

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
June 13, 2022
Virtual Meeting
6:01 p.m. – 8:56 p.m.**

Minutes

Present

Victoria Archibald/County
Robert Barfield/County/HLC Secretary
Akadius Berry/County
Nadine Ford/City
William Hughes/City/HLC Chair
Garrett Nelson/Mayor
Jeffrey Parsons/Mayor/Projects Committee Chair
Edwin Wilson/City/HLC Treasurer
Jack Thomson, HLC Executive Director
Stewart Gray, HLC Historic Resources Program Manager
Elizabeth Stuart, HLC Senior Administrative Assistant
Tommy Warlick, HLC Consulting Preservation Planner

Absent

Lesley Carroll/County
Brian Clarke/County/HLC Vice Chair/Survey Committee Chair
Joshua Shope/City

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

1. Consideration of Minutes

COMMISSIONER BERRY PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FORD THAT THE MINUTES FOR THE APRIL 11, 2022, MEETING OF THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION BE APPROVED. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

2. Chair's Report: William Hughes

Chair Hughes noted that Commissioners Parsons and Nelson's terms conclude soon and thanked them for their dedication to historic preservation.

3. Public Comment Period (Up to 3 Minutes Per Person)

Chair Hughes explained that this period is an opportunity for the public to speak on items within the Commission's jurisdiction that are not on the agenda. There were no comments from the members of the public.

4. Consent Agenda

a. Sloan-Porter House, 10124 Walkers Ferry Road, Charlotte

COMMISSIONER PARSONS PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BERRY THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED FOR THE SLOAN-PORTER HOUSE, 10124 WALKERS FERRY ROAD, CHARLOTTE, N.C. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

5. Financial Report: Jack Thomson

Executive Director Thomson stated that all expected income from financed properties has been received.

6. Closed Session to Discuss a Legal Matter

Chair Hughes recommended that the Commission enter closed session to discuss a legal matter.

COMMISSIONER NELSON PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARFIELD THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION CONVENE IN CLOSED SESSION. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

COMMISSIONER PARSONS PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARFIELD THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

7. Quasi-Judicial Hearings

a. Nebel Knitting Mill Annex, 127 W. Worthington Avenue, Charlotte

HEARING ON CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Owner/Applicant: Little Diversified Architectural Consulting
Subject Property: Nebel Knitting Mill Annex
Address: 127 W. Worthington Avenue, Charlotte
PIN: 12101301

The Commissioners affirmed that they do not have any known conflicts of interest which would prevent their participation in this hearing, and that they have not engaged in any ex parte communication which would prevent their participation in this hearing.

The following persons were sworn in to give testimony at the hearing: Stewart Gray, Jack Thomson, Welch Liles, Nicholas Ault, Alex Valle, Fielding Huseeth, and Dan Morrill.

Staff presented the findings of fact.

Staff Report and Comments
Nebel Knitting Mill Annex
Application for COA HLC205

Exhibits presented to and considered by the Commission:

Exhibit A – Project description from the application:

The applicant-owner proposes to perform a demolition of the structures on the property. The applicant-owner is open potentially to preserving one or two of the exterior walls along West Worthington Avenue and Hawkins Street.

Exhibit B – Map

Exhibit C - Images

Based upon the information presented in the application, staff offers the following suggested findings of fact:

- A. The proposed demolition is incongruous to the STANDARDS.
- B. There is the potential to preserve portions of the building.
- C. On March 14, 2022, the HLC considered a COA application for the erection of a contemporary office tower rising over the existing two-story Nebel Annex, with 9 stories total (2 existing; 1 roof terrace; 6 office floors).
- D. On March 14, 2022, Commissioner Clarke presented a motion that the Historic Landmarks Commission find that the COA application as presented for the Nebel Knitting Mill Annex is incongruous with the second sentence of Standard #9 of the HLC Standards but that the applicant is encouraged to resubmit revised plans for consideration. The motion was approved.
- E. On April 19, 2022, the applicant met with Staff and Commissioners Barfield and Shope to discuss the application for COA HLC195 which involved the addition of the equivalent of 7 stories to the existing building.
- F. On April 20, 2022, the owner filed the application for the demolition of the building.
- G. The HLC cannot deny a COA for demolition for the Nebel Knitting Mill Annex, but it can delay the effective date of the COA for 365 days.
- H. The HLC must act on a COA application within 180 days of its filing. (GS 160D-9-47-d)
- I. September 12th is 145 days from when the COA application was filed, and October 10th is 173 days from when the COA application was filed.
- J. If the HLC fails to issue a COA by October 10th, 2022, for the demolition for the Nebel Knitting Mill Annex, the owners will be able to proceed without a COA.
- K. However unlikely, the HLC may not have a quorum at their October 10th, 2022, regular meeting.
- L. If plans for an addition are submitted, and a COA for an addition is approved by the HLC while there is a delayed or active COA for its demolition, the COA for demolition becomes moot.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the HLC defer a decision until no later than September 12, 2022, on issuing the COA so that the HLC may consider any information presented at this meeting, and allow Staff to work with the applicant to determine the feasibility of preserving portions of the exterior of the building.

Commissioners' Comments

There were no comments.

The Applicants' Comments

Welch Liles stated that he, Nicholas Ault, Alex Valle, and Fielding Huseth comprise the project team. Liles stated that after the original presentation in March that included the proposed addition it became apparent that it is economically impossible to both save the historic building and construct the addition. Liles stated that the plan is to still build the addition that was proposed in March with the intent of preserving parts of the historic building, potentially including the façade that faces Worthington Avenue and other walls as able. Liles asked the Commission to consider expediting the demolition timeline.

Nicholas Ault stated that the team did not intend to demolish the historic building but had to adjust expectations based on the financial impact.

Commissioner Barfield asked staff if the Commission decided not to shorten the COA timeframe at tonight's meeting but then was presented precise preservation plans at a future meeting whether the date could be amended at that time. Historic Resources Program Manager Gray stated that is correct.

Dr. Morrill stated that the greatest commitment to preservation that the applicant could make is to commit to holding serious discussions regarding placing a permanent preservation easement on the original Nebel Knitting Mill building.

Liles stated that the team does not intend to demolish the Nebel Knitting Mill building. Liles stated that he has had preliminary conversations with Commission staff and outside counsel to understand the implications of an easement and is open to further discussions but cannot currently commit to placing an easement on the property.

Chair Hughes asked Dr. Morrill to make himself available to the applicants for future conversations regarding easements.

Executive Director Thomson stated that he introduced the applicants to the holders of the Mayes House easement.

Commissioner Barfield asked for clarification regarding the placement of a preservation easement on a building that is not wholly preserved. Dr. Morrill stated that an easement can be placed on any section of a building.

There were no comments from the public in support or opposition of this application.

Commissioner Parsons proposed that if the COA delay is shortened that the applicants could use the funds saved to pursue placing an easement on the Nebel Knitting Mill building.

Historic Resources Program Manager Gray stated that this project will come back to the Commission quickly if the applicant presents a plan for the preservation of portions of the historic building.

Commissioner Barfield presented a motion that the Historic Landmarks Commission approve the staff recommendation that the Commission defer a decision until no later than September 12, 2022, on issuing the COA for the demolition of the Nebel Knitting Mill Annex, 127 W. Worthington Avenue, Charlotte, so that the HLC may consider any information presented at this meeting, and allow staff to work with the applicant to determine the feasibility of preserving portions of the exterior of the building. Commissioner Ford seconded the motion.

Once made, there was no more discussion of the motion.

The motion was approved with all in attendance voting in favor.

b. Mount Carmel Baptist Church, 412 Campus Street, Charlotte

HEARING ON CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Owner/Applicant: Johnson C. Smith University
Subject Property: Mount Carmel Baptist Church
Address: 412 Campus Street, Charlotte
PIN: 06901104

The Commissioners affirmed that they do not have any known conflicts of interest which would prevent their participation in this hearing, and that they have not engaged in any ex parte communication which would prevent their participation in this hearing.

The following persons were sworn in to give testimony at the hearing: Stewart Gray, Jack Thomson, Gordon Douglas, and Erna Perkins-Jones.

Staff presented the findings of fact.

Staff Report and Comments
Old Mount Carmel Baptist Church
Application for COA HLC210

Exhibits presented to and considered by the Commission:

Exhibit A – Project description from the application:

This project is for the stabilization of an existing historic church property.

Exhibit B – Map

Exhibit C – Images

Exhibit D – Project plan

Based upon the information presented in the application, staff offers the following suggested findings of fact:

1. The designation includes the sanctuary, the 1925 south addition to the sanctuary, and the land associated with tax parcel 069-011-04.
2. The building is in a high state of disrepair, endangering its basic integrity.
3. The proposed project would involve the removal of a significant amount of the building's interior framing and millwork.
4. The proposed project would stabilize and protect the building's shell and salvageable millwork and interior architectural elements.
5. The proposed project is not in conflict with STANDARDS #2 as the removal of original materials is necessary due to extreme deterioration.
6. The proposed project meets STANDARDS #5 as all materials that are practically salvageable are being preserved.

Staff suggests that the Commission approve the application with the following conditions:

1. All work shall be in accordance with attached drawings and plans.
2. All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.
3. Staff will review and approve what original materials are left in place, salvaged, and disposed of.

Commissioners' Comments

There were no comments.

The Applicants' Comments

Gordon Douglas, architectural designer for Neighboring Concepts informed the Commission that the church was designed by Louis Asbury.

Erna Perkins Jones, Executive Director of Facilities for Johnson C. Smith University, stated that the church is a community asset and noted that she looks forward to collaborating on the church's preservation.

There were no comments from the public in opposition of this application. Brandon Lunsford stated his support.

Commissioner Parsons stated his support for the COA application and encouraged the other Commissioners to support it.

Commissioner Hughes echoed Commissioner Parsons's sentiments.

Commissioner Parsons presented a motion that the Historic Landmarks Commission approve the proposed findings of fact as presented by HLC staff. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion.

Once made, there was no more discussion of the motion.

The motion was approved with all in attendance voting in favor with the exception of Commissioner Wilson who was recused.

Staff suggests that the Commission approve the application with the following conditions:

1. All work shall be in accordance with attached drawings and plans.
2. All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.
3. Staff will review and approve what original materials are left in place, salvaged, and disposed of.

Commissioner Parsons presented a motion that the Historic Landmarks Commission approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the stabilization of the Old Mount Carmel Baptist Church, 412 Camp Street, Charlotte. Commissioner Berry seconded the motion.

Once made, there was no more discussion of the motion.

The motion was approved with all in attendance voting in favor with the exception of Commissioner Wilson who was recused.

Executive Director Thomson encouraged the applicant and others in support of the property to remain in the meeting for further discussions.

Chair Hughes thanked the applicants for their cooperation and wished them success on their project. Chair Hughes stated that the quasi-judicial hearing was closed.

8. Design Review: Stewart Gray

a. Ashford House, 241 Hoskins Avenue Drive, Charlotte

Historic Resources Program Manager Gray reminded the Commission that this property was recently designated and includes the house and the lot directly in front of the house. He stated that the house is one of the few surviving mill houses built for African American mill workers in Mecklenburg County and noted that the Hoskins Mill is located nearby. He explained that no Certificate of Appropriateness application has been received and that the infill development proposal is being presented for informational purposes for the applicant to receive feedback.

Brant McConkey and Diane Long with JCB Urban were present to represent the proposal.

Historic Resources Program Manager Gray stated that the proposal for the vacant lot includes two single family homes and one duplex. He stated that Travis Ashford, property owner, contacted staff when considering selling the property and staff discussed development restrictions with potential buyers. Historic Resources Program Manager Gray stated that many discussions were regarding commercial buildings and noted that staff was concerned about what visual impact this would have on the historic house.

Executive Director Thomson reminded the Commission that this is not a quasi-judicial hearing and that no formal application has been received.

Several Commissioners expressed concerns about the proximity and height of the proposed houses and stated that the public should be able to easily view the Ashford House.

McConkey stated that changes to the side elevation facing the Ashford House could be easily implemented.

Long stated that the location of the houses depends on setbacks.

Note: Commissioner Berry left the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

9. Survey Committee Report: Stewart Gray

a. The Survey Committee will meet on June 22 at 6 pm.

Historic Resources Program Manager Gray stated that the Survey Committee will meet on June 22 at the Wadsworth House.

10. Projects Committee Report: Jeff Parsons

a. Wallace House Listing Update, 9425 Robinson Church Road, Charlotte

Executive Director Thomson stated that the listing agreements with real estate agent Elizabeth Grillo will be signed soon and that the property should be placed on the market by the end of the week.

b. Mount Carmel Stabilization Project Proposal

Executive Director Thomson stated that a guideline of the revolving fund is to deploy it on properties that the Commission owns. He described the redevelopment partnership between

JCSU and the Commission on the George Davis House and noted that Commission staff in partnership with JCSU staff would like to propose a similar situation for the stabilization of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church. He stated that the stabilization would be performed before moving into other parts of the rehabilitation.

Executive Director Thomson proposed that the Commission approve a request for the deployment of revolving funds for the stabilization of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church. He reminded the Commission that no funds will be deployed unless approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

Executive Director Thomson stated that the request from the revolving fund would be between \$800,000-\$850,000. He described the condition of the building and noted its high level of loss threat.

Executive Director Thomson stated that if the Commission approves the request, the lawyers for both parties will craft a redevelopment agreement, which could be presented to the BOCC when seeking approval to deploy funds.

Douglas and Perkins-Jones stated that the construction schedule has not yet been finalized but that it will likely be a six-month project and that weekly site visits are currently being conducted.

Executive Director Thomson reminded the Commission that Preservation North Carolina holds a protective covenant on the property and that written correspondence stating that they agree with proceeding on this project has been received.

Dr. Morrill asked for clarification regarding monitoring of the easement. Executive Director Thomson stated that Myrick Howard, president of Preservation North Carolina, would be the best person to contact regarding the management of deed restriction properties.

COMMISSIONER PARSONS PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER NELSON THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS TO DEPLOY THE REVOLVING FUND FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$850,000 FOR THE STABILIZATION OF MT. CARMEL BAPTIST CHURCH, 412 CAMPUS STREET, CHARLOTTE, N.C. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

11. HLC Adventure Club Outings Recap

Executive Director Thomson stated that staff has been encouraged by Commissioners to increase public outreach. He stated that the Adventure Club has recently visited Robinson Rock House Ruin and Wing Haven and encouraged Commissioners to attend future outings. He stated that staff will work with the Park and Recreation department on a partnership to determine which properties overlap.

12. HLC Staff Report

a. Freeman House, 201 S. Ames Street, Matthews

Project Manager Gray reminded the Commission that the house's relocation was approved last year and noted that the owners are currently working on the house at the new approved location.

b. Project Manager Gray reported that the Marion Stedman Covington Foundation has awarded \$10,000 to the Reeves Temple AME Zion Church in support of the renovation of the Unity Church Cabin/Lingle Hut, located at 219 Watson Street, Davidson.

Executive Director Thomson stated that this is the type of work staff does that Commissioners do not get to see very often. He stated that the church contacted staff and that Project Manager Gray provided the assistance needed to receive the grant.

c. Designation Flow Chart

Project Manager Gray presented the designation flow chart and noted that there have been changes to the designation process.

d. HLC 50th Anniversary Committee

Executive Director Thomson reminded the Commission that in March staff asked for ideas to celebrate the Commission's 50th anniversary and stated that he has yet to hear from anyone. Chair Hughes requested volunteers for an ad hoc committee to focus on the upcoming anniversary. Commissioners Archibald, Barfield, and Ford volunteered to serve on the committee. Commissioner Parsons stated he is interested in helping and encouraged staff to contact former Commissioners for assistance.

e. HLC Social Media Update

Administrative Assistant Stuart noted that the HLC's Facebook page received positive feedback from the County's Public Information Department and stated her anticipation that the Commission's social media will expand to include Instagram soon.

f. Presentation of Plaques

Commissioners Nelson and Parsons were presented plaques commemorating their years of service on the Commission. They expressed gratitude to staff and fellow Commissioners.

13. Old Business

There was no old business.

14. New Business

There was no new business.

COMMISSIONER NELSON PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PARSONS THAT THE MEETING OF THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION ADJOURN. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.