

Lauer, Martha

From: Peter Rumsey <peter@peterrumsey.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2014 9:50 AM
To: Lauer, Martha
Subject: Oakwood Support for Flexible RHDC Guidelines
Attachments: Living History, Living Raleigh - 140921.pdf

Importance: High

Dear RHDC commissioners and staff,

We represent an active and diverse group of Oakwood neighbors who champion historic preservation. Our commitment is rooted in a deep appreciation of the intricate balance of history and variety that prospers in this unique neighborhood. This diversity is the very thing that, over time, enhances our quality of life and the value of Oakwood homes.

The attached "statement" outlines our position and includes the names of over 80 supporters, all of whom live in the Oakwood local historic district. We support the Cherry-Gordon House. And we favor retaining RHDC guidelines that allow infill and additions that reflect our current time, while remaining compatible with historic structures. We oppose adding *style* in the RHDC guidelines. Such changes would adopt language originally intended to preserve Old Salem locked in the past. Our view is best expressed by Steven W. Semes, a national expert on infill and historic preservation:

What makes buildings from different eras and styles compatible is that they share the same underlying principles of space, structure, elements, composition, proportion, ornament, and character. If these principles are consistent among the buildings along a street or around a square, they will be compatible, regardless of style.

We welcome the upcoming RHDC review. We want to find ways to clarify RHDC guidelines and discourage tear downs and inappropriate infill and additions. On a related issue, we also support broadening the period of significance to include structures excluded from the 1970s survey because they were then less than 50 years old.

Please call upon us and other supporters to meet with you and others to explore how best to continue the important and impressive work of historic preservation that has been achieved thus far in Raleigh through careful and forward-looking planning by the City and its citizens working together. This message and the attached statement were prepared by Toni Sutphin, Tina and Grayson Currin, Molly and Will Feichter, Jim and Meghan Melo, Mary Dillon, Barbara Wishy*, Curtis Kasefang*, Hugh Stohler#, Peter Rumsey.

* Prior RHDC chair. # Prior RHDC member.

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Living History, Living Raleigh

The construction of the home at 516 Euclid has set off debate about the decisions of the Raleigh Historic Development Commission and the content of the guidelines the Commission is tasked with enforcing. The City is currently updating those guidelines, a process that will include one or more public hearings this fall.

Many residents of Historic Oakwood and other historic districts believe that historic structures should be protected but that these neighborhoods should not be frozen in time. They believe that contemporary infill, thoughtfully regulated by the Raleigh Historic Development Commission (RHDC), can be compatible with the historic character of our local historic neighborhoods. These districts reflect a continuous and continuing thread of time. The present generations' contribution, both infill and additions, should reflect their own times, while remaining compatible with, but not imitating, the truly old buildings.

As residents of Historic Oakwood, we support this view. And we support the RHDC decision approving the construction of the Louis Cherry-Marsha Gordon House at 516 Euclid Street. Oakwood is not frozen in time as is Colonial Williamsburg. Rather Historic Oakwood is historically unique because of its diversity. This diversity is the very thing that enhances the value of homes and the quality of life in our Oakwood neighborhood.

We welcome the opportunity to revisit the RHDC and Board of Adjustment process and guidelines exploring alternatives for how they may provide greater clarity to homeowners, builders and members of the Commission while maintaining aspects of the guidelines that allow flexibility. This City review should also examine how the guidelines can most effectively discourage the tear down of both contributing and non-contributing structures in a historic district. A related issue is whether additional homes now 50 years or older should be designated as contributing structures in an historic district. The original 1970s survey in Historic Oakwood excluded homes then less than 50 years old which themselves are part of the story of the development of Raleigh's first suburb.

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|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Mary Dillon | Hugh Stohler | Jerry Blow | Leigh Blow |
| Curtis Kasefang | Sharon O'Neill | Sheila Duncan | George Duncan |
| Bob Tomb | Norma Tomb | Kristopher Nordstrom | Kate Bronstein |
| Jim Melo | Meghan Melo | Madonna Phillips | Greg Hallam |
| Barbara Wishy | Peter Rumsey | Julie Snee | Andrew Snee |
| Grayson Currin | Tina Currin | Debra Smith | Bob Rose |
| Kay Coleman | Ed Coleman | Donald Mertrud | Michiel Doorn |
| Toni Sutphin | Will Sutphin | Katherine White | Thomas Urquhart |
| Molly Feichter | Will Feichter | Heather Hesketh | Steve Champeon |
| D. Eagle White, III | Bonnie McCreary | Hélène Crié-Wiesner | Win Coleman |
| Ann Franklin | Joshua Franklin | Imogen Hoyle | Crosby Franklin |
| Crystal Farrow | Randy Godwin | Don Hobart | Kay Hobart |
| Sue Rudkin | Mike Rudkin | Coleen Speaks | Nick Speaks |
| Laura Jackson | Jim Biddell | Greg Colvin | Liisa Ogburn |
| Lou Pascucci | Sarah Pascucci | Heidi Walters | Chris Mackey |
| John Dancy-Jones | Cara Dancy-Jones | Chris Gotwalt | Jessica Gotwalt |
| Linda Tripp-Corbin | Richard Kaznicki | Trish Healy | John Healy |
| Aranzazu Lascurain | Matthew Booker | Dan Gaugert | Terry Harper |
| Gene Conti | Betsy Conti | Susan Iddings | Rob Hale |
| Lisa Finaldi | Brian Starkey | Eric David | Chris Crew |
| Sabra Taylor | John Clay | | |