

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
June 10, 2024
Hybrid Meeting
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, Room 266
6:04 p.m. – 7:16 p.m.**

Minutes

Present

Dontressa Ashford/Mayor
Robert Barfield/County
Lesley Carroll/County/HLC Treasurer/Survey Committee Chair
Brian Clarke/County/HLC Chair
Nadine Ford/City
Victoria Grey/County/HLC Secretary/Community Outreach Committee Chair
Emily Makas/Mayor
Charlie Miller/City
Stewart Gray, HL Director
John Howard, HL Historic Preservation Manager
Tommy Warlick, HL Historic Preservation Specialist
Elizabeth Stuart, HL Senior Administrative Support Assistant
Michele Lemere, HL Intern
Tahlya Mock, HL Intern

Absent

Akadius Berrv/Countv
Andra Eaves/Countv
John Kincheloe/City
Edwin Wilson/City/Proiects Committee Chair

Note: This meeting was held virtually through the Microsoft Teams video conferencing platform and in-person at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center.

1. Adoption of the Consent Agenda

a. Approval of May HLC Minutes

Commissioner Barfield presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Grey that the Historic Landmarks Commission approve the consent agenda as presented for the approval of the Historic Landmarks Commission's May 13 meeting minutes. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

2. Mecklenburg Historical Association Ex-Officio Member Introduction

Chair Clarke welcomed Mecklenburg Historical Association (MHA) representative, Rob Thomas. Chair Clarke explained that the Historic Landmarks Commission's original ordinance established that the MHA be provided an ex-officio seat on the Commission. Rob Thomas introduced himself.

Thomas explained that MHA was founded in the 1870s with its original mission to preserve and publicize Mecklenburg County's history from its founding to the present. He stated that an affiliate council was recently established with members of numerous local historical organizations engaged to increase collaboration and coordination. He explained that this group hopes to expand in the future.

3. Chair's Report: Brian Clarke

a. Committee Assignments for FY25

Chair Clarke stated that Committee assignments will be reconsidered as the new fiscal year begins. He explained that the Survey and Community Outreach Committees will remain and noted that the Projects Committee may be restructured. He stated that the Survey Committee has not had a quorum for the past two meetings and has not been able to conduct business. He stated that he would like for every Commissioner to be on a Committee and asked the Commissioners to let him know of others that are not on the Commission that may be interested in serving as Committee members.

4. Public Comment Period

Chair Clarke explained that this is the period for members of the public to speak to the Commission on issues within the Commission's purview. No members of the public registered to speak.

5. Discussion of Potential Purchase of Cornelius Agriculture Building, 21126 Catawba Avenue, Cornelius

Commissioner Carroll presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Grey that the Historic Landmarks Commission convene in closed session. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

Commissioner Carroll presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Ashford that the Historic Landmarks Commission reconvene in open session. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

6. Survey Committee Report: Lesley Carroll

Director Gray stated that there was no quorum at the last Survey Committee meeting and explained that staff felt it was important to update the Commission on properties that were discussed at this meeting.

Historic Preservation Specialist Warlick stated the Survey Committee has not had a quorum for two consecutive meetings. He explained that properties cannot be added to the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks, which is the beginning of the designation process, due to a lack of a quorum.

Warlick discussed the history of the Dr. Charles L. Sifford Golf Course at Revolution Park, 1225 Remount Road, Charlotte. He stated that this golf course was originally constructed in the 1930s as a WPA project and was an 18-hole course until it was reduced to 9 holes. He stated that Dr. Rudolph Wyche was part of a group of golfers who sued for access to the golf course, which had a race-restricted covenant. He stated that the North Carolina Supreme Court ruled that the City of Charlotte must either sell the property or integrate it.

He stated that the clubhouse has been recently renovated and noted that this would be the primary focus due to the reconfiguration of the golf course. He stated that this is Charlotte's first municipal golf course and is now operated by Mecklenburg County's Park and Recreation department. He noted that Dr. Sifford did not play on this course according to research, but he was a Charlotte native and was responsible for integrating the PGA Tour.

Gray discussed the history of the Hunters Chapel United Methodist Church, 18423 John Connor Road, Cornelius. He explained that this 1950s building was built by the congregation due to the original church building being flooded by the creation of Lake Norman. He stated that this is a story of rural African Americans, some of which were born into slavery, prospering. He noted that many church members attended the last Survey Committee meeting.

Warlick stated that one discrepancy is that the congregation believe the church was formed in 1909, but there are headstones that precede this date.

Historic Preservation Manager John Howard discussed the history of the Dr. Charles Williams House, 5906 Crestwood Drive, Charlotte. He stated that Dr. Williams was the visionary for the Hyde Park Estates neighborhood. He explained that Dr. Williams envisioned the neighborhood from what he saw during travels in Los Angeles. He stated that Dr. Williams' wife, Vivian, wrote the covenants for the neighborhood, which included elements such as setbacks, house types, et cetera.

Gray asked if this house was the first house built in Hyde Park. Howard answered it was one of the first houses built.

Gray stated that staff's goal was to receive feedback from the Commission before staff proceeds with producing designation reports on these properties.

The Commission unanimously agreed that staff should proceed with the production of designation reports for the Dr. Charles L. Sifford Golf Course at Revolution Park, 1225 Remount Road, Charlotte; the Hunters Chapel United Methodist Church, 18423 John Connor Road, Cornelius; and the Dr. Charles Williams House, 5906 Crestwood Drive, Charlotte.

Chair Clarke asked staff to consider producing a designation report on Camp Oak, the scout camp for Black scouts during segregation. Gray stated he would follow up on this.

7. Community Outreach Committee Report: Victoria Grey

Commissioner Grey stated that the Charlotte Museum of History is holding its Siloam School Homecoming on Saturday, June 15. She stated that staff has planned several events through the end of the calendar year.

8. Nominating Committee Report: Dontressa Ashford

Commissioner Ashford presented the recommended slate of officers to the Commission:

Chair: Brian Clarke

Vice Chair: Robert Barfield

Secretary: Victoria Grey

Treasurer: Lesley Carroll

There were no recommendations for officers made from the floor.

Commissioner Ashford presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Makas that the Historic Landmarks Commission approve the following slate of officers for fiscal year 2025: Chair: Brian Clarke; Vice Chair: Robert Barfield; Secretary: Victoria Grey; and Treasurer: Lesley Carroll. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

9. Historic Landmarks Staff Report

Historic Landmarks interns, Tahlya Mock and Michele Lemere, introduced themselves.

a. Staff Revolving Fund Recommendations

Gray stated that Deputy County Manager Leslie Johnson recommended that staff create guidance for the usage of the Revolving Fund. He stated that such guidance could be useful for consideration when the Commission is buying or selling property.

10. Old Business

Chair Clarke reminded the Commission that they voted to recommend the Steele Creek Presbyterian Church Manse be designated as a historic landmark to Charlotte City Council in December 2023. He stated that no action has been made on this issue due to the issue not being placed on City Council's agenda. He explained that the 180-day hold expired at the end of last week, meaning the structure can be demolished.

Gray explained that staff provides a resolution to City Council for potential designations. He stated that City Council can decide to not hold a public hearing after receiving a resolution, which would effectively stop any potential landmark designation by not adopting the resolution. He explained that this property has not even had a resolution considered and noted that City staff has explained their opposition.

Chair Clarke stated that he acted as a private citizen and informed City Council of the resolution recommending the Manse as a landmark. He stated that only Councilmembers Jerrell and Mayfield acknowledged the information.

11. New Business

There was no new business.

The Commission agreed to adjourn the meeting by unanimous consent.

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.