

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
Survey Committee
November 29, 2023
2100 Randolph Road, Charlotte
6:01 p.m. – 7:50 p.m.**

Minutes

Present

Lesley Carroll, Survey Committee Chair/HLC Treasurer
Brian Clarke, HLC Chair, ex officio member
Whitney Feld
Victoria Grey, HLC Secretary (remote)
Michael Rogers (remote)
Stewart Gray, HL Director
Elizabeth Stuart, HL Senior Administrative Support Assistant
Tommy Warlick, HL Consulting Preservation Planner

Absent

Akadius Berry
Nadine Ford, HLC Vice Chair
John Howard

Note: This meeting was held virtually through the Microsoft Teams video conferencing platform and in-person at the Historic Landmarks office at 2100 Randolph Road, Charlotte.

1. Chair's Report: Lesley Carroll

Chair Carroll did not have a report.

2. Update from HLC Chair Brian Clarke

a. Study List Additions:

i. Steele Creek Manse

Chair Clarke noted that this property is under imminent threat of demolition.

ii. Spratt-Grier Farm off Robbie Circle

Chair Clarke stated that this property includes a log structure purported to be enslaved persons housing. He stated that the Charlotte Douglas International Airport has purchased the right to demolish this property.

iii. Smith-Richter House

Chair Clarke stated that the Projects Committee continues to discuss this property, which was designed by AG Odell in the early 1950s.

iv. Camp Oak

Chair Clarke stated that this was the Scout Camp for “Colored Scouts” during segregation. He stated that this camp is within the Berryhill Nature Preserve and is protected.

Director Gray stated that staff will ensure that the Park and Recreation department is aware of this property.

Note: Chair Clarke left the meeting at 6:12 p.m.

Commissioner Grey presented a motion seconded by Committee Member Rogers that the Survey Committee place the Steele Creek Manse, Spratt-Grier Farm, Smith-Richter House, and Camp Oak on the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks. The Committee unanimously approved the motion.

3. Little House, 1136 Queens Road, Charlotte

Consulting Preservation Planner Warlick reminded the Committee that this property was discussed at the September meeting. He explained that the property is in the National Register for Myers Park and would need special significance to warrant being designated as a local historic landmark. He stated the uncertainty regarding when the house was built since the owners indicated it was built in 1912 but the water tap was not turned on until 1915. He noted that John Little and his wife, who were associated with several notable buildings including the First ARP Church, moved to this house in 1916. He asked the Committee whether they would advise the property owners to proceed with producing a designation report.

Gray noted the demolitions in Myers Park and Eastover and emphasized that this house is endangered as one of only six surviving pre-WWI houses in Myers Park. He stated that staff thinks this property is a good candidate for landmark designation.

The Committee reached a consensus for the property owners to proceed with the production of a designation report on this property.

Warlick stated that he will contact the property owners and inform them of the Committee’s consensus.

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

a. J.J. Akers House, 6501 Sardis Road, Charlotte

Gray stated that this house was built in 1937 and designed by Louis Asbury. He stated that the house helps tell the story of Charlotte as a once-rural setting and noted that the property is already a neighborhood landmark as it sits prominently on Sardis Road. He explained that Preserve Mecklenburg worked diligently to find an owner for this property and noted that the property has been on the market without any known protections. He stated that neighbors and other citizens have expressed concern that the house is threatened and could be demolished.

Dr. Tim Brown noted that the house has great historical significance and retains extraordinary integrity as it has been largely untouched since the 1930s.

Gray stated that the building itself would be a good candidate for adaptive reuse. He stated that the house is situated on the site such that part of the property could be used for some type of infill development.

Committee Member Feld presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Grey that the Survey Committee place the J.J. Akers House, 6501 Sardis Road, Charlotte, N.C., on the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks. The Committee unanimously approved the motion.

Gray recommended that this property be brought to the full Commission's attention at the December 11 meeting and determine what actions the Commission may take.

b. Sydenham B. Alexander, Jr. House, 250 Cherokee Road, Charlotte

Warlick stated that the 2007 report on this property needs to be updated. He explained that this area is experiencing changes and noted that the owners are sensitive to this. He described the accomplishments of the Alexander family. He detailed interior renovations that have been made by both previous owners and the current owners and stated that various features have been maintained throughout these changes.

Gray stated that this is an impressive house and noted the demolitions occurring near the house. He asked if the owners have discussed preservation covenants. Warlick stated he has not yet had those conversations. Gray advised that staff will discuss preservation covenants with these owners and the owners of the Little House.

Committee Member Rogers presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Grey that the Survey Committee place the Sydenham B. Alexander, Jr. House, 250 Cherokee Road, Charlotte, N.C., on the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks. The Committee unanimously approved the motion.

Dr. Dan Morrill with Preserve Mecklenburg asked whether the Survey Committee needs the full Commission to vote to add the Smith-Richter House to the Study List and whether the property owner is notified that the property has been added to this list. Gray answered that the full Commission does not need to vote to add properties to the Study List and that notifications are typically not sent to property owners since the Study List operates as a tracking tool. He noted that if a property is endangered that staff can contact the property owner to introduce them to the Commission. He stated that staff will inform the owners of the Smith-Richter House.

Dr. Dan Morrill asked for the timeline of the production of a designation report for the J.J. Akers House if approved by the Commission. Gray answered that he will work with Survey Chair Carroll on language for the Commission to consider.

c. Mary Rose and William Alexander Davis, Jr. House, 140 Lynbrook Drive, Davidson

Gray stated that this house was designed by Cynthia Bostick, one of four women architects active in North Carolina in the 1960s and 1970s. He stated that he and Warlick visited with the

property owner, who is interested in pursuing landmark designation. He stated that the previous owner has a lot of information about the house that fits with previous research from Warlick. He stated that the house is not endangered. He stated that this house could be part of the agreement with the Town of Davidson to fund designation reports.

Commissioner Grey presented a motion seconded by Committee Member Feld that the Survey Committee place the Mary Rose and William Alexander Davis, Jr. House, 140 Lynbrook Drive, Davidson, N.C., on the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks. The Committee unanimously approved the motion.

5. Delburg Mill House, 225 Armour Street, Davidson

Warlick stated that this house was part of the mill village for the Delburg Mill in Davidson. He explained that the mill village expanded in 1916-1917 when the Delburg Mill expanded and noted that there were approximately 102 properties in the mill village. He stated that the houses were eventually sold to private property owners and that there have been significant changes in the neighborhood over time, leaving very few houses associated with the mill remaining. He stated that he and Gray recently visited the neighborhood and noted approximately seven houses that looked like they had good integrity. He stated that he sent letters to property owners inquiring of their interest in landmark designation, to which the owners of this house responded favorably. He stated that the house is rented to Davidson College students and is well taken care of. He stated that this designation report would be funded by the Commission as part of their agreement with the Town of Davidson.

Committee Member Rogers presented a motion seconded by Committee Member Feld that the Survey Committee place the Delburg Mill House, 225 Armour Street, Davidson, N.C., on the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks. The Committee unanimously approved the motion.

6. Thompson-Anderson House, 858 Concord Road, Davidson

Susan Mayer explained that this house is essentially one of two remaining Tudor Revival homes in Davidson. She stated that the house is well-preserved. She noted that a previous owner built an addition on the back of the house that is not visible from the front. She stated that the owners are interested in interior and exterior designation.

Gray stated that this property is interesting since it represents the early-20th century middle class of Davidson that is not related to Davidson College. He noted that the property is on the eastern edge of the National Register district.

Committee Member Feld presented a motion seconded by Committee Member Rogers that the Survey Committee recommend to the Historic Landmarks Commission that it process the Thompson-Anderson House, 858 Concord Road, Davidson, N.C., for historic landmark designation including the interior and exterior of the house and the property associated with tax parcel 00729301. The Committee unanimously approved the motion.

7. Presentation for Study List Consideration by SVM Historical Consulting

Susan Mayer reviewed the properties in the presentation to be considered for inclusion on the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks.

Commissioner Grey presented a motion seconded by Committee Member Feld that the Survey Committee place the properties from SVM Historical Consulting's presentation on the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks and authorize Historic Landmarks staff to work with Susan Mayer to ensure applicable property details are included. The Committee unanimously approved the motion.

8. Site Visit to Westchester Community

Gray stated that he recently visited this community, which fronts on Freedom Drive. He stated that it is a 1960s suburban planned neighborhood time capsule with a very intentional layout. He stated that he is working with Ms. Kirkpatrick, community leader, to research the neighborhood and bring properties to the Committee soon.

Ms. Kirkpatrick stated that she and another community member continue to research the neighborhood.

9. Updates

a. Bonnie Cone House, 9234 Sandburg Avenue, Charlotte

Gray stated that the report for this property was completed around five years ago. He noted that Bonnie Cone is arguably one of the most important citizens of Mecklenburg County in the 20th century for her role in establishing the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He stated that Murray Whisnant designed the house, which retains good integrity. He stated that one of Cone's relatives owns the house and recently moved back to the area. He stated that staff will follow up with the property owners and determine whether to proceed with landmark designation. He stated that the designation report would need to be updated before proceeding with a recommendation for landmark designation.

b. Caldwell Bradford Schoolhouse, 16401 Davidson-Concord Road, Davidson

Gray stated that this property is one of a few remaining rural schoolhouses that was built early in the consolidation process. He stated that staff is planning to match funding for a designation report with the property owner. He stated that the designation report will be produced by Susan Mayer.

c. Recent Public Hearings: Savona Mill, Wyche-Dobson-McCoy House, Funderburk House interior

Warlick stated that the designations of the Savona Mill and the Wyche-Dobson-McCoy House were unanimously approved by Charlotte City Council and the amendment of the Funderburk House's designation to include the interior of the house was unanimously approved by the Town of Matthews' Board of Commissioners.

d. Beard-Rogers-McConnell House, 119 Gilead Road, Huntersville

Gray stated that Susan Mayer is working on this designation report, which still needs interior photographs. He stated this would be brought to the Committee for consideration soon.

e. Endangered Steele Creek Properties

Gray stated that he and Chair Clarke have been meeting with Charlotte Douglas International Airport officials regarding the status of the Steele Creek Church Manse and the Douglas House, which currently has a deferred Certificate of Appropriateness application for the demolition of the property. He stated that these properties are endangered due to the expansion of the airport. He stated that he also recently met with a group interested in adaptively reusing the Steele Creek Church property.

10. Old Business

There was no old business.

11. New Business

Senior Administrative Support Assistant Stuart reminded the Committee of the upcoming holiday party on December 7.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.