

Historic District Commission

May 26, 2022

Meeting Minutes

Chairwoman Andi Eddlemon called the meeting of the Historic District Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 26, 2022 at City Hall in the Council Chamber, 181 S. South Street of Gastonia, NC.

Present: Commissioners James Henson, Andi Eddlemon, Carol Hauer, Camille Fox, and Ed Starr

Absent: Commissioners Josh Hauser and Jerry Tucker

Staff present: Charles Graham, Jason Thompson, Kim Wallis, and Chrystal Howard

ITEM 1a. Roll Call / Sound Check

Chairwoman Eddlemon opened the meeting, conducted roll call and declared a quorum.

ITEM 1b. Approval of April 28, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Starr made a motion to adopt the April 28, 2022 meeting minutes and Commissioner Hauer seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-0).

Chairwoman Eddlemon stated because of the quasi-judicial format of the hearings, persons wishing to speak and offer evidence are required by North Carolina law to be sworn in or affirmed. Ms. Howard administered the oath to Ms. Kim Wallis.

Chairwoman Eddlemon explained the procedure of the quasi-judicial meeting.

ITEM 2. Public Hearing – Certificate of Appropriateness (File # PLCA202200313)

- Ever Torres
- 1223 Jones Street
- Install decorative stone siding on foundation, front columns, front stairs, and chimney

Chairwoman Eddlemon recognized Kim Wallis, Senior Planner for the purpose of staff presentation. Ms. Wallis stated the applicant's name, property location, and the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) request to install stone veneer siding at three feet tall along house foundation, entire chimney, front porch columns and stairs, remove iron porch, step and post railings, step railings and install new wooden column posts. She displayed the property/zoning map. Ms. Wallis read the property description, findings, and key elements. She displayed photos of the house from front and side views, as well as, a photo of what was installed. Ms. Wallis read the excerpts from the Design Standards and Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Ms. Wallis noted that the applicant was expected to be at the meeting, but was not present.

Commissioner Henson made a motion in accordance to the Section 7.6.2 of the Unified Development Ordinance to deny the application because the applicant altered the exterior of the house without a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and Commissioner Fox seconded the motion. Discussion ensued on the locations of windows and doors on the front and rear of house. Assistant City Attorney Graham provided legal guidance. Commissioner Henson noted that the house was cinder block, the parcel was at the edge of the historic district boundary, and was an older home. He was unable to provide suggestions to make the house compliant due to the amount of items wrong with the house. Commissioner Henson noted that what the Commission decides will set a precedent for others. Chairwoman Eddlemon noted that if material needed to be removed, it was over cinder block and agreed that suggestions would be difficult. Her preference was to deny the application and allow the applicant to come back with a new application. Brief discussion ensued on how the Commission should proceed. The motion to deny unanimously passed (5-0).

ITEM 3. Public Hearing – Certificate of Appropriateness ((File # PLCA202200318)

- Ever Torres
- 1223.5 Jones Street
- Remove garage and entry doors, awning, install new door and window in openings, close in remaining openings with block siding, add 3' tall decorative stone siding, and paint white

Chairwoman Eddlemon recognized Kim Wallis, Senior Planner for the purpose of staff presentation. Ms. Wallis stated the applicant's name, property location, and the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) request to remove two garage doors, right side door and awning, install new door and new 48"x88" window in garage door openings, close in remaining openings with black siding to match existing siding, add three-foot-tall stone veneer siding around building, and paint structure white. She displayed the property/zoning map. Ms. Wallis read the property description. She displayed

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front, side and rear view photos of the house and the proposed siding. Ms. Wallis displayed the excerpts from the Design Standards and Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). She noted that a letter was sent to the applicant informing them of noncompliance and to complete an application. This letter was not an official notice of violation.

Commissioner Fox asked for clarification that the request was to remove two garage doors and install a single leaf door. Ms. Wallis replied that she was unsure. Commissioner Henson replied that information may be missing. Commissioner Fox stated she was confused that the applicant wanted to add another single door. Commissioner Hauer stated this was on the same property as the previous item. She emphasized the importance of both buildings blending well with each other, and the difficulty of not knowing what will happen with the other building. Commissioner Starr noted there was no roof. Ms. Wallis stated the idea was to make this building more of a residence and eliminate the garage look. Chairwoman Eddlemon stated there was not enough information, such as not knowing what kind of door, what the door will look like, no drawing of the finished product, and the stone siding was a problem.

Discussion ensued to either continue or deny the item. Assistant City Attorney Graham provided legal guidance.

Commissioner Henson made a motion to deny the application because of insufficient information and Commissioner Starr seconded the motion. No further discussion ensued. The motion to deny was unanimously passed (5-0).

ITEM 4. Public Hearing – Certificate of Appropriateness ((File # PLCA202200325)

- Dennis Jones
- 417 S. South Street
- Rebuild front porch

Chairwoman Eddlemon recognized Kim Wallis, Senior Planner for the purpose of staff presentation. Ms. Wallis stated the applicant's name, property location, and the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) request to rebuild front porch. She displayed the property/zoning map. Ms. Wallis read the property description, findings, and key elements of design. She displayed front view photos of the house and close up photos of the porch. Ms. Wallis displayed the excerpts from the Design Standards.

Ms. Howard administered the oath to Dennis Jones.

Chairwoman Eddlemon recognized Mr. Jones, 743 Mylinda Drive of Newton, SC. Commissioner Henson asked if the design under the porch ceiling will remain and Mr. Jones replied that it will remain the same. Mr. Jones stated he may not be able to replace the corbels at the top of the columns, but will replace with something as close as possible. Chairwoman Eddlemon asked if all ten columns will be replaced with 4x4s and Mr. Jones replied that all ten columns will be wrapped with similar column wraps resulting in eight to nine inches in thickness. Commissioner Fox asked if the columns were fluted or flat and Mr. Jones replied that the columns were fluted. Chairwoman Eddlemon commented that the corbels were an important feature on the front of the house and needed to be replaced with the same or something similar to keep it fitting in with the neighborhood. Commissioner Starr needed to see a full detail of an example of the columns and base. He stated the columns were the most important aspect of the house and the application stated the columns were 4"x4". Mr. Jones clarified that the supports were 4"x4". Commissioner Starr stated a detail of the corbels, tops, columns and base was needed including pictures of the sources to be used in order for the Commission to properly evaluate because of misleading information in the application. Commissioner Fox noted that that the application states column wraps and supports will be the same as original design. Discussion ensued that the application was for the porch only. Mr. Jones shared that the existing rails will be cleaned and reused.

Commissioner Hauer made a motion to continue until the next meeting to allow the applicant time to provide details and images of corbels, columns, porch ceiling, and railings. Commissioner Fox seconded the motion. The motion to continue was unanimously passed (5-0).

ITEM 5. Public Hearing – Certificate of Appropriateness ((File # PLCA202200324)

- Tim Kovalenko
- 405 S. South Street
- New house construction, install new landscaping and driveway

Chairwoman Eddlemon recognized Kim Wallis, Senior Planner for the purpose of staff presentation. Ms. Wallis stated the applicant's name, property location, and the Certificate of Appropriateness

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(COA) request to build a new primary structure (house), driveway, and landscaping on vacant lot. She displayed the property/zoning map. Ms. Wallis read the findings and key elements of design. She displayed a photo of the parcel, site plans, elevations, roof details, and the location of house in relation to existing neighborhood buildings. Ms. Wallis displayed the excerpts from the Design Standards and Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Google Maps was displayed to show neighboring properties.

Discussion ensued on nearby house colors as white. Comments made was that the house blends, the house has a double roof, the house repeats detail of scale of adjacent houses, the roof length was different, porch was shorter in length, other houses have a substantial porch, and the brick adds to the feel of an enclosed porch. Commissioner Starr inquired about the height of the brick foundation and requested confirmation that it did not have a slab.

Ms. Howard administered the oath to Tim Kovalenko.

Chairwoman Eddlemon recognized Mr. Kovalenko, 4938 Safford Shire Lane of Charlotte, NC. Mr. Kovalenko replied that it would not be a slab, but stem walls with two blocks about sixteen inches in height with a brick veneer wrap. He stated the brick was red and the colors of the house were shown. Changing the roof design was discussed and it was determined not possible. Chairwoman Eddlemon changed the focus to smaller details to make harmonious. Discussion ensued on extending the porch while keeping balance and it was determined to keep the porch as is. Commissioner Starr commented that the proportion from the left corner of house plus the porch appeared to be two-thirds of the overall length and was balanced. He inquired about the size of the columns and Mr. Kovalenko replied that the brick section was 12"x12" and the remaining column was approximately six or eight inches squared. Chairwoman Eddlemon asked what the overall brick height was for the columns and Mr. Kovalenko replied that it was 12"x12"x32" brick porch columns from ground level. Commissioner Starr suggested thicker columns and posts to be more in line with the historic district neighborhood. Discussion ensued on the drawing of the columns, and the top of the brick column being even with the top of the porch railing. Mr. Kovalenko asked if window shutters were needed to be on the back as he preferred not having them. No objections were made by the Commission to have shutters on the back of the house. Commissioner Starr, Fox, and Henson stated they did not have any issue with the removal of shutters because it was on the back of the house and not seen from the road. Commissioner Fox agreed with Commissioner Starr regarding beefing up with column base and wood portion of column in lieu of extending the porch.

Commissioner Henson made a motion to approve the request with the condition to increase the front porch brick column width, brick column height be the same as railing top, increase the wood portion of the column, and for the builder to work with staff on the finished size. Commissioner Starr seconded the motion.

Chairwoman Eddlemon commented that landscaping, windows, pathway and stone wall were not discussed. Discussion ensued on the stone wall and stairs and Chairwoman Eddlemon was in favor for these to remain as it may help prevent the property from looking new and sterile. Discussion ensued on shutter sizes to be twelve inches wide by the same height of window. Commissioner Starr and Chairwoman Eddlemon suggested hinge-folding shutters. Assistant City Attorney Graham provided legal guidance. After hearing options, the motion and second were withdrawn by Commissioner Henson and Commissioner Starr respectively.

Commissioner Henson stated there were front porch issues addressed. He continued that the exiting stairs and stone wall at the sidewalk to be removed were an issue, stairs were centered where they don't need to be, front and side elevations of windows and doors were an issue, as well as shutters. Commissioner Hauer would like the shutters appropriately wide and tall to match the size of the window. Commissioner Henson agreed with Commissioner Hauer and requested to see an example. Commissioner Starr stated the height of the shutters was the issue and consider the idea of hinge-folding shutters. Dimensions of the shutters in relation to the size of the windows was requested. Chairwoman Eddlemon transitioned to landscaping. She mentioned additional plants to be added to soften the look of a new home in the district. Chairwoman Eddlemon suggested planting a full plant next to the porch and encouraged landscaping be presented with the shutter dimensions. Discussion ensued on the proposed motion.

Commissioner Starr made a motion to approve with conditions that the brick and wood front porch columns be enlarged, shutters be the equal height of the windows, and the applicant return with a complete landscape plan for the Historic District Commission's approval once the house is constructed. Commissioner Hauer seconded the motion. The motion to approve with conditions was unanimously approved (5-0).

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ITEM 6. Other Business

Subcommittee Meeting Tonight, if Needed: No subcommittee meeting is needed.

ITEM 7. Adjournment

There being no other business, Chairwoman Eddlemon adjourned the meeting at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Chrystal Howard, Secretary

Andi Eddlemon, Chairwoman