

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
Survey Committee Minutes
Virtual Meeting
June 23, 2021
6:09 p.m. – 7:54 p.m.**

Present:

**Mr. Brian Clarke, Survey Committee Chair
Ms. Leila Farsiani
Ms. Cindy Kochanek
Mr. Len Norman
Mr. Michael Rogers
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:

**Mr. Akadius Berry
Mr. John Howard
Ms. Elizabeth Luke**

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

1. Chair's Report: Brian Clarke

Mr. Clarke stated that the best action for the following properties is to place them on the Commission's Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks.

a. Johnston Farm, 8520 Dixie River Road, Charlotte

Mr. Clarke stated that this property is located in the heart of the planned River District. Mr. Clarke detailed the history of the community and noted that for generations the area was a predominantly African American community. Mr. Clarke stated that the stock of rural housing throughout the county is rapidly disappearing and explained that he has been communicating with the developers of the River District to encourage them to engage in preservation where possible.

b. WBT Transmission Facility, 9201 Nations Ford Road, Charlotte

Mr. Clarke stated that this facility was built in the 1920s and is facing developmental pressure.

MR. NORMAN PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. KOCHANЕК THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE PLACE THE FOLLOWING PROPERTIES ON THE

STUDY LIST OF PROSPECTIVE HISTORIC LANDMARKS: JOHNSTON FARM, 8520 DIXIE RIVER ROAD, CHARLOTTE, AND WBT TRANSMISSION FACILITY, 9201 NATIONS FORD ROAD, CHARLOTTE. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

2. Parkwood Avenue A.R.P. Church, 1017 Parkwood Avenue, Charlotte

Mr. Gray reminded the Committee that it discussed the rehabilitation of the church at a previous meeting. Mr. Gray stated that feedback to the owner noted that the Commission likely would not have approved some of the changes if the building had been a designated landmark. Mr. Gray stated that Staff does recognize that the building was adaptively reused rather than demolished. Mr. Gray stated that he recommended to the property owners that they hire a consultant to revise the designation report to reflect the changes. Mr. Gray noted that Susan Mayer was hired to revise the report and created a balanced report that illustrates the current situation. Mr. Gray asked the Committee how it would like to proceed on the issue of designating this property.

Mr. Norman asked Mr. Gray which items from the rehabilitation were of concern to him. Mr. Gray stated that the changes made to the front stairs likely would have been approved by the Commission due to the proximity of the street. Mr. Gray stated that the front windows that were removed and bricked up would likely have not been approved.

Ms. Mayer stated that, according to the owners, the City of Charlotte mandated the removal of the front stairs due to the widening of the street. Ms. Mayer explained the reasons for removing the front windows and noted that the front door was replaced with a more modern door.

Mr. Clarke stated that his biggest issue is the removal of the front two windows. Mr. Clarke stated he would ask the owners if they would be willing to remediate this issue in some manner, including putting the windows back in a non-functional format.

Mr. Gray reviewed the side elevation and noted the hanging placement of the air conditioning units. Mr. Gray stated hiding these units would be a challenge.

Mr. Norman asked for clarification regarding what is being proposed for designation. Mr. Gray stated that Staff would recommend that designation be limited to the historic building.

The owner of the building thanked the Committee for its consideration. The owner explained that some windows needed to be bricked in to make the building functional as residences.

Mr. Clarke stated that the Committee understands the need to no longer have the front windows as functioning windows. Mr. Clarke stated that the Committee would prefer for the view of the façade from the street to remain as it was originally. Mr. Clarke asked the owner if it would be possible to return the stain glass sashes to those front openings. The

owner stated that the stain glass has been placed inside the building and invited the Committee to visit the property and view the windows.

Mr. Rogers stated his appreciation to the owner for preserving the building. Mr. Rogers agreed that the removal of the two front windows is a concern and noted that if the owner could come to an agreement with the architect to return windows to that location, it would be easier to proceed with designation.

Mr. Clarke noted the effort and expense it took to adaptively reuse this building rather than demolishing it. Mr. Clarke emphasized that recommending the designation of the building to the full Commission would be a good decision.

The Committee discussed the design of the coverings for the air conditioning units. Mr. Gray stated that the Committee could request for a plan showing the coverings or wait until they are installed for a final decision. Mr. Norman stated it would be good to have clarity on the coverings.

MR. ROGERS PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. NORMAN THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT PROCESS THE EXTERIOR OF THE PARKWOOD AVENUE A.R.P. CHURCH BUILDING, 1017 PARKWOOD AVENUE, CHARLOTTE, AS A HISTORIC LANDMARK WITH THE CONDITION THAT THE OWNER WORK WITH THE COMMISSION ON A SOLUTION TO RETURN THE STAIN GLASS PANELS TO THE BRICKED UP WINDOWS ON THE FRONT FAÇADE OF THE CHURCH BUILDING. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

Mr. Gray stated that the Commission may not consider this motion until its August meeting to provide the owner an opportunity to update plans.

3. Updates on Davidson Historic Properties

Mr. Gray stated that in 2019 the Commission and the Town of Davidson partnered on the production of the Johnson-Sherrill House and the Helper-Walley House designation reports. Mr. Gray stated that during discussions in late 2020, it was suggested that the partnership continue to produce four additional designation reports, the funding of which was approved administratively by Mr. Thomson. Mr. Gray stated that after additional consultation, it was determined that the designation reports should be devoted solely to African American resources. Mr. Gray stated that Staff anticipates having a more focused list at the next meeting.

Mr. Gray reviewed the following potential properties:

a. Conner House, 122 Mock Road

Mr. Gray noted that compared to other properties in the neighborhood, this property has a high degree of integrity. Mr. Gray stated that the house has undergone many architectural changes but the metal roof and layout of the house have not significantly changed.

b. Houston House, 335 Catawba Avenue

Mr. Gray stated that the Houston family is a significant family in Davidson. Mr. Gray explained that Logan Houston, a farmer, built the house and that the substantial size indicates the success of the family. Mr. Gray stated that Logan Houston was also a strong supporter of the 1930s African American schoolhouse located in the neighborhood.

Mr. Gray stated that the property is located on four acres of land close to the Cornelius foundry. Mr. Gray noted that the house is currently vacant and that the town has approached Staff to assist with a preservation solution. Mr. Thomson stated that a development scenario is likely due to the size of the parcel.

c. Ada Jenkins House, 111 Sloan Street

Mr. Gray stated that Ada Jenkins was a leader in the education community. Mr. Gray stated that the house is still in its original form.

d. Mills House, 136 Mock Circle

Mr. Gray stated that this house, like the Conner House, is one of the best examples of early 20th century architecture in the neighborhood. Mr. Gray stated that efforts to contact the owner have so far not been successful.

e. Mayhew House, 235 Eden Street

Mr. Gray stated that this property was recently added to the list and has been researched by Mr. Warlick. Mr. Gray stated that through both Mr. Warlick's research and discussions with longtime members of the community, it became clear that Eden Street consisted of African American housing located between two African American communities.

f. Davidson Presbyterian Church, 214 Depot Street

Mr. Gray stated that the exterior of the Davidson Presbyterian Church was covered in the early 20th century with cement blocks but remains architecturally interesting. Mr. Gray stated Staff recently contacted the minister and that in a meeting of church members, it was determined that they would be interested in learning more about designating the property as a historic landmark. Mr. Gray explained that previous plans to demolish the sanctuary have been delayed for various reasons.

g. Sparrow's Nest, Davidson College Campus

Mr. Gray stated that the traditional story of this building is that it was a home for enslaved people when this part of the campus was a farm owned by the Sparrows, but that Staff is not certain of the validity of this story and would need to conduct further research. Mr. Gray stated that the school has embraced this idea and is interested in making the research part of its curriculum.

4. Pineville Survey Implementation

Mr. Gray stated that Ms. Farsiani has taken the lead on the Pineville survey. Mr. Gray reminded the Committee that the survey was presented at the last meeting with an implementation strategy agreed upon. Mr. Gray stated that Staff has identified 12 houses and will contact the property owners to determine their interest in designation. Mr. Gray noted that Staff would consider it a success if a handful of owners were interested in designating their properties. Mr. Gray stated that the next step might be to invite the property owners to a meeting to gauge interest.

Mr. Gray briefly reviewed the following properties and recommended Staff contact the owners to discuss the designation process: 422, 429, 808, 811, 813, 901, 907, and 911 Cone Avenue; 415 and 505 Fisher Street; 903 Hill Street; and 422 James Street.

5. Beatties Ford Road Corridor Study

Mr. Clarke reminded the Committee that Brandon Lunsford produced the Beatties Ford Road Corridor Study. Mr. Clarke stated that he, Akadius Berry, William Hughes, and Edwin Wilson have discussed how to use the research and determined that a reintroduction launch of the Commission to west Charlotte would be useful.

Mr. Clarke stated that Mr. Warlick gathered resources from other nearby neighborhoods that were not included as part of the original survey. Mr. Clarke noted that this addendum is currently separate from the original survey and expressed his preference that the sections be combined. Mr. Gray stated that Staff will review this feedback.

6. Update on Designations

Mr. Gray stated that the following properties will be considered in a public hearing at Charlotte City Council's meeting on June 28: William H. Peeps House, 831 E. Worthington Avenue, Charlotte; Edgewood Plantation, 11132 Eastfield Road, Charlotte; Ervin Building, 4037 E. Independence Boulevard, Charlotte; Larkwood-Chadborn Hosiery Mill Plant, 451 Jordan Place, Charlotte; and Victor Shaw House, 2400 Mecklenburg Avenue, Charlotte.

Mr. Gray stated that Staff plans to bring the following properties to Charlotte City Council in August: Kimberlee Apartments, 1300 Reece Road, Charlotte; Stafford Properties, Charlotte; and 2nd Ward YMCA, 416 East 3rd Street, Charlotte.

7. Staff Report: Jack Thomson and Stewart Gray

a. Wadsworth House Meeting Site

Mr. Gray stated that Mark Miller, former Commissioner and current owner of the Wadsworth House, has offered to host a meeting at the property after its restoration is complete. Mr. Gray stated the Committee may be able to meet in-person this fall.

Mr. Gray stated that the designation of the Potts House in Huntersville is moving forward and the designation report may be ready for review at the next Committee meeting.

Mr. Thomson reminded the Committee that the dendrochronologist is currently visiting local sites and has been to the Stafford House, the Davidson Log Cabin, the Oehler House, the Sloan-Porter House, and Ingleside. Mr. Thomson stated that the group will also visit the Sandifer House.

8. Old Business

There was no old business.

9. New Business

Mr. Clarke stated that this is Mr. Norman's last meeting on the Survey Committee. The members expressed their gratitude to Mr. Norman for his many years of service on the Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.