

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
March 14, 2022
Virtual Meeting
6:00 p.m. – 8:15 p.m.**

Minutes

Present:

Mr. Robert Barfield/County/HLC Secretary
Mr. Akadius Berry/County
Ms. Lesley Carroll/County
Mr. Brian Clarke/County/HLC Vice Chair/Survey Committee Chair
Ms. Nadine Ford/City
Mr. William Hughes/City/HLC Chair
Ms. Elizabeth Luke/County
Mr. Garrett Nelson/Mayor
Mr. Jeffrey Parsons/Mayor/Projects Committee Chair
Mr. Joshua Shope/City
Mr. Jack Thomson, HLC Executive Director
Mr. Stewart Gray, HLC Historic Resources Program Manager
Ms. Elizabeth Stuart, HLC Senior Administrative Assistant
Mr. Tommy Warlick, HLC Consulting Preservation Planner

Absent:

Ms. Diane Althouse/County
Mr. Edwin Wilson/City/HLC Treasurer

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

1. Consideration of Minutes

MS. LUKE PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. BERRY THAT THE MINUTES FOR THE FEBRUARY 14, 2022, MEETING OF THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION BE APPROVED. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

2. Chair's Report: William Hughes

Mr. Hughes welcomed Nadine Ford to the Commission. Mr. Hughes stated that Ms. Ford has been a longtime advocate of Druid Hills and noted that she would bring additional energy to the Commission.

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

There were no comments from the public.

4. Consent Agenda

a. Bishop John C. Kilgo House, 2100 The Plaza, Charlotte

MR. CLARKE PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. BERRY THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED FOR THE BISHOP JOHN C. KILGO HOUSE, 2100 THE PLAZA, CHARLOTTE, N.C. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

5. Financial Report: Jack Thomson

Mr. Thomson stated that the Rozzell House has been refinanced almost a year in advance.

6. Public Hearings for the Following Properties

MR. PARSONS PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. BARFIELD THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION OPEN A PUBLIC HEARING TO SOLICIT PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE PROSPECTIVE HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF THE FOLLOWING PROPERTIES: HUNTERSVILLE SCHOOL #2, 508 DELLWOOD DRIVE, HUNTERSVILLE; CHARLOTTE QUARTERMASTER DEPOT/CHARLOTTE AREA MISSILE PLANT, 300 CAMP ROAD, CHARLOTTE; AND MCDONALD'S CAFETERIA & MINI-CENTER, 2023 BEATTIES FORD ROAD, CHARLOTTE. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

a. Huntersville School #2, 508 Dellwood Drive, Huntersville

The following members of the public spoke in favor of landmark designation for the Huntersville School #2: Betty BJ Caldwell, Rachel Swift, and Kellie Williams. Varona Wynn and Dora DuBose commented in favor of landmark designation for the Huntersville School #2 via the Webex comment feature.

b. Charlotte Quartermaster Depot/Charlotte Area Missile Plant, 300 Camp Road, Charlotte

There were no comments from the public.

c. McDonald's Cafeteria & Mini-Center, 2023 Beatties Ford Road, Charlotte

Christopher Dennis thanked the Commission for its support in designating the McDonald's Cafeteria as a historic landmark.

MS. LUKE PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. BARFIELD THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

MR. BERRY PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. PARSONS THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION REAFFIRM THAT THE FOLLOWING BE PROCESSED FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION: HUNTERSVILLE SCHOOL #2, 508 DELLWOOD DRIVE, HUNTERSVILLE, N.C., TO INCLUDE THE EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDING AND THE LAND ASSOCIATED WITH THE TAX PARCEL; CHARLOTTE QUARTERMASTER DEPOT/CHARLOTTE AREA MISSILE PLANT, 300

CAMP ROAD, CHARLOTTE, N.C., TO INCLUDE INTERIORS AND EXTERIORS OF 1824 STATESVILLE AVENUE, 200 CAMP ROAD, 201 CAMP ROAD, 270 CAMP ROAD, 300 CAMP ROAD, 301 CAMP ROAD, 330 CAMP ROAD, 701 KESWICK AVENUE (EXTERIOR ONLY), 1701 NORTH GRAHAM STREET, 1801 NORTH GRAHAM STREET, AND THE SURROUNDING LAND INCLUDING THE RAILROAD SPUR TO THE NORTHEAST OF THE BUILDINGS; MCDONALD'S CAFETERIA AND MINI-CENTER, 2023 BEATTIES FORD ROAD, CHARLOTTE, N.C., TO INCLUDE THE EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDING AND THE LAND ASSOCIATED WITH THE TAX PARCEL. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

7. Quasi-Judicial Hearing for the 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: Alex Valle, Stewart Gray, Jack Thomson, Michael Wagner, and Welch Liles.

Staff presented the findings of fact.

Staff Report and Comments
Nebel Knitting Mill Annex, 127 West Worthington Ave, Charlotte
Application for COA HLC195

Exhibits presented to and considered by the Commission:

Exhibit A – project description

Schematic plan for a contemporary office tower rising over an existing two-story warehouse building, which is currently used as office space, with 9 stories total (2 existing; 1 roof terrace; 6 office floors). Retail at ground floor and conferencing/amenity space at the 3rd floor roof deck.

Exhibit B – map

Exhibit C – Proposed Scope of Work

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

1. There are significant development pressures on properties with UMUD or TOD zoning such as the Nebel Mill Annex, and Staff is aware of how the development potential for

such properties may threaten the preservation of their historic buildings. In some cases the addition of significant features to an historic building may be required to make possible a compatible use for the property while still preserving those portions or features of the building which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

2. Considering its potential cost, the proposed project would likely secure the preservation of the Nebel Mill Annex for decades.
3. Only the exterior of the building and the lot associated with the building are designated.
4. The proposed large addition on top of the Nebel Mill Annex does negatively affect the historic character of the property putting it in conflict with aspects of STANDARDS #2.
5. The proposed project meets STANDARDS #2 and #5 as the proposed tower does not obscure or cause to be removed historic materials or features that characterize the property. The project would preserve the façade of the building and the building's Art Moderne character, the façade's decorative horizontal concrete elements, and the monumental central window that rises to the top of the arched roofline of the atrium. Generally, the materials and character of the other original elevations will be retained.
6. The proposed large addition on top of the Nebel Mill Annex is not in harmony with the historic portion of the property in terms of massing putting it in conflict with an aspect of STANDARDS #9.
7. The proposed project meets STANDARDS #9 and #10 as the proposed new addition and alterations do not destroy the historic materials that characterize the property, and the proposed addition would be well differentiated from the historic portion of the building. If the proposed tower were removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the designated portions of Nebel Mill Annex would be unimpaired.

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

1. The front elevation of the 4th and 5th stories of the tower be pushed back to column line C as shown on plan page labeled "OFFICE TYPICAL LEVEL," or that other changes are made to the front elevation of the 4th and 5th stories of the tower so that it would be more harmonious with the historic portion of the property.
2. That this review is for a schematic design, and that final design and material selection for walls, windows, and all other architectural elements associated with the tower, and all new feature proposed for the existing building be submitted for review to the HLC.
3. All work shall be in accordance with attached drawings and plans.
4. All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.

Mr. Gray showed the location of the property and noted that the façade is the most important element of the historic building. Mr. Gray explained that staff has proposed that the 4th and 5th floors of the tower be pushed back.

Commissioners' Comments

The Commissioners asked for clarity regarding which floors staff has proposed to be recessed and to which gridline. Mr. Gray confirmed staff proposes the 4th and 5th floors be pushed back to Gridline C.

Mr. Clarke stated his reservations reconciling this project with the language of the second sentence of STANDARD #9. Mr. Clarke noted that the modern design of the proposed tower was incongruous with the historic building.

Mr. Gray stated that design review is a balance between compatibility and differentiation. Mr. Gray stated that it would be reasonable for the Commission to deny this proposal and ask for a more compatible design. Mr. Gray noted the developmental pressures in this area and stated that the historic building is considered endangered.

The Applicants' Comments

Michael Wagner, design principal with Little Diversified Architectural Consulting, stated that the purpose of the proposed tower is to bring density to the area which is undergoing many changes. Mr. Wagner stated that considerable time was spent shaping the tower so that it would be respectful of and separate from the historic building. Mr. Wagner stated that the intent is for the façade on W. Worthington Avenue to be repaired and restored. Mr. Wagner noted that pushing the building back any further would affect its structure.

Mr. Parsons questioned whether this project should be considered appropriate preservation. Mr. Parsons stated his concern that allowing a modern building to be constructed on top of a historic building would set a precedent that could endanger other historic textile buildings.

Mr. Clarke questioned why the applicant chose this design.

Mr. Shope stated that the contrasting style of the proposed tower would be a successful preservation exercise by ensuring that the mill building's historic design remains distinct.

Mr. Barfield echoed Mr. Shope's comments that an addition's design should contrast with the mill building's historic design. Mr. Barfield noted that from a design standpoint the proposed tower is an appropriate solution but the tower is not as easy to reconcile with the Commission's Standards.

Mr. Berry asked for clarity from the applicant regarding recessing the 4th and 5th floors. Mr. Wagner stated that this has been studied but that it is complicated due to structural issues. Mr. Wagner stated that he could continue researching this feasibility. Welch Liles stated that his group could explore recessing the building but would prefer for it to not be recessed to column line C.

Mr. Gray and Mr. Thomson explained that the Commission can approve staff's findings of fact as presented, substitute the presented findings of fact with new findings, or reject the findings of fact altogether and defer the hearing with specific guidance for the applicant before voting to deny the Certificate of Appropriateness.

Mr. Shope presented a motion that the Historic Landmarks Commission approve the proposed findings of fact as presented by HLC Staff. Ms. Luke seconded the motion. The motion failed with the following vote: For - Robert Barfield, Elizabeth Luke, Garrett Nelson, Josh Shope; against - Akadius Berry, Lesley Carroll, Brian Clarke, Nadine Ford, William Hughes, Jeff Parsons.

Mr. Clarke presented a motion that the Historic Landmarks Commission approve the proposed findings of fact as presented by HLC Staff with the exception of fact #7. Mr. 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.

Mr. Clarke presented a motion that the Historic Landmarks Commission find that the Certificate of Appropriateness application as presented for the Nebel Knitting Mill Annex, 127 West Worthington Avenue, Charlotte, 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. Mr. Parsons seconded the motion.

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

The motion was approved with Josh Shope voting in opposition.

Mr. Hughes stated that the Commission should provide direction to the applicant. Mr. Gray and Mr. Thomson stated that further feedback given would need to be in the quasi-judicial meeting.

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

8. Survey Committee Report: Brian Clarke

Mr. Clarke stated that the Survey Committee will meet virtually on March 30 at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Clarke stated that the Adventure Club's first outing at Big Rock Rock Shelter went well.

9. Mr. Parsons stated that the Projects Committee will meet virtually on March 23 at 6:00 p.m.

10. HLC Staff Report

a. HLC 50th Anniversary Commemoration

Mr. Warlick stated that next year is the 50th anniversary of the Historic Landmarks Commission and that staff is working on commemoration ideas for the Commission to consider. Mr. Gray stated that staff may need an ad hoc committee to help guide this process.

b. HLC Social Media Update

Mr. Gray stated that the Commission's social media strategy is going well and that the Commission should be able to join Instagram after being on Facebook for a year.

11. Old Business

There was no old business.

12. New Business

There was no new business.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.