

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
Executive Committee
January 31, 2024
2100 Randolph Road, Charlotte
6:00 p.m. – 7:49 p.m.**

Minutes

Present

Lesley Carroll, Survey Committee Chair/HLC Treasurer
Brian Clarke, HLC Chair
Victoria Grey, HLC Secretary
Edwin Wilson, Projects Committee Chair
Stewart Gray, HL Director
Elizabeth Stuart, HL Senior Administrative Support Assistant
Tommy Warlick, HL Consulting Preservation Planner

Absent

Nadine Ford, HLC Vice Chair

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: Brian Clarke

Chair Clarke did not have a report.

2. Updates to the Rules of Procedure

a. Adoption of Updated Guidelines for the Use of the Revolving Fund

Chair Clarke explained that County leadership asked the Commission to implement guidelines for the use of the revolving fund.

Director Gray stated that the Finance department reported \$7.698 million available in the revolving fund in spring 2023. He explained that when he requested a monthly budget that Finance stated that they were still reconciling the revolving fund since it is approximately 30 years old. He stated that a ledger is being developed and that until that is available that it is important that the Commission be aware that the balance may be lower than the reported amount.

Commissioner Wilson expressed frustration that this reconciliation has been ongoing for a year with no conclusion. He stated that the Commission cannot take action on projects while the reconciliation continues.

Gray stated that he and Chair Clarke can produce a letter to share with Deputy County Manager Leslie Johnson and the Finance department regarding the need to have a definitive balance soon. There was unanimous consent from the Committee to produce such a letter.

Gray stated that there are currently no guidelines on the revolving fund in the Rules of Procedure. He stated that the Rules of Procedure will remain as Commission members change.

The Committee discussed the role the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners has in recognizing funds from the Revolving Fund.

Commissioner Wilson stated his concern regarding having exceptions for certain properties for the expected 80% return on investment. Chair Clarke stated that an exception should be recognized early so that the Commission is informed.

The Committee discussed establishing a minimum balance in the Revolving Fund. Commissioner Wilson suggested tying a percentage to the fund balance.

The Committee discussed protecting properties through options to purchase and the purchasing of easements. The Committee was in favor of discussing easements further and agreed with staff's assessment to not include easements in the Rules of Procedure until further discussions are held with the Manager's Office and the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners to gauge their support.

The Committee also discussed the following topics for potential inclusion in the Rules of Procedure: viability of projects; an approved panel of licensed realtors; financing the sale of properties; equity; risk; exceptional properties; partnering; and property assessments.

The Committee expressed gratitude to staff for beginning the process of updating the Rules of Procedure.

b. Discussion of Design Review of Post-Demolition Designated Land Policy

Chair Clarke stated his view that land designated as a landmark remains designated by law unless the ordinance is amended to remove or rescind the designation.

Gray proposed that the action the Commission takes be included in the Rules of Procedure.

Chair Clarke stated that he will work on drafting amendments to present to the Commission potentially by March.

3. Discussion of the James Jones and Nancy Anderson Akers House, 6501 Sardis Road, Charlotte

Note: This Item was discussed before Item 2b.

Gray reminded the Committee that the lawyer for the property owner attended the Commission's January meeting. Gray stated that a meeting needs to be scheduled between the lawyer, staff, and members of the Executive Committee. He stated that a meeting request has not yet been received.

Gray stated that there is a 180-day hold on demolition due to the Commission's approval of processing the property as a historic landmark on January 8. He stated that staff has not had any communication with the property owner or potential buyer since that meeting.

Chair Clarke stated that earlier in the day he was copied on an email from a prospective buyer to the real estate agent handling the property. He stated that the person appears to be preservation-minded.

Consulting Preservation Planner Warlick stated that the designation report review from the State Historic Preservation Office is due soon.

Commissioner Wilson stated that staff received a considerable amount of correspondence from the community regarding this property. Gray stated that staff emails were sent to the County Attorney to be shared with the property owner's lawyers.

4. Old Business

Commissioner Wilson asked about the status of educational markers to place on properties.

Chair Clarke asked about QR codes to place on landmarks. Gray stated that 30 QR codes are ready to be picked up. He explained that they would be placed on commercial properties initially.

5. New Business

Chair Clarke reported that local author Greg Jarrell has a book coming out called "Our Trespasses: White Churches and the Taking of American Neighborhoods." He stated that the book details the role that predominantly white churches played in urban renewal in Charlotte.

Commissioner Wilson stated that author Pam Grundy would also be a good speaker for an upcoming lecture.

The meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.