

Historic District Commission
September 27, 2018
Minutes

Chairman William Blackwelder called the meeting of the Historic District Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 27, 2018 at City Hall in the Council Chambers.

Present: Commissioners Clark Simon, Andi Eddlemon, William Blackwelder (Chair), Ed Starr, Carol Hauer, and Jerry Tucker

Absent: Commissioner Dick Ruhlman

Staff present: Jason Thompson, Planning Director; Kim Wallis, Planner; Chrystal Howard, Secretary; and Gary Saine, City Engineer

Chairman Blackwelder welcomed to the Historic District Commission newly appointed Commissioners, Mr. Clark Simon and Mr. Jerry Tucker. Ms. Chrystal Howard administered the Oath of Office to the newly appointed commissioners.

ITEM 1a. Roll Call / Sound Check

Chairman Blackwelder opened the meeting and declared a quorum.

ITEM 1b. Adoption of the Agenda

Commissioner Starr made the motion to adopt the September 27, 2018 Agenda. Chairman Blackwelder seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

ITEM 1c. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Eddlemon made the motion to approve the August 23, 2018 minutes. Commissioner Tucker seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Chairman Blackwelder stated 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. Speakers were sworn in by Ms. Howard.

Chairman Blackwelder provided an explanation for public hearings on Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications and the order of business.

ITEM 2. Public Hearing – Certificate of Appropriateness (File # 9100)

- Unbridled Holdings, LLC.
- 413 S York St
- Install new 2 ft. x 5 ft. sign on front of building

Chairman Blackwelder opened the public hearing recognizing Ms. Kim Wallis, Planner for the purpose of staff presentation.

Ms. Wallis stated the applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to install a new 2 ft. x 5 ft. sign on the front of building. The structure is an office building with a one story, brick, front-gable roof, 6/6 sash, front-gable porch, built in 1984, and is considered *Non-Contributing* to the district. The sign will be 2 ft. high by 5 ft. wide and located on the front gable of the porch, centered above the door. The design of the sign will be the Elite Insurance logo, with dark blue and light blue colors, on a white background. The sign will be mounted on a HDU board – a strong naturally waterproof sign material. The sign design was displayed. Ms. Wallis finished her presentation by reading the excerpts included in the staff report.

Commissioner Starr asked if the yard sign will remain and Ms. Wallis stated there will be two signs; the monument sign and the wall mounted sign. Commissioner Starr stated aesthetically he had a problem with the proposed sign.

Commissioner Eddlemon inquired about the signs in the window and the banner. Ms. Wallis was unsure if the signs in the window will remain, but the banner will be removed. Mr. Thompson replied from an architectural perspective it does not lend itself to an ideal location for placement compared to commercial buildings. The signage in the window would be considered as wall signage. Brief discussion ensued on the location and approval process of hanging banners. Mr. Thompson stated staff will inspect and sum up the square footage of the wall signage and if it exceeds the maximum allowable square footage in the district, staff will contact the applicant to correct the matter. If this request is approved by the Commission, staff will not issue the permit following the issuance of the COA until the existing signage is in compliance with the ordinance.

Historic District Commission
September 27, 2018
Minutes

Brief discussion ensued amongst the Commissioners on the signage visible in the front of the building.

Mr. Thompson mentioned working with the applicant to consider a multitenant sign. Commissioner Hauer commented that it would be more attractive and Commissioner Starr commented it would be more appropriate. Commissioner Eddlemon would prefer this versus what was proposed. Mr. Thompson also mentioned a blade or projecting sign; however, the setback of the building may not make it as visible.

No further questions were asked by the Commissioners.

Commissioner Starr stated placement of this sign was inappropriate. Commissioner Tucker stated it abuts the vent and was busy or crowded in appearance at the proposed location. Commissioner Starr specified adding the condition of removing all other signs if the request was approved. Brief discussion ensued on size allowance of sign.

Commissioner Hauer and Commissioner Eddlemon were in an agreement that a yard sign would be more appropriate and attractive.

Commissioner Eddlemon made the motion to deny the request as presented and Commissioner Starr seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (6-0).

Mr. Thompson stated staff can convey the concerns, reason motion was denied, and provide options, such as a freestanding sign.

ITEM 3. Public Hearing – Certificate of Appropriateness (File # 9101)

- John Matthews
- 219 W Fourth Avenue
- Install new front entry. Design to be one of two options reviewed:
 - Option 1: Remove two existing French doors and existing front steps. Install new recessed front entry with single door and front steps. Install two new windows and new window shutters.
 - Option 2: Install new porch roof over both existing French doors. Install new patio with porch railings on right side.

Chairman Blackwelder opened the public hearing recognizing Ms. Kim Wallis, Planner for the purpose of staff presentation.

Ms. Wallis stated the applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to install a new front entry. The subject property is located in the York-Chester Historic District, the structure is a one story, frame, gable-on-hip roof, 1/1 sash, enclosed front porch, interior chimneys, brick foundation, and stuccoed, rear deck. It was built around 1914, is zoned residential, and the structure is considered *Non-Contributing* to the district. Ms. Wallis displayed a photo of the property. Ms. Wallis stated that applicant has two options for the front entry and she read Option 1 listed in the staff report on the agenda and she displayed

Commissioner Hauer asked if the windows are all the same size and Ms. Wallis replied that the windows are 3 ft. x 5 ft. Chairman Blackwelder asked if the new windows will be the same size as the existing windows and if the existing windows are vinyl. Ms. Wallis referred these questions to the applicant.

Ms. Wallis continued her presentation by reading Option 2 listed in the staff report on the agenda and addressed the new landscaping proposal. Ms. Wallis displayed the plan.

Commissioner Hauer asked if the side deck was stained and Ms. Wallis stated that it was indicated on the plan as stained. Ms. Wallis encouraged the Commissioners to read the excerpts and gave a brief summary. The State Historic Preservation Office stated that the house was basically the same design as shown, but did not have any photos from inventory in the 1980s.

Commissioner Tucker asked if the homeowner expressed a preference between the two options and Ms. Wallis was not informed of a preference and referred the question to the applicant.

Historic District Commission
September 27, 2018
Minutes

Commissioner Starr stated it was an important detail to know a decision on windows of Option 1 flanking recessed door.

No further questions were asked by the Commissioners.

Chairman Blackwelder recognized Mr. Steve Ranshaw, 1204 Grayscroft Drive of Waxhaw, NC. Mr. Ranshaw stated he is the owner of John Matthews, Inc. named after his children. Mr. Ranshaw stated the current house windows are single pane wood windows screwed and plans are to replace with the Low E, insulated, white vinyl replacement windows to match the blue and white house exterior. Mr. Ranshaw stated they are leaning toward Option 1, the recessed entrance and install two windows. The reason for the option of windows was to consider having a closet installed, but Mr. Ranshaw made the decision to forgo the closet to allow for more lighting. He shared details of the interior including the fireplace, floors, and woodwork on windows. Mr. Ranshaw asked the Commissioners to consider the recessed entry option. He is looking at the house as a French provincial. He continued that the dormer on the front of the house has shingles up the side and he will make it into a normal dorm. The double doors will be replaced with a single door and two windows flanking the door. The windows will match the other house windows. Mr. Ranshaw finished by reiterating Option 1 key elements presented by staff and stated any remodeling will replace exactly as is.

Commissioners briefly discussed security and appropriateness on a single door and French doors. Several Commissioners stated they were glad something was happening at this location. Brief discussion occurred on whether the applicant would live at the property or restore and place it on the market.

Commissioner Starr made the motion to close the public hearing and Chairman Blackwelder seconded the motion.

Commissioner Hauer made the motion to approve Option 1 request and Commissioner Starr seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (6-0).

Option 1:

- Remove the two existing French doors at front of house
- Remove existing wood and brick steps
- Create two new single 3'x5' windows at French door openings
 - Windows to be double hung, white vinyl
 - Vinyl shutters in black or navy will be installed on either side of windows (on all three front windows)
 - Hardi-board siding will patch areas around windows, painted to match blue of house
- Install new 5' wide recessed front entry
 - Entry will have two white fiberglass ground columns on either side of door, 8" diameter, with cap and base
 - Entry will have stained wood flooring
 - Entry ceiling to be of stained tongue and groove knotty pine or painted white drywall in entry
 - Entry ceiling to have recessed canned lighting
 - Entry to have solid wood single door with mahogany stain
 - Entry to have 6' wide concrete front steps leading to front yard path
- New Landscaping
 - All trees to remain
 - Grass yard throughout
 - 3-4' Holly or similar evergreen bush planted at base of house on both street sides
 - Low green leaf bush running along either side of front walkway

ITEM 4. Other Business

Second Avenue Streetscape Improvements:

Mr. Thompson began by explaining funding available through Congestion, Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) because of making bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and Phase 1 work was almost complete. With enough roadway width, removal of turn pockets and the addition of full formal bicycle lanes are improvements between Broad Street and 321. Roads will have two travel lanes in each direction, as well as, two bicycle lanes in each direction. Being considered from Linwood to 321 on the western side and Broad Street to Belvedere Street traffic circle are bike sharrows (share the road). Also being funded or considered are intersection improvements, pedestrian signalization, crosswalks, and wheelchair ramps. The vision is from Linwood to

Historic District Commission
September 27, 2018
Minutes

Belvedere. Chestnut Street is included to make a clear connection to Lineberger Park and is part of a critical connection. Resurfacing may occur, that is on a rolling schedule, as funding is available and may trigger some of these additional phases depicted on the design displayed over the next couple years. This will impact the York-Chester Historic District; therefore, staff brought this to the Commissioners and public's attention for awareness and to have an opportunity to provide any comments. The York-Chester National Historic District Neighborhood Association was also made aware. In addition the City is trying to work with Keep Gastonia Beautiful to include additional tree plantings. The goal is to make this corridor the primary bicycle and pedestrian friendly corridor in the Center City. Mr. Thompson briefly explained the broad connection of the interchange project, various trail extensions, and new sidewalks.

Commissioner Hauer inquired about Second Avenue area between Clay Street to Loray Mill and Mr. Thompson replied that this area is planned for improvements. He also commented that the City is working with Carolina Thread trail on funding regarding potential future trail extensions.

Commissioner Tucker asked if street parking is allowed or impacted on Second Avenue and Mr. Thompson replied that there was no parking allowed.

Commissioner Starr commented the whole concept was wonderful; however, reduction of the speed limit in the residential part on Second Avenue needs to be looked at. He shared an incident that almost happened due to the volume of traffic and speed on the street. Brief discussion ensued on speed limit reduction. Mr. Thompson encouraged the Commissioners to read the Downtown Streetscape and Public Realm Plan available on the City website.

Chairman Blackwelder inquired about the project's time frame and Mr. Gary Saine, City Engineer answered that phase 1 is close to completion and phase 2 is anticipated to begin in summer or fall of next year.

Commissioner Starr asked about the additional four-way stops at Trenton Street and Weldon Street. Mr. Saine replied that he's unaware if the study has been completed on these intersections, so he'll need to talk to the traffic engineer. Wheelchair ramps along with the paving project is expected to happen all at the same time. Mr. Thompson stated that Trenton Street is unknown because of FUSE, YMCA property and possible realignment. The City plans to apply through NCDOT to fund a comprehensive bicycle plan for the whole city.

Commissioner Tucker inquired about the process for getting a four-way stop or reducing the speed limit on a street. Mr. Saine stated the speed limit reduction is normally handled through a petition process. A petition is prepared and someone in the neighborhood would circulate it to the property owners on the section of street for the speed limit reduction. If a passing percentage occurs, the petition is presented to City Council to be approved. Brief discussion occurred on the distance for a speed limit reduction. Ms. Wallis will email a petition to Commissioner Starr.

Commissioners thanked Mr. Thompson and Mr. Saine for the information.

Subcommittee Meeting Tonight, if Needed:

Ms. Wallis stated a subcommittee meeting is needed after the meeting. Commissioners Eddlemon, Starr and Blackwelder volunteered.

Brief discussion occurred on motions to approve and approved with conditions, and file 9101 was clarified.

ITEM 5. Adjournment

There being no other business, Chairman Blackwelder adjourned the meeting at 6:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Chrystal Howard, Secretary

William Blackwelder, Chairman