

TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE

Historic Preservation Commission

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**Development Services
Director**
Elizabeth Teague

Chairman
Sandra Owen (Chairman)
Board Members
Alex McKay (Vice)
Ann Melton
Linda Ann Lee
Abigail Carver
Glenn Duerr
Jeff Childers
Virgil Messer
Bill Revis

REGULAR MEETING HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION TOWN HALL BOARD ROOM 9 SOUTH MAIN STREET AUGUST 1, 2018

Members Present:

Sandra Owen - Chairman
Jeff Childers
Ann Melton
Virgil Messer
Bill Revis
Glenn Duerr
Linda Ann Lee
Abigail Carver

Absent:

Alex McKay

Also Present:

Elizabeth Teague, Development Services Director
Byron Hickox, Land Use Administrator
Gavin Brown, Mayor
Preston Gregg, Town Engineer
Chelle Baker, Administrative Assistant

Media Present:

Becky Johnson, The Mountaineer newspaper

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. Welcome and Announcements

Chairman Sandra Owen called the meeting to order at 2:04 P.M. Ms. Owen welcomed and introduced the two new Board members, Ms. Linda Ann Lee and Ms. Abigail Carver.

Mr. Byron Hickox, Land Use Administrator, announced CLG Training Friday, August 17, 2018 at the Henderson County Courthouse from 9 to 4.

2. Adoption of Minutes

A motion was made by Virgil Messer and seconded by Bill Revis to adopt the June 6th and 20th, 2018 minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

B. BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Presentation by CALYX Engineering regarding revised Walnut Street improvements within the Spread Out Historic District, public comment and possible action by the Historic Commission.

Representatives of CALYX Engineering and NCDOT presented:

**Martha Hodge and Steve Drum
CALYX Engineers**

**Mary Pope
NCDOT Architectural Historian**

Ms. Martha Hodge advised that she is the project manager. Ms. Hodge, along with Ms. Mary Pope and Mr. Steve Drum gave a brief description of the proposed design of the roadway. Mr. Drum advised the conceptual plan included the removal of overhead power lines by burying utility lines underground using a duct bank. He also informed the Commission and public that the Town will put up decorative lighting between Main Street and Boundary Street. He talked about the transformer boxes and where easements would be placed.

There was much discussion between members of the public and NCDOT regarding the proposed project plans.

**Bob Golding
NCDOT Division 14
Utilities**

**Jonathan Woodard
NCDOT Division 14
Project Engineer**

**J Scott Miller
NCDOT DDC Division 14**

**Ethan Miller
RK&K Division 14**

**Renee Glenhill Early
SHPO**

Ms. Elizabeth Teague, Director of Development Services explained where the power conduits for the light poles were being placed and said that the idea was to keep the utilities within the footprint of the road. Mr. Revis asked if we could match the poles from Main Street and make the design consistent. Ms. Teague responded that was the goal. She said these were town power poles and we were going to be working with the Town utilities company trying to match and bring the decorative poles around from Main Street and down.

Ms. Mary Pope, NCDOT Architectural Historian, introduced herself and spoke about the goals of the improvements with Russ Avenue such as parking, sidewalks and some utilities while maintaining the integrity of the Historic district. She informed everyone that Calyx and members of the DOT have looked at ways to reduce impact to the district. She spoke about how they will change the roadway on Boundary Street and that parking spaces on Walnut Street will be eliminated from North Main toward Boundary Street.

There was public comment regarding the design of the roadway at the intersections of Branner Avenue, Boundary Street, and Walnut Street. The comments were directed toward losing the parking on Walnut and the median planned for Branner and Walnut. Public comment also addressed the planned removal of the right lane in front of the Hipp house. DOT advised that they could widen it out and put in a short right-hand turn lane. They advised that a traffic analysis showed that both of those lanes are not needed for a good flow and if they do put in a short right-hand turn lane, then it may impact property in the Historical district.

Chairman Owen read a letter Mr. Lawrence Braxton at 66 Walnut Street, a copy of which was sent to Mr. Woodard, regarding the loss of parking. Ms. Owen stated there was very little parking in this area already. Ms. Pope responded that this is why they were here was to listen to the concerns in this district and maybe they could quantify the parking spots that were being taken and look for ways to recoup some of the parking.

The public asked why the need for the median at Boundary Street. DOT answered to restrict the movement to Boundary Street and to make it unable to make a left into Boundary from Branner for safety reasons.

Ms. Pope said that another concern being addressed by this plan was the existing sidewalks. She advised the existing sidewalks are in poor condition with telephone poles in the middle of them. She said the telephone poles would be removed and the sidewalks would be replaced with appropriate sidewalks for the Historic District. She explained that the brick walls along the sidewalks would be protected.

Mr. Drum outlined where electrical, phone, and signal light boxes would be located. He said that he asked the town to look at running utilities behind the McDarris house and the other houses on that side of Walnut Street. This is where a duct bank would be located. He stated that this was a vital part of the plan and without this happening the planning would have to start over again. There was public comment addressing who would be responsible for making the decision or to arrange for the approval of the utilities to the back of the homes. It was explained that it would be a joint effort of the Town, home owners, and the State to make this happen.

Mr. Preston Gregg, Town Engineer, addressed the decorative lights that will be placed on Walnut St. He said that the poles would be the same theme as the ones currently on Main St. He also said the poles would have to be on the sidewalks just behind the curbs in a way that maintains the sidewalk's ADA requirements. The sidewalks will be replaced with 5 foot sidewalks which will make this possible. He advised the light poles will be maintained by the Town. Mr. Gregg said that in the area between Branner Ave and the railroad there would be a slightly different type of pole. There will be nine poles from Main St to Branner Ave and another four or five from Branner to the railroad. Mr. Gregg explained that the Town feels confident it can serve power to the poles and adjacent properties, but there will be easements that needed to go through private properties for access from the rear of these properties. He also advised that in some areas if one resident denies access it would deny the utility project in that area.

Ms. Hodge explained that the utility plan has room for changes upon the concerns of the public and the property owners. Ms. Hodge said she was there to see if the residents and town were open to this project.

Mayor Brown spoke as to the funding for burying the utilities. Mayor Brown said the NC DOT would bear the expense to do this work in the amount of one million dollars. He said that there would be costs to the Town if this project is approved, but at a nominal cost. He advised that burying the utilities underground would be great win for the Town and the Historic District.

Ms. Pope asked the Commission for their views. Chairman Owen asked about the parking lots and running the single phase power from the parking lots instead of from the sidewalk area. It was explained by DOT that the boxes would need to be in the sidewalk area. It was asked if the boxes could not be buried. DOT explained that these boxes suffer from moisture and that the utility workers are required to be special trained to work in these boxes.

The Commission asked the question about the sidewalks and if there was going to be grass between the light poles and that question was not able to be answered. Mr. Revis asked if the sidewalks could be brick like the rest of the Main St area. It was answered that it was a possibility and it could be talked about in future meetings, but that the Town would have to pay the additional costs for brick instead of concrete.

DOT advised that they need participation agreements to serving the properties from the back side in place before they invest more money and time into design. Ms. Teague asked if DOT needed a concurrence from the Historic Commission that they are headed in the right direction as to their concept and design plans. The DOT stated that they do need the concurrence before they go forward.

The public asked if all the houses are already serviced by the rear of their homes already then would there still need to be a duct bank. It was explained that it would still be necessary to have this duct bank to service the properties past Branner Ave. It was also asked if there would be a need for more than two distribution boxes total in the Historic District. DOT explained a couple of possibilities as to where the boxes could be placed but they have not put the time into research as to where the boxes would go until the plan was ready to move forward. DOT stated that there were going to have to be some compromises to make this project happen.

Beth Johnson
No address given

Ms. Johnson advised that she does not live in town but attends the Presbyterian Church. She addressed the Commission and asked them if they had the opportunity to vote on a resolution to vote no to the project because this project was supposed to be a Russ Ave project but they were changing Walnut St. She further stated that Wanda from DOT had promised no changes but they are changing sidewalks, putting in barriers that prevent people from turning left from their property and removing a lane for a block. She stated there was no need to change or improve Walnut St.

Commission Member Childers asked if a resolution was being asked for. Ms. Teague stated that although a resolution was provided, NCDOT are only asking for a verbal concurrence at this time. DOT stated that they were looking to achieve a good faith understanding so that they can move forward with designs.

Ms. Pope stated that the DOT is dealing with two laws they must comply with to complete this project. The first is Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act with a district listed on the National Registry. She advised the Town that they have to work with the properties on the locally designated areas of which there are only two in the district. She stated that there are only two properties that are under the Town's purview

and those are the only two properties that DOT has to work with the Town to get approval. She said that she would need to see the local by-laws to see if the Town even has purview on those properties. Ms. Early, SHPO, advised the Commission to direct NCDOT to continue working on the project and to bring it back as soon as they can. Ms. Early urged the Commission to have a staff member be a party to the consultation and that the Town, DOT, CALYX, and the Army Corp of Engineers work together to address the concerns.

Commission Members asked if the design that is finally presented does not meet their concerns, can it be amended? Ms. Teague stated that they could only deal with the impact on the two properties in their purview. Ms. Teague stated that the DOT is looking for a concurrence that the design is heading in the right direction because there is a resolution now on file against the project. DOT wants something on record saying that we are open to supporting the project, particularly as it impacts the two locally designated properties.

Chairman Owen stated that she agrees with the speaker and that they support the plan but have specific concerns regarding saving the integrity of the Historic District. Chairman Owen asked if there was further comment before a motion is made. It was questioned if a motion was needed. DOT advised they just needed to hear that the Commission was interested and wanted to be a part of the consultation, then they would make them a part of the consultation. Mr. Childers asked DOT if the public comments made today were captured and would be responded to. DOT advised yes and stated they used the meeting as a hybrid meeting to consult with the Commission and with the public.

Ms. Teague requested that if the DOT wanted to use this forum again to contact the CLG staff and tell them what is needed so that everyone knows what is expected of them so that everyone can work together. She stated she wanted to further work with DOT and SHPO to continue the dialogue and work cooperatively with our own staff also regarding the decorative light posts.

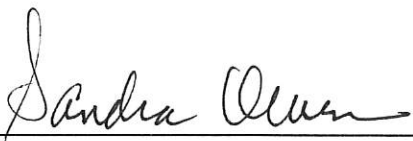
2. Appointment of HPC Subcommittee for the planning of the Greenhill Cemetery Tour

Mr. Byron Hickox addressed that there was a need to plan a subcommittee for the Greenhill Cemetery tour. Chairman Owen announced that the cemetery was just approved to be on the National Registry. Mr. Hickox placed Commission Members Alex McKay, Ann Melton, Abigail Carver, and Bill Revis to be on the subcommittee for planning.

D. ADJOURNMENT

***A motion was made by Ann Melton and seconded by Bill Revis to adjourn the meeting at 4:14 P.M.
The motion passed unanimously.***

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wed, September 5th, 2018 at 2:00 P.M.



Sandra Owen, Chairman



Chelle Baker, Administrative Assistant