

**Minutes of the
New Bern Historic Preservation Commission
December 5, 2007**

The New Bern Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) held its regular meeting on Wednesday, December 5, 2007, in City Hall Courtroom, 2nd Floor, 300 Pollock Street.

Members Present: Dr. Joe Klotz, Chair
Mrs. Sarah Afflerbach, Vice Chair
Ms. Diane Filipowicz
Mr. Jack Morton, Jr.
Mr. Rich Frye
Mr. Peter Adolph
Mr. Jay Heck
Mr. David Lancto

Members Excused: Mrs. Sadaf Hassan

Members Absent: NONE

Staff Present: Mrs. Annette Stone, AICP, City Planner
Mrs. Leigh Anne Friesen, AICP, Planner

The meeting was opened and roll call was taken. A quorum was reached. Chairman Klotz briefly discussed the function and qualifications of the Historic Preservation Commission and its members. Witnesses were sworn in.

Witnesses Sworn: Philippe Lafargue, Tim Silar, and others.

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the September 19th meeting. Commissioner Afflerbach moved to waive the reading of the minutes as submitted with a second by Commissioner Adolph. Motion carried. Commissioner Adolph moved to approve the minutes as submitted with a second by Commissioner Morton. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

- 1. Consider COA for 506 South Front Street, owned by PEC MGP LLC (Progress Energy), for demolition of a non-contributing structure.**

Staff Comments: Staff Mrs. Stone described the project briefly while a video of the property was shown. Building is not contributing to the District, c. 1968. She reminded the Commissioners that under the new Historic District demolition ordinance, they cannot delay the demolition of a non-contributing structure. However, they can attach any guideline-based conditions on the COA as necessary.

Applicant's Comments: Applicant Tim Silar (Silar Services, Inc.) has been hired by owner, Progress Energy, to clean up the environmental contamination at the site due to the former gas plant.

Public Comments: *Jerry Hobbins*, 229 New Street, inquired about the grade of the clean soil backfill.

Discussion by the Commission: Issues included appropriate uses for the site once vacant, new ownership, timeframe of the project, options for securing the property while being cleaned, future landscaping plans, and post-cleaning dirt grade requirements/options.

Findings of Fact: Motion by Commissioner Lancto, with second by Commissioner Morton, to find the application congruous with the Historic Preservation Guidelines, citing Section 15-427 Certificate of Appropriateness required; Section 15-429 Review Criteria, citing the following guidelines: "Archaeology", pages 68-69, guideline(s)#1, 2, 5, 6 and "Demolition of Buildings", pages 71-72, guideline(s)# 1 – 5.

Motion carried unanimously. During the discussion, the motion was amended to include the condition that once Tryon Palace HS&G assumes ownership of the property, they return to have their landscaping/parking plans reviewed by the Commission.

Statements of Reason: (1) Structure is non-contributing to the Historic District c. 1968; (2) Structure must be removed to conduct environmental remediation at the site; (3) Contaminated soil to be removed will be replaced with clean soil and backfilled to rough grade.

Condition(s):

- Create photo documentation of the historic resource prior to demolition per the guidelines.
- Donate any salvageable architectural features and building materials to the New Bern Preservation Foundation operates a salvage warehouse
- Avoid damaging any known archaeological resources.
- Once Tryon Palace HS&G assumes ownership of the property, they return to have their landscaping/parking plans reviewed by the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Lancto moved to issue the COA, with a second by Commissioner Adolph. The motion passed unanimously.

Miscellaneous Business

Staff Mrs. Stone introduced John Wood, Restoration Specialist with the Eastern State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). He discussed the SHPO pot of money that will fund this project, and congratulated the City for having been awarded several of these grants through the work of Staff Mrs. Stone. He then introduced Michelle Michael, the consultant who will be aiding the City update the Historic District guidelines.

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Ms. Michael briefed the Commission on the process ahead. She emphasized that the bulk of the input for the update will come from the Commission members and City residents, and noted that public meetings will be a part of the process. She mentioned to the Commission that she, too, is a Historic Preservation Commissioner in her own town, and understands a lot about their perspective. She then distributed and reviewed a draft Table of Contents (Exhibit A). In addition to obvious additions to the guidelines such as Outbuildings and Recreational Areas, Commissioners mentioned the importance of further incorporating the principles of the Urban Design Plan.

Due to stipulations of the grant funds, the project must be complete by August 30, 2008. She would like to establish a task force to begin work on the project, with a first meeting in January. She recommends current and former Historic Preservation Commissioners (suggested were Sarah Afflerbach, Jack Morton, Peter Adolph, Dean Knight, Tripp Eure), and members of citizens groups such as Historic Downtown Residents Association, Historic Riverside Neighborhood Association, and the Preservation Legal Action Team.

On a separate issue, Commissioner Lancto confirmed that Tuesday, December 11th was the Board of Aldermen meeting at which the 300 South Front Street Conditional Use Permit public hearing would be held. He suggested that the Commissioners draft a resolution re-affirming the Certificate of Appropriateness issued for the project on May 16, 2007. Diane Filipowicz agreed, and made a motion to approve such a resolution that in essence stated that the Commission found the project appropriate for the District, acting with full knowledge of the project, and stands behind the COA issued for the project. City Staff will draft the text for distribution to the Commission, and Chairman Klotz will sign it. Commissioner Lancto seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

With no more business, the meeting was adjourned.

Dr. Joe Klotz, Chairman

Annette D. Stone, AICP
Commission Administrator