

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
Design Review Committee Minutes
Virtual Meeting
May 26, 2021
8:05 a.m. – 9:39 a.m.**

Present:

**Mr. Richard Alsop
Mr. Robert Barfield
Mr. Matthew Benson
Mr. David Gieser
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:

**Ms. Kristi Harpst
Mr. Victor Jones**

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. Mr. Nelson announced that this would be the last meeting of the Design Review Committee due to the Historic Landmarks Commission becoming a quasi-judicial body starting in July.

2. Staff Report: Jack Thomson and Stewart Gray

Mr. Thomson stated that he had no additional items to report.

Mr. Gray echoed Mr. Nelson's sentiments and thanked the members for their years of service on the Committee. Mr. Gray stated that starting July 1, the Commission will begin reviewing applications for Certificates of Appropriateness in the quasi-judicial format.

3. McNinch House, 2401 Sharon Lane, Charlotte

Mr. Gray explained that at the Commission's meeting in April, the Commission voted to approve the motion presented by the Design Review Committee which gave approval to the proposed infill development of the land associated with the McNinch House with the stipulation that the plans for lots 3 and 4 facing Sharon Lane would be revised to be

reviewed at a later date. Mr. Gray stated that revised plans for lots 3 and 4 have been submitted but that the landscape plan will be submitted and reviewed by the Commission at a future meeting.

Mr. Gray reviewed the revised elevations for lots 3 and 4. Ben Collins, developer, noted the changes to open the front porch to make it more inviting to Sharon Lane and to add double doors with a stoop cover to increase accessibility to the street.

Mr. Benson stated that the project is moving in the right direction by opening the porch to the side, but otherwise he found the changes minimal in having the houses address Sharon Lane. Mr. Benson noted that other houses along Sharon Lane face the street and that this will be a new orientation. Mr. Gray asked whether extending the porch across the elevation would create the impact Mr. Benson expected. Mr. Benson stated that an extension of the porch would be helpful.

Mr. Gray reminded the Committee that it does not have to act at this meeting. Mr. Gray stated that the Committee can instruct the applicant to work with Staff and the Design Review Chairperson to create plans that are more compatible, and which could be approved by the Chairperson.

Mr. Pursley stated that the entrance of the side porch is more welcoming but that the intent of the French doors is not clear. Mr. Pursley agreed with Mr. Benson that the house could present more appropriately to the street. Mr. Pursley stated that it is difficult to anticipate the view from the street without a landscape plan.

Mr. Collins stated that his architect can implement the architectural decisions that best represent what the Committee finds appropriate.

Mr. Gray stated that there seems to be a consensus regarding concerns with how the houses address Sharon Lane. Mr. Gray asked the Committee if the entrance should present as the front of the house on Sharon Lane or whether it should be more compatible with Sharon Lane.

Mr. Barfield stated that the houses should be more compatible with Sharon Lane while maintaining the front entrances facing the cul-de-sac.

Mr. Collins stated that the developers are considering using the same elevation as it is approved for lots 3 and 4 to create a side view that is more welcoming to the McNinch House for lots 1 and 6.

MR. NELSON PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. GIESER THAT THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT LOTS THREE AND FOUR FACING SHARON LANE AND LOTS ONE AND SIX FACING THE MCNINCH HOUSE, 2401 SHARON LANE, CHARLOTTE, N.C., BE REVISED TO ADDRESS THE STREET EDGE MORE SENSITIVELY AND THAT THE SUBMITTAL OF THE LANDSCAPE PLAN BE

REVIEWED BY STAFF AND THE DESIGN REVIEW CHAIRPERSON. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

4. VanLandingham Estate, 2010 The Plaza, Charlotte

Mr. Gray explained the background of this project and noted that the development of the property has been a long process. Mr. Gray stated that a major change with the current proposed development plan is the exclusion of a swimming pool and pool house. Mr. Gray stated that plans for an event center are on hold with no indication that construction will proceed. Mr. Gray reminded the Committee that in 2015 the Commission provided conceptual approval for two infill buildings on the historic property. Mr. Gray stated that townhomes will be constructed on the perimeter of the property and that the demolition of the carriage house is expected. Mr. Gray stated that the VanLandingham Estate was on a separate parcel than the townhomes and that the townhomes have been reviewed and approved by the Historic District Commission.

Mr. Pursley stated that this design is a good solution for preserving the historic house and space around it by pushing the density of the townhomes to the edge of the property. Mr. Pursley asked about the integration of the carriage house into the new development.

Tim Finein, architect for the project, clarified the orientation of the townhomes. Mr. Finein stated that he did consider keeping the carriage house but that there would be no fire access for the property due to the size of the carriage house.

Mr. Nelson asked about the driveway material and Mr. Finein stated he would get this information for the Committee.

Mr. Pursley asked how the rear townhomes will be screened from the historic estate. Mr. Finein stated that this section has existing trees and shrubs and that the Historic District Commission requested fencing not be used.

MR. NELSON PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. PURSLEY THAT THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT APPROVE DEVELOPMENT PLANS AS PRESENTED FOR THE VANLANDINGHAM ESTATE, 2010 THE PLAZA, CHARLOTTE, N.C., WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS: THAT THE LANDSCAPE PLAN AND PLANTING OF NATIVE SPECIES BE BLENDED INTO THE EXISTING FABRIC OF THE PROPERTY AND SUBMITTED TO STAFF FOR APPROVAL, AND THAT WALKS AND DRIVEWAYS BE EITHER LOOSE PEA GRAVEL TO MATCH EXISTING DRIVES OR EXPOSED AGGREGATE GRAVEL THAT MATCHES IN COLOR OR TEXTURE. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

Mr. Nelson stated his agreement with Mr. Pursley's sentiments that this is a thoughtful project and is sensitive to street fronts and the neighborhood.

5. Old Business

There was no old business.

6. New Business

Mr. Nelson stated that it has been a privilege to serve as Chairperson of the Design Review Committee. Mr. Nelson thanked Staff and the members of the Committee for their contributions. Mr. Pursley emphasized Mr. Gray's role and stated Mr. Gray has been instrumental in ensuring the success of the Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 9:39 a.m.