

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
June 8, 2026
Hybrid Meeting
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, Room 266
6:01 p.m. – 7:52 p.m.**

Draft Minutes

Present

Matt Browder/County
Andrew Dunn/County/HLC Secretary
Andra Eaves/County
Emily Makas/Mayor
Charlie Miller/City
Melanie Reddrick/City/HLC Chair
Jason Tapp/County
Peter Wasmer/Mayor
Stewart Gray, HL Director
John Howard, HL Historic Preservation Manager
Tommy Warlick, HL Historic Preservation Specialist
Elizabeth Stuart, HL Senior Administrative Support Assistant
Rachael Brown, HL Intern

Absent

Brian Clarke/County/HLC Vice Chair
Victoria Grey/County/HLC Treasurer/Property Oversight and Engagement Chair
John Kincheloe/City/Survey 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 HLC May Minutes

Commissioner Dunn presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Eaves that the Historic Landmarks Commission approve the consent agenda as presented for the approval of the Historic Landmarks Commission's May 11 meeting minutes. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

2. Chair's Report: Melanie Reddrick

a. HLC Appointments and Upcoming HLC Vacancy

Chair Reddrick stated that Sekiya Billman was appointed and Charlie Miller was reappointed to the Commission by Charlotte City Council.

Chair Reddrick stated that the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners will consider Andra Eaves' reappointment and Brian Clarke's vacancy on August 5. She asked for those interested in the vacancy to apply by July 27.

Chair Reddrick welcomed Sekiya Billman to her first meeting. Commissioner Billman introduced herself.

b. Committee Rosters and Schedules for Fiscal Year 27

Chair Reddrick stated that the Survey Committee and the Property Oversight and Engagement Committee will be updating rosters and schedules for the next fiscal year. She asked Commissioners to let staff know of their interest in serving.

3. Public Comment Period

No one signed up to speak.

4. Public Hearings

a. Dilworth Methodist Church South, 1829 Cleveland Avenue, Charlotte

Commissioner Wasmer presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Eaves that the Historic Landmarks Commission open a public hearing for the Dilworth Methodist Church South, 1829 Cleveland Avenue, Charlotte, N.C. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

Historic Preservation Specialist Warlick stated that the designation process for this property is underway.

Chase Klugh, designation report consultant, thanked Warlick for his assistance through the designation process.

Commissioner Dunn presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Eaves that the Historic Landmarks Commission close the public hearing. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

b. Foard House, 7410 Shady Lane, Charlotte

Commissioner Tapp presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Miller that the Historic Landmarks Commission open a public hearing for the Foard House, 7410 Shady Lane, Charlotte, N.C. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

Warlick stated that the property owner has been very supportive of the designation process.

Commissioner Dunn presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Miller that the Historic Landmarks Commission close the public hearing. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

5. Rules of Procedure Changes (HLC Officer Roles)

Chair Reddrick explained that staff has proposed to create a Projects Secretary position to replace the current Secretary position. Chair Reddrick read the proposed language in the Rules of Procedure.

Commissioner Dunn stated that he looks forward to this position having the opportunity to further the development of the revolving fund purchase scorecard.

Commissioner Makas stated that this change is a more practical use of the position.

Commissioner Makas presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Dunn that the proposed changes to the Rules of Procedure be approved, which will modify the Rules of Procedure to replace the Secretary position with a Projects Secretary position. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

Chair Reddrick stated that Vice Chair Clarke has proposed creating an officer position to be held by the immediate past Chair. She stated that this proposal will be deferred and considered at a future meeting.

6. Nominating Committee Report: Jason Tapp

Commissioner Tapp stated that the Nominating Committee recommends the following slate of officers for Fiscal Year 27:

Chair: Andrew Dunn

Vice Chair: Peter Wasmer

Secretary: Charlie Miller

Treasurer: Victoria Grey

Commissioner Tapp asked if any Commissioners would like to nominate another candidate from the floor. There were no nominations made from the floor.

Chair Reddrick presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Browder that the Historic Landmarks Commission approve the following slate of officers for Fiscal Year

2027: Chair: Andrew Dunn; Vice Chair: Peter Wasmer; Secretary: Charlie Miller; and Treasurer: Victoria Grey. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

Note: The newly elected officers started their positions immediately.

7. Nationwide Significance of the Elizabeth Lawrence House

Rachael Brown, Historic Landmarks intern, explained that the Commission can approve a special protection that allows the Commission to prevent the demolition of a property that has national or state significance. She noted that the Commission unanimously moved to nominate the Hezekiah Alexander House for a finding of statewide significance pursuant to the North Carolina General Statute in 2025. She reminded the Commission that a request for a demolition of a locally designated historic landmark cannot be denied. She stated that there is a specific statute that allows the Commission to deny the demolition of a landmark that has statewide or national significance unless the owner can prove that the denial of demolition would cause extreme hardship for the owner.

Brown listed the properties that have statewide significance in North Carolina. She also listed the 14 designated historic landmarks in Mecklenburg County that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and that have been previously determined by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to have either national or statewide significance, making them eligible for this special statutory protection against demolition. She stated that the only property on this list that the SHPO has determined to have nationwide significance is the Elizabeth Lawrence House. She explained that the SHPO requires that the property owner consent to this special designation and that the local Historic Landmarks Commission file an application on behalf of the property owner requesting this special designation. She stated that the property owner, which is the Wing Haven Foundation, has consented to pursuing this designation.

Commissioner Makas asked if the property is threatened. Warlick stated that it is not threatened. He stated that the property owner is excited and would like to take advantage of this special protection.

Chair Dunn asked if anyone currently lives in the house. Warlick stated that Wing Haven uses it primarily for the administration of its Foundation.

Commissioner Reddrick presented a motion seconded by Vice Chair Wasmer that the Historic Landmarks Commission nominate the Elizabeth Lawrence House and Garden at 348 Ridgewood Avenue in Charlotte, North Carolina, for a finding of "statewide significance" pursuant to N.C. General Statute section 160D-949(c). The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

8. Revolving Fund

a. Financial Report: Victoria Grey

Gray stated that the revolving fund balance is approximately \$4 million. He noted that staff will be intentional about sharing the revolving fund statement with the Commission since these funds are the Commission's responsibility.

Chair Dunn asked if the balance had changed since last month. Gray stated that the balance is largely the same except for a few utility bills for Edgewood Farm and the Kelly Alexander House.

b. Use of Revolving Fund for Purchase of Covenants and Loans

Gray stated that the officers have been discussing using the revolving fund to purchase an easement on a property rather than buying a property and potentially losing money. He stated that he has researched the possibility of buying easements and explained that the General Statute states that the Commission can buy an easement on a designated historic landmark. He explained that staff would need to present the idea to the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and determine if it is appropriate to use these funds to purchase easements since the revolving fund is County money. He recommended that the Commission instruct staff to contact the County Manager's Office to discuss how to proceed.

Commissioner Browder asked if an easement could be placed on a non-historic property. Gray stated he would need to discuss this with the County Attorney's Office since the General Statute specifies designated properties.

Chair Dunn stated that this is a good opportunity to reopen the conversation on the revolving fund in general and ensure that the goals of Mecklenburg County and the Commission align, including the possibility of replenishing the revolving fund if needed. Gray explained that the revolving fund is a line item in the County budget and is earmarked.

Commissioner Wasmer asked about the cost of enforcing an easement. Gray stated that the process could likely be handled with the County attorneys.

Gray stated that staff is looking for direction from Commissioners regarding whether they are interested in pursuing easements. He stated that staff would discuss the issue with the County Manager's Office before presenting it to the BOCC.

Commissioner Browder stated that it would be helpful to know whether easements on non-designated properties can be purchased.

Chair Dunn stated that having another preservation tool is a good idea.

Gray stated that staff will follow up with the County Manager's Office regarding next steps.

Gray stated that loans are complicated compared to easements. He stated that his research has shown that loans are prominent among other preservation organizations, with most of the loans limited to \$200,000-\$250,000. He explained the two loans: renovation loans and purchase/renovation loans.

Commissioner Browder expressed concern that the Commission may not be willing to foreclose in a situation where foreclosure is needed.

Gray stated that loans could be limited to an amount that the Commission finds comfortable. He stated that the Commission serving as a lender could also be tied to the property owner allowing the Commission to place an easement on a property.

Chair Dunn noted that the Commission should consider the element of servicing the loan.

Gray stated that staff will contact the City of Savannah to inquire how it uses preservation loans. He stated that a committee can be appointed to discuss this further.

Chair Dunn stated his comfort with easements and staff discussing easements further with County staff. He stated that more information is needed on loans. He stated that staff should contact the City of Savannah and provide options on how to proceed at a future Commission meeting. He stated that he is agreeable if staff presents a property to the Commission to consider for a purchase/renovation loan.

Gray stated that he will let the realtor for Edgewood Farm know of the possibility of the Commission agreeing to a purchase/renovation loan for a potential buyer.

Chair Dunn stated that the loan program would need to be thoroughly defined.

Commissioner Miller presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Browder that the Historic Landmarks Commission instruct Historic Landmarks staff to contact the County Manager's Office to further the discussion of easements and direct the Projects Secretary to work with staff to establish guidelines and answer questions related to renovation loans for approval at a future meeting. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

9. Mecklenburg Historic Cemetery Registry

Gray stated that staff has discussed developing a historic cemetery registry as a department tool. He explained that the National Register of Historic Places has a high threshold for cemeteries due to the large number of cemeteries that exist. He stated that a cemetery registry could be used as an organizational tool since it is not feasible for every cemetery in Mecklenburg County to be designated as a historic landmark. He stated that people could apply to place a cemetery on the registry. He requested that a committee consisting of Commissioners and staff be established to review submitted applications.

Commissioner Reddrick asked if this committee would be separate from the Survey Committee. Gray stated that this committee would be focused on cemeteries. He stated that it would report to the Commission when cemeteries are added to the registry. He explained that some cemeteries may become historic landmarks.

Chair Dunn asked if there are other frameworks available that establish criteria for historic cemeteries. Gray stated that criteria would be needed.

Warlick stated that cemeteries have more protection than designated landmarks. He explained the importance of locating abandoned cemeteries to protect them.

Commissioner Wasmer asked if there was a plan to also approach churches. Gray stated that this is a possibility and noted that properties can be placed on the Study List of Prospective Historic Landmarks. He explained that the current need is to organize cemeteries, especially abandoned cemeteries.

Chair Dunn stated that he, Director Gray, and Commissioner Tapp will meet to discuss the details of the proposed cemetery committee for consideration at a future meeting.

10. Survey Committee Report: John Kincheloe

Warlick stated that one designation report will be presented at the next Survey Committee meeting on June 24.

11. Project Updates

a. Kelly M. and Margaret G. A. Alexander House, 2128 Senior Drive, Charlotte

Howard stated that he met earlier in the day with Commissioner Makas and another University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC) professor to discuss the next steps and feasibility of this house being used as a house museum.

Commissioner Makas stated that the meeting today was to prepare to potentially meet with the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) after County Commissioner Griffin indicated that there may be interest from the County to create a house museum at this site. She stated that she is assembling a small team to propose a feasibility study.

Gray stated that the BOCC embraced this property when staff presented the proposal to purchase the property. He stated that staff committed to consulting with the BOCC on the future of the property. He stated that the BOCC was interested in staff researching how this property could be a public space rather than a private residence.

Commissioner Makas stated that UNCC students participated in an exercise this spring to interpret the site as a house museum with a potential addition in the back. She stated

that a range of ideas was presented and can be shared in the future. She stated that she is currently compiling the responses as a visualizing exercise to share with the BOCC. She stated that the next step will be to build on this student work with a professional team to determine the feasibility of responses and assist the Commission in determining how to proceed.

Chair Dunn asked if the BOCC is interested in potentially purchasing this house from the Commission. Commissioner Makas stated that the Park and Recreation department could purchase the property and manage it as a park site.

Chair Dunn stated that a public component is warranted but noted that the Commission is not in a position to administer a house museum. He asked if the person who expressed interest in purchasing the house at a previous meeting was still interested. Howard stated that this person contacts staff every few weeks to inquire about the house.

Commissioner Browder asked if nearby West Charlotte High School could use the property.

Chair Dunn asked if the property would need to be upfitted if turned into a public space. Howard stated that the buyer would be responsible for changes.

Commissioner Eaves presented a motion seconded by Commissioner Tapp that the Historic Landmarks Commission empower Commissioner Makas to discuss the feasibility of administering a house museum at the Kelly M. and Margaret G. A. Alexander House, 2128 Senior Drive, Charlotte, N.C. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

b. Edgewood Farm, 11132 Eastfield Road, Huntersville

Gray stated that the listing price for this property was recently lowered. He stated that no offers have been received.

Chair Dunn asked if the Commission could renovate the property before selling it. Gray stated that the Commission could renovate the property but explained that it is difficult for the County to be competitive with such tasks. Commissioner Makas stated that a renovation would limit the property's use.

c. Torrence-Lytle School, 13900 Holbrooks Road, Huntersville

Howard stated that he and Gray met earlier in the day to review the scorecard to rank the submitted proposals for the adaptive reuse of this property. He stated that there are eight proposals that will be reviewed by Deputy County Manager Leslie Johnson with feedback provided to staff likely in July. He stated that the plan is for the officers to then review the proposals.

Gray explained that the Request for Proposals stated that the officers and staff will meet and review the proposals to determine which one will be presented to the full Commission. He stated that staff will instruct the chosen applicant to meet with the Pottstown community before the proposal is reviewed by the Commission.

12. Community Outreach Updates

a. Trivia Night at Heist Brewery Recap

Howard stated that the trivia night at Heist Brewery on May 20 had a good turnout.

Gray stated that the department received grant funding from the state for window workshops, which will be held on November 7 and 14.

13. Historic Landmarks Staff Report

a. Easement Owner Postcard Notifications

Howard stated that staff sent postcards to every easement owner, informing owners that the Commission holds easements on their properties.

14. Old Business

There was no old business.

15. New Business

Commissioner Browder stated that he spoke to the owner of Dunkin' Donuts, which is in the building that used to house the former Oleen's Bar on South Boulevard. He stated that the owner is not interested in designating the building as a historic landmark and he noted that the owner does not intend to sell the building. Gray stated that a historic marker at the site might be appropriate.

Commissioner Tapp reminded the Commission that the Atlas Preservation Tour would be held at Settlers' Cemetery on Thursday, June 11.

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.