



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

MINUTES

Members Present

Debbie Shoenfeld, Chair
Kristin Kubly
Barbara Engel, Alternate (Sitting)

Staff Present

Sean Taylor, Planning Director
Sandra Smith, Town Clerk

Members Absent

Caroline Ruch, Vice Chair
Brian Hall
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 ensure that any proposed changes are compatible with the special character of the Historic District.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Kristin Kubly made a motion to approve the amended meeting agenda to include discussion of a coffee table book as item 6.I. Barbara Engel seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (3-0).

3. APPROVE MINUTES

Kristin Kubly moved to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2019 regular meeting. Barbara Engel seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (3-0).

4. OLD BUSINESS

A. Town Council report.

Shoenfeld gave the Commission's report at the July Town Council meeting, but she said she would not be able to attend the August meeting and would be looking for a volunteer to handle it.

B. COAs reviewed/ approved at staff level.

None

C. COAs approved but not completed.

COAs outstanding are:

- COA-19-01 for Domino's signage
- COA-19-02 for Lionel & Meredith Shoffner's house
- COA-19-03 for Philip Cooke/Rio Grande's building elevation changes
- COA-19-03A for Philip Cooke/Rio Grande's outdoor patio and front doors
- COA-19-05 for Gary and Myra Blackburn's fencing
- COA-19-06 Matt and Brooke Kuzmick's new front porch
- COA-19-07 for Drew Donnell's project to replace the roof and repair the skylight

D. Design review meetings.

Shoenfeld reported that she, Caroline Ruch and Planning Director Sean Taylor had held a design review meeting with Stanley Sacks for his proposed new house on Billet Road. They also reviewed the Rio Grande application for quantity and signs.

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 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 either of the COAs to be discussed. Engel, Kubly and Shoenfeld each individually indicated that they had no conflicts of interest. Shoenfeld reported that she, Caroline Ruch and Planning Director Sean Taylor had held a design review meeting for COA-19-08 with Stanley Sacks for the proposed new house on Billet Road. Shoenfeld, Ruch and Taylor had also reviewed the Rio Grande signage at the meeting. Kubly said she lived on Billet Road but had not discussed the Sacks' COA request with anyone.

- A. COA-19-03B:** Philip Cooke requests a COA for signage at 2213 Oak Ridge Road, Oak Ridge, NC. The property is Guilford County Tax Parcel 166226, Oak Ridge Township, zoned CU-SC (Conditional Use-Shopping Center), SC (Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone), Historic District Overlay Zone. It is owned by Cooke Outparcel E, LLC.

Shoenfeld read the property description into the record. Shoenfeld the applicant was not present and that the Commission did not generally review cases unless the applicant is at the meeting. She said that in lieu of the fact that the applicant has submitted a request for a total of seven signs or displays that could reasonably be interpreted as a sign and knowing that the Historic District Design Guidelines specifically state that, as a rule, the number of signs should be limited to one per parcel, she thought it would be in the best interest of the applicant to continue the COA until the following month in order to have a design review meeting.

Debbie Shoenfeld made a motion to continue the Philip Cooke COA request to the August 21, 2019 meeting. Barbara Engel seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (3-0).

- B. COA-19-08:** Stanley and Denise Sacks request a COA for construction of a new single-family residence at 5915 Billet Road, Oak Ridge, NC. The property is Guilford County Tax Parcel 165528, Oak Ridge Township, zoned AG/RS-40 (Agricultural/Residential-minimum 40,000 sq. ft. lots), SC (Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone), Historic District Overlay Zone. It is owned by Stanley R. and Denise R. Sacks.

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 and Shoenfeld all individually answered yes to the questions.

Shoenfeld asked Planning Director Taylor if he wished to present the staff report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes. Taylor said that the applicant had now provided a landscape plan, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes. Shoenfeld asked Commission members if they thought they had adequate time to review the landscape plan, and they agreed by consensus that they did. Taylor said, in speaking with the applicants, that their goal is to keep the landscaping simple so it fits within the farm setting.

Shoenfeld welcomed the applicants and invited them to come forward, be sworn in, and provide a brief explanation of the project. Denise Sacks came to the podium and was sworn in. She said she and her husband had lived in the area for almost 30

years and she had recently retired from ownership of Oak Ridge Animal Hospital. She said, with the Commission's approval, they would like to build a single-family residence on their farm property. She said they currently owned a residence at 604 Stafford Point Court in Oak Ridge, which they hoped to put on the market as soon as they received approval to build the new house.

Shoenfeld said the packet included illustrations submitted and that the Sacks had decided to have a standing seam roof. Denise Sacks pointed out the roof color from among the samples submitted. Shoenfeld asked if the stone shown would be placed on the garage as well as on the columns and across roughly the bottom quarter of the building, and Sacks said yes. Shoenfeld asked about the windows, and Sacks said that the windows would be vinyl-clad like the sample she had submitted, but that they would have a prairie-style grid. Shoenfeld said the cut sheet of the garage door was included in the packet as well as a cut sheet for the style of windows. Shoenfeld said the proposed location for the house was shown in the plot plan in the packet. Shoenfeld asked if the submitted illustrations would be a true idea of how the house would look except for the color of the roof, the windows and the doors, and Sacks said yes. Shoenfeld asked about the stone that would be used, and Sacks pointed out the stone sample and said she had found it at Piedmont Stone and that it was actually a mixture of two types of stone. She said she had chosen the stone colors specifically to compliment the white color of the house as well as the black windows.

Kubly asked if the open area along Oak Ridge Road would remain open for the horses, and Denise Sacks said yes because that was what she loved about the property. She said the horses were the first priority for her, and the second was to keep the nine existing willow oaks that had been planted along the road. She said no one would get within the drip line or the roots of the trees or they would have her to contend with. She said the willow oaks had been on the property for a long time and she intended to keep them as long as she owned the property. She said the trees were very healthy and an arborist had inspected them, thinned them out some and removed some dead portions, and they were doing nicely and thriving.

Shoenfeld said she was impressed with the packet and the application and everything had been submitted that the Commission needed to know about. She said the landscaping plan was fine, and that the biggest thing the Commission looked for was that the applicant fronts the foundation with plantings that are congruent with the Historic District, and it looked as though that was what the Sacks planned.

Shoenfeld asked if the Commission members had any questions or if they felt the application did not meet a specific guideline. Kubly asked if the applicants were going to have a pool like what was shown in the rendering, and Sacks said no. She said she did not want the upkeep of a pool, and they would continue to use part of the back pasture for their horses if they needed to be separated so they were trying to maintain as much of the existing pasture as possible.

Shoenfeld said she thought the house met all the required Design Guidelines. She asked the Commission members to cite the applicable sections of the Design Guidelines and said they should all help keep track of the findings of fact so they could be included in the motion. She suggested the Design Guidelines be used as a

guide for discussion. She asked if there were any other areas of the guidelines that the Commission wanted to discuss, and Kubly and Engel said no.

To summarize the findings of fact, Shoenfeld said that the project meets the required Design Guidelines.

Kristin Kubly made a motion to accept the staff report as part of the findings of fact and that the project meets all the historic guidelines. Barbara Engel seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (3-0).

Kristin Kubly moved to approve COA-19-08 for construction of a new, single-family residence at 5915 Billet Road, Oak Ridge, NC. Barbara Engel seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (3-0).

Commission members congratulated the applicant, and Shoenfeld said they could not wait to see the new house.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATES

- A. **2018-19 budget update.** The budget showed the end-of-year figures as of June 30, 2019.
- B. **2019-20 budget.** The 2019-20 budget year began July 1. Shoenfeld said no funds had been spent yet.
- C. **Grant program.** Shoenfeld said that St. James AME Church had completed its 2018-19 grant requirements and its reimbursement check was sent. She also said that all grant award letters for the 2019-20 fiscal year had been sent to recipients.
- D. **Historic inventory/Markers.** Shoenfeld said no markers were funded for 2019-20.
- E. **Training.** Taylor sent out information about the Preservation NC annual conference in Raleigh in November.
- F. **Communications outreach.** No report
- G. **Display case.** No report
- H. **Coffee table book.** Shoenfeld said she thought this project would be approved in the future, but not for this fiscal year. She said she would contact Shawn Rogers, a local historian, for a proposal on a historic survey of properties outside the Historic District.
- I. **Heritage Day.** Shoenfeld said the annual event would be held this year on September 28. She said she would not be able to attend, but she said volunteers would be needed to help with the Commission's booth.

7. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Martha Pittman, 8018 Fogleman Road, congratulated Commission members for the work done recently on St. James AME Church. Pittman introduced herself as a candidate for Town Council, and said she wanted to learn more about the Commission's work and she supported its mission.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Kristin Kubly moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m. Barbara Engel seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (3-0).

Respectfully Submitted:

Sandra B. Smith, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk/HPC Staff

Caroline Ruch
Vice Chair