

**TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
WRITTEN DECISION
(HDC-26-15)**

Subject Property: 111 Ridge Lane, Chapel Hill, NC
PIN#: 9788-87-2202
Historic District: Gimghoul
Property Owner: Nancy Smith and Ryan Smith
Applicant: Ben Johnson

At its regular meeting on 9 June 2026, after conducting a duly advertised public meeting, and after considering the above-referenced application for certificate of appropriateness, the application materials, staff report, and exhibits presented at the meeting or otherwise appearing in the record, and the approval criteria established under N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-947, Section 3.6.2(e) of the Land Use Management Ordinance (the “LUMO”), and the relevant provisions of the Chapel Hill Historic Districts Design Principles & Standards (the “Principles & Standards”), the Town of Chapel Hill Historic District Commission (the “HDC”) voted 4 to 0 to **APPROVE** a certificate of appropriateness for all elements of the amendment application on the basis that the proposed work is not incongruous with the special character of the historic district and that existing structure is not building, site, or structure determined by the State Historic Preservation Officer as having statewide significance as defined in the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places.

Findings:

1. The Subject Property is located at 111 Ridge Lane, Chapel Hill, NC (PIN 9788-87-2202), is located within the Town’s Gimghoul Historic District and is zoned Residential-1 District (R-1).
2. The Subject Property is owned by Nancy Smith and spouse, Ryan Smith (the “Owner”).
3. The certificate of appropriateness application (the “Application”) was submitted by Ben Johnson (the “Applicant”) on 20 April 2026.
4. The Application sought approval to demolish the existing structure on the Subject Property because the existing structure does not provide a viable foundation for rehabilitation or expansion.
5. The Application was scheduled for hearing by the HDC at its regular meeting on 9 June 2026. Notice of the HDC’s regular meeting was provided as required by law.
6. All HDC Members were present at the meeting.
7. An oath was administered to the Applicant.

8. The staff report and application materials associated with the 9 June 2026 evidentiary hearing were entered into the record for the meeting.
9. During the 9 June 2026 evidentiary hearing, the Applicant testified and provided evidence showing:
 - a. The area of land disturbance resulting from the proposed demolition will be limited to 5,000 square feet or less.
 - b. The existing structure proposed for demolition lacks the structural and foundational stability necessary to safely rehabilitate and/or add onto the existing structure – the existing foundation cracks are well beyond normal tolerances and very high levels of moisture content have been found throughout the existing structure.
 - c. The existing structure proposed for demolition is an example of a transitional building type within the neighborhood/District and does not provide an architecturally distinctive example of the Colonial Revival design found elsewhere in the neighborhood/District; the existing structure is listed as non-contributing on the Historic Registry and is not architecturally or historically significant within the District.
 - d. The existing structure is not building, site, or structure determined by the State Historic Preservation Officer as having statewide significance as defined in the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places.
10. The owner of the abutting property, located 723 Gimghoul, was administered the oath and commented that over the last 7 years the Subject Property has been owned/occupied by a number of temporary owners who have struggled with significant flooding at the Subject Property; the abutting owner supports the proposed demolition and eventual rebuild of the existing structure.

Conclusions

1. Based upon the competent, material, and substantial evidence in the record, the approval criteria described in N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-947, Section 3.6.2(e) of the LUMO, and in the Principles & Standards, the work proposed in the Application is not incongruous with the special character of the Gimghoul Historic District and the existing structure is not building, site, or structure determined by the State Historic Preservation Officer as having statewide significance as defined in the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places.

ACCORDINGLY, based on the foregoing, the Town of Chapel Hill Historic District Commission hereby **APPROVES** the Application proposed by the Applicant for the Subject Property and **DIRECTS** Town Staff to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness to the Applicant.

This the 22nd day of June, 2026.

Don Tise, HDC Chair