THE MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

OCTOBER 15, 2018

A regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held on Monday, October 15, 2018 at 5:30 P.M. in the conference room at City Hall.

Members present: Blanche Hailey

Jean Harrington

Everall Peele

Marianne Aiken

Louise Price

Beth Pulliam

Members absent: George Underwood

Charles Yarbrough

Staff present: Kelly Stultz, Director of Planning and Inspections

Debbie Galloway, Planner

The meeting was called to order by Chair Blanche Hailey.

**SET MEETING AGENDA:**

There were no additions to the agenda and the agenda was set.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The minutes of a regular meeting on August 20, 2018 were presented to the Commission. Chair Hailey noted that the minutes made reference to Joe Maddrey (from First Baptist Church) talking to the State about the National Register designation. Chair Hailey wanted to clarify that Mr. Maddrey did not talk to the State, but had done some research into whether replacing the steeple would affect the National Register designation. Mrs. Harrington made a motion that the minutes be approved with the clarification. Mrs. Pulliam seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH STEEPLE.

Mrs. Price asked if the staff had made a recommendation to the SHPO about the steeple.

Mrs. Galloway said they had not.

Mrs. Aiken asked if the before and after photos of the steeple were included in the letter.

Mrs. Galloway replied that they were.

Mrs. Harrington asked when the letter was mailed.

Mrs. Galloway said it was mailed on September 18.

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LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS.

Mrs. Stultz commented about the deterioration of historic structures all over town. She said that if the church had had a local designation, the Commission could possibly have held up the replacement of the steeple long enough to negotiate with the church. She also mentioned that the Ice Plant building was about to be torn down by the owner, due to the fact that the roof has collapsed. She noted that if the Commission designated a local historic district, this would be a designated area with design guidelines. She said it would not give tax breaks to the property owners, but it would allow the Commission to step in sooner if a building is in danger.

There was discussion about the Highlands area, and they last time they [Commission] tried to do a local designation. It was noted that the property owners were not receptive. There was also discussion about designating the downtown Leaksville area.

Mrs. Stultz said they would put together a list of possible areas for the next meeting. It was noted that Randy Hunt, Main Street Director, has a good relationship with the Leaksville Merchants.

Mrs. Stultz noted that Carolina Heights is probably the most intact mill village.

A question was asked about how restrictive the design guidelines would be. It was noted that they would not be so restrictive as to regulate things like paint color, however they should ensure that additions be sympathetic to the original style of the neighborhood. Mrs. Stultz said lots of public meetings would be required and the owners must buy in so that the neighbors would want to adhere to the guidelines.

Chair Hailey asked if there needed to be 100% agreement from property owners. Mrs. Stultz said no, but Council is not likely to approve it if property owners don’t buy in.

Mrs. Stultz reported that the city had spent $138,000 on 622 Washington Street ($94,000 came from a grant) and the city was about to sell the property for $15,573. She said this was less that the city would have spent to tear the building down. She said the staff has to be realistic about what the potential sales price of this type of building. She said the city had stabilized the building and made it into a “vanilla shell”.

There was discussion about other downtown properties and potential redevelopment. Mrs. Stultz also discussed issues with code enforcement and violations all over town.

Mrs. Pulliam asked if this was a revenue source. Mrs. Stultz replied no, that the city loses money on code enforcement. There was discussion about code enforcement efforts and the general lack of community pride. There was also discussion about city staff and budget cuts which limit the amount of code enforcement we can actually do.

Mrs. Galloway said she had been though the book and found that 61 properties listed have already been demolished or lost, and there are many others that are in danger.

Mrs. Stultz said she would like to see the Commission come up with a project as part of the Strategic Plan. She said that any of the National Register properties should also be landmarked.

There was discussion about the condition of the American Warehouse and the Nantucket Mill. There was also discussion about the Hotel.

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**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra W. Galloway, Administrative Assistant

to the Eden Preservation Commission

Attest:

Blanche Hailey, Chair