

**Orange County
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Approved Meeting Summary

**August 28th, 2019
Old Orange County Courthouse
106 W. King Street, Hillsborough**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Ballard, Todd Dickinson, Tom Loter, Art Menius, Paul Noe,

MEMBERS ABSENT: Steve Peck (excused)

STAFF PRESENT: Peter Sandbeck

GUESTS: Jerome Bias and East Chapel Hill High School student and parent

ITEM #1: CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dickinson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

ITEM #2: CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO AGENDA: Dickinson asked to add a discussion about what we know about the history of the KKK in the county or Hillsborough. .

ITEM #3: APPROVAL OF MINUTES for June 26th, 2019 (Attachment 1): Menius moved to approve the minutes as corrected; seconded by Ballard; motion approved.

ITEM #4: ITEMS FOR DECISION: None

ITEM #5: DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Preservation of Historic African American Schools:

Staff presented PowerPoint program showing the surviving historic African American schools in the county. Members viewed a handsome book on this topic produced by Renee Price and Free Spirit Freedom. These included the Carr or Haith School, Ridge Road School, Jordan's Grove School and the White Oak Grove School. These deserve recognition and some may merit designation as local landmarks. In the 19th century, the county taxing structure of having over forty small school districts virtually guaranteed that no new schools were built for blacks until mandated by the state in the early 20th century. Some old white schools were moved and converted into black schools. There were four Rosenwald funded schools but none survive. The HPC can reach out to the owners to see if they would be willing to partner in a preservation project. If one of these can be landmarked, then the HPC could help with finding funding. Discussion followed. The Ridge Road School is owned by the neighboring church and is being kept in good condition. Others are great examples of a certain type. Members asked staff to contact all the owners to see who might be interested in saving some of these.

b. Cemetery Preservation Case Study in Carrboro ETJ: Staff presented an overview of the issue of moved graves at the site of the former Nunn's Chapel (1946). The current owner/developer says the graves were relocated properly but there is no record of any permit or other approval from Carrboro. A citizen noted that the burials appear to have been moved but nobody knows if they followed state law. This issue has been raised with various county officials. The county needs to develop a process that dictates what must be done when someone wants to move graves, with clear rules.

- c. **Landmark Priorities for 2020:** Members reviewed the landmark evaluation compilation to see get an overview of possible candidates for new landmarks to pursue in 2020. Staff obtained a new sample Interlocal Agreement from the Forsyth County Historic Preservation Commission that might provide a better model for our own ETJ agreements. Members suggested Bethlehem Presbyterian Church and St. Mary's Chapel as good candidates for churches, since we don't have any. It makes sense to look at properties that scored highest in our evaluations and start there to see who might be interested. Other good candidates included the Bryant Neville Farm on Old Greensboro Road, the Forrest House in Efland, the John Hackney House, and the Ellis House and Store up in Cedar Grove. Some of these, like the Smith-Cole House and the Kirkland House, are in the Carrboro ETJ so will have to await our work on that front.
- d. **Membership:** We now need one new member to replace Becky Paxton. Eligibility has been expanded to include members from within the various local municipal boundaries.
- e. **Preservation NC Annual Symposium, Nov. 7-8, to be held in Raleigh at Shaw University (Attachment 3):** Staff referred members to the agenda for the upcoming conference, noting that it included some excellent speakers. The county can pay for your registration and probably provide some level of transportation if we can coordinate riding in the county vehicle. Let me know if you think you will want to attend.

ITEM #6: UPDATES AND INFORMATION ITEMS

a. Brickwork Restoration Workshop at Burwell School:

Dickinson provided an overview of this successful event. Staff showed a PowerPoint of the event. We had more attendees than planned, even some contractors from Charleston, SC. Participants asked if we were going to hold more workshops in the future.

b. Bingham School Progress:

Staff provided an update. The owner of the Bingham School is going to acquire more of the land right at the intersection, to be able to control that land and to have a larger buffer along the east property lines. This is a great outcome for the long-term protection of that landmark. The exact location and route of the trail is still being discussed and negotiated.

c. Piper-Cox House update:

Dickinson provided an overview of the project to date. Staff attended the recent pre-construction meeting. Work will begin when the reproduction bricks have been delivered. The temporary tarp we put on the roof last October failed and leaked water into the front parlor causing some additional damage. Clark Poe will be the contractor; he did a good job on the restoration of the barn and outbuildings at Blackwood farm for the county.

d. Eno Quaker Cemetery Update:

Our volunteer is still working on a draft for the landmark application. The big issue here is going to be getting an access easement to the cemetery.

e. Book project status/update:

Editor/author Laura Phillips has written most of the county property entries and is now working on some Town entries. Ballard asked staff to work on the DAR grant application so that can be submitted.

f. Wood artifacts on Still House Creek:

Renee Gledhill-Earley from the SHPO has determined that we must contact the Army Corps of Engineers since this involves a stream located on Federal property.

g. Open air time:

Dickinson noted that the recent KKK event in town created some curiosity about the history of that group in Orange County. He also noted that he had found a new app designed for hunters, called "huntX" that uses GPS to help you stay on the correct parcel.

ITEM #7: ADJOURNMENT: Loter moved to adjourn, seconded by Ballard; adjourned at 8:07.

Meeting summary by Peter Sandbeck, DEAPR staff