

**Minutes of the
New Bern Historic Preservation Commission
April 20, 2011**

The New Bern Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) held its regular meeting on Wednesday, April 20, 2011, in the second floor courtroom of City Hall, 300 Pollock Street.

Members Present: Jack Morton, Jr., Chairman Richard Parsons
 Peggy Broadway Bradley Cummins
 Rich Frye
 Johnny Harrison

Members Excused/Absent: Peter Adolph, Vice-chair (E); Karen Britton (E)

Staff Present: Michael Avery, AICP, Planning and Inspections Director
 Leigh Anne Friesen, AICP, Volunteer

The meeting was opened and roll call was taken. A quorum was present. Commissioner Frye moved and Commissioner Cummins seconded that the reading of the January minutes be waived and approved as submitted. Both motions passed unanimously. Witnesses were sworn in.

Witnesses Sworn: Nancy Hollows, Shannon and Corrine Corr, Bud Stilley, John Watson, Lucien Vaughn, Mark and Jennifer Knight, Sabrina Bengel, David French, Dru Parsons Nichols, Marvin Maune, and others.

Old Business

1. Consider application to amend the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for 203 South Front Street, owned by the City of New Bern to add benches at the site.

Staff Comments: See “Applicant Comments”

Applicant Comments: Staff Mike Avery described the amendment request. He showed pictures of the bench locations and a sample bench (as per Urban Design Plan recommendations). The second bench is the “Whispering Bench”, that was a past winner of the Annual Sculpture Show.

Public Comments: NONE

Discussion by the Commission: The Commissioners discussed issues including the placement of the benches and from where the Whisper Bench originated.

Finding(s) of Fact: Commissioner Frye moved to find the amendment application congruous with the Historic Preservation Guidelines, citing Section 15-427 Certificate of Appropriateness required; Section 15-429 Review Criteria, citing the following guidelines: “Parks and Public Spaces”, page 77, guideline(s) #2 and 3. Commissioner Cummins 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 HPC asked the applicant to return with details; (2) The landscaping changes were approved as a minor work leaving the benches for HPC consideration.

Condition(s): NONE

Motion: Commissioner Parsons moved to amend the COA, seconded by Commissioner Frye. All Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

2. Consider request to amend the Certificate of Appropriateness for 712 New Street, owned by Corinne Corr, for remodel of the main house.

Staff Comments: NONE

Applicant Comments: Owner/Applicant Shannon and Corrine Corr had to update plans since their setbacks did not conform. They also changed windows in the plan from one to two, and are keeping the five-paneled door.

Public Comments: *Nancy Hollows*, 4438 Rivershore Drive, expressed concern about the second story fenestration having horizontally-, versus vertically-oriented windows to face New Street. She was also concerned about the height of the roof in front as compared to the new structure in the rear. Finally, she offered an example at 219 New Street of full exterior windows that are plastered over inside.

Discussion by the Commission: The Commissioners discussed issues including the final height of building, horizontal versus vertical orientation of the windows, any additional changes requested, an apparent discrepancy in roof lines of the screened porch addition as compared to the original house and how this will read from the front, the possibility of changing the roof pitch to minimize the visual impact of different roof lines.

Finding(s) of Fact: Commissioner Harrison moved to find the amendment application congruous with the Historic Preservation Guidelines, citing Section 15-427 Certificate of Appropriateness required; Section 15-429 Review Criteria, citing the following guidelines: “Roofs”, pages 13-16, “Window and Doors”, pages 22-25, and “Exterior Entrances and Porches”, pages 30-32. Commissioner Parsons 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 amendments to the previous application are minor: setback, additional window, side porch configuration and the retaining of the existing front door.

Condition(s):

- Applicant shall submit a drawing of the final roof pitch for approval by Staff, to match the “Amended Exhibit A” as marked up in meeting.
- Applicant shall submit a final drawing of the proposed windows to match those of existing windows of “Amended Exhibit B” as marked up in meeting.

Motion: Commissioner Frye moved to amend the COA, seconded by Commissioner Cummins. All Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

New Business

1. Consider application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Firemen’s Museum (old main station), owned by the City of New Bern, for installation of an exterior stairway.

Staff Comments: NONE

Applicant Comments: Applicant representative, Bud Stilley, spoke on behalf of the Friends of the Fireman’s Museum. He stated that this is a code-required fire escape. They hope to have it painted with powdercoat if the budget allows.

Public Comments: NONE

Discussion by the Commission: The Commissioners discussed issues including the style of the stairs being excessively industrial and modern, the location of the stairs being secondary/tertiary, the apparent lack of effort to match the character of the stairs with that of the existing building, the acceptability of utilitarian design given that it is on the side of the building between the existing building and the proposed new building, whether or not the stairs are offset from the building, a horizontal versus vertically oriented railing design, and whether or not to table this application to explore additional railing designs.

Finding(s) 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: “Accessibility and Life Safety”, pages 41-42. Commissioner Frye seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote, all Commissioners, save Commissioners Cummins and Harrison, voted in favor of the motion. Motion passed.

Statement(s) of Reason: (1) The proposed fire escape is required by code; (2) The proposed fire escape footprint is kept to a minimum.

Condition(s): NONE

Motion: Commissioner Parsons moved to issue the COA, seconded by Commissioner Frye. All Commissioners save Commissioners Cummins and Harrison, voted in favor of the motion. Motion passed.

2. Consider application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 217 Middle Street, owned by John and Michaele Watson, for construction of a rooftop deck.

Staff Comments: NONE

Applicant Comments: Owner/Applicant John Watson indicated that approximately one inch of the 4X6” powder-coated aluminum posts of the rooftop deck will show from the street.

Public Comments: *Nancy Hollows*, 4438 Rivershore Drive, said she believed sensitivity had been shown in the design for the rooftop deck, so she supports it.

Discussion by the Commission: The Commissioners discussed issues including the design of the deck behind the parapet wall and the need for railings.

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: “Decks on Historic Buildings”, page 71. Commissioner Parsons 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 deck is not located in a primary area of visual concern and complies with guidelines for decks.

Condition(s): NONE

Motion: Commissioner Parsons moved to issue the COA, seconded by Commissioner Frye. All Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

3. Consider application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 712 New Street, owned by Corinne Corr, for construction of a carriage house (new construction).

Staff Comments: NONE

Applicant Comments: Owner/Applicant Shannon and Corrine Corr had these plans presented at the last Design Review meeting with the help of Staff Mike Avery. They understood the feedback from the Commission to be positive. The square footage had changed a bit and the living area is narrower and longer. Proposed windows facing New Street have been changed to faux shutters. Brick foundation trim has been changed to wood siding to match the house. They have changed the door configuration on the side of house.

Public Comments: *Nancy Hollows*, 4438 Rivershore Drive, requested more information about the front elevation.

Discussion by the Commission: The Commissioners discussed issues including the attractiveness of the project and the appropriateness of a carport in a primary area of visual concern.

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: “Outbuildings and Accessory Structures”, page 80; and “Building Materials for New Construction and Additions to Non-contributing Building Guidelines, page 50. Commissioner Cummins 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 is an accessory structure; (2) It is located primarily in a secondary area of visual concern; (3) It is proposed to match the house in terms of materials.

Condition(s): NONE

Motion: Commissioner Parsons moved to issue the COA, seconded by Commissioner Harrison. All Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

4. Consider application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 252 Middle Street (formerly Four C's), owned by Minges Bottling Group, for replacement of an existing storefront.

Staff Comments: NONE

Applicant Comments: Applicant Lucien Vaughn of Tarheel Associates presented the application. He noted that Minges is not the building, but the business owner. He discussed the removal of an existing aluminum storefront to replace with wood, and the addition of awnings to match those on the current Pepsi Store building.

Public Comments: *Mark and Jennifer Knight*, 223 New Street, expressed concern about the lack of a door in the middle storefront configuration and asked about the nature of the proposed changes. *Nancy Hollows*, 4438 Rivershore Drive, thought the changes improved the balance of the building and would be good for the streetscape. *Sabrina Bengel*, 329A Middle Street, noted that the goal of this project is to make the Pepsi Store a Pepsi Café and to move the retail portion of the existing store to the rear (along Middle Street).

Discussion by the Commission: The Commissioners discussed issues including any changes to the second floor and the appropriateness of the project.

Finding(s) 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: "Historic Commercial Building Facades", pages 45-47. Commissioner Cummins 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 design is consistent with the balance of the building known as 256 Middle Street and does not impact the existing piers or cornices. (2) The project complies with the "Historic Commercial Building Facades", guideline #7.

Condition(s): NONE

Motion: Commissioner Parsons moved to issue the COA, seconded by Commissioner Harrison. All Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

5. Consider application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Heritage Park, owned by the City of New Bern, for development of green space between City Hall and Christ Episcopal Church (300 Pollock Street).

Staff Comments: NONE

Applicant Comments: Applicant Jennifer Knight presented the project. She is the president of the Craven County Gardeners Association and a City Appearance Committee Consultant. She gave a background of the design process and discussed those involved. They took the application to a Design Review meeting and were asked to consider the following items: the importance of maintaining existing trees, the change in flag pole height, site maintenance and placement of the proposed sculpture, the need for an enhanced description of the fence and benches, and the need for more information about the reflecting pool.

Public Comments: *David French*, 1719 Spencer Avenue, is president of the Craven County Family History Society, and wanted to thank Jennifer Knight, Annette Stone and the Committee for their hard work on the project. *Dru Parsons Nichols*, 227 New Street, stated that though she is not a member of Mr. French's organization, her family originated in Craven County and she approves of what the applicants are proposing to do.

Discussion by the Commission: The Commissioners discussed issues including the proposed height of the flagpoles; the design and grade of proposed curb cuts as compared to existing; the reflecting pool's material, coping, etc.; the impact of a possible gate connection to the church yard; the manner of a Flemish Bond paving pattern given that it is typically a building pattern; the possibility of an agenda item motion to approve the location and size of the pool, but no other details; the lack of a lighting plan to address design and location of proposed lights; the possibility of a conceptual approval or a tabling of the item to the next meeting, the level of specificity of the plan; and the possibility of elevations for the landscaping of the project.

Motion: Commissioner Parsons moved to table the application until a special called meeting on May 4, 2011, seconded by Commissioner Cummins. All Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

6. Consider application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 418 New Street (First Presbyterian Church) for installation of a handicap ramp.

Staff Comments: NONE

Applicant Comments: Church representative, Mike Avery, presented for the church property committee. He gave a description of the project, and showed plans.

Public Comments: NONE

Discussion by the Commission: The Commissioners discussed issues including whether or not the existing handicapped spaces would be re-stripped, the accessibility of the church steps once

members come up the ramp, the combination of cement and grassing on the proposed ramps, and the treatment and retention of existing granite curbs

Finding(s) of Fact: Commissioner Cummins 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: “Accessibility and Life Safety”, pages 41-42. Commissioner Parsons 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 curb cut and ramp will provide access for four heavily used handicapped parking spaces; (2) The project will enhance accessibility and life safety for church members.

Condition(s): Granite curbs to be retained

Motion: Commissioner Parsons moved to issue the COA, seconded by Commissioner Harrison. All Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

7. Consider application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 119 Middle Street to replace side porch windows facing Middle Street with a French door, and add stoop steps, handrails and walkway.

Staff Comments: NONE

Applicant Comments: Applicant Marvin Maune spoke about the project. He showed pictures of the existing structure, then the proposed project to include changing the existing windows to French doors. He noted that this part of the structure had been a porch that was previously enclosed.

Public Comments: *Nancy Hollows*, 4438 Rivershore Drive, inquired about the railing material on the original building, the use of wood as a material, and whether or not the width of the window opening would change.

Discussion by the Commission: Commissioner Johnny Harrison recused himself from the discussion and vote. The Commissioners discussed issues including whether or not this building is contributing, the relocation of this building to its current location, and the past use of the enclosed space.

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 22-25, and “Exterior Entrances and Porches”, pages 30-32. Commissioner Parsons 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 alteration to a formerly enclosed porch provides access consistent with the guidelines for “Windows and Doors” and “Exterior Entrances and Porches”.

Condition(s): NONE

Motion: Commissioner Parsons moved to issue the COA, seconded by Commissioner Cummins. All Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Jack Morton, Jr., Chairman

Michael Avery, AICP
Planning and Inspections Director