

MINUTES
HERITAGE TRUST ADVISORY BOARD
RICHLAND COUNTY
FEBRUARY 6, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT

Campbell Coxe (Chair)
Henry Fair (Vice Chair)
Jake Rasor
Sonny King
Julia Krebs
Bob Perry (for Alvin Taylor)
Ken Prosser (for Ken Rentiers)
States Clawson (for Bobby Hitt)
Phil Gaines (for Duane Parrish)
Russell Hubright (for Gene Kodama)
Jonathan Leader

MEMBERS ABSENT

Eric Emerson
Beth Grace
Dave Cicimurri (for William Calloway)
Randy Lowe

OTHERS PRESENT

Julie Holling
Kay Daniels
Kathy Boyle
Bert Pittman
Sean Taylor
Meg Gaillard
Mary Crockett
Jamie Dozier
Paul League
Tim Ivey
Johnny Stowe
Allen Bridgman
Sam Stokes
Harry Shealy
Pat Corey
Randy Wolcott
Toby Ward
Travis Bell
Maayan Schechter

Call to Order

Campbell Coxe called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone, and requested they introduce themselves.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Coxe asked if there were any changes, additions or deletions to the minutes from the November 7, 2013, meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board (HTAB). *Mr. Clawson made a motion that the Board approve the minutes of the November 7, 2013, meeting, as submitted. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

Information on Historical Redoubt

Mary Crockett, Director of Land Protection for the Congaree Land Trust, reported on a redoubt in Colleton County near Colleton State Park. The property consists of 5.6 acres and it is believed that this particular earthwork had at least one small cannon embankment and some placements for guns protecting the river. Ms. Crockett said their research has not determined whether the redoubt is a Civil War or Revolutionary War era earthworks. She stated the landowners want to sell the property, but want it kept in a cultural/ historical perspective. Ms. Crockett asked the Board for permission to have more research conducted for the purpose of a future purchase by the SCDNR or the State Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism. Chairman Coxe directed DNR archaeologist Sean Taylor to investigate the site.

Expansion of Conservation Easement on Hitchcock Woods

Paul League, Deputy Chief Counsel for DNR, reported that he had been asked by members of the Hitchcock Woods Foundation about adding several parcels to the conservation easement that currently exists on the Hitchcock Woods property. In 1996 the Hitchcock Woods Foundation granted to the SCDNR a conservation easement to protect the Hitchcock Woods property from encroachment. Mr. League stated the property is in downtown Aiken, comprises nearly 2,000 acres and is surrounded by intensive housing developments and highways. He noted there are some associated issues, one being the possible encroachment onto the dedicated property by a state highway. Mr. League said the Hitchcock Woods Foundation has acquired a number of parcels abutting the existing dedicated property to buffer and protect it and they propose to grant the SCDNR an easement over those parcels.

Randy Wolcott, from The Hitchcock Woods Foundation, stated the foundation has been managing all the additional properties in conjunction with the Hitchcock Woods' management plan. He explained the majority of the lands are longleaf pine plant communities. Mr. Wolcott added that a baseline survey for Red-cockaded woodpeckers has also been completed. They are working closely with Sean Taylor to complete an archaeological inventory of the Woods.

Chairman Coxe complimented The Hitchcock Woods Foundation on their thorough management practices, especially at their own expense, on these new properties.

Mr. League stated that staff does not have any recommendation at this time. This request will be reviewed and the presentation today was for education and information. Presumably at the next HTAB meeting a recommendation will be brought forth to give to the SCDNR Board on this request.

Road Widening Project at Hitchcock Woods

Mr. League briefly explained the proposed widening of Hitchcock Woods Parkway. The project would involve expanding the existing parkway from two to four lanes and potentially result in the taking of land from the Hitchcock Woods Heritage Preserve. The exact acreage hasn't been disclosed, but it appears to be a significant intrusion onto the preserve.

Mr. Toby Ward, legal counsel for The Hitchcock Woods Foundation, stated he has been communicating with the City of Aiken and the SC Department of Transportation. He said the main concern of the Foundation is that DOT hasn't been forthcoming with information despite repeated unofficial and official efforts.

Bob Perry, Director of Environmental Programs for DNR, volunteered to talk to SCDOT's Environmental Planning office and to see what he can learn about the planning process for the proposed project. He will report his findings back to the Board.

Carolina Bays and Isolated Wetlands Task Force

Johnny Stowe, Region 2 Wildlife Biologist, gave a presentation on the Carolina Bays and Isolated Wetlands Task Force. Mr. Perry and Mr. Stowe have made presentations to this General Assembly Task Force. The Task Force's activities can be seen at:

<http://www.scstatehouse.gov/committeeinfo/IsolatedWetlandsandCarolinaBaysTaskForce/IsolatedWetlandsandCarolinaBaysTaskForce.php>

Mr. Stowe provided an overview of the Task Force's activities, plus information on Carolina Bays in general, including geomorphology, ecology and management. He highlighted Carolina Bays protected by the Heritage Trust Program, including: Lewis Ocean Bay, Cartwheel Bay, Little Pee Dee State Park Bay, Woods Bay State Park Bay, Junkyard Bay, Savage Bay, and Cathedral Bay. He emphasized the unique, prescient accomplishments of the Board and Heritage Trust in protecting these areas decades ago, before anyone else in South Carolina was interested in them.

Executive Session

At this time, Mr. Razor made a motion that the Board hold an Executive Session to discuss contractual and legal matters. Dr. King seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Return to Regular Session

Mr. Razor made a motion that the Board return to regular session. Mr. Fair seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Rasor made a motion to direct DNR staff to engage with the Hitchcock Woods Foundation to determine additional details about the conceptual Hitchcock Woods Parkway, and to engage with DOT staff for the same purposes in order that appropriate steps be taken to work with the City of Aiken, The Augusta Regional Transportation Authority and DOT so that a clear purpose and need for a proposed highway widening project be defined and that it utilize all available steps to avoid, minimize and mitigate for potential effects of the project to Hitchcock Woods.

Updates & Comments

Ken Prosser, Assistant Deputy Director for the DNR's Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division, updated the Board on current property acquisitions, pending legislation and Heritage Trust revenue. During the last fiscal year, Mr. Prosser explained that the DNR acquired eight different properties totaling 1,711 acres. The cost of these properties was \$538,872 and the donated value was \$4 million.

Update on Bear Branch Archaeology

Sean Taylor, archaeologist for the Heritage Trust Program, described the results of the archaeological excavation currently being conducted by Diachronic Research Foundation at Bear Branch HP. Recent survey work throughout December has identified 14 previously unknown archaeological sites of both prehistoric and historic origin. It is believed the historic sites are related to the pottery operation of Benjamin Franklin Landrum. Remote sensing work conducted by Terry Ferguson of Wofford College identified magnetic anomalies. Shovel tests placed in close proximity to the anomalies identified Landrum's kiln. Its current dimensions are unknown but it could be as large as the kilns operated by B.F. Landrum's uncle and brother-in-law at Pottersville and Stoney Bluff, both are approximately 110' feet in length. Investigation of the kiln will be conducted later in the spring. There may be a field trip to the site at the next meeting. Artifacts from both Gopher and Bear Branch Heritage Preserves were on hand for display to the Board.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board will be held Thursday, May 1, 2014, at 10:00 a.m. at Hitchcock Woods in Aiken County.

Adjourn

There being no further business to be brought before the Board at this time, *Dr. King made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Rasor seconded the motion, the motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.*

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