



**OAK RIDGE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
APRIL 17, 2019 – 7:00 P.M.  
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present**

Debbie Shoenfeld, Chair  
Caroline Ruch, Vice Chair  
Kristin Kubly  
Brian Hall  
Barbara Engel, Alternate (Sitting)

**Staff Present**

Sean Taylor, Planning Director  
Sandra Smith, Town Clerk

**Members Absent**

Paul Woolf

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Debbie Shoenfeld called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She welcomed meeting attendees, then explained the purpose of the Commission, which is to promote restoration and preservation of historic structures in Oak Ridge. The review is to see that any proposed changes are compatible with the special character of the Historic District.

**2. APPROVE AGENDA**

*Barbara Engel made a motion to approve the meeting agenda as amended after switching the order of the items under New Business. Kristin Kubly seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

**3. APPROVE MINUTES**

*Kristin Kubly made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2019 meeting. Barbara Engel seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

**4. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Town Council report.**

Shoenfeld gave the Commission's report at the March Town Council meeting and said she would also give the report at the May meeting.

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

Planning Director Sean Taylor reported that he had approved the landscaping plan submitted for Brian Hall's property.

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

COAs outstanding were COA-19-01 for Domino's signage, COA-19-02 for Meredith and Lionel Shoffner's house, COA-19-03 for Philip Cooke/Rio Grande's building elevation changes, COA-19-04 for Verizon signage and COA-18-06 for Maple Glade at Oak Ridge Military Academy.

**D. Design review meetings.**

None

**E. Historic District violations.**

None

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

Shoenfeld explained that the Commission would be following quasi-judicial procedures based on admitted evidence and sworn testimony. The suitability of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is based on conformance with the Design Guidelines and compatibility with the Historic District.

Shoenfeld said the Commission can only consider the size, scale, materials and other criteria described in the Design Guidelines. The Guidelines are intentionally broad to allow applicants a broad pathway toward compliance; the goal is to ensure that approved projects are compatible with the District and surrounding buildings. The Commission may approve, deny or continue consideration of a COA request, but a decision must be made within 180 days of the date the application was submitted. Appeals are heard by Oak Ridge Board of Adjustment; appeals from the Board of Adjustment are heard by Guilford County Superior Court.

Shoenfeld explained that Commission members should not engage in discussions with applicants regarding past or current COA applications and should not discuss the Commission's proceedings except with the Chair or the Town staff.

Shoenfeld 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 with COA-19-06. Barbara Engel, Kristin Kubly, Caroline Ruch and Shoenfeld each individually indicated that they had no conflicts of interest. Kubly disclosed that she also lived on Billet Road, but said she had not met the Kuzmicks. Brian Hall said the Kuzmicks are also his neighbors, and said he had told them that they needed to talk with Planning Director Taylor.

*Kristin Kubly made a motion to revise the agenda to hear COA-19-06 before COA-19-05. Brian Hall seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

- A. COA-19-06:** Matt and Brooke Kuzmick request a COA to replace a porch at 5918 Billet Road, Oak Ridge, NC. The property is Guilford County Tax Parcel 165483, Oak Ridge Township, zoned RS-40, SC (Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone), Historic District Overlay Zone. It is owned by Matt and Brooke Kuzmick.

Shoenfeld read the property description into the record and asked Commission members if they felt the project falls within the Design Guidelines and whether sufficient information has been submitted for the Commission to make a decision. Commission members Engel, Kubly, Ruch, Hall and Shoenfeld all individually answered yes to the questions.

Shoenfeld asked Planning Director Sean Taylor if he wished to present the staff report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes. Taylor said the report stands as is, but added that new information had been added by the applicant and that the iron railing shown on the porch would be removed. He said part of the information added to the packet includes better renderings of the elevation of the porch roof.

Matt and Brooke Kuzmick came forward and were sworn in. Matt Kuzmick spoke, saying they had purchased the home a year or so previously, but they felt the house did not have a lot of character in front. They proposed removing the porch posts, which had some dry rot, and adding a porch across the front of the house with a total of six columns and a roof pitch with a 4/12 slope. The six columns would match the existing columns as closely as possible. Brooke Kuzmick said Taylor had suggested not using PVC posts, so the posts would be made of wood.

Caroline Ruch said that the area just under the porch roof on the submitted application appeared to have arches, and asked if that was correct. Matt Kuzmick said although the illustration had arches, they had decided that they would be OK without them. Kuzmick added that the windows on the front of the house are not centered on one side, something that would be evident if there were arches between the posts.

Shoenfeld asked about the south side of the porch away from the garage and whether it would have a partial gable there. Matt Kuzmick said yes, and it would be made of the same material as the dormers.

Kubly pointed out that the roof in the first illustration submitted looked flat while the illustration added to the packet at the meeting appeared sloped. Taylor said the porch roof would have a 4/12 slope. Brian Hall asked if the roof would be covered with asphalt shingles, and Matt Kuzmick said yes.

Shoenfeld said the Commission had the opportunity to review the materials but the applicants had submitted a new materials list at the meeting. She asked if the porch posts would now be wood instead of PVC, and Matt Kuzmick said yes. Taylor suggested the new materials list be incorporated into the staff report, and Shoenfeld agreed.

Shoenfeld asked the Commission to cite the applicable parts of the Design Guidelines when discussing the findings of fact. She referred to page 29, section A.7. regarding porches. She said a lot of the Guidelines in that section apply to historic structures and were not applicable in this case since this is a non-contributing structure. She added that the landscaping plan was included in the new packet, and she asked if any large trees would be removed. Brooke Kuzmick said they had removed a crape myrtle before they realized the house was in the Historic District. In response to a question, she said the tree was not 8 inches in diameter. Hall pointed out that they would be planting two crape myrtles along with other landscaping shown. Taylor showed the Commission a Google images map, which showed that the landscaping was somewhat overgrown and that the crape myrtle appeared to be planted very close to the foundation. Matt Kuzmick explained that an exterminator had recommended they remove the large crape myrtle because pests were entering the house as a result of it. Shoenfeld asked the Kuzmicks if they were familiar with recommended landscaping in the Historic District, such as there should not be large mulched areas. Brooke Kuzmick said they had read the Design Guidelines after they realized they were living in the Historic District.

Shoenfeld said she felt the Design Guidelines were being met. For findings of fact, she stated that there would be no arch in the new porch construction. Ruch said the information submitted at the meeting by the applicant would become part of the staff report. Shoenfeld said the roof pitch would have a 4/12 slope. Kubly pointed out item c. on page 29, which said to replace rather than permanently remove unrestorable deteriorated portions of a porch, since the posts were rotting.

*Caroline Ruch made a motion to adopt the staff report as part of the findings of fact and to add the newly submitted materials list to it. She stated that there would also be no arches on the porch and that the roof pitch would have a 4/12 slope. The Design Guideline on page 29, item c., which says to replace rather than permanently remove unrestorable deteriorated portions of a porch had been met by the applicant. Kristin Kubly seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.*

*Caroline Ruch made a motion to approve COA-19-06 to allow for construction of a porch at 5918 Billet Road, Oak Ridge, NC, Guilford County Tax Parcel 165483, Oak Ridge Township, zoned RS-40, SC (Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone), Historic District Overlay Zone, and owned by Matt and Brooke Kuzmick. The scope of the work is to be as described in the COA application dated April 1, 2019, and as described in the applicant's presentation and responses to the Historic Preservation Commission at its meeting on April 17, 2019 using drawings, materials, samples, photos and colors as presented to the Commission. Brian Hall seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

Shoenfeld congratulated the applicant.

- B. Rezoning Case #RZ-19-01:** PI (Public and Institutional) to CU-GB (Conditional Use-General Business). The property is located on the south side of Oak Ridge Road, approximately 350 feet east of the intersection with NC Highway 68, in Oak Ridge Township. It is Guilford County Tax Parcels #0166219, 0166213, and 0166212, consisting of approximately 1.93 acres, and is located in the Greensboro (GW-III) Watershed, Historic District Overlay Zone and Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone. The property is owned by Oak Ridge Foundation Inc.

Shoenfeld read the property description into the record and stated that the staff report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes, showed lists of what could and could not be done with the property. She explained that the case was not a Certificate of Appropriateness, but because the property is in the Historic District, the Commission needed to make a recommendation to the Planning & Zoning Board. Shoenfeld said she was excited about the proposed rezoning because Oak Ridge Foundation had agreed to grant a historic preservation easement, which would protect the historic structures, to Preservation Greensboro.

Planning Director Taylor said the rezoning was initiated because a flight school wanted to locate in the former Post Office building. He said the business, which uses computer-generated images to simulate flying, was something like an arcade but that the users would be spending \$30-\$50 instead of quarters. He said the business is considered commercial, which does not meet the current PI zoning. He said the applicant agreed to a zoning condition which includes a preservation easement that says they cannot demolish the historic structures on campus. Taylor said the signing of the historic preservation easement agreement may not be completed until after the rezoning has been voted on by Town Council because he is working on it with attorneys.

*After discussion, Caroline Ruch made a motion to recommend approval of the rezoning request. Brian Hall seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

## 6. COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATES

- A. **2018-19 budget update.** Shoenfeld said the Commission was currently considerably under budget.
- B. **Grant program.** Shoenfeld said she had emailed Steve Wilson about the outstanding grant for Maple Glade and Rev. Marcia Isley regarding the outstanding grant for St. James AME Church. Three grant applications had been submitted for the 2019-20 grant year.
- C. **Historic inventory/Markers.** Shoenfeld said Taylor was still working on reformatting the Design Guidelines.
- D. **Training.** All Commission members had signed up for an upcoming quasi-judicial training session.
- E. **Communications outreach.** Shoenfeld said there is enough money for another ad if the Commission decides to run one.
- F. **Display case.** No report
- G. **Coffee table book.** Shoenfeld said she was trying to negotiate a better price for printing, and several people were doing research and had committed to writing articles.

7. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

None

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

*Caroline Ruch made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 p.m. Kristin Kubly seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

Respectfully Submitted:

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Sandra B. Smith, CMC, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

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Deborah D. Shoenfeld  
Chair