

**Minutes
Union County Historic Preservation Commission
20 July 2010**

The Union County Historic Preservation Commission met at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 20, 2010, in the Heritage Room at the historic Union County Courthouse, Monroe, North Carolina.

Present: Dr. Jerry Surratt, Virginia Bjorlin, Brad Hudson, Sis Dillon, Danny Stegall, Margaret Bivens, Carolyn Funderburk

Absent: Al Diehl, Chairman; Dale Loberger, Charles Williams

Also Present: Mary Lou Gamble, Harriett Moore

A quorum being present, Dr. Jerry Surratt presided for the Chairman, Al Diehl, who was absent due to personal reasons.

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Surratt asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of May 4 and June 16. It was noted regarding the meeting of June 16, the date of the meeting printed in the heading of the minutes should be changed from June 17 to June 16, 2010. Mr. Stegall moved to approve the minutes for the May meeting and the June 16 meeting as corrected. Mrs. Dillon seconded the motion, and the vote carried.

Financial Report

Dr. Surratt asked for members to review the financial report. Mrs. Bjorlin mentioned that the bank service charge of \$4 seemed to be excessive. Dr. Surratt suggested that the bank be contacted to ask if the service charge can be dropped since the commission is non-profit. Mrs. Funderburk moved to approve the financial report. Mrs. Bivens seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Report of Committees

Concerning the election of vice chairman, Dr. Surratt has been advised by Al Diehl that Dale Loberger has indicated that he would accept this position. Dr. Surratt asked for a nomination to elect Mr. Loberger in absentia. Brad Hudson made the nomination. No other nominations were made. Motion was made by Margaret Bivens to close nominations and that the election be by acclamation. All voted in favor of the motion.

Unfinished Business

Dr. Surratt asked Mrs. Bjorlin to explain the status of the Stallings Methodist Church recommendation for designation. Mrs. Bjorlin stated that the Union County Legal Department has now received all information necessary for the recommendation presentation and has set a joint public hearing with the County Commissioners for Monday, August 2, at 7:00. A quorum will be needed from the Preservation Commission to attend this meeting, and she asked members to

attend. Mrs. Bjorlin mentioned the County Commissioners had never asked for a quorum to be present for prior public hearings.

Mrs. Bivens noted that the Marshville Town Council had appointed Jane Erlickson to the Historic Preservation Commission to fill her expired term. Mrs. Bivens plans to talk to her soon. Mrs. Bjorlin said that the Marshville Town Manager should send a letter to announce her appointment.

Mrs. Bjorlin said that she had ordered a plaque for the clock donated by the Brooks family. The plaque will be placed on the windowsill beside the clock and should be ready this week. Mrs. Gamble inquired as to who will pay for the plaque. Dr. Surratt asked if the clock had been given to the Historic Preservation Commission or to the county. Mrs. Bjorlin said it had been given to the Union County Historical Society.

Dr. Surratt asked for discussion about developing a policy for placing future monuments on the grounds and plaques on the exterior and interior of the historic courthouse. Dr. Surratt said that he had been told recently that the Preservation Commission did not have jurisdiction because the grounds were not designated. Mrs. Bjorlin presented an Ordinance dated in 1985 that specifies that the interior and the exterior of the courthouse (building) and grounds are designated as historic. Dr. Surratt said that the 1985 Ordinance should be acknowledged to avoid future questions and will present a clear understanding for all parties involved. Dr. Surratt stated that Chairman Al Diehl has no knowledge of this ordinance and opened the floor for any further discussion. Dr. Surratt referred to the second page of the June 16 minutes stating, "Due to the limited size and historic nature of the historic Union County Courthouse grounds, any future monuments would not be appropriate on this property". The Preservation Commission would request, too, that the County Manager ask the Union County Legal Department to write a policy that can be submitted to the Union County Board of Commissioners for adoption. Dr. Surratt asked for further comments.

Mrs. Funderburk asked who governed the ordinances. Mrs. Bjorlin answered that it is the responsibility of the governing body that adopts an ordinance. She added that the 1983 Ordinance designated only the exterior of the old courthouse. Mrs. Gamble found the 1985 Ordinance stating that the exterior of, the interior, and site of the building is hereby designated as historic property by the City of Monroe. Mr. Diehl had knowledge of the 1983 ordinance only. Mrs. Gamble pointed out the "headings" of each ordinance includes the exterior, interior and site. Mrs. Bjorlin said that any ordinance involving historic properties is recorded with the Union County Register of Deeds and that office notifies the Tax Assessors office for tax credit purposes. The Union County Commissioners would make the decision after the Preservation Commission's recommendation on usage of the property. Dr. Surratt said that anything already in the works, such as the monument that has been proposed for the Confederate Pensioners of Color, would not fall under a policy governing future monuments.

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Mrs. Dillon also mentioned the placement of future plaques on the building as well – that restrictions should be a part of the policy – for monuments, memorials, and plaques on the grounds and the building. Individuals could be honored in the museum with more depth.

Mrs. Bjorlin stated she wanted to cite two precedents. One is a policy statement for use of the old courtroom that was adopted by the Union County Board of Commissioners, therefore, a policy for use of the grounds surrounding the courthouse should be adopted. The other policy, adopted by Monroe City Council on November 4, 2004, cites the restrictions for use of the Main Street Plaza area. Mrs. Hudson said that we should absolutely reject requests for any monuments honoring anyone unless there is an overwhelming reason. Mrs. Hudson was concerned that some event would be devalued should they not be honored.

Consideration of Applications

Dr. Surratt presented an Application of Certificate of Appropriateness that had been presented by Clifford Chin, owner of the Dr. John M. Belk House, 401 South Hayne Street, Monroe, NC, for removal of two diseased maple trees. Dr. Surratt referred to a map of the property as well as pictures of the trees and noted that the trees are located in the driveway area on the Hayne Street side. One tree will be taken immediately and the second will be taken down in two to five years. The Application of Certificate of Appropriateness was issued less than 30 days ago, but the nature of the request was reason to take a vote. Mrs. Hudson moved to approve the application. Mrs. Dillon seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

Dr. Surratt announced that there is a compromise that is currently being discussed by Al Diehl, Al Green, and Tony Way concerning the Pensioners of Color Monument. Discussed was that “a monument would be placed at a site roughly 30 feet south and outside the sidewalk where it would not be associated with the existing Confederate Monument. It would be placed midway between the Confederate Monument and the WWI Monument. This would be a standing monument which could be viewed from the Main Street sidewalk. It would also have a title making clear what the monument stood for.” Dr. Surratt said that Al Diehl feels that this compromise might be acceptable to those who proposed the monument because this would reflect the significance of these pensioners, but at the same time would not involve the existing monument. Dr. Surratt stated that there were some other compromises that had been discussed that would involve finding randomly ten confederate troops (out of roughly 1800 names) whose names are not included on any monuments and list them somewhere to balance the names of the pensioners. Mr. Way’s has commented was that this is a tradeoff. Dr. Surratt noted that it is his opinion that the existing monument should remain as it has been for the past 100 years. Dr. Surratt said that Mr. Way indicated that he would attend the meeting today. The Application of Certificate of Appropriateness has not been submitted to the Preservation Commission but probably will be submitted soon. The Application must be submitted to the Historic Preservation Commission 30 days before a meeting so consideration can

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be made. With the Application, a description of dimensions, colors, and a site plan is required. Mrs. Dillon said that she had mentioned to Mr. Way that the pensioner's story could be told better in the proposed museum, but he did not agree.

New Business

Dr. Surratt said that there had been a request from the current owners, Mr. and Mrs. Phil Woods, of the Marsh-Baucom House, 318 N. Elm Street, Marshville, NC, to add their surname name "Woods". Mrs. Gamble added that the house was designated by ordinance as the Marsh-Baucom House and it would probably require an amendment to the ordinance, and it is unprecedented to add another name. Mrs. Bivens moved not to approve the request. Mr. Stegall seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous. A letter, including a copy of the designation ordinance, will be sent to Mr. and Mrs. Woods.

Mrs. Bjorlin said that hopefully the Heritage Room can move to the new space in August. Mrs. Bjorlin said she feels that if we ask permission for the use of another room, we could start collecting items for the museum and invite Sidney Halma to help with the displays. Dr. Surratt said that we need to send a written request to the Union County Board of Commissioners asking to use the first floor of the building to exhibit displays and collections. Mrs. Gamble reminded the commission that the Gold Star Mother's Cross has been placed in the room across the hall. Mrs. Dillon noted that the County Commissioners had appropriated \$50,000 for a feasibility study for a museum before the funds were frozen. Mr. Stegall moved that a written request be sent to the Union County Commissioners asking for use of all rooms on the first floor of the historic courthouse in addition to those used by the Heritage Room so exhibits can be created. Mrs. Bivens seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mrs. Bjorlin said that a grant application is being prepared and must be submitted in early August to the Union County Community Foundation. Mrs. Dillon said that she had spoken with a member of the Union County Foundation who said that the usual amount of money appropriated by the foundation to organizations such as ours is \$2500. A motion to apply for the grant was made by Mrs. Dillon. Mrs. Bivens seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

The next meeting will be held September 7 at 3:30 p.m. in the Heritage Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Al Diehl, Chairman

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