

**Orange County
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Approved Meeting Summary

August 24th, 2022 at 6:30 pm

Bonnie Davis Center, 1020 US 70 West, Hillsborough

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Loter, Cecelia Moore, Paul Noe, Steve Peck,

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Peter Sandbeck

GUESTS: Todd Dickinson, Art Menius

ITEM #1: CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm.

ITEM #2: CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO AGENDA: Dickinson asked for some time to highlight the two fine recent **Ribbons of Color** editions of the Eno River Association Journal.

ITEM #3: APPROVAL OF MINUTES for June 22, 2022 (Attachment 1): Moore moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Noe; motion approved.

ITEM #4: TEMS FOR DECISION:

- a. **Troy and Roberta Andrews House National Register Nomination:** Staff provided an overview of the historical and architectural significance of this unique modernist house, which the HPC first evaluated as a possible local landmark candidate back in 2018, when it passed that test with flying colors. Discussion followed about the restriction on our ability to designate a local landmark within the special zoning district around Carrboro, as landmarking is essentially a form of zoning ordinance. However there is no restriction on our ability to undertake a National Register project. Most of the land of the Andrews family farm was placed in a conservation easement a few years ago so the larger 60+ acre parcel is protected. This house sits on a small lot surveyed out of that larger farm, which also includes a farmhouse dating from 1890 and updated in the 1920s, and an important log house that probably dates to the first quarter of the 19th century. The site is dramatic and rocky, hence the house is built of the local rocks that were gathered up and laid up by two Black stonemasons from Carrboro. The house was designed by a student of Frank Lloyd Wright's. Members remarked on the special Modernist and Wrightian architectural qualities of the house and its setting. Noe moved to direct staff to proceed with the National Register nomination process, seconded by Moore; motion passed.
- b. **Dickerson Chapel AME Church:** Staff included in the agenda to allow the HPC to make and approve a motion to officially support Dickerson Chapel's proposed application for a grant from the National Trust's new Preserving Black Churches Grant Program. Members viewed a brief PowerPoint presentation on the architectural and historical significance of this structure, which was built in 1790 as the third Orange County Courthouse, then later moved up Churton St. in 1846 after the present courthouse was built, to its present site where it served as the town's first Baptist Church. It was then sold in 1862 to George Bishop of New Bern who moved up to Hillsborough as one of the refugees from the Union Occupation of the coastal plain. He ran a woodworking shop there, then sold it in 1866 to the Quakers who opened a Freedman's School there, at the same time the Rev. Job Berry founded the first AME congregation in the area and later the Rev Billy Payne preached here. You can see the original hewn oak and pine 1790 framing members under

the building and in the attic. It was remodeled in the 1890s, with the addition of the Gothic Revival windows and the steeple. The brick veneer was added in 1947. Peck noted that it is arguably the most historic building in Hillsborough. While it was a courthouse, it also served as the town's primary meeting house for all denominations following the demise of the 18th century Anglican Church. Peck moved that the HPC support their grant application, seconded by Moore; motion passed.

ITEM #5: DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. **Field trips to the Ridge Road School and the Troy and Roberta Andrews House:** Staff proposed working on scheduling a field trip to both these resources in the coming months, depending on the schedules of the owners.
- b. **Preservation NC Annual Meeting in Winston-Salem:** Members are invited to attend all or portions of this year's conference, which is the first in-person on since before covid. There is money in the HPC budget to help pay for registration. Staff asked that members let him know if they wish to attend and he'll make the arrangements for you. It was noted that Noe attended the regional CLG training session in Alamance County, which helped us meet our training goals for the year.
- c. **Membership:** Staff has been discussing HPC membership with several qualified candidates and has some positive leads. We still need to enlist a new member this fall.

ITEM #6: UPDATES AND INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. **Blackwood Farmhouse Restoration Project:** Work has now begun on the long-awaited project to restore the exterior of the farmhouse, including restoration of the wood windows and siding, as well as the repointing and repair to the very significant stone chimneys. Jeff Bergman, a preservation craftsman from Durham (who actually trained under our very own Todd Dickinson, is doing the carpentry work, with our local skilled mason Wayne Thompson handling the chimney restoration. Our goal is to complete the exterior by the end of the year, then start work on the interior to return it to its 1920s appearance.
- b. **Ridge Road School National Register Nomination Schedule:** We are in the process of generating a contract for the consultant for the project, Heather Fearnbach, who did the NR nominations for the NC Industrial Home for Colored Girls and the Schley Grange.
- c. **Book Project:** Our author, Laura Phillips, has finished editing her initial drafts of the architectural and historical essays, using input from Catherine Bishir. She is now working on editing all the property entries following Bishir's advice; she has been submitting these to staff in batches and has finished the county entries. She expects to complete the Hillsborough entries by the end of September. Once that work is finished, staff will have to read over the entries and make some final edits before submitting to our book designers who are already under contract, being paid by the Alliance. The essay chapters will be available for HPC members to read and edit; several members indicated interest.
- d. **Open air time:** Noe reported on the CLG training workshop. One topic was the nature of protection afforded to a property by listing on the National Register. He also learned that local preservation commissions have the ability to petition the Dept. of Cultural Resources to make a determination of statewide significance, which does provide complete protection; this process was used to help protect the Colonial Inn for example. The session included some explanation of the CLG membership requirements. Staff invited members to register for the planned brickwork workshop proposed for Oct. 15th. Peck mentioned the wonderful video recently done by PNC about the Bellamy Slave Quarters. Noe mentioned the state's new story map program, which might help us with our marker program. He offered to pull something together to show at a future meeting.

ITEM #7: ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Meeting summary by Peter Sandbeck, DEAPR staff