Charlotte-Mecklenburg
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
October 12, 2026
Hybrid Meeting
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, Room 266
6:00 p.m. – 7:54 p.m.

Draft Minutes

Present
Sekiya Billman/City
Andrew Dunn/County/HLC Chair
Andra Eaves/County
Victoria Grey/County/HLC Treasurer
John Kincheloe/City/Survey Committee Chair
Emily Makas/Mayor
Charlie Miller/City/HLC Projects Secretary
Melanie Reddrick/City
John Short/County
Jason Tapp/County
Peter Wasmer/Mayor/HLC Vice Chair
Stewart Gray, HL Director
John Howard, HL Historic Preservation Manager
Tommy Warlick, HL Historic Preservation Specialist
Elizabeth Stuart, HL Senior Administrative Support Assistant

Absent
Matt Browder/County

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 September Minutes

Commissioner Grey 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 September 14 meeting minutes. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

2. Chair's Report: Andrew Dunn

Chair Dunn stated that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to hear from two finalists for the redevelopment of the Torrence-Lytle School property. He stated that both parties have conducted community hearings in Huntersville. He explained that there would be

no public comments at this meeting and noted that the public would have the opportunity to comment on proposals at the Commission's November 9 meeting.

3. Review of Little Sugar Creek Developments Proposal for Torrence-Lytle School

Jerry Lee, founder of Little Sugar Creek Developments, led the discussion of his organization's proposal. He emphasized the community focus of this proposal, including space for a café and bakery, a neighborhood grocery, and local entrepreneur opportunities. He stated that the 1937 Building would be used as an auditorium, coworking space, historic classroom museum, and community meeting rooms. He stated that Buildings B and C would be residential wings.

Commissioner Grey noted a comment from the community meeting regarding whether one-bedroom lofts were needed. She asked why this element was not adjusted in favor of two- or three-bedroom apartments. Lee stated that he would conduct a community and marketplace analysis to determine appropriate housing for the area. He stated that the layout of the buildings may cause a reduction in the number of proposed units, which could make some apartments larger.

Commissioner Reddrick asked why the residential phase would be the final phase of construction. Lee stated that this was out of consideration for residents so that they are not disrupted by construction.

Commissioner Reddrick asked about the cost estimate for construction. Lee stated that his researched construction estimates pre-Covid were lower than post-Covid. He stated that his team member Victor Jones has advised him on expectations. He stated that he does not know the cost estimate yet. Jones stated that the organization could research estimates internally or hire a third-party estimator or contractor. He stated that costs have escalated and are unpredictable for new construction.

Commissioner Reddrick asked about expectations of additional abatement in addition to mold remediation. Lee stated that there are still a lot of infrastructure questions to explore.

Commissioner Wasmer asked if the organization considered developing the site to help fund this project. Lee stated no and explained that the existing footprint seemed to be enough for this proposed project.

Commissioner Reddrick asked if there was certainty that the construction costs will exceed the economic value. Lee stated no.

Chair Dunn asked Lee about his experience managing projects of this size and complexity. Lee stated that he has never managed a project of this size. He stated that he intends to have many partners supporting the project.

Chair Dunn noted the amount of government interaction in the proposal and asked if Lee anticipated working with a lobbyist or public affairs consultant. Lee stated that he does not have lobbyists and would be the central person on the project.

Commissioner Reddrick asked about the origins of the two-year feasibility analysis period. Lee stated two years would be enough time to capture a political cycle.

Commissioner Short asked if Lee has discussed the idea of a bakery and café with the community. Lee stated that he has not yet discussed this idea with the community. He stated that he would like a local organization to run these elements.

Commissioner Wasmer asked about the anticipated relationship with Mecklenburg County and the nearby David B. Waymer Recreation & Senior Center. Lee stated that there has been interest in the site being activated in the manner his organization has proposed.

4. Review of DreamKey Partners Proposal for Torrence-Lytle School

Julie Porter, President of DreamKey Partners, briefly reviewed the history of the Torrence-Lytle School.

Fred Dodson, COO of DreamKey Partners, led the discussion of his organization's proposal. Dodson reviewed his organization's experience in developing affordable housing communities. He stated this proposal would keep and restore the existing buildings and construct one new building. He stated that the buildings would be age-restricted housing for seniors with community space.

Commissioner Reddrick asked how long it took the organization's previous project at the Dillard School in Yanceyville, North Carolina, to be fully leased. Dodson stated it was fully leased within approximately eight months.

Commissioner Reddrick asked if the need for affordable housing in Pottstown was comparable to the need elsewhere. Dodson stated that affordable housing in Pottstown would be highly in demand.

Commissioner Reddrick asked if DreamKey Partners would own and manage the property. Dodson stated that the organization works with third party management companies. Commissioner Reddrick asked if DreamKey Partners provides oversight of the management companies. Dodson stated that the organization is always involved and oversees work closely, including with monthly reporting from management companies.

Commissioner Grey asked why only one-bedroom apartments are being proposed. She stated that this development would not serve the whole community if housing were age restricted. Dodson stated that it is difficult to build apartments from classrooms. Shawn

Kennedy, CEO of Kennedy Properties and Development, stated that aging in place is a high priority for the residents of Pottstown.

Commissioner Short asked if it were possible to ensure that Pottstown residents are prioritized for the proposed housing. Dodson stated that there are fair housing requirements and noted that many factors depend on the construction timeline.

Commissioner Reddrick asked about the possibility that this project fails. Dodson stated that his organization has not walked away from any developments. He stated that the project would be tough if federal tax credits were not available.

Commissioner Short asked about the organization's sources of funding. Dodson stated that the organization often needs multiple sources of funding.

Commissioner Reddrick asked about the return on investment. Dodson stated that refinancing would happen eventually.

Chair Dunn asked Dodson to verify that his organization is proposing to purchase the property from the Commission. He also asked about placing an easement or other restrictions on the property. Dodson stated that his organization is proposing to purchase the property. He stated that restrictions would depend on not interfering with investor requirements. He explained that restrictions would already be included in the federal tax credits and affordable housing requirements.

Chair Dunn requested that staff share the Commission's draft easement language with Dodson before the November 9 meeting.

Chair Dunn asked about the phases of development. Dodson stated that the residential phase and non-residential phase would be independent.

Chair Dunn asked if the organization has the capacity to give this project the attention it needs. Dodson answered yes.

Commissioner Reddrick asked about the process for the community space. Dodson stated that he would talk to the Pottstown community before anything is planned. Kennedy stated that the community would like a gathering space where the community's story can be shared.

5. Next Steps

Chair Dunn encouraged Commissioners to reach out to staff with follow up questions. He stated that public comments would be heard at the November 9 meeting.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.