

MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
April 10, 2019
City of High Point
Municipal Office Building
City Council Chambers
6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS

PRESENT: Gloria Halstead, Chairman
Janet Catania
Dorothy Darr
Mary Powell DeLille
John Fitzwater

MEMBERS

ABSENT: Julius Clark
Annette Cox
Jerry Mingo
Dories Patrick

STAFF

PRESENT: David Fencl, Senior Planner
Gina Lindsey, Administrative Coordinator
Genine Solis, Recording Secretary
Fred Baggett, Legal Counsel to the Board
Meghan Maguire, 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. January 9, 2019 Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission

Ms. DeLille made a motion to approve the January 9, 2019 minutes for the regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission. Ms. Catania seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by a vote of 5-0.

C. Public Hearing Items

All speakers offering testimony were sworn.

1. Paige Ray 224 Woodrow Ave CA-19-01

A request to remove two sweetgum trees located in the front yard and replace with crape myrtles.

Mr. David Fencil, Senior Planner, presented CA-19-01 and recommended approval as outlined in the staff report.

The following information was provided by Mr. Fencil in response to questions by Commissioners:

- Most of the crape myrtles in the neighborhood were planted by homeowners in addition to the other trees, not as replacements. Per the Historic District Design Guidelines, the trees should be replaced with a similar or identical species.
- Comparable replacements could be decided by consulting the [City of High Point Recommended Plant Materials] guide and by talking with HPC staff and Urban Forestry Commission staff. There are many varieties of maples and oaks that would be appropriate, however, the cost and availability of different trees needs to be factored in, as many varieties of trees are currently unavailable.
- While it would not be beneficial to replant the trees in the same location they were removed from, they still need to be planted in the front yard.
- Whether or not one canopy tree would be better than two would depend on the type of tree, but two would more closely match the other yards in the neighborhood.
- Changing the location of the front walk could potentially help with the placement of replacement trees, but it would be up to the Commission to approve a change in the location of the sidewalk.

Lisa Anderson, 317 Woodrow Avenue, High Point, asked Mr. Fencil if there were trees that would not affect the foundation and gas line as these did. Mr. Fencil responded that would be a consideration and an appropriate variety could be selected with assistance from staff.

The following person spoke on behalf of the applicant:

- Paige Ray, owner of 224 Woodrow Ave., High Point

Ms. Ray stated she recently moved back to the High Point area and was unaware of the [COA requirements] in the Historic District. She said that she loves the huge trees, but was initially unaware of the problems caused by the roots, and her homeowner's insurance is at risk of being cancelled as a result. Ms. Ray stated that her insurance company is drafting a letter that should be completed by the end of the

week. She noted that while she understands that the landscape is important in preservation, the home should be more important.

Ms. Ray added that she has paid for the stumps to be ground down and the mulch to be hauled away, and she will have to pay for soil to be brought in as well. She also expressed concern about planting new trees that will cause the same problems in the future.

The applicant provided pictures of the tree roots, basement, foundation, and broken window caused by the roots.

Ms. Ray provided the following answers to questions asked by the Commission:

- She was aware that she had moved into a historic district, but she stated she was unfamiliar with the [COA requirements].
- Her real estate agent was Ms. DeLille, who provided her with a link to the Historic District Design Guidelines.
- She was aware she needed to wait for [COA] approval before removing the trees, but her contractor began earlier than expected.
- She spoke with a representative from the NC Arboretum who made a few suggestions, but was unaware that she needed to plant the same type of tree.

The Commission stressed the importance of consulting staff regarding tree replacement, particularly as Ms. Ray's contractor with Beeson Tree Service is not a certified arborist.

Ms. Darr made a motion to end deliberation. Ms. Catania seconded. The Commission ended deliberation with a vote of 5-0.

Ms. Darr made a motion to approve CA-19-01 as recommended by staff because it is congruent with the special character of the Sherrod Park Historic District and is in compliance with the Historic District Design Guidelines. The staff recommendation includes the condition that the applicant plant a 2.5-inch caliper tree for each sweetgum removed in the front yard within six months from the date of approval instead of the proposed crape myrtles. Mr. Fitzwater seconded the motion. The Historic Preservation Commission approved the motion by a vote of 5-0.

D. Old Business

1. CLG Grant Application

Mr. Fencil stated the City submitted two applications for Certified Local Government Grants by the March 29, 2019 deadline. The first grant would be used for ground penetrating radar to help locate graves in the African American section of Oakwood Cemetery. The second grant would be used for a study of Griffin Park, which includes the Underhill neighborhood. City Council recently approved a historic marker for the

childhood home of John Coltrane in that neighborhood. City staff should know by the end of May if the applications have been successful.

2. Application Fees for Certificates of Appropriateness

Ms. Halstead expressed concern regarding the application fees assessed for Certificates of Appropriateness. She and other members feel the fees are too high, and they feel it makes it difficult for homeowners to keep their houses up. She is also concerned that the fees may prevent other neighborhoods, such as Griffin Park, from forming new historic districts.

When asked who sets the fee prices, Mr. Fencil stated that City Council approves the fees. Staff has plans to provide more information on the history and reason for the fee amounts in the future.

E. New Business

1. New City Email Addresses for Historic Preservation Commission

Ms. Gina Lindsey, Administrative Coordinator, presented information to the Commission regarding new City e-mail accounts for members.

Since the Commission became Quasi-Judicial, it was decided that City e-mail addresses would be appropriate. The public will be able to contact members of the Commission without giving out any personal telephone numbers or e-mail addresses.

2. Sign at 1001 Johnson Street

Ms. Halstead mentioned a sign in the front yard of 1001 Johnson Street. She suggested that staff look into that.

3. Quasi-Judicial Training Reminder

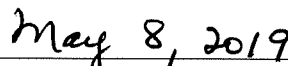
Staff reminded the commissioners about the Quasi-Judicial training session offered through the UNC School of Government that is being held on Wednesday, May 8 in Kernersville.

F. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.



Gloria Halstead, Chair



Date