



# TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

## Historic District Commission

### Meeting Minutes

Town Hall  
405 Martin Luther King Jr.  
Boulevard  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Chair David Schwartz  
Vice-Chair Duncan Lascelles  
Deputy Vice-Chair Sean Murphy  
Josh Gurlitz

Nancy McCormick  
Anne Perl De Pal  
Polly Van de Velde

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**Tuesday, April 13, 2021**

**6:30 PM**

**Virtual Meeting**

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#### **Virtual Meeting Notification**

Board members will attend and participate in this meeting remotely, through internet access, and will not physically attend. The Town will not provide a physical location for viewing the meeting.

The public is invited to attend the Zoom webinar directly online or by phone. Register for this webinar: [URL](#) After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar in listen-only mode. Phone: 301-715-8592, Meeting ID: 844 5464 9194.

#### **Opening**

##### *Roll Call*

Staff present: Anya Grahn, Staff Liaison to Commission, and Brian Ferrell, Counsel to Commission

**Present**                      7 - Chair David Schwartz, Vice-Chair Duncan Lascelles,  
Deputy Vice-Chair Sean Murphy, Josh Gurlitz, Nancy  
McCormick, Anne Perl De Pal , and Polly Van de Velde

*Secretary reads procedures into the record*

#### **Approval of Agenda**

#### **Announcements**

1. Administrative Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Approvals [\[21-0261\]](#)

Grahn explained that staff had approved amendments to the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) application at 203 Battle Lane that included a change from a casement to a single-hung window on the rear elevation and the applicant's reconstruction of a wood attic window.

#### **Petitions**

**Approval of Minutes**

2. March 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes [\[21-0262\]](#)

A motion was made by Murphy, seconded by Lascelles, to approve the March 18, 2021 meeting minutes. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

**Historic District Candidate Interviews**

3. Historic District Commission Candidate Interviews [\[21-0263\]](#)

Candidate Chris Berndt introduced herself to the Commission. She explained her history of working in the Town's Planning Department and serving on the Greenways Commission and Community Design Commission during her retirement. She spoke to her lifelong interest in history and the challenges of increased development along the edges of the historic districts.

Candidate Brian Daniels introduced himself to the Commission. He discussed his interest in community involvement, historic districts, and experience renovating a 1935 house in Los Angeles. He spoke of the importance of creating an efficient and transparent Certificate of Appropriateness process for homeowners and staff.

Chair Schwartz moved to discuss the candidates and make recommendations to Council on the candidates' appointments at the end of the meeting.

**Consent**

4. 524 E. Franklin Street [\[21-0264\]](#)

A motion was made by Van de Velde, seconded by Murphy to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

5. 707 Gimghoul Road [\[21-0265\]](#)

A motion was made by Van de Velde, seconded by Murphy to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

6. 210 Hillsborough Street [\[21-0266\]](#)

A motion was made by Van de Velde, seconded by Murphy to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

**Old Business**

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**7. 510 E. Franklin Street/ 513 Hooper Lane****[\[21-0267\]](#)**

Grahn stated that this item had been continued from the March 18, 2021 meeting as the applicant was unable to attend the last meeting. She stated that the applicant was proposing to reconstruct stone landscape stairs along Hooper Lane with existing and new stones to improve the safety of the stairs.

Steve Sylvester, property owner, presented slides showing the condition of the existing stone stairs. He pointed out the uneven heights and widths of the stone treads and risers that created tripping hazards. He explained that he had spoken to stone masons who could reuse some of the existing stones on site to create uniform stone steps. He also proposed a metal handrail.

The Commission considered the proposed stone materials and techniques masons used to chisel stones to form walls and steps. The Commission and the applicant discussed the proposed materials of the stringers, or side walls bordering the stone steps. The applicant presented photos of brick walkways and stairs with metal railings as examples of possible railing designs. Commissioners spoke of the need to prioritize the restoration and in-kind reconstruction of the stone steps.

A motion was made by Murphy, seconded by Lascelles, to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness to rebuild the stone steps with the condition that the stones steps be rebuilt in-kind with existing stone, stones found onsite, and new stones; with stone stringers matching the drawing on page 17 of the application materials, and a metal railing be placed in the center of the stone stringers similar in design to the railing at 111 Battle Lane depicted on page 14 of the application materials . The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

**New Business****8. 742 Gimghoul Road****[\[21-0268\]](#)**

Grahn explained that the applicant was requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for an addition and site improvements to Gimghoul Castle. The Commission would be reviewing a concept plan and conditional zoning district application in the future to amend the zoning to allow for the proposed scope of work.

LeAnn Nease Brown, attorney for the applicant, spoke to the applicants' need for a conditional zoning district application to memorialize the use of the castle

that had served as the home of a fraternal order since 1926. Edgar Carr, architect for the project, presented photographs of the existing buildings as well as plans and elevations highlighting the proposed addition, new terraces, circular ramp, and ADA entrances to the building. Brown discussed the project's compliance with the Design Guidelines and A through J criteria.

Commissioner Perl de Pal discussed the historical importance of the structure and asked that the applicant consider seeking federal historic landmark status. The Commission clarified the proposed building materials of the concrete pavers proposed on the terrace, the level sidewalk on the west side of the building, and the scale of the materials and addition. The applicant team emphasized that the proposed materials were smaller in size and scale to help distinguish it from the castle's historic features. The Commission complimented the applicant on a thorough application and the sensitivity of the addition's design.

A motion was made by Gurlitz, seconded by Van de Velde, to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

**9. 201 E. Rosemary Street**

**[\[21-0269\]](#)**

Grahn explained that the applicant was proposing a new ADA ramp, a new cantilevered sign, and a new door sign on the front of the historic building.

Ryan Spurrier, applicant, described his team's intent to make sensitive improvements to the site that would preserve the historic character of the building. He noted that they had purposefully designed the ADA ramp to be structurally independent from the building so as not to damage the historic building materials and so that the ADA ramp could be easily removed in the future. He discussed the safety concerns and interior programming that necessitated a ramp at the front of the building. He explained the difficulty in finding an automatic door opener for the narrow double doors on the facade, and he presented photos of the front doors, showing how the doors had been replaced several times. He provided examples of how UNC had provided ADA accessible doors by inserting a single paneled door within the larger historic door opening and filling in the door surround with paneling matching that of the door. Spurrier presented photos of neighboring church signs suspended by two posts and explained that they proposed a cantilevered sign as that was the most similar to a two-post sign. The Town's sign ordinance no longer permits two-post signs.

Matthieu Campbell, contractor for the project, described the dimensions and design of the ADA ramp. The Commission discussed whether the proposed dimensions of the door and ramp would meet egress requirements. They considered the relationship of the proposed ramp to the existing ramp in the alleyway to the east of the building and reviewed the grade change between the east and west sides of the facade. The Commission spoke to ways that the ramp's visibility could be further minimized.

Commissioners expressed concerns about the proposed sign obscuring the brick wall. They worried that the Design Standards were not consistent with the Town's sign ordinance. Grahn and the Commissioners discussed that two-post signs were no longer permitted by the sign ordinance.

The Commission encouraged the applicant to return with scaled drawings and asked that the applicant consider creating a ramp by grading the site, removing the proposed railing from the ramp design, and requested that the applicant work with staff on the cantilevered sign.

A motion was made by Perl de Pal, seconded by Schwartz, to continue the item to the May 13, 2021 Historic District Commission meeting. The motion carried by a vote of 6 to 1.

**Aye:** 6 - Chair David Schwartz, Vice-Chair Duncan Lascelles, Deputy Vice-Chair Sean Murphy, Josh Gurlitz, Nancy McCormick, and Anne Perl De Pal

**Nay:** 1 - Polly Van de Velde

**10. 215 Friendly Lane**

**[\[21-0270\]](#)**

Grahn explained that the applicant was proposing to install 53 solar panels on the hipped roof of a contemporary house.

Nathaniel Lin, property owner, presented slides showing aerial view of the house and described how the proposal complies with the Design Standards. He explained that the solar panels would have a low-profile as they would be flush-mounted to the roof, and the black color of the solar panels was similar to the existing dark asphalt shingle roofing. He proposed to install the panels on the upper roofs of the house to minimize their visibility. He described the location of the house at the end of Friendly Lane.

The Commission spoke in favor of the project, discussing how the placement

of the solar panels on the roof would make them largely invisible from the right-of-way. They spoke of how the modern design of the house accommodated the solar panel installation.

A motion was made by Lascelles, seconded by Van de Velde, to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

### **Historic District Design Principles & Standards**

#### **11. Historic District Design Principles & Standards**

[\[21-0271\]](#)

The Commission unanimously agreed to continue the Design Principles and Standards to the May 13, 2021 Historic District Commission meeting.

### **Historic District Candidate Interviews**

#### Historic District Commission Candidate Interviews

[\[21-0263\]](#)

The Commission discussed the existing vacancies as well as the qualifications and experience of the candidates. Grahn explained that the Commission was forwarding recommendations to the Town Council for the two candidates interviewed during the meeting as well as for the reappointments of Commissioners Schwartz and McCormick.

A motion was made by Van de Velde, seconded by Gurlitz, to forward a positive recommendation to the Town Council for the appointment of Chris Berndt. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Perl de Pal, seconded by Schwartz, to forward a positive recommendation to the Town Council for the appointment of Brian Daniels. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Lascelles, seconded by Murphy, to forward a positive recommendation to the Town Council for the reappointment of David Schwartz. Schwartz recused himself from the vote. The motion carried by a unanimous vote of the remaining commissioners.

A motion was made by Lascelles, seconded by Murphy, to forward a positive recommendation to the Town Council for the reappointment of Nancy McCormick. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

*Adjournment*

Next Meeting - May 13, 2021

*Order of Consideration of Agenda Items:*

- 1. Staff Presentation*
- 2. Applicant's Presentation*
- 3. Public Comment*
- 4. Board Discussion*
- 5. Motion*
- 6. Restatement of Motion by Chair*
- 7. Vote*
- 8. Announcement of Vote by Chair*

*Public Charge: The Advisory Body pledges its respect to the public. The Body asks the public to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous manner, both with the Body and with fellow members of the public. Should any member of the Body or any member of the public fail to observe this charge at any time, the Chair will ask the offending person to leave the meeting until that individual regains personal control. Should decorum fail to be restored, the Chair will recess the meeting until a genuine commitment to this public charge is observed.*

*Unless otherwise noted, please contact the Planning Department at 919-968-2728; [planning@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:planning@townofchapelhill.org) for more information on the above referenced applications.*

*See the Advisory Boards page <http://www.townofchapelhill.org/boards> for background information on this Board.*