

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

**May 10, 2021
Virtual Meeting
6:01 p.m. – 8:23 p.m.**

Draft Minutes

Present:

**Ms. Diane Althouse/County/HLC Treasurer
Mr. Robert Barfield/County
Mr. Akadius Berry/County
Mr. Brian Clarke/County/Survey Committee Chair
Ms. Leila Farsiani/City
Ms. Laura Hoover/County/HLC Secretary
Mr. William Hughes/City/HLC Vice Chair
Ms. Elizabeth Luke/County
Mr. Garrett Nelson/Mayor/Design Review Committee Chair
Mr. Jeffrey Parsons/Mayor/HLC Chair
Mr. Edwin Wilson/City/Projects Committee Chair
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**

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

1. Consideration of Minutes

MS. LUKE PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. NELSON THAT THE MINUTES FOR THE APRIL 12, 2021, MEETING OF THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION BE APPROVED. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

MR. CLARKE PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. BARFIELD THAT THE CLOSED SESSION MINUTES FOR THE APRIL 12, 2021, MEETING OF THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION BE APPROVED. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

2. Chair's Report: Jeffrey Parsons

Mr. Parsons stated that he recently traveled to Florida and noted the popularity of heritage tourism and travel to historic sites during his visit to a historic town. Mr. Parsons encouraged those that are interested in traveling to not wait to make travel plans.

Mr. Parsons explained that moving forward the Commission meetings would include a public comment period to provide opportunity for members of the public to speak. Mr.

Parsons stated that each person would have up to three minutes to make comments. Mr. Parsons noted that owners of historic properties and applicants for Certificates of Appropriateness would still be given time to speak during the discussion of their applicable properties.

3. Public Comment Period

Mr. Parsons asked if any visitors would like to speak. No comments were made.

4. Treasurer's Report: Jack Thomson on behalf of Treasurer

Mr. Thomson reviewed the monthly financial report prepared by the Asset and Facility Management Department of Mecklenburg County. Mr. Thomson stated that all anticipated revenue has been received and that the final payment on the Davis House is forthcoming. Mr. Thomson stated that he will coordinate with Johnson C. Smith University to plan a burning of the note. Mr. Thomson stated that additional funds have been spent at Torrence Lytle School on securing exterior windows and at the Wallace House on removing a fallen tree.

5. Design Review Committee Report: Garrett Nelson

a. Proposed Limited Design Review Recommendations for the HLC for Single-Family Home Additions and Infill Development

Mr. Nelson stated that the Design Review Committee did not meet in April. Mr. Nelson reminded the Commission that the design review recommendations for single-family home additions and infill development were presented at the Commission's April meeting. Mr. Gray stated that the Commission has had the opportunity to review the recommendations and that the intent is for the Commission to adopt the guidelines as limited guidance.

Mr. Gray reviewed the recommendations and noted that they would provide a starting point for discussions with applicants regarding home additions and infill development. Mr. Gray stated that unique situations may arise with many properties, in which case the Commission would have the ability to make allowances. Mr. Gray stated that although Staff already works with applicants to ensure appropriate plans, having recommendations would put Staff in a better position for these discussions.

Mr. Parsons commended Staff and the Design Review Committee for developing and refining these guidelines. Mr. Parsons stated that the idea is to stimulate conversations with the applicant. Mr. Nelson stated that the earlier that conversations with the applicant can be generated, the earlier that concerns can be identified before the applicant begins designing. Mr. Nelson stated that the intent was to keep the guidelines simple and straightforward and to not exclude design aspects from the applicant.

Mr. Clarke recommended that the Commission add a disclaimer to the guidelines that state approval of any project is not guaranteed. Mr. Clarke stated that fundamentals should be explained before the document is presented to the public. Ms. Althouse agreed with Mr.

Clarke's comments and noted that the inclusion of a mission statement detailing the Commission's purview would also be helpful.

Mr. Nelson stated that he would distribute these comments to the full Commission through email as the document continues to be refined.

6. Survey Committee Report: Brian Clarke

a. Stafford Properties

Mr. Gray showed a map of the property and described the location on the border of Mecklenburg and Cabarrus Counties. Mr. Gray reviewed the statement of significance and noted that the importance of the slave quarters structure cannot be overemphasized. Mr. Gray stated that Staff believes this structure is the only identified extant slave quarters structure in Mecklenburg County.

Mr. Gray discussed the well-preserved nature of the main house and showed interior and exterior photographs of the house. Mr. Gray stated that the designation report presents a strong argument for the significance of the house, even with the noted exterior alterations. Mr. Clarke stated that the original farmhouse remains underneath the brick exterior. Mr. Gray stated that it would be feasible for the house to be restored to its original exterior.

Mr. Gray stated that Heather Fearnbach produced the designation report and did a thorough job documenting the historical significance of the property. Mr. Gray stated that the report is comprehensive and is an important piece of academic research that helps bolster the case for the designation of the property.

THE SURVEY COMMITTEE PRESENTED A SECONDED MOTION TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT PROCESS THE STAFFORD PROPERTY FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION, INCLUDING THE INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR OF THE HOUSE, THE INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR OF THE LOG SLAVE QUARTER-TENANT HOUSE AND THE OUTBUILDINGS, AND THE ASSOCIATED SITE AS SHOWN ON THE BOUNDARY MAP IN THE DESIGNATION REPORT.

Mr. Gray reviewed the seconded motion and noted that, due to technical difficulties at the meeting, the Committee was not able to receive adequate feedback from the property owner. Mr. Gray stated that after the meeting, the owner expressed reservations regarding the designation of several of the outbuildings and has requested that the Commission not vote on the motion.

Mr. Clarke stated that the other buildings are not as historically significant as the main house and the slave quarters. Mr. Clarke withdrew the seconded motion.

MR. CLARKE PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. WILSON THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION PROCESS THE STAFFORD PROPERTY FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION, INCLUDING THE INTERIOR AND

EXTERIOR OF THE MAIN HOUSE, THE INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR OF THE LOG SLAVE QUARTER-TENANT HOUSE AND THE APPROXIMATELY 27.780 ACRES OF LAND ASSOCIATED WITH TAX PARCEL 10521107. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

b. Kimberlee Apartments

Mr. Clarke stated that the Kimberlee Apartment Building is a midcentury modern apartment building adjacent to Park Road Shopping Center.

Mr. Warlick stated that the Kimberlee Apartments remain one of Charlotte's most distinctive and intact modern apartment buildings. Mr. Warlick stated that the property has retained a high degree of integrity. Mr. Warlick attributed the continued success of the property largely to the enthusiasm of the property owners.

The following residents of the Kimberlee Apartments affirmed their support for its designation as a historic landmark: Holli Adams, Hunt Allen, Tom Bott, Dawn Huntley, Jamie Lambert, Kevin McCue, Mark Pierman, and Jim Wooden.

Ms. Althouse asked if the interior designation would include living areas. Dawn Huntley stated that to her knowledge the interior designation would include common spaces but not interiors of individual units.

THE SURVEY COMMITTEE PRESENTED A SECONDED MOTION TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT PROCESS THE KIMBERLEE APARTMENTS FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION, INCLUDING THE INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDINGS AS WELL AS THE ASSOCIATED AUXILIARY STRUCTURES, THE LAND, AND THE LANDSCAPE AND HARDSCAPE ELEMENTS ON THE APPROXIMATELY 4.61-ACRE PARCEL AS SHOWN ON THE BOUNDARY MAP IN THE DESIGNATION REPORT.

After further discussion regarding the interior designation, the Commission presented a substitute motion.

MS. HOOVER PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. ALTHOUSE THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION PROCESS THE KIMBERLEE APARTMENTS FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE INTERIOR OF THE COMMON AREAS BE INCLUDED BUT THAT THE INTERIOR OF THE INDIVIDUAL UNITS BE EXCLUDED, AND THAT THE DESIGNATION INCLUDE THE EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDINGS AS WELL AS THE ASSOCIATED AUXILIARY STRUCTURES, THE LAND, AND THE LANDSCAPE AND HARDSCAPE ELEMENTS ON THE APPROXIMATELY 4.61-ACRE PARCEL AS SHOWN ON THE BOUNDARY MAP IN THE DESIGNATION REPORT. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

Mr. Gray stated it may be prudent to approach the owners of Park Road Shopping Center for the potential inclusion of the pedestrian bridge.

c. Camp North End, 1824 Statesville Avenue, Charlotte

Mr. Clarke stated that the Survey Committee meeting in April was held at Camp North End to provide an opportunity for members to understand the scale of the property. Mr. Clarke stated that the Committee came to a consensus that the property owners should proceed with preparing a designation report on the buildings.

7. Projects Committee Report: Edwin Wilson

a. White Oak, 7729 Hood Road, Charlotte

Mr. Wilson stated that Mr. Thomson has been working with Mecklenburg County's finance department to assist Brian Sharpe, property owner, in his effort to refinance the property.

b. Wallace House, 9425 Robinson Church, Charlotte

Mr. Wilson stated that the bathrooms and kitchen would not be updated due to expected funds being unavailable. Mr. Wilson stated that communications with a listing broker are expected to begin soon, which will help the Commission reevaluate the property's sales price and marketing efforts. Mr. Thomson stated that he is in the process of communicating with the broker to set expectations without the bathroom and kitchen improvements. Mr. Thomson stated that he and Peter Wasmer, Mecklenburg County Project Manager, recently visited the site and Mr. Wasmer advised to focus on updating the essentials and placing the property on the market soon.

c. Cooper Log House, 5621 Mt. Olive Church Road, Charlotte

Mr. Wilson stated that due diligence on the property has started. Mr. Wilson stated that uncovered machine parts are grouped together by kind throughout the property. Mr. Wilson stated that the Commission will likely face potential environmental hazards with these items. Mr. Clarke stated that this property is close to the River District development and developers will be interested in the land if it goes up for sale.

d. 1544 Merriman Avenue, Wilmore Historic District

Mr. Wilson stated that the Charlotte Historic District Commission voted unanimously to issue a 365-day delay of demolition for this property. Mr. Wilson stated that the listing agent has confirmed that a prospective buyer intends to proceed with renovating the house. Mr. Thomson reminded the Commission that although this property is not a local designated landmark that the Commission can pursue acquisition due to its location in a historic district.

Mr. Thomson stated that the Projects Committee had concerns regarding the Commission's limitations for buying properties only at the appraised price. Mr. Wilson stated that the Commission would not be a top contender for buying properties in the current market. Mr. Parsons stated that the Projects Committee should think about how to leverage nonprofits that can move more quickly than the Commission.

8. Nominating Committee Report: Laura Hoover

Mr. Thomson stated that the Nominating Committee has not been able to meet but will schedule a meeting soon. Mr. Thomson reminded the Commission that Laura Hoover, Akadius Berry, and Garrett Nelson are members of this Committee. Mr. Berry stated that he may not be available to serve on the Committee due to a personal issue. Mr. Parsons stated that the Commission will vote on officers at its June meeting.

9. Staff Report: Jack Thomson and Stewart Gray

a. CLG Training Update

Mr. Gray reminded the Commission that two Commissioners must attend at least three training sessions by September for the Commission to retain its status as a Certified Local Government. Mr. Parsons encouraged the Commissioners to explore the presented list of virtual training sessions.

10. Old Business

Mr. Thomson stated that Darius Anderson would be presenting a virtual overview of the Excelsior Club project on May 14 and encouraged the Commissioners to attend.

Mr. Clarke stated that a dendrochronologist is planning to visit in June to sample various properties around Mecklenburg County.

Mr. Clarke stated that on May 27, he would be speaking about the process of renovating his historic house at an event for the Charlotte Museum of History.

11. New Business

Mr. Thomson stated that as of July 1, the Commission will officially become a quasi-judicial body. Mr. Thomson stated that Staff would ensure all Commissioners are trained in advance of this date.

MS. LUKE PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. BARFIELD THAT THE MEETING OF THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION ADJOURN. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.