

**Orange County
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**Meeting Summary
February 26th, 2014
Old Orange County Courthouse
106 East King Street, Hillsborough**

APPROVED: 3-26-14

MEMBERS PRESENT: Todd Dickinson (Chair), Susan Ballard, Rob Golan, Jaime Grant, Bob Ireland, and Joanna Lelekacs

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Peter Sandbeck, Rich Shaw

GUESTS: Grace White, possible applicant for HPC
Students from the UNC Planning Department

ITEM #1: CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dickinson called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. He introduced Grace White who spoke briefly about her background as a materials conservator at the Duke Library, specializing in paper conservation. He then recognized a group of students attending from the UNC Planning Department; they are taking Myrick Howard's course in preservation and planning, and as part of that coursework are attending some local HPC meetings.

ITEM #2: CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO AGENDA: None

ITEM #3: APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Dec. 11th, 2013 meeting)

Ballard moved to accept the minutes, seconded by Lelekacs. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM #4: ITEMS FOR DECISION:

a. **2014 CLG Grant Application**

Dickinson reviewed the history of the HPC's past county-wide architectural survey projects, noting that we are now moving forward to apply for a CLG grant application from the SHPO. Sandbeck reviewed the results of his meeting with Claudia Brown, head of the SHPO Survey Program, who assisted in crafting the scope. Phase 1 will consist of hiring a consultant to do a more intensive survey focusing on approx. 200 or more rural properties to be included in the book. The overall project would be three phases as outlined in the draft application. Ireland asked about the steps needed to partner with Hillsborough. Sandbeck reported on his positive his meeting with Stephanie Trueblood, Town Planner. Ballard asked about the prospect for getting county funding for the match. Shaw explained the steps required to seek matching funds through the County. Ireland moved that staff submit the CLG application as now drafted and take the necessary steps to request county matching funds; seconded by Ballard. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM #5: DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. **Update on Potential Orange County/Chapel Hill Preservation/History Symposium**

Sandbeck gave an overview of the planning for the two-day event, to be held Friday and Saturday, May 30th and 31st. Friday will consist of a CLG training program, held in Chapel Hill at the Carolina Inn, followed by tours, a keynote speaker later in the afternoon, and a reception for attendees at the Horace Williams House. Saturday the event moves to the Old Courthouse in Hillsborough for a program of lectures on history, preservation and archaeology topics in the morning and early afternoon, followed by tours of local sites. We have asked if we can hold a closing reception out at Moorefields. A couple of speakers are still pending for the Saturday program. Steve Davis from the UNC Archaeology Lab cannot do his great program on the Occaneechi. Golan offered to speak with his friend, Brett Riggs, also at the Archaeology Lab, to see if he could do a program for us. He is working on the Cherokee and the Trail of Tears. We will need volunteers from the HPC to assist. Ireland and Ballard expressed interest in helping. Preservation Chapel Hill will set this up with an online registration system which will be a big help. By doing some fund-raising in advance, we hope to keep registration costs very low. Lelekacs suggested that we explore the idea of certification for Continuing Education Unit credits for architects and planners. Discussion followed about typical CLG training courses. HPC members who volunteer will not have to pay registration. Updated materials will be emailed.

b. Subcommittee Reports

Publication Subcommittee: Chair Dickinson remarked that the CLG application we just approved sums up the progress we are making on this project.

Database: Ballard has completed doing her data entry for about three quarters of her second batch of files, for Eno Township. Sandbeck reported that progress is being made, thanks to key assistance provided by Grant. He has added more fields to cover our special terminology needs; the architectural table may be over 50 fields. He has made extensive use of dropdowns. He needs to let it go and return his tables back over to Grant for her review. Our consultant, Chris, will enter data in coordination with Ballard.

Education Subcommittee: Ireland is presently a committee of one. He is working on an outline of educational goals, objectives, measurable outcomes and activities that apply to elementary, middle and high schools and the general public. He would like others to look over what he has done and will send out his draft. It is a framework, a start, certainly not the only way to do it. Ballard noted that there are other non-profit groups in town, like Burwell School or the Museum, who are doing educational programs, which raises the question of how we could partner with them on this effort. Discussion followed. Ireland would like to see us be able to lay out a series of plans that would allow us to meet the objectives we have set. He will continue to work on this.

c. Historic Resource Evaluation Exercise:

This was deferred until the end of the meeting to allow for completing other agenda items. Members discussed and evaluated the S. C. Forrest House (OR1409) located at 3211 Hwy 70 West in Efland, Cheeks Township. Dickinson explained the process and walked everyone through the evaluation forms and ranking/scoring system. Sandbeck provided a PowerPoint presentation showing details of the property. Using the evaluation process, HPC members gave the property a final average score of 61.5 based on the special integrity of this c.1927 Foursquare/Craftsman style brick house, with its notable original windows and very few alterations. The three outbuildings appear later. This was a high ranking in the context of other properties ranked by the HPC. Sandbeck noted his opinion that this is probably the largest, most architecturally imposing brick house of that period in the county (outside of Chapel Hill) and with its great integrity, merits a high score.

d. Review of County Funding Applications:

Sandbeck handed out the two applications now before the HPC for review and explained the scorecard for new members. The HPC's scores will be combined with the staff scores, then it all gets sent back to the BOCC for their final decision.

ITEM #6: UPDATES AND INFORMATION ITEMS

Lelekacs reported that she was resigning at the end of her first term in March. Ireland noted that she has been a "pillar of stability and common sense." All agreed that she would be greatly missed. Dickinson thanked her for her service.

a. Proposed Signs for Local Historic Landmarks:

Dickinson reported on the long history of the current effort to develop a sign for our landmarks, noting that the sign maker who did our final design has gone out of business since Tina Moon obtained the design and pricing. Sandbeck passed out the current design for discussion, noting that it was 12" by 18", with black lettering on a white background. The old cost was \$80 (one-sided) and \$120 (double sided). Dickinson directed Sandbeck to identify a new supplier and come back with a couple of proposed designs. We need six signs at this point, so the cost will not be too great.

b. Letters to Property Owners:

Sandbeck gave a brief update on these letters. Dickinson's asked to wait until late winter to send them out so they won't be discarded. This may be the year for the new property assessment. These will go to the owners of 34 properties now on the Study List. We can offer the additional incentive of providing funding for the landmark application.

c. HPC Annual Report/Work Plan for BOCC:

Members were given copies of the plan submitted to the BOCC in December, FYI.

d. Overview of Current Preservation Activities/Issues in County:

Sandbeck provided a PowerPoint presentation to give members brief updates on:

- Efforts to develop joint Town/County agreement to protect archaeological resources: this prompted discussion about the progress on the proposed agreement with the Town to allow the HPC to designate Landmarks within the Town's ETJ. Sandbeck reported that this will be moved forward this year. Discussion followed about wording that would allow for future annexation.
- Proposed Solar Farm west of Efland: This is adjacent to the Efland Home, so there is concern about the impact of the solar farm on this historic resource. The BOCC expressed interest in putting it on the National Register. Ireland suggested that the home could be a solar education center and a place to tell the story of the building.
- Proposed Morinaga Plant Site: The 18th century Hawfields Presbyterian Church cemetery is in the center of the industrial park; it is owned by the church.
- Geothermal Well Project: members viewed maps and photos of current progress.

e. Interest in Class or Work Session about Orange County Architecture?

Members agreed that Wednesdays were best; the group could meet a bit earlier than usual and hold this as part of a regular meeting with a light agenda.

f. Update on Hackney House Landmark Application and possible site visit

Members would like to visit the house in the late afternoon, now with good daylight. Sandbeck has made the offer to Preservation Chapel Hill to contract with them to complete this application so that it can come back to the HPC in the near future.

ITEM #7: ADJOURNMENT: Golan moved to adjourn, seconded by Lelekacs; motion passed. Chair Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 9:18 pm.

Meeting summary by Peter Sandbeck, DEAPR staff