

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
December 9, 2019
Location: 2100 Randolph Road, Charlotte, N.C.
Time: 6:00 p.m. – 9:08 p.m.**

Draft Minutes

Present:

**Ms. Diane Althouse/County/HLC Treasurer
Mr. Robert Barfield/County
Mr. Akadius Berry/County
Mr. Nathan Clark/County/HLC Vice Chair
Ms. Laura Hoover/County
Mr. William Hughes/City
Mr. Garrett Nelson/Mayor/Design Review Committee Chair
Mr. Len Norman/City/Survey Committee Chair
Mr. Jeffrey Parsons/Mayor/HLC Chair
Mr. Edwin Wilson/City/Projects Committee Chair
Dr. Dan L. Morrill, HLC Consulting Director
Mr. Stewart Gray, HLC Senior Preservation Planner
Ms. Elizabeth Stuart, HLC Administrative Assistant
Mr. Peter Wasmer, Project Manager, Mecklenburg County**

Absent:

**Mr. Sandy Carnegie, HLC Attorney
Mr. Brian Clarke/County
Mr. Jonathan Schulz/City**

Visitors:

**Frank Bragg, McNinch House
Jolly Dale, Torrence Lytle School
Christopher Dennis, Butler House
Norman Fortson, McNinch House
Jared Gardner
Lexie Longstreet, Torrence Lytle School
Susan Mayer
Joseph Pellegrin
Marnie Poirier, Torrence Lytle School
Mary Springsteed, McNinch House
Jack Thomson**

1. Consideration of Minutes

MR. NORMAN PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. HOOVER THAT THE MINUTES FOR THE NOVEMBER 4, 2019, MEETING OF THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION BE APPROVED. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

2. Chair's Report: Jeffrey Parsons

Mr. Parsons stated that this meeting was the last meeting that Dr. Morrill would preside over as Consulting Director. Mr. Parsons presented a proclamation to Dr. Morrill from the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners, which proclaimed December 9, 2019, as "Dr. Dan Lincoln Morrill Day." The Commissioners expressed their gratitude to Dr. Morrill for his many years of service to the Historic Landmarks Commission.

3. Director's Report: Dan Morrill

Dr. Morrill reported the following:

a. Torrence Lytle School (Huntersville Colored School), 302 Holbrooks Road, Huntersville, N.C.

Dr. Morrill showed a video detailing the current condition of the Torrence Lytle School. Dr. Morrill stated that the video illustrated how the Commission has been sensitive to diversity.

b. Victor Shaw House, 2400 Mecklenburg Avenue, Charlotte, N.C.

Terranova, Inc. has signed a contract to purchase the Victor Shaw House. The prospective buyer is performing due diligence. Closing is scheduled for February 1st. Two actions by the HLC will be required if the project is to occur. They are: 1) approval of an amendment to the historic landmark ordinance that will reduce the size of the historic landmark, and 2) approval of the demolition of the breezeway and attached garage on the western end of the Shaw House. Terranova will place preservation easements on the property that will assure the preservation of the house in perpetuity.

c. Frank R. McNinch House, 2401 Sharon Lane, Charlotte, N.C.

The owner has stated his interest in seeking a preservation solution for the McNinch House and the construction of sensitive infill on the remainder of the property. He supports approval of the recommendation of the Design Review Committee that the Commission give conceptual approval of the site plan as presented. Dr. Morrill stated that this item will be considered further later in the meeting.

d. Excelsior Club, 921 Beatties Ford Road, Charlotte, N.C.

Efforts to establish contact with Darius Anderson, the prospective buyer, have been unsuccessful. Contact has been made with Steve Robinson, the owner's realtor. He says that a "dramatic announcement" will be made in the near future. Dr. Morrill stated that he has told Mr. Robinson that he believes the HLC will take the stand that design review will

be performed on the portion of the property which is a historic landmark. The current Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the structure expires on December 12th. Thereafter, the owner will have to apply for a new demolition COA, the effective date of which could be delayed for 365 days.

e. McConnell House, 4009 Beatties Ford Road, Charlotte, N.C.

On December 6, 2019, the McConnell House was standing. The current COA to demolish the structure expires on December 12th. Thereafter the owner will have to apply for a new demolition COA, the effective date of which may be delayed for up to 365 days. Mr. Gray stated that the owner has been issued a permit to proceed with demolishing the house.

f. Former Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, 412 Campus Street, Charlotte, N.C.

The Historic Landmarks Commission and Johnson C. Smith University continue to negotiate a memorandum of understanding whereby the HLC will spend money up to \$1 million to remove code violations. Once the memorandum of understanding is approved, Staff will move forward with preparing a Request for Board Action for the Board of County Commissioners to approve the project.

g. John Douglas House, 7601 Christie Lane, Charlotte, N.C.

Staff continues to prepare the materials necessary to submit a Request for Board Action for the Board of County Commissioners to approve an Option to Purchase for the John Douglas House. Dr. Morrill stated that the appraiser has visited the house and Staff is awaiting the appraisal.

h. Former Wesley Heights United Methodist Church, 205 Grandin Road, Charlotte, N.C.

Developers planning to place condominiums in the church have until December 15th to close. A party with necessary financial resources has a backup offer to purchase the church, preserve the interior, and use the property for a community purpose.

4. Treasurer's Report: Diane Althouse

Ms. Althouse reviewed the monthly financial report prepared by the Asset and Facility Management Department of Mecklenburg County. Ms. Althouse stated that the Rozzelle House payment has been delayed but would be resolved soon.

Mr. Parsons asked the visitors to introduce themselves and state what property they were representing.

5. Senior Preservation Planner's Report: Stewart Gray

a. Public Hearing for Historic Landmark Designation for the Cornelius High School Agriculture Building, 21126 Catawba Avenue, Cornelius, N.C.

MR. NORMAN PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. ALTHOUSE TO OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING TO HEAR COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC REGARDING THE PROSPECTIVE DESIGNATION OF THE CORNELIUS HIGH SCHOOL

AGRICULTURE BUILDING, 21126 CATAWBA AVENUE, CORNELIUS, N.C., AS A HISTORIC LANDMARK. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

Mr. Gray stated that the Historic Landmarks Commission has recommended to the Cornelius Town Board that the Cornelius High School Agriculture Building be designated as a historic landmark. Mr. Gray reviewed the advisory letter from the State Historic Preservation Office and stated that the letter was positive. Mr. Gray stated that the Survey and Research Report has been updated per the recommendation of the State Historic Preservation Office.

Mr. Parsons asked the Commissioners if they had any questions regarding the advisory letter or the Survey and Research Report. There were no questions.

MR. BERRY PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. CLARK TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING TO HEAR COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC REGARDING THE PROSPECTIVE DESIGNATION OF THE CORNELIUS HIGH SCHOOL AGRICULTURE BUILDING, 21126 CATAWBA AVENUE, CORNELIUS, N.C., AS A HISTORIC LANDMARK. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

MR. NORMAN PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. WILSON THAT THE COMMISSION REAFFIRM ITS RECOMMENDATION THAT THE CORNELIUS HIGH SCHOOL AGRICULTURE BUILDING, 21126 CATAWBA AVENUE, CORNELIUS, N.C., BE PROCESSED FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

b. Stafford Slave Cabin Update

Mr. Gray stated that forthcoming emergency repairs to the Stafford Slave Cabin have been arranged with funding from Preserve Mecklenburg, thanks to Dr. Morrill's assistance. Mr. Gray stated that the Historic Landmarks Commission would stay involved with this project for as long as needed. Mr. Parsons thanked Dr. Morrill and Frank Bragg for their assistance with this issue.

6. Design Review Committee Report: Garrett Nelson

a. Frank R. McNinch House, 2401 Sharon Lane, Charlotte, N.C.

Mr. Gray reviewed the significance of the house. Mr. Gray reviewed the proposed plan and stated that this was the only proposal that had been brought to the Commission. Mr. Gray stated that Staff has found the plans to be appropriate.

Mary Springsteed, a neighbor of the property, detailed the history of the neighborhood for the Commission and stated that she is opposed to the proposed in-fill plan. Norman Fortner, a relative of a neighbor of the property, expressed concern over violating restrictions in the deed. Mr. Fortner stated that he does not understand how the Commission can act in disregard to those who border this property.

Frank Bragg stated that his role with Preserve Mecklenburg was to find a way to protect the house. Mr. Bragg explained that nine houses are allowed by current zoning and that the owner originally planned to demolish the historic house. Mr. Bragg stated that in Preserve Mecklenburg's view that if infill is not allowed that the historic house will be demolished.

Dr. Morrill stated that the owner told Preserve Mecklenburg that the deed restrictions would not be valid if they had not been adequately enforced throughout the years.

Mr. Barfield stated that the Design Review Committee approved the plans at a conceptual level. Mr. Barfield stated that the Committee specified at its meeting that it was not aware of deed restrictions and that no one has brought forth any evidence of deed restrictions since that time.

Ms. Althouse recommended referring this issue back to the Design Review Committee for further consideration. Mr. Parsons stated that the Commission will be facing more infill pressure as large historic lots become increasingly threatened.

THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE PRESENTED A SECONDED MOTION TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT CONCEPTUALLY APPROVE THE PLAN AS PRESENTED FOR THE FRANK R. MCNINCH HOUSE, 2401 SHARON LANE, CHARLOTTE, N.C., WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE OWNER WILL PLACE A PROTECTIVE EASEMENT ON THE PROPERTY THAT WILL PREVENT THE DEMOLITION OF THE HISTORIC HOUSE.

The Commission did not act on the seconded motion.

MR. NORMAN PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. WILSON THAT THE CONCEPTUAL PLAN FOR THE FRANK R. MCNINCH HOUSE, 2401 SHARON LANE, CHARLOTTE, N.C., BE REFERRED BACK TO THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

b. Johnston Building, 212 S. Tryon Street, Charlotte, N.C.

Mr. Gray reviewed the proposed plans.

THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE PRESENTED A SECONDED MOTION TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT APPROVE PLANS AS PRESENTED FOR THE JOHNSTON BUILDING, 212 S. TRYON STREET, CHARLOTTE, N.C. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

c. Charles E. Barnhardt House, 3217 Maymont Place, Charlotte, N.C.

Mr. Gray reviewed the proposed plans. Mr. Nelson stated that he opposed the motion when the plans were originally discussed at the Design Review Committee meeting because of the highly landscaped buffer that would be drastically reduced with the addition of a driveway. Mr. Gray stated that if the Commission approved the motion that the owner would be able to convert the crawlspace into usable space but there would not be a driveway.

THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE PRESENTED A SECONDED MOTION TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT APPROVE PLANS AS PRESENTED FOR THE CHARLES E. BARNHARDT HOUSE, 3217 MAYMONT PLACE, CHARLOTTE, N.C., WITH THE STIPULATION THAT THE FINAL DESIGN FOR THE DRIVEWAY WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR APPROVAL. THE COMMISSION APPROVED THE MOTION WITH MR. NELSON VOTING IN OPPOSITION.

Mr. Nelson thanked HLC Staff for its help throughout the past year as he has served as Chair of the Design Review Committee. Mr. Nelson also thanked the members of the Design Review Committee for the various talents they bring to the Committee. Ms. Hoover and Mr. Parsons commended Mr. Nelson for the time he has committed in his role as Chair of the Design Review Committee.

7. Survey Committee Report: Len Norman

Mr. Norman reminded the Commission that the Holiday Party would be held on Wednesday, December 11.

a. Consideration of the Survey and Research Report for the Butler House, 240 Sylvania Avenue, Charlotte, N.C.

Mr. Gray introduced Chris Dennis, who Mr. Gray stated deserved credit for preserving the house and saving it from demolition. Mr. Gray reviewed the special significance in the Survey and Research Report and stated that Susan Mayer, consultant, had revised the report to address comments from the State Historic Preservation Office. Mr. Dennis spoke to the Commission and stated that the neighborhood has undergone many changes throughout the years.

THE SURVEY COMMITTEE PRESENTED A SECONDED MOTION TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT PROCESS THE BUTLER HOUSE, 240 SYLVANIA AVENUE, CHARLOTTE, N.C., FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE SURVEY AND RESEARCH REPORT BE REVISED TO ADDRESS QUESTIONS OF INTEGRITY AND SIGNIFICANCE. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

b. Consideration of Amending the Designation Ordinance for the Victor Shaw House, 2400 Mecklenburg Avenue, Charlotte, N.C.

Mr. Gray stated that the Design Review Committee and Survey Committee have reviewed the proposed infill development on this property. Mr. Gray stated that Staff recommends approving the de-designation of the property with the exception of the lot with the historic house and the lots in front of the house, which would all remain under design review control of the Commission.

THE SURVEY COMMITTEE PRESENTED A SECONDED MOTION TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT AMEND THE DESIGNATION ORDINANCE FOR THE VICTOR SHAW HOUSE, 2400 MECKLENBURG AVENUE, CHARLOTTE, N.C., TO DE-DESIGNATE THE PROPERTY EXCEPT FOR THE LOT

CONTAINING THE ORIGINAL HOUSE AND THE TWO PROPOSED LOTS THAT WILL BORDER MECKLENBURG AVENUE ON THE FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

c. Additions to the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks

Mr. Norman stated that the Survey Committee recently added a variety of properties to the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks. Mr. Gray briefly reviewed the additions:

- i. Simmons House, 625 Hermitage Court, Charlotte, N.C.**
- ii. Ca. 1936 YMCA Building, 317 S. Caldwell Street, Charlotte, N.C.**
- iii. Pentes Log House and Property, 6510 Sharon Hills Road, Charlotte, N.C.**
- iv. Morris Field Chapel, 5415 Airport Drive, Charlotte, N.C.**
- v. Davidson Log House, Eastfield Road, Huntersville, N.C.**

8. Projects Committee Report: Edwin Wilson

- a. Torrence Lytle School, 302 Holbrooks Road, Huntersville, N.C.**

Mr. Wilson thanked the visitors for attending. Jolly Dale, prospective buyer of the Torrence-Lytle School, presented a PowerPoint presentation detailing the current status of and proposed plans for the property.

MR. BERRY PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. NELSON THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION CONVENE IN CLOSED SESSION. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

MR. BERRY PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. HUGHES THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

- b. Wallace House Property, 9425 Robinson Church Road, Charlotte, N.C.**

Mr. Wilson stated that at its November meeting, the Projects Committee discussed whether the Wallace House should be marketed as a single parcel or whether the land should be subdivided with a portion of the land preserved to protect the house.

THE PROJECTS COMMITTEE PRESENTED A SECONDED MOTION TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT EXPLORE ENTERING INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH A DEVELOPER AND INVESTIGATE SUBDIVIDING A PORTION OF THE LAND AROUND THE WALLACE HOUSE, 9425 ROBINSON CHURCH ROAD, CHARLOTTE, N.C., WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE HOUSE AND A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THE LAND CONTIGUOUS AROUND

THE HOUSE WILL BE PRESERVED. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

c. John H. Mayes House, 435 E. Morehead Street, Charlotte, N.C.

Dr. Morrill showed a brief video of the Mayes House. Dr. Morrill stated that the owner of the Mayes House has restored the house and is interested in its preservation. Dr. Morrill stated that the owner intends to join with a neighboring property in marketing both parcels for sale. Dr. Morrill stated that the issue before the Commission is whether it wishes to assume the leadership in seeking an Option to Purchase for the Mayes House parcel or whether it would be interested in having Preserve Mecklenburg take a leadership role. The Commission agreed it is interested in pursuing this opportunity and that Jack Thomson should meet with the owner for further discussions.

9. Old Business

There was no old business.

10. New Business

Mr. Parsons introduced Jack Thomson as the new Director of the Historic Landmarks Commission. Mr. Thomson briefly introduced himself and stated that he was honored to lead the Commission.

MR. HUGHES PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. NORMAN THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION ADJOURN. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

The meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.