

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
Survey Committee Minutes
Virtual Meeting
March 30, 2022
6:01 p.m. – 7:29 p.m.**

Present:

Mr. Akadius Berry
Ms. Lesley Carroll
Mr. Brian Clarke, Survey Committee Chair/HLC Vice Chair
Mr. William Hughes, HLC Chair, ex officio member
Ms. Cindy Kochanek
Mr. Michael Rogers
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:

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 welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mr. Clarke stated that on Monday, Charlotte City Council designated the Quartermaster Depot and McDonald's Cafeteria as local historic landmarks.

2. Consideration of Designation Reports

a. Blythe House, 121 Gilead Road, Huntersville

Mr. Gray stated that the Blythe House is located prominently on Gilead Road, close to downtown Huntersville. Mr. Gray stated that this was the childhood home of William LeGette Blythe, a prominent author from northern Mecklenburg County. Mr. Gray noted that the house contributes to the historic character of the town and is architecturally significant, having been in its current configuration for over 50 years. Mr. Gray explained that although the house has been adaptively reused as a commercial property, it still retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

Mr. Berry asked if there is anything in Blythe's past that may draw scrutiny if the property were to proceed to landmark designation. Mr. Gray stated that Blythe was well-regarded during his life and that his reputation continues to hold up in reflection. Samantha Smith, author of the

designation report, stated that she did not find anything of concern regarding Blythe's history in her research. Mr. Clarke noted that the naming of Blythe Elementary School in Huntersville would have included some level of vetting of Blythe's background.

MR. BERRY PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. KOCHANЕК THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT PROCESS THE BLYTHE HOUSE, 121 GILEAD ROAD, HUNTERSVILLE, N.C., FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION TO INCLUDE THE FIRST AND SECOND LEVEL INTERIOR HALLWAYS AND STAIRCASE, THE EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDING, AND THE ASSOCIATED TAX PARCEL. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

b. Franks Third Ward Bungalow, 305 Dunbar Street, Charlotte

Mr. Clarke stated that this property is one of the last surviving houses on the southern edge of Third Ward, and that this section of Third Ward contained a significant Black neighborhood. Mr. Clarke noted that the house is a modest wood framed house, which was a once common housing type that has largely vanished in favor of other types of development. Mr. Clarke explained that most of the houses along what is now known as Dunbar Street were built by white owners to use as rental properties for blue-collared Black workers, and that the property at 305 Dunbar Street was unusual because it was purchased by the Franks family and was not a rental property. Mr. Clarke stated that the house remained in the Franks family until 2007 when it was sold to the current owner, who owns an office building directly behind the house.

Susan Mayer, author of the designation report, stated that the community's history was fascinating to research and that her intent with the report was to celebrate Third Ward.

Mr. Berry asked about the intended use of the building. Paul Kardous, property owner, stated that it will be converted into office space. Mr. Kardous stated that there is not much left in the interior. Ms. Mayer stated that after discussing with the Franks family, it has been determined that the exterior remains largely untouched.

Mr. Hughes stated that historic markers are an effective way for the public to recognize historic properties and asked Mr. Kardous if he would be willing to place a marker at the site. Mr. Kardous stated his willingness to place a historic marker on the property and noted his intention to create outlines of locations where houses once stood on the street to show the public the scale of what the neighborhood once looked like. Mr. Kardous stated that he has a good relationship with the Franks family and hopes to have more stories to include with the property. Mr. Thomson asked Mr. Kardous to contact staff to see how the Commission can lend its support to his preservation efforts.

MR. ROGERS PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. KOCHANЕК THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION THAT IT PROCESS THE FRANKS THIRD WARD BUNGALOW, 305 DUNBAR STREET, CHARLOTTE, N.C., FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION TO INCLUDE THE

EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDING AND THE ASSOCIATED TAX PARCEL. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

3. Consideration of Placement on the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks

a. Charles Jones House, 2112 W. Trade Street, Charlotte

Mr. Clarke stated that this was the childhood home of Charles Jones, a significant civil rights figure, and that the house has been recently renovated and is currently on the market. Mr. Clarke noted that Charles Jones' adult home is located nearby, but this house has more historic significance as his formative residence.

MS. KOCHANEK PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. BERRY THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE PLACE THE CHARLES JONES HOUSE, 2112 W. TRADE STREET, CHARLOTTE, ON THE STUDY LIST OF PROSPECTIVE HISTORIC LANDMARKS. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

b. Shell Factory Cafeteria, 1923 Westinghouse Boulevard, Charlotte

Mr. Clarke stated that this property is the former cafeteria of a munitions factory during WWII and is the only remaining vestige of the shell factory. Mr. Gray stated that the shell factory had as much economic impact on Mecklenburg County as the Quartermaster Depot. Mr. Clarke stated that the property is currently occupied by restaurants and that the integrity still needs to be studied.

MR. ROGERS PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. KOCHANEK THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE PLACE THE SHELL FACTORY CAFETERIA, 1923 WESTINGHOUSE BOULEVARD, CHARLOTTE, ON THE STUDY LIST OF PROSPECTIVE HISTORIC LANDMARKS. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

c. Newbury-Walden House, 1401 Briar Creek Road, Charlotte

Ms. Mayer stated that this house was built ca. 1950 and was discovered during research for the Modernist Survey. Ms. Mayer stated that there are not many resources from the earlier modernist era. Mr. Clarke asked if there has been any contact with the owner. Mr. Gray stated that staff is not aware of any recent contact.

MR. BERRY PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. CARROLL THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE PLACE THE NEWBURY-WALDEN HOUSE, 1401 BRIAR CREEK ROAD, CHARLOTTE, ON THE STUDY LIST OF PROSPECTIVE HISTORIC LANDMARKS. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

d. Roach House, 2823 Bellhaven Circle, Charlotte

Mr. Gray stated that the family of the owners contacted staff a few months ago regarding this property. Mr. Gray stated that the since-demolished Caldwell Bungalow was located next door to this site. Mr. Gray noted that this area was a well-established rural African American community of brickmasons. Mr. Gray explained that the house was built around 1945 and is a modest house

that might not be considered for landmark designation if it were in a different part of the County. Mr. Gray noted that the property stands out since many similar houses located nearby have been demolished.

MS. KOCHANЕК PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. BERRY THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE PLACE THE ROACH HOUSE, 2823 BELLHAVEN CIRCLE, CHARLOTTE, ON THE STUDY LIST OF PROSPECTIVE HISTORIC LANDMARKS. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

e. Huntersville Hotel, 104 South Maxwell Avenue, Huntersville

Mr. Gray stated that this is a small railroad town hotel whose location is significant due to its proximity to the rail line that runs between Main Street and Church Street. Mr. Gray stated that it was likely constructed in the late-1800s and that most of its character has been preserved.

Mr. Rogers asked about the property's current use. Mr. Gray stated he believes that the property is a rental house.

Mr. Clarke asked how staff learned of this property. Mr. Gray stated that the Town of Huntersville reached out to staff regarding the property. Mr. Gray stated that the town is working on a master plan for their downtown.

MR. ROGERS PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. KOCHANЕК THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE PLACE THE HUNTERSVILLE HOTEL, 104 SOUTH MAXWELL AVENUE, HUNTERSVILLE, ON THE STUDY LIST OF PROSPECTIVE HISTORIC LANDMARKS. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

4. Potential Demolition of 205 N. Myers Street, Charlotte

Mr. Clarke stated that this property is for sale in First Ward and is potentially threatened. Mr. Gray stated that the property is located directly behind the McDowell Street Post Office and is a surviving residential element of First Ward. Mr. Gray stated that staff would need to research the history of the property. Mr. Gray explained that staff received a phone call from someone interested in purchasing the property and who inquired about potential historic restrictions. Mr. Gray stated that staff is unsure of the intent of the potential buyer and wanted to inform the Committee of a potentially endangered property.

Mr. Clarke stated that the property could be added to the Study List and preliminary research performed as the first steps. Mr. Thomson stated that he will reach out to the owner and will determine if the real estate posting is still listed.

MR. CLARKE PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. ROGERS THAT THE SURVEY COMMITTEE PLACE 205 N. MYERS STREET, CHARLOTTE, ON THE STUDY LIST OF PROSPECTIVE HISTORIC LANDMARKS. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MOTION.

5. Update on Sinister Wisdom House Designation Report

Mr. Gray stated that Kayla Chadwick-Schultz, a graduate student who has worked extensively on LGBTQ issues, has submitted a proposal to produce the designation report for this property. Mr. Gray reminded the Committee that the property was identified by the National Trust as a significant LGBTQ site. Mr. Gray stated that the site was the birthplace of “Sinister Wisdom,” the first lesbian literary journal in America, which was started by two people associated with UNCC and which is still in publication. Mr. Gray stated that Ms. Chadwick-Schultz is planning to commence her research in June and that a report is anticipated to be ready for review by the Committee this summer.

6. Adventure Club Update

Mr. Clarke stated that the Adventure Club will next visit the Robinson Rock House Ruin at Reedy Creek Nature Preserve.

7. HLC Staff Report

Mr. Thomson stated that he recently reached out to the owners of Chicken & Ribs and Igloo Dairy Bar on Beatties Ford Road and is awaiting a response. Mr. Clarke stated that the Committee has discussed funding a designation report for Igloo Dairy Bar and would like for discussions to proceed in the next meeting.

8. Old Business

There was no old business.

9. New Business

Mr. Clarke stated that Lesley Carroll has recently been appointed to the Survey Committee and thanked Ms. Carroll for her participation. Mr. Clarke noted that Nadine Ford, newly appointed Commissioner, and Victoria Archibald, potential Commissioner, also attended and observed the meeting tonight and thanked them for their interest.

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.