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**Approved Minutes of the
New Bern Historic Preservation Commission
April 16, 2014**

9 The New Bern Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) held a regular meeting on Wednesday,
10 April 16, 2014, in the second floor courtroom of City Hall, 300 Pollock Street. Meeting was
11 preceded by a work session at 5:30.

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Members Present: Tim Thompson, Chair Nancy Gray
Tripp Eure, Vice Chair Mickey Miller
Jerry Walker Richard Parsons
John Young David Griffith
Jim Morrison

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16

Members Excused (E)/Absent (A): NONE

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Staff Present: Kevin Robinson, AICP, City Planner
Leigh Anne Friesen, Volunteer

20 The meeting was opened and roll call was taken. A quorum was present. Witnesses were sworn
21 in. They included Nancy Hollows, Alex Cardelli, Duncan and Judy Harkin, Rich and Ann Frye,
22 Richard Hoff, Carson Elder, Dave Preis, and John Phaup. March and April minutes will be
23 approved at the May meeting.

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New Business

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**1. Proposed major exterior alterations to 1119 N Craven St. (Carson Elder) to
include installation of porch railings in the primary and secondary AVC.**

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Staff Comments: Staff Kevin Robinson reviewed and briefed the project. Mr. Robinson later
reviewed the Staff Recommendations.

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Applicant Comments: Owner Carson Elder showed his porch plans, including the proposed
design and example photographs.

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Public Comments: NONE

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Discussion by the Commission: The Commissioners discussed issues including the distance
between the pickets, the recommendation for a traditional top/bottom rail detail to avoid
rainshed-caused rotting, the lack of balustrades on the steps, whether rear steps will be rebuilt,
the exact location of all proposed railings, and the presence of and plans for any side-step
railings.

43 **Finding(s) of Fact:** Commissioner Parsons moved to approve the application congruous with the
44 Historic Preservation Guidelines, citing Section 15-427 Certificate of Appropriateness required;
45 Section 15-429 Review Criteria, citing the following guidelines:

46
47 “Exterior entrances and porches”, pp34-36, guideline(s)#6, 13; “Accessibility and Life Safety”,
48 pp45-46, guideline(s)#4. Motion seconded by Commissioner Walker. Motion passed
49 unanimously.

50
51 **Statement(s) of Reason:** (1) The proposed alterations are intended to improve the safety of the
52 use of the porch and are in keeping with homes from this time period in the District; (2) the
53 proposed alterations have similar dimensions to existing railings on neighboring homes and
54 comply with the building codes; (3) the proposed alterations are removable in the future with
55 minimal impact to the integrity of the structure; (4) proposed materials are congruous with
56 historic guidelines.

57
58 **Condition(s):** Materials to be painted after they are installed.

59
60 **Motion:** Commissioner Miller moved to issue the COA, seconded by Commissioner Parsons.
61 All Commissioners voted in favor of the motion. Motion passed.

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63 **2. Proposed major exterior alterations to 210 Hancock St. (Richard Hoff) to include**
64 **construction of accessory structure in the tertiary AVC.**

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66 **Staff Comments:** Staff Kevin Robinson reviewed and briefed the project. Mr. Robinson later
67 reviewed the Staff Recommendations.

68
69 **Applicant Comments:** Owner Richard Hoff described his proposed accessory structure,
70 including the plot plan, materials, dimensions, placement, specs and hurricane tie-downs, etc.
71 Applicant indicated that hardi board would smooth textured and would provide sample to Staff.

72
73 **Public Comments:** NONE

74
75 **Discussion by the Commission:** Commissioner Miller moved and Commissioner Morrison
76 seconded to recuse Commissioner Parsons from the proceedings. Motion passed. They then
77 discussed issues including the side door on the drawing, the type of roof behind the parapet wall,
78 the presence of rear cornerboards, and the need for the color of the proposed roof shingles to be
79 dark and non-variegated.

80
81 **Finding(s) of Fact:** Commissioner Miller moved to find the application congruous with the
82 Historic Preservation Guidelines, citing Section 15-427 Certificate of Appropriateness required;
83 Section 15-429 Review Criteria, citing the following guidelines: “Residential New Construction:
84 Materials”, pp 68-69, guideline(s)#1-4; “Site and Setting: Outbuildings and Accessory
85 Structures”, p 84, guideline(s)#5. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Eure. In a following

86 discussion, Commissioner Gray asked to include the condition of bringing back a shingle sample
87 to Staff. The Commissioners agreed to the condition. Motion passed unanimously.
88

89 **Statement(s) of Reason:** (1) The proposed structure is located in the tertiary area and is clearly
90 secondary to primary structures in scale and form; (2) The proposed materials are congruous
91 with historic guidelines for new construction; and (3) the proposed application of wood on doors
92 represents a modern variation of the detailing an adjacent building.
93

94 **Condition(s):**

- 95 • Applicant will bring a sample of the shingle to be used back to Staff;
- 96 • Board widths on shed doors shall be sufficiently different from the main building's style so
97 as to clearly distinguish them as a modern interpretation of a historic detail on adjacent
98 building.
99

100 **Motion:** Commissioner Gray moved to issue the COA, seconded by Commissioner Eure. All
101 Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.
102

103 **3. Proposed major exterior alterations to 512 Metcalf St. (Zachary Orman - Roland Pridgen)**
104 **to include installation of stair railings in the primary and tertiary AVC.**
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106 **Staff Comments:** Staff Kevin Robinson noted that no representative was present for the
107 application, so the Commission proceeded to the next application.
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109 **4. Proposed major exterior alterations to 402 Queen St. (Alexis Cardelli for Aaron Leeds)**
110 **to include demolition of a contributing structure.**
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112 **Staff Comments:** Staff Kevin Robinson noted that tonight the Commission will consider the
113 demolition application. If approved, the Commission will then consider a redevelopment
114 proposal at a later meeting. He presented the engineer's report, John Wood's comments on the
115 proposal, and the comments of the Chief Building Inspector. Mr. Robinson later reviewed the
116 Staff Recommendations and summarized the letter from John Wood.
117

118 **Applicant Comments:** Applicant Alexis Cardelli (for owner Aaron Leeds) presented on the
119 project. He discussed the engineer's report, the expense of the project, and the letter from John
120 Wood. Later in the meeting, Mr. Cardelli speculated as to the owner's awareness of existing
121 termite damage, and mentioned that a lending institution wouldn't loan money based on the
122 structure's current condition.
123

124 **Public Comments:** *Jerry Hobbins*, 229 New Street, asked the Commission to save 402 Queen
125 Street. He questioned whether or not ground rules were established between the owner and the
126 City. He discussed the history of the Prevention of Demolition by Neglect ordinance as well as
127 the tax status of the home. He believes the City should have taken more initiative with this
128 house. *Nancy Hollows*, 4438 Rivershore Drive, owns property near this parcel and is a New
129 Bern Preservation Foundation (NBPF) Board member. She noted the focus that NBPF has had

130 on Queen Street, infilling and rehabbing houses. She said this house is important to save the
131 fabric of the Historic District. NBPF asked to have the house donated to it, but was declined. As
132 President of PLAT, Mrs. Hollows had these comments regarding the demolition request at hand:
133 the engineer should be selected from those approved by the State Historic Preservation Office
134 (SHPO). She believes the architectural integrity has remained intact. She said the architectural
135 style is typical vernacular construction, particularly the rear porch off the kitchen. Per John
136 Wood's letter, she notes some cultural significance. *David Preis*, 1203 National Avenue, said
137 that the current owners have only owned it for several years in the condition it's currently in. He
138 pushed for an approved plan before the building is allowed to be demolished, should the demo be
139 approved. Ann Frye, 406 Queen Street, has historic house renovation experience, and agrees the
140 work needed on 402 Queen is expensive, but thinks it's an eyesore in its current condition and
141 devaluing property. She's curious about the redevelopment plan: could something worse, like a
142 gas station, be put in its place? And she worries there may be public nuisance issues if the
143 building is left standing. She thinks given the real estate market and current economy,
144 demolition is the most viable option. *John Phaup*, 206 Johnson Street, he's a contractor and
145 toured the house prior to its auction. It's a nice size, and he thinks it would be cheaper to
146 renovate and sell it versus demolishing it to rebuild something new.

147
148 **Chief Building Inspector comments:** Received the petition to put the house on the Prevention
149 of Demolition by Neglect list from HPC on June 20, 2012. All seemed fine and there was a
150 pending loan. On February 6, 2014, \$50/day fines began incurring on the property. The owner
151 declined an economic hardship claim.

152
153 **Discussion by the Commission:** The Commissioners discussed issues including the letter from
154 John Wood, the future of the property, the comments of the Chief Building Inspector, the fact
155 that economic concerns nor ignorance of the law or house condition have no bearing on the
156 HPC's decision, whether all HPC members had inspected the property, the status of the engineer
157 per SHPO, the fact that the engineer also tried to buy the house when it was auctioned, the
158 evidence from Sanborn maps that show c. 1888 a "two story flammable roof" and c.1904-1908
159 an addition.

160
161 **Part I Form Discussion and Scoring**

162 Architectural integrity: Dating of structure is sound and roof could be original (or at least of
163 similar material; there are many original pieces (porch, mantels, windows); the house is
164 relatively undisturbed and intact; addition is historically significant; windows are not beyond
165 repair.

166 Architectural style: Important as a cluster of lower income housing in that formerly industrial
167 area; significant as a corner anchor and historic fabric; represents vernacular houses; distinctive
168 and important; pre-dates the New Bern Fire; past renters speak to its use; platform columns still
169 visible in the sidewalk and passengers saw this house in the streetscape as part of the landscape
170 while waiting for their train; doesn't need to be the "last" or "only" to be significant.

171 Cultural Significance: John Wood demonstrated how the lives lived in these houses and their
172 people were the working class members of New Bern, and have already connected us to all of
173 New Bern's stories. As stated above the past renters speak to its use; platform columns still

174 visible in the sidewalk and passengers saw this house in the streetscape as part of the landscape
175 while waiting for their train.

176 Structural integrity: Experienced eye is just as reliable as the engineers report, since the
177 engineer's parameters are unknown; structurally stable enough for the Chief Building Inspector
178 to let the HPC members inside; apparent deflection not a big problem to fix; roof seems to be in
179 unusually good condition; engineer's percentage deteriorations don't appear to agree with sight
180 evaluations; "demolition" of front and rear porches shouldn't affect the structural or foundational
181 integrity; percentages are subjective, Commission should rely on their visual evaluation
182

183 **Finding(s) of Fact**: Commissioners voted nine to deny demolition application, zero to approve
184 demolition, based on the Part I Form Criteria #1-4 and the "Relocation and Demolition"
185 guidelines, pp 96-100, #1-6. Voting results were as follows: Thompson (6); Eure (5+); Gray
186 (4.5); Miller (5); Parsons (7); Morrison (7); Walker (7); Griffith (5); and Young (5).
187

188 **General Public Comments**

189 *Jerry Hobbins*, 229 New Street, said the application that wasn't heard tonight is hard to see
190 online. He'd like an easier way to view the online drawings (8.5X11" and vertical orientation).
191 Would also like to receive the same link to online documents that the HPC listserv receives.
192

193 **Prevention of Demolition by Neglect List Updates**

194 217 Hancock Street: lots of behind the scene work being done; need to keep rear structure water
195 tight if not planning on doing a demolition soon

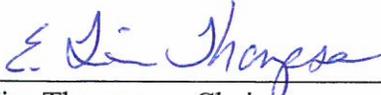
196 316 Ave C (Maola Hse): work proceeding
197

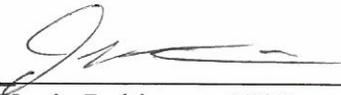
198 **Minor Works report**

199 512 Metcalf Street: side gate
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201 **Next Month**: Review the SHPO packet regarding a National Register listing for Craven Terrace
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203 There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.
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206 _____
207 Tim Thompson, Chairman
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206 _____
207 Kevin Robinson, AICP
208 City Planner