Minutes of the
New Bern Historic Preservation Commission
November 14, 2012

The New Bern Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) held a special called meeting on Wednesday, November 14, 2012, in the second floor courtroom of City Hall, 300 Pollock Street.

Members Present:	Rich Frye, Chairman	Tim Thompson
	Richard Parsons	Jan Giordano
	Peggy Broadway	Mickey Miller
	Peter Adolph	Nancy Gray

Members Excused (E)/Absent(A): Karen Britton (A)

Staff Present: Kevin Robinson, AICP, City Planner
Bernard George, AICP, Planning Division Manager
Leigh Anne Friesen, AICP, Volunteer

The meeting was opened. Roll call was taken. A quorum was present. Witnesses were sworn in.

Witnesses Sworn: Chief Building Inspector Johnny Clark, Rip and Debbie Taggart, Nancy Hollows, Corinne and Shannon Corr, Jim Stroud, Zach Moore, and others.

New Business

1. Continuation of Consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness application for 712 New Street for exterior alterations to include demolition of the existing structure and redevelopment of a new residence on the site.

Staff Comments: Staff Bernard George described the process to be followed during the evening, and gave some background on the project. He noted that the Professional Engineer, Sean Corcoran, had further detailed his report to breakdown the soundness percentages of his previous report.

Applicant Comments: Corinne and Shannon Corr, owners, clarified how the scores will be entered for the evaluation. They noted that point number four needs to be treated consistently, and that the procedure could be described more clearly. They also stated their belief that this house is not unique in the District, and that the project is cost prohibitive to renovate the existing structure given its current state. Corinne Corr emphasized that they did not neglect the house, but just found too many unforeseen problems when they began interior demolition.

Public Comments: *Zach Moore*, 616 New Street, stated that he thought the structural integrity scoring is an inadequate measure of building soundness and leaves too much open to interpretation. *Nancy Hollows*, 4438 Rivershore Drive, stated the intention of Part One's number

four, and said she thinks the architectural integrity criteria has been met, because the architectural style is significant. She believes the cultural integrity is questionable, and the structural integrity should be informed by the engineer's report. She noted that the spirit of the ordinance is to encourage preservation, not demolition. *Jim Stroud*, 419 George Street, stated his support for the applicants' request, saying he almost didn't move in to his current residence due to the unsavory activities and appearance of the 700 block of New Street which backs up to his rear yard. He asked that the Commission let them do what is needed to improve that block.

Discussion by the Commission: Commissioner Thompson again reviewed the steps by which the Commission will review the request. He clarified the scoring method. Commissioners then discussed issues including the value of the house's vernacular style, the importance of preserving the blue-collar homes in New Bern, the level of deterioration, the impact of preserving a "cluster" of homes, the lack of compelling evidence to any cultural significance, the impact of denying the applicants' request, the original condition of the house, the need to recuse oneself if one has arrived with a pre-determined decision, the high level of difficulty of such a decision, and the alleged negligence of the house by the owners.

Part One vote: Upon a roll call, those Commissioners whose Part One scores were less than four and therefore were voting to consider demolition depending on the Part Two redevelopment plan (and their respective Part One scores in parentheses) were: Commissioner Adolph (Part One score: 3), Commissioner Broadway (2), Commissioner Giordano (3), Commissioner Gray (zero), Commissioner Miller (2), and Commissioner Thompson (3). Those Commissioners whose Part One scores were equal to or greater than four and therefore were voting to deny the demolition request were: Commissioner Frye (4). Those Commissioners abstaining were Commissioner Parsons, and those absent were Commissioner Britton. Thus the Part One request to consider demolition based on a redevelopment plan was approved.

The applicants asked about the need to attend another design review, and the Commissioners encouraged them to do so.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Rich Frye, Chairman	Bernard George, AICP HPC Administrator