

## DRAFT MINUTES

Wake County Historic Preservation Commission  
Tuesday, January 8, 2019 – 3:30 PM Room 2800 – Wake County Justice Center  
301 S. McDowell Street, Raleigh, North Carolina

**Members Present (11):** Mr. Ed Morris (Chair), Mr. Jeff Hastings (Vice-Chair), Mr. Marshall Harvey, Ms. Stephanie Ashworth, Mr. Ray Hinnant, Mr. Charles Blunt, Ms. Camille Morrissey, Mr. Dan Turner, Ms. Mary Beth Carpenter, Ms. Lonnelle Williams, Ms. Carrie Ehrfurth

**Members Absent (1):** Ms. Peggy Beach

**Staff (3):** Mr. Gary Roth and Mr. Jeremy Bradham, Capital Area Preservation, Inc. (CAP)  
Ms. Terry Nolan, Wake County Planning and Development Services Division

### 1. Call to Order / Roll Call:

Mr. Morris called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

### 2. Approval of January 8, 2019 Agenda

Hearing no objection, the agenda was approved as submitted.

### 3. Approval of November 20, 2018 Retreat and Meeting Minutes

Ms. Carpenter noted that under Item IV, "315 properties were identified as historically significant" should be added to the minutes. Also, she wanted to clarify that only two property owners of five gave permission for access inside the properties for further evaluation for Study List potential.

**Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, seconded by Ms. Morrissey, the minutes were approved as amended.**

### 4. Committee Reports

a. Outreach Committee: Ms. Morrissey reported that the committee is in the process of planning for the *2019 Preservation Celebration*, April, 2019. Staff will be sending out more than 500 invitations to public officials and guests. Our hope is that four or five landmark plaques will be presented. The *Preservation Celebration* will be held on Sunday, April 28, 2019 from 2:00pm-5:00pm at the Leslie-Alford-Mims House in Holly Springs. Each commission member will be assigned a food item and helping opportunities at the event. Ms. Morrissey and staff will be meeting the owners of the property to go over logistics. At the March WCHPC meeting, Ms. Morrissey will have a sign-up sheet for what everyone needs to bring.

b. Designation Committee: Mr. Turner reported

- The Tom Olive House landmark report is nearly complete minus the photographs that Ms. Ellen Turco will take to finish the report so it can be sent to SHPO. A CAP, Inc. Board member will be purchasing the property and restoring the house; and, mantles and doors must be placed back into the house once he closes so that the photographs can be taken. The plan is to have the completed report sent to SHPO in March at the latest so that it can

be brought before this commission at the April meeting and designated prior to the 2019 *Preservation Celebration*.

- The E. C. and Elvah Daniel House landmark hearing will be held before the Zebulon Board of Commissioners on February 4; and, the plaque will be presented to the owners at the *Preservation Celebration* in April.
- With the start of a new fiscal year, July 1, 2019, the committee will be exploring more potential landmarks, as more funds will be available given the completion of the Wake County Survey Update.

## 5. Staff Report

- a. Town of Zebulon /SHPO/WCHPC Staff/ PZ Meeting Report: Mr. Roth stated that the commission has worked diligently for over a decade to have Zebulon return to the preservation program within Wake County's interlocal agreement. The last couple of years, a good relationship has developed between the town and this commission. On Friday, January 4, staff met with Mayor Matheny and town staff to further define what this commission does for the town and its citizens. Also, in attendance were SHPO staff and members of *Preservation Zebulon*. The goals of the WCHPC were established and clarified as distinctively different from those of *Preservation Zebulon*/SHPO as this commission's goals are to work with willing property owners to have their properties designated as local historic landmarks, whereas PZ/SHPO are working toward the creation of a National Register Historic District in Zebulon. The landmark program is a voluntary and participatory process and the town and property owners are involved in every step. Final determination for landmark designation is ultimately decided by the town's governing board.

As regards the proposed National Register District, the number one concern from the town is that the proposed National Register Historic District is too large, and they would like to see it reduced in size. SHPO appears resistant to any proposed change to the boundary. The second major concern is that the town feels like it hasn't been a part of this process having been entirely left out; and, it appears to be moving forward without them. Mr. Roth noted that, in the end, once the report is written, it will be brought before this commission for review solely on the merits of meeting the Secretary of Interior's Standards for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. That is the WCHPC's only role in the National Register process.

**QUERY:** Mr. Blunt asked if SHPO has to sign off on the report by the time the WCHPC reviews it. Mr. Roth stated that this commission is essentially a "check box" before the NRAC meeting, so that they will have the commission's confirmation of whether it does/does not meet National Register standards. The Mayor of Zebulon, however, does have to sign off on the final report. This will allow the town to feel less disconnected and more involved in the process, since it will have the final word. Under the interlocal agreement, this commission serves as the commission for the Town of Zebulon. Under the agreement, the town can have its concerns met with final authority on the designation of the district.

**QUERY:** Mr. Blunt asked who would be responsible for addressing citizens' concerns about the whole process and what the designation would mean for those within the boundaries. Mr. Roth stated that SHPO, *Preservation Zebulon*, and the Mayor would all have to address any questions or concerns. This commission's main interest is that there is a real threat that if the Town of Zebulon feels dissatisfied about this process,

one recourse they have in frustration is to exit the preservation program once again. Even though the WCHPC is not a part of this effort to establish a National Register Historic District, the commission could bear the brunt of any backlash.

*Preservation Zebulon* is funding the effort and SHPO will be thoroughly involved throughout the process. Mr. Roth noted that the positive that came from this meeting in Zebulon was that the commission's position and role was made clear; and, we distanced ourselves from anything that would harm the relationship that we have worked so hard to strengthen over the years. The WCHPC hasn't worked so long to get Zebulon back into the program just to lose them again over something over which we have absolutely no control. At the meeting, the Mayor did note that he was concerned that this issue could lead to the explosion of the relationship that we have built. The threat is real and Mr. Roth believes that staff has helped to diffuse it for the time being, assuring the Mayor that he has the final signature authority, quite a comfort for both him and town staff.

**N.B.** Mr. Turner asserted that this commission has spent more than a decade working to regain Zebulon's confidence and faith and to assure them that they have the final say concerning landmark designations. It was imperative that the town staff and government know that they will be involved from the very beginning in this process of landmark designation. Building relationships with the towns across Wake County is this commission's major focus. The last thing the commission needs is to muddy the waters and draw this commission into a fray over which it has no control.

**N.B.** Joe Moore, Town Manager for the Town of Zebulon, stated that there is not much more to contribute that Mr. Roth didn't cover. He graciously complimented the staff to the commission and thanked Mr. Roth and Mr. Bradham for being experts in the field; and, for keenly understanding the importance of developing a good relationship with the town, which was clearly demonstrated during the January 4 meeting. He told the commission that they are represented well and have a hardworking staff. Mr. Moore notified the commission that the Town of Zebulon's Board of Commissioners will have a discussion about NR Historic Districts in general and the current project at their retreat in late February. They will get answers to any further questions and try to ease their minds.

**NB:** Mr. Turner stated that the commission appreciates the Town of Zebulon along with everything they are trying to do; and, appreciates especially this renewed relationship Zebulon has with the WCHPC. It is critical to maintain that relationship; and, Mr. Turner agreed that the commission is well represented by commission staff. Further, Mr. Turner added that the commission is willing to answer any and all questions that the town may have of it.

**QUERY:** Mr. Hinnant asked Mr. Moore if he knew what objections the Zebulon Board of Commissioners might have about a NR Historic District. Mr. Moore stated that the discussion has not yet been had but hoped any concerns will be addressed at the retreat next month.

**N.B.** Ms. Carpenter stated, as *Preservation Zebulon's* President, that *Preservation Zebulon* has been working on the funding for a nomination of a NR Historic District beginning with a grass roots movement to raise money for more than a year. The results of the most recent survey in Zebulon revealed more than 300 properties in a proposed NR Historic District, when it was initially believed it would be only a few streets in the residential and business areas. After consulting with SHPO staff, the consultants informed *Preservation Zebulon* that they could not write a nomination for a smaller district. Ms. Carpenter stated that *Preservation Zebulon* has had

meetings with the Mayor and informed members at its annual meetings of this effort to establish a NR Historic District.

*Preservation Zebulon* has advanced the process and already hired a consultant to begin work in the coming weeks, as the state rehabilitation tax credits are set to sunset in January 2020. The goal is to have the NR Historic District designated before that happens, so the town's citizens can take advantage of the tax credit program. Four property owners have already begun work on their properties, and when the town indicated that it could not provide any funding, *Preservation Zebulon* raised the money on its own and hired the consultant.

**QUERY:** Mr. Blunt asked if there are other towns with multiple NR Historic Districts, since the town seems concerned about the proposed large size of this district. Ms. Carpenter stated that the era of significance includes all of the proposed properties, and SHPO has confirmed with her that a smaller district is not possible.

**N.B.** Mr. Turner stated that when other NR Historic District nominations in Wake County began, town officials were included in the projects from the very beginning; and were supportive of the projects because they were involved during the whole process understanding its impact for the town. From time to time, SHPO will be in favor of something that the town just simply does not want. A partnership with the town is absolutely necessary, working with them during the whole process. If the Town of Zebulon would rather see a smaller district, which was Mr. Turner's suggestion many months ago, then *Preservation Zebulon* should work with the property owners and the town together to explain the benefits of a NR Historic District to everyone. There are plenty of NR Historic Districts that have been added to or nominated in phases; and this one should be no different.

**QUERY:** Mr. Harvey asked if SHPO has the authority to not approve the designation. Ms. Carpenter noted that SHPO supports this project, but if the WCHPC does not approve the nomination or the Zebulon Board of Commissioners does not, it can be appealed by a Zebulon citizen within thirty days. Mr. Roth stated that the size of the proposed district is the biggest issue. Staff suggested that anyone who may talk with SHPO staff should encourage them to look at ways that this district can be reduced, at least for the time being. Ms. Carpenter stated that *Preservation Zebulon* members have met with the Zebulon BOC over the last year, but this process takes time. Mr. Turner noted that it does take time, but *Preservation Zebulon* should tread cautiously and move slowly to make sure that everyone is on the same page with no group left out of the loop. The entire proposed district might not materialize in the next few years, but working slowly and generating support from the ground up - including property owners and the Zebulon BOC - builds confidence in all stakeholders for this to take hold, to be realized for the good of the town and its citizens.

**N.B.** Mr. Morris stated that he understands that the potential for the rehabilitation tax credits to sunset in 2020 is a concern, but they will most likely continue as they are now, as an agreement was reached a few years ago with this very concern in mind. The key is to avoid the ruin of something that this commission has worked so hard to regain and maintain with the Town of Zebulon, just for the sake of making a perceived deadline. Time is a human construct, we amend it at our will.

**QUERY:** Mr. Harvey again asked if the larger initial project could be downsized in response to the Town's concerns and increased in the future. SHPO has stated that is not possible. Mr. Hinnant noted that in Wendell, there are two National Register Historic Districts, and when a third was desired, it was denied by SHPO. Wendell was told that it did not qualify and that was the final word. Mr. Turner confirmed that these proposed districts have standards that have to be met, but this one is different

as the whole proposed district currently qualifies for listing. The question remains: "Can the district be completed in phases with the goal of making the town more comfortable?"

**N.B.** Ms. Williams stated that it sounds like there is some confusion between a National Register Historic District and a Local Historic District. The NR Historic District allows for tax credits on approved work and doesn't have restrictions that require a commission to grant a COA for any changes to a structure, whereas a local district does. Ms. Williams suggested the most important step - early in this process - is to have conversations with all property owners who could benefit from being in a NR Historic District. Ms. Carpenter stated that *Preservation Zebulon* has a segment in the town paper to explain to everyone what they are trying to do and its meaning for property owners. Ms. Williams noted that people might feel like they are being tricked regardless - always the perception and not necessarily the reality.

**N.B.** Mr. Roth said a lot of wisdom that has been shared here today, and staff will keep the commission informed as to any new developments.

- b. Survey Update Phase V – Eastern Wake USAs: Mr. Roth stated that the RFP has been published and all responses are due Friday, January 11. Once we have a list of applicants, staff and SHPO will make a selection. Once a consultant is chosen, contracts will be signed and work will begin. This final phase will include the USAs of Knightdale, Rolesville, Wendell, and Zebulon, as well as of the county's Little River watershed area.
- c. Landmark Report Updates: Mr. Roth reported that the Zebulon Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing on February 4, 2019, to consider designating the E. C. and Elvah Daniel house as Zebulon's second historic landmark. If designated, it will become the first privately owned historic landmark in the town. The Wakelon School, Zebulon's first historic landmark, was approved September, 2018 and the ordinance was recorded in November, 2018. As mentioned in Mr. Turner's report, the landmark report for the Tom Olive House in Apex will be completed once the house has been sold and the architectural items returned to their original locations. If the report is completed and reviewed by SHPO in time, it can be considered by the WCHPC before being forwarded to the Apex Town Council for designation in time for the plaque to be presented at the *Preservation Celebration*, April 26, 2019.
- d. Wake County Comprehensive Plan Update: Ms. Nolan shared the results of the survey for the early stages of the Wake County Comprehensive Plan Update.
- e. COA Review: Mr. Roth noted that there are some major work COAs currently in the works, and there is a good chance that one or two of them will be brought before the commission at the February meeting. Staff has been receiving and reviewing drafts and working with the applicants during the process to ensure that a complete COA will be presented to the commission. As some of the projects are a bit complex, it might be beneficial to have a COA review to prep for some of these future hearings.

**QUERY:** Mr. Blunt asked if any of the COAs have had anything to do with damage from the bad weather in recent months. Mr. Roth stated that none of these projects are a result of damage from bad weather; and, generally speaking, any projects requiring repair of damage from weather would be maintenance and would not require a COA.

- f. WCHPC Reappointments: Mr. Roth reported that all commission members that were up for reappointment were reappointed by the WCBOC.

**6. Old Business:** None.

**7. New Business:** None.

**8. Other Business:** None.

**9. Chair's Report:** Mr. Morris stated that the annual retreat in November was a huge success and everyone seemed to enjoy seeing Yates Mill in operation.

**10. Adjourned:** Hearing no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 4:32 pm.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Jeremy Bradham  
Secretary**