

MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
April 8, 2021
City of High Point
Municipal Office Building
City Council Chambers
6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS

PRESENT: Janet Catania, Chair
Holly Davis, Vice Chair
Mary Powell DeLille
Jeremy Fennema
John Fitzwater
Brenda Stewart
Brienne Verstat

MEMBERS

ABSENT: NONE

STAFF

PRESENT: Lee Burnette, Planning & Development Director
Chris Andrews, Development Administrator
David Fencl, Senior Planner
Genine Solis, Recording Secretary
Montana Brown, Administrative Specialist I
Meghan Maguire, Assistant City Attorney

The meeting began at 6:01 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

A. Call to Order

Ms. Catania, Chair, determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order.

B. Approval of Minutes

1. December 3, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission

Ms. Davis made a motion to approve the December 3, 2020 minutes for the regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission as presented. Mr. Fennema seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by a vote of 7-0.

C. Hearing Items

All speakers offering testimony were affirmed.

**1. Matt Mahoney for Lily Pad Investors, LL 319 & 321 Montlieu Avenue
CA-21-04**

A request to add a new gravel driveway from Brookside Drive to tie into existing parking area located in the rear yard.

Mr. David Fencl, Senior Planner, presented CA-21-04 and entered the application, staff report, and pictures into the record.

Mr. Fencl stated the current driveway would be removed once the new one is installed as the old driveway does not meet the requirements of the City ordinance. He also noted a permit would be required for the driveway.

He recommended approval of the request as presented in the staff report.

Mr. Fencl provided the following answers to questions from the Commission:

- The driveway should cause little to no impact on traffic along Brookside Drive.
- The house is currently used as student housing.
- Requiring the existing driveway to be removed may be a good condition to add.
- This lot was included in the original 1920 subdivision, so it is included in the Historic District.

The following person spoke on behalf of the applicant:

- Matthew Mahoney, Representative of High Point University, 1 University Parkway, High Point

Mr. Mahoney provided the following answers to questions from the Commission:

- There are plans to remove the bamboo where the driveway will be located as it is an invasive species.
- The gravel and traffic will help to keep the bamboo down naturally and some will be dug up, and herbicide treatments may also be used.

- There is an 8-foot-high privacy fence between this property and the one behind it.
- Students have difficulty parking on the street as the neighbor parks right in front of the house.
- The old driveway will be removed, and grass will be added.
- Students will be notified of parking rules and cement barriers will be considered to prevent future parking in the area of the old driveway.
- There are no intentions of removing any trees on the property, particularly the persimmon trees.

The Commission began deliberation.

During deliberation, Mr. Mahoney provided these additional answers to questions from the Commission:

- Mr. Mahoney reiterated that only the bamboo would be removed and not any trees.
- There will be explicit stipulations on parking rules for the students in this house.

Although the Commission agreed that it would not be appropriate for them to stipulate that barriers be erected in front of the old driveway as that has no bearing on this COA or on historical value, the applicant volunteered to add barriers.

Mr. Fennema made a motion that the Commission accept the Certificate of Appropriateness, CA-21-04, as stated with staff recommendations in the document that was submitted in this meeting. Ms. Stewart seconded the motion. The Historic Preservation Commission approved the motion by a vote of 7-0.

**2. Pat Cardillo for PDA Enterprise 2011 Trust 909 Johnson Street
CA-21-05**

A request to add a deck on roof of one-story extension on the rear of house.

Mr. David Fencl, Senior Planner, presented CA-21-05 and submitted the staff report, photographs, and the attachments in the agenda packet into the official record of the meeting. He also entered the authorization for the applicant to sign for the trust and the authorization by the applicant for the representatives at the meeting to act on his and the trust's behalf into the record.

Mr. Fencl noted that this was an after-the-fact Certificate of Appropriateness due to much of the work being done prior to applying for the COA.

Although there is no specific mention of rooftop decks in the Historic District Design Guidelines, the guidelines state that decks in general should:

- Be sited discreetly in a rear yard to minimize their visibility from the street.

- Designed as contemporary elements and constructed to ensure minimal physical damage to the historic building.
- Be self-supporting so that connections to the house can be minimized so that structural failures in the deck would not impact the historical structure.

Mr. Fencel noted that the rooftop deck, as currently constructed, has not been designed to be self-supporting and has been tied into the masonry walls of the home as well as its roof structure. The roof itself could have been approved as a Minor Works Certificate of Appropriateness but is being considered along with the deck.

He added that issuance of a construction permit is also required prior to construction of any proposed deck.

Staff recommends denial of the portion of the COA for the construction of the deck as noted in the staff report. Staff recommends approval of the portion of the COA for the roof as noted in the staff report.

Mr. Fencel provided the following answers to questions from the Commission:

- Construction of the deck was halted with a Stop Work Order and a Zoning Violation was issued.
- He cannot say for certain whether a deck was built on the house originally or if there was possibly a railing.
- This project does not have a permit yet as one cannot be issued until they have a COA.
- City of High Point Building Inspector Brian Magyar recommended some changes for the structure to meet building code. Mr. Fencel entered Mr. Magyar's affidavit of inspection into the record.
- Guidelines are not specific for rooftop decks, so the Commission would be the deciding factor.

Meghan Maguire, City Attorney, reiterated that the Historic Preservation Commission is responsible for deciding on such factors that are not specified in the Historic District Design Guidelines.

The following person spoke on behalf of the applicant:

- Zack Taylor, Representative of PDA Enterprises, Stokes County, North Carolina
- Jeff Taylor, Representative of PDA Enterprises, Trinity, North Carolina

Mr. Zack Taylor stated that the deck is tied into a 12-inch solid steel I-beam for support. They would be willing to change out the bolts from zinc-plated to galvanized to ensure that they would not rust. His concern with removing the bolts to make it self-sustaining would be the potential damage it could cause to the brick.

Mr. Zack Taylor explained that the repairs were started because they were afraid a delay may result in ponding and leaking on the original flat roof, which could damage the structure underneath. A roofing company that was consulted suggested that a metal roof be added instead of just replacing the rubber membrane.

He added that the rooftop did have a handrail around it originally and it had been used as a sitting area.

Mr. Zack Taylor answered the following questions from the Commission:

- Decking was an afterthought. The new roof would have made the area unusable as a sitting area.
- He believes the flat roof was original to the property.
- The deck is somewhat visible, but not directly from the front.
- There will be a railing all the way around the deck, which would be visible. Two options are being considered: wood and wrought iron. If wood is used, it will be sanded and stained.
- The inspector did say [the deck] would be structurally sound.

Mr. Zack Taylor offered his apology for not realizing that a COA was needed prior to beginning work on the deck..

Mr. Jeff Taylor provided the following information and responses to questions by commissioners:

- The house was not in great shape when it was purchased.
- There are plans to fix the guest quarters and they are now aware of the COA requirements before beginning the work.
- The handrails, trim and deck may be painted by a contractor.
- The water ponding would often be pretty deep, causing concerns of a mosquito issue.
- Owner wants to use the space.
- While the deck is drilled into masonry, the masonry is not really providing any support. The deck is very sturdy.
- The Taylors are not general contractors; they are just helping the family.
- They want to keep the integrity of the house and restore it.

Mr. Fencel read the notarized comments by Mr. Brian Magyar, a City of High Point building inspector.

The Commission began deliberation.

The following were concerns by the Commission:

- Flat roofs with rails exist, but there are no roofs with decking on them within the historic district.

- The deck extends beyond the house, so it is visible from the street.
- Furniture would further increase the visibility of the deck.
- Removing the deck may damage the brick. Bolts may need to be cut instead of removed.
- The decision on this deck must be based on the guidelines and not stability and safety.
- A flat roof with a railing would be more congruent with the Johnson Street Historic District.

The consensus was that the deck is not congruent with the Johnson Street Historic District and should not be allowed.

Mr. Fennema made a motion to approve the low-profile dark gray metal ribbed roofing proposed for a portion of the flat roof covering the one-story wing located on the northwest corner of the residence, because that is congruent with the Johnson Street Historic District and the Historic District Guidelines, and deny the Certificate of Appropriateness to construct the deck on the one-story wing located on the northwest corner of the house, because this request is not congruent with the Johnson Street Historic District and the Historic District Design Guidelines based on the following criteria: The location of the proposed roof top deck alters the historic building's character defining front elevation by extending beyond the main body of the house, not being inset from the corners of the building, and being visible from Johnson Street; the height of the deck above the flat roof of the one-story wing located on the northwest corner of the house makes the deck more visible from Johnson Street; and the deck has not been designed to be self-supporting to minimize its impact on the historic building and would be difficult to remove in the future without damaging the historic structure. Ms. Davis seconded the motion. The Historic Preservation Commission approved the motion by a vote of 7-0.

D. New Business

1. Petition for Washington Street area

Mr. Fencil presented a petition from the Washington Street Historic Society to designate Washington Street as a local historic district. The petition was requested last year by staff to demonstrate interest in becoming a local district. A map was created based on the petition. Owners/representatives of the shaded areas on the enclosed map have signed the petition.

Washington Street was added to the National Registry in 2010 by the National Park Service through a Certified Local Government Grant with matching funds from the City.

Mr. Fencil entered into the record a Facebook petition and a change.org petition, both of which were in favor of creating the new historic district.

Mr. Fencil also passed out a handout of the Local Historic Designation Process that the City would complete to create a historic district.

Typically, the National Register Historic District Designation comes before the local designation, although that is not always the case, explained Mr. Fencil.

He added that as the Washington Street area is already a National Register Historic District much of the research has already been done and probably all that will be needed are some updates.

The Commission has the option to endorse this or a decision can be delayed until the next meeting.

Ms. Rishaunda Moses, 106 Woodland Drive, Jamestown, NC, on behalf of the Washington Street Historical Society, gave a brief presentation on the importance of designating the area as a local historic district. She noted that they already have someone qualified to put together the Local Designation Report, but that it is a costly process and they would appreciate any help the City would provide.

Ms. DeLille made a motion to pursue the Local Historic Overlay District for Washington Street and also to recommend that staff identify potential funding for the Local Designation Report. Mr. Fennema seconded the motion. The Historic Preservation Commission approved the motion by a vote of 7-0.

2. Major and minor works COA fees

Mr. Chris Andrews, Development Administrator, provided the processing time and costs associated with applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

3. *The Architecture of High Point* books

Mr. Andrews provided information on the *Architecture of High Point* books that are currently in storage. He noted that

308 books were sold and 1,054 remain.

Staff is open to ideas of how to distribute the books and would like suggestions from the Commission.

E. Announcements

1. Minor Works Certificate of Appropriateness Report


This report has been included in the packet for informational purposes.

F. Adjournment

Ms. Davis made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Stewart seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.



Holly Davis, Vice-Chair



Date