



**OAK RIDGE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
NOVEMBER 16, 2016 – 7:00 P.M.
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Members Present

Ann Schneider, Chair
Debbie Shoenfeld, Vice Chair
Mac McAtee
Caroline Ruch
Kristin Kubly
Paul Woolf, Alternate (Not sitting)

Staff Present

Bill Bruce, Planning Director
Sandra Smith, Town Clerk

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

Debbie Shoenfeld made a **motion** to approve the meeting agenda with the following changes:

- Remove COA CASE # 16-12, which was withdrawn
- Consider COA CASE # 16-13 without signage (to be submitted later)
- Reorder items under Committee Reports/Updates
- Add Design Review Consultation under Old Business
- Remove Approval of September 21, 2016 Meeting Minutes

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

3. APPROVE MINUTES

Debbie Shoenfeld made a **motion** to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2016 and July 20, 2016 meetings. **Mac McAtee** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

4. OLD BUSINESS

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

B. COAs reviewed/ approved at staff level.

A COA was approved to replace a backyard fence at 8503 Merriman Farm Road.

C. COAs approved but not completed.

COAs not completed at this time include the commercial building at Marketplace Shopping Center, and the houses in Oak Ridge Plantation and Barrow Place.

D. Violations

The only pending violation case was scheduled to be heard at that night's meeting.

E. Design Review Consultation.

Schneider reported that she, Shoenfeld, Planning Director Bill Bruce and Town Clerk Sandra Smith had sat in on a design review consultation with Pugh Oil, who was proposing a prototype building for a quick oil change facility on the remaining outparcel at Marketplace Shopping Center. Schneider said it was a productive meeting.

5. NEW BUSINESS

COA CASE # 16-13: Tom Wright requested approval for painting and repairs to a building exterior and fence. The property is located at 2103 Oak Ridge Road in Oak Ridge Township, is Guilford County Tax Parcel #0165108, and is zoned LB, Historic District Overlay Zone, Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone. It is owned by William S. Newman and Dana Newman Sigmon.

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 asked the Commission to cite the applicable sections of the Design Guidelines in their deliberations. Schneider said 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 an application was submitted.

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 Schneider indicated they had no conflicts. Shoenfeld said she had none but disclosed that she had a discussion with the applicant, and said she had referred him to Planning Director Bruce.

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 Sandra Smith swore in Tom Wright and Richard Lamb.

Wright said Oak Ridge resident and artist Leanne Pizio would help with the signage, and he hoped to submit that information in time for the next meeting. He said he is currently requesting permission to paint the front and sides of the building white. The trim at the top of the building, around the windows and doors would be black. He said they want to repair the fence and paint it the same color white as the building. He said they had removed a lot of bamboo and trash from the property and cleaned and remodeled the inside of the building.

McAtee asked if the sign that belonged to the former tenant and was in the photo submitted was still on the building, and Wright said no.

Schneider said she was thrilled the project was being undertaken, and she thought the property would be more of an asset to the Historic District than it has been in the past.

McAtee asked why the fence would be painted. Wright said they did not want to remove the fence, but it did need repair. He said it is painted white now, and they have pressure washed it and replaced some boards; they intend to just paint it again.

Richard Lamb, Wright's business partner, said the building was originally a Shell station, and oftentimes their buildings from that era were painted black and white. He said several other things need to be done to the interior of the building, but he and Wright had carefully considered what they planned to do. Schneider said she had not known that the color choices were based on historical research. Lamb said Shell stations were often red and white or black and white, while Gulf stations were orange and white. Wright said they had decided on black and white because it would blend with the colors of the signage they had in mind, which would be black, white and gold.

Lamb said due to the type of business he and Wright run (small engine repair), they sometimes make noise and they also have traffic in and out of the building. He said the fence would help screen some of that. He said they had thought about tearing it down, but it was not in bad shape and had simply been neglected.

McAtee asked if the art work on the cement pad in front of the building was going to be taken down, and Schneider said it had already been removed. Lamb said the original block is still there and that was where the building's signage had originally been erected. He said the block has electrical wires in it and he did not know if the property owner wanted it removed. Wright said they would likely paint it black or white to match the fence or the building.

Ruch reiterated that she appreciated Wright and Lamb cleaning up the property. Wright said both were previously in the military and understood things being cleaned up and squared away.

Schneider noted the staff report should be included in the findings of fact.

Debbie Shoenfeld made a **motion** to approve the staff report as the findings of fact with the exception of the area regarding signage, since that was not part of this COA. Schneider added a friendly amendment that the paint, colors, fences and walls were being addressed. **Mac McAtee** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

Debbie Shoenfeld made a **motion** to approve Certificate of Appropriateness 16-13 to allow for painting of the exterior structure and painting of the side yard fence. The property is located at 2103 Oak Ridge Road in Oak Ridge Township, being Guilford County Tax Parcel #0165108, zoned LB, Historic District Overlay Zone, Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone, and 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 October 24, 2016, and as described in the applicant's presentation and responses to the Historic Preservation Commission during its meeting on November 16, 2016, using drawings, materials, samples, photos and colors as presented to the Commission. **Mac McAtee** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

The Commission then had a brief discussion about a new form the Town Attorney had asked to be filled out for COAs. Schneider said it would be completed and signed later and would be retained in the files.

Ann Schneider made a motion to excuse Caroline Ruch from the meeting. **Kristin Kubly** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

Ann Schneider made a motion for Paul Woolf to be seated to take Ruch's place. **Kristin Kubly** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATES

A. 2016-17 budget update.

Schneider said the advertising budget for the year had already been spent, and another ad will likely be scheduled for the spring. She said the money could be moved from another line item.

B. Grant program.

Schneider reported that the work at the Larkins house, which belongs to Gary and Myra Blackburn, is complete and the grant reimbursement is ready to be paid. Work on the 2017 grants will be discussed early in the new year.

C. Communication outreach.

Schneider said ads for the most recent historic marker dedication ad had run in the Northwest Observer and had prompted a question from a reader about the Donnell

rock house and whether it was eligible for a marker. She said the question gave her the opportunity to explain the criteria for a historic marker.

Schneider said she had recently spoken to the Merchants of Oak Ridge and focused primarily on what is historic about the Historic District.

D. Historic Inventory/Markers.

Shoenfeld said she had checked on the arrival date for the Benbow/Stafford Farm marker, but had not received a response yet.

Schneider said along with the form discussed earlier in the meeting, the Town Attorney had some suggestions to make regarding the Commission's Rules of Procedure. The Commission discussed other possible revisions including the fact that the Commission follows quasi-judicial procedure in its hearings, information about the Design Review Advisory Committee and on what would cause a Commission member to be dismissed, and expanding the details on how Commission members should uphold the Design Guidelines.

E. Administrative Updates.

Schneider also described a potential project that she has discussed with the Town attorney, staff, and a potential consultant to update the Design Guidelines with visuals such as photographs of contributing structures, charts, and other images that would be helpful to readers. The Commission also discussed whether there were any other updates that should be made at the same time. Schneider stated at this time she was not proposing any significant changes to the Design Guidelines and that, in any case, such changes to the Design Guidelines would require extensive community input. Schneider recommended that Commission members read the books by Bill Schmickle, which discuss the importance of getting buy-in for the Historic District from citizens. She asked Commission members to send her any minor updates or visual additions that they believe should be added to the the Design Guidelines.

F. 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. Suggestions included Historic District tours, an outdoor reception and creating a video. Schneider said she would like to create a subcommittee to work on the event.

G. Display case.

No report

H. Training.

None scheduled at this time

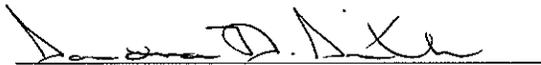
7. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

None

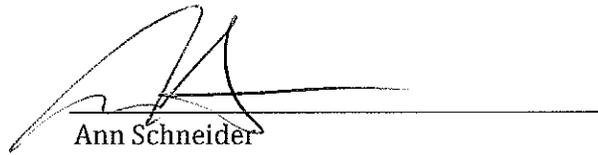
8. **ADJOURNMENT**

Kristin Kubly made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m. **Mac McAtee** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

Respectfully Submitted:



Sandra B. Smith, NCCMC, CMC
Town Clerk



Ann Schneider
Chair