



**OAK RIDGE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING  
JUNE 8, 2016 – 7:00 P.M.  
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present**

Ann Schneider, Chair  
Debbie Shoenfeld, Vice Chair  
Caroline Ruch  
Kristin Kubly  
Paul Woolf, Alternate (Sitting)

**Staff Present**

Bill Bruce, Planning Director  
Sandra Smith, Town Clerk

**Members Absent**

Mac McAtee

**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.

**2. APPROVE AGENDA**

Due to the length of the meeting agenda, Schneider suggested removing all the items under Committee Reports except for a report on the grant program. She also suggested adding a discussion of the meeting schedule for the remainder of the year, and deleting approval of the March, April and May meeting minutes.

**Debbie Shoenfeld** made a **motion** to approve the meeting agenda as amended. **Paul Woolf** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

**Kristin Kubly** made a **motion** to approve the minutes of the February 17, 2016, meeting. **Paul Woolf** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**4. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Town Council report.** Schneider said she attended the last Town Council meeting and reported on the Commission's activities. Shoenfeld volunteered to draft the meeting summary and present it at the July 7, 2016 Town Council meeting.

**B. COAs approved/reviewed at staff level.**

None

**C. COAs approved but not completed.**

Bruce reported that Oak Ridge Marketplace had the only COA that was not completed at this time. Schneider said the Bojangles' plan was approved by the Planning & Zoning Board, who had discussed traffic flow and safety at the site.

\* \* \*

Schneider then read a statement about Design Guidelines, which 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. The goal of the Commission is to see that any proposed changes are compatible with the special character of the Historic District and surrounding buildings. The Commission would be conducting a quasi-judicial evidentiary hearing, meaning each Commission member is acting as an independent judge. She said Commission members are each tasked with being impartial. She asked Commission members to cite the applicable sections of the Design Guidelines in their deliberations. The Commission should take the evidence presented, apply the standards outlined in the Historic District Design Guidelines, make findings of fact, and render a decision. The Commission may approve, deny or continue consideration of the COA request, but a decision must be made within 180 days of the date the application was submitted.

Schneider then explained what constituted a conflict 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. She asked if any Commission members had such a conflict for any of the five COAs to be heard, and Commission members stated that they had none. Schneider noted that she had discussions with grant applicants, and she had reviewed a preliminary draft of the Barrow Place residence and discussed it with staff.

Town Clerk Sandra Smith swore in Planning Director Bill Bruce, Philip Cooke, Rick Lee, Gary Blackburn and John Haynes.

- D. COA-16-01B.** Philip Cooke requests approval of a landscaping plan to complete the requirements of COA-16-01. The property is located at 8001 Marketplace Drive, Guilford County Tax Parcel #0165103, in Oak Ridge Township, zoned CU-SC, Scenic Corridor Overlay, Greensboro (WS-III) Watershed, Historic District. It is owned by Oak Ridge Marketplace III, LLC.

Schneider asked the Commission to confirm whether the application is eligible and sufficient information had been submitted to permit the Commission to make a decision. Commission members all agreed.

Planning Director Bill Bruce said he had no updates to the staff report. He said he was available to answer questions.

Philip Cooke said the landscaping plan that had been submitted originally did not have enough plantings, so it was being resubmitted. Cooke said he thought the plan now met all the landscaping requirements.

Schneider said, in general, that she was thrilled to see so many native plants had been selected. She said it appeared the requirements had been met, and that the plantings would provide a nice screening of the parking areas, which she said seemed almost park-like.

Shoenfeld said she had visited the site and also looked at the entire shopping center. She said she felt the plan and the landscaping fit well, and that the applicant had gone above and beyond what was required. Kubly agreed. Shoenfeld said she thought all requirements had been met.

Caroline Ruch referred to the Design Guidelines on page 39, item g, which addresses required planting rate requirements. She said Section C., item c on page 38 specifies one canopy tree is required for every six parking spaces, and Section D, item g, discusses the minimum numbers of plantings required.

**Debbie Shoenfeld** made a **motion** to adopt the staff report as part of the findings of fact. **Paul Woolf** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**Paul Woolf** made a **motion** to approve the request. **Caroline Ruch** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

## 5. NEW BUSINESS

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

Schneider asked the Commission to confirm the eligibility of the application and that the information submitted was sufficient. Commission members agreed by consensus.

Bruce said he had sent out a rendering of the proposed wall lighting, the wall signage and the specifications on the proposed lighting. He said he thought the applicant would offer some clarification.

Philip Cooke handed out copies of the wall signage renderings to the Commission. He said there would be signage on the building as well as a monument sign. He displayed an aluminum letter, which will be used on the signs, and said it would be painted black. He said the gooseneck lamps would be on the ends of the building, but not in the recessed area in the center of the building. Lighting fixtures that had already been approved will be mounted on top of the overhang to reflect light on the walls. Schneider clarified where the fixtures would be mounted, and said that was not considered backlighting, but was uplighting. Bruce said that was still considered direct illumination. Cooke explained that one of the original renderings showed white letters for the signage and they were backlit.

Cooke said there was a rendering in the COA application of the freestanding monument sign. He said the materials were brick and capstone, both of which were the same as what will be used in the building. He said specifications for the tenant signage were in the Commission's packet. The signage panels would be made out of aluminum with a 1-inch-square aluminum tube backing. He explained that he was not talking about tube lighting, but just an aluminum tube to provide rigidity to the sign panels. Lettering would be 1/4-inch black acrylic. If acrylic is not appropriate in the Historic District, aluminum could be used.

Schneider asked if there were five bays in the building, and Cooke said there could be.

Cooke also said specs for two lighting fixtures were submitted which would light the monument sign. Cooke said Danny Yanusz, the Town's lighting consultant, had said using either of them is appropriate.

Schneider said in reviewing Section B on pages 34-36, it appears the building signage meets the requirements of the Design Guidelines in terms of being unobtrusive, compatible with the building, and simple. She said the aluminum letters were appropriate, as was the fact that they would be painted black. She asked the Commission about using acrylic or aluminum on the monument sign.

Woolf said Item J on page 35 says it is not appropriate to use plastic signage. Schneider said it sounded like the Commission should suggest the applicant use aluminum. Ruch asked if the lettering would be raised, and Cooke said acrylic was preferred because it can be thicker than the aluminum, so the letters can have some depth. Schneider asked if the aluminum tubing that may be used on the signage panel was already curved. Cooke said yes, and while it would not stand out, the curl of the aluminum would give it some strength. Schneider asked if acrylic had been used before on signage in the Historic District, and Bruce said possibly at Sherwin Williams.

**Ann Schneider** made a **motion** to adopt the staff report as the findings of fact with the addition of the requirement for aluminum letters. **Paul Woolf** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**Paul Woolf** made a motion to approve the COA with the condition that the proposed acrylic letters be replaced with aluminum ones. **Kristin Kubly** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**B. COA-16-07.** Johnson and Lee, LLC requests approval of a new single-family residence. The property is located at 8422 Linville Road in Oak Ridge Township, being Guilford County Tax Parcel #0222373, zoned RS-40, Historic District Overlay Zone. It is owned by Johnson and Lee LLC.

Schneider asked if enough information had been supplied and if the project was within the scope of the Design Guidelines. Commission members agreed by consensus.

Bruce said he had no additions to the staff report.

Rick Lee, the applicant, said he had worked closely with Bruce in redesigning the plan, which had now been redrawn three times. In addition to the narrative he supplied with the application, he noted that additional windows had been added to the sides of the structure, which can be seen from Linville Road. He said the earlier version of the plan showed no windows on one side of the house and only one window on the other side.

Ruch asked about samples, and Lee described the sample materials displayed for the Commission. Schneider asked if shake shingles, as shown on the rendering, would be used. Lee said he would be glad to use shake, but had been unable to find them made of cementous siding. He said he thought lap siding blended in better in the Historic District.

Woolf asked what material would be used for the shutters, and Lee said it was cedar. He added that the shutter width would appear to cover the entire window if it were closed.

Schneider said the redrawn design was hugely improved as far as conforming to the Design Guidelines, and Ruch agreed. She noted that there should be variety in historic designs, and there was no need to copy them. She cited page 48 under A. General Guidelines, items 1 and 2.

Schneider asked for comments on the landscaping, noting that it appears to meet the recommendations per the staff report. She also noted that seven mature trees would be lost. Lee said that was the same number that would have been cut down per the previous application. He said no additional trees would be lost.

Schneider said she thought moving the placement of the garage and including a porch with Craftsman columns was a lovely addition. She said the change adds to the architectural details, as mentioned in the Design Guidelines, and it gives the house more balance. She cited page 41 of the Design Guidelines under C. Residential Driveways and Parking, item d, which says parking should be located behind houses or as unobtrusively as possible in side yards.

Shoenfeld said she had no issues with this plan.

Schneider asked if there were any comments on shake versus lap siding. Lee said he would prefer to use siding, but he could go either way. Kubly and Woolf said they had no concerns either way. Schneider said lap siding may be more consistent with the Historic District, but shake seemed to add something. Ruch said it adds variety; although lap siding was appropriate, it would add variety as cited on page 51, item 3. She said she liked the idea of shake to add visual interest, but lap is appropriate. Schneider agreed.

Schneider noted the typo in the staff report and said the roof slope was 8/12 and 10/12. She said she appreciated that the window coverage had been increased to be within the percentage preferred, and noted that the new front entrance is larger. Kubly said the larger entrance met the requirement on page 52, Section G, item 2.

Schneider said the design elements added to create a Craftsman-like design were very helpful, and the tapered porch columns are particularly appropriate. Although Craftsman homes do not usually have shutters, Schneider said the ones here look appropriate with the design. She said the staff report notes each of the sections the Commission had discussed, and she thought the Commission could adopt it as the findings of fact. She said it could also note that shake shingles would add variety and interest.

**Paul Woolf** made a **motion** to adopt the staff report as the findings of fact with the roof pitch correction and that the proposed shake shingles could add visual interest and were compatible with the Design Guidelines per Section E, item 3, on pages 50-51. **Kristin Kubly** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**Debbie Shoenfeld** made a **motion** to approve COA-16-07 to allow for construction a new, single-family residence located at 8422 Linville Road in Oak Ridge Township, Guilford County Tax Parcel #0222373, zoned RS-40, Historic District Overlay Zone, owned by Johnson & Lee, LLC. The scope of the work is to be as described in the COA application dated May 24, 2016, and as described by the applicant in the presentation and responses to the Historic Preservation Commission during its meeting on June 8, 2016, using drawings, materials, samples and colors as presented to the Commission. **Paul Woolf** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**C. COA-16-08.** Gary and Myra Blackburn request approval to install balustrades atop existing porch roofs and install seven canvas awnings. The property is located at 2345 Oak Ridge Road in Oak Ridge Township. It is Guilford County Tax Parcel #0163171, is zoned RS-30, Scenic Corridor Overlay, Historic District Overlay, and is owned by Gary and Myra Blackburn.

Schneider asked to confirm the eligibility of the application and that it falls within the scope of the Design Guidelines; the Commission agreed by consensus.

Bruce noted no addition to the staff report.

Schneider said although this project had been submitted for a Historic Heritage Grant, it must receive a COA in order to receive the grant.

Gary Blackburn said the project was something he and his wife had wanted to do for a long time after running across a photo of the house, which was built in 1933. He said the photo was taken around 1936, and it showed the original balustrades and awnings on the house when it was built. He said the project was not inexpensive, and something they had not felt they could spend the money on before now. He said he was excited about the project.

Schneider asked for initial questions, and said the project was exciting because it was replacing something original that had later been removed.

Woolf commented that awnings were very popular in the years when the house was built.

Schneider said the balustrades were very important, and said a member of the grant review committee had called them “the icing on the cake.” She said the staff report had cited the section under Shutters and Awnings on page 28-29 of the Design Guidelines. She noted that the Guidelines say those details should closely match the originals in material, scale, character and appearance.

Kubly pointed out that the same section of the Guidelines said awnings were only found on commercial buildings in the Historic District, but said she did not take that to mean they could not be on residences. Schneider said she thought the Guidelines were saying awnings should not be added to a house that did not traditionally have them. She noted the section of page 30 of the Design Guidelines that refers to porches, balconies and other outdoor structures. She said she thought this project was preserving architectural elements by restoring them. She said she thought the case was covered in the staff report.

**Ann Schneider** made a **motion** to adopt the staff report as the findings of fact. **Paul Woolf** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**Debbie Shoenfeld** made a **motion** to approve COA-16-08 to allow for repair/replacement or restoration of balustrades atop porch roofs to match original 1933 construction and to install seven canvas awnings as shown in the 1936 photo. The property is located at 2345 Oak Ridge Road in Oak Ridge Township, Guilford County Tax Parcel #0163171, zoned RS-30, Scenic Corridor Overlay, Historic District Overlay, and owned by Gary and Myra Blackburn. The scope of work is to be as described in the COA application dated May 27, 2016, and as described in the applicant’s presentation and responses to the Historic Preservation Commission at its meeting on June 8, 2016, using drawings, materials, samples and photos as presented to the Commission. **Paul Woolf** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**D. COA-16-09.** Oak Ridge Military Academy requests approval to perform renovations to the east, south, and west porticos at Alumni Hall. The property is located at 2317 Oak Ridge Road in Oak Ridge Township. The property is Guilford County Tax Parcel #0162858, is zoned PI, Scenic Corridor Overlay, Historic District Overlay, and is owned by Oak Ridge Foundation Inc.

Schneider verified that the Commission members felt the COA request was within the scope of the Design Guidelines and that sufficient information had been supplied for the Commission to make a decision.

Bruce said that in the staff report, he had noted that the details regarding the light fixtures had not been submitted. He said there were also no details on signage, although he believed the intent was for plaque signage. He stated that wall signage might require a COA. Schneider said she had received an email from John Haynes, president of ORMA, regarding the signage. She asked if a COA would be required if the wall signage were flush mounted and almost not visible from the right of way; Bruce said his opinion was yes. Schneider said if the COA is approved, the Commission can stipulate that approval of lighting fixtures and signage is required.

John Haynes addressed the Commission, saying he appreciated Schneider’s assistance since he is new to the process, but added that he looked forward to

working with the Commission for many years to come. Haynes said he was not sure about any early photos of Alumni Hall's signage, saying he could not find any that showed such signage on the building originally, nor did he know what it might have been constructed of. Schneider said it appeared the signage on the building now was just on a piece of board, which could be removed. Haynes said something nicer could be installed, and Schneider reminded him that any changes would need to be approved by the Commission.

Ruch said she could not tell that any signage was on the building from the early photos submitted. She asked if other old photos might be available to see what was there originally so it could be matched.

Haynes said he could tell that the upper portion of the portico was painted a dark color, but he had been unable to find any photos that showed any building signage. Schneider asked Haynes if there was any interest in again painting that portion of the building dark. Haynes said he thought there were a couple of things he would like to explore further. He said the columns on the west portico had been changed as well, and that they originally matched the front columns. He said he would like to explore returning those columns to more of their original look. He said they were also trying to remove some of the more modern additions, such as a speaker which had been installed in the south portico. Schneider noted that returning the west portico columns to their original style was not included in the quote submitted with the application. If that were going to be done, she said the Commission would likely need to approve the details of the work. She asked Bruce if that could be approved at staff level; Bruce said yes, since any maintenance or restoration work that involves less than 50 square feet of area can be approved by staff.

Ruch asked about the current lighting fixture under the sign, and whether it was black and modern in appearance. Haynes said yes, but he would like to consider something perhaps more tasteful and not mounted directly on the portico. Ruch asked if he meant perhaps a porch pendant light, and Haynes said yes. Schneider said there did not appear to have been a hanging fixture on the porch, and Haynes said Jim Savage, curator of the museum at ORMA, was looking for additional photos of the building. Shoenfeld asked if it was safe to say that the Commission would not be looking at lighting at this time, and Schneider said yes; she said Haynes might not have to present a porch light fixture at a Commission meeting, as it might be possible for the Commission to review the light fixture by email. She asked Bruce if that was appropriate, and Bruce said he was unsure of the answer at this time.

Ruch asked for the meaning of the term "back primed" as it relates to the wood soffit boxing on the south portico in the application. Shoenfeld asked if it meant priming the wood on both sides, and Haynes said he thought it meant the wood would be primed before it was painted. Town Clerk Sandra Smith said it meant priming the back of the wood to further protect it from rot.

Schneider said she thought the project conforms to the Design Guidelines because it is restoring important parts of the building, sometimes using the original design elements.

Regarding the painting of the concrete, Shoenfeld asked Haynes if he knew whether it was painted originally. Haynes said he did not know.

Schneider said the email from Haynes included in the packet said all materials would be matched to what they are currently. She said part of the challenge with the project is getting a lift up to the top of the porches so the materials could be examined more closely. She said the contractor that has been chosen has a lot of experience restoring historic buildings and is a member of Preservation North Carolina.

**Paul Woolf** made a **motion** to adopt the staff report as the findings of fact with the clarification as stated in the email in the packet which said that the existing paint and materials would be matched as closely as possible, and that lighting and signage be reviewed and approved by the Commission prior to installation. **Caroline Ruch** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**Debbie Shoenfeld** made a **motion** to approve COA-16-09 to allow for repair/renovations to the east, south, and west porticos at Alumni Hall, located at 2317 Oak Ridge Road in Oak Ridge Township, Guilford County Tax Parcel #0162858, zoned PI, Scenic Corridor Overlay and Historic District Overlay, owned by Oak Ridge Foundation Inc. The scope of the work is to be as described in the COA application dated May 27, 2016, and as described in the applicant's presentation and responses to the Historic Preservation Commission at its meeting on June 8, 2016, using materials, photos and emails as presented to the Commission. The COA approval is conditional with the following stipulation: That the evaluation and approval of light fixtures and signage be done prior to installation. **Paul Woolf** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

## 6. COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATES

### A. Grant program.

Schneider reported that the Grant Review Panel met on May 16; the panel was made up of:

- Benjamin Briggs, executive director of Preservation Greensboro,
- David Hoggard, a materials specialist and owner of Double Hung, and
- Lisa Tolbert, associate professor of architectural history at UNCG.

The panel reported being impressed with the quality and comprehensiveness of each of the grant applications received, and recommended funding a portion of each of the four projects. Schneider said the grant subcommittee had agreed, and although that would be \$250 more than the grant funds actually budgeted, that amount could be moved from another portion of the Commission's budget so that there would be no net budget increase. The grant projects and amounts recommended for funding are:

- \$2,000 to Oak Ridge Military Academy for restoration of porticos on Alumni Hall (2317 Oak Ridge Road)
- \$2,000 to Gary and Myra Blackburn for restoration of balustrades and awnings on the R.P. Larkins house (2345 Oak Ridge Road)

- \$1,000 to Roy Nydorf and Theresa Hammond to repair/replace broken shutters on the Sanders-Blaylock house (1815 Oak Ridge Road)
- \$250 to Barry and Susie Westmoreland to replace the front portion of the roof on the J.L. Sawyer house (2421 Oak Ridge Road)

**Caroline Ruch** made a **motion** to approve the grants as recommended by the subcommittee. **Kristin Kubly** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

Schneider said grant approval letters will be sent out to the recipients soon, and information on the grant awards will also be distributed for publication. Signs will also be constructed to be placed at each site that say the work on each project was partially funded by a Town grant.

**B. Possible meeting date change.**

**Ann Schneider** made a **motion** to change the July HPC meeting from July 13 to July 20. **Debbie Shoenfeld** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**Ann Schneider** made a **motion** to change future HPC meetings from the second to the third Wednesday of each month. **Paul Woolf** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**7. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

None

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

**Debbie Shoenfeld** made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. **Kristin Kubly** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

Respectfully Submitted:



Sandra B. Smith, NCCMC, CMC  
Town Clerk



Ann Schneider  
Chair