

**Minutes of the  
New Bern Historic Preservation Commission  
August 18, 2010**

The New Bern Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) held its regular meeting on Wednesday, August 18, 2010, in the City Hall Courtroom, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 300 Pollock Street.

**Members Present:** Jack Morton, Jr., Chair  
Bradley Cummins  
Richard Parsons  
Johnny Harrison  
Peter Adolph, Vice-chair  
Karen Britton  
Rich Frye

**Members Excused/Absent:** Jay Heck (A); Peggy Broadway (E)

**Staff Present:** Annette Stone, AICP, City Planner  
Leigh Anne Friesen, AICP, Volunteer

The meeting was opened and roll call was taken. A quorum was present. The reading of the minutes to be approved was waived upon unanimous vote for a motion by Commissioner Adolph, seconded by Commissioner Cummins. The minutes were approved as submitted upon unanimous vote for a motion by Commissioner Adolph, seconded by Commissioner Britton. Chairman Morton discussed the function and qualifications of the Historic Preservation Commission and its members. Witnesses were sworn in.

**Witnesses Sworn:** Sarah Afflerbach, Jerry Hobbins, Susan Moffat-Thomas, Stevie Bennet, Anthony Bonnici, John Ward, Nancy Hollows, and others.

**New Business**

**1. Consider COA for 109-123 Pollock Street for replacement of existing wooden doors with fiberglass raised panel doors.**

**Staff Comments:** Staff Annette Stone gave a description of the project. She noted that these apartment buildings were renovated in 2004, with particular expense and attention given to making the units handicap-accessible.

**Applicant's Comments:** Project Architect, Sarah Afflerbach, discussed the project. She explained that in addition to the owner having done as much repair as is possible, the request to go with fiberglass doors would eliminate the need for a storm door that would render the apartments less handicap-accessible. She brought a sample of the fiberglass material to the meeting.

**Public Comments:** *Jerry Hobbins*, 229 New Street, endorses the change, particularly because of the accessibility issue.

**Discussion by the Commission:** The Commissioners discussed issues pertaining to the age and current condition of the existing wooden doors.

**Finding(s) of Fact:** Commissioner Frye 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 27-30, guideline(s)#2-4; and “Accessibility and Life Safety”, pages 45-46, guideline(s)#3. Commissioner Britton seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote, all Commissioners voted in favor of the motion. Motion passed.

**Statement(s) of Reason:** (1) The proposed doors were new at the time the structure was restored; (2) The owner has attempted to maintain the doors; (3) The doors previously had storm doors but now do not have store doors; (4) The doors are in a deteriorated condition; (5) The doors do not face Pollock Street and are in an area of secondary visual concern; (6) The units are intended to be handicap-accessible.

**Condition(s):** NONE.

**Motion:** Commissioner Adolph moved to issue the COA, seconded by Commissioner Frye. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Old Business**

### **1. Consider amendment of the COA for proposed location of Spider Lily Sculpture at the terminus of Broad Street.**

**Staff Comments:** Staff Ms. Stone began her discussion by clarifying the nature of this agenda item for those present. She noted that as this project was approved in the last meeting, tonight’s discussion will only address the two amendments to the COA that are being requested by the applicant: (1) The elevation of the overall height of the proposed entry wall from four to five feet; and (2) the addition of a row of four foot tall bushes at the rear of Phase I to delineate the developed park from the yet-undeveloped rear of the property. She showed the marked up drawings of the wall elevation to elaborate.

**Applicant Comments:** Applicant Susan Moffat-Thomas, Executive Director of Swiss Bear Downtown Development Corporation, discussed the amendments. She presented a slide show detailing the approved project, and added details about each amendment request.

**Public Comments:** *Stevie Bennett*, 1312 National Avenue, stated she doesn’t believe the City owns the property in question and fears it may be designated for vehicular traffic at some point in the future. *Anthony Bonnici*, 512 Jefferson Avenue, is opposed to the park and also doesn’t believe the City owns the property. He is concerned about the loss of river views and the additional development proposed for the site. *Jerry Hobbins*, 229 New Street, concerned that the lengths of the wall appear different on either side, and wants to confirm that the wall is not being increased just to accommodate more donor names. He is also concerned about the material used for the donor name plaques. He asks that the Commission reject the amendment requests. *John Ward*, 219 Pollock Street, spoke in favor of the amendments. He stated he is a New Bern

native, Swiss Bear Board Member, and friend of the sculpture donor, Jim Congelton. He asks that the Commission interpret the guidelines considering all factors and approve the amendments given the unique and extenuating circumstances of the existing site. *Nancy Hollows*, 626 Hancock Street, asks if just the gate in front of the transformer could not be made higher instead of the wall on either side. She is not in favor of raising the height to five feet. She is in favor of using vegetation to delineate the rear of Phase I of the park, but suggests a broken hedge versus solid. Finally, she stated she supports the overall project, not just because of the donor, but also because of the statement it makes about the City.

**Discussion by the Commission:** The Commissioners discussed issues including the amount of existing infrastructure at the park site, the inability to move the transformer (or any other existing electric feature), the impact of an additional foot to the overall entry wall height, the possibility of lessening the density of the requested rear hedge, the overall impact on a river view of the entry wall, the improvement of using a rear hedge over the previously proposed arbor vitae, the possibility of just erecting the right side of the entry wall versus both, and the fact that any rear delineation will further block the river view which is clearly considered inappropriate by the guidelines.

**Motion:** Commissioner Britton moved to deny the amendment to raise the overall height of the entry wall from four to five feet, seconded by Commissioner Frye. All Commissioners present, save Commissioners Adolph, Cummins, and Morton voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed. Commissioner Cummins moved to approve a rear four foot hedge broken with an empty hedge space every other hedge, to be removed upon final construction of the Phase II of the park, seconded by Commissioner Adolph. This motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

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Jack Morton, Chair

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Annette Stone, AICP  
Commission Administrator