

**DRAFT OF MINUTES PROPOSED FOR ADOPTION BY THE GREENVILLE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

June 28, 2011

The Greenville Historic Preservation Commission held a meeting on the above date at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of City Hall located at 200 West Fifth Street.

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:**

RYAN WEBB

DENNIS CHESTNUT

KERRY CARLIN

JEREMY JORDAN, CHAIR

CHARLOTTE COHEN, VICE CHAIR

ROGER KAMMERER

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:**

JORDAN KEARNEY

ANN SCHWARZMANN

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** SETH LAUGHLIN, PLANNER; VALERIE PAUL, SECRETARY; JONATHAN EDWARDS, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNICIAN; CHRIS PADGETT, CHIEF PLANNER; BILL LITTLE, ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY; MERRILL FLOOD, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT. DIRECTOR

**ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA**

Mr. Webb asked to add "Information Update of the Intermodal Transportation Center" under New Business.

**Mr. Chestnut made the motion to approve the change, Ms. Cohen seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion was made by Mr. Kammerer to approve the minutes, it seconded by Ms. Cohen and it carried unanimously.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Spring 2011 Façade Improvement Grant**

Mr. Seth Laughlin reported \$81,537 remaining in the FIG account, and approximately \$4,700 outstanding from the fall applications, and they have until August to complete that, yielding a balance of \$76,812 available funds. For this cycle there are three complete applications requesting a total of \$2,836.

Application 1101 is Pitt County Chamber of Commerce at 302 S. Greene St. In the past they have submitted four applications for \$2500; a total of \$10,000 ultimately being awarded. The fifth, similar to this application was submitted during the fall cycle of 2010, and was not funded by the HPC.

The two estimates, just like in the fall, was to scrape and paint a wooden front porch, as needed. The low estimate was \$650, which would make the grant \$325.

Applications 1102 and 1103 were submitted by Mr. Greg Jarrell for his side-by-side buildings, 815 and 817 Dickinson Ave. The applications are for the front of those buildings. The two estimates were for the replacement of rotten wood, trim around windows, and installation of an awning and frame. The accommodation of the low estimates with the wood repair, painting, and the awning is \$2,486. In the past, he did submit three applications and received all three grants for \$2,500 each. All three were funded and completed, and the total of \$7,500 and had been reimbursed.

Mr. Chestnut asked for the dates of the spring cycle.

Mr. Laughlin answered that there was a workshop in May and an application that was due on June 3, one month from the date of the workshop.

Ms. Cohen said that the Chamber is an important building, and very beautiful. She then asked if the design review committee felt that it was too much in the way of maintenance to support.

Mr. Webb answered that the Design Review Committee felt that it was maintenance. Also there is the consideration that the building is owned by the City.

Chairman Jordan concurred that there is precedent for not funding that sort of basic maintenance.

Mr. Chestnut asked if there is something in the guidelines that says that we cannot fund maintenance.

Mr. Laughlin answered that the guidelines for the program state that maintenance is a permissible activity.

Mr. Chestnut said that a project of this scale may be small but nonetheless, the money is there and the work needs to be done.

Ms. Cohen concurred, suggesting it might increase awareness of the program.

**Mr. Chestnut made a motion to fund all three applications, Ms. Cohen seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

### **PROPOSED CHANGES TO FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT GUIDELINES**

Mr. Laughlin presented this item to the Commission. Last month the Commission discussed the possibility of an open cycle alternative for a façade improvement grant. The benefits mentioned included increased funding availability throughout the year, more opportunities for the HPC to advise on these projects which would result in having

the projects done and restored in a responsible manner. The Commission requested that staff move forward with possible language updates to the existing FIG guidelines for their review at their May 24<sup>th</sup>, meeting. Mr. Laughlin read the updated guidelines to the Commission. Mr. Laughlin advised that if the Commission did want to go forward with the updating the guidelines it could be adopted by the City Council after a second reading and public hearing, per legal council's recommendation.

Mr. Chestnut said that he had some basic questions about the overall intent. He expressed concern that the changes would significantly increase the volume of work for staff. He suggested that the lack of grants may be a simple result of a "saturation point" for the façade grants, rather than the difficulty of getting in sequence due to the requirements of a two-cycle system.

Mr. Webb felt that they were far from saturation point; he had personally witnessed applications missing the deadline and subsequently having a hard time. In regards to the paperwork, Mr. Webb did not perceive this to be a significant increase because it's the same application.

Mr. Chestnut asked if each one would have to still come before the Commission.

Mr. Webb answered that they would, but that is something that they would have to do anyway.

Mr. Chestnut said that with the current system they would be coming at a certain time of the year rather than coming to each commission meeting; with an open cycle applications would be coming in on a more sporadic basis.

Mr. Jordan agreed that it probably is a little more work for staff but since staff put this forward apparently they can handle it.

Mr. Christopher Padgett, Chief Planner said the fundamental reason behind this was to stimulate interest and promote the grant program. He said that staff would be pleased to be able to bring multiple applications to the Commission.

Ms. Cohen said that she thought the main point of it was to address the seasonality of construction projects and general scheduling compatibility issues.

Mr. Laughlin said that it would not be a burden to staff.

Mr. Kammerer said that currently we're certainly not at saturation point.

Chairman Jordan reminded the Commission that the applicants will still have to attend a workshop anyway.

Mr. Laughlin said that the presentation could be broken down into a smaller one and provided in his office to smaller groups, using the same PowerPoint that we do in the full workshops, and go through on a one-on-one basis or small groups. From a staff view, an open cycle would be fairly easy to accommodate. The Commission will not just be handing out money because the applicant will have to make a contribution in effort and money.

Mr. Webb asked if restored properties had a different time line under the loan program.

Mr. Laughlin answered that it is also set up for Spring and Fall.

Mr. Webb asked if it was still in the works.

Mr. Laughlin answered that the applications are due at the end of this month.

**Mr. Kammerer made a motion to move forward with a second reading, Ms. Cohen seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### **TAR RIVER UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (TRUNA) & HPC MEETING DISCUSSION**

Referencing a memo included in the packet, Mr. Laughlin said that although each item individually was addressed in that letter at the HPC's May meeting, no official action was taken. TRUNA suggested a meet time and did offer to host the meeting at Cypress Glen. Mr. Laughlin added that city facilities are also available at that time for that date, should the HPC choose to schedule such a meeting. It would be a special call meeting for September 19, for the purpose of discussing the issues identified in the May 16 letter from TRUNA president, Bert Powell. The exact time and place of this meeting should be determined by the Commission. Staff recommended that the Commission move forward with scheduling the meeting.

**Ms. Cohen made the motion that we schedule this meeting, Mr. Carlin seconded the motion.**

Mr. Chestnut said he would not be able to make the meeting that day.

Mr. Laughlin said the Commission can choose the day and location of the meeting and he suggested the large conference rooms on the third floor of City Hall.

Mr. Chestnut had some procedural questions such as the City Council's stance on setting up special meetings with different groups such as neighborhood groups. He asked for the guidelines regarding that. He also had questions about the location. In general, he wanted to know what precedent there was for setting up a special meeting like this for just one neighborhood.

Chairman Jordan said that Attorney Little said that it is permissible. It does have to be a

special call, and it has to be advertised that it is open to the public.

Mr. Laughlin said that if the Committee were to decide on a date and time then it would be advertised just like any other special call meeting that the Commission has had.

Chairman Jordan said that the overall hope is to improve relations with TRUNA.

Ms. Cohen observed that it is the neighborhood where we have the no-interest loans available, and subsequently it makes sense to meet with the people directly impacted by that.

**Chairman Jordan, recalling that there had been a motion and a second, was unsure whether it was right to vote at this point.**

Attorney Little reminded the Commission that they had not decided on a date, agenda, or location. It would be staff's recommendation that the meeting be held here in City Hall because they are going to be sitting in a special meeting as a governing body of the city. It would be more appropriate in City Hall because it establishes the formality of the meeting and it could be televised.

Chairman Jordan suggested that if the meeting be located at City Hall and that it be explained clearly to TRUNA why this location would be better, for the sake of open dialogue.

Mr. Chestnut wanted to clarify whether this motion would have to be approved by the City Council.

Attorney Little answered that it would not have to be. It would go in the regular printed advertisement positions and because it's a special meeting, only the agenda items that are listed are the items that can be discussed. He recommended that they discuss the items that are in the agenda, based upon the responses of the city so that they limit what's being discussed at that moment; otherwise, if it is too open-ended you violate the meeting rules. If it was held on a regular meeting night and that's all that's discussed on that night then anything can be discussed.

Mr. Webb asked if there would be a public comment period at such a meeting.

Attorney Little answered that there could not be a public comment period because they could only discuss what is on the agenda. Even if there were a public comment period, then, according to the HPC's bylaws, it would still have to be discussed at the next meeting.

Mr. Webb asked how the exchange would work; he asked if they would come up and talk about each item and then the Commission respond back to them.

Attorney Little answered that he was correct. Items for discussion can be allotted certain time periods, and ground rules can be set through the agenda.

Mr. Chestnut asked if they could do the same thing at a regular meeting by way of agenda items.

Attorney Little affirmed that you could do with a regular agenda item.

Mr. Chestnut asked why then could they not just do this at a regular meeting.

Attorney Little affirmed that it could be done that way, that it could be the entire agenda for the September meeting.

Mr. Kammerer said that a special called meeting would simply be a way to allot more time to the items described in the attached letter.

Mr. Webb asked if the real purpose was to address item number five in the letter from TRUNA that talks about their desire for annual sessions hosted by the HPC about the implications of living in the College View area.

Attorney Little expressed concern that these programs are advertised throughout the year with all forms of media. All they have to do is read it and it seems like they are asking for a special agenda just for them. He cited the distinction between TRUNA members living in the College View neighborhood as compared to the rest of TRUNA, which is a much larger entity and he said that he was concerned that all TRUNA members would think that they are eligible for programs strictly for the TRUNA members living in the College View District.

Mr. Webb said that he did not understand why they would have to discuss certain items with TRUNA like item number three which addresses concern with the size of the HPC. He says that should be a city-wide discussion.

Attorney Little said that the size of the Commission was determined by the City Council.

Chairman Jordan said he thought that the main intent was more simply to open dialogue with TRUNA.

Attorney Little said that if you have a special meeting, the rules say that your agenda items have to be designated, and those are the only items on the agenda. It has to be specific; it can't just be discussion of something very broad and vague. That has a significant impact on the open meeting rules and requirements.

Ms. Cohen said that it would make sense to go back to TRUNA and ask what items they would like to see on the agenda.

Mr. Laughlin reminded the Commission that there remains a fair amount of time between now and then.

Attorney Little said that the idea to ask TRUNA what they wanted to discuss had been proposed some time ago and this is what they came back with. Unfortunately, not all of their concerns are within the purview of the Commission to be addressed.

Chairman Jordan asked if there was an official response to their letter. He said that it might be helpful to take the minutes from the last meeting and draft a response to the letter; it might solve some of the concerns that they have. Conversely, it may create more concerns but at least that way we get an idea of what exactly they want to discuss since we have to be specific.

Mr. Laughlin said it was the staff's recommendation to continue to move forward with working on public relations with our largest governed body. If the Commission wants to move forward with that particular date, the location and agenda can be worked on between now and then.

Chairman Jordan said that this would be good public relations.

Mr. Chestnut suggested that since they are trying to open up a dialogue, then maybe the Publicity Subcommittee, rather than the entire Commission, should meet with TRUNA.

Ms. Cohen said based on the discussion that came out, it seems that TRUNA would like to meet with the entire Board.

Mr. Chestnut suggested that if you want that exchange of dialogue then you should come out to the HPC meetings.

Mr. Webb said that it appears from what Attorney Little had said, we cannot address four of the five items on the list anyway. He asked how they would have a meeting on one item.

Chairman Jordan said that the next thing they would have to decide on is if they wanted to ask TRUNA if they had any specific concerns that they would like to address. At the same time, the Commission could use last month's minutes to draft a response addressing their concerns and advising them of things that the Commission could not do.

Attorney Little suggested that the Commission direct staff to prepare a response to Mr. Powell, as the president of TRUNA, saying that the Commission would like to have a meeting and that the date has not been yet established. It would also advise that before the date can even be established, the agenda must be set and followed in a specific fashion. We would ask for specific items to be discussed at the meeting.

Mr. Kammerer suggested that they include that type of thing, things that they cannot respond to, in the letter.

Attorney Little said that can be part two of the response. Part one is telling them we would like to have the meeting. Part two would be responding back to those items. Part three would be the notation of specific items. The motion would then direct staff to prepare a response establishing the meeting and questioning specific items from the agenda.

Mr. Chestnut said that it seems like that motion would be adding an extra step since the response would be saying that there are things that the Commission cannot address and then would ask for specific issues from TRUNA.

Chairman Jordan said that he had thought that part two would accomplish that.

Mr. Laughlin said that you can move forward with directing staff to prepare a response.

Chairman Jordan asked if he would like to mention hosting it at a city venue for the reasons that Attorney Little set forth.

Mr. Chestnut asked if we could make a motion to direct staff to work on a response to this and bring this back, including relevant points that have been made.

Mr. Kammerer asked if that would leave it open-ended.

**Mr. Chestnut generally concurred and made a motion to that effect.**

Chairman Jordan asked for a second for Mr. Chestnut's motion.

Ms. Cohen asked Mr. Chestnut if that would mean that it would be taken up at the next meeting.

Mr. Chestnut answered that staff would go and draft a response based on the Commission's comments and at next meeting the Commission could review it. If it is approved, send it on at that point.

Chairman Jordan said that we could still meet in August if we did that, because we have enough time.

Mr. Laughlin reminded them that special called meetings only require 48 hours, technically.

Mr. Kammerer said that out of courtesy, TRUNA deserved to get the letter sooner rather than later.



Ms. Cohen agreed and said that 30 days would be too much.

Mr. Laughlin offered to move forward with the dialogue over the course of the next month.

Mr. Webb observed that the letter was addressed to the city and not the Commission, so the city should give a response back.

Chairman Jordan concurred.

**Mr. Chestnut said that the motion died for lack of a second.**

Chairman Jordan, recognizing Mr. Chestnut's point, suggested that notwithstanding the fact that the letter was addressed to Mr. Merrill Flood, it would be appropriate for us to formally respond that would be based on the minutes of the last meeting.

Mr. Webb asked if TRUNA were to come back before the Commission with another list, would that list first go through staff so that they could make them aware if there are things that on that new list that cannot be discussed.

Mr. Kammerer expressed the concern that there would be a lot of back-and-forth like Mr. Chestnut had mentioned earlier.

Mr. Laughlin responded that it is something that staff can quickly iron out in discussions without waiting months for that sort of dialogue. The communication can take place via e-mail, largely, and get taken care of quicker than just the meetings alone.

Mr. Kammerer said it would certainly be quicker if Mr. Powell could come down and meet with you.

Mr. Laughlin said that he was agreeable to the idea.

Mr. Webb said that he and Seth had already had a discussion with TRUNA and several of them were the things that they wanted to discuss were things that the Commission cannot discuss including the makeup of the board, the number of people on the board, where they come from. It seemed that they wanted a workshop that addresses all of those things.

Mr. Kammerer asked if they had workshops for those things.

Mr. Laughlin offered to prepare a response that would include portions of the minutes from last month.

**Mr. Kammerer made a motion that staff be directed to write a response for the**

**minutes from the last meeting addressing the things that the Commission cannot discuss and the location of the meeting. Staff should also include the HPC's schedule.**

Chairman Jordan reminded them that the meeting will be open meeting. There would not be a public comment period but they would be welcome to come.

**Ms. Cohen agreed to second the motion it passed unanimously.**

Mr. Kammerer reminded staff to send it to council members as well.

### **STAFF REPORT ON MINOR WORKS**

Mr. Laughlin reported six minor works this month:

- Replace HVAC unit located at 304 Lewis St.
- Repair of gutters, wood fence in rear yard, storm doors and storm windows located at 400 S. Eastern St.
- Shingle replacement, dormer and fascia repair located at 301 S. Harding St.
- Remove vinyl fascia and replace rotten fascia wood, replace roof shingles located at 505 E. 5<sup>th</sup> St.
- Scrape and paint exterior of home located at 400 S. Library St.
- Replace wooden windows and siding with like materials as needed due to fire damage located at 403 S. Summit St.

And there are no ongoing noncompliant issues right now.

### **INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION CENTER**

Mr. Webb presented the item to the Commission. He had signed a memorandum in July of 2009 between the Federal Transit Administration, the North Carolina Department of Transportation, the City of Greenville, and the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer, relating to the bus transfer center, or the Intermodal Transportation Center. He requested an update from staff on the items mentioned in this agreement; specifically, the moving of the Jones-Lee House and the design of the center as it relates to the historic properties around it.

Mr. Laughlin agreed to take it to appropriate city staff.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

(No public comment.)

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Mr. Webb announced that the committee did meet to go over the façade improvement grants, and to discuss an upcoming COA, which has been continued.

#### **PUBLICITY COMMITTEE**

Ms. Cohen reported that the committee did not meet; however, e-mails were circulated

regarding monitoring the Third Street School and what's going on with that.

### **SELECTION COMMITTEE**

Mr. Chestnut passed out his committee's minutes to the Commission and reported that the Selection Committee had met on June 14, 2011, at 5:45 PM in Sheppard Memorial Library. He expressed the need for a new member on his committee, and summarized their minutes. He emphasized the point that there is a need for the Selection Committee members to survey the properties to see if it's being maintained. He said that there were some discrepancies on the last updated priority list; nevertheless, the committee agreed to move forward with that list. They also decided that the list should be updated to see if the property owners were still interested in being included on the list in order to have in ready for the next cycle in January.

Chairman Jordan said that the suggestion of the committee was to have staff go ahead and contact those property owners. So we would need to have the full Commission agree and have a motion to do that.

**Ms. Cohen made a motion to have staff contact the people on the list and see if they are still interested, Mr. Kammerer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

Mr. Chestnut asked for more specifics on how and when they would update local designated landmarks

Chairman Jordan suggested that they at least drive by the properties to make sure that they are still there.

Mr. Kammerer said that he has several properties that he would like to meet with the Selection Committee about.

Mr. Chestnut advised Mr. Kammerer that if you have properties then the procedure has been outlined so he would have him follow that.

Mr. Webb asked if the intent is to get back on track by January.

Mr. Jordan answered that was correct. There was discussion about the possibility of the Commission trying to start now since the last cycle was missed, but it was decided by that it would be better to stick with what was in the procedure that had been most recently adopted.

Mr. Webb asked if the money from this year's budget cycle was lost.

Chairman Jordan answered that it was. He then called for a motion to drive by the properties.

Mr. Chestnut asked for clarification.

Chairman Jordan narrowed it down to historic landmarks.

Mr. Webb said he would have assumed that was something that staff already did.

Mr. Laughlin said that Mr. Webb was correct; staff had conducted windshield surveys of the historic landmarks.

Mr. Webb said that he didn't think it would have to be that often; he suggested doing it twice a year.

Mr. Chestnut said that it wasn't specifically about checking for compliance but at the same time if you've got to check for compliance, you've got to look at it, so it may very well be.

Mr. Webb said that those properties are receiving tax benefits.

Mr. Chestnut offered a recommendation that, rather than needing a motion, that staff, when they check on the compliance of the properties, go ahead and survey all locally designated landmarks; this should be done at least once a year.

Mr. Laughlin agreed to review establishing such a policy.

Mr. Webb asked if the report that staff provides to Raleigh each year includes information about compliance.

Mr. Laughlin said that it does, but it involves more what our procedures are, as far as Certificates of Appropriateness (COA's) and that sort of thing versus inventorying all the properties under our purview. He said that the Commission could direct staff to conduct windshield surveys on a regular basis and report back to the Selection Committee.

Mr. Chestnut said that all that is necessary is a recommendation, because it seems that it's in there unless a motion is needed.

Mr. Webb asked if we have pictures of all the restored properties.

Mr. Laughlin answered that we do.

Mr. Webb asked if they were taken when they were first made historic properties.

Mr. Laughlin answered that he thought so, but they have not been updated in the two years that he has been with the HPC.

Mr. Chestnut suggested that rather than asking for a policy, the Commission could

simply ask for updated images of locally designated properties.

Chairman Jordan directed staff so to do. He then reminded the committee that the selection committee was in need of one more member.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/OTHER**

Chairman Jordan said that he had talked with Ms. Claudia Deviney with Preservation North Carolina regarding Third Street School several times this month and she said that as of now the Pitt County School Board has not taken them up on their offer of using their marketing skills but she did say that they have had some contacts from people with preliminary interest in what was going on with Third Street School. At this time they are still interested so they're going to forward that information on to the school board.

**With there being no further discussion, Mr. Chestnut made the motion to adjourn, Mr. Webb seconded it and it passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Seth Laughlin, Planner II