



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes

Town Hall
405 Martin Luther King Jr.
Boulevard
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Chair Robert Epting
Vice-Chair Kimberly Kyser
Deputy Vice-Chair John Sweet
Woodrow Burns

Craig Carbrey
Susan Smith
Mary Vogler
James White

Tuesday, February 13, 2018

6:30 PM

RM 110 | Council Chamber

Opening

Present 7 - Chair Robert Epting, Vice-Chair Kimberly Kyser, Deputy
Vice-Chair John Sweet, Woodrow Burns, Craig Carbrey,
Susan Smith, and Mary Vogler

Absent 1 - James White

Consent

Secretary reads procedures into the record

Approval of Agenda

Announcements

Petitions

Approval of Minutes

1. Approve the January 9, 2018 Action Minutes

[\[18-0104\]](#)

Attachments: [Action Minutes](#)

Commission Craig Carbrey correctly noted that the action reflected for item 5 on pages 4-5 in the draft minutes, showing that Commissioner Sweet's Motion to adopt a Finding of Fact had passed, actually failed by a vote of 3-4. John Richardson, Staff, clarified that that mistake had been corrected in the final version of the minutes, and had resulted from a change in the minutes format, on the Town webpage.

Aye: 7 - Chair Epting, Vice-Chair Kyser, Deputy Vice-Chair Sweet,
Burns, Carbrey, Smith, and Vogler

Reports

2. Update on Outreach Initiatives [\[18-0105\]](#)

Nothing to report, according to the Chair.

3. Update on SHPO grant proposal for Design Guidelines; and Project to Complete Surveys of Chapel Hill local Historic Districts [\[18-0106\]](#)

Commissioner Sweet reported the SHPO has acknowledged receipt of the HDC's grant application to help fund the Guidelines revision project. Further, he reported progress toward completion of the survey of 58 additional properties that are located near Franklin-Rosemary and Cameron McCauley Historic Districts, and that he is managing the scanning of existing photographs to help make these materials more available and useful in our work.

4. Staff Report on Town's Future Land Use Map Project (presenter: Alisa Duffey Rogers) [\[18-0107\]](#)

Alisa Duffey Roger, Staff, gave an overview of the mapping project processes and will return as needed. The HDC will have future opportunity for comments and recommendations to assist in the LUMO map revision project.

Consent

5. 321 W Cameron Avenue - Alpha Sigma of Chi Psi Inc. [\[18-0117\]](#)

Attachments: [321 W Cameron Ave COA Application](#)

Commissioner John Sweet moved and Commissioner Woodrow Burns seconded his Motion to approve the after-the-fact Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of the fire pit at 321 W. Cameron Street.

Aye: 7 - Chair Epting, Vice-Chair Kyser, Deputy Vice-Chair Sweet, Burns, Carbrey, Smith, and Vogler

Old Business

6. 229 E Franklin Street - Lambda Chi Alpha [\[18-0108\]](#)

Attachments: [Hyperlink - Lambda Chi Alpha COA Application](#)

Commissioner Kimberly Kyser moved and Commissioner Woodrow Burns seconded to close the public hearing.

Chairman Epting suggested, and the applicant agreed, that the application might remain open, so that further research could be done to show why the dumpsters are located as they are, and to give the applicant time to consider revisions to better accommodate these uses, which are being made by several fraternities in the area.

Aye: 7 - Chair Epting, Vice-Chair Kyser, Deputy Vice-Chair Sweet, Burns, Carbrey, Smith, and Vogler

New Business

7. 179 E Franklin Street - Post Office Alley Renovations Project

[\[18-0109\]](#)

Attachments: [Hyperlink - 179 E. Franklin Street COA Application](#)

Commissioner John Sweet moved and Commissioner Kimberly Kyser seconded to close the public hearing.

Commissioner John Sweet proposed, and the Members indicated seconded his Motion to make the following Findings of fact for the record in reference to the application for the property located at 179 E. Franklin Street: (1) that the structure is within the downtown landscape and contributes in important ways and uses to the special character of Chapel Hill's Franklin Rosemary Historic District; (2) that the original downtown post office building is a distinctive historic structure that has currently undergone adaptive re use, and is used as a post office branch and a State Court facility; (3) that the property has acquired important associations reflected in the name Peace and Justice Plaza out in front of the building itself; and (4) that therefore it is important that the character of the property be respected and its special character and its contributions to the district be preserved. Commissioner Woodrow Burns seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

Commissioner Sweet further proposed a Finding that the application convincingly demonstrates that the alleyway adjacent to the building is currently unpleasant and unsafe, and that re-grading is needed to improve the flow of traffic through the alley by widening it in places. He also noted that improvements to wayfinding proposed at the entrance near the parking garage at the rear of the alley should contribute both to utility and safety. Commissioner Craig Cabrey seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

Commissioner John Sweet further proposed Finding that the proposal for

re-grading the walkway is congruous with the HDC's Design guidelines for walkways; (1) that it will use traditional materials; (2) that it is unobtrusive visually; (3) that it solves practical problems, including public safety concerns that currently exist; (4) that the changes proposed will make an important contribution to the integrity and future use of the site; and (5) that the changes to the surface of the alleyway are not incongruous with the historic character of the District. Commissioner Woodrow Burns seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

Commissioner Sweet further proposed by way of a motion the following Finding of Fact: that the pierced brick fence designed to screen the back northwest portion of the property from the adjacent utility area and trash containers is appropriate in light of the HDC Design Guidelines (pages 16-17) for walls and fences because the applicant proposes to use classic materials and a classic design that would be in harmony with the site. Commissioner Kimberly Kyser seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

Based upon the aforementioned Findings of fact, Commissioner Sweet moved that the three basic elements of the proposed re-grading for the alleyway (raised planting beds, the pierced fencing, and the embedded wayfinding) are consistent with the Design Guidelines and are not incongruous with the special character of the Historic District, and should be approved; Commissioner Woodrow Burns seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

Additionally, Commissioner Sweet made a motion for a Finding of Fact that the applicant's decorative scheme which proposes affixing metal models of birds to the sides of the chimney and wall of the Courthouse/Post Office building, as well as along the fencing beside the alleyway, are all uncharacteristic of the Historic District, and are therefore incongruous with the special character of the District, as they detract from and diminish the historic character of the building and the uses inside and are not approved. Commissioner Woodrow Burns seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

Commissioner Sweet made a Finding of Fact that the proposed guardrail and entry portal could be appropriate, but that final designs are needed to make this determination. Commissioner Woodrow Burns seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

Commission John Sweet moved based on the finding of fact just made, to

approve the application as it relates to the re-grading of the walkway, rearrangement of the planting beds and the pierced brick fence as proposed, and to deny the other elements of the application, with the expectation that the applicant may return with a new or revised application that will cover these elements in the future. Commissioner Woodrow Burns seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

Aye: 7 - Chair Epting, Vice-Chair Kyser, Deputy Vice-Chair Sweet, Burns, Carbrey, Smith, and Vogler

8. 517 E Franklin Street [\[18-0110\]](#)

Attachments: [Hyperlink - 517 E. Franklin Street COA Application](#)

Matthew Ford presented for the applicant.

Commissioner Kyser moved to close the public hearing, which was seconded by Ms. Smith. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

The Commissioners then discussed the application, and determined, at the applicant's request, to revisit this application, in a revised form, at the March 13, 2018 meeting of the Historic District Commission.

Aye: 7 - Chair Epting, Vice-Chair Kyser, Deputy Vice-Chair Sweet, Burns, Carbrey, Smith, and Vogler

9. 9 Cobb Terrace - Modification of Application [\[18-0111\]](#)

Attachments: [Hyperlink - 9 Cobb Terrace Written Request for Modification of Application](#)

Mr. Cam Hill, property owner, made a request to modify the COA previously approved by the Commission for his property at 9 Cobb Terrace.

Commissioners noted that the work previously required for Mr. Hill to obtain an after-the-fact COA had not been completed, and that several actions inconsistent with HDC guidelines and requirements had been taken by Mr. Hill. The Chair suggested to Mr. Hill that he resolve these issues first, and then return to the Commission once he has complied with the HDC's previous directives.

10. Discussion of Historic District Commission Priorities [\[18-0112\]](#)

11. Conversation about the Cottages at 109 Park Place [\[18-0113\]](#)

Chair Epting noted that a letter has been received from Jim Spencer, Architect

for the COA application, requesting permission to move or demolish the Park Place cottages, and that Mr. Spencer's letter indicates that progress is being made on relocating those cottages rather than demolishing them. A copy of letter is attached to these minutes .

Membership

12. Membership Application Review and Recommendations to Council

[\[18-0114\]](#)

Attachments: [Applications](#)

Three applicants James Locke, Garrett Sillman and Francis Gravely made brief statements in support of their nominations. Commissioner Sweet noted several additional seats on the Commission would be filled by Town Council at the June meeting and that any not appointed this evening would also be considered for appointment then.

Commissioner Kimberly Kyser moved that the Commission recommend James Locke and Sean Murphy to Town Council to fill the two current Historic District Commission vacancies. It was noted that the HDC had previously voted to recommend the application of Joe Reckford, and that that recommendation had previously been forwarded to Council. Commissioner Woodrow Burns seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

Aye: 7 - Chair Epting, Vice-Chair Kyser, Deputy Vice-Chair Sweet, Burns, Carbrey, Smith, and Vogler

13. Discussion of Historic District Commission Membership Seat Categories

[\[18-0115\]](#)

The Commission briefly discussed the specific categories of qualifications recommended by the Statute, and it was noted that the present membership of the Commission included persons from each of the suggested categories.

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Courtesy Review

None

29 *Adjournment*

Next Meeting - March 13, 2018

The meeting adjourned at 10:00pm.

Order of Consideration of Agenda Items:

- 1. Staff Presentation*
- 2. Applicant's Presentation*
- 3. Public Comment*
- 4. Board Discussion*
- 5. Motion*
- 6. Restatement of Motion by Chair*
- 7. Vote*
- 8. Announcement of Vote by Chair*

Public Charge: The Advisory Body pledges its respect to the public. The Body asks the public to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous manner, both with the Body and with fellow members of the public. Should any member of the Body or any member of the public fail to observe this charge at any time, the Chair will ask the offending person to leave the meeting until that individual regains personal control. Should decorum fail to be restored, the Chair will recess the meeting until a genuine commitment to this public charge is observed.

Unless otherwise noted, please contact the Planning and Development Services Department at 919-969-5066; planning@townofchapelhill.org for more information on the above referenced applications.

See the Advisory Boards page <http://www.townofchapelhill.org/boards> for background information on this Board.