

**Historic Preservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 19, 2015**

| Call to Order | In Attendance | Absent | Guests |
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| Made by: Tony Armento Time: 5:55 p.m. | Tony Armento-Chairman Cathy Weaver-Treasurer Rick Thomas-Vice Chairman Susan Wicker-Secretary Joan Roberson Cheryl Hart-Planning Director Lu Anne Gilligan-Recording Secretary | Peter Tocci | Christine Usry, Director, Parks and Recreation |

| Approval of Minutes | Date of Minutes | Motion to Approve | 2nd | Outcome |
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| | January 8, 2015 | Joan Roberson | Susan Wicker | Motion to approve as written with one minor adjustment made. |

| Treasury Report | Starting Balance | Expenditures since last meeting | Current Balance |
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| | \$ 1500.00 | \$ 368.38 | \$ 1,131.62 |

Old Business

| Topic | Discussion | Outcome |
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| City Educational Retreat | <p>Susan Wicker and Tony Armento shared that they were invited by Randy Hemann to attend an educational retreat for the Board of Commissioners and other City Department Leaders on January 28. Susan relayed that prior to the retreat Randy Hemann had requested she secure speakers to make a presentation about the value of historic preservation to the city leaders.</p> <p>Susan enlisted Cathleen Turner from Preservation NC and Laurie Mitchell from the CLG Division of the State Preservation Office to speak at the event. Mitch Wilds also attended but did not speak.</p> <p>Cheryl Hart, the Planning Director, was also in attendance at the retreat. Cheryl stated she felt the attendees were receptive to the information given but felt there were some that were not willing to use taxpayer's money to help stabilize properties such as the Watkins property.</p> <p>Christine Usry (Director of Parks and Recreation) also attended the retreat. Christine stated she thought it was a good presentation and that the attendees were pleased with what was presented.</p> | <p>Attendance and participation in this event fosters two HPC goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relationship building with other City Boards. - Education |
| CLG Grant | <p>Susan Wicker relayed that she had prepared the CLG grant application. Susan stated that Michelle McCabe, CLG grant administrator, was the point of contact with the State Preservation Office. Per the CLG grant application requirements, the City must agree to match 40% of cost estimates. The State gave Susan five examples of other grant requests seeking funds to re-write their Design Guidelines. The recommended budget for this type of project is \$15,000-\$20,000. Using \$20,000 as the estimate for a re-write of the Oxford Design Guidelines, Susan requested \$12,000 from the State and the City agreed to provide the matching \$8,000. If approved, the project must be completed by August 2016.</p> | <p>Susan completed the CLG Grant Application. Needed signatures were secured following the meeting. Cheryl Hart will mail the package before the February 27, 2015 deadline.</p> |

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| | <p>Ms. McCabe informed Susan that it may take two or more years to be approved and to not be disappointed if denied this year - just resubmit in subsequent years.</p> | |
| <p>Demolition of 218 College Street</p> | <p>A 365 day delay was approved at the last HPC meeting for the demolition of 218 College Street (Jimmy Crawford owner).</p> <p>Tony and Susan reported that they had arranged for Cathleen Turner (Preservation NC), Mitch Wilds (Branch Manager and Restoration Specialist with State Preservation Office), and Laurie Mitchell (CLG Grant Division of State Preservation Office) to meet them following the City Retreat on January 28, 2015 at the property to give an opinion about if and how this property could be saved as well as the history of it being a multifamily dwelling. (Tony secured Mr. Crawford’s permission prior to entering the house with the State officials.)</p> <p>The experts concluded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They believe the house is structurally in great shape. - It is doubtful that the house was originally a multifamily dwelling. Based on evidence of enclosed doorways, in the center hall adjacent parlor, it appears it was originally a single family home with a center hall with a stair case leading to the second floor. Some additions were made through the years. The porch appears to have been altered to accommodate additions. They recommended that historical maps and historical records be reviewed to support their assessment. - It would cost as much or more to demolish and rebuild a new house of like size (as required by the Design Guidelines) as it would to restore it. - Federal Tax Credits are still available for the restoration of income producing properties—i.e., potentially 20 % of qualified rehabilitation costs would be available to Mr. Crawford to help offset some expenses if he rents the restored property for minimum of 5 years. <p>Preservation NC also put forward 3 options to offer Mr. Crawford so that the house can be saved:</p> | <p>Joan Roberson will do some research on the house and report her findings.</p> <p>Susan will check to see if the State has any contractors that they have worked with that may be willing to give a pro-bono estimate as to the cost to restore.</p> <p>Cathy plans to see if a contractor that she knows (with experience restoring historic homes) would be willing to give a pro-bono analysis of the property.</p> <p>In the near future, as recommended by the State and Preservation NC officials, two or three HPC members will be chosen to go sit down with Mr. Crawford and explain all of the options that are available to him.</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - He can donate the property to Preservation NC for a tax credit - They can help him find a buyer who will restore the house - They can effectively buy his house at his cost + interest (paid after the restoration is complete and the home is sold.) <p>Further research is needed to verify the single family vs. multi-family question so as to address the rental option considerations.</p> <p>Cathy Weaver reported that she tried to reach the person she thought would be interested in purchasing this property (an idea previously suggested by Mr. Crawford) but had not heard from them as of today.</p> <p>Tony suggested that a contractor be contacted to get a more definitive idea of the costs to restore.</p> | |
| <u>2015 Goal: Design Guidelines</u> | On hold until CLG grant approved. | On hold, pending CLG grant approval. |
| <u>2015 Goal: Website Update</u> | Since the HPC website is in need of major updating and since our current webmaster, Mr. Joe Boron, has been so busy, it was agreed that a new website design and webmaster is needed. Susan will speak with Randy Hemann and the City Webmaster so as to explore options that may be available through the City's resources. Joan Roberson stated that she had spoken with Cathy Wolford, the original website designer, and learned that she may be interested in reworking it but is not interested in maintaining content updates. Joan also announced that she had "played around" with creating a new HPC website on WEEBLY.COM. | Joan will send a link to the draft website design she created on WEEBLY.COM to the HPC members via email for them to view. More discussions will follow at the next meeting. |
| <u>2015 Goal: Relationship Building</u> | Tony and Susan's presence at the Board of Commissioners Retreat contributed to relationship building but Tony feels there is still much work to be done. He suggested that the HPC become involved with the Oxford Bicentennial Celebration. The HPC's involvement with the Bicentennial event would foster relationships with, not only other city boards, but also the downtown merchants and the community as a whole. | Everyone agreed that the HPC should participate in the Bicentennial Event. |

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| <p><u>2015 Goal:</u> Bicentennial Celebration participation</p> | <p>Susan nominated Rick Thomas to be the HPC representative on the Bicentennial Committee which meets on the third Wednesday of each month at the Library at 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>As part of the bicentennial celebration, Tony would like the HPC to sponsor a walking tour. At the BOC retreat, Tony and Susan learned that Christine Usry, the new Parks and Recreation Director, has experience in this regard. Partnering with the Parks and Recreation Department would be another way for the HPC to build relationships. Tony invited Christine to speak on this matter. Christine spoke of her background and experience with conducting a variety of tours and historic district endeavors in her prior jobs and how she welcomed the opportunity to do the same in Oxford. She said the Parks and Recreation Department is not there to just sponsor sports related activities but recreational activities in general. The HPC voiced their eagerness to work with the Parks and Recreation Department in this and similar regards.</p> | <p>Rick Thomas will be our Liaison for the bicentennial celebration and keep the HPC abreast of all information learned.</p> <p>The HPC plans to move forward working with the Parks and Recreation Department to conduct a walking tour for the bicentennial event (as well as other yet named projects).</p> |
| <p><u>2015 Goal:</u> HPC Retreat</p> | <p>Tony announced he would like to begin an HPC retreat (akin to the BOC retreat) to foster education for the HPC members and to work on big projects.</p> | <p>All members agreed with Tony to hold a HPC Retreat. More information about a retreat will be provided in the coming months.</p> |

Summary of Approved Minor Works:

| <i>Property Owner Address</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>HPC authorization</i> |
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| <i>Elizabeth and Maureen Taylor 108 Front Street Oxford, NC</i> | The Homeowners requested to replace their roof with like shingles. | Tony and Cheryl signed the COA since there were no changes being made to color or materials. |

COA Renewal: There were none at this time.

Demolition by Neglect

| <i>Property Owner Address</i> | <i>Status</i> |
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| <i>217 College Street Tom Watkins Property</i> | <p>Cheryl reported that the Watkins property was listed on the Preservation NC website and that a sign was in the front yard. She said that Cathleen Turner would like for volunteers to assist in the cleanup effort as soon as she retains a key to the property and when weather allows. Cheryl stated she is also working with Randy Hemann to see if the City can assist with stabilizing the property. (an investment that would be returned when the property is sold.)</p> <p>Joan reminded everyone that when we are allowed inside the house to look for any salvageable old newspapers to be donated to the Library.</p> |

New Business

| Topic | Discussion | Outcome |
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| HPC ANNUAL REPORT | Susan reminded the HPC that (per the Charter) an annual report must be given at the March Board of Commissioners meeting. As outgoing Chair, Susan will draft the report, using formats utilized in prior years. | Susan will give the annual report at the Tuesday, March 10, 2015 Board of Commissioners meeting. |
| PHOTO CONTEST | <p>Susan will be overseeing the Annual Photo Contest again this year. The categories are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Facades of homes on Front Street (2) Church Windows (3) Entryways to public buildings (4) Streetscapes <p>Susan will find sponsors and prepare an article for the OPL by March. The winner will be presented their award at the May BOC meeting.</p> | Susan will find sponsors and write an article to place in the OPL. The winners will be announced at the May BOC meeting. Susan will also write an article for the OPL to run soon after the BOC meeting. |
| STEWARDSHIP AWARD | The Stewardship Award plaque for 2015 has already been purchased. The commission must decide from this year's COAs who will be the recipient of this award. The winner will be announced at the May Board of Commissioners meeting and in the OPL. A decision will be made regarding the winner at the next HPC meeting. | Stewardship Award winner will be decided at the April HPC meeting and presented to recipient at the May Board of Commissioners Meeting. Susan Wicker will place an article in the OPL about the Stewardship Award. |
| CLG TRAINING SESSION | Tony Armento, Cheryl Hart, Susan Wicker and Rick Thomas will be attending a free CLG training session in Greensboro on March 19, 2015 from 9a.m. - 5:30p.m. It will be held at the Greensboro Historic Museum Auditorium. All HPC members were encouraged to attend if possible. Attendees to the meeting will give a report at the next HPC meeting. | Tony Armento, Cheryl Hart, Susan Wicker and Rick Thomas plan to attend the CLG training session in Greensboro on March 19, 2015 and report relevant info learned at the next HPC meeting. |

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| HPC (CAMP) Participation | Tony Armento would like for members to consider attending the CAMP “(Commission Assistance and Mentoring Program) training session in Salisbury September 15, 2015. It will cost \$350.00 for three people and \$30.00/person thereafter. The training will be from noon on Tuesday through Wednesday and attendees would be responsible for their own lodging. | Tony Armento would like for the commission members to think about attending a CAMP training session in Salisbury on 9-15-15. This will be discussed further and voted on at our next meeting. | |
| Motion to Adjourn | 1st Susan Wicker | 2nd Cathy Weaver | Outcome By unanimous decision, the meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m. |

Date of Next Meeting: April 16, 2015

Minutes Prepared by: Lu Anne Gilligan and Susan Wicker