

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
Design Review Committee Minutes
Virtual Meeting
August 26, 2020
8:03 a.m. – 9:44 a.m.**

Draft Minutes

Present:

**Mr. Richard Alsop
Mr. Matthew Benson
Mr. David Gieser
Ms. Kristi Harpst
Ms. Laura Hoover, HLC Secretary
Mr. Garrett Nelson, Design Review Committee Chair
Mr. Kenneth Pursley
Mr. Jack Thomson, HLC Executive Director
Mr. Stewart Gray, HLC Senior Preservation Planner
Ms. Elizabeth Stuart, HLC Administrative Assistant**

Absent:

**Mr. Robert Barfield
Mr. Victor Jones**

Visitors:

**Mac Crisco
Traci Crisco
Scott Dunnagan
Elizabeth Funck
Ellen Loncz
Lora Mastrofrancesco
Bob McAuley
James Train**

Note: This meeting was held virtually through the Zoom video conferencing platform.

1. Chair's Report: Garrett Nelson

Mr. Nelson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Staff Report: Jack Thomson and Stewart Gray

Mr. Thomson reminded Committee members who also serve on the Historic Landmarks Commission to review the emails from Staff regarding requirements for the Certified Local Government's virtual continuing education training. Mr. Thomson requested that visitors sign into the meeting with their full names to ensure accurate recording.

Mr. Gray stated that the Committee should include the applicable standard(s) from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation with each motion made. Mr. Gray stated that Staff met with Mr. Nelson, Mr. Barfield, and Ms. Hoover to discuss initial guidelines that will be provided to applicants proposing additions or infill developments. Mr. Gray stated that these guidelines may be ready to present to the Committee at its next meeting.

3. Ranson House, 412 S. Old Statesville Road, Huntersville, N.C.

Mr. Gray stated that the Town of Huntersville is proposing to install a roundabout on Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road, which will affect part of the historic Ranson House property. Mr. Gray stated that the historic designation of the Ranson House includes two land parcels. Mr. Gray noted that one parcel contains the historic house while the other parcel includes additional land. Mr. Gray showed a map of the designated property and noted where the project would impact the historic land. Mr. Gray stated that a positive effect of the roundabout installation is that it would push the curb away from the historic house. Mr. Gray stated that Staff analysis determined that the project meets Standards #5, #6, and #7. Mr. Gray stated that Staff considered Standard #2 and determined that it conflicts with the proposed project.

Lora Mastrofrancesco, representative of the Town of Huntersville, described how the roundabout will be the entrance to the Town of Huntersville. Ms. Mastrofrancesco provided specific details about the proposed road widening and described the impact on the surrounding land parcels.

Scott Dunnagan, attorney for the property owner, summarized concerns from the owners. Mr. Dunnagan asked about the projected timing of the project and when the road widening will commence and end. Mr. Dunnagan noted that vegetation has already been removed in preparation for the road widening and stated the property owners are concerned about the historic vegetation on the property and whether the root systems will be harmed by heavy machinery. Mr. Dunnagan stated that the owners have also requested a rendering of what the project will look like when it is completed.

Mr. Thomson reminded the visitors that while the Committee may act as a conduit between the property owners and the Town of Huntersville, the concerns that have been listed, with the exception of the historic vegetation, are not within the purview of the Committee.

Ms. Mastrofrancesco stated that an arborist confirmed that nearby trees were not damaged by the borings completed by the Town of Huntersville. Ms. Mastrofrancesco stated that she believes the concern regarding trees being damaged by heavy machinery is valid and that she will follow up with the arborist regarding this concern and will also make a note that

heavy machinery needs to be kept away from the trees. Mr. Nelson asked if the Town would be willing to place temporary protective measures around the affected trees with the approval of the owners. Ms. Mastrofrancesco stated that the Town would be open to this consideration.

Ellen Loncz, property owner, stated that she believes that the construction easement extends to where an older tree on the property is located, which is a concern for her and her husband. Ms. Loncz stated that she and her husband have been working to restore vegetation onsite, including planting multiple trees around the property and engaging in hybrid planting of older vegetation in the front of the property. Ms. Loncz thanked Ms. Mastrofrancesco for her willingness to protect the vegetation from the heavy machinery. Ms. Loncz also noted the hardship that would come with the amount of time it will take for the road widening to be completed.

Mr. Gray stated that any motion that the Committee makes regarding this project can be contingent upon having appropriate language in the Certificate of Appropriateness that states boundaries for the construction easement will be well-defined and the property will be protected.

Mr. Nelson stated that this project meets Standards #5, #6, and #7 with the consideration of #2.

MR. NELSON PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. GIESER THAT THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT APPROVE THE ROAD WIDENING PROJECT AT THE RANSON HOUSE, 412 S. OLD STATESVILLE ROAD, HUNTERSVILLE, N.C., WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS: 1) THAT THE EXACT CONSTRUCTION EASEMENT BE SPECIFIED; 2) THAT THE TOWN OF HUNTERSVILLE WORK IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE OWNERS OF THE RANSON HOUSE TO ENSURE TREE PROTECTION FOR THE DURATION OF THE PROJECT; AND 3) THAT ANY NEEDED VARIATIONS TO THE CONSTRUCTION EASEMENT BE PROPOSED TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION AND THE OWNERS OF THE RANSON HOUSE BEFORE CONSTRUCTION BEGINS. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

Mr. Gray informed the visitors that this project will be considered at the Historic Landmarks Commission's meeting on September 14.

Note: Mr. Benson left the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

4. Freeman House, 201 S. Ames Street, Matthews, N.C.

Mr. Gray stated that the Freeman House is currently located on land owned by the Matthews Presbyterian Church. Mr. Gray stated that the church does not have a need for the house and that the house is at risk of being demolished. Mr. Gray introduced Mac and Traci Crisco and noted that Mr. Crisco is a descendent of the couple that built the Freeman House and is interested in moving the house to an adjoining lot in an effort to preserve the

house. Mr. Gray stated that the Criscos are the only party that has presented a preservation plan for the house.

Mr. Crisco stated that the Freeman House was built by his grandparents and was later bought by the church from another branch of the family. Mr. Crisco explained that his mother's house is located on the lot next to the Freeman House. Mr. Crisco stated that he intends to demolish his mother's house and relocate the Freeman House to this adjoining lot. Mr. Crisco stated that he is proposing to construct an addition on the back of the house to provide additional living space. Mr. Crisco showed the proposed plans for the addition. Mr. Gray stated that Staff would work with the Criscos on plans that would give them more space while lessening the impact on the historic house.

Mr. Nelson asked about the intent of the second floors. Ms. Crisco stated one part would be for office space and the other part for storage. Mr. Nelson stated that he is in favor of moving and preserving the house but has concerns about the scale of the proposed addition. Mr. Gieser and Ms. Harpst echoed Mr. Nelson's concerns and stated that the original house appears dwarfed by the additions. Mr. Gray stated that the proposed plans could be considered conceptual at this point, which would give the applicants confidence that they could build an addition with the idea that details will be finalized later.

Mr. Pursley stated that the proposed plans meet Standard #2 but do not completely meet Standards #3 and #4.

MR. PURSLEY PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. HOOVER THAT THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT APPROVE THE RELOCATION OF THE FREEMAN HOUSE, 201 S. AMES STREET, MATTHEWS, N.C., TO MECKLENBURG COUNTY TAX PARCEL 22702446 AND CONCEPTUALLY APPROVE THE PROPOSED PLANS FOR THE ADDITION WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE MASSING ON THE SECOND FLOOR. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

Mr. Gray stated that if the Historic Landmarks Commission approves this motion that the relocation will be approved, but that this project will need to come back to the Design Review Committee for additional architectural review of the addition.

5. Charlotte Fire Station #10, 2136 Remount Road, Charlotte, N.C.

Mr. Gray stated that this property is in the process of becoming a designated historic landmark and that the applicant is seeking conceptual approval for exterior repairs and replacements prior to closing on the property. Mr. Gray stated that the front entry requires accessible parking spaces, which are proposed to be installed where the existing gas pumps are located, and that a boulder is proposed to also be placed in front of the building. Mr. Gray stated that existing windows will be repaired where feasible and replaced where not. Mr. Gray noted that general repairs to the exterior are required due to years of vacancy and vandalism.

James Train, architect, stated that the intent is to restore the building to how it historically appeared. Ms. Hoover stated that the major exterior alteration will be installing glass garage doors on the front of the building so future tenants have the option to use the garage as an open office.

Mr. Pursley asked about the intended use of the building. Ms. Hoover stated the interior will be remodeled and likely leased as office space. Ms. Hoover noted that the interior is not designated.

Mr. Gray stated that Staff believes the project meets Standards #2, #3, and #4. Mr. Gray stated that the installation of glass garage doors conflicts with Standard #6, but that the overall integrity is appropriate even with this conflict.

Mr. Thomson stated that the details for a permanent preservation easement on the exterior of the building are still being refined. Mr. Thomson stated that the Commission will briefly own the property in order to place the deed restriction on the property.

Mr. Pursley stated that the project meets Standards #2, #3, and #4.

MR. PURSLEY PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. NELSON THAT THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT APPROVE PLANS AS PRESENTED FOR THE CHARLOTTE FIRE STATION #10, 2136 REMOUNT ROAD, CHARLOTTE, N.C. THE COMMISSION APPROVED THE MOTION WITH MS. HOOVER ABSTAINING FROM THE VOTE.

6. Update on Rezoning of the Shaw Property, 2400 Mecklenburg Avenue, Charlotte, N.C.

Mr. Gray updated the Committee on the status of the Shaw House property rezoning. Mr. Pursley asked about neighborhood support for the development and Mr. Gray stated he did not recall any opposition. Ms. Harpst noted that the due date for comments on the rezoning is August 27.

7. Old Business

There was no old business.

8. New Business

There was no new business.

The meeting adjourned at 9:44 a.m.