

SPECIAL MEETING
TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 15, 2000
WEDNESDAY - 2:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL

The Waynesville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) held a special meeting on Wednesday, November 15, 2000. Members present were Ruth Chacto, Helen Malina, Alex Lesueur, Ron Fleenor, Sandra Owen and Bob Breese. Chairman Helen Malina called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

Approval of Minutes of October 4, 2000

Ron Fleenor moved, seconded by Alex Lesueur, to approve the minutes of the October 4, 2000 meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Local Landmark Designation - Stanley Williamson - 53 Walnut Street

Sybil Bowers, representing Stanley Williamson, said that Mr. Williamson was in the process of having a feasibility study conducted on the building located at 53 Walnut Street. Ms. Bowers reported that the State did not make any comments within the thirty (30) day period following the request for local landmark designation. This building was originally built between 1906 and 1909 by Charles Miller and was part of the Presbyterian Church property. Ms. Bowers said that the building is very intact architecturally and she recommended placement of the structure on the local landmark designation list. She also stated that this step may be the key toward getting the Walnut Street area designated as a historic district.

Ron Fleenor said that he had been inside the building and the interior is in excellent condition. There have been two fires in the home but they left very minimal damage, mainly from smoke. Ms. Bowers said that the attic area is completely usable and the owners have talked about using the structure as office space or possibly a gallery. Heating, plumbing and electrical will need to be updated and can be done without damaging the outside of the house. If exterior changes are made, they would need to come before the Historic Preservation Commission for approval.

Ron Fleenor moved, seconded by Ruth Chacto, to recommend placement of the property located at 53 Walnut Street as a local landmark designation. The motion carried unanimously.

M. R. Whisenhunt and Edith Whisenhunt attended the meeting after receiving notification of the public hearing. Mr. Whisenhunt said that they live on Hazel Street and expressed concern with placing a building on the local landmark designation list because he felt that this would give property owners a reason not to maintain the house and would prevent the Town from ordering the demolition of the house if it became deteriorated. As an example, Mr. Whisenhunt mentioned the house located behind Maxine's Restaurant. He said at one time the house was designated for destruction and has now been turned into four (4) apartments.

Helen Malina informed Mr. Whisenhunt that the Shubash house was not designated as a historic site by the HPC. However, the property owner was encouraged not to demolish the house. Ms. Malina added that the Town, not HPC controls zoning uses such as allowing a structure to be used as

apartments.

Local Landmark Designation - Penny Morse - 80 North Main Street

Ms. Morse asked that action be deferred on this request until after January 1, 2001.

Local Landmark Designation - Penny Morse - 188 North Main Street

Ms. Penny Morse requested that the building located at 188 North Main Street be designated as a local landmark.

Ms. Sybil Bowers said that the letter from the State outlines several issues where additional information was needed, including the architectural integrity and the historical significance of the building. This building is one of six commercial buildings on Main Street which were built by 1896 or earlier. This building, along with several others on Main Street, were renovated in the 1940's and a new facade was placed on the building around this time, as well as those located at 98, 80 and 207 Main Street.

Helen Malina said that the HPC would love to have Main Street declared a historic district, not only based on their historic significance but also on structural significance. It was the consensus of the HPC that the property owners would not need to restore the building as it was originally, but maybe to its condition around the 1940's which was they felt was an important era in Waynesville's development. Bob Breese pointed out that the front of this building has been changed about five or six times during its history.

Ron Fleenor moved, seconded by Ruth Chacto, to recommend that the building located at 188 North Main Street be included as a local landmark designation, with the condition that Ms. Bowers provide the additional information requested by the State for the Board of Aldermen meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Carol James - Request for Historic District Studies of Frog Level

Carol James attended the meeting to request that a historic district study be conducted of the Frog Level area. Ms. James said that she represented several Frog Level property owners who have been in the process of forming a non profit organization, with their focus on deciding what can be done to the area. Recent attention to the Frog Level area has been negative and the property owners would like to see it become a positive attraction. They would like to eventually see this area designated as a historic district since most of the buildings are at least fifty years old and this was the first commercial district in Waynesville. They feel that these buildings have a considerable amount of historic significance since this area provided goods and services for the people in Waynesville.

Bob Breese said that one of the saddest days in Waynesville was when the Norfolk Southern Railway tore down the old Depot Station. Ms. James said that she has spoken with Waynesville's Planning and Zoning Manager John Swift about rebuilding the depot. It is felt that there may be grant money available for this purpose. Ms. James also said that she has been in touch with Ron Leatherwood with N.C. Department of Transportation regarding proposed changes which may occur with the road in this area. Some things to consider will be central parking for the area, traffic flow and grant money to rebuild the depot.

Helen Malina said that the Town can look at studies which have already been done in this area and see what other work would need to be done. Ms. Malina pointed out that commercial areas are more vulnerable to rapid change than residential areas, and the HPC would like to preserve as much of the history of this area as possible. Andrew Powell said that funds are available for a study.

Ron Fleenor moved, seconded by Bob Breese, to place Frog Level as the number one priority for the HPC to pursue to be designated as a Local Historic District and request that Town Staff look at the studies that have been done and determine what is necessary for funding presentation. The motion carried unanimously.

Ron Fleenor added that he has been fortunate to be able to attend some of the meetings of the Frog Level area and those in attendance have been very excited about this process.

Historic Preservation Commission Brochure Revision Approval

Andrew Powell presented another draft of the Historic Preservation Commission Brochure with examples of twelve various fonts used during the 1880-1930 era. It was the consensus of the Board to approve the brochure, after it is proofread and finalized. Helen Malina appointed Sandra Owen to choose which fonts to use in the brochure.

2001 Annual Training Conference - Request for Program Ideas

Planning and Zoning Manager John Swift requested input from HPC Members regarding program ideas for the 2001 Annual Training Conference. Ron Fleenor suggested that information be provided on what grant monies are available. Sandra Owen said that it would be helpful to have a seminar on what grant monies were available both on the State and Federal Levels and to have a consolidated book with available grants. Mr. Fleenor also said that he knew someone in Ohio who is willing to present a seminar about using lime mortar which expands and contracts with the brick and this type of information would be helpful to anyone doing restoration work. Ms. Owen suggested that a day be set aside to have speakers and information available for persons interested in restoration. Ron Fleenor said that it is important to have a source where people can find this information.

Adjournment

With no further business, Ron Fleenor moved, seconded by Bob Breese, to adjourn the meeting at 3:25 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Helen Malina
Chairman

Phyllis R. McClure
Secretary