

Historic District Commission

July 27, 2017

Minutes

Chairman Jennifer Stepp called the regular meeting of the Historic District to order at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 27, 2017 at City Hall in the Council Chambers.

Present: Commissioners Lynn Stepp, Carol Hauer, Ben Brackett, Ed Starr, Dwayne JohnPaoli, Vice-Chairman William Blackwelder, and Chairman Jennifer Stepp

Absent: None

Staff present: Kim Wallis, Planner; and Chrystal Howard, Secretary

ITEM 1a. Roll Call / Sound Check

Chairman Stepp opened the meeting and declared a quorum.

ITEM 1b. Oath of Office

Ms. Howard administered the Oath of Office to Commissioners Lynn Stepp, William Blackwelder and Dwayne JohnPaoli.

ITEM 1b. Adoption of the Agenda

Commissioner Starr made a motion to accept the agenda as presented and Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

ITEM 1c. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Blackwelder made a motion to approve the April 27, 2017 minutes and Commissioner JohnPaoli seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chairman Stepp stated that because of the quasi-judicial format of the hearings, persons wishing to speak and offer evidence are required by North Carolina law to be sworn in or affirmed, and asked all speakers to come forward to be sworn in or affirmed. Oaths of speakers were administered by Ms. Chrystal Howard.

Chairman Stepp explained the rules of procedure and order of business for the public hearings.

ITEM 2. Public Hearing – Certificate of Appropriateness (File # 8805)

- Martin Taylor
- 431 S York Street
- Installation of a 6' side yard privacy fence

Chairman Stepp recognized Ms. Kim Wallis, Planner for the purpose of staff presentation.

Ms. Wallis stated that the applicant is Mr. Martin Taylor. The property is 431 S. York Street and the request is to install a new 6' privacy side yard fence. Ms. Wallis provided the property description, findings, key elements of the design, and excerpts from the Design Guidelines as presented in the agenda. No questions were asked by the Commissioners.

Chairman Stepp recognized Mr. Martin Taylor, 431 S. York Street of Gastonia. Mr. Taylor submitted photos to the Commissioners. Mr. Taylor is requesting approval of his fence to provide and enjoy privacy. Future plan is to have the property rezoned as residential, but this process hasn't been initiated.

Discussion amongst Commissioners and applicant occurred regarding the fence being made from pressure treated deck lumber, the style being similar to a stock fence, the fence having a top to it, the finish side of the fence facing the neighbor's property, the request to change the fence stain instead of white paint as indicated on the application, and verification of handrails. Mr. Taylor explained that cost was a factor in his decision on the fence chosen. Ms. Wallis used google maps to provide a visual understanding of 431 S. York Street for the Commissioners. Commissioners and Mr. Taylor discussed staggering the fencing so the finish side is facing his property, as well as, the neighbor's property. Mr. Taylor is willing if this is the Commissioner's decision.

Commissioner JohnPaoli made the motion to close the public hearing and Commissioner Blackwelder seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner JohnPaoli shared his concern of setting the presence on this fence style decision. Chairman Stepp commented that the Design Guidelines discourage stockade fences. Discussion ensued amongst Commissioners regarding adding conditions. Conditions were determined after

Historic District Commission

July 27, 2017

Minutes

considering applicant's costs, preferred options, staining after six months for the wood, and ease of maintenance, and consistency.

Commissioner JohnPaoli made the motion to approve the fence as presented with the conditions that the decorative finished top board be added, posts are higher than presented conforming to the stated guidelines, and the fence is stained and sealed. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. Commissioners approved unanimously.

ITEM 3. Other Business

Ms. Wallis stated that the adoption of the new design guidelines was to occur at this meeting; however, language will be added requiring a subcommittee to review. The Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) will need to reflect this change and be presented to City Council. The next City Council meeting is Tuesday, August 15, 2017. The adoption of the new design guidelines may take place at the next Historic District meeting scheduled Tuesday, August 24, 2017.

Mr. Ted Alexander, Western Regional Office Director for Preservation North Carolina (Preservation NC) thanked the Commission for allowing him to come and talk about Preservation NC. Mr. Ted Alexander stated that the Preservation NC is a statewide nonprofit organization that has been around for approximately 80 years, since 1939. For the past 80 years, they have been involved with protecting and preserving properties through a variety of ways, primarily with PNC's protected covenants on the deed or easements. Mr. Alexander distributed the Spring 2017 North Carolina Preservation advertisement and mentioned a book on architecture in North Carolina that is for sale. Their mission is to protect and promote buildings, landscapes and sites important to the diverse heritage of North Carolina. Preservation NC has around 5,000 members. Mr. Alexander explained the Endangered Properties Program. Preservation NC acquires endangered historic properties and then finds purchasers that can rehabilitate them. Mr. Alexander commented that Gaston County and Gastonia are areas that are agreeable to work with and interested in preserving their historic character from a municipal standpoint. Mr. Alexander proceeded to show and explain examples of restored properties. Discussion ensued on Loray Mill. Mr. Alexander thanked the Commissioners again. Commissioner Blackwelder asked about the dates for the Preservation NC's Annual Conference and Mr. Alexander answered that the conference is September 27th - 29th. The Commissioners thanked Mr. Ted Alexander for his presentation.

The next regular scheduled meeting is Tuesday, August 24, 2017.

Commissioners JohnPaoli and Blackwelder will attend the subcommittee meeting afterwards.

ITEM 4. Adjournment

There being no other business, Chairman Stepp adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Chrystal Howard, Secretary

Jennifer Stepp, Chairman