

New Philadelphia holds Planning Retreat

The New Philadelphia Association (NPA) held a Planning Retreat August 21-23 at Sprague's Kinderhook Lodge near Barry.

The New Philadelphia Association has been in existence for 28 years in Pike County, Illinois developing, maintaining and maintaining the New Philadelphia site near Barry, established by the first African American to register and plat a town in the US in 1836. Frank McWorter freed his wife, Lucy, first and then himself. Through the selling of plots and building this multiracial town, he freed his children and other family members.

The mail goals of NPA have been reached, including an Act of Congress making the New Philadelphia site a National Historic Site, one of the nation's national parks.

Now in transition to working with the National Park Service (NPS), the organization will move from a locally based project to a national project. This will require new programs and a new level of fundraising. Over the years the NPA has also gained a new emphasis on all the descendants of New Philadelphia, those whose background goes back to both Africa and Europe. This includes almost 10 generations.

To plan a path for the future of this new organization, the NPA organized this collaborative effort involving members of the current NPA board, the National Park Service, descendants of Free Frank and other families and participants from many organizations around the country involved in history, community development, and education.

The planning session



CHRIS COLLINS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, Superintendent of the New Philadelphia National Historic Site Phil Bradshaw, NPA board president, Dr. Gerald McWorter, NPA vice president, great-great-grandson of Frank McWorter

was facilitated by representatives of the University of Illinois Extension Service. A written report will be provided to the NPA board in a few weeks, the results of which will be used to

establish the leadership and goals of the new organization at its annual meeting in October.

As a summary of the meeting, Dr. Gerald McWorter, vice-president of the New Philadelphia Association and great-

great grandson of Frank McWorter said "The planning session was uplifting, positive and successful, upholding NPA's slogan ("If New Philadelphia is possible, then maybe America is possible"). We look

forward to the future."

For more information, please contact Kaye Iftner, New Philadelphia Association board member and PR chair at kiftner@gmail.com or by phone at 201-314-3624.