

**PUBLIC MEETING
GUILFORD COUNTY
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
March 15, 2022
6:00 p.m.
Public Meeting
McAdoo Room, 3rd Floor, Truist/B B & T Building
201 W Market St, Greensboro, NC**

Following the tour from 4:30pm to 5:30pm, the public meeting will reconvene at the regularly scheduled meeting time of 6:00 pm in the McAdoo Room, 3rd Floor of the Truist Building (former B B & T Building) at 201 W Market Street.

Chair Briggs called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m.

Each of the following members were present for this meeting:

Chairman Briggs; Jayne Payne; Dawn Chaney; Terry Hammond; Sean Dowell; David Millsaps and Megan Sommers.

Members not present were Ms. Pittman, David Horth

Chair Briggs announced that the Commission did have a tour this afternoon of a building in High Point called the Fli-Back Toy Factory Building on West Green Drive. Many of the Commissioners have been there or attended the meeting today. The first public hearing item on the agenda relates to this building to consider a recommendation for designation to the City of High Point. Commissioners have received the local landmark report in their packages.

Public Hearing Item:

1) Historic Landmark Designation Application consideration and recommendation: Fli-Back Toy Factory Building, 710 W. Greene Drive, High Point, NC **(REQUEST RECOMMENDED)**

Kaye Graybeal stated that she wanted to introduce the newest member of the Commission, Megan Sommers. Chair Briggs welcomed Ms. Sommers to the Commission. He asked if she would like to introduce herself.

Megan Sommers stated that she lives in Greensboro and works for an interior designer and previously she worked for a large architecture and planning firm in Atlanta, GA, and she would be representing Greensboro.

The Commission members introduced themselves: Chair Briggs stated that he is at-large and he is from High Point; Jane Payne represents Jamestown; Dawn Chaney represents Greensboro; Terry Hammond represents Oak Ridge; David Millsaps represents Greensboro. Chair Briggs stated that there are a couple of Commissioners missing and they also represent High Point, Gibsonville and other areas in the County.

Kaye Graybeal stated that she would like Samantha Smith to speak on this particular case before the Commission. She stated that this is a genre of building that was very prominent in High Point as a manufacturing town and there are still a lot of warehouses in High Point because of the furniture industry and a lot of them were manufacturing plants, but now some have become very obsolete but there are a lot of companies that like to look at them as showrooms because they have the large open floor space and a lot of square footage available with big windows. That's the case of this building and she does not know how long it has been vacant but it is being rescued because it is masonry and is still intact. The roof is leaking and the wooden floors are rotting away and a lot of the historical elements are going away. Hopefully, the folks that bought it and want to renovate it for their furniture showroom will be able to save it. There is sort of a campus of buildings in that area that are on the study list for the National Register. This building was not on the study list but the State agree that it is worthy of receiving tax credits and there's also going to be a review at the State Preservation Office at their next meeting. If this building is designated as a local landmark they will be bringing those renovations plans for review by the Commission. This building was built in 1945 and is significant, both for its example of type of architecture and structure. It is the original site where toys were manufactured, which were the wooden paddle with an attached red rubber ball. Staff feels that there is a great deal of architectural significance shown in this building and should be considered for recommendation of designation.

Samantha Smith, 211 Tate Street, Greensboro, stated that the Fli-Back building is a great example of that type of architecture of the time, (1945), which is slowly disappearing in High Point, but it also really significant as a location where the Fli-Back paddle-ball toy was manufactured. The Fli-Back was ubiquitous and famous in North Carolina and internationally as the Fli-Back was a very popular toy. This is the main surviving location that represents that important historical component. The National Register wasn't quite the best fit for this building, just because some of the building that were part of the whole Fli-Back campus are significantly altered or gone now, but it makes it a really good fit for local landmark because we have this one really good representative example of a building that tell a story and can be protected by the status for the long-term. The previous owner and the current owner are here to work together really closely to bring this building back to its former glory and doing so in a way that's really sensitive to the historic fabric and they want to do it right and celebrate this building. If it is approved tonight, in the coming months they are going be doing a COA process for that restoration, following historical guidelines. This is a great project for High Point citizens. As said previously the National Register is not a good fit and they cannot go for adaptive reuse tax credits, however, they still respect the integrity of the building. After review of the application, the National Register recommended local landmark status as a great alternative for the building. There was a substantial discussion about the other buildings on the campus that were unfit for recommendations. She pointed out that page 8 and 9 shows the buildings being discussed. Chair Briggs pointed out that page 41 also has some information that related to the National Register's recommendation. He does not want the Commission members to get to distracted by the fact that the National Register is not being pursued on this building.

Kaye Graybeal pointed out that the City of High Point likes to take these case to their Commission for review, as well as the High Point Preservation Commission and City Council for their recommendation, as well.

Chair Briggs pointed out for clarification that what the Commission is reviewing is the interior and exterior designation for this building. There is not much land that isn't built on so it would be the full 50% tax credits just for the building. He also pointed out that the State Restoration branch has seen the plans and they gave a verbal approval for everything that was sent to them. Ms. Smith stated that she would be bringing that back to the Commission as a COA.

Chair Briggs stated that this would be similar to Revolution Mills in Greensboro, for a better comparison.

Steven Fare, 710 W. Greene Drive, stated that the interior has basically been the same since he has owned it.

Chair Brigg stated that, historically, when there is something concerning a voluntary process with the State Historic Preservation Office Restoration Grant, from what the Commission has heard the applicant is following their guidance and the Commission would now be "hands-on", because he does not want the Commission to say, "You've got to keep the pulley" and then Mitch Wilds in Raleigh says, "You can get rid of the pulley." And then the owner is left not knowing which direction to take. So that the Commission is never in conflict, they defer to the State because the State has a broader opinion that relates to the Secretary of Interior of Parks Service in Washington, DC. and the Commission cannot go against that.

Mr. Dowell arrived at 6:46 p.m. for the remainder of the meeting.

Ms. Hammond moved to make a recommendation of landmark designation for the property referred to as a Fli-Back Toy Factory, located at 716 W. Greene Drive, High Point, NC, based on the evidence presented in the staff report and this public hearing, The property is significant for it's architectural type of manufacturing building in High Point, as well as the cultural significance because the Fli-Back Company produced the paddle ball toy that was marketed and famous internationally approximately 1950 through 1981. In addition, to the exterior, the interior features will also be designated, seconded by Ms. Payne. The Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion, with one (1) abstention, Mr. Dowell. (Ayes: Briggs, Payne, Sommers, Chaney, Hammond and Millsaps. Nays: None. Abstained: Dowell.)

Other Business:

2) Work Session on procedural items

3) Review and consideration of approval of updated Rules of Procedure draft

2/16/2022

Kaye Graybeal stated that there will be a discussion about the Rules of Procedure and Terms for Commission members. There will also be a discussion about trees and that will be addressed in the list of Major and Minor Works. She presented handouts for the Commission members' review.

Kaye Graybeal stated that in regard to the Rules of Procedures, the hand-out goes over that in pretty good detail, especially relative to the Terms of Office for the members. It is actually 8 years, (a two-term) limit for each member. She pointed out that the County Commissioners can waive that term limit at their discretion.

Ms. Chaney left the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

After a lengthy discussion, it was felt that the Court Reporter could leave as there did not seem to be any other pertinent items to discuss, there would just be continued general discussion.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:27 o'clock p.m.