

ALAMANCE COUNTY HISTORIC PROPERTIES COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday January 14, 2014

6:00 p.m., Office Annex Conference Room

Members Present

Rodney Cheek, *Vice Chair*
Jimmy Ray Cobb Jr.
Bryan Dalton
Marti Friddle, *Chair*
David Mickey
Gale Pettiford
Jennifer Talley

Members Absent

Ida Stephens
John Braxton

Staff Present

Aspen Price, *Planner*

Guests Present

Laurie Smith
Helen Sharpe

I. Call to Order

Chair Marti Friddle called the January 14, 2014 meeting of the Alamance County Historic Properties Commission to order at approximately 6:02 p.m. Ms. Price completed the roll call and confirmed that a quorum of members was present.

II. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Friddle asked if there were any changes to the minutes. None were suggested.

Motion: Mr. Dalton made a motion to approve the December 17, 2013 minutes; it was seconded by Mr. Cobb.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

III. New Business

Oneida Mills National Register Nomination: Ms. Friddle introduced the nomination application and asked Ms. Price to present it. Ms. Price provided an overview of the approval process for a property that has been nominated for the National Register. She stated that the property in this nomination consists of two parcels; the larger Oneida Mills complex on the north side of W. Harden Street at address point 219, and the smaller Scott-Mebane Manufacturing Company on the south side at 220 W. Harden Street.

Ms. Price stated that the eligibility of a property for National Register listing should be based only on the property's current condition and how well that meets the criteria for National Register listing. Eligibility is based on the significance and integrity of the property. Ms. Price stated that in the application the applicant suggests this property is significant under criteria C: that this property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, in the category of architecture, and the period of significance is from 1882-1931. She noted that for the integrity, the property must retain enough of its historic physical character to represent its historic period and associations adequately. This includes location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Ms. Price stated that there are eight total buildings/structures, five of which are considered contributing to this nomination. The three buildings that are non contributing are the bathroom building, the utility building, both of which were built after 1931, and the walls of the cotton warehouse, which burned at some point in time. She pointed these out on the map provided in the application.

Ms. Price then read the significance summary from the National Register nomination on page 13 and the integrity statement on page 12.

Ms. Friddle opened the floor for comments and discussion. Mr. Dalton stated that he felt that the structures meet criteria C, without a doubt. Ms. Friddle reminded the commission that their job is to recommend it or not recommend it for National Register, that they do not get a vote on the intended use for the building. Helen Sharpe, guest, stated that she resides on N. Main Street in Graham, and that she felt the building should be nominated, however she is not at all pleased with the intended purpose of the structure.

Ms. Friddle acknowledged Ms. Sharpe's concerns and reiterated that that is not within the scope of the HPC's decision. She added that her understanding is that all of the paperwork has been filled out that would allow the project to go forward, whether or not it was listed on the National Register. Ms. Friddle asked Ms. Price to clarify this. Ms. Price stated that the property was rezoned by the Graham City Council September. The property was rezoned to Residential-Multifamily, and was previously zoned Light Industrial, so at this point they could renovate it right now if they wanted to without the National Register status.

Mr. Mickey asked if he was correct in his understanding that there were one or two other mills in Alamance County that were on the National Register. The Commission discussed this. Ms. Price referred to the inventory and stated that Durham Hosiery Mill, Saxapahaw Spinning Mill, and Glencoe Mill were all listed. Mr. Mickey suggested that this nomination would be another example of that type of construction. Ms. Price stated that was correct, and added that there were no mills listed on the National Register in Graham. She stated that in the application the applicant stated that this was the first mill built in Graham, and the Sidney Scott Mill on Washington Street is the only other historic industrial building that remains in Graham.

Mr. Cobb stated that he agreed with Ms. Sharpe; he felt that this complex should be listed on the National Register and that repurposing a building is not necessarily a bad idea, but he added that a lot of mills in this county have already been repurposed into apartments and that in some cases he feels it is more to line pockets than to preserve the history. Mr. Cobb stated that the mill used to belong to Jay Burke and asked who owns it now. Ms. Price stated that it still belongs to Jay Burke but her understanding is that the company that wants to renovate it is a contracted purchaser, who will purchase the mill under certain conditions. Mr. Cobb asked where the company is from. Ms. Price replied that they were from Winston-Salem and were the same company that renovated Mebane Lofts Mill.

Mr. Cobb stated that ultimately what is going to happen is Oneida Mills is a pretty good size, and by the time it is retrofitted into apartments you're talking about a good size population

explosion in a confined area. Mr. Cobb stated that he's in favor of the National Register listing, but has hesitations about the property's potential use.

Ms. Friddle stated that the only comment she has is that she is for repurposing the buildings that we've got and not going out and buying up farmland to build new facilities. She added that she would like to see it done well.

Ms. Sharpe asked if there was any chance, if the nomination went through, if that act alone may dampen the enthusiasm for this subsidized housing, that the owners may rethink their project. Ms. Price responded that one of the benefits of being listed on the National Register is that there are tax credits for rehabilitation. Ms. Price explained that you have to pay out the money for rehabilitation first, and if your rehabilitation meets the Standards of Rehabilitation, which is checked by someone from the State Historic Preservation Office, then you get tax credits back after the work is done. She stated that there is a financial incentive, but it also means you have to do a certain level of work.

Ms. Friddle asked if there was any other discussion. Hearing none, she called for a motion.

Motion: Mr. Cheek made a motion to recommend that the Oneida Cotton Mills and Scott-Mebane Manufacturing Company Complex be submitted for listing in the National Register; it was seconded by Mr. Cobb.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

IV. Old Business

Pat Bailey Memorial: Ms. Friddle stated that the discussion at the last meeting was to put up a plaque at cost from Colonial Hardware. She visited the park and couldn't find a very good place to mount a plaque, with the exception of a springhouse in the woods. At present there are no paths through the woods, but it is her understanding that the Boy Scouts may take on the project of building paths. Mr. Cobb restated his offer to cover the cost of the plaque up to \$200. Ms. Price mentioned that there was about \$30 currently available for this project. Ms. Friddle asked if the Commission want to wait until the paths were constructed.

Ms. Talley arrived at 6:26 p.m.

Mr. Cheek suggested that they get the plaque, and then go to the memorial association and see if they would give the Commission permission to put it up and where they would like it to be.

Motion: Mr. Cheek made a motion that the Commission decide what they want on the plaque, order the plaque, and then get permission from the memorial association to put it up; it was seconded by Mr. Cobb.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

Continued Discussion: Ms. Friddle asked the Commission for suggestions for wording. After some discussion among members, Ms. Talley read out a suggested wording, "This memorial is in remembrance of Pat Bailey, historian, preservationist and genealogist, February 12,

1927- December 4, 2013. Pat's spirit lives on here in a place that is special to her. It was here in southern Alamance that Pat began her life's dedication to historical preservation. This plaque is a reminder of her strength, determination, and love for history," and then it would be signed by Alamance County Historic Properties Commission.

Ms. Friddle asked the commission for their opinion on the color variations for the plaques, as some have a silver background and some have a bronze background.

Ms. Price noted that the Alamance Historic Markers are usually green. Ms. Friddle stated that they could do a similar color with this plaque.

V. Announcements & Updates

Staff Updates: Ms. Price informed the Commission that the Old South Mebane Historic District Expansion which they had recommended for approval to the National Register was approved and was officially listed in the National Register on December 16, 2013.

Ms. Price stated that the Architectural Inventory is at a point where it is ready for someone to write a preface or introduction to the document, which could include information such as the historical background of Alamance County, a short history of the inventory process, the role of the Historic Properties Commission, and other related information. Ms. Friddle offered to get in touch with some writers that she knows.

Ms. Friddle asked if the inventory would be online or on a CD. Ms. Price stated that it would be online, and that she had heard that there was some interest in selling it as an ebook for \$10-\$15 to raise money for the HPC. She added that they could also print a number of hard copies to sell, or they could just make it available online as a free PDF. Ms. Friddle stated that there are people who would probably want one of each. Ms. Talley stated her concern that the previous printed survey was hard to read, and that she felt an electronic version would be easier to navigate. Ms. Price stated that she had worked on that; the inventory was organized by township, with the properties listed by their inventory number in each section. She added that she was including indexes in the back with properties listed by name and inventory number, and that there was a map at the beginning of each section that shows where they are located. Ms. Price added that she was updating the GIS layer as well and is hoping to set it up where people can search for the property name or inventory number and find it on the GIS maps online, and that link would go to the book. Ms. Price noted that if it was an e-book you would have to own the book to be able to read it; if it was a free PDF you could click the link and open it online. She asked the commission how much importance they wanted to place on the document being accessible and how much importance they wanted to place on it raising money for the Commission and their projects. Ms. Talley stated that she felt they should raise money other ways, and that the book should be free. She added that the information should be out there to promote the preservation of these properties. Ms. Price stated that they needed a motion if they wanted to make a decision on this.

Motion: Ms. Talley made a motion that the Architectural Inventory publication be made available to the public at no cost; it was seconded by Mr. Mickey.

Vote: Unanimously approved

Commissioner Announcements: Ms. Friddle stated that it was brought to her attention that the North Carolina Historic Tax Credits were set to expire this year, in 2014. Ms. Price explained that if they wanted to support the extension of these tax credits, the best route would be to make a recommendation to the County Commissioners to pass a resolution in support of the extension of the tax credits, and then that could go to the NC General Assembly to show that this community supports it.

Motion: Ms. Talley made a motion to recommend that the County Commissioners prepare a resolution in support of continuing the State Historic Tax Credits; it was seconded by Mr. Dalton.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

VI. Adjournment

Motion: Mr. Cheek moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m.; it was seconded by Mr. Dalton.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,



Aspen Price
Clerk to Alamance County Historic Properties Commission