

**CITY OF HENDERSONVILLE**  
**Historic Preservation Commission**

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 19, 2022 - Electronic**

**Commissioners Present:** In Person – Sam Hayes, Chris Battista, Jim Welter; Zoom - Cheryl Jones, (Chair), Ralph Hammond-Green, Chris Dannals, Crystal Cauley

**Commissioners Absent:** Chris Barron, Derek Cote

**Staff Present:** Matthew Manley, Planning Manager/Commission Coordinator, Alexandra Hunt, Planner, John Connet, City Manager

- I **Call to Order.** Chair called this meeting of the Hendersonville Historic Preservation Commission to order at 5:08 pm.
- II **Agenda.** Chair made a motion to amend the agenda to include public comment time for the items on the agenda tonight. This will be added after item III. Commissioner Welter made a motion to approve the revised agenda. Commissioner Hammond-Green seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, motion passed unanimously.
- III **Minutes.** On motion of Commissioner Hammond-Green seconded by Commissioner Welter the minutes of the Regular meeting of December 15, 2021 were approved.

**Public Comment –** Ken Fitch, 1046 Patton Street (Zoom) stated he supported the action of the Commission writing a letter concerning Boyd Park to City Council. He thinks Council needs to know what the Commission's view is on Boyd Park.

Sandra Williams, 309 Chadwick Avenue (Zoom) stated she was here in reference to Boyd Park. She stated she heard there was a letter that had been written. Chair stated she can make her comments now, as they will not be taking any comments on the letter. Ms. Williams stated she is in favor of keeping the park. It was a safe place for her while growing up and she also took her children there. She discussed the trash at Edwards Park and stated she is in favor of keeping the park. She is just here to listen.

There were no further comments.

- IV(A) **Landia Guest House Marker Proposal –** John Connet, City Manager stated he is here to present the item of a request to erect a historical marker at 710 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue West which is the location of the Landia Guest House. It served as a gathering spot not only for African Americans in Henderson County and Hendersonville but also as folks traveled through the area. It was listed in the Negro Motorist Green Book in 1960-1961 as a location where African Americans could rent a room with a private bath and meals that satisfy. Hollis T. and Ozzie Landrum were the proprietors. Mr. Connet showed an example of a sign. There are several historic signs around the community, not as many for African Americans or sites that are significant to African Americans. As they have been working with our Diversity Inclusion Committee as well as others in the community, they thought it was appropriate to recognize the Landia Guest House for its historic significance. It served the African American community from back in the

1950's and 60's and even into the 70's and 80's, it continued to be a community location where they had dances and served meals.

The Diversity Inclusion Committee met last week, and they unanimously recommended they do this. Mr. Connet has a sign proposal ready, and they could move forward with ordering the sign if the HPC feels it is appropriate. They would like to get it erected as soon as possible. They will be using money set aside for HPC in their budget plus monies set aside from various events they have done. They felt like it was appropriate for the HPC to review and sign off on this marker.

Chair asked if the property owners had been contacted and if they were agreeable. Mr. Connet stated yes, it is Melinda Lowrance and her husband.

Chair asked what the total cost of the marker would be. Mr. Connet stated roughly \$4,000. He stated they had money in their budget and had money in an old HPC account that staff did not even know about, where they had been putting money for this type of purpose. There is money available in that account also.

Commissioner Welter asked how much was in that account. Mr. Connet stated he thinks there is about \$7,000 in that account. Commissioner Welter asked if it was left over from the home tours. Mr. Connet stated yes, and the Cookie Caper and things like that.

Chair asked what the total of both accounts would be. Mr. Connet stated \$1,500 in the General Fund and \$6,000 to \$7,000 in the other account, so roughly \$8,500. If there are any other events they would like to do next year, they can work with staff to make a proposal if there are other things they would like to do in the coming year.

Commissioner Hammond-Green asked if the house that is there now, is the one that was used for this original purpose. Mr. Connet stated yes, the Landia Guest House is actually behind the residence located at 710 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue West. The original structure is there. This location is not in a local historic district, but the original house is there.

Commissioner Welter asked would the placement of the marker be viewable from the street. Mr. Connet stated yes, the marker would be on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and is a two-sided sign that you could see while traveling east or west. It is in a prominent location.

Commissioner Hammond-Green was concerned about the house that will be seen is not the historic building. Chair asked if an image of the building could be placed on the marker. Commissioner Hammond-Green suggested they change the wording on the marker and add that the building is located behind the house. Mr. Connet stated they are trying to keep the wording short for people viewing the marker while driving. He stated they could change the wording.

Commissioner Hayes stated he felt the same and felt the number could be removed. Commissioner Hayes asked if the section of the wording was taken out of the Green Book. Mr. Connet stated yes. Commissioner Hayes suggested that wording being a direct quote should be placed in quotations. The Commission agreed and Mr. Connet stated they could do that.

Chair discussed the motion. Mr. Connet stated they could approve this up to \$4,500 so that they can move forward on this. If other things come up that the HPC would like to do then Mr. Manley can apply for funding. Chair stated she thought their funds were a lot higher than that, but they have not seen the funding information in a long time.

Commissioner Battista discussed the amount coming out their account and other accounts that could be used. Mr. Connet explained spending the money and it just sitting in an account and not being used. It is all government money and if you don't spend it on this then what would you spend it on.

Chair discussed the coloring book project and spending money for that. Mr. Connet stated they are in the budget process now which begins June 1<sup>st</sup> and if they have items they need to spend money on then they will need to know how much. Since Covid there have not been a lot of events. If the Commission prefers not to spend HPC money to do HPC type things that benefit the whole public then he can find the money in the General Fund, but they need to find a way to put the money back into the community and not leave it sitting in an account.

Chair stated they have not seen accounting of their funds in a long time. She talked about allocation of funds and if they spend the \$4,500 now how could they replenish it. Commissioner Hammond-Green suggested they cap the amount at \$2,000 and that would give them time to get more through the budgeting process and the City could fund the other half. Mr. Connet stated whether you use the money in this account or not, the City could cover any HPC events they may have moving forward.

Commissioner Welter suggested putting an agenda item on the agenda to look at the budget. He suggested applying for grants from the federal money coming their way. Chair stated she did not have any answer about the federal money, but they can put an item on the agenda to discuss the budget. She stated they use to receive \$10,000 a year. Mr. Connet stated the money is there if they need it. He discussed the HPC setting priorities and ask Mr. Manley to submit a budget request for the coming year.

Chair asked if they could have one more look at the marker. Could he send an email with the changes to the marker so they can see it? Mr. Connet stated yes.

Commissioner Cauley joined the meeting via Zoom.

***Commissioner Hammond-Green made a motion to proceed with the installation of the sign with revised wording and the money come from the HPC account for markers for up to \$4,500.***

***Commissioner Welter seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken. The vote was unanimous.***

Mr. Connet asked if the Commission had any further questions for him before he leaves. There were no questions from the Commission.

V(A) **Consideration of Letter to City Council concerning Boyd Park.** Chair stated they can have discussion among the Commission members on the letter she drafted concerning the content and any changes they may have.

Commissioner Welter congratulated Chair for putting together the letter and stated he thinks it gets the point across. It is just asking to start a conversation. Chair stated they are granted the authority to assist City Council and provide information to them.

Commissioner Hammond-Green wondered why this wasn't done two year ago. Chair stated they are the liaison between City Council and the citizens. She felt something can be done to recognize the park and its value and the historic value that is there. The Commission inserted themselves because the public asked for their help.

Commissioner Hayes asked about the urgency of this. Mr. Manley stated there is an item on the February Council agenda related to the Fire Station. He felt like the Commission needed to take some action tonight because this is timely. Chair stated they could get feedback now before the final approval.

Commissioner Battista stated he did some research and last month at the City Council meeting they did a resolution and engaged a design firm for the putt-putt course, so he felt this was very urgent.

Mr. Manley stated a member of the public came in late and would like to address the Commission. Chair stated she would open the public comment, but comments should be general and not related to the letter.

Chair opened the public comment.

Lynne Williams, Chadwick Avenue thanked the Commission and staff. She acted as the liaison to City Council and shared the message with them that a letter would be coming to them from the HPC. They moved forward with the resolution for bids but she told them about the letter. She reached out to the State Historic Preservation Office and they stated they cannot get involved politically in municipal matters and the only way they would be involved is if this body comes to them with an investigation for historic designation and they will comment on that. You can either take it into consideration or not, that will be up to you. The other way the state office would be involved is there was a section she believes 106 review that would be if any project uses federal funds, they are bound to have to do a historic review of that property before they can build on it. She brought this to the attention of City Council at their last meeting and Mr. Connet before his presentation specified to her that currently there wasn't going to be any federal funds in the building of this project. She doesn't know if that means in the future no federal funds could be used for the project. She does know there are FEMA funds coming and the money is going to fund firefighters and their roles and benefits but not buildings. One thing she learned from the State Historic Office when considering what would be considered historic at Boyd Park, must structures are not there but the one structure that is there is the actual mini-golf course itself and its older than 50 years and that would be something that could qualify. Yes, the mini-golf course has changed, four holes have been changed she believes when they did the remodel but there is a part of it that is actually authentic. She discussed the big bear and it being there for a long, long time. Someone from the Historic Heritage Museum said he can remember the putt-putt being there since the 60's. That puts it over 50 years old. She brings this to relevance because that would be the defining factor in that historic designation. With the City attempting to move the course, once they do this, they might lose the standing for any designation for Boyd Park. That is why this point is relevant. The next point is often when you move historic features to another park you lose the historic use of the park in which you are relocating it to. She discussed seeing Edwards Park covered in snow and how this will totally change when the putt-putt course is moved there. She discussed the City bargaining to get Edwards Park and losing Berkeley Park with the historic Spinners Stadium. This is an example of how moving it could affect other historic locations and their value. She discussed the timeline for demolition being September 2022. She asked the Commission for any advice and support. She referenced a quote in the Times

News by Councilwoman Roundtree. Debbie Roundtree, who was elected to Miller's seat November 2<sup>nd</sup> will begin her term in December said; "she is against the elimination of Boyd Park. Some parts of the City are classified as historical and they keep taking away and giving something new back. She wants Council to consider putting mini golf on the roof of the new fire station. She got the idea from a course put of the top of a building in Raleigh about 10 years ago. I do realize that we need more capacity for the people of Hendersonville because Hendersonville is growing, and she gets that, but they need to keep in mind we need to keep some history here and they have taken so much out and she is very concerned about that."

Ms. Williams stated she just wanted to point out the opinion of some current Council members. She asks that they determine and collaborate on preservation aspects before we even consider commemoration, and she continues to ask this governing body to please prepare an investigation into the historic designation.

Mr. Manley asked if there was anyone on the Zoom call that did not get to speak. There was no one else on the call that had not given public comment already.

Chair went back into Board discussion concerning the letter. She discussed the urgency of the letter and if they are going to move forward with the letter, they need to either approve it as is or make any changes tonight. She would like to get it signed and get it to City Council on their February agenda. Chair asked if there was any further discussion. Commissioner Hammond-Green thought Chair did a very good job.

***Commissioner Welter made a motion to authorize the Chair to issue the letter to City Council to open the dialogue about the historical aspects of Boyd Park. Commissioner Hammond-Green seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.***

- VI(A) **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair.** ***Commissioner Battista moved the Commission approve Cheryl Jones to continue as Chair for another year and Jim Welter to serve as Vice-Chair. Commissioner Hammond-Green seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.***
- VI(B) **Staff Update on Assessment of Condition of Structures in Historic Districts.** Mr. Manley had reached out to friend of his that is a consultant in the historic field concerning what type of cost would be incurred to do that type of assessment. He read the feedback to the Commission. A quote of \$30,000 was estimated for 600 structures. Mr. Manley stated the cost could be a potential budget item and the Commission would need to discuss this. Mr. Manley stated the Commission could do a Demotion by Neglect on these properties. Commissioner Hammond-Green discussed using a drone to get a photographic survey of the roofs. Mr. Manley explained Demotion by Neglect. Mr. Manley will keep the Commission updated on a budget discussion. The Commission discussed helping property owners and not going at it as an enforcement action. Grants and tax credits were discussed. Chair asked that they get a budget proposal together for next month so they can move forward with this to City Council. Chair asked Mr. Manley to get a deadline on the budget so they can set a meeting time. No action was taken.
- VI(C) **Staff Request: Assistance with Social Media Content for the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.** Mr. Manley stated this is the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the City of Hendersonville. Staff is putting together a social media event for the anniversary and asked if the Commission have any content they would like to add that would be

helpful. Commission Battista suggested forming a committee. Mr. Manley stated they just need a few people to get together with some ideas that could be posted to the website. They can even email the ideas to staff. This does not necessarily need to be meeting. No action was taken.

VII ***Adjournment.*** The Chair adjourned the meeting at 6:48 p.m.

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Chair

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