



Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission

204 East Academy St. ♦ P.O. Box 771 ♦ Asheboro, North Carolina 27204

October 22, 2008

The Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission (HLPC) met in the County Commissioners Training Room of the County Office Building at 725 McDowell Road, Asheboro, NC, and the meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

Members present were Hal Johnson, Fran Andrews, Bill Johnson, Warren Dixon, Lynne Qualls, and Robby Davis. Robyn Hankins was absent. Chairman Johnson stated that Mac Whatley would be joining the meeting shortly.

Approval of Minutes from September 24, 2008 Meeting

On a motion of Ivey, seconded by B. Johnson, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 24, 2008, as presented.

Update on the Status of the Inter-local Agreements Being Considered by Local Municipalities

Chairman Johnson stated that he was proud that the cities wanted to have this relationship and were being supportive. Since the last meeting of the HLPC Franklinville, has approved their inter-local agreement.

Discussion and Consideration of Landmark Signs for Designated Properties

Chairman Johnson had the example of signage that can be produced by the County sign department. He stated that the actual sign could be as big as 16" x 24" in size, but with the weight the Commission would need to also consider if one post would support it. This would also need to figure into the consideration of cost. Mr. Ivey stated that he felt less wording may be best, because as you drive by, one will be able to read only a small portion of the text.

Mr. Whatley entered the meeting at this time.

Mr. B. Johnson stated that he had researched information, and it was recommended that sign lettering be six-inches in height to be readable at 30 mph. There were various discussions among the members about the wording they would like to see on the signage with the words "Randolph County Historical Landmark" being the primary and outstanding visual. It was decided that the size of the sign needed to be determined in order to make a decision on the final wording and how much could be printed on it.

Ms. Andrews questioned if the municipality seal could be positioned opposite of the county seal on the sign. Chairman Johnson replied that the Commission will still need to determine if it will use County or Municipality seals and/or possibly the potential new historic landmark logo design that RCC is working on. A final sign design will most likely not be decided upon until the HLPC logo is finished.

Discussion of Application Fees

Chairman Johnson said he had researched the fees from around the state and found that they vary. Some do not charge a fee, and some run in excess of \$225 per application. Chairman Johnson recommended a fee of \$125 for Randolph County and stated the fee would cover the cost

of legal advertising and standard signage. Signage other than standard signage would need to be approved by the Commission. Any excess fees of the standard sign would be charged to the applicant. As the Commission requested, Chairman Johnson discussed potential application denial refunds with his staff, keeping in mind the staff time involved in the application process. He concluded that the proposed \$75 refund would be acceptable.

Fees will be waived for landmark designations requested by the Commission or a governing body; however, cost of signage in excess of standard shall be the responsibility of the local government.

On a motion by Ivey, seconded by Dixon, the HLPC voted unanimously to recommend that the Randolph County Board of Commissioners approve the following fees for the historic landmark designation application fee: \$125 Application fee; \$75.00 refund, if the application is denied; and cost for signage other than the approved standard signage will be charged to the applicant.

Update on the Randolph County Courthouse Designation

Chairman Johnson said that the landmark designation application was completed with all required attachments, and forwarded to the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office for review. He stated that he had been notified by National Register Specialist Jessica Dockery that the 1909 Courthouse meets requirements for a local landmark designation. Ms. Dockery also advised that pictures should be taken of the inside of a proposed landmark, regardless of whether only the exterior is to be designated. She also noted that pictures should be maintained that show the area context of the landmark. She advised that the Commission, and ultimately the elected officials, should note the specific criteria outlined in the Ordinance that the proposed landmark meets. Ms. Dockery's suggestions have been included in the courthouse designation and the record will be maintained by the County Planning Department. Chairman Johnson noted that the proposed resolution by the Commission recommending adoption of the Ordinance and the proposed Ordinance for the Asheboro City Council contains the specific criteria, or findings, that are in compliance with the Ordinance creating the HLPC. Chairman Johnson stated that the next process is the public hearing on November 3rd at 5:00 p.m. at the Randolph County Office building, in the Commissioners Meeting Room, in which members are required to attend if possible. At that time the Commission will hear comments from the public and take a vote whether to approve the resolution recommending to the Asheboro City Council that they adopt an ordinance declaring the Randolph County Courthouse of 1909 be designated a historical landmark.

Chairman Johnson stated that the wording for the proposed resolution fulfills all the requirements in the HLPC Ordinance that has brought the Commission to this event. He pointed out the three criteria that make the Randolph County Courthouse a valid designation, as follows: it is a critical part of the county's heritage by having value as an example of the cultural, economic, historic and social heritage; it exemplifies an architectural type distinguished by overall quality of design, detail, materials and craftsmanship; and the location provides a unique and distinctive structure representing an established and familiar visual presence in the City of Asheboro and Randolph County.

Mr. B. Johnson added that from the Mt. Shepherd tower, the courthouse and the Hedgecock Builders Supply smokestack are very visible and easily distinguished.

Chairman Johnson informed the members that the Asheboro City Council will hold its public hearing on December 4th at 7:00 p.m. After the public hearing the Council will make a decision on adopting the ordinance to declare the seventh Randolph County Courthouse as a historical landmark and HLPC members are not required to attend this public hearing.

Chairman Johnson presented a slideshow of the 1909 Courthouse and asked Mr. Whatley to narrate the details of the pictures. Mr. Whatley told the story of “Lawyer’s Row” establishment and that it was there prior to the building of the 1909 courthouse and a reason that the courthouse was wanted at the particular location. He shared details about the other pictures in regards to time period and architectural features on the exterior and interior of the building with Chairman Johnson noting again that the inclusion of interior pictures supports and adds value to the exterior designation of a landmark.

Mr. Whatley commented that the Commission need not shy away from interior designations, but reserve designation of interiors to such outstanding features like the tin ceiling of Courtroom A. He stated that very important interior features are often thoughtlessly damaged by “modernizations” like the addition of the dropped ceiling and HVAC ductwork in the courthouse and designating the ceiling would prevent changes in the future. He said interior designation could also apply to well-preserved features such as the front hall and stairwells of the courthouse, or to the millwork inside the Dempsey Brown House in Trinity. It must be something special like mantels and millwork, ceilings or stairways or features that show special attention in design from an architect or special care in construction by a carpenter, mason or builder.

Mr. Ivey stated that the future use of the upstairs courtroom had not been determined and encouraged the members to talk with the County Commissioners to encourage them to fill the needs of a museum in this location. Mr. Ivey feels that if it is not established as a museum that Randolph County will probably never have a museum in which to display historical information.

Priority Landmark Designations by Members

Chairman Johnson asked the members to share their suggested landmark designations in order to determine a priority list for designations.

- Ms. Andrews requested the Dempsey Brown house in Trinity, now more recognized as the Larry Brown house. It was built in 1836 and was the first brick house in the county.
- Mr. Whatley suggested Franklinville Manufacturing Company. It was added to the National Registry in 1985. It is the oldest water powered mill in North Carolina and is in the process of being added to the Civil War Trail.
- Mr. Dixon’s requested designation is the Sandy Creek Baptist Church as it is the oldest church in the county and the oldest surviving religious structure.
- Mr. Johnson presented the Mount Shepherd Pottery Site and stated that it is one of the oldest European pottery making sites known. It was added to the National Registry of Historical Places in 1980. Mr. Ivey added that on November 1 there would be a program at Old Salem discussing pottery and the Mount Shepherd Pottery pieces would be discussed as well as new found whole pieces that have recently been discovered.
- Ms. Qualls felt that the oldest Quaker church should be recognized, which would be Holly Spring Friends. She said she would also like to see Lassiter Mill recognized, but was unsure about the condition of the mill.
- Mr. Ivey asked that the Female Academy be recognized, because it was a landmark of women’s education in 1839.

Chairman Johnson commended the members on a great selection of potential designations, realizing that each of those choices cover history based on residential, economic, religious, cultural or educational parameters that were established in the Historical Landmark Preservation Commission’s Ordinance.

November and December Meeting Dates Set

After some discussion it was decided that due to a public hearing meeting in November and the Thanksgiving holiday, the November 3rd meeting would be the only November meeting. The December meeting has been rescheduled for December 10th at 2:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Meeting Room.

Adjournment

On a motion of Davis, seconded by Andrews, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 3:40 p.m.

Hal Johnson, Chairman

Amanda W. Varner, Deputy Clerk
Randolph County Board of Commissioners
Clerk to the HLPC