

Public Meeting
February 15, 2022
6:00 p.m.
McAdoo Room, 3rd Floor,
Truist/BB&T Building
201 W. Market St., Greensboro, NC

AGENDA

A. Call to Order

Chair Briggs called the meeting to order and stated that this is the first meeting since September.

B. Roll Call

Kaye Graybeal called the roll and stated that each of the following members were present for this meeting:

Chairman Briggs; Jayne Payne; Dawn Chaney; Ms. Hammond; Mr. Dowell; David Millsaps.

Members not present were Ms. Pittman, David Horth

C. Agenda Amendments

There were no changes to the agenda.

D. Approval September 21, 2021 Minutes

Mr. Dowell stated that he has a few corrections to the September minutes: On page 1, under July 20th, he asked that his name be spelled correctly, Dowell, the first line under the approval of minutes. There were also questions about the city involvement of murals painted on walls, and Ms. Graybeal stated that representatives from the City of Greensboro told her, including the Director, Sue Schwartz, that indeed, they were afforded an opportunity to review the mural, but there is not a formal or required review process. So, they did know that it was planned but since they do not have a formal review process or approval process, that approval was not part of their process. They were just made aware of it and that was the extent of their informal review.

Mr. Dowell also asked about on page 2, the reference to the applicant going through Ordinance #2 with the City, and he would only be able to get 32% instead of the 50% tax credit. Kaye Graybeal stated that he was alluding to the fact that the brick wall was not an original exterior brick wall, so she thinks that he was saying that the City was not going to give him the full 50% deferral on the property because they were going to subtract out the value of that brick wall, because it wasn't the original exterior brick wall.

Mr. Dowell stated that he did not know or understand the reference to the 2nd Ordinance of the City. Kaye Graybeal stated that she did not know. She thinks he may have meant the 2nd approval from the City. Chair Briggs stated that this Commission makes recommendations to

the County Council and they may have been what he was talking about. Probably something to designate the interior should have been added.

Mr. Dowell stated that on page 4, the first full paragraph **“He would make a Finding of fact that the size and scope of this mural do not fit historically with a 2-foot tall for a max area.”** He asked if they could add the 2-foot tall for a max area of general, commercial historic commercial signs? Ms. Graybeal stated that that could be done. Mr. Dowell stated that he recommends it saying, “General Commercial Historic signs.” He also stated that on page 6, “Chair Briggs had stated **“The neighborhood is very much against it but they would be in favor of it if it was a parking development, but they are not happy with the Publix grocery store at that location.”** Chair Briggs asked that this portion just be stricken from the minutes to avoid confusion OR, it could say that he had stated that they would be in favor if it were a “housing” development.”

Mr. Dowell moved approval of the September 21, 2021 minutes with the above discussed changes, seconded by Ms. Payne. The Commission voted 6-0 in favor of the motion.

E. Old Business

No old business to discuss

F. New Business:

New Business

Evidentiary Hearing Item

- 1) Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) after-the-fact request for the William G. Wiley House and property for window replacement, door replacement, tree removal and addition of gutters.

Chair Briggs invited anyone who was present to speak, to come forward to be affirmed or sworn in.

Kaye Graybeal stated that staff would not be making a recommendation, but staff did develop and did research to state as many findings as possible from which the Board make derive their final determination.

Ms. Graybeal stated that she received some further information after the staff reports went out that showed that there was a smokehouse that was demolished, as well as an early machine shop. So, there were two (2) outbuildings that were demolished on the property that were considered to be contributing, and normally, a COA would be required for that work. The Town of Jamestown, as it was in their jurisdiction, and a building permit is not required to replace windows and doors or to demolish buildings or remove trees. So, even though a building permit is not required, the Certificate of Appropriateness is still required. There is also the addition on the property or a metal outbuilding that is next to the existing garage and they did receive a development clearance Certificate in order to build that metal building. They were also able to get a building permit from the County, so they did get the approval to do that metal building. Normally, staff would review that, as well, but there are some new staff and they were not aware of the Landmark status. So, there was the demolition of two (2) contributing outbuildings and the addition of one (1) new outbuilding.

This property was designated as a landmark in 1993. One of the main reasons it was designated as a landmark was because the William G. Wiley House was built with only minor modifications from the Radford American Homes mail-order publication out of Riverside, Illinois. The house design number is #509 and it was constructed in 1908 and cost about \$1,800. It has been a well-preserved house with regard to that particular type of design and floor plan and materials. It is considered to be a late Victorian Colonial Revival house. It was designated under Criterion "C", Architecture. It is especially significant as one of the few examples in the State of an Agricultural property directly associated with a mail-order design book of the period. The farmhouse complex was recently comprised of a house, a garage, a smokehouse, a workshop, and there is a cattle barn that is existing but in deteriorating condition. In 2016, the HPC approved a horse barn to be demolished. Now, the smokehouse and a workshop has been demolished.

In regard to the windows, they were one-over-one with no muntins, they were double-hung and they were removed as originals and they were a character-defining type of window for a 1908 farmhouse. The paneled wood doors were removed and were earlier original and character-defining for a 1908 farmhouse and those were a half-light door, with glass in the top part and three (3) horizontal panels below for the front and side doors. The design and materials of the new steel replacement door with leaded glass, would not have been found on early farmhouses in Guilford County and the design does not replicate the original half-light wood paneled door of the Wiley House. The double-paned window replacements have the same one-over-one configuration and similar dimensions as the originals, however, the material is vinyl, which is not considered to sufficiently simulate historic materials for replacement on historic buildings, according to the National Parks Service and HPC Preference. The Commission utilized the Secretary of Interior's Standards on which to review these COA's and those the National Parks Services Secretary of Interior's Standards.

The Evergreen tree that was removed was, indeed, greater than 4 inches in diameter at breast height and the current list of major and minor works, does say that removal of healthy trees, 4 inches over in diameter at 4 feet above the ground are reviewed by the Commission before removal. She does not have any early pictures of the house, but the tree was probably very old and was not dead but was removed due to some safety concerns. The uppermost portion of the tree had broken off in a storm and the tree was about 8 feet away from the house and a tree company recommended removal due to their safety concerns.

The new aluminum gutters are not inappropriate and help to direct water run-off from the roof to reduce the chances of rot. Two out-buildings that were considered to be resources which contributed to the historic significance of the property, the smokehouse and the machine shop have also been demolished. The smokehouse was contemporary with the house and the machine shop appears to have been built later, but it was still an early outbuilding that was considered to be a contributing factor.

The staff report mentions a new concrete pad that has been poured and that was in preparation for the metal building that was approved with a building permit by the Town and the County. That has been added now, at this point, next to an existing garage. The current owners painted the exterior white and the house was painted a bright yellow with three (3) color schemes, but the owner indicated that they did an analysis of early paint layers and that an earlier layer on the house was white. They have also done some repairs on the interior and repainted the doors, mantels, walls, and moldings white, and that is a color that they were previously painted. The

owner's power-washed the asphalt shingle roof. The windows at the back of the house were also replaced although the bathroom window remains as it was. They also looked into rebuilding the base of the floor of the smokehouse but the termite damage was so great that the floor was opened up and the main structure would require an entire re-build, which is not economically feasible at this time. They treated the entire home for termites to keep them from spreading.

The National Parks Services Technical Brief #9, related to the repair of Historic Wooden Windows, was presented in the handout included in the Commission members' packets for their review.

Glen Laivins, 4909 Guilford College Road, the property owner was affirmed for his testimony during the meeting, and stated that they are not preservationists, but are fixer-uppers and flip homes. In fact, they previously had a beautiful home in Jameson Meadows. They started looking at this house in 2017 and it was completely uninhabitable. In fact, when they went to get the loan for the home, the bank stated that it was uninhabitable. He explained to the representative at the bank that they intended to get the house in habitable condition. They fell in love with the home and proceeded to make renovations and updates, making the house habitable. They did not want to destroy any of the looks or characteristics of the original home. The doors were broken and nailed to keep them together and were inoperable because when someone opened the door, the frame also moved with the door. For security reasons, they put in a security-style metal door. There were many animals that were living in the attic of the house. It was noted during their renovation work that there was no insulation in the exterior wall areas. They tried to preserve all that they could to take care of the home. In the smokehouse, the floor was completely gone and it was just dirt and wood chips and it looked like newspapers of some sort had been in there. The top roof had been leaking and there was water standing in some places and Termin-X pointed out some sort of wood eating bugs. They had to make some hard decisions about whether to try to save the smokehouse or use that renovation money on other projects. They spent about \$60,000 just on the initial repairs just to shear up the house so it would not fall in on itself. The vegetation that had also taken over the house, was tremendous and it cost a lot of money to make those repairs.

In response to questions by the Commission members, Mr. Laivins responded that the workshop, the barns, and the smokehouse were all determined to be beyond repair or restoration as they were mostly just debris. He did save the upper beams and some bricks from the workshop. He did not realize that his repairs and renovation work was going to cause such an uproar with the Historic Society. Ms. Payne suggested that the applicant get in touch with the Director of the Historic Society or someone in the Town's Offices to obtain more information about guidelines, rules and regulations that will help him in future renovation work on the house.

Ms. Graybeal stated that the task at hand is to assess what the next steps are for the applicant, and look at options that are available to him.

There being no one else to speak in favor or in opposition to this request, Chair Briggs stated that the Public Hearing was closed.

In response to some questions, Mr. Liavins stated that he does still have the front door and the side door and he has collected several other doors from the Renovation Restore place in Greensboro.

Chair Briggs asked how the Commission wished to move forward on this case. Ms. Graybeal stated that the options are to go down the list of changes and see which ones the Commission wished to approve and which they did not want to approve. The Commission does not dictate the solution, but see what solution might be offered to meet the guidelines. Another option is to re-designate the building because of the concern about returning it to its original materials. It sounds like, over time, there was no one loving there or they just didn't want to keep the house up, so the house ended up being neglected.

Chair Briggs stated that there are several things that come to mind; painting the house white, the Commission does not regulate colors; the Evergreen tree removal, considering that it was damaged and may have been a threat to the house, that is something that might have easily been approved; and the gutters might have been approved had they gone through the process. He pointed out these are findings of fact that he wants included in the record. The gutters were likely not inappropriate to the property and there was other work done that would likely have been approved.

Chair Briggs made a motion to approve the aluminum gutters, the removal of the tree and paint color on the exterior and interior of the house, based on the fact that they were not found to be inappropriate. Ms. Payne seconded the motion. The Commission voted 6-0 in favor of the motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness. (Ayes: Briggs, Payne, Chaney, Hammond, Dowell, Millsaps. Nays; None.)

Chair Briggs stated that now the Commission would address the loss of two (2) outbuildings, windows, the front and side doors.

Mr. Dowell stated that prior to joining HPC, he had heard that the outbuildings were always the first ones to get gone and he has rarely seen that on the cases that he has participated in. That is a part of history that really is the setting of the scenes and they are getting lost in the shuffle. Ms. Graybeal pointed out that they are usually not heated or cooled and people usually want to build bigger and low maintenance for storage and are sometimes considered to be dispensable. Chair Briggs asked if there is a finding of fact related to this particular matter?

Mr. Dowell stated that he feels that there has been enough information presented and talked about and the photographs presented to move forward with a recommendation. Kaye Graybeal noted that there was a proposed road widening project in the immediate area and she felt that was what prompted the historic designation of this house that it would not be negatively impacted by the roadwork. She pointed out that there is the original front door which could act as a guide for replication.

Mr. Millsaps stated that three of the windows at the rear are vinyl and the kitchen window is vinyl and that is not an acceptable material for the windows. Chair Briggs suggested that it might be beneficial to hold this discussion on the windows open and do a site visit to obtain more information. There is a question in the air about possible un-designation of this property. Mr. Millsaps stated that this makes this conversation difficult and trying to come to any reasonable conclusion is also challenging.

Ms. Hammond stated that she is thinking about all the property owners who have bent over backwards to do the right thing and if the Commission does find a way to approve this request, then it isn't fair to the other property owners.

Chair Briggs stated that there is nothing holding them to making a decision tonight.

Ms. Payne stated that she agrees that this discussion should be continued to another meeting. Therefore, Ms. Payne made a motion to continue.

Ms. Payne made a motion to recommend de-designation on this property at 4909 Guilford College Road, as an historic property based on findings of fact that indicate loss of integrity and significance, which have been indicated within the previous discussions. The findings of fact will also include the de-designation of the property's replacement windows and doors and destruction of outbuildings without a COA. Ms. Payne asked if that was enough in the motion. Kaye Graybeal stated that in a report that is given to the governing body that makes the final, staff would provide that documentation in the form of the staff report and the minutes. Mr. Millsaps seconded the motion. The Commission voted 6-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Briggs, Hammond, Payne, Millsaps, Dowell, Chaney. Nays: None)

G. Other Business

2. Review and approval of updated HPC Rules of Procedure draft 2/2/2022

Kaye Graybeal stated that in regard to the term limits that the County Commission goes by, they can provide an exception if they want to keep someone beyond the two (2) 4-year terms.

She explained that the updated HPC Rules of Procedure are based on the State Statute and there is a State – NC-160(d) which was adopted last year and put into effect last year.

Chair Briggs stated that the Commission members felt it would be more beneficial to wait until the next meeting to approve it.

Kay Graybeal stated that there are no applications for the March meeting. Ms. Payne suggested that they meet anyway and have a work session.

H. Adjournment

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 8:06 o'clock p.m.