

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
Design Review Committee Minutes
Virtual Meeting
February 24, 2021
8:02 a.m. – 9:03 a.m.**

Present:

**Mr. Richard Alsop
Mr. Robert Barfield
Mr. Matthew Benson
Mr. David Gieser
Ms. Laura Hoover, HLC Secretary
Mr. Victor Jones
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:

Ms. Kristi Harpst

Visitors:

**Hasheem Halim
Mark Miller**

Note: This meeting was held virtually through the Webex 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 and Mr. Gray noted that they did not have any additional announcements.

3. Wadsworth House, 400 S. Summit Avenue, Charlotte

Mr. Gray reminded the Committee that it reviewed a project for this property approximately a year ago and at that time the project was also reviewed by the Historic District Commission. Mr. Gray stated that while the Historic District Commission reviewed both architectural plans and landscape plans, the Historic Landmarks Commission only reviewed architectural plans. Mr. Gray stated that the Committee would be reviewing the landscape plan and noted that work on the project had already begun.

Mr. Gray showed images of the property and stated that since the property used to function as an event center, a large portion of the property was dedicated to parking.

Mark Miller, property owner, explained the plans and noted that he anticipates work being completed in May. Mr. Nelson stated that the Commission is fortunate that the Wadsworth House is being preserved and commended Mr. Miller for his efforts.

MR. GIESER PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. HOOVER THAT THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT APPROVE THE LANDSCAPE PLAN AS SHOWN FOR THE WADSWORTH HOUSE, 400 S. SUMMIT AVENUE, CHARLOTTE, N.C. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

4. Proposed Limited Design Review Guidelines for the HLC and DRC for Single-Family Home Additions and Infill Development

Mr. Gray stated that due to feedback from the Commission and Design Review Committee on recent challenging projects, Staff has worked with Mr. Nelson, Ms. Hoover, and Mr. Barfield on crafting guidelines for single-family home additions and infill development. Mr. Gray stated that since the Secretary of the Interior's Standards provide room for interpretation, Staff has had a difficult time providing consistent guidance to applicants. Mr. Gray stated that providing simple guidelines to applicants would keep the Commission from being surprised with presented projects and would also provide a defense for the Commission for any hard decisions it has to make.

Mr. Jones stated his concern that historic properties may be at risk as owners could decide to demolish structures rather than abide by additional guidelines.

Mr. Pursley noted that it would be useful to provide graphics that illustrate appropriate projects versus inappropriate projects. Mr. Pursley stated that providing visual examples would help applicants present better work since they may not know what is expected otherwise. Mr. Barfield echoed Mr. Pursley's sentiments.

Mr. Alsop questioned if applicants could be encouraged or required to have an initial consultation with Staff or the Design Review Committee before they submit a project. Ms. Hoover stated that the intent of developing these guidelines was to condense tasks and not overwhelm Staff with additional meetings. Mr. Gray noted that the current application process does not include a consultation requirement, but that this could be considered.

Mr. Gray stated that, although not required, consultants for large projects often meet with Staff regardless to ensure their projects are developing in an appropriate manner. Mr. Gray reminded the Committee that the Commission would have to approve any guidance provided to applicants.

Mr. Thomson stated that it is a tremendous effort by Staff to review projects. Mr. Thomson noted that no Certificates of Appropriateness have been denied in the past 12 months. Mr.

Thomson stated that having some type of guidelines would make the review process more efficient and would also help mitigate applicant expectations.

Mr. Gray asked members of the Committee to email him with further comments.

5. Old Business

Mr. Pursley asked about the status of the VanLandingham Estate. Mr. Gray stated the application to consider a new proposal for infill development was sent to the applicant in December. Mr. Nelson stated he hoped it would be brought to the Committee for review soon.

6. New Business

There was no new business.

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 a.m.