

MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
January 9, 2019
City of High Point
Municipal Office Building
City Council Chambers
6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS

PRESENT: Gloria Halstead, Chairman
Janet Catania
Julius Clark
Annette Cox
Mary Powell DeLille
Jerry Mingo
Dories Patrick

MEMBERS

ABSENT: Dorothy Darr

STAFF

PRESENT: Lee Burnette, Planning & Development Director
David Fencl, Senior Planner
Gina Lindsey, Recording Secretary
Fred Baggett, Legal Counsel to the Board

The meeting began at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

A. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum

Ms. Halstead determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order.

B. Approval of Minutes

1. November 14, 2018 Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission

Gina Lindsey, Recording Secretary, explained that prior to the meeting, Ms. Halstead requested that her statements on page 4 in paragraph 2 be amended to clarify her statement. The original sentence read, "Ms. Halstead stated that she would also like to see the insurance claim documents, noting that the quote of about \$55,000 seems reasonable, but she doesn't understand where the insurance adjuster came up with \$10,000." The statement was amended to read, "Ms. Halstead stated that she would also like to see the insurance

claim documents, noting that she doesn't understand where the insurance adjuster came up with \$10,000."

Mr. Clark made a motion to approve the November 14, 2018 minutes for the regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission as amended. Ms. Patrick seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by a vote of 6-0. Ms. DeLille abstained from the vote.

C. Continued Public Hearing Items

All speakers offering testimony were sworn.

1. Ray Wheatley for Margaret and Rick Lewis 1013 Johnson Street CA-18-15

A request to remove the granite chimney located on the south elevation of the residence.

Ms. DeLille noted to Fred Baggett, Legal Counsel to the Board, that she and Ms. Halstead had a conversation regarding the chimney shortly after it fell. She said at the time that Ms. Halstead was adamant that the chimney needed to be replaced and asked if it was necessary for Ms. Halstead to recuse herself due to perceived impartiality. Ms. Halstead said the only comment that she made was that the guidelines needed to be followed and that she did not say "that the chimney had to go back up no matter what." Ms. Halstead added that the [Historic District Design] Guidelines should be followed unless there is a good reason that they should not be followed, in which case you use that good reason not to follow them.

Ms. DeLille requested to be recused from the case. The Commission accepted her recusal and Ms. DeLille stepped down from the dais.

Mr. David Fencl, Senior Planner, presented CA-18-15 as outlined in the staff report. He stated that staff cannot recommend approval of the applicant's request to remove the granite chimney located on the south elevation at this time without at least one additional estimate and without the applicant addressing whether other options have been considered for rebuilding the chimney. The Commission also requested the applicant try to secure an additional estimate for rebuilding the collapsed chimney and submit information regarding the insurance claim for the collapsed chimney.

The following information was provided by staff in response to questions by Commissioners and Ray Wheatley:

- Staff cannot comment on whether the applicant's local and national sponsors would be able to assist financially with the reconstruction of the chimney.
- The Historic District Design Guidelines are based on the Secretary of Interior's standards.
- There is nothing in the state statutes that addresses whether a structure or feature on a property in a local historic district is required to be replaced if it is destroyed. It is only addressed by COAs.

Ms. Halstead noted that the Secretary of the Interior's Standards states that changes to properties that have acquired historical significance in their own right should be retained and preserved.

The following people spoke on behalf of the applicant:

- Ray Wheatley, Owner of Spruce Builders, General Contractor for the project at 1013 Johnson St., 116 Hillcrest Dr., High Point
- Rick and Margaret Lewis, owners of 1013 Johnson St., 206 Hillcrest Dr., High Point
- Benjamin Briggs, 1753 Penny Rd., High Point

Mr. Wheatley provided the following information:

- As requested by the Commission, an additional estimate was obtained for the replacement of the chimney from Tench Services for \$57,450 plus a 20% coordination fee that was comparable to the original quote of \$55,000.
- The local and national sponsors might donate products, but not cash toward the rebuilding of the chimney.
- He called about five other masons in attempt to get estimates and most of them did not return his phone call. Those that did respond said that due to a heavy work load, it would be at least six months to a year before they could look at the project.
- Mr. Wheatley is serving as the general contractor on the project and some work will be completed by subcontractors, including the mechanical, plumbing, HVAC and electrical work.
- The fireplace mantel on the second floor was saved and the mantel on the first floor was burned beyond repair and the tile surround is gone.
- The quotes include two chimney flues because that is the way the original chimney was constructed. The firebox on the second floor could be eliminated to save money.

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis provided the following information:

- Margaret Lewis grew up in the house at 1013 Johnson St. and there was only one chimney at the time, not two. The second chimney was constructed later.
- The house was spared from demolition through efforts made by the High Point Preservation Society and the Lewises purchase of the house from the Preservation Society.
- On Labor Day weekend, he was notified by Mr. Wheatley that the chimney had collapsed into the Adams Inn parking lot, which needed to be cleared of the debris. He agreed with Mr. Wheatley that the stones should be moved out of the way.
- Mrs. Lewis stated that the chimney that fell was not original to the house, adding that the chimneys on the roof were the originals. Thus the chimney that fell is not a historical feature of the house.

- The chimney fell because it wasn't constructed properly and it was dangerous and it could have hurt someone.
- The Lewises have been discussing a potential fundraiser for the Junior League of High Point using 1013 Johnson St. There have been no commitments made or money exchanged in its talks with Marsh Kitchens.
- The \$10,000 received from the insurance claim did not include debris removal, building the fence or stacking the stones to preserve the materials. The Lewises are not sure why the insurance company did not pay more.
- The owners have invested more than \$400,000 into the purchase and restoration of the home.

Mr. Lewis stated that he feels that Ms. Halstead has a conflict of interest [in this public hearing] and should not be involved in the decision. He noted that she lives on Johnson St., serves on the Historic Preservation Commission, and that she wrote part of the closing statement [for the purchase of the house]. Mr. Lewis noted that if Mary Powell DeLille needed to be recused from the hearing, then so did she.

The Commission called Benjamin Briggs as a witness to provide testimony as an expert in historical architecture in High Point. He is the author of the book, The Architecture of High Point North Carolina.

Mr. Briggs provided the following information:

- It's not well documented when the cross gable wing was added to the Carter Dalton House. There is no historical narrative by Carter Dalton, a diary or daybook, or building records that would provide additional details.
- Historical properties on Johnson St. are dated using photographs and newspaper articles. It was discovered that the house was built a year later than published in the book based on information available through newspapers.com.
- It's his understanding that the wing was not original to the building, but he cannot testify to the exact year the cross gable wing was added.
- To the best of his memory, the photograph of the Carter Dalton House used in his book came from a J.J. Farris book published around 1918.
- He does not recall Ms. Halstead drawing up the closing documents on the house, but rather Jim Morgan having a hand in it.

Per the Historic Preservation Commission Rules of Procedure, Ms. Halstead was given the opportunity to refute the challenge to her participation in the matter due to an alleged conflict of interest posed by the applicant. Ms. Halstead stated that she has had no direct conversations with the Lewises regarding [this matter] nor did she write the part of the closing documents for the purchase that were signed by the Lewises.

Ms. Halstead asked Mr. Briggs to speak to her involvement in the purchase of 1013 Johnson St. by the Lewises. Mr. Briggs said Ms. Halstead was involved with the

organization [High Point Preservation Society] that placed the easement on the property, so she had a role in the purchase and was present at closing.

Mr. Clark made a motion that Ms. Halstead remain as chair for this case. Ms. Cox seconded the motion. The remaining members of the board voted 5-0 in favor of the motion.

Commissioners made the following comments:

- Ms. Cox stated that while the house has been a sore place in the community, it is a beautiful house and the goal is to save it. She noted that if you cannot prove when the chimney was built, just forget about it and let the owners get back to work.
- Ms. Catania said that in [Mrs. Lewis'] statement, the [chimney] wasn't there before. With that in mind, she noted that the removal of the chimney should be passed.

Due to the absence of Ms. Catania and Ms. Cox from the previous meeting in which this public hearing for CA-18-15 was continued, they each assured the Commission that they had read and reviewed all material related to the matter. As such, Ms. Halstead, as chairman, approved the participation of Ms. Catania and Ms. Cox in the vote.

The Commission ended deliberation with a vote of 6-0.

Mr. Clark made a motion to approve CA-18-15 as proposed by the applicant because it is not incongruent with the special character of the Johnson Street Historic District and is in compliance with the Historic District Design Guidelines. Ms. Patrick seconded the motion. The Historic Preservation Commission approved the motion by a vote of 6-0.

Ms. DeLille returned to her seat at the dais following the conclusion of the public hearing.

D. Old Business

1. 1108 Johnson Street Update

Ms. Halstead asked for an update on the property at 1108 Johnson Street where the Commission approved a COA for a new tree to be installed. Mr. Fencl stated that tree had been removed prior to receiving a COA. The Commission approved the after-the-fact COA with the condition that the tree be removed and replanted in the fall of 2018. During an inspection made earlier in the day, Mr. Fencl said the remaining 6-to-8-foot section of the tree has been removed and the stump has been ground down, but no replacement tree has been planted. The brother of the owner who is managing the

property has stated that he is working on it. Mr. Fencil said he would try to contact him and get an update on when a tree will be planted. If he does not supply a satisfactory answer, it will have to move to code enforcement action.

Ms. Halstead asked why it hasn't already moved to code enforcement action since the tree was not planted in the fall as specified in the conditions of the COA. Mr. Fencil responded that work was in progress at the time.

E. New Business

1. Request for Historic Marker at John Coltrane Home

A request for evaluation and recommendation for approval of a historic marker to recognize the childhood home of John Coltrane to be located at 118 Underhill Street.

Mr. Fencil presented the request and recommended approval of the historic marker request as outlined in the staff analysis.

Speaking in favor of the request:

Speaking in favor of the request was the applicant, Phyllis Bridges, CEO of Yalik's Modern Art, 115 Parkview Terrace Ln., Jamestown

Ms. Bridges gave a presentation during a meeting of the Commission held on October 10, 2018 on why High Point should have a historic marker recognizing the boyhood home of jazz musician John Coltrane. At that time, she noted that John Coltrane lived in High Point about 17 years, and yet High Point is the only city in which he lived that does not have a historic marker in recognition of him.

Ms. Bridges stated that the Hayden-Harman Foundation has donated money for the historic marker, which is the only money received for the project. While the installation date has not been set, Ms. Bridges said a good time to install it would be during The John Coltrane International Jazz and Blues Festival [scheduled for August 31-September 1, 2019.]

Ms. Bridges noted that she has been speaking with Assistant City Manager, Randy Hemann, about plans for the home after the marker is installed. She hopes that the home will eventually become a museum where people can come to learn more about the life and history of John Coltrane.

Commissioners made the following comments:

- Ms. Halstead noted that she hopes this marker can help serve as a catalyst to renovate and restore other homes in the area near Underhill St.
- Ms. DeLille said she likes the wording because it talks about John, but also his family and heritage and where he came from and provides background to his upbringing.

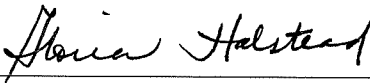
Mr. Clark made a motion to recommend approval of the historic marker to recognize the childhood home of John Coltrane as proposed by the applicant. He stated that the request meets the minimum evaluation criteria, and coupled with the documentation submitted with the request, it meets all the evaluation criteria of the Historical Marker Policy. Ms. Patrick seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 7-0.

2. Greenhill Cemetery Update

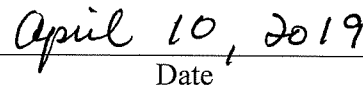
Mr. Mingo presented a PowerPoint presentation on the status of infrastructure improvements at Greenhill Cemetery after the City allotted money in its 2018-19 Fiscal Year budget for this purpose.

F. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.



Gloria Halstead, Chair



Date