

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
Survey Committee Minutes
Virtual Meeting
December 16, 2020
6:01 p.m. – 7:46 p.m.**

Present:

**Mr. Akadius Berry
Mr. Brian Clarke, Survey Committee Chair
Ms. Leila Farsiani
Mr. John Howard
Ms. Cindy Kochanek
Mr. Len Norman
Mr. Jonathan Schulz
Mr. Jack Thomson, HLC Executive Director
Mr. Stewart Gray, HLC Senior Preservation Planner
Ms. Elizabeth Stuart, HLC Administrative Assistant
Mr. Tommy Warlick, HLC Consulting Preservation Planner**

Absent:

**Ms. Christine Landry
Mr. Michael Rogers**

Visitors:

**Allen Brooks
Chris Dennis
Ann Henson
Steve Menaker
Kendra Waters**

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

1. Chair's Report: Brian Clarke

Mr. Clarke welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Staff Report: Jack Thomson and Stewart Gray

Mr. Thomson and Mr. Gray stated they did not have anything additional to report.

3. Updates

a. Stafford Slave Cabin, Charlotte

Mr. Thomson stated that Heather Fearnbach, consultant, is currently working on the designation report. Mr. Thomson stated that Ms. Fearnbach has reported challenges accessing resources due to the pandemic. Mr. Thomson stated that he hopes the report will be ready for review soon. Mr. Clarke noted that Preserve Mecklenburg assisted the Commission in funding stabilization work on the cabin.

b. Pineville Mill Village (Cone Avenue)

Mr. Gray stated that Ms. Farsiani has been researching this community and has spearheaded further examination of the properties. Mr. Gray showed a map of the mill village and stated that Staff has asked Ms. Farsiani to survey the area to determine if there is interest in historic landmark designation. Mr. Gray stated that the light rail is being expanded to Pineville and that this will increase developmental pressures in the area.

Mr. Farsiani spoke to her progress on surveying the area. Mr. Gray stated that Staff may have more information ready for review for the February or April meeting of the Survey Committee.

c. Potts Barbershop, 21324 Catawba Avenue, Cornelius

Mr. Gray stated that Tommy Warlick has been instrumental in the current processing of designations. Mr. Gray stated that Mr. Warlick is assisting Staff with producing a designation report for the Potts Barbershop. Mr. Gray stated that he anticipates having a finished report ready for review at the February meeting of the Survey Committee.

d. Huntersville Rosenwald School, 508 Dellwood Drive, Huntersville

Mr. Gray reminded the Committee that the Commission has already voted to produce a designation report for this property. Mr. Gray stated that Ryan Sumner, consultant, has worked with the Commission on previous reports and is contracted to produce this report. Mr. Gray stated that due to a loss in Mr. Sumner's family the submittal of the report will be delayed from its anticipated January 15 submittal date. Mr. Gray stated that Staff hopes to have the report ready for review at the February meeting of the Survey Committee.

Mr. Howard asked how far the survey of this property extended and whether there are nearby properties that have connections to the school. Mr. Gray clarified that the designation report will only focus on the school.

Mr. Clarke expressed condolences to Mr. Sumner on his loss. Mr. Clarke noted that the school property is not threatened and that a delay in reviewing the report will not be detrimental to the preservation of the school.

e. Samuel Grier House, 421 Montrose Street, Charlotte

Mr. Thomson showed a map of the property and explained its location. Mr. Thomson stated that an elderly member of the family that owns the house has passed away and that the family is currently engaged in straightening out title work for the property. Mr. Thomson stated that Michael Sullivan has a strong relationship with the family and has

reported that the family is interested in preserving the house. Mr. Thomson stated that the family has expressed interest in subdividing the property in front of the house, potentially for infill development. Mr. Thomson stated that the house retains a high level of integrity and that he is hopeful to have a meaningful conversation with the family regarding the preservation of the historic house soon.

f. Commercial Bldg, 857 Belmont Avenue, Charlotte

Mr. Gray stated that this commercial building is located in the heart of the Belmont neighborhood. Mr. Gray stated that he has been in contact with the owner and that the owner appears to be interested in historic landmark designation.

g. Beatties Ford Road Survey

Mr. Clarke stated that he has created a list of the properties that Committee members focused on as strong properties to contact and gauge interest in historic landmark designation. Mr. Clarke named the properties as follows:

- **1100 Beatties Ford Rd - Chicken N Ribs; Green Book site**
- **1218 Beatties Ford Rd - Northwest Medical Center; good example of modernist design; former office of civil rights lawyer Reginald Hawkins.**
- **1415 Beatties Ford Rd - Northwest School of the Arts; Art Deco design features**
- **1500 Beatties Ford Rd - former Igloo Dairy Bar; Green Book site**
- **2023 Beatties Ford Rd - Original location of McDonald's Cafeteria; Community gathering spot.**
- **2128 Senior Drive – Kelly Alexander Sr. house**
- **2140 Senior Drive – Fred D. Alexander house**
- **2319 LaSalle Street – North Branch Library, Allegra Westbrook First African American library manager in N.C. Modernist building**
- **1404 Beatties Ford Road – Former photography studio of James Peeler**
- **Patterson Grocery on Booker (which Preserve Mecklenburg owns and is selling with preservation covenants)**
- **1930 Beatties Ford Road – modernist commercial building, site of "Neighborhood Service Station" owned and operated by "leading westside businessman Charles W. Withers" who lived at 1919 Oaklawn Avenue in McCrorey Heights.**

Mr. Clarke stated that he received no questions when he presented this list to the Commission at its December meeting. Mr. Clarke stated that the first action item is to direct Staff to reach out to the owners of these properties regarding historic landmark designation.

Mr. Norman asked whether these properties should be placed on the Study List before contacting owners to gauge interest in designation. Mr. Clarke agreed that the first step should be to place the properties on the Study List.

MR. NORMAN PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. KOCHANEK THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE PLACE THE FOLLOWING PROPERTIES ON THE STUDY LIST OF PROSPECTIVE HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND INSTRUCT HLC STAFF TO CONTACT OWNERS TO GAUGE INTEREST IN HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION: 1100, 1218, 1404, 1415, 1500, 1930, AND 2023 BEATTIES FORD ROAD; 2128 AND 2140 SENIOR DRIVE; 2319 LASALLE STREET; AND 2515 BOOKER AVENUE. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

Mr. Clarke stated that he, Akadius Berry, William Hughes, and Edwin Wilson met to discuss how to move forward with the Beatties Ford Road survey. Mr. Clarke stated that one suggestion was to create a website to highlight this survey and other surveys that focus on the lower Beatties Ford Road corridor. Mr. Clarke stated that it was also discussed to have an event in the Spring to present these resources to the community. Mr. Clarke stated that existing surveys will need to be identified and noted that historian Tom Hanchett and the Charlotte Historic District Commission could be good resources.

Chris Dennis stated that he would like to assist in engaging the community.

Mr. Gray stated that Committee members are welcome to join the subcommittee that is working on this project.

4. Consideration of Placement on the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks

a. McDonalds Cafeteria, 2023 Beatties Ford Road, Charlotte

Mr. Clarke noted that this property was placed on the Study List earlier in the meeting. Mr. Gray stated that Staff would like for the Committee to vote on whether it would support Staff funding a designation report for this property.

Mr. Norman asked how much designation reports cost and Mr. Gray answered they cost \$3500. Mr. Norman asked if funds were available in this fiscal year's budget to produce a report and Mr. Thomson answered adequate funds were available.

Mr. Clarke noted the importance of the associative history of this property. Mr. Gray stated it is a prime example of mid-century modern architecture.

MR. NORMAN PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. HOWARD THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE SUPPORT HLC STAFF IN ITS EFFORTS TO PRODUCE A DESIGNATION REPORT FOR MCDONALDS CAFETERIA, 2023 BEATTIES FORD ROAD, CHARLOTTE, N.C.

Mr. Schulz asked Staff to clarify expectations for the motion. Mr. Thomson stated that funds for this designation report would come from the Commission's operational account, which is separate from the revolving fund.

After discussion, Mr. Norman withdrew his motion.

MR. BERRY PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. NORMAN THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE RECOMMEND THAT HLC STAFF FUND THE PRODUCTION OF A DESIGNATION REPORT FOR MCDONALDS CAFETERIA, 2023 BEATTIES FORD ROAD, CHARLOTTE, N.C. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

Mr. Gray reiterated that the revolving fund is separate from the operational account and that the expenditure of funds from the revolving fund must have the Commission's approval.

Mr. Schulz questioned whether, moving forward, Staff will determine which designation reports to fund. Mr. Thomson stated that it would vary based upon factors including priority projects or the level of endangerment.

Note: Mr. Berry and Mr. Norman left the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

b. Blythe House, 121 Gilead Road, Huntersville

Mr. Gray detailed the history of the property and stated it would be a good candidate for landmark designation. Mr. Gray stated the house is under contract to purchase to convert to office space. Mr. Gray stated that placing this property on the Study List would allow for the new owners to proceed with designation.

Jay Henson with HensonFoley spoke to the condition of the interior and noted that he has no plans for renovating the house.

MR. SCHULZ PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. HOWARD THAT THE BLYTHE HOUSE, 121 GILEAD ROAD, HUNTERSVILLE, N.C., BE PLACED ON THE STUDY LIST OF PROSPECTIVE HISTORIC LANDMARKS. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

5. Consideration of Designation Reports

a. Peeps House, 831 E. Worthington Avenue, Charlotte

Mr. Gray stated that Allen Brooks, architect, has championed this property for many years and ensured the property would qualify as a historic landmark. Mr. Gray reviewed the designation report and noted the special significance. Mr. Gray stated that the report presents a strong case for the significance of the house.

Mr. Brooks detailed the location of the house and explained that the renovation restored the house to its original nature with the front entry on the side of the house.

Steve Menaker, property owner, stated that he was supportive of interior designation.

MR. HOWARD PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. SCHULZ THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT PROCESS THE PEEPS HOUSE, 831 E. WORTHINGTON

AVENUE, CHARLOTTE, N.C., FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION AND THAT THIS DESIGNATION INCLUDE THE INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR OF THE HOUSE AND THE LAND ASSOCIATED WITH THE HOUSE. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

b. Ervin Building, 4037 E. Independence Boulevard, Charlotte

Mr. Clarke noted that this property was placed on the Study List earlier in the meeting.

Mr. Gray reviewed the designation report and stated that the report makes a strong case for architectural significance and associative history. Mr. Gray stated that this building might be the most prominent building that is associated with Charles Ervin.

Kendra Waters, author of the designation report, spoke to the importance of the property.

MS. KOCHANEK PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. HOWARD THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT PROCESS THE ERVIN BUILDING, 4037 E. INDEPENDENCE BOULEVARD, CHARLOTTE, N.C., FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION AND THAT THIS DESIGNATION INCLUDE THE INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDING AND THE LAND ASSOCIATED WITH THE BUILDING. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

6. Dendrochronology Project

Mr. Clarke stated that he has been in communication with dendrochronologist Maegen Rochner regarding scheduling a visit to date selected structures in Mecklenburg County whose dates are uncertain. Mr. Clarke stated that Dr. Rochner and a colleague are tentatively scheduled to visit during the first week of March. Mr. Clarke stated that Dr. Rochner is creating a database of samples from structures built of pine.

Mr. Thomson stated that Staff and Mr. Clarke have discussed creating a short list of sites that have questionable dates. Mr. Thomson stated that he would like to notify the broader preservation community including neighboring counties of this visit to potentially have Dr. Rochner return to study other areas.

7. Old Business

There was no old business.

8. New Business

There was no new business.

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.