

Director's Report

May 13, 2002

Action Items.

1. Childress Klein Properties is requesting that the ordinance designating the Ratcliffe Flowers Building be amended to take the relocation of the building into account. The essential changes are: change of location, exclusion of ground and air rights, and excluding from designation the non-historic elements in the interior of the building. The City Attorney has advised the Commission that this will have to be processed as a new designation. Staff Recommendation: Approve the revised ordinance and proceed with the designation process.

2. An ad-hoc committee (Cox, Foust, Gray) met with the attorney and an owner of the open land surrounding the Washam farmhouse. The ad-hoc committee is recommending that the Commission table the designation process for the entire Washam Farm until August, so that the owners can consider what portions of the property they are willing to support for designation. Staff Recommendation: Approve the recommendation of the ad-hoc committee.

Information Items.

3. Make your calendars for June 17th. City Council will be considering five properties for historic landmark designation. They are: Grier House, Grier-Rea House, Carolina Transfer and Storage Company Building, D. A. Tompkins Dilworth Machine Shop Building, and the Home Federal Savings and Loan Building.

4. On June 17th, City Council will also consider the rezoning petition the HLC has filed for the Grier-Rea House. On May 7th, Bryan Turner and I attended a neighborhood meeting to listen to citizens. There was a lot of opposition, and the Commission continues to work on the issue. The Commission has also received an Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the Grier-Rea House. This is essentially a procedural step which will allow the owner to demolish the house if no suitable site is available to which to move it. The Application will come before the HLC at its June meeting.

5. The rezoning petition the HLC has filed on the W. T. Alexander Plantation will be coming before City Council in the near future. There is no significant opposition to the petition.

6. On May 2nd, I met with Ron Tober of CATS to discuss the status of the Southern Public Utilities Streetcar Barn. He informed me that Charlotte Trolley had met with him, and that they agreed that CATS will be assuming responsibility for the maintenance and operation of the vintage streetcars. Mr. Tober said that it would be most helpful if the HLC would move ahead with requesting the funds to purchase the building. He also stated that he would provide a written statement explaining the level of commitment of CATS and the City to reimburse the HLC for purchase of the building and for the restoration of the building. That statement has not yet arrived.

7. On May 6th, Bryan Turner and I met at the Grier House with representatives of Portrait Homes to examine the plot of land that will be sold to the HLC. Bryan and I were satisfied with the layout except that the plantings at the rear of the property need to be sufficient to screen the house adequately. I believe Bryan will bring this matter before the HLC during his report.

8. On May 6th, I gave a Power Point presentation on the HLC's post World War Two Survey to the Joint Use Task Force of City and County staff members. It was well received.

9. On May 9th, I participated in a visit to the Newell Community to discuss what preservation tools are potentially available to assist with the preservation of the neighborhood. Members of the Planning staff and the Charlotte Historic Districts Commission attended.

10. John Misenheimer and I did meet on May 7th with representatives of the Catawba Valley Scottish Society to discuss their involvement in programming for the Davidson Rural Hill Schoolhouse if the HLC should decide to undertake that project. It was a constructive meeting.

11. On April 30th, Bryan Turner and I did meet with a prospective buyer of the Oehler House. It was a mutually enjoyable event.

12. On April 30th, I participated in a meeting to review the proposal submitted by the F.W.A. Group to purchase and restore the historic buildings on the Palmer Fire School property.

13. The Historic Landmarks Commission will receive a reduction of approximately \$5,000 in its operation budget for FY 2003. This is money that the Commission has used to obtain outside help in cases of design review.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan L. Morrill  
Consulting Director