



**OAK RIDGE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
JANUARY 18, 2017 - 7:00 P.M.
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Members Present

Ann Schneider, Chair
Debbie Shoenfeld, Vice Chair
Mac McAtee
Caroline Ruch
Kristin Kubly

Staff Present

Bill Bruce, Planning Director
Sandra Smith, Town Clerk

Members Absent

Paul Woolf, Alternate

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Ann Schneider called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She welcomed meeting attendees and introduced Commission members and staff. Schneider then explained the purpose and goals of the Commission, which is to see that any proposed changes are compatible with the special character of the Historic District and the surrounding buildings.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Caroline Ruch made a **motion** to approve the meeting agenda after the addition of Design Review Meetings as a standing agenda item. **Kristin Kubly** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

3. APPROVE MINUTES

Mac McAtee made a **motion** to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2016 and November 16, 2016 meetings. **Debbie Shoenfeld** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

4. OLD BUSINESS

A. Town Council report. Schneider volunteered present the report at the February Town Council meeting, and Shoenfeld volunteered to draft it.

B. COAs reviewed/ approved at staff level.

None

C. COAs approved but not completed.

COAs not completed at this time include the commercial building at Marketplace Shopping Center, painting at L&T Small Engine Repair, and the houses in Oak Ridge Plantation and Barrow Place.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of chair and vice chair.

Debbie Shoenfeld nominated Ann Schneider as chair, and **Mac McAtee** nominated Debbie Shoenfeld as vice chair. With no other nominations, the Commission's vote in favor of the slate of nominees was unanimous (5-0).

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Schneider stated that the Design Guidelines are designed to provide recommendations for design aesthetics within the Oak Ridge Historic District and are intentionally broad to allow applicants a broad pathway toward compliance with the goal of making sure approved projects are compatible with the District and the surrounding buildings. Schneider said the Commission will conduct a quasi-judicial evidentiary hearing, which means each Commission member acts as an independent judge and a member of the Commission. She said Commission members are each tasked with being impartial, without taking the opinions of themselves or others into account. She said appeals of the Commission's decisions are heard by the Board of Adjustment; appeals of Board of Adjustment decisions are heard by Guilford County Superior Court.

Schneider then asked if Commission members had any conflicts of interest: A fixed opinion; undisclosed ex parte communications with anyone about the case; a close familial, business or other relationship with an affected person; or a financial interest in the outcome of the case. Commission members Mac McAtee, Caroline Ruch, Kristin Kubly and Debbie Shoenfeld indicated they had no conflicts. Schneider said she had none but disclosed that she had sat in on a Design Review Meeting with Bill and Pam Lemmons.

B. COA CASE # 16-11A: Pam and Bill Lemmons request a revision to Certificate of Appropriateness 16-11 for a new single-family residence. The property is located at 8418 Linville Road in Oak Ridge Township, is Guilford County Tax Parcel #0222375, and is zoned RS40, Historic District Overlay. It is owned by Pam and Bill Lemmons.

Schneider read the property description, then asked Commission members to confirm the eligibility of the project, whether it fell within the scope of the Design Guidelines, and whether they had sufficient information to make findings of fact and render a decision. Commission members agreed by consensus that they did. McAtee asked if a landscape plan had been submitted. Planning Director Bill Bruce said the landscape plan that was previously approved was still valid.

Town Clerk Sandra Smith swore in speakers for all COAs on the agenda, which included Tommy Pegram, Kevan Combs, Bill Lemmons, Pam Lemmons, and Philip Cooke.

Pegram reported that the basic plan for the house was still the same, but said a couple of items had been discussed at the Design Review Meeting that are included in the drawings submitted. Among those were that the shape of the columns had been changed and the rock had been eliminated. Schneider said the prairie grids had also been removed from the windows, since the applicants were not interested in pursuing an arts and crafts style house. She said instead they had drawn inspiration from Linville Chapel on the Oak Ridge Military Academy campus.

Schneider asked the Commission to cite the applicable sections of the Design Guidelines in their deliberations. She said she was happy to see the change in the columns, which were now more consistent with the architecture seen on Linville Chapel. She said she thought the center dormer window, which the Commission had noted was somewhat inconsistent with arts and crafts style, works much better with this inspiration that it did previously.

Shoenfeld asked about the fact that there was only one window and mostly a flat expanse of wall on the left elevation. Schneider said the Commission had approved that on the original COA, and they had discussed how that side of the house would be relatively screened from the road. Schneider said for purposes of this discussion, the Commission should focus on the architectural details on the front façade, since that was where the changes were being requested.

Ruch asked if the columns were cylindrical. Pegram confirmed they were round, and said they included a platform and were 10-inches wide at the bottom. Schneider asked if the columns had a base and cap. Combs said yes, and approached the dais to point it out to Schneider on the plan. Ruch said the column cap seemed relatively small, and Combs said caps on that size column was generally 2½ to 3 inches. Schneider asked if that was a standard size, and Combs said yes. Schneider noted that a Corinthian column, such as what was seen on Linville Chapel, would be overkill on a small house like this. Combs said the architect had originally suggested a column that was 8 inches wide, but after something larger was discussed at the Design Review Meeting, they had been replaced with a 10-inch wide column. McAtee said he thought the details were compatible with the Design Guidelines and he thought the revised plan looked good.

Ann Schneider made a **motion** to approve that the findings of fact include:

- The staff report
- The finding that the architectural details are compatible with the Historic District and with applicable sections of the Design Guidelines on page 52 under Architectural Details.

Kristin Kubly seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

Debbie Shoenfeld made a **motion** to approve Certificate of Appropriateness 16-11A to allow for construction of a new single-family residence at 8418 Linville Road in Oak Ridge Township, Guilford County Tax Parcel #0222375, zoned RS-40, Historic District Overlay, and owned by Pam and Bill Lemmons. The scope of the work is to be as described in the COA application dated August 19, 2016 and as amended in subsequent submissions, and in related information, testimony and staff report, and using materials/colors, drawings and

photos as presented to the Historic Preservation Commission at its meeting on January 18, 2017. **Mac McAtee** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

- C. COA CASE # 17-01:** Tom Wright requests approval for new signage. The property is located at 2103 Oak Ridge Road in Oak Ridge Township. It is Guilford County Tax Parcel #0165108, is zoned LB, Historic District Overlay Zone, Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone, and is owned by William S. Newman and Dana Newman Sigmon.

Schneider read the property description, then asked Commission members to confirm the eligibility of the project, whether it fell within the scope of the Design Guidelines, and whether they had sufficient information to make findings of fact and render a decision. Commission members agreed by consensus that they did.

Town Clerk Smith swore in applicants Tom Wright and Rick Lamb.

McAtee asked what the sign's posts were made of, and Wright said they were 4-inch-by-4-inch pretreated wood posts. McAtee asked to confirm that the sign would be at right angle from the street, and Wright said yes.

Kubly asked what the letters on the sign would be made of. Wright said they would be painted, and that local artist Leanne Pizio would do the painting on the sign. In response to a question from McAtee, Wright confirmed that the phrase "We get you mowin'," which was on the application but not on the sign mock up, would not be included on the sign.

Shoenfeld asked about the box board, and Wright explained how a planter would be constructed underneath the sign with space between the box board and the bottom of the sign.

Kubly asked if the sign would be lighted, and Wright said no.

Ruch asked about the font that would be used. Wright said it would be exactly as shown on the mock-up presented to the Commission.

Shoenfeld noted on page 34 of the Design Guidelines that it says to construct signs using wood, brick or stone. She also noted item H. on page 35, which says to erect freestanding monument signs so they are not monolithic. Schneider noted that the Design Guidelines also say smaller signs can be mounted on metal, concrete or wooden posts. She asked if the applicants were requesting the maximum size sign permitted; Bruce said no, and that the sign was roughly half the size allowed. Schneider said she would consider that it be a smaller sign.

Shoenfeld pointed out that the applicants are renting the property, and since the front of the property is made up entirely of paved parking area and concrete sidewalks, the applicants would have to tear that up if a different type of sign were erected. Schneider said the Commission was looking for conformance, and she thought a stone sign would be very formal in front of the structure on the property.

McAtee asked if the posts and planter on the sign would also be painted, and Wright said yes. Shoenfeld asked about the red border mentioned on the application, and

Wright said the red border would be around the outside of each black letter on the sign. Because the sign would be hand painted, Ruch said she wanted to make sure the lettering would look like it was professionally done. Wright said that was why they had commissioned a local artist to paint it.

Ann Schneider made a **motion** to approve that the findings of fact include:

- The staff report
- Noting that the text had been changed from what was submitted on the application
- Determining that the request complies with the Design Guidelines for signage, including that it was a smaller sign so wooden materials were appropriate
- Noting that the sparing use of red on the sign was appropriate

Kristin Kubly seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

Debbie Shoenfeld made a **motion** to approve Certificate of Appropriateness 17-01 to allow for construction of signage at 2103 Oak Ridge Road in Oak Ridge Township, Guilford County Tax Parcel #0165108, and zoned LB, Historic District Overlay Zone, Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone. The property is owned by William S. Newman and Dana Newman Sigmon. The scope of the work is to be as described in the COA application dated January 9, 2017, and in related information, testimony and staff report, and using materials/colors, drawings and photos as presented to the Historic Preservation Commission at its meeting on January 18, 2017. **Mac McAtee** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

- C. **COA CASE # 16-06A:** Philip Cooke requests approval for revised signage. The property is located at 8001 Marketplace Drive, in Oak Ridge Township, is Guilford County Tax Parcel #0165103, and is zoned CU-SC, Historic District Overlay Zone, Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone, Greensboro (WS-III) Watershed. It is owned by Oak Ridge Marketplace III, LLC.

Schneider read the property description into the record. She explained that the signage for the property had already been approved by the Commission, but the applicant was requesting a change. She asked if Commission members had enough information to render a decision, and they agreed by consensus.

Philip Cooke said the tenants wanted to change the color of the letters on the building from black to white. He said they felt white would be more visible and was what was on nearby McDonald's, BB&T and other properties.

McAtee said he had no questions, and that a beautiful building had been constructed that was an asset to the Town. Schneider agreed that the building was very handsome.

Ruch noted there would be no changes to the monument sign. She asked if the lettering on it was black or white. Cooke said it had black letters on a white background, and that it would not change.

Kubly asked if all signage on the building would now be white, and Cooke said yes.

Ann Schneider made a **motion** to approve that the findings of fact include:

- The staff report
- Noting the color change of the lettering

Debbie Shoenfeld seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

Debbie Shoenfeld made a **motion** to approve Certificate of Appropriateness 16-06A to allow for a color change of building signage at 8001 Marketplace Drive, in Oak Ridge Township, Guilford County Tax Parcel #0165103, zoned CU-SC, Historic District Overlay Zone, Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone, Greensboro (WS-III) Watershed, and owned by Oak Ridge Marketplace III, LLC. The scope of the work is to be as described in the COA application dated January 10, 2017, and in related information, testimony and staff report, and using materials/colors, drawings and photos as presented to the Historic Preservation Commission at its meeting on January 18, 2017. **Mac McAtee** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATES

A. 2016-17 budget update.

B. Grant program.

Schneider reported that two of the grants awarded had been completed and the property owners reimbursed for the grant amount. She said she had updated the grant application and guidelines and would send them to Commission members for review. She explained the timeline, which included letters mailed to property owners at the first of February and the application deadline being changed from mid-April to March 20.

C. Communication outreach.

Schneider said an ad would appear in the Northwest Finder commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Historic District.

D. Historic Inventory/Markers.

Shoenfeld said the Benbow/Stafford Farm marker should be delivered on January 20. A spring dedication date will be discussed.

E. Historic Oak Ridge Celebration.

The Commission discussed ways to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the creation of the Historic District, which has been proposed for spring 2017. Schneider said she would like to create a subcommittee to work on the event. A special meeting of the Commission will be held on Feb. 8 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall to discuss the event. Several other organizations, including Preservation Oak Ridge, Merchants of Oak Ridge, Oak Ridge Military Academy and churches will be contacted to see if they would like to participate.

F. Display case.

No report. The next display will be on the Oak Ridge Horse Show.

G. Training.

None scheduled at this time

7. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

8. ADJOURNMENT

Debbie Shoenfeld made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. **Mac McAtee** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).