

**Minutes of the
New Bern Historic Preservation Commission
March 18, 2009**

The New Bern Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) held its regular meeting on Wednesday, March 18, 2009, in the Planning Conference Room, 3rd Floor, 248 Craven Street.

Members Present: Diane Filipowicz, Chair Karen Britton
Peter Adolph, Vice-chair Jack Morton, Jr.
Richard Parsons Rich Frye

Members Excused/Absent: Sadaf Hassan, Bradley Cummins, Jay Heck

Staff Present: Annette Stone, AICP, City Planner
Lorraine DiBella, Administrative Assistant

The meeting was opened and roll call was taken. A quorum was present. Reading of the February 18, 2009 minutes was waived with motion by Commissioner Parsons, second by Commissioner Adolph and unanimous vote of Commission. Minutes were approved with motion by Commissioner Parsons, second by Commissioner Britton and unanimous vote of Commission. Chairwoman Filipowicz discussed the function and qualifications of the Historic Preservation Commission and its members. Witnesses were sworn in.

Witnesses Sworn: Annette Stone, Pat Shell, Anne Frye, Ben Parrish, and Newsome Williams

It was agreed that agenda item three would be heard first.

New Business

3. Consider COA for 501 Craven Street owned by John Young, to re-open a previously enclosed front side porch.

Staff Comments: Staff Annette Stone briefed the Commission on the request, stating the applicant desires to remove metal windows and match the siding on the house which will return the porch to its original open appearance.

Applicant's Comments: Pat Shell, Wake Forest, said he represents the applicant John Young. He briefly discussed the porch modification and stated that staff had accurately represented the project.

Public Comments: None

Discussion by the Commission: Brief discussion and comments followed with the Commission agreeing that the presentation of the old photo was key to appreciating the original facade.

Findings of Fact: Commissioner Parsons moved 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: “Exterior Entrances and Porches” pages 27-29 Guidelines 1, 2, 9 and 10. Commissioner Frye seconded.

Statements of Reason: 1) Project impacts a primary area of visual concern. 2) The project will re-establish a previously enclosed porch. 3) The project will use materials to match the existing house.

Discussion on the Motion: None

Condition(s): None

Motion was made by Commissioner Parsons, with second by Commissioner Adolph and unanimous vote of the Commission, to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for 501 Craven Street.

Public Hearing on the final draft of the update to the Historic Preservation Commission Guidelines

Staff Annette Stone discussed the revisions to the Historic District Guidelines, stating the changes fall into two basic categories: Clarifications and Additions.

The revised guidelines contain more information, for example, the Commission’s rules of procedures and policies have included within the document. There are clarifications on minor works applications that can be approved at staff level and pre-construction conference procedures. The language has been tweaked to be more user-friendly, i.e. replacing “avoid” with “inappropriate”.

Sections on new construction and acceptable new materials, i.e. smooth face and faux grain cement board siding, have been re-worked to add clarity. The original guidelines weighed heavily on residential works with only commercial projects covered generally as storefronts. The revised guidelines take into account free-standing and in-fill commercial projects. New Sections on parks and public spaces; piers, docks and bulkheads; out buildings and accessory structures; and procedures for requesting demolition have been added. Other additions to the guidelines were discussed including national, state and local preservation laws, bibliography, glossary and appendices.

Ms. Stone explained the next steps in the process of adopting the revised guidelines, specifically, the writing of an amendment to the City Land Use Ordinance, review and approval by the City Planning and Zoning Board, and final approval of the guidelines by the Board of Aldermen.

Board Discussion: Considerable discussion followed on the placement of the Secretary of Interiors Standards within the revised guidelines. Commissioner Parson felt strongly that it should be included within the guidelines and not simply an appendix. Commissioner Frye argued that the reader might be confused and not read past the State standards to appreciate that the City guidelines followed. Further there was a concern that an applicant might attempt to pick and chose (for example, mix rehabilitation and restoration standards) which set of standards are being followed. Ms. Stone stated language could be added to make it clear that the applicant must state which standards are being followed for a project to avoid the misuse of the guidelines.

Motion was made by Commissioner Parsons, with second by Commissioner Adolph and unanimous vote of the Commission, to recommend the HPC guidelines update to the Board of Aldermen for approval.

Commissioner Frye recused himself from the following agenda items.

1. Consider COA for 406 Queen Street owned by Ann Frye, installation of shutters to the front of the house.

Staff Comments: Staff Annette Stone briefed the Commission on the request and said the applicant is requesting to install wooden louvered shutters on the front façade of this structure. The applicant secured the proposed recycled shutters from the Preservation Foundation. Pictures of the shutters were examined. It is recommended that the shutters be operative or fixed with operable hardware.

Applicant's Comments: The applicant stated the shutters fit perfectly and are fully operative.

Public Comments: None

Discussion by the Commission: After brief discussion, the Commission voted.

Findings of Fact: Commissioner Adolph moved 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: "Windows and Doors" pages 20 through 23; Guideline 13. Commissioner Parsons seconded.

Statements of Reason: 1) The project impacts a primary area of visual concern. 2) The material of the proposed shutters is wood.

Discussion on the Motion: Commissioner Parsons requested the following condition.

Condition(s): The shutters must relate proportionately to the window opening and be operable or fixed with operable hardware.

Motion was made by Commissioner Parsons, with second by Commissioner Heck and unanimous vote of the Commission, to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for 406 Queen Street.

2. Consider COA for 709 and 711 Queen Street owned by Ann Frye, installation of shutters on front and side of the houses (none rear and alley).

Staff Comments: Staff Annette Stone briefed the Commission on the request and said the applicant is requesting to install wooden louvered shutters on the front and side of these two structures. As before, the shutters are reclaimed by and secured from the Preservation Foundation. It is recommended that the shutters be operative or fixed with operable hardware.

Applicant's Comments: The applicant stated the shutters fit perfectly and are fully operative.

Public Comments: None

Discussion by the Commission: After brief discussion, the Commission voted.

Findings of Fact: Commissioner Adolph moved 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: "Windows and Doors" pages 20 through 23; Guideline 13. Commissioner Parsons seconded.

Statements of Reason: 1) The project impacts a primary area of visual concern. 2) The material of the proposed shutters is wood.

Discussion on the Motion: None

Condition(s): The shutters must relate proportionately to the window opening and be operable or fixed with operable hardware.

Motion was made by Commissioner Parsons, with second by Commissioner Heck and unanimous vote of the Commission, to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for 709 and 711 Street.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Diane Filipowicz, Chair

Annette Stone, AICP
Commission Administrator