

**Minutes**  
**Union County Historic Preservation Commission**  
**1 March 2012**

The Union County Historic Preservation Commission met at 1:30 pm on Thursday, March 1, 2012, in the Heritage Room at the historic Union County Courthouse, Monroe, North Carolina.

Present: Dr. Jerry Surratt, Brad Hudson, Jane Ellickson, Sis Dillon, John Dickerson, Crystal Crump  
Absent: Dale Loberger, Charles Williams, Danny Stegall  
Also Present: Matthew Delk, Assistant Union County Manager; Virginia Bjorlin, Union County Historical Society; Houston Blair, Mary Lou Gamble, Harriett Moore

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Jerry Surratt, Chairman. Mr. Dickerson left the meeting at this time without being excused but will be contacted by phone regarding any approvals or motions

Dr. Surratt recognized two guests present at the meeting. Matthew Delk, Assistant Union County Manager and Houston Blair.

**Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Surratt asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the January meeting. Mrs. Dillon moved to approve the minutes. Mrs. Crump seconded the motion.

**Financial Report**

Dr. Surratt asked if there were any comments or questions concerning the financial report. Mrs. Gamble reported that we have received the request for the 2012-2013 budget from Union County which is due March 15th. There were no 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, North Carolina 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 the addition of more information about the Kerr Family history and also the architectural style of the house and outbuildings would make the report more complete. A five page addendum to the designation report has been prepared by Sidney Halma. Dr. Surratt asked that each Commission member pass it around for review. Mr. Delk suggested that the Commission contact the Village of Marvin for their input and support in designating the Kerr Farm. Mrs. Crump offered to call the town hall regarding the matter. Mrs. Ellickson moved that the report be sent to the Union County Board of Commissioners to request a public hearing. Mrs. Hudson seconded the motion.

John Dickerson was contacted by telephone and he voted positive for approval of the minutes

and for requesting a public hearing to recommend designation of the Kerr Farm as an historic landmark. The vote for both motions was unanimous.

Dr. Surratt said that he, Mrs. Crump and Mr. Dickerson attended the Monroe City Council Public Hearing on January 17 regarding the rezoning of the Piedmont Buggy Factory, Miller Street, Monroe, for conversion into apartment rentals by Reliance Housing, Asheville, NC. The property is zoned for multi-family use. The proposal was voted down by the City Council who preferred ownership condominiums instead of rental units. The representatives present from Reliance Housing felt there could be a recourse and they would continue to pursue the proposal.

Dr. Surratt said that Mr. Dickerson had suggested the group of stone houses on Concord Avenue in Monroe for possible designation. Letters were mailed to the owners of the houses inviting them to attend today's meeting so the designation procedure could be explained. Only one owner, Jeannette Johnson, 1318 Concord Avenue responded and said that she would try to attend the meeting. Mrs. Gamble told her that a Procedures Manual is available. Mrs. Johnson has made no further contact.

### **Application for Designation**

Dr. Surratt asked about the status of Application for Designation of the C. C. Stokes House, circa 1919, located at 903 West Franklin Street, Monroe, NC. Mrs. Gamble reported that Gail Russell, owner of the house, had called regarding the Application. Mrs. Gamble told her that she had contacted Paul Fromberg, Senior Preservation Specialist, NC Archives. A date for a visit from Mr. Fromberg has not been scheduled. Staff was waiting to hear from owners of the Concord Avenue properties.

### **New Business**

Dr. Surratt introduced Matthew Delk, Assistant Union County Manager. Mr. Delk wanted to speak about the proposed museum. Mr. Delk spoke of the process that should be prepared before presenting a proposal to the County Commissioners regarding the museum. All legalities, budgets, etc. should be covered to have answers to any debates that may be brought up by the commissioners. Mr. Delk recalled a planning meeting that was held before the economy took a downward turn and before his tour of duty. He said that Sis Dillon, Virginia Bjorlin, Sidney Halma, Mary Lou Gamble, and Jeff Crook were present. Preliminary plans were presented, but unfortunately the funds were frozen. He said that he and Mrs. Cynthia Coto had spoken recently about the historic courthouse and the county's need for a museum and she had asked about the stage of planning. Mrs. Coto raised questions about materials for the museum and how to find things, insuring items, etc.

Mr. Delk said that he and Mr. Keith Richards, Risk Manager for Union County had met with Mrs. Bjorlin in December, 2011 with concerns about how to begin insuring items collected and a policy for receiving donations. He added that he and Mrs. Coto are interested in knowing what the County can do at the staff level to help in preparation so a favorable vote will be given by the County Commissioners when a plan for the museum is presented.

Mrs. Bjorlin asked Mr. Delk about receiving donations for the museum -would they be given to the County. Mr. Delk said it should be a split. He explained that if an artifact is owned by the County, it is only protected by the NC General Statutes for local governments. A public body would have to have specific stated permission to receive property with a

requirement for a procedure in place to dispose of the property at the option of the receiver (autos, farm equipment, etc.). Valuable items should be appraised by the donor. Mr. Delk suggested that items be donated to one or the other (museum or an organization) in care of the county. They should be cared for and stored properly. He suggested that representatives from the Union County Historical Society (501-C3) meet with the County attorneys and design a contract with the county to explain what responsibilities are for each.

Dr. Surratt said that policy needs to be established for receiving items in the name of the county as custodian and the Historical Society as the owner, including a statement that the organization as the owner, has the option of deciding what should be kept and what should not.

Mr. Delk said that he would like to talk about hiring an intern - a person who is interested in history and museums - to help with the process.

Mr. Delk suggested that the Commission give consideration to the following questions: What would be expected of an intern? What could he or she accomplish in a 3 month period? Should we begin this summer or plan for a more modified project in the fall semester?

He listed the duties of an intern:

1. Record and identify items, artifacts, photographs, etc. giving the source of donation; location where items are stored for protection.
2. Prepare list of items that could be requested for exhibits
3. Provide a list of items that should be insured

Mr. Delk said that the County had used interns in the past with a salary or a non-paid arrangement. Donations of monetary gifts could be made or a grant could be written to cover expenses of an intern's room and board. He said he had procured information from the Smithsonian about employing an intern. A primary qualification would be a motivated person who is interested in history. The person should also have technological capabilities. He suggested Wingate University and the University at Chapel Hill as possible sources for interested students. He added that if a student is selected, he would need to be hired quickly in order to get maximum hours during the coming summer and perhaps limited hours during the fall - for academic credit. He said too that after talking to Mrs. Coto and Mark Watson, Personnel Director, funds might be available for a salary.

Dr. Surratt said that some structure needs to be developed for hiring an intern regarding salary, duration, local support, room and board and oversight.

Mrs. Gamble noted that the Heritage Room is open only 18 hours a week and arrangements would be needed for extended hours. Mr. Delk said that he could volunteer sometime if supervision was needed. He also said that some work, done in the historic courthouse could be transferred online to a designated location.

Mr. Delk suggested that the Historical Society could put together a committee who will review

applications, develop a job description, make contacts,, interview, make a selection and present an offer. Mrs. Gamble suggested that we need input from all three organizations - the Union County Historical Society, Carolinas Genealogy Society and the Union County Historic Preservation Commission - that sponsor the Heritage Room.

Mr. Delk said that the Union County Board of Commissioners had decided there would be tax cuts on some county funding, but planning can proceed so when funds are available, a presentation can be made.

Dr. Surratt will contact Wingate about any interest there for interns. Dr. Surratt asked Mr. Delk to have a financial status for us at the next meeting on April 5th so that we will know how to proceed.

Mr. Delk asked that a letter be sent to Mrs. Cynthia Coto stating that he had attended the meeting of the Union County Historic Preservation Commission on Thursday, March 1, 2012, and that a lengthy discussion was held about planning for a museum in the historic Union County Courthouse.

In response to Mrs. Bjorlin's questions about planning a capital campaign, Mr. Delk said that is is not a good time because of budget concerns.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mrs. Gamble reported that an email had been received from Rob Crawford requesting information on our Procedures and Ordinances. Mrs. Gamble is mailing him copies of the documents.

Mrs. Bjorlin asked Mr. Delk's permission to use the downstairs rooms to store the Indian Artifacts that have been donated to the Historical Society.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 5, 2012 at 1:30.

Respectively submitted,

Dr. Jerry Surratt, Chairman