DRAFT MINUTES
Wake County Historic Preservation Commission
Tuesday, February 14, 2017 – 3:30 PM Room 2800 – Wake County Justice Center
301 S. McDowell Street, Raleigh, North Carolina

Members Present (5): Mr. Ed Morris (Chair), Ms. Camille Morrissey, Mr. Wes Tripp, Mr. Marshall Harvey, Ms. Michelle Muir, Mr. Jack Harman, Mr. Charles Blunt, Ms. Carrie Ehrfurth, Ms. Stephcnie Ashworth
Members Absent (3): Mr. Jeff Hastings (Vice-Chair), Mr. Ray Hinnant, Mr. Dan Turner
Staff (2): Mr. Gary Roth and Mr. Jeremy Bradham, Capital Area Preservation, Inc. (CAP)

1. Call to Order / Roll Call:
Mr. Morris called the meeting to order at 3:30pm.

2. Approval of February 14, 2017 Agenda
Ms. Morrissey asked to have committee reports given after the COA hearing. Upon a motion by Ms. Morrissey and seconded by Ms. Ashworth, the agenda was approved as amended.

3. Approval of December 13, 2016 Meeting Minutes
Hearing no objection, the minutes were approved as submitted.

4. Public Hearing to Consider CA-02-17
   Applicant:       Connie Lynn & Diane Ward Blalock
   Landmark:        Dr. Nathan Blalock House
   Location:        6741 Rock Service Station Road, Raleigh
   Jurisdiction:    Wake County
   The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for removals and additions associated with transformation from private residence to wedding venue.

Mr. Morris began by summarizing the public hearing procedures.

Mr. Morris swore in Mr. Roth, Mr. Bradham, Mr. Lynn Blalock, and Ms. Diane Blalock to speak on the application. Mr. Bradham presented a PowerPoint summarizing the application. Following the presentation, staff recommended conditional approval of the application. Mr. Morris asked if there were any questions for staff.

QUERY: Ms. Muir asked what were on the adjacent parcels. Mr. Bradham stated that the adjacent parcels are vacant lots.

QUERY: Ms. Muir asked if this property is currently in an entitlement process; or, in rezoning, with the buffer as a requirement of the rezoning? Mr. Bradham noted that the property is seeking a special use permit - commercial use - but that the commission will be considering this COA based solely on those guidelines which ultimately led to today's staff recommendation. To clarify, Ms. Muir asked whether the existence of a buffer, the width of the buffer, or the type of vegetation led to the staff recommendation. (continued)
Mr. Bradham noted that the staff recommendation used the word "excessive" to reference the buffering. If any other landmark owner submitted a COA for plantings of this quantity and scale - disregarding buffering requirements - the 'historic rural farm setting' as a significant character defining element would be in peril. The Design Guidelines mandate maintaining the rural setting.

**QUERY:** Mr. Blunt asked about the use of the word "encroachment" in terms of the "old" well house; and, is staff recommending a specific distance between the driveway expansion and the structure. Mr. Bradham noted that the position and setting of the "old" well house should be maintained. Mr. Roth added that the structure will not be moved; but, that the drawing showing the driveway touching the corner of the structure is cause for concern. Mr. Bradham noted that the 'excessive' buffering aforementioned compromises the entire lot; and, there is, therefore, nowhere else for the driveway to expand except in the direction of the "old" well house.

**QUERY:** Ms. Muir asked for clarification of the staff recommendation as regards the buffer. Mr. Bradham stated that a buffer reduction is not quantified; but, according to the Design Guidelines, the buffer as proposed is excessive. Mr. Roth noted that, while there are lots of needs to be met, preserving the historic setting - including the circular drive around the house with limited additional buffering - is critically important. Staff's recommendation - based on the guidelines - is that the historic setting be preserved and maintained.

**QUERY:** Mr. Harman asked if the four parking spaces staff recommends eliminating from the plan will be relocated elsewhere on the property; and, will the relocation come before the commission at a future date? Mr. Roth stated that anything within the landmark boundary that would significantly change the plan will need to be brought back before the commission. Some issues which constitute minor works may be handled at the staff level.

**QUERY:** Mr. Harman asked if the circular drive is proposed as a two-way road, as that will impact the "old" well house as well; and, should the commission be concerned about its close proximity to the drive. Mr. Bradham noted that the width of the road complies with emergency vehicle access requirements. Mr. Roth noted that, based on the Design Guidelines, the road should ideally be expanded out away from the structure, but the limitations placed on the proposed plan by the buffer make that impossible. Mr. Harman noted that the existing drive is already encroaching on the required buffer. Mr. Bradham noted that the existing drive stays where it is regardless of the proposed buffer requirement area. Mr. Roth added that staff will likely initiate a conversation with County staff concerning the ruling of the commission on this issue. Mr. Morris stated that it appears that the driveway expansion could slide a few more feet outside of the circle to prevent any encroachment on the "old" well house.

**QUERY:** Ms. Ehrfurth asked if there was any merit to relocating the smokehouse. Mr. Bradham stated that this option has already been discussed with the owners; but, based on the size of the lot, the septic field as required and the proposed buffer, there is nowhere that the structure can be moved; and, it is always best to keep a building in situ if at all possible.

---

2. *Copies of any of the designation reports and other information regarding agenda items available by calling (919) 833-6404 or e-mailing info@cappresinc.org*
Mr. Morris asked if there were comments by interested parties. Mr. and Mrs. Blalock offered to speak to the commission concerning the application and presentation. Mr. Blalock noted that Wake County staff had already granted a variance for the buffer in front of the house, reducing it to only ten feet. He assured the commission that the "old" well house will be avoided during widening of the drive. He affirmed that Wake County is requiring the driveway to be widened by ten feet for access by fire trucks.

**QUERY:** Mr. Morris asked Mr. Blalock if they would be required to place the parking spaces elsewhere if four are removed from the plan. Mr. Blalock suggested that, if the buffer requirement were reduced, additional parking spaces could be added to either side of the property.

**QUERY:** Ms. Muir asked Mr. Blalock if there was a discussion with Wake County to have the buffer reduced if a wooden fence is erected. Mr. Blalock expressed her hope that depending on the commission’s ruling concerning the buffer, the County will make an exception and allow the buffer to be reduced.

**QUERY:** Mr. Blunt inquired about the buffering of the entire property versus the landmark boundary. Mr. Blalock confirmed that the heavy buffering on the sides of the property - within both the landmark boundary and the rear parcel - are to buffer the new use from neighboring properties.

Mr. Morris closed the hearing and opened the floor for discussion among the WCHPC.

With no further questions or remarks, Ms. Ashworth offered the following motion:

"I move that the WCHPC find as a fact that the removal of the c. 1975 garage of the Dr. Nathan Blalock House property is in accordance with the following Wake County Guidelines for Setting & Site Features:

2.5.1. Retain and preserve outbuildings and accessory structures and their visual and associative characteristics that contribute to the overall historic context of a landmark site including their siting, orientation, spacing, scale, and materials.

2.5.2. Retain and preserve outbuildings and accessory structures such as garages, barns, dependencies, sheds, and well houses that are significant in defining the overall historic character of a landmark building, structure, or site.

I further move that the WCHPC find as a fact that the demolition of the c. 1950 smokehouse, introduction of two parking spaces inside of the circular drive, and heavy buffering of the Dr. Nathan Blalock House property are not in accordance with the following Wake County Guidelines for Setting & Site Features:

2.2.7. Introduce new site features and plantings, if needed, which are compatible with the overall historic character of the landmark building, structure, or site. (continued)"

*Copies of any of the designation reports and other information regarding agenda items available by calling (919) 833-6404 or e-mailing info@cappresinc.org*
2.4.6. Introduce new walkways, driveways, or parking areas, if necessary, which are compatible with the overall historic character of the landmark and site. Consider location, scale, materials, and configuration when determining compatibility. Retain the general site topography and any significant landscape or site features. It is not appropriate to diminish or substantially alter the overall historic character of the landmark site through the introduction of new walkways, driveways, or parking areas or through the introduction of inappropriate materials.

2.5.1. Retain and preserve outbuildings and accessory structures and their visual and associative characteristics that contribute to the overall historic context of a landmark site including their siting, orientation, spacing, scale, and materials.

2.5.2. Retain and preserve outbuildings and accessory structures such as garages, barns, dependencies, sheds, and well houses that are significant in defining the overall historic character of a landmark building, structure, or site.

I further move that the WCHPC find as a fact that the widening of the circular driveway and the introduction of parking spaces outside of the circular drive of the Dr. Nathan Blalock House property is in accordance with the following Wake County Guidelines for Setting & Site Features, with the exception of the encroachment on the c. 1910 “old” well house and the two parking spaces proposed where the c. 1950 smokehouse is located:

2.4.6. Introduce new walkways, driveways, or parking areas, if necessary, which are compatible with the overall historic character of the landmark and site. Consider location, scale, materials, and configuration when determining compatibility. Retain the general site topography and any significant landscape or site features. It is not appropriate to diminish or substantially alter the overall historic character of the landmark site through the introduction of new walkways, driveways, or parking areas or through the introduction of inappropriate materials.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1) The c. 1975 garage proposed for demolition is not a contributing structure to the historic landmark.

2) The c. 1950 smokehouse proposed for demolition is a contributing structure to the historic landmark.

3) The proposed parking spaces outside of the circular drive, with the exception of the two spaces where the c. 1950 smokehouse is located, do not diminish the overall historic setting.

4) The proposed widened driveway does not diminish the overall historic setting of the landmark, except for encroachment on the c. 1910 “old” well house.

*Copies of any of the designation reports and other information regarding agenda items available by calling (919) 833-6404 or e-mailing info@cappresinc.org
5) The proposed parking spaces inside the circular drive diminish the overall historic character of the site.

6) The proposed buffer is not compatible with the overall historic character of the site as a rural farm house.”

Ms. Morrissey seconded.
Mr. Morris asked for discussion concerning this motion.
In discussion, Ms. Muir stated that the project creates an unfortunate situation regarding special use permit, as it is difficult to get variances on buffers. It appears that a little flexibility has already been provided by Wake County Planning staff (front buffer); but, if the commission rules in favor in order to go on the record as standing for the Wake County Design Guidelines, then, the commission has her support.

N.B. Mr. Morris added - as a point of information - that the County must not permit the project - one way or the other - until it receives a ruling by this commission. Moreover, any future decisions may be sent to this commission should the plans be heavily altered. With no further discussion, the motion passed, unanimously.

Ms. Ashworth offered the following motion:
“Based on the preceding findings of fact, I move that the Commission grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the change of use and associated changes to the property of the Dr. Nathan Blalock House subject to the following conditions:

1) The proposed widening of the driveway does not encroach on the c. 1910 “old” well house.

2) The two parking spaces proposed to be located within the circular drive are eliminated from the plan.

3) The c. 1950 smokehouse is retained and the two parking spaces proposed where the smokehouse is located are eliminated from the plan.

4) The proposed buffering is reduced to limit its impact on the rural farm setting of the historic landmark.”

Mr. Morris asked if there was any discussion concerning this motion. There was none. Upon a second by Mr. Tripp, the motion passed unanimously.

5. Committee Reports
   a. Outreach Committee: Ms. Morrissey stated that the Wake County 2017 Preservation Celebration will be held Sunday, April 30, 2017, at the Dr. Nathan Blalock House, Fuquay-Varina; and, four plaques will be presented to the new Wake County historic landmarks. Save-the-Dates will go out from CAP offices in the next week or two. Ms. Morrissey added that she will pass a sign-up sheet for commissioners to sign up to bring refreshments; and, everyone will have an assignment of some sort. It will be very important that all commissioners get involved in this event in order to assure successful outcomes. The owners are currently in the process of moving out of the home so it will be wide open for use and for showcasing.

*Copies of any of the designation reports and other information regarding agenda items available by calling (919) 833-6404 or e-mailing info@cappresinc.org
b. Designation Committee: Ms. Ashworth reported:
   - The Percy J. Olive House, Apex: Landmarking will be pursued further once money is available at the start of the next fiscal year, July, 2017;
   - The Thompson-Wrenn House and the Edward Sexton House are being evaluated further by staff as potential landmarks;
   - The Rogers-Whitaker-Haywood House, Wake Forest vicinity: The very important Federal house is under pressure for development with the owner trying to decide what to do with the property. By consensus, the commission decided that it will wait to see if annexation is also an issue impacting this property, with the intention of historic landmark designation before that occurs;
   - The John Lewis Terrell House, Rolesville, is another potential landmark;
   - The John Norris House, c. 1785, Holly Springs, an early hall-and-parlor house, is on the radar as well, but will likely need to be relocated.

6. Staff Report
   a. Town Of Zebulon Inter-Local Status: While there is an existing inter-local agreement between Wake County and all of the municipalities, excluding Wake Forest, Cary, and the corporate limits of Raleigh, Zebulon is the only town that has no access to a historic preservation commission. Staff has been in touch with Zebulon over the past several years to discuss re-entering the inter-local agreement. Mr. Roth has received a copy of a draft inter-local agreement, between Wake County and Zebulon. The draft is essentially the same agreement as signed by all of the other towns under the jurisdiction of the WCHPC in 1992. The County Attorney has reviewed the draft and all parties appear to be in agreement. Assuming no more holdups, Wake County’s response will go back to the Town of Zebulon by February 20, 2017, so this item will be included on the March 6 TOZ Board of Commissioners meeting agenda, at which meeting, the agreement will likely be approved.

QUERY: Mr. Blunt asked if this has an impact on funding. Mr. Roth said it does not. However, it does make a good case for extra funding from Wake County as the jurisdiction and territory would be expanded, not to mention the vast backlog of potential historic properties to be considered.

b. 2017 CLG Grant Requests
   1) Eastern Wake Survey: Over the past three years, the commission has carried out three phases of updates to the original Wake County survey of historic properties. Identifying and inventorying historic resources throughout the County, structures that did not qualify in 1992 have since become eligible. Apart from Zebulon, which has not been surveyed since 1992, only parts of eastern Wake County - including the future urban service areas of Rolesville, Wendell, and Knightdale - remain to be surveyed. If Zebulon signs the proposed inter-local agreement, the focus for the final phase of the survey update will also include Zebulon. It is possible that the number of resources to be surveyed - along with the Little River area - could be too large to complete with one grant. The deadline for grant application submissions is February 28.

N.B. Mr. Roth shall speak with Claudia Brown, SHPO, to see if Zebulon can be included in the current grant request, even if the Town BOC does not vote until March 6, 2017.

*Copies of any of the designation reports and other information regarding agenda items available by calling (919) 833-64C4 or e-mailing info@cappresinc.org
2) Rock Cliff Farm/B. W. Wells Association: Mr. Roth stated that he received an email about a grant for the B. W. Wells Property called Rock Cliff Farm. Rock Cliff Farm is an 83-acre property individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places that is owned by the Army Corps of Engineers and administered by NC State Parks. The B. W. Wells Association would like to apply for a CLG grant to conduct a study concerning the preservation needs of the site and potential interpretation opportunities. The proposed Study Center is a concept similar to the Center for Teaching Excellence, located in the old United States Coast Guard Station on Ocracoke Island. The association is interested in an interpretive site for environmental and preservation issues. Mr. Roth told the commission that he has been assured by SHPO staff that this grant request will not impact the Wake County survey update, so the commission will NOT be competing against itself for funding. As the CLG preservation commission for Wake County, any towns or organizations seeking grants from SHPO must come through the WCHPC. The B. W. Wells Association is currently completing its application to be submitted along with the survey update request. With a project cost of $12,000.00, the Association is asking for a $7,500.00 grant from SHPO with the balance of the funding provided by the Association.

N. B. Mr. Morris stated that the site contains numerous outbuildings as well as the c. 1895 farmhouse as it was originally furnished. It also is the site of the only volcanic plug in eastern North Carolina, a truly unique feature.

c. WCHPC Appointments/Reappointments: Mr. Roth noted the appointment of Mr. Charles Blunt and the reappointments of Ms. Ashworth, Mr. Harvey, Ms. Ehrfurth, Mr. Morris, and Mr. Turner. Mr. Lawson was not reappointed.

d. Mid-Year Report: The 2016-2017 mid-year report has been completed by staff and sent to the commission members in their meeting packets. The report highlights the activities of the WCHPC for the first half of FY2017. The commission has spent $12,310.00 but has since purchased plaques for $1,040, leaving about a small amount in the fund for this year. Remaining funds could be used for additional C.G training or to purchase additional books for the Olivia Rainey Library. Staff anticipates an increase for the preservation fund this year, which will be the first increase in many years.

e. 2015/2016 CLG Re-Certification Letter: Mr. Roth shared the letter sent to the commission by SHPO concerning the activities of the commission. SHPO’s new CLG coordinator, Amber Kidd, thanked the WCHPC for going beyond basic requirements and for its outstanding work in preservation.

N.B. Mr. Roth commended this commission for the hard work it has endured to get this particular letter of thanks and its word of acknowledgment from SHPO.

f. Minor Works COA Approval: Mr. Bradham presented a minor works COA that was approved by staff.

CA-01-17—Dr. Wiley S. Cozart House, Fuquay-Varina: The owner requested approval for installation of low profile solar panels on a non-contributing structure on the property.

7. Old Business: None.

8. New Business: None.

*Copies of any of the designation reports and other information regarding agenda items available by calling (919) 833-6404 or e-mailing info@cappresinc.org
9. Other Business: None.

10. Chair's Report: Mr. Morris welcomed Mr. Blunt to the commission.

11. Adjourn: Hearing no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 4:54 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeremy Bradham
Secretary