

Minutes
Regular Meeting of the
Aberdeen Historic Preservation Commission

April 15, 2019
Monday, 4:30 p.m.

Robert N. Page Municipal Building
Aberdeen, North Carolina

The Aberdeen Historic Preservation Commission met on Monday, April 15, 2019 at 4:30 p.m. for their Regular Meeting. Members present were Chairperson Mollie Wilson, Dell Crumpton, Ernestine Chapman, and new member Christian Crumpton. Staff members in attendance were Planning Director Justin Westbrook, Senior Planner Kathy Blake, Downtown & Economic Development Planner Jen Gallimore, and Administrative Assistant Megan Henderson. Citizens in attendance were Commissioner Eleese Goodwin, Curtis Iovito, Barbara Allred, Janet Peele, Jewell Monroe, Robbie Monroe, and Cam Hurst.

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Wilson called the meeting to order at 4:37 p.m.

2. Swearing in of new member – Christian Crumpton

Megan Henderson administered the oath of office to new member, Christian Crumpton.

Ms. Wilson stated with regret that the Commission acknowledges Mr. Ring's resignation and thanks him for his many years of dutiful service to the Historic Preservation Commission.

3. Approval of Minutes
a. January 22, 2019 Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Dell Crumpton, seconded by Ms. Chapman, to approve the minutes from the meeting on January 22, 2019. Motion unanimously carried 4-0.

4. New Business
a. Review of Certificate of Appropriateness COA #19-05 for demolition of house at 105 N. Pine

Chairperson Wilson opened the public hearing for COA #19-05.

Megan Henderson swore in Curtis Iovito, Eleese Goodwin, Barbara Allred, Janet Peele, and Jewell Monroe.

Planner Gallimore presented the staff report to the HPC and stated the Friends of the Aberdeen Library would like to demolish the property in order to build the new library. The property has asbestos siding and lead paint, as well as mold. Planner Gallimore stated a representative from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) visited the property and stated demolition should be considered only as a last resort and that relocation should be looked at beforehand. Planner Gallimore stated in order to demolish, SHPO would have to say the property is deteriorated beyond repair or that the applicant would have to prove such by providing evidence to the Town. Planner Gallimore opened the floor to the citizens.

Janet Peele, treasurer for the Friends of the Aberdeen Library, stated the organization has been raising money since 2014. They received a grant from the State Department of Cultural Resources in the amount of \$25,000. Ms. Peele stated the property has been in distress for years. It was originally the home of Hugh Styers, who came to town about 1938-1940. The House has been added onto several times, with the last time being in the 1950's. The earliest county record of house is 1950. Ms. Peele stated the wood and siding were rotten, the roof was leaking, seals were rotted out on the backside of house, the ceiling was falling in over the kitchen, and asbestos was present. The home is a menace to town as is, so the Friends of the Aberdeen Library want to raise money to build a new library on the property. The new library would be close enough to the downtown area to be included in the community and would be an asset to the Town of Aberdeen. Ms. Peele stated they are currently paying liability insurance on the property, but not fire insurance. Ms. Peele stated there is also someone living in the shed behind the building, as there is toilet paper, food cans, and alcohol present. Ms. Peele stated the house as it sits should be condemned as both fire and human hazards, and the Friends of the Aberdeen Library does not have enough money to fix it, therefore they would like to demolish it. Ms. Peele stated the demolition could be used as a fire department training exercise.

Planner Gallimore stated the SHPO representative does not believe the home is deteriorated beyond repair and that Chief Building Inspector for the Town Mike McGowan has stated he believes it is in fixable condition. The Town has a list of homes, regularly updated by Mike, that should be condemned or demolished by neglect, and this home is not on that list.

Ms. Dell Crumpton stated SHPO advertises many homes that look worse than this one that they restore and asked if the representative said anything about

assisting someone with acquiring the house and relocating it. Planner Gallimore stated he provided contacts for such resources to the Town. Planner Gallimore stated on the national register, the home is identified as a contributing structure. If it is relocated, there will be new guidelines and expectations in order to make sure it remains on the national list; however, there is nothing stating it has to remain on the list. At this time, there is no evidence to show that it has deteriorated beyond repair.

Ms. Dell Crumpton asked if anyone would be interested in buying and moving the home. Ms. Allred stated they would like to put a nice library in that spot for the Town. While Page Memorial Library is wonderful and historic, there are no children or adult programs or activities. Ms. Allred stated the site has already been purchased. Ms. Dell Crumpton stated she has no objection to the library, but their duty on HPC is to preserve. Ms. Peele stated economically, the Friends of the Aberdeen Library cannot take on that responsibility.

Planner Gallimore stated SHPO would provide contact information of those who would be able to help. The HPC also has the option of setting up to a 365 day stay in order for the HPC and the applicant to look into resources for the property, either through relocation, fixing it up and using it as a museum, etc.

Ms. Peele stated Mark Galyean of the Aberdeen Fire Department inherited the property, but could not do anything with it or take care of it. The house has been abandoned since 2014. Mark wanted to sell the property, and the sale was arranged by Phillip Richardson. Ms. Peele showed the HPC on a map where the building entrance and parking lot would be. Ms. Peele stated they had hopes of starting the project to demonstrate its importance and the overall intent of the project, with hopes that Aberdeen would choose it as the next capital project to be funded.

Ms. Wilson stated we would all like the new library, but as HPC they have to preserve the history and the representative from SHPO as well as the building inspector say it is repairable. Ms. Dell Crumpton stated there have been other homes that were in worse condition that were completely renovated that now look incredible.

Mr. Iovito stated he lives across the street from the home and used to take care of the lady who lived there. The living conditions were terrible. Mr. Iovito stated he owns the John Graham house and is doing his best to beautify their area. He is currently considering selling his home because of the abandoned and

deteriorating houses around him. Mr. Iovito stated for this reason, it is necessary to look at the area as a whole. Mr. Iovito stated the previous owner's family wants the home to be demolished as well. Mr. Iovito stated that while it is important to appreciate the past, we also need to live in the present and plan for the future, and therefore he would like to see the house demolished.

Ms. Chapman stated she has concerns about the people staying in the shed and possible injuries on the property.

Planner Gallimore stated the options are: approve the demolition, approve it with conditions, deny it, or set up to a 365 day stay in order for the applicant and HPC to explore alternative options to demolition.

Megan Henderson swore in Cam Hurst.

Ms. Hurst stated she was previously a member of the HPC. Ms. Hurst stated her great grandfather owned the whole block and her mother lives on Main St. The previous resident could not afford the upkeep of the home and was very much an advocate for the future. Ms. Hurst asked if someone could move that home off the lot. Planner Gallimore stated if a 365 day stay was agreed upon, HPC could explore that alternative within that time frame. SHPO would assist with that process and would be put in contact with the property owner.

Ms. Hurst stated 2 or 3 contractors have looked at the home and all have said they would not attempt a renovation. Ms. Hurst stated it would be a great place for a library for everyone in Aberdeen to enjoy. Ms. Hurst suggested maybe preserving a single room to dedicate to the history of the building or using some remnants of the home to keep in new building.

Chairperson Wilson stated it behooves the commission to declare a delay of 365 days. Ms. Dell Crumpton stated she is for the library, but would feel bad if they could have saved the home and it was demolished, therefore she would like the opportunity to explore and make sure it was the best decision. Ms. Dell Crumpton stated she supports the library, but as a commission they have to be loyal to preservation of history of the Town. 365 days would be plenty of time to explore such.

Commissioner Goodwin stated for years, she was one of the first members of HPC, and worked hard to make the area realize what great things are here. She lives in a home from 1891 that has been restored and has also restored 4

buildings in this town, thus she understands the nature of restoring. Commissioner Goodwin has gone inside the home and looked at it and stated while she understands where HPC is coming from, the home is really in such bad shape and she doesn't understand why we would want to keep something that looks like this particular building. From her observations, Commissioner Goodwin stated she knew that the home could definitely not be restored. Chairperson Wilson thanked Commissioner Goodwin for her comments.

There was some discussion about the format of the motion and what it should specify.

Ms. Peele asked if by the next meeting someone else purchased the property with the intent to move it, would that person have to get permission from HPC to do so. Director Westbrook stated that is correct.

Ms. Chapman stated she would like to recuse herself from the voting, as she is a member of the Friends of Aberdeen Library. Ms. Chapman stated she feels torn because she really wants a new library for Aberdeen because we do need it. The current library is the 2nd oldest in the state and is not beneficial to Aberdeen. Ms. Chapman stated citizens are going to other libraries in other areas when they could be staying in Aberdeen. A motion was made by Ms. Dell Crumpton, seconded by Ms. Christian Crumpton, to approve Ms. Chapman's recusal from voting for COA-19-05 for reasons she expressed as being a member. Motion unanimously carried 3-0.

A motion was made by Ms. Dell Crumpton, seconded by Ms. Christian Crumpton, that the proposal is congruous with the historic aspects of Aberdeen's historic district, and declare **up to** a 365 day stay in order for the applicant and the commission to explore any and all possible alternatives to demolition to protect the property. Motion unanimously carried 3-0.

Ms. Dell Crumpton asked if staff could keep HPC informed of events taking place over the 365 days. Director Westbrook stated staff could do so.

Chairperson Wilson closed the public hearing.

b. Review of Certificate of Appropriateness COA #19-07 for major exterior renovations at 124 W. Main St.

Chairperson Wilson opened the public hearing for COA #19-07.

The applicant for COA #19-07 was not present. Planner Gallimore presented COA #19-07 and stated the COA expired before the applicant was able to begin work and it is the same proposal from April of 2017.

Chairperson Wilson stated she felt it would be beneficial to the district.

A motion was made by Ms. Chapman, seconded by Ms. Dell Crumpton, that the applicant's proposal is compatible with the historic aspects of the Aberdeen Historic District with respect to the following criteria:

- Height
- Materials to be used (texture & patterns, color if authorized, etc)
- Architectural detailing
- Roof shapes, forms, and materials
- Fenestration proportions, shapes, position, location, and pattern
- General form and proportions of buildings and structures
- Appurtenant features and fixtures: lighting, walls, fences, landscaping (if authorized)

And subject to the following conditions:

- Project color list (Attachment A)
- Project Description (Attachment B)
- Site Plan / Elevations sheet A-1 for 124 W. Main (Attachment C)

Motion unanimously carried 4-0.

Chairperson Wilson closed the public hearing.

5. Other Business

a. Plaque Discussion – Planning Director Justin Westbrook

Director Westbrook discussed the distribution of the questionnaire and the responses received. Director Westbrook stated he presented this same information to the Board of Commissioners and the Board directed HPC to assist staff with the plaque program.

The HPC was very pleased with the information provided and the responses received. Director Westbrook suggested using social media and the Bon Accord for further response. Chairperson Wilson suggested the use of post cards and Director Westbrook stated door-to-door communication may also be necessary. Chairperson Wilson asked about the timeline. Director Westbrook stated the goal

is as soon as possible. Chairperson Wilson suggested that HPC members could assist staff with door-to-door communications.

b. Methodist Church Status

The HPC inquired about the status of the Methodist Church and their previously approved COA. Director Westbrook stated a site plan still needs to be submitted, reviewed, and approved.

c. Tents and Canopies

The HPC inquired about the regulations regarding tents and canopies. Ms. Chapman stated there is one next to her home on Main St. and has been there more than 6 months, thus implying it is not temporary. She stated there is also a camper in the back yard. Director Westbrook stated staff will research this matter and present findings to HPC at the next meeting.

d. 502 E. Main St.

Ms. Dell Crumpton stated the siding was removed from this building, as well as a couple windows removed, about 2 weeks ago and it was not approved to do so. Planner Gallimore stated she would consult with the Chief Building Inspector Mike McGowan and have him look into the issue.

6. Adjournment

A motion was made by Ms. Dell Crumpton, seconded by Ms. Chapman, to adjourn the meeting. Motion unanimously carried 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:16 pm.

Admin. Asst., Megan Henderson
Minutes were completed in
draft form on April 26, 2019.

Chairperson, Mollie Wilson
Minutes were approved on
on May 21, 2019.