

REGULAR MEETING
TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 2, 2005
WEDNESDAY - 2:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) held its regular meeting on Wednesday, February 2, 2005. Members present were Marc Yops, Malinda Messer, Bette Sprecher, Laura Soltis, David Felmet and Sandra Owen. Others present were Planning Director Paul Benson and Town Clerk Phyllis McClure. Chairman Bette Sprecher called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Approval of Minutes of January 5, 2005

Bette Sprecher said on Page 5, first paragraph the open house held at the old Bank Building on Main Street was the Waynesville Historical Society rather than the Historical Society of Haywood County.

Laura Soltis moved, seconded by David Felmet, to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion carried unanimously.

Review Draft Amendment to Land Developments Regarding Powers and Duties of the Historic Preservation Commission

Paul Benson presented a draft amendment which would add to the powers and duties of the Historic Preservation Commission the following:

Section 154.054 - "To review plans for any development activity requiring a Certificate of Land Developments Standards Compliance or a demolition permit effecting a historic property within the planning jurisdiction of the Town of Waynesville. Such historic properties shall include any property listed on the National Register of Historic Places either individually or as a contributing building within a district, or any property on the North Carolina study list for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or any property included on the Town of Waynesville Architectural Survey as amended."

An amendment was also included to add the following to Section 154.053 Community Appearance Commission of Waynesville Powers and Duties: "However, this duty shall not include plans under the jurisdiction of the Historic Preservation Commission as established in Section 154.054(A)."

The Commission felt that this amendment would give them an opportunity to give guidance when property owners plan to make changes to property with historic significance. They asked if new property owners are made aware when a building is on the National Register. Mr. Benson said it depends on how knowledgeable the realtor or current owners are, but in most cases this

information is relayed to the new owner. There was discussion regarding the building located beside Town Hall which recently was sold. This building is listed on the National Register and the new owner plans to put in a restaurant, professional offices and rental units.

David Felmet pointed out that there have been two historically significant buildings torn down, the Red Wing building on Main Street and the Dr. Todd building at the intersection of Haywood and Academy Street. Sandra Owen said it was shortly after the Todd building was demolished that the Historic Preservation Commission began. Mr. Benson said in 1996 the Town adopted an ordinance to require a demolition permit for any historically significant building which is at least 50 years old. However, with the adoption of the Land Development Standards this was somehow omitted. It was felt that this was an oversight and should be corrected. Mr. Benson said the Town had a section which required the issuance of a permit for demolition but the Town does not have such a permit. The Commission felt that it was pointless to have an ordinance without enforcing it. Malinda Messer asked what the ramifications of this were on the Commission's mission. Laura Soltis pointed out that if an ordinance is not enforceable maybe the Town should not have the ordinance.

Paul Benson said with the proposed amendment a demolition permit was not required but the property owner would be required to come before the HPC for their review. Malinda Messer said it seems that the HPC would simply be giving friendly advice without any teeth.

Marc Yops moved, seconded by Sandra Owen, to endorse the proposed amendment as written. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion Regarding Williamson House - Walnut Street

There was discussion regarding the status of the Williamson house on Walnut Street since it appears the work has stopped again. They asked whether the owners will begin work again, if the next step is demolition or if the property owners can be persuaded to complete the work. The property is under the control of three brothers, Malcolm, Stanley and George Williamson. Tim Welch had been contracted to restore the home but work has since stopped when one of the brothers became ill. Sandra Owen said this house was given Local Landmark Designation several years ago. An architectural survey done about 22 years ago revealed that this house was an excellent example of the Dutch Revival style. Ms. Owen personally called Stanley Williamson at that time to encourage restoration of the home and work did begin shortly after that. Paul Benson will gather information and report back to the HPC at their next meeting.

Paul Benson said there was not a lot the Town could do to push the completion of the work. It seems that the safety issues were cleared with the work that was done. The Town could write a letter encouraging the completion of the work. Sandra Owen suggested that a picture be taken of the house and sent with the letter.

Cure' Building on Main Street

John Horton met with Ms. Cure' and looked at the building on Main Street which she recently purchased and is currently renovating. Ms. Cure' seemed very interested in doing what she

needed to get tax credits. Mr. Horton determined that the 1950's facade which was removed was not historically significant to the building.

Sybil Bowers - Main Street Historic District

Paul Benson reported that Sybil Bowers had planned to attend the meeting today, but with the prediction of ice she decided to delay coming until the next meeting in March. The Commission asked if the Community Appearance Commission and Downtown Waynesville Association could be invited to the meeting.

Historic Rock Walls

Paul Benson said it would be necessary for him to write letters to the owners of historic rock walls to request that they be restored.

Purpose of Commission

There was discussion regarding training for the HPC Members. Paul Benson said there is usually one training session for the HPC in the Autumn. Mr. Yops asked if the Commission was in violation since there have been no training sessions. Commission Members felt that there may be some training which could be done in house. Mr. Yops said there may be some material available at Western Carolina University and he will look into this. Mr. Benson will check on available training. The Community Appearance Commission and Downtown Waynesville Association can also be invited.

Historic Preservation Commission Brochures

Sandra Owen said several years ago brochures were printed for the HPC. The back page needs corrections since only two of the members listed are still serving on the Commission. It was suggested that the corrections be made and the remaining brochures be distributed and that an article be placed in the newspapers and the Town's Quarterly Newsletter encouraging property owners to have their historic homes designated as Local Historic Landmarks. Malinda Messer asked if a query could be done in Haywood County Land Records to determine which homes would qualify and if letters could be sent to those property owners. Town Staff will look into this further.

HPC Member Earl Lanning

There was discussion regarding HPC Member Earl Lanning. Mr. Lanning was appointed by the Board of Aldermen several months ago and has failed to attend any of the meetings. It was requested that Phyllis McClure call Mr. Lanning to see if he is interested in serving on the Commission. According to the Commission's Bylaws, if a member misses three consecutive meetings or more than one half of the regular meetings in a calendar year they lose their status as a member of the Commission and can either be reappointed or replaced.

Adjournment

With no further business, Marc Yops moved, seconded by David Felmet, to adjourn the meeting at 3:09 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Phyllis R. McClure
Town Clerk

Bette Sprecher
Chairman