

**Minutes**  
**Union County Historic Preservation Commission**  
**12 January 2012**

A called meeting was held by the Union County Historic Preservation Commission at 1:30 pm on Thursday, January 12, 2012 in the Heritage Room at the historic Union County Courthouse, Monroe, North Carolina.

Present: Dr. Jerry Surratt, Dale Loberger, Jane Ellickson, Sis Dillon, John Dickerson, Crystal Crump

Absent: Brad Hudson, Charles Williams, Danny Stegall

Also Present: Mary Lou Gamble, Doug Britt, City of Monroe; Kevin Drexel, Reliance Housing.

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Jerry Surratt, Chairman. Dr. Surratt noted that items other than ones listed on the meeting notice could be addressed because members who are absent signed a waiver to allow commission members to take action on any item of business.

**Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Surratt asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the December meeting. Mr. Loberger motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Dickerson seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

**Financial Report**

Dr. Surratt asked if there were any comments or questions concerning the financial report. Mrs. Gamble said that she has requested the 2nd quarter funding from the City of Monroe and Union County. There were no other questions and the financial report was approved by the Commission members.

**Unfinished Business**

Dr. Surratt said that a letter has been received from Rob Crawford, Preservation Commission Coordinator, NC Archives, in reference to the Survey and Research Report for the Kerr Farm, 9616 Joe Kerr Road, Waxhaw, NC, owned by Paulette Kerr. Dr. Surratt summarized the content of the letter saying that Mr. Crawford suggested that more information about the Kerr Family history and also the architectural style of the house and outbuildings would make the report more complete. Dr. Surratt asked Mrs. Gamble to contact Sidney Halma to see if he could add more information about the items that Mr. Crawford cited regarding the Survey and Research Report. Mrs. Gamble commented that these questions need to be addressed before the Commission requests the Board of Union County Commissioners to schedule a public hearing to designate the property.

**Application for Designation**

Dr. Surratt said that we have received an Application for Designation for the C. C. Stokes House, circa 1919, located at 903 West Franklin Street, Monroe, NC. The owner is Gail Russell. Mrs. Gamble reported that staff has done some preliminary research about the

property and the only information found thus far is: a picture of the house in *Sweet Union* (no description); a listing in the National Register of Historic Places for Monroe's Residential District; and, a picture of Mr. Stokes in a special magazine edition of *The Monroe Journal*, December 15, 1919, with a brief biography. Mr. Stokes was Treasurer and Assistant Manager for Icemorlee Mills. Dr. Surratt asked Mrs. Gamble to contact Paul Fromberg, Senior Preservation Specialist, NC Archives, and ask him to schedule a visit to Monroe to evaluate the historic significance of the property. Mrs. Gamble noted that owners of historic properties who file an Application for Designation should be advised that the Preservation Commission is asking the property owner to pay one-half the fee required by the Architectural Historian for preparing the Survey and Research Report. A signature form can be drawn and attached to the Application.

### **New Business**

Dr. Surratt asked Mr. Dickerson to speak about the possible rezoning of the Piedmont Buggy Factory. Mr. Dickerson introduced Mr. Kevin Drexel who represents Reliance Housing, a potential owner of the property, and Mr. Doug Britt of the City of Monroe Planning Department.

Mr. Dickerson asked Commission Members to refer to the handouts describing the history of the Piedmont Buggy Factory, ca. 1919, located on Miller Street. He spoke about the significance of the property and recalled the other efforts that have been made to preserve and restore the property in recent years. He added that the property is located on a very visible site on a main entrance to the city and the architecture of the building is unique. He said that the City of Monroe has scheduled a public hearing for Tuesday, January 17, 2012 to consider rezoning the property.

Mr. Drexel then explained in detail the project that Reliance Housing, a 501-C3 organization, hopes to accomplish. He said that the building would be restored in compliance with the Secretary of the Interiors Guidelines in order to qualify for all federal and state tax credits. The building would be converted into 47 apartment units with the rent based on annual income of the renter (\$18,000-\$36,000). It would be targeted toward working families with a long-range plan toward home ownership. This would be Reliance's first project in North Carolina, but the company has a strong track record with developments in other states. He emphasized that no public funds would be used in the project - only private funds. He added that the Monroe City Boards have been very accommodating in hearing his proposal.

Mr. Britt said that the rezoning request has been presented to the Land Development Committee and the Monroe City Planning Board and neither group supports the rezoning request. The objections are based on the number of rental units in Monroe at the present time.

After further discussion, Dr. Surratt said that the preservation of the property is very important and the proposed project by Reliance could guarantee that. He asked if members of the Commission to express opinions about the rezoning.

Mr. Loberger made a motion that representatives from the Union County Historic Preservation Commission attend the Monroe City Council meeting on Tuesday, January 17, 2012 and speak in support of the rezoning of the Piedmont Buggy Factory property, located on Miller Street, Monroe, NC. Mrs. Crump seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 2, 2012 at 1:30.

Respectively submitted,

Dr. Jerry Surratt, Chairman