

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
June 9, 2025
Hybrid Meeting
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, Room 266
6:05 p.m. – 7:50 p.m.**

Minutes

Present

Robert Barfield/County/HLC Vice Chair
Christina Benton/City
Brian Clarke/County/HLC Chair
Andrew Dunn/County
Andra Eaves/County
Victoria Grey/County/HLC Secretary/Community Outreach Committee Chair
John Kincheloe/City
Emily Makas/Mayor
Charlie Miller/City
Melanie Reddrick/City
Stewart Gray, HL Director
John Howard, HL Historic Preservation Manager
Tommy Warlick, HL Historic Preservation Specialist
Elizabeth Stuart, HL Senior Administrative Support Assistant

Absent

Dontressa Ashford/Mayor/Survey Committee Chair
Lesley Carroll/County/HLC Treasurer

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 Dunn 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 12 meeting minutes. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

2. Chair's Report: Brian Clarke

Chair Clarke thanked staff for organizing the historic marker unveiling for the Franks House on June 7. He stated that several media outlets, Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners Chair Mark Jerrell, City Councilmember LaWana Mayfield, members of the Franks family and the community, and many others attended the event.

Chair Clarke stated that the 365-day delay approved by the Commission for the William Grier House in the Steele Creek area has expired and that the Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the house is active. He explained that Preservation North Carolina was not able to find a buyer to relocate the house. He stated that the Charlotte Douglas International Airport recently applied for a demolition permit and noted that the house could be demolished at any time.

Chair Clarke stated that the Commission would be electing officers later in the meeting and thanked the Commission for allowing him to be Chair for the past few years. He stated that the Commission is doing good preservation work.

Director Gray stated that Chair Clarke has been one of the most involved Chairs in Gray's experience. He credited Chair Clarke for ensuring that the preservation of the Douglas House was included in the former Steele Creek Presbyterian Church's redevelopment. He stated that staff is working on another of Chair Clarke's initiatives, which is the designation of Camp Oak as a historic landmark.

Chair Clarke stated that he and Brandon Lunsford, who was recently hired as the historian for the Park and Recreation department, plan to meet soon to visit Berryhill Nature Preserve to view the remnants of Camp Oak and another historic ruin nearby.

3. Public Comment Period

No members of the public registered to speak.

4. Survey Committee Report: Dontressa Ashford

Note: Historic Preservation Specialist Warlick presented this report in Commissioner Ashford's absence.

Warlick stated that the Survey Committee met on May 21 and added the following properties to the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks:

a. R. Kent and Gertrude N. Blair House, 529 N. Poplar Street, Charlotte

Warlick stated that this Foursquare house is in Charlotte's Fourth Ward historic district and was owned by the Blair family from 1906-1979.

b. Foard House, 7410 Shady Lane, Charlotte

Warlick stated that this midcentury modern house is located in the Grove Park subdivision. He stated that staff is not certain of the architect and explained that the house was reportedly built by Jack Dagenhart for Cecil “Zeke” and Nancy Grady Foard. He explained that Zeke owned Sign Art Inc., and that Nancy was dedicated to historic preservation and was one of three women who owned the NC Medical College Building.

c. McClintock Presbyterian Church, 14008 Erwin Road, Charlotte

Warlick stated that this church is affiliated with the McClintock Rosenwald School. He explained that the ruins of a school that the congregation operated prior to the Rosenwald School opening are still present. He stated that the congregation was organized in 1865 by formerly enslaved persons and is believed to be Mecklenburg County’s first Black Presbyterian Church. He stated that this church is credited as one of the founding churches of the Catawba Presbytery, which was founded by the three ministers who are credited for much of the foundation work for Johnson C. Smith University: Samuel Alexander, Sidney Murkland, and Willis Miller. He stated that the current structure was remodeled in 1948 with parts likely constructed earlier.

d. Newell Presbyterian Church, 1500 W. Rocky River Road, Charlotte

Warlick stated that this property was nominated by Ginny Harper of Mecklenburg County’s Public Information department. He stated that this church is in the Newell Community. He stated that the congregation was founded in 1889 with 31 charter members. He explained that the group originally met in W.B. Newell’s home and noted that Newell was the co-founder of the Newell Community. He stated that Newell’s brother and community co-founder, John Newell, provided the land for the construction of the church. Warlick stated that the congregation is interested in selling its extra land for affordable housing.

Vice Chair Barfield asked if the steeple was original to the building. Warlick stated that he was not certain.

Gray stated that staff has been refining the application process to keep Study List applications separate from properties that are ready to begin the formal designation process with the production of a designation report.

Note: Commissioner Benton joined the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

5. Nominating Committee Report: Robert Barfield

Vice Chair Barfield stated that he and Commissioner Ashford met with Senior Administrative Support Assistant Stuart and Historic Preservation Manager Howard to review proposed officers for Fiscal Year 2026. He listed the slate of recommended officers: Chair: Melanie Reddrick; Vice Chair: Brian Clarke; Secretary: Andrew Dunn; and Treasurer: Victoria Grey.

Vice Chair Barfield asked if any Commissioners would like to nominate another candidate from the floor. There were no nominations from the floor.

Commissioner Benton presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Makas that the Historic Landmarks Commission approve the following slate of officers for Fiscal Year 2026: Chair: Melanie Reddrick; Vice Chair: Brian Clarke; Secretary: Andrew Dunn; and Treasurer: Victoria Grey. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

Chair Clarke stated that the Commission might consider having the outgoing Chair serve in a specific role to provide advice.

6. Community Outreach Updates

a. Updates on QR Codes: Tommy Warlick

Warlick stated that the QR code program recently launched and noted that six properties have had placards developed. He stated that placards will be delivered to the Charlotte Coliseum, Caldwell Station School, and the W.P.A. Douglas Airport Hangar soon.

Gray stated that staff is working on growing the department's mailing list as a method of informing the public of upcoming events.

Ginny Harper, Communication Specialist for Mecklenburg County Public Information department, stated that two of the Franks family granddaughters used the Franks House new QR code at the recent marker unveiling event and found the information useful.

b. Committee Report: Victoria Grey

Commissioner Grey stated that she was on Town Talk hosted by Lake Norman Chamber President Bill Russell recently and discussed the work of the Commission.

c. Upcoming Outreach Events: Tommy Warlick

Warlick stated that staff is planning a book club meeting on September 20 at Huntersville School #2. He stated that the event will also include the Pottstown Heritage Group and Torrence-Lytle School alumni.

Warlick stated that a headstone cleaning event at Matthews Historic Cemetery will be held on October 4. He stated that the Matthews Heritage Museum will help plan this event.

d. Savona Mill Tour: Stewart Gray

Gray stated that staff and Commissioner Grey recently attended a tour of the Savona Mill, which is being adaptively reused into office space.

e. Historic Northwest Charlotte Bike Tour: Stewart Gray

Gray stated that this was the third bike tour hosted by staff and noted that the tour was well-attended.

f. Franks House Marker Unveiling: Stewart Gray

Gray stated that the Franks House marker was placed on the nearby United House of Prayer property. He stated that representatives of the church attended the ceremony and noted that the church's brass band, the Horns of Glory, performed for the unveiling. He stated that the event was well-attended and had good media coverage.

7. Projects Updates

a. Torrence-Lytle School, 14000 Holbrooks Road, Huntersville

Gray stated that he and Historic Landmarks intern, Kyra Sykes, visited the Torrence-Lytle School to see the construction. He stated that there is a new subfloor in the hallway and that there will be foundation and structural repairs to the building to provide reinforcement to carry the load of the new roof. He stated that the project is expected to finish in mid-July if there are no delays.

b. Edgewood Farm, 11124 Eastfield Road, Huntersville

Gray stated that he is working to schedule a meeting with the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners regarding purchasing this property.

8. Discussion of the Historic Landmarks Commission's Strategic Plan: Andrew Dunn

Commissioner Dunn reviewed the strategic plan document and asked for initial reactions regarding whether the Commission should function as an executive-style board, which would be more staff-driven, or an activist-style board, which would be more Commission-driven.

Vice Chair Barfield stated that the Commission is currently largely executive-style but also works alongside staff as an activist-style board.

Chair Clarke stated that he has had an activist tendency during his years as Chair. He stated that the Commission needs to have characteristics of both styles.

Commissioner Reddrick asked how the Commission could help staff. Gray stated that the Commission placed an emphasis on community outreach, which is largely handled by staff.

Commissioner Grey emphasized that the Commissioners should know why they are on the Commission and why they were chosen to serve. She asked how the Commissioners' various talents can be used in community outreach.

Commissioners discussed how the community can be used to help find properties to potentially designate as landmarks.

Warlick stated that staff welcomes any properties suggested for the Study List. He noted that the Commission has a lot of properties with preservation easements placed on them and encouraged the Commission to become familiar with these properties.

Ginny Harper encouraged Commissioners to attend neighborhood meetings and offered to assist with this if interested.

Gray encouraged the Commissioners to codify some of the mentioned ideas in their Rules of Procedure, which the Commission controls. He noted that a one-year workplan might suit the Commission better at this point rather than a three-year strategic plan.

Chair Clarke noted how the Commission is serving a thought leadership role. He explained that a staff member from Charlotte Planning attended the Donovan Rypkema lecture last fall and has been suggesting adaptively reusing properties for affordable housing through techniques she learned at this lecture.

Howard stated that it would help the Commission if elected officials knew them and what they do.

9. Revolving Fund Financial Report: Stewart Gray

Gray stated that the revolving fund has a balance of \$5.2 million. He explained that \$200,000 will be used for a loan for the Cornelius Agriculture Building and \$500,000 will be used for a loan for Edgewood Farm. He stated that staff does not currently have any recommendations for a property that needs to be purchased.

Commissioner Dunn asked where the funds are located. Gray answered that it is a line on the County budget.

10. Historic Landmarks Staff Report

a. Upcoming HLC Vacancy – July 5 Deadline

Stuart stated that the application deadline to fill Robert Barfield's upcoming vacancy is July 5. She asked Commissioners to share the application with those who may be interested in serving.

b. Preservation North Carolina Conference – October 5-7, 2025

Gray stated that the Preservation North Carolina conference will be held in Asheville and asked Commissioners to let staff know if interested in attending.

Howard stated that he will be scheduling a Spirit Square construction site visit soon. He asked Commissioners to let staff know of other sites they would be interested in touring.

11. Old Business

There was no old business.

12. New Business

There was no new business.

Commissioner Kincheloe presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Eaves that the Historic Landmarks Commission meeting adjourn. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.