

MINUTES

Town of Southern Pines Historic District Commission Regular Meeting April 8, 2021 at 4:00 PM

The Town of Southern Pines Historic District Commission held its regular meeting on Thursday, April 8, 2021, at 4:00 PM. in the C. Michael Haney Community Room of the Southern Pines Police Department, 450 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Southern Pines, North Carolina.

Members present: Vice Chairman Mart Gibson, Steady Meares, Dorothy Shankle, Robert Anderson and Leslie Brians.

Members absent: Molly Goodman and Elizabeth Oettinger.

Staff members present: B.J. Grieve, Suzy Russell and Cindy Williams.

Vice Chairman Gibson called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Robert Anderson made a **motion**, which was seconded by Dorothy Shankle, to approve the Minutes of the January 14, 2021 meeting. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Vice Chairman Gibson stated that a quorum was present and confirmed that there were no conflicts of interest among the members of the Commission.

PUBLIC HEARING:

HD-21-20 Certificate of Appropriateness - Major Work for exterior alterations; Community Congregational Church, 141 North Bennett Street; Applicant: Pinehurst Homes, Inc. by Wayne Haddock, Authorized Agent

Mr. Wayne Haddock of Pinehurst Homes has submitted an application on behalf of Community Congregational Church requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness Major Works, for the purpose of requesting to alter four elevations on the existing education building and the entrance of the vestibule between the existing church building and the existing addition. Starting with the vestibule, the applicant is proposing to alter the windows and door, on the eastern side of the existing addition the windows would be altered, and the eastern side elevation would be resurfaced with stucco, on the northern elevation the brick wall would be resurfaced with stucco and the door and overhang would be altered and the air handlers would have a wall built in front of them, the western elevation would be resurfaced with stucco, two existing windows would be filled in well as the brick column and replaced with stucco siding, the windows would be altered, the air conditioners removed and filled in with brick and covered in stucco siding, while at the further end of this facade, the metal roof flashing would be replaced, all of the lower windows would be altered and

STAFF PRESENTATION - Suzy Russell:

Ms. Russell entered file HD-21-20 into the record and provided an overview of the proposed alterations as contained in the application and staff report which included upgrading the overhang on the Bennett Street side of the building by adding brackets and replacing the sidelights at the bottom with wood; replacing of all of the windows on the Camelia Way side of the building and filling in the area under the air conditioning unit on the far side; installing two windows on the sides of the vestibule doors and the doors will be six panel with wood at the bottom; and altering the eastern elevation of the building to mimic the western elevation. The face of the building is currently brick, cement and stucco. The applicants have requested to stucco the entire face where they have requested to make alterations. They have also requested to construct a wall in front of the air handlers and to replace the windows on the rear of the building, keeping the same general layout as currently exists.

Robert Anderson asked Richard Dana what had prompted the proposed alterations.

Mr. Dana responded that these changes had been on the back burner for the church for many years. The exterior is a combination of stucco, poured concrete and brick and the 1950's style windows are not energy efficient and are in terrible condition.

Mr. Anderson asked Mr. Dana why they want to add so much more solid wall.

Mr. Dana responded that they cannot cool the building in the summertime so that have proposed enclosing portions of the wall and installing double-paned windows.

Mr. Wayne Haddock stated that an interior partition wall divides one section of windows.

Mr. Dana said another consideration is safety because if someone could not get out of the room through the doorway they would not be able to exit through the existing windows.

Mr. Anderson asked if the rooms were used for elementary education.

Mr. Dana responded that there is a preschool and offices downstairs and a library and restrooms upstairs.

Mr. Anderson asked if they were going to install wood trim around the outside of the windows.

Mr. Dana responded no, they will be aluminum clad weather shield windows.

Mr. Anderson asked if they would be using cementitious stucco and putting down a lath first and then stucco over the lath.

Mr. Haddock responded that they are going to do the lath first and then stucco.

Mr. Anderson asked if the sills will be brick.

Mr. Haddock said there will be a Styrofoam type of material with stucco over it.

Mr. Dana said there is stucco below the windows that protrudes out about an inch from the rest of the wall. That will stay and then below each window they plan to do about a four (4) inch sill.

Vice Chairman Gibson asked if the windows on the south side were going to be replaced.

Mr. Dana responded they are only replacing the glass in the windows on the south side. The windows they are replacing will look very similar but will be plate glass fixed windows.

Mr. Anderson inquired about the brackets they were proposing for the roof over the entrance.

Mr. Dana responded that they thought the brackets might make the protruding roof more attractive.

Mr. Anderson commented that he did not think the brackets were a good idea and suggested that they leave the roof as it is currently.

Ms. Russell responded that the Commission is tasked with determining whether a feature is congruent with the historic district as a whole.

Mr. Dana said that it is a concrete roof that sticks straight out.

Mrs. Dana asked Mr. Anderson what he would suggest.

Mr. Anderson responded that he would leave it as is instead of attempting to make it look like something else.

Mr. Dana said he thought he and Mr. Anderson were going to have to agree to disagree on that issue and that the brackets give the appearance of supporting to the roof.

Vice Chairman Gibson asked if quoins were no longer being proposed.

Mr. Dana responded that columns will be used instead.

Ms. Russell stated that when it comes to a detail like this, the Commission is looking at whether or not the detail is congruent with the historic district as a whole and that is the only way that they would be able to deny something like that.

Mr. Anderson asked if they would consider making the windows look more like the windows on the second story of the church.

Mr. Dana responded that there is no second story.

Mr. Anderson said the windows he was referring to were in the shape of an inverted cross with a vertical mullion and then a horizontal mullion.

Vice Chairman Gibson asked if the reason they were proposing to install stucco over brick was because the brick on the addition is not the same as the original brick.

Mrs. Dana said they had tried to match the original brick.

[The oath of testimony was administered to those wishing to speak during the hearing.]

Ms. Russell stated that the proposed windows are congruous with the historic district as a whole.

Mr. Haddock responded that the windows would be trimmed with a dark stucco.

Mr. Anderson stated that the existing brick does not look like the brick that is on the church.

Mr. Dana responded that it is not the same brick.

Mr. Anderson asked if they planned to use brick for the wall that will screen the air conditioning equipment.

Mr. Dana said they would probably use antique brick if they could find any because they cannot find brick to match any of the existing brick. He was hoping that they could salvage enough brick from the portion of wall that will be removed to fill in the hole on the back of the building. In the original application they were proposing to stucco the back of the building. They are not going to stucco the south side of the building.

Mr. Anderson stated that Kings Mountain in South Carolina used to make a brick that was very similar in color.

Ms. Patricia Richardson, owner of the building that extends from 140 NW Broad Street to 11 Camelia Way, asked if the new windows would line up and be complimentary to the lower story windows that are on the side and in the rear of the building, and if they would be replacing the lower windows.

Mr. Dana responded yes.

Ms. Richardson asked if those windows would be in proportion to the upper windows and if they will line up.

Mr. Dana responded that they will be the same size as the existing windows.

Ms. Richardson asked if they will line up so they will not look incongruent.

Ms. Russell responded that the applicant was following the general layout of the existing windows. They were not adding any new windows on the lower level and those windows do not line up with the windows on the upper level.

Ms. Richardson asked if the windows ever lined up in the past.

Ms. Russell stated that she did not have photographs from the time of original construction, but that she was not aware of any changes to their original location.

Mr. Dana stated that the lower level is a 12" thick concrete wall so there would be no way to change the location of the windows on that level without tearing half of the building down.

Ms. Richardson asked if they would be changing any of the playground equipment in the back.

Mr. Dana responded no.

Vice Chairman Gibson asked the applicants if they were replacing the windows on the lower level.

Mr. Dana responded that they were replacing the windows on the lower level with sliding windows that will essentially have the same appearance as the existing windows.

Dorothy Shankle made a **motion**, which was seconded by Steady Meares, to close the public hearing. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Discussion ensued among the Commission members regarding the request to apply stucco over the existing brick.

Robert Anderson made a **motion**, which was seconded by Mart Gibson, to reopen the public hearing. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Anderson asked the applicants how they felt about leaving the brick wall as is instead of covering it with stucco.

Mr. Dana responded that the issue they have with leaving the Bennett Street side of the building brick is that the alley side is almost 100 percent stucco or poured concrete and the ramp side is essentially stucco with the exception of a small area of brick where the PTAC unit is and they need to do something with that also.

Mr. Anderson stated that he thought the only concern the applicants had with what had been discussed was with the Bennett Street side of the building.

Mr. Dana said his problem was with leaving that side brick and everything else being covered with stucco. They are trying to make the building look like it belongs there.

Dorothy Shankle commented that once the screening wall is built it will not match the original brick.

Ms. Russell stated to Mr. Dana that the Commission was concerned that if they made a decision to cover a front-facing wall with stucco it would set a precedent for the rest of the historic district.

Mr. Dana said the top of that wall is poured concrete on one side of the door, the other side is brick that goes all the way up and then there is about four feet of poured concrete at the bottom.

Vice Chairman Gibson stated that he thought the fact that they have to use stucco to do what they need to do for the windows, which is required for the habitability of the structure, it removes the issue of whether they use stucco at all in his opinion.

Mr. Dana stated that they have removed all of the stucco on the fellowship building that they originally proposed and that building will remain brick.

Vice Chairman Gibson made a **motion**, which was seconded by Steady Meares, to close the public hearing. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Discussion ensued among the Commission members.

Mart Gibson made a **motion**, which was seconded by Leslie Brians, to reopen the public hearing. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Dana stated that he was hearing from some members of the Commission about setting a precedent and he understood where that was coming from but they are anticipating something that may or may not ever happen. Stucco has been applied to several downtown buildings. Many of the changes to downtown buildings occurred before the Historic District Commission was created and many have occurred since. All they are trying to do is fix the building so that they can use it better and make it more attractive to the Town as a whole. It is nitpicking to him to say that one wall being changed from brick to stucco is so important to the character of the downtown.

Mr. Anderson expressed opposition to the language Mr. Dana was using.

Mr. Dana stated that two sides of the building will be 100% stucco, one wall is about 30% either poured concrete or stucco, and the screening wall will hide part of the wall they are proposing to cover in stucco.

Mr. Anderson stated that Mr. Dana's concern is for his church and the Commission's concern is for the precedent it would set. He said he thought the wall would look a lot better if it remained brick. There is brick in enough other places on the building that it will help to tie things together. Otherwise it is going to look really fractured and even more divorced from being part of the church than it is currently by modifying the color and the texture. He had no major problem with what they were proposing on the sides. The window proportions are not great and it would be helpful if they were taller, skinnier or spaced in a more regular pattern but he is putting all of that aside

and saying this is really what he thinks needs to happen – that the wall be bare brick because it keeps future Commission members from having to deal with applications that are really inappropriate but that they have no legal background to back that up because the precedent has been muddled. He said they are not saying that doing stucco is going to ruin the town but it is going to set off something that he would not even want to see in his own time.

Mr. Dana said his question was just because they do it in one location does that mean they have to do it everywhere else.

Vice Chairman Gibson stated that the Commission exists for one reason, which is to maintain the value of downtown properties.

Mr. Haddock stated that what he was having trouble with was that the Commission was approving what they wanted to approve. The brick on the front is not balanced and it does not match the church at all but the stucco will match the new stucco.

Mrs. Dana said a whole second story was added to the Compass Building and it is stucco on that entire story. The first story remained brick. The HDC did not have a problem with that and asked if a precedent was set then.

Vice Chairman Gibson responded that he agreed with the fact that on one side there is exposed concrete and on the other side the brick goes all the way up and that is not the most attractive thing in the world. On the other hand, if he is driving down the road he does not notice it. In fact, he never noticed that the two bricks were different until he was forced to look at it and he did not think most people would and he thought that what Robert was trying to say was there would be a greater impact and they would notice the stucco when passing by, and asked the other members if they thought that was detrimental.

B.J. Grieve stated that it seemed as though they were headed to a 3 to 2 vote and at least four (4) members needed to agree on something. Otherwise the application would be denied. He asked the Commission if there were any conditions that, if agreed to by the applicants, could be applied in order to reach a majority vote.

Leslie Brians stated that for her it was maintaining the brick wall.

Mr. Anderson said he would be very specific and say it needs to wrap around and the stucco does not go any further on the back side coming into the back of the wall.

Mr. Dana asked Mr. Anderson to repeat what he had stated again.

Mr. Anderson responded that he was saying to maintain the thickness of the wall and not to stucco over the edges of the wall.

Mr. Dana asked about the foundation that is under the brick.

Ms. Russell stated that Mr. Dana was concerned about was how to tie in so that everything is flush.

Steady Meares asked if they could approve everything with the condition that they not stucco the front wall.

Ms. Russell asked Mr. Dana if the new stucco would be a different color from the existing stucco.

Mr. Haddock responded that it would be a different color.

Mr. Grieve asked the Commission what could get them to a point to obtain an approval.

Mr. Anderson responded that his condition of approval would be that the Bennett Street wall be retained as brick and the concrete below maintained as concrete and the concrete above maintained as concrete and when you turn the corner you stop it with stucco at the back of that wall and call it a day.

Mr. Dana asked Mr. Anderson if what he was saying was that they leave the front wall alone.

Ms. Russell asked the applicants if they would like to take a five minute recess to discuss this condition.

Mr. Robert Coates asked the Commission if, in addition to the front wall, they were asking that the existing one foot of brick on the side walls be maintained.

Mr. Anderson responded yes.

Mr. Dana asked if that was the only concern.

The Commission responded yes.

Mr. Dana stated that if that was the only objection the Commission had and that is what it was going to take that to get their application approved they would leave the front wall brick.

Mr. Dana stated that the application remained the same with the exception that the wall facing Bennett Street, including the 12 or 16 inches that wraps around the side, will remain brick.

Leslie Brians made a **motion**, which was seconded by Robert Anderson, to close the public hearing. **The motion carried unanimously.**

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION ACTION:

Mart Gibson made a **motion**, which was seconded by Dorothy Shankle, that as a finding of fact the application was complete and that the facts submitted were relevant to the case, in that the request for a Certificate for Appropriateness - Major Work, as modified, has met the specified submittal requirements as required in the Town of Southern Pines Unified Development Ordinance

and the evidence submitted was sworn testimony by qualified experts or provided through substantiated documentation. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Leslie Brians made a **motion**, which was seconded by Mart Gibson, that as a finding of fact the application, as amended, complies with Section 2.28.10 Criteria for a Certificate of Appropriateness – Major Work, Criteria C 1-3, as amended, in that:

1. *Work is compatible and appropriate in preserving, retaining, repairing, or restoring the defining historic character of a property and the district. Specifically, the work is considered compatible and appropriate in terms of material, design, dimensions, mass, scale, orientation, color and other applicable considerations because the alterations create a cohesive appearance while also maintaining, in general, the original configuration and are appropriate and compatible with the character of the property and the district as a whole.*
2. *Work does not damage and remove significant character defining features of the building and will not adversely affect its contribution to the larger historic district. Defining features were not part of the National Register’s description for the addition of the education building. The windows and doors that are being replaced and the stucco siding are in harmony with the larger historic district, and because the exterior alterations will be differentiated from the old and are compatible with the special character of the historic district as a whole, there are no adverse effects to the larger historic district.*
3. *Work is consistent with the adopted Design Guidelines for the historic district because the window and door openings and configurations are generally being maintained, and the stucco siding treatment will provide a cohesive façade and will create a matching wall system rather than several types, patterns, textures and colors of materials on each wall, as modified.*

and therefore moved to approve HD-21-20. **The motion carried unanimously.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Russell stated that a Chairman and Vice Chairman still need to be appointed, but those appointments would be postponed until the May meeting. Elizabeth Oettinger had been appointed as a new member of the Commission.

Ms. Russell stated that Mr. Fenton Wilkinson has requested that the Commission look into a home for nomination. She is not sure if he wants it to be nominated to be on the National Register or to be nominated as a landmark. The property is in the ETJ. The Commission up to this point has not nominated a property outside of the corporate limits. The property is out on an island and it is

owned by Diana Dodge and she calls her home “Pines and Pond.” Her brother was a Frank Lloyd Wright studio member and he designed the whole property. Once the Commission has looked at the property Ms. Russell will go through the nomination process.

Ms. Shankle asked if they can make a site visit.

Ms. Russell said they will need to make several onsite visits.

Mr. Anderson asked how this is within the Commission’s purview.

Ms. Russell responded that when the Commission created the Guidelines, and this is part of General Statute as well, there is a lot to being a Commission. The members could be doing this on their own or if someone comes to the Commission to request for a representation to the Town Council that is absolutely under the Commission’s purview.

Mr. Anderson asked if they are looking for National historic status.

Ms. Russell responded that was all of the information she had received thus far.

Ms. Russell stated that this would not be part of the local historic district. The local historic district is the zoning overlay. Then we have the National Register Historic District and that is many properties within the corporate limits. When you are on the National Register it is an honor but it does not prohibit someone from coming along and changing the home. She thinks Mr. Wilkinson is actually seeking to be labeled as a landmark, which is slightly different. There are no landmarks in the Town of Southern Pines so this would be something different. She will email all of the information that has been provided to her. It will take a lot of guidance from the state. Ms. **Hannah Beckman Black** with the state is familiar with this property.

Mart Gibson made a **motion**, which was seconded by Leslie Brian, to adjourn the meeting. **The motion carried unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Cindy Williams
Secretary to the Historic District Commission