

Staff Report and Comments
Oak Lawn – Application for COA HLC147

Exhibits presented to and considered by the Commission:

Exhibit A – project description from the application

The Town of Huntersville plans to construct 280 linear feet of a concrete sidewalk in the existing right-of-way on Stratton Farm Road to connect the existing sidewalk through the entrance of the Cedarfield neighborhood. We are proposing the sidewalk at back of curb so we don't disturb the existing landscaping and wooden split rail fence that protects the rural landscape associated with the historic home. This project is part of a larger town initiative to make sidewalk connections and repairs to improve connections, accessibility and necessary repairs for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act throughout our 62 square miles (43 square miles incorporated). This sidewalk connection will also mean that the entire portion of this neighborhood is connected to McCoy Road via sidewalk. Sidewalk already exists along Twin Trail Drive at the southern entrance to Cedarfield off McCoy Road. It will allow access to a CATS bus stop immediately south of the entrance to Stratton Farm Road. Additionally, it will safely connect the neighborhood to the existing sidewalk running north along McCoy Road to The Park-Huntersville (business park) and Gilead Road and south down McCoy to connect with another Town sidewalk project that will add a mile of sidewalk down McCoy Road to Hambright Road, thanks to a CDBG grant. That project will also connect to the Lake Norman Charter Elementary School and southern access to the Park-Huntersville. This project has also brought to light existing accessibility and safety concerns that this project will address by giving pedestrians and anyone with disabilities a safe and accessible way to enter and exit their neighborhood.

The project:

- 2' valley gutter on both sides and tying into the existing valley gutter on Oak Park Drive, which runs directly in front of the historic Oak Lawn home.
- 6' sidewalk at the back of the curb on the southern side of Stratton Farm Road tapering to a 5' sidewalk to an ADA accessible curb ramp
- ADA accessible curb ramps will also be installed on the western boundary of the project to allow safe connection to the existing sidewalk along Stratton Farm Road and the crosswalk over to the sidewalk existing along Oak Park Drive, which runs across the street from the historic Oak Lawn house.
- Tying into existing stormwater catch basins on both edges of the project.

Exhibit B – map

Exhibit C - plans, and photographs

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

- A. In 1989 a COA allowing for the construction of Stratton Farm Road through the designated property associated with Oak Lawn required that no concrete curb or sidewalk be constructed to preserve the rural character of the designated property. Staff recognizes the need for pedestrian access and particularly access for people with disabilities at the proposed location, the changes in the character of the property, and the need for a durable curb and gutter system.
- B. The proposed development as shown in Exhibit C is not incongruous according to STANDARDS 2, 9, and 10.
 - 1* The proposed project does not destroy historic materials or the preserved open spaces that characterize the property.
 - 2* The proposed improvement could be easily removed in the future to restore the property's historic character.

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.