

Cary Historic Preservation Commission

2016 Report

September 27, 2016

Background

The Cary Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is completing its second year of operation. The intent of the first year's (2015) commission goals was to ensure that the commission achieved a successful start and built a sound foundation for the future. The 2016 goals build on that foundation and advance the commission's work in the community.

The Historic Preservation Commission 2016 goals were designed to be:

- achievable;
- consistent with a commission in its second year of operation; and
- valuable to the community.

Based on this approach, the following goals were adopted by the HPC and approved by the Town Council.

This report presents the HPC's accomplishments and progress in terms of the adopted goals.

Operational Goals, Accomplishments & Progress

All members have:

- Received training for the conduct of Town of Cary meetings, including public meeting, email and related requirements and guidelines
- Received training for conducting quasi-judicial hearings
- Become familiar with statutes, laws, ordinances, and rules of procedure relating to historic designations
- Become familiar with the Town of Cary Inventory of Historical Resources

Procedural Goals, Accomplishments & Progress

- The commission considered one Historic Landmark designation (actually a partial de-designation) in a timely, thorough and impartial manner and presented a recommendation to the Town Council.
- The commission has not yet considered any Historic District designation recommendations but we have discussed this possibility and expect to focus on this more in 2017.
- The commission considered one Certificate of Appropriateness request in a timely, thorough and impartial manner in a quasi-judicial hearing. The request was withdrawn before the commission completed any findings.
- The commission has identified, from the Town of Cary Inventory of Historical Resources, potential future Historic Landmarks based on a thorough review of the Inventory and a "scoring" system. For private properties, we expect to contact several property owners in the near future and provide education to owners interested in pursuing landmark status. We recommended three town-owned properties to the Cary Town Council for local historic landmark status and the Town Council approved pursuing the initial reports for these properties to begin the process to determine if they will become landmarks. The commission also heard from the owners of one private property who might be interested in pursuing

landmark designation and had discussion with and provided education to those property owners.

- The commission engaged in focused discussion to advance the process of creating one or more local historic districts, including examining potential boundaries with respect to the National Register historic districts. We expect to devote more attention to this topic, especially for a downtown local historic district, in 2017.
- The commission engaged in outreach and educational activities in the community to promote awareness of historic preservation and the historic preservation commission, including a presence at Spring Daze and the creation of informational materials about historic properties in Cary.

Excellence Goals, Accomplishments & Progress

The commission has:

- Complied with all relevant statutes, laws, ordinances, and rules of procedure
- Conducted all business in an open, positive, collaborative manner
- Maintained open communication with the Cary Town Council, Cary Town Staff, related historic preservation organizations and the community
- Begun the process to pursue the State Historic Preservation Office “Certified Local Government” (CLG) designation for local historic preservation commissions. Commission members have received State Historic Preservation Office sponsored training and completed individual member forms in preparation for applying for CLG designation.

2016 Highlights

The commission held its first quasi-judicial hearing to consider a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) request from the owner of one of the town’s local landmarks. The owner withdrew the request before the commission completed any findings.

The commission also held its first public hearing to consider the partial de-designation of a local landmark property (the same property as the CoA request just mentioned). We voted on a recommendation to Town Council and presented our findings to Town Council, which approved the request.

Cary currently has 7 local historic landmark properties, and one of the HPC’s responsibilities is to identify additional landmark candidates. Identifying potential future local historic landmark properties required the commission to review more than 300 properties on Cary’s inventory of historic resources. Commission members ranked all the properties and then reviewed and discussed our consolidated rankings. To date we have identified about 30 top-tier candidates for potential historic landmark designation. We have reviewed candidate properties to ensure that each of Cary’s historic context time periods and various property types (such as residential, commercial, etc.) are appropriately represented as candidates for preservation. For the top tier candidates we also have identified which specific preservation criteria apply for those properties. We expect that only a few of these properties will actually pursue landmark status.

We recommended three town-owned properties for potential landmark designation and the Town Council approved pursuing the initial reports for these properties to begin the process to determine if they will become landmarks. We plan to begin conversations soon with private property owners to determine if they are interested in landmark designation. In addition, others besides the HPC, including property owners themselves, can nominate properties for local

landmark status. The owners of one property have approached the commission about potential landmark status and we have visited the property and had discussions with the owners.

2017 Outlook

The HPC expects to build on the accomplishments of 2016 to continue to pursue our mission to work to preserve the historical, cultural, and architectural heritage of our Town for future generations. As we establish our 2017 goals, we expect to:

- Recommend new local historic landmarks to the Town Council, based on the top candidates we have identified for those property owners who wish to pursue this designation.
- Continue discussions about establishing local historic districts. Such conversations will ultimately involve many stakeholders, including the HPC, Town Council, Town Staff, property owners and the community.
- Pursue Certified Local Government status. This certification enables Cary to participate in the national framework of historic preservation programs and offers benefits such as the ability to apply for grants to perform preservation projects.
- Continue open communication with the Cary Town Council, Cary Town Staff, related historic preservation organizations and the community; and continue community outreach efforts.

Conclusion

We believe that the HPC has had a successful second year and that we are on solid footing for the future. It is a privilege and honor to serve the citizens of Cary in this capacity. The commission members extend thanks and great appreciation to Council liaison Ed Yerha and Staff liaison Anna Readling.

2016 Historic Preservation Commission

Brent Miller, chair
Chris Johnson
Charles McDarris
Bob Myers
Sheila Ogle
Jennifer Rossi
Jennifer Sisak
Town Council Liaison Ed Yerha
Town Staff Liaison Anna Readling

Incoming new members beginning Oct. 1, 2016 (replacing Johnson, McDarris & Ogle):

Joy Anderson
Leah Campbell
Sarah Riney

Report prepared by Brent Miller