MINUTES
Wake County Historic Preservation Commission
Tuesday, April 11, 2017 – 3:30 PM Room 2800 – Wake County Justice Center
301 S. McDowell Street, Raleigh, North Carolina

Members Present (11): Mr. Ed Morris (Chair), Ms. Camille Morrissey, Mr. Charles Blunt, Mr. Ray Hinnant, Mr. Dan Turner, Mr. Wes Tripp, Mr. Marshall Harvey, Ms. Michelle Muir, Mr. Jack Harman, Ms. Carrie Ehrfurth, Ms. Stephanie Ashworth

Members Absent (1): Mr. Jeff Hastings (Vice-Chair) – Absent, in Apex on behalf of the WCHPC

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

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

2. Approval of April 11, 2017 Agenda
Hearing no objection, the agenda was approved as submitted.

3. Approval of March 14, 2017 Minutes
Hearing no objection, the minutes were approved as submitted.

4. Committee Reports
   a. Outreach Committee: Ms. Morrissey reported that the WCHPC 2017 Preservation Celebration will be held at the Dr. Nathan Blalock House on April 30 and will kick off Preservation Month in Wake County. Ms. Morrissey provided assignment sheets and details for the event. She noted that all commission members should be on site no later than 2:00pm to help with set up. The event begins promptly at 3:00pm. She encouraged everyone to keep the food portions small and easy to eat. The beer and wine will be handled by Mr. Hastings. The attire for commission members is business casual. After the event, 5:00pm, commission members will need to help clean up and break down the tables and chairs.
   
   QUERY: Mr. Hinnant asked how many invitations were put in the mail. Mr. Bradham stated that 800 invitations were mailed, but staff expects between 90 and 100 to attend. Mr. Hinnant also asked about having trays for the food. Ms. Morrissey stated that any food that can be placed directly on the table with its dish will help with set up.

   b. Designation Committee: Mr. Turner stated that much of the discussion of this committee revolved around Zebulon – with its abundance of historic resources - and its return to the Wake County Preservation Program. An event is being planned with officials in Zebulon and will be discussed further in the staff report.

5. Staff Report
   a. Town Of Zebulon Inter-Local Status: The WCBOC approved the interlocal agreement, and Zebulon has officially returned to Wake County’s Preservation Program. Mr. Turner had suggested a social event so everyone can get to know one another including the WCHPC, Wake County Staff, Zebulon officials, and Preservation Zebulon members. Preservation Zebulon, which was organized by the town’s citizens, has been a big part of this effort over the past year. SHPO

*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
staff will also likely also be in attendance. Mr. Hastings has offered to supply the beer and wine, as this social gathering will likely be held in one of the historic houses in Zebulon. Preservation Zebulon and the Zebulon Town Staff have been discussing the possibility of using the Wakelon School, as well, with the Town as sponsor and the WCHPC as co-sponsor. The Zebulon Town Council has placed this item on the agenda for the first meeting in June. It is important to note that the town is also considering the potential designation of the Wakelon School, as it is such an important symbol for the town and would be a great first landmark in Zebulon.

b. 2017 Preservation Month Proclamation: Mr. Roth reported that May will be designated as Historic Preservation Month across Wake County. The WCBOC will be reading and voting on the proclamation at their meeting on April 17, where staff and Mr. Morris will be in attendance. Once the proclamation is read, Mr. Roth and Mr. Morris will give a brief talk before the WCBOC. The 2017 Preservation Celebration on April 30 will kick off Preservation Month. Commission members are encouraged to let staff know if they plan to attend to represent the WCHPC.

c. Captain Bailey Williamson House, Knightdale vicinity: Mr. Roth discussed the c. 1850 Captain Bailey Williamson House near Shotwell, which is in danger of development. The proposed project on this site involves a self-storage facility developed on the property with a plan to “remove” the house. This commission offered a motion for a condition on the development plan and staff worked with Wake County Planning Staff concerning the resolution. At the Wake County Planning Board Meeting, staff gave a presentation and presented the resolution to the board. While there was a lot of sympathy on the planning board regarding the important historic houses, they ultimately decided that they do not have the legal basis require that something be done to protect and preserve the house, and there is no ordinance with provisions to do so. Based on this, county staff realized that something needed to be done in the future with regards to an ordinance and/or the procedural process concerning the review of historic resources. The municipalities of Apex, Cary, and Raleigh all have some form of ordinance in place that requires mitigations concerning historic resources and proposed development. During the Planning Board meeting, the developer noted that they had an agreement with the current owners to relocate the house, but the details of that are vague.

N.B. Mr. Coates further explained that the property owner/developer doesn’t always tell staff the full details of what they plan to do. Staff assumed that “to be removed” ultimately points toward a demolition, but, as previously stated, it appears the house will be moved. Those details are still not yet known, as there is no preservation plan or moving plan. Wake County Staff are proposing to have an internal work group to discuss options to prevent things like this in the future. Any changes dealing with land would have to go through a hearing process. Even though specific ordinances work for Apex, Cary, or Raleigh, the same might not work for the county. Starting in May, Wake County Planning will have the services of an intern who would be working on a proposal that would involve commission staff, planning staff, and members of the WCHPC to work on this committee to sit down and have a review of what other municipalities are using for a review process. Eventually, the goal is to have a proposal to be taken to the WCBOC to have new regulations in place. This could include process improvements or reviewing zoning changes to assure historic resources are addressed. In the case of the Captain

*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*
Bailey Williamson House, the zoning was changed from residential to commercial. Planning staff has to look at all of the potential uses for a property within its zoning limitations, which does not necessarily mean staff is looking at the property’s current use. A historic house existing on a property currently does not trigger any red flags from a zoning perspective. County staff is looking for feedback and interest from the WCHPC to help with this process.

**N. B.** Mr. Harvey stated that he will look into some other states as well to see how their language and regulations might fit into Wake County’s situation.

**N. B.** Mr. Roth said there should be something in place that raises a red flag when a parcel containing a historic resource is being rezoned for a change of use. Both Apex and Cary do just that if a property has been surveyed as historic. If a historic resource is located within an area, the resource is evaluated and all comments are forward to the town council. In Apex, for example, CAP has a contract with the town to evaluate historic resources after they have been flagged in the preliminary review process, and CAP staff gives that evaluation with a recommendation to the town. The town then makes a decision based on their ordinance and the recommendation concerning the historic resource. If a resource is worthy of preservation, the Town of Apex requires a preservation plan, whether the structure is moved or remains in situ, but in the end, a preservation easement guarantees its protection in perpetuity. Something similar to this process would be a positive step for Wake County to evaluate and save more structures before they are lost. As of now, there is little the county can do to force the hand or offer conditions for the preservation of historic resources within the county’s jurisdiction.

**QUERY:** Mr. Morris asked how far the Captain Bailey Williamson House is from Walnut Hill site. Mr. Roth noted that both properties are in close proximity, and the Walnut Hill site could be a potential location to move the house.

**N. B.** Mr. Coates further noted that Mr. Bradham initially provided comments about this during their current review process, and his comments were forwarded to the applicant. County staff cannot force the developer to call and reach out for mitigation, but certainly more communication needs to occur, and this could be reflected in the potential changes to the process.

**N. B.** Mr. Bradham stated that he has reached out to the developer numerous times to discuss the details and plan for the relocation of the house, but no response has been given. Mr. Roth further stated that staff is dependent solely on good will at this time if there is nothing in writing from the developer. Some developers are great to work with, but others want nothing to do with historic resources.

**N. B.** Ms. Ehrfurth, Ms. Ashworth, Ms. Muir, and Mr. Harvey all volunteered to help with the process for the work group this summer.

6. **Old Business:** Ms. Morrissey stated that all WCHPC members should mingle and get to know the planners and public officials in attendance at the Preservation Celebration in April 30, as the WCHPC is host to this event.

7. **New Business:** Mr. Harvey noted that he was able to visit two historic African-American cemeteries two weekends earlier, Mount Hope Cemetery and the O’Rourke Family Cemetery. There are unmarked graves, and the cemeteries are working to have a plaque or marker to those whose burial locations are unknown.

8. **Other Business:** Mr. Coates stated that County staff has asked for a 5% increase for preservation funds and is currently going through the budget process. If it is
approved by the WCBOC and the budget adopted, there will likely be an increase to staff funding as well, as it has been more than five years since an increase. The request was made last year before Zebulon came back into the county’s preservation program, so there will likely be another budget increase request in the near future.

9. Chair’s Report: Mr. Morris stated that the Wake Forest Historical Museum received a grant from Hammonds Family Foundation to do GPR for the Friendship Chapel Cemetery, the oldest African-American cemetery in Wake County. Many of the wooden markers have already disappeared, but many of the graves have been located and identified. Mr. Roth further noted that the Cary First Christian Church is in a similar situation and is looking to have a plaque with the names of those buried there without markers.

Point of information: Ms. Ashworth reported that, as Chairman of the Committee on Records and History at First UMC of Fuquay-Varina, she will be attending a meeting of the NCCUMC Commission on Archives and History, Saturday, April 29, 2017 at Purdie UMC (1845) in Tarheel, NC. Mr. Harvey requested that Ms. Ashworth provide the commission with photos of the historic church.

10. Adjourned: Hearing no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 4:23pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeremy Bradham
Secretary