

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE GREENVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

July 27, 2021

The Greenville Historic Preservation Commission met on the above date at 6:00 pm via Zoom.

Jeremy Jordan - Chairperson - *

Candace Pearce – Vice chair - *

Myron Caspar – *

Andrew Morehead - X

Justin Edwards - X

Kerry Carlin - *

Israel Mueller -*

Scott Wells - *

Robert Wright - *

The members present are denoted by an “*” and the members absent are denoted by an “X”.

PLANNING STAFF: Thomas Barnett, Director of Planning and Development Services; Chantae Gooby, Chief Planner; Tony Parker, Planner I; Taylor Bland, Staff Support Specialist II

OTHERS PRESENT: Donald Phillips, Assistant City Attorney; Kelvin Thomas, Communications Specialist

Motion made by Ms. Pearce, seconded by Ms. Wells, to accept the agenda as written. Motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES:

Motion made by Ms. Pearce, seconded by Dr. Carlin, to accept the May 25, 2021 minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

City Attorney Donald Phillips read the following statement:

Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 160A-388 and Section 4, H. of the Historic Preservation Commission’s Rules of Procedure:

H. Conflict of Interest. No member of the Historic Preservation Commission shall participate in either the discussion or vote on any certificate of appropriateness in any manner that would violate the affected persons’ constitutional right to a fair and impartial decision maker. Prohibited conflicts include but are not limited to a member having a fixed opinion prior to hearing the matter and not willing to consider changing his or her mind; undisclosed ex parte communications with the person before the Commission, any witnesses, staff or other Commission members; a close familial, business or other associational relationship with the affected person; or a financial interest in the outcome of the matter before the board. On any other matter before the Commission where such decision by the Commission shall be in an advisory capacity only, no member shall participate in the discussion or vote on such advisory matters where the outcome on the matter being considered is reasonably likely to have a direct, substantial, and readily identifiable financial impact on the member. Decisions on either a request for recusal by a member or objections by a person appearing before the board shall be decided by a simple majority vote. A member so disqualified will not be counted or included in the count to determine the appropriate voting majority for the issue before the Commission and will not negate a quorum of the Commission.

If a Commission member has had an ex parte communication that needs to be disclosed at this time.

As a reminder, as members of the Commission conversations among yourselves during the discussion periods of this meeting and your committee meetings are NOT ex parte communications.

Chairman Jordan swore in presenting staff member – Tony Parker.

Chairman Jordan confirmed and swore in one speaker – Nick Crabtree.

New Business

1. Major Work COA

2021-0028: 807 E 3rd Street

Applicant: Nick Crabtree

Project: Demolition of accessory structure (garage)

Mr. Parker delineated and discussed the subject property. The applicant requests to demolish a non-contributing accessory building which is a garage. The garage in question is not listed in the College View Historic District Architectural Survey. There are several cracks on the north side of the garage that have attempted to be repaired. On the back side of the garage, there is a large crack and protruding cinder blocks in the walls. Chief Building Inspector William Mills, after a site visit, stated that in his professional opinion the structure is failing and must come down. The Design Review Committee met on site and recommended the building be demolished. At their subsequent meeting they had a split vote, one for removal, one for denial of removal and the third member was absent. Staff recommends to allow the removal of the accessory structure and will follow up with the removal to make sure it has been removed properly, no debris remains, and no parking improvements of any type are made without a site plan and a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Nick Crabtree spoke in favor of the application. He stated the structure is not sound or safe. He is concerned it may cause harm to neighbors or residents of the home. He stated he will have a landscape design team work on the empty space if it is demolished.

Mr. Mueller asked if he has any intention to increase parking in the area where the garage is.

Mr. Crabtree stated no. His intention is to plant bushes around the area but he would allow vehicles to pull up in that area. There would be no permanent structure for parking.

Ms. Pearce asked if he is aware that he would need to have a COA to have a vehicle parked there, otherwise they would be parked on the grass.

Mr. Crabtree asked even though it would be the area where the garage is currently located.

Ms. Pearce stated yes even though it was a prior garage.

Chairman Jordan stated after the garage is demolished, there would be dirt in the area. The City of Greenville does not allow parking on dirt so before doing any improvement that would allow parking, he would have to have a COA.

Mr. Crabtree asked if he could put gravel there.

Ms. Pearce stated not without a COA.

Chairman Jordan stated basically if the driveway that is already there in front of the garage is not part of the demolition, you can park there but anything beyond that would have to be a part of a COA request.

Mr. Crabtree asked if that can be done during this meeting.

Ms. Pearce stated no, that would be have to be a separate application.

Chairman Jordan stated the reason it has to be a separate application is because the board can only vote on what is already a part of the application.

Attorney Phillips stated that is correct. The issue before the commission tonight is the request to demolish the garage.

Mr. Jordan closed the public hearing.

Mr. Caspar stated it appears Mr. Crabtree would want to park more cars at the home so perhaps the board should give him to opportunity to reconsider the use of the garage. If the garage was made structurally sound it could fit two more cars.

Ms. Pearce stated the garage would have to be demolished and rebuilt. It is not possible to restore or repair the current garage.

Mr. Caspar stated if Mr. Crabtree desires to have four or five cars in that area, he could park two cars in the garage. Perhaps the board should postpone and allow him the time to think about this matter.

Chairman Jordan asked Mr. Crabtree if he would have any interest in repairing the garage knowing that he may or may not be able to park additional cars there.

Mr. Crabtree stated his initial concern is that it is not safe and at some point it would have to be taken down. He has no problem with considering an alternative in the area.

Chairman Jordan stated it is certainly an option to obtain a COA to put a garage there or improvements for parking.

Mr. Crabtree stated he would like to remove the structure and then evaluate a path to take that would be satisfactory with the commission.

Motion made by Mr. Mueller, seconded by Mr. Wright, that notice has been properly given in conformance with N.C.G.S § 166A-19.24 (Session Law 2020-3) and that all provisions applicable for remote quasi-judicial hearings, particularly subsection (f) have been followed. Motion passed 6 to 1. Vote in opposition: Caspar

Motion made by Mr. Jordan, seconded by Ms. Wells, to adopt the Findings of Fact as presented by City Staff. Motion passed 6 to 1. Vote in opposition: Caspar

Motion made by Ms. Pearce, seconded by Dr. Carlin, that the garage at issue has no special significance or value toward maintaining the character of the district and given the structural hazard associated with the garage, the period of delay is hereby waved in its entirety as allowed by 160D 949 and 9-17-17 of City Code. Motion passed 7 to 0. Mr. Caspar abstained from the vote but this was counted as an affirmative vote based on the Rules of Procedure.

Attorney Phillips explained that the Rules of Procedure for the commission states that in the event a commission member abstains from voting or has withdrawn from the meeting without being excused from a majority vote by the remaining members present, such a failure to vote shall be recorded as an affirmative vote in favor of the issue before the commission.

Mr. Jordan affirmed the COA was approved.

2. Minor Work COAs

2021-0026: 605 E Fifth Street

Applicant: John Gill

Project: Remove diseased Pecan Tree, replace with large canopy tree

2021-0027: 200 S Eastern Street
Applicant: Susan Pearce
Project: Repaint with staff approved colors

2021-0029: 1001 Johnston Street
Applicant: Sarah Watkins-Kenney and John Kenney
Project: Repaint with like colors

3. Discussion of HPC Budget and Enhanced Enforcement

Thomas Barnett, Director of Planning and Development Services shared the budget amounts for the commission. He also explained there will be enhanced code enforcement in the Historic District that focuses on the Design Guidelines and Standards.

4. Discussion of Topics for a Workshop

The commission members discussed ideas for a workshop that included discussing local landmark designation, outreach and education, as well as meeting with code enforcement officer Jennifer Peebles.

5. Discussion of Certified Local Government (CLG) Training and Due Dates

Tony Parker explained to the commission that to maintain the Certified Local Government status at least two commissioners and one staff member will need to watch a minimum of three presentations or webinars and write a brief synopsis. A few benefits of being a CLG is the eligibility for monies and matching grants to continue the historic work of the city, CLG's review all new nominations to the National Register of Historic Places for properties and districts within our boundaries, and the community benefits from the expertise and knowledge of the trained commissioners.

Public Comment Period

Refer to page 5 of agenda for public comment guidelines. No Public Comments.

Committee Reports

1. Design Review Committee – COA 2021-0028: Met on site June 29, 2021, met on July 16, 2021
2. Publicity Committee – Did not meet
3. Selection Committee – Did not meet

Announcements / Other

No announcements.

Motion made by Ms. Wells, seconded by Ms. Pearce, to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Parker

Planner I