

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
Projects Committee Minutes
Virtual Meeting
November 16, 2020
6:01 p.m. – 8:20 p.m.**

Present:

**Ms. Diane Althouse, HLC Treasurer
Ms. Laura Hoover, HLC Secretary
Mr. William Hughes, HLC Vice Chair
Mr. Jeffrey Parsons, HLC Chair
Mr. Edwin Wilson, Projects Committee Chair
Mr. Jack Thomson, HLC Executive Director
Ms. Elizabeth Stuart, HLC Administrative Assistant
Mr. Sandy Carnegie, HLC Attorney
Mr. Peter Wasmer, Project Manager, Mecklenburg County**

Absent:

Visitors:

**Lorraine Mulligan
Chris Ogunrinde
Brian Sharpe**

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

1. Chair's Report: Mr. Edwin Wilson

Mr. Wilson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Update on Projects

Mr. Carnegie advised the Committee on what it should discuss in closed session versus open session. Mr. Carnegie explained that conducting business in open session allows for public knowledge.

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

Mr. Thomson stated that he circulated a Letter of Intent from Chris Ogunrinde to the Committee members for consideration. Mr. Thomson reviewed the details of the letter and noted that it includes an affordable housing component. Mr. Thomson stated it is clear that the community needs affordable housing and that this is an opportunity to potentially contribute to this need through the rehabilitation of this property.

Mr. Ogunrinde stated that his team, Urban Trends Real Estate Inc., is working to alleviate affordable housing challenges. Mr. Ogunrinde reviewed the timeline for rezoning and permitting and stated that he would not hold on to the property if it became apparent that the project is not feasible.

The Committee discussed the Commission's long ownership of this property and the difficulties it has had in finding an appropriate buyer.

Ms. Althouse discussed the process for procuring federal low income housing and historic rehabilitation tax credits for the property and noted that the interested party should understand that financing may be difficult to obtain. Mr. Ogunrinde stated that he may be able to proceed without the tax credits. Mr. Ogunrinde noted that he was also interested in exploring demolishing some additions on the property.

Mr. Wilson noted that the surrounding community is committed to the preservation of the school and that Mr. Ogunrinde may want to reach out to this group for its input.

Mr. Thomson stated that he and Leslie Johnson, Assistant County Manager, have discussed working together on finding an appropriate use for this property. Mr. Thomson stated that while he is unsure of demolishing additions, it would create space for new development on the site.

Mr. Carnegie stated that the rezoning process in the Town of Huntersville typically moves more quickly than in Charlotte. Mr. Carnegie noted that the language regarding affordable housing should come out of the Letter of Intent due to not being in the purview of the Commission and that this language could instead be placed within the due diligence section of the contract.

The Committee discussed the need to have a list of minimum criteria that details the Commission's expectations. Mr. Carnegie stated that this document could be provided to Mr. Ogunrinde to review and to share with people in the neighboring community.

Mr. Wilson stated that he would send a request for feedback to the Committee members.

b. White Oak, 7729 Hood Road, Charlotte, N.C.

Mr. Thomson stated that Brian Sharpe, property owner, has requested an extension of finance terms. Mr. Thomson stated that Staff visited the site and observed material alterations and the construction of a detached garage that were not approved. Mr. Thomson stated that Mr. Sharpe has begun removing the detached garage and noted that Mr. Gray believes most of the remaining items can be resolved through Minor Works' Certificates of Appropriateness.

Mr. Thomson explained that the current financial extension expires on December 1 and the Commission does not meet until December 14. Mr. Thomson reminded the Committee that it approved the current extension which was then implemented by Sandy Carnegie. Mr. Thomson stated that after consulting with Mr. Parsons, it was determined that this second request should be reviewed by the full Commission before being granted. Mr. Carnegie

stated that a letter detailing the unapproved alterations as well as the expiration of the current extension should be sent to the property owner.

Brian Sharpe, property owner, explained to the Committee his reason for requesting an extension. Mr. Sharpe stated that a six-month extension should be adequate. Mr. Sharpe stated that he has agreed to remove the unapproved detached garage and is in the process of doing this. Mr. Sharpe explained that he has submitted applications for Certificates of Appropriateness for the installation of brick pavers and other work.

The Committee discussed the process of obtaining financing during the pandemic.

MS. ALTHOUSE PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. PARSONS THAT THE PROJECTS COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT EXTEND THE CURRENT FINANCIAL AGREEMENT FOR WHITE OAK, 7729 HOOD ROAD, CHARLOTTE, N.C., FOR SIX MONTHS WITH THE CONDITION THAT ALL LEGAL FEES ASSOCIATED WITH THE CREATION OF THE EXTENSION BE COVERED BY BRIAN SHARPE, THE OWNER OF WHITE OAK. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

Note: Ms. Althouse left the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

c. Wallace House, 9425 Robinson Church Road, Charlotte, N.C.

Mr. Thomson reviewed the estimates for work needed on the property and stated that he would like to stay under \$35,000 for repairs. Mr. Thomson stated that in order to stay within budget the Commission may need to forego remodeling the bathrooms.

Mr. Wilson stated that he will reach out to realtor Elizabeth Grillo to schedule a site visit. Ms. Hoover stated that she could assist with the interior design of the house. Mr. Wilson stated that he would schedule a site visit for Ms. Grillo and interested Committee members after Thanksgiving.

d. Cooper Log House, 5621 Mt. Olive Church Road, Charlotte, N.C.

Mr. Thomson stated that he is in the process of ordering an appraisal and home inspection for the property, which includes six acres of land. Mr. Thomson stated that a Phase 1 Environmental Assessment may be necessary due to a junk yard located on the property.

3. Update on the Cole Manufacturing Company Plant, 1318 Central Avenue, Charlotte, N.C.

Mr. Thomson stated that the new owners of the property will be proceeding with historic landmark designation on both buildings and that rehabilitation work on the buildings will occur prior to designation. Mr. Thomson stated that the owners will donate a preservation easement on one of the buildings. Mr. Thomson thanked City of Charlotte Councilmember Larken Egleston for his work on procuring this easement.

4. Old Business

Mr. Thomson stated that conversations with Johnson C. Smith University and Self-Help Credit Union regarding the stabilization of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church continue.

Mr. Parsons asked about the status of the Excelsior Club. Mr. Hughes stated that there is still a fence around the property and that the grass is being maintained approximately once a month. Mr. Thomson stated he would reach out to the property owner for an update.

The Committee discussed the status of the Barringer Hotel property.

Mr. Hughes asked about signage for the Shotgun Houses indicating their historical significance. The Committee discussed the need for a balance between the issues of historic preservation and affordable housing.

5. New Business

There was no new business.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.