

**TOWN OF TRYON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 15, 2019 11:00 A.M.
TRYON TOWN HALL – MCCOWN ROOM
SPECIAL MEETING**

Present: Mayor Pro J. Alan Peoples Mayor Pro Tem Bill Ingham
Commissioners: Crys Armbrust, Bill Crowell Absent: Commissioner Chrelle Booker
Staff Present: Town Manager Zach Ollis Town Clerk Susan Bell

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Peoples called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. and turned over to Ms. Tolbert.

Tiffany Tolbert, Senior Field officer for the National Trust Historic Preservation office. She is out of the Chicago office. She gave some background on where things are since they were here last with the Nina Simone Project. Also here with her was Olivia Tarricone, Preservation Architect, who will talk about the assessment on the structure and give recommendations and speak on how they are going to incorporate those recommendations. Last June they launched the Nina Simone project. They are working on three things.

1. Look at options for the property for future protection.
2. Look at the structure.
3. Look at the future use of the property.

The owners would like to see it preserved, but they don't intend to own the property forever.

1. Protection Preservation Easement-agreed to do this
2. Would it be eligible for the National Trust of Historical Places – they are developing a nomination-feel it is worthy
3. Zoning protection
4. Rehabilitation – issues architecturally – capture where property is now (stabilizing it)
5. Use – want to incorporate the legacy of Nina Simone – contract with consultant that will look at the residency and do a visionary session

They will then present options to the owners who will ultimately decide what they want to do with the property. There will be a lot of activity within the next few months. They would also like input from the board.

Olivia presented a snapshot of the physical condition of the house based on field observations done in May 2018.

First is the overview of the site. There is five parts. The photos help to illustrate the condition of the house. The architect can take this document and see what needs to be done. You have all seen the house. It seems to be stable. Because it has been exposed to air, it probably has deteriorated further. On page 6 there are photos showing the elevation. Commissioner Crowell asked about the condition of the roof. She will get to that. On page 7, it shows the porch. The house is a simple house with wood

frame on brick pillars. You can see that the floor joists have been recently reinforced. Room 2 on page 12, you can see where the room has been rebuilt by previous owner because of damage done from the roof. The roof and framing are the most significant things. Page 15 goes through everything – there are certain areas in red (walls) that really needs work. The windows are not bad just need some work. Page 17 pictures of newer framing underneath the house. MEP – mechanical, electrical, plumbing and fire protection are nonexistent. The architect will have these photos to reference to do a condition measurement.

Any questions? There were none at this time.

Tiffany stated there is more detail in the report. On page 29 at the end of the report shows her recommendations. They have contacted the owners. After the assessment, they can continue to let it sit until the use is decided. The structural issues have been identified. The windows and doors need to be repaired.

They have been fortunate with some fund raising. Olivia has recommendations outlining a two phase approach where the building is first stabilized to prevent further deterioration and then the chosen re-use is implemented in a traditional design and construction process. They would like to hire an architect. They released the RFP for architect last week. She would like to have one selected by May 8.

Part of the fundraising would come through HOPE Hands on Preservation Experience. This program helps young people be involved in the preservation. HOPE has received a grant to do projects throughout the country. Would like to do a HOPE crew on site here. They could use HOPE to handle the siding and the painting to help seal the envelope and hand over the roof to the architect. Can use the re-use materials.

They would like to push the architect to get him on board. By May they hope to have the house not leaking. There is water damage. There is two layers of roofing, one is stamped tin tiles from the 1940's. This is the original roof and the other one that is peeling off. They would like the architect to look and see if the pressed tin can be salvaged. Olivia stated they are trying to stop it from deteriorating. Stabilization can proceed even if they don't know what the use will be.

Tiffany stated they are committed to doing this, because people want to see it done. They want to make sure the Board is okay with what they are doing and asked about concerns and what they need to take into consideration.

Crowell stated you mentioned early the town's rezoning for possible historical preservation. Do you have a protocol for this? Tiffany stated N.C. has a preservation ordinance and some towns have local ones. They make a recommendation to the commissioners to designate a property for Historical Designation. It's a benefit for the town to have this. Armbrust stated we have one, but it needs to be tweaked. He stopped by John Walters' (local architect) office before coming here and he would be interested in this. Tiffany will do follow up calls next week.

Armbrust asked if the drawings on pages 24-28 would be sufficient in order to pull the building permit. Manager Ollis stated he feels that it's more than sufficient and he will contact the county to see if they need more. Tiffany would like to know soon.

Armbrust asked if Fred Counts house had been scheduled for demolition. Tim scheduled the hearing and sent letters, but they did not reach anyone. Armbrust asked what would be the possibility if the house is demolished to harvest items for this project from there, such as siding and flooring. Ollis stated most of the house was damaged in the fire. There is very little left. Armbrust stated they don't need much. Most of it is there. Tiffany stated maybe they could collect some from the location. Tim stated technically Fred Counts son owns the property. He will check. Wouldn't you want to contact them first? Armbrust stated he will contact Angie later today and ask her. Ollis stated if they are willing to donate, he will take care of it. Mayor Peoples stated a signed document is needed.

Tiffany stated the HOPE crew is hands on. This grant wants to expand their outreach to educate the next generation.

Jerry Soderquist, Cemetery Committee Chairman, stated across the street from the cemetery is another building that belongs to the African American Masonic Lodge. The group is active, but only has about ten members. The lodge is within 400 feet of the cemetery. They are not using the building and it needs a lot of repairs. The cemetery committee looked at the building and with all the repairs decided it was not feasible at this time.

Tiffany asked what else is available. Good to share and they have room for expanded services. She will be holding a visioning session on May 15 and 16 and would like to see about this. Jerry stated it was built in 1951 and organized in 1912. Armbrust stated it was 1914, because they dug up graves from the churches and moved them to the cemetery. Jerry stated the cemetery committee started in 1923 and has recently obtained an additional five acres. The cemetery is active, there's just not much space. The building is concrete block with two floors. The roof has a leak in it. The ductwork has asbestos. The group was using the building until the last eight or nine years. Historically the organization has a long history with the town. Tiffany stated this is great to know for the visioning session. They want to access other amenities in the town.

They are bringing on a consultant to look at artists in residency to help settle on a use. The consultant will want to do a site visit. The visioning session will have the artists, the Trust, Town of Tryon representatives, Heritage Area, World Monument that has been great with fund raising will be here, UNC Asheville and other universities. They have a long list of representations to be here. She asked if there were others that needed to be here.

Armbrust stated because of the future uses, it would behoove you to do a visit to the Tryon Arts & Crafts School. Their new executive director would be an essential points person. Tiffany will pass that along. She thanked everyone. She just wants to keep the chain of communications open.

Mayor Peoples stated twelve to fifteen years ago two people came from Italy and asked where the queen of soul lived. He took them to see her house and he could see how disappointed they were. We have enough places to be studied and researched. Tiffany says that is what she likes about Tryon. You can stay here and find plenty to do. They are really promoting this project.

She thanked the board for their time and asked if they had any issues to please let her know.

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adjourn. Armbrust so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

J. Alan Peoples, Mayor

Attest:

Susan B. Bell, Town Clerk