



Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission

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

May 22, 2012

The Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission (HLPC) met in the Meeting Room of the 1909 Historic Courthouse at 145 Worth Street, Asheboro, NC, and the meeting was called to order by Chairman Hal Johnson at 2:00 p.m.

Members present were Hal Johnson, Fran Andrews, Bill Johnson, Lynne Qualls, Marsha Haithcock, Nan Kemp, Robyn Hankins, Bill Ivey and Mac Whatley. Warren Dixon was absent.

Chairman Johnson welcomed Laura St. Cyr, Director of Marketing for Linbrook Hall; Asheboro City Planner Justin Luck; City Engineer Dumont Bunker and City Manager John Ogburn.

Approval of Minutes

On motion of Qualls, seconded by Andrews, the HLPC voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of March 28, 2012, as presented.

City of Asheboro Request for Approval of Certificate of Appropriateness – Sunset Theatre

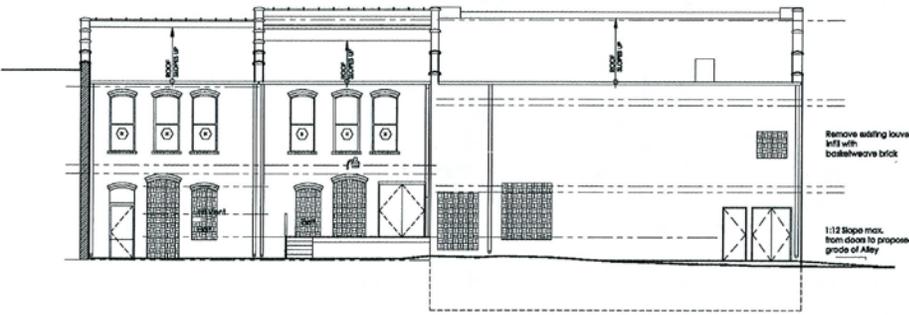
Chairman Johnson stated that a Certificate of Appropriateness is required when any changes are to be made to a designated local historic landmark that could be of significance to the character of the landmark. The HLPC sits in a “quasi-judicial” capacity for Certificates of Appropriateness (COA), and sworn oath is required for testimony.

Chairman Johnson stated that the City of Asheboro is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness in order to complete the exterior renovations to the Sunset Theatre. They have consulted with the NC Department of Cultural Resources and their suggestions are reflected in the request to the HLPC by the City of Asheboro.

Justin Luck, after having been duly sworn by Chairman Johnson, stated that the City has received architectural drafts from Steve W. Cofer for the façade renovation and restoration of the Sunset Theatre. He also stated that they had received a letter from Senior Restoration Specialist Paul Fomberg of the NC Department of Cultural Resources with his review that included four concerns regarding the proposed changes to the Theatre; the Theatre is also listed on the National Registry of Historic Places (April 2011) and designated as a Randolph County Historic Landmark (September 2010). The letter stated that any major changes to the exterior of the building would diminish its significance. Mr. Fomberg had also made other suggestions regarding finishes and colors that were from the time period of the building. His major concern was in regards to the plan to replace the steel windows on the upper two levels with aluminum ones. He said that the steel windows are “important character-defining elements and must be retained and repaired in order to meet *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.*”



A3.02.01 PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION
SUNSET



A3.02.02 PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION
SUNSET

1. While joints in Paint, Ceiling, Walling, Steel Casings and
2. Paint, Wood Siding, Metal, Window Frames, Door Frames, etc. for
3. Structural Steel Work to be repaired, but not removed and
4. Repaired with original color and finish of exterior grade paper.
5. Repaired with original color or finish of exterior grade paper.
6. Repair or replace in accordance with original.

- 1. Repair Upper Sash
- 2. Repair Lower Sash
- 3. Repair Frame
- 4. Repair and Repaint with Original Color
- 5. Repair and Repaint with New Color

COA - March 2012
SPO - September 2011
**SUNSET THEATRE
RENOVATION**
City of Asheboro
Cultural & Recreation
Services
Asheboro, North Carolina

PROJECT NUMBER:
100 -

ARCHITECT
S. W. COFFEY
509 Archer Drive
Chapel Hill, Virginia
27313
757.895.7500
www.swcoffey.com

MARCH 2012
07110
**BUILDING ELEVATIONS
PROPOSED
A3.02**

These drawings and the Project of them represented
and the Project of them represented
and the Project of them represented, etc.
and may not be reproduced without the approval.

Mr. Whatley responded that he wished that the City could provide to the HLPC a pallet of colors that the City is considering for the façade, but hoped they would stay with the Department of Cultural Resources’ suggestions for the time period. He also agreed with the Department of Cultural Resources that the steel windows should remain and be repaired, stating that in historical circumstances, it is best when it is restored rather than reconstructed. He asked Mr. Luck to explain the reasoning behind wanting to replace all windows. Mr. Luck responded that the main reason was for future maintenance.

Dumont Bunker, sworn in by Chairman Johnson, stated that there was no structural reason to use aluminum, except for easy upkeep.

Ms. Qualls agreed with Mr. Whatley that the original windows should remain.

Chairman Johnson stated that the State seemed adamant with its wording “retained and repaired,” and the City’s project description submitted on the COA application reflected their willingness to comply, as follows:

As the Sunset Theatre begins its ninth decade along with its transformation into a performing arts center, it is poised to become the vibrant centerpiece of the downtown’s revitalization effort. Completed in 1930, local historian Mac Whatley describes the theatre as “an example of a ‘Moorish Picture Palace,’ designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style popular in southern California.” As part of the transformation to a performing arts center, exterior façade renovations will be made. Careful attention has been paid in the design of the exterior renovations to ensure that they are in keeping with the historic character of the theatre. The City of Asheboro consulted with the NC

State Historic Preservation Office and local historians, and utilized historic photographs in the renovation design process. Key aspects of the proposed renovation include:

- 1. Addition of 4" quarry tile along the base of the theatre, to match original tile as evidenced by photographs.*
- 2. Restoration of storefronts, including new door, windows, and repair to transom.*
- 3. Addition of new, copper canopy to mimic detailing and design of original canopy, including exposed light bulbs*
- 4. Preservation of frieze*
- 5. Restore upper level windows rather than "replacing" the windows, as was originally planned*
- 6. Restore and repaint metal roof, including supporting wooden corbelled brackets*
- 8. Restore and repaint remainder of façade.*

Public Hearing; Approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the Sunset Theatre

At 2:30 p.m., the HLPC adjourned to a duly advertised public hearing to consider the request of the City of Asheboro for the approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the renovations of the Sunset Theatre. Chairman Johnson opened the public hearing and, hearing no comments, closed it before taking action.

On a motion of Whatley, seconded by Ivey, the HLPC voted unanimously to approve the following requested Certificate of Appropriateness to the City of Asheboro, NC for the exterior façade of the Sunset Theatre, as per their request and the guidelines suggested by the State Preservation Specialist:

***Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission
Order Approving Certificate of Appropriateness
Sunset Theatre, Asheboro, N.C.***

The Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission conducted a public hearing on Tuesday, May 22, 2012, at 2:00 pm, Historic County Courthouse, 145 Worth Street, Asheboro, N.C., to consider the following Certificate of Appropriateness application:

*On behalf of the City of Asheboro, John Ogburn, City Manager; Dumont Bunker, City Engineer; and Justin Luck, Planner, Community Development Department; are requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow exterior façade renovations to the following designated Local Historic Landmark : **Sunset Theatre, 234 Sunset Avenue, Asheboro, N.C.***

And

Having heard sworn evidence presented, and having received into evidence such exhibits as presented by the applicant, and after affording all who wished to be heard the opportunity to testify, examine, and cross-examine witnesses and to make comments and arguments, now based on substantial, relevant, and credible evidence received, said Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission makes the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1: *The applicant applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness as required by regulations contained within the Ordinance establishing the Randolph County Historic Landmark Commission and the Ordinance adopted by the Asheboro City Council designating the Sunset Theatre as a Local Historic Landmark on September 9, 2010.*

2: *Testimony was received that the Sunset Theatre is beginning its ninth decade along with its transformation into a performing arts center and has become a vibrant centerpiece of the downtown revitalization effort. Exterior renovations are necessary as a result of the transformation into a performing arts center.*

3: *Testimony and exhibits were received that key aspects of the proposed renovation would include: addition of 4" quarry tile along the base of the theatre to match original tile as evidenced by photographs; restoration of storefronts, including new door, windows, and repair of transom; addition of new copper canopy to mimic detailing and design of original canopy, including exposed light bulbs; preservation of frieze; restoring upper level windows; restoring and repainting metal roof, including supporting wooden corbelled brackets; and restoring and repainting remainder of façade.*

4: *Testimony was received and evidence presented that the exterior renovations would follow guidelines received from the State Historic Preservation Office and contained in the letter dated May 8, 2012, from Paul E. Fomberg, Senior Restoration Specialist.*

5: *Testimony was received that the proposed renovations were in compliance with the City of Asheboro's zoning regulation and applicable state building codes, and that adjoining property owners have been notified of the application and notice of public hearing.*

6: *No persons spoke in opposition to the request.*

BASED ON THE GREATER WEIGHT OF EVIDENCE AND THE FOREGOING FINDINGS OF FACT, AND AS WILL BE REFLECTED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE RANDOLPH COUNTY HISTORIC LANDMARK PRESERVATION COMMISSION, THE COMMISSION MAKES THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS BASED ON DESIGN GUIDELINES OUTLINED IN THE ORDINANCE :

1: *The proposed exterior façade renovations are designed in a manner that will support the architectural detail of the 1929 Sunset Theatre.*

2: *The proposed exterior façade renovations will not reduce the value of the 1929 Sunset Theatre as a Local Historic Landmark and the exterior façade renovations will maintain the unique architectural style that continues to enable the Sunset Theatre to provide a unique and distinctive structure representing an established and familiar visual presence in the City of Asheboro and Randolph County, N.C*

3: *Special reference in testimony was made that the steel windows on the upper two levels of the building façade would be retained and repaired as per guidelines suggested by the State Preservation Specialist in his letter to the City of Asheboro dated May 8, 2012, and that a baked enamel finish in a color appropriate to the period of the building such as shades of black, dark green, or red would be used along the storefront framing.*

BASED ON THE FOREGOING FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS, the application for Certificate of Appropriateness is approved by a vote of 9 to 0, this 22nd day of May, 2012.

Adjournment

Chairman Johnson commended the City of Asheboro for their efforts to keep the historical significance of the city intact. They have the most designations out of all the municipalities in the County.

At 2:40 p.m., on motion of Andrews, seconded by Ivey, the HLPC voted unanimously to adjourn.

Hal Johnson, Chairman

Amanda Varner, Clerk to the HLPC