

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

The Historic Preservation Commission met on Tuesday, August 25, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building.

Members present: Clement Geitner, Nancy Zagaroli, Anita Johnson Gwin, Larry Triplett, Paige Lutes Brigham, Curtis Mauser, Ernie Sills, Zach Taylor, Chelsea Champion

Members absent: None

Others present: Planner Donna Cullum, Minutes Clerk Patty Williams

A quorum was present.

- I. Chairman Geitner called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was present.
- II. Mrs. Zagaroli moved, seconded by Mrs. Johnson Gwin to approve the minutes of April 28, 2009. The motion carried unanimously.
- III. Public Information Meeting—Expansion of the Claremont High School District—Clay Griffith, Acme Preservation Service and Ann Swallow

Ms. Cullum introduced Clay Griffith, consultant with Acme Preservation Service, and Ann Swallow, National Register Coordinator for the State Preservation Office of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources for presentations.

Mr. Griffith presented the nomination information based on his preparation of the National Register Nomination Boundaries Increase. (All documents are on file in the Office of Planning and Development.) Mr. Griffith used a PowerPoint presentation to show architectural styles found in the expansion area and discussed other pertinent information which is part of the nomination document.

Ms. Swallow stated that she manages the National Register of Historic Places which is part of the Department of the Interior. She presented historical information about Hickory's historic districts. She further explained the National Register saying that becoming part of this program means that lives will not change, no special requirements are placed on property owners, and tax credits can be received. It's an honorific designation and raises awareness. Ms. Swallow explained the state tax credit program for homes. All buildings that are contributing resources qualify for tax credits. Work that is done on the building has to meet the standards of the Secretary of Interior's standards for rehab and at least \$25,000 must be spent. Property owners can get 30% of the amount of money spent on rehab as a tax credit on state income taxes.

Private property owners have the right to formally object to having their property listed in this historic district expansion. If more than half object, then the area will be designated, it will only be determined eligible. All property owners receive notices in the mail because most people don't see the published legal notice. Hickory is a certified local government so this Historic Preservation Commission has the responsibility to review and comment on the nomination. The mayor is also asked to comment. The district nomination has been scheduled for the October 8 meeting of the National Register Advisory Committee in Raleigh. If they recommend the nomination, then it will be independently reviewed and nominated and forwarded to Washington, D.C. for a 45-day public comment period after which it will be officially designated.

IV. Public Hearing—Claremont High School District Expansion Nomination to National Register of Historic Places

Chairman Geitner opened the public hearing. All speakers must be sworn in. No members of the Commission expressed a conflict of interest.

Ms. Cullum presented staff report:

The City of Hickory is rich in history and is blessed numerous well preserved historic buildings. One important tool in the preservation of historic buildings, structures, and neighborhoods is the National Register of Historic Places. For properties to be eligible for the National Register they must have historical integrity, meaning that the property's historical physical characteristic must have survived. Secondly, the properties must have historical significance and meet at least one of the following criteria:

- (A) Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- (B) Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- (C) Embodiment of distinctive characteristics of design, construction, or form.
- (D) The ability to yield information important in prehistory or history.

The Claremont High School Historic District Expansion has been in the works for several years. The original district's period of significance was approximately 1870 to 1935. This expansion extends the period of significance from 1935 through the 1950's. Whereas the original Claremont District was characterized by imposing structures and large lots, this expansion follows the trend of smaller lots and houses closer to the street.

The nomination for the original Claremont High School Historic District describes Hickory's evolution from a small nineteenth-century trading center to an urbanized manufacturing city. This expansion documents the building patterns that occurred after World War I as vacant lots were improved and large lots were subdivided.

The architectural style of the expansion area is characterized by Craftsman, Colonial Revival, Period Cottage, Minimal Traditional, and Ranch. Other important examples of Dutch Colonial, Spanish and Tudor Revival are interspersed throughout the District. As a Certified Local Government (CLG), we are required to participate in the review of any nominations within the boundaries of the City, provide for public comment, and make a recommendation to City Council as to whether the proposed nomination meets the criteria for inclusion to the Register.

The Claremont High School Expansion District appears to meet the criteria of A and C above. The role that the High School played in the District and the architectural styles provide the evidence that this area continues the educational and cultural traditions that drew people to Hickory in the first place.

Mr. Patrick Daily, executive Director of Hickory Landmarks Society, stated that the HLS Board supports the proposed boundary expansion of the Claremont High School District. Part of the Landmark Society's mission is to education and advocacy on the part of historic preservation. These properties are part of our past and can be a part of our future. Historical preservation is the ultimate recycling effort. The expansion will nearly triple the size of the current district that was established in 1984. One property omission that stands out is the 1887 Shuler-Harper House. The HLS believes it should be included. HLS owns three properties in the district. Property owners should not fear a designation. Listing is honorary, a matter of community pride and can have financial benefits. The HLS Board of Directors encourages passage and will assist any property owners in any way that they can. Finally, they encourage the Commission to recommend designating the expansion Claremont District, the expansion Kenworth District, the newly created Southwest Downtown Historic District, and the recent individually listed properties in Hickory as locally designated local landmarks.

Mr. Albert Keiser, Jr., a director of the Hickory Landmarks Society, spoke about how the proposed expansion will help real estate values. It will help sell property. He spoke further about the historic values of some of the houses in the Claremont District. Mr. Keiser encouraged approval of the Claremont High School District Expansion Nomination to National Register of Historic Places.

The public hearing was closed.

Mr. Sills moved, seconded by Ms. Johnson Gwin to accept the expansion nomination of the Claremont High School District in the National Register of Historic Places.

Ms. Brigham asked which house Mr. Daily thought should be included and is not. Ms. Cullum explained that it is the Shuler-Harper House. It was originally in the Claremont District and is still listed on the National

Register. Mr. Harper was vehemently against the program so that house was not listed. The house is now owned by the Catawba County Historical Association.

The motion carried unanimously.

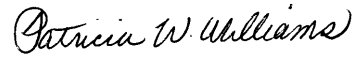
V. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Ms. Cullum announced that this is Anita Johnson Gwin's last meeting as she is moving away from the area. Christine Brown's term has expired and no appointment has been made yet.

CHAIR—Ms. Brigham nominated Mr. Geitner as chair, seconded by Mr. Triplett. Nominations were closed and the motion to elect Mr. Geitner as chair carried unanimously.

VICE CHAIR—Mr. Sills nominated Mrs. Zagaroli as vice chair, seconded by Mr. Geitner. Mrs. Zagaroli nominated Mr. Sills for vice chair, seconded by Mr. Mauser. Members voted by ballot and were counted by Chairman Geitner. Mrs. Zagaroli was declared to be the new vice chair.

VI. There being no further business, upon motion made, duly seconded, and unanimously adopted, the meeting adjourned 7:25 p.m.


Patricia W. Williams, MMC
Minutes Clerk