

Historic District Commission

December 12, 2019

Minutes

Chairman William Blackwelder called the meeting of the Historic District Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 12, 2019 at City Hall in the Council Chamber.

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

Absent: Commissioner Ed Starr

Staff present: Charles Graham, Assistant City Attorney, Jason Thompson, Planning Director; Kim Wallis, Planner; Chrystal Howard, Secretary; and Robert Stroud, City Arborist

ITEM 1a. Roll Call / Sound Check

Chairman Blackwelder opened the meeting and declared a quorum.

ITEM 1b. Adoption of the Agenda

Commissioner Simon made the motion to adopt the December 12, 2019 Agenda. Commissioner Eddlemon seconded the motion and the motion unanimously passed (6-0).

ITEM 1c. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Blackwelder made the motion to approve the October 24, 2019 minutes. Commissioner Tucker seconded the motion and the motion unanimously passed (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. Speakers were sworn in by Ms. Howard.

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

ITEM 2. Public Hearing – Certificate of Appropriateness (File # 9396)

- Peter and Johanna Giese
- 209 W. Third Avenue
- To construct a new garage in rear yard

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

Ms. Wallis stated the applicant's name, subject location, and the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) request. She provided the property description and findings as presented in the agenda. Ms. Wallis displayed a front and side view photo of the house, as well as, the property location map. She continued with key elements of the design. Ms. Wallis displayed the existing location of the proposed site, preliminary design, garage door, hipped roof style and pitch, and gable style roof with architectural detail in the front of the garage. Ms. Wallis finished her presentation with excerpts from the Design Guidelines as presented in the agenda.

Chairman Blackwelder asked Ms. Wallis to elaborate on the style the applicant is requesting and Ms. Wallis referred this question to the applicant. Commissioner Simon asked if the structure would be seen from the street and Ms. Wallis replied that it would not be seen from the street. Commissioner Eddlemon asked if the design above the garage door is similar to a pergola. Ms. Wallis answered that it was more like dentil molding.

Chairman Blackwelder recognized Mr. Peter Giese, 209 W. Third Avenue of Gastonia, NC. Mr. Giese explained the rafter tail as an architectural element and compatible with the style of the roof detail over the garage door. The first design with the hipped roof was to match the house. Adding the gable over the garage door adds an appealing element. He shared that the roof extends less than two feet from the building and the exposed rafter tails were below.

Commissioner Tucker commented that he was in favor of the additional architectural element. Mr. Giese shared another idea he had considered. Commissioner Simon inquired about the construction of this project impacting trees and Mr. Giese replied that it would not. Chairman Blackwelder asked if the garage shingles, siding and colors would match the house and Mr. Giese replied that it would. Commissioner Tucker asked if the driveway will be gravel and Mr. Giese replied that it would for the time being. Commissioner Eddlemon asked if one window is on

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either side and Mr. Giese replied that two windows will be on one side along with the one access door.

Commissioner Ruhlman made a motion to approve the request as presented and Commissioner Eddlemon seconded the motion. The motion was approved 6-0.

ITEM 3. Other Business

Update on 514 S. South Street:

Ms. Wallis shared the demolition process that will occur at 514 S. South Street. Brief discussion ensued on any follow-up notification letter and any communication with the homeowner.

Brief discussion ensued on potential interests in the FUSE area.

The City of Gastonia Tree Inventory Demo:

Mr. Robert Stroud, Municipal Arborist demonstrated the new digital tree inventory software purchased in conjunction with a grant awarded to the City of Gastonia. Davey Tree Expert Company was contracted to create a digital inventory of all public owned trees. The inventory website <https://gastonianc.treekeepersoftware.com/>, which is available to the public and is hosted by Davey Tree Expert Company. This website is an annual subscription the City has with Davey Tree Expert Company. The contract was for 14,000 trees based on the existing tree inventory prior to the Rankin Lake renovation and it has been estimated that the city may have around 21,000 trees. Rankin Lake, wooded lots, natural areas, greenways have not been inventoried; therefore, the digital inventory is not complete. Mr. Stroud continued with his online demo showing how to use the software while explaining how useful, beneficial, and lucrative the new tree software is to the City of Gastonia. Mr. Stroud shared a legacy or heritage tree program he would like to start that would allow homeowners to nominate their privately owned trees for historic preservation. Discussion occurred on tree stumps and he shared an interest of using the software to get a stump grinding program started in the future. Several commissioners provided positive feedback of the software and its future uses and benefits. The Commission thanked Mr. Stroud for his presentation.

Introduction to the new marketing/branding materials:

Ms. Wallis postponed this item.

Subcommittee Meeting Tonight, if Needed:

Ms. Wallis stated a subcommittee meeting is needed. Commissioners Simon, Eddlemon, Hauer and Blackwelder stated they will participate.

ITEM 4. Adjournment

There being no other business, Chairman Blackwelder adjourned the meeting at 6:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Chrystal Howard, Secretary

William Blackwelder, Chairman