CONTENTS

Introduction.......................................................................................... 3
Highlights............................................................................................... 4
Identify................................................................................................. 4
Preserve................................................................................................. 6
Protect.................................................................................................... 8
Promote................................................................................................. 10
Preservation Trends............................................................................... 11
Annual Work Program........................................................................... 12
About the Commission........................................................................... 14
The Raleigh Historic Development Commission (RHDC) is proud to present its performance report for 2015-2018.

The commission has continued identifying, preserving, protecting, and promoting Raleigh’s historic resources on behalf of the citizens of Raleigh. This report highlights our efforts to designate local landmarks, National Register properties and Historic Overlay Districts as well as our ongoing design review work.

We are particularly proud of our participation in documenting the city’s African American history, including our sponsorship of Raleigh Historic Landmark designations for the Berry O’Kelly School Campus and the Lillie Stroud Rogers House. Additionally, we are pleased to have supported the designation of Oberlin Village as a Historic Overlay District as well as the listing of John Chavis Memorial Park and Berry O’Kelly Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places.

Preserving places in peril has been a theme as we partnered with Preservation North Carolina (PNC) on the relocation of the Lustron House and the sale of the Plummer T. Hall House to PNC as its future office. We have also worked diligently to widen the reach of RHDC by partnering with the City of Raleigh Department of Transportation and Community Development Division.

The Commission looks forward to continuing to fulfill our city’s preservation goals.

Don Davis, RHDC Chair
RHDC identified the Adams-Scott House, Gables Motor Lodge, and the Lustron House as eligible to be designated as Raleigh Historic Landmarks. Landmark designation reports for these properties were commissioned by RHDC in 2017.

**Architectural Survey Update**

Utilizing a Historic Preservation Fund pass-through grant from the National Park Service, the RHDC commissioned an update of Raleigh’s Architectural Survey. The focus was on mid-20th-century neighborhoods and areas annexed since 2006, when the last update was completed. Six neighborhoods were added to the National Register State Study List.

**Method Community**

Thanks to a warm reception from enthusiastic residents and descendants, RHDC spent a lot of time in Method, a former freedmen’s village. The commission prepared a study and historic context which identified at least two properties as potential Raleigh Historic Landmarks. Additionally, RHDC contracted an architectural historian to prepare the National Register Nomination for the Berry O’Kelly School Historic District. It was successfully listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2017 and subsequently designated as a Raleigh Historic Landmark in 2018. RHDC also contracted for a ground penetrating radar archaeological survey for Oak Grove Cemetery.

**Other Studies**

RHDC, in partnership with the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department, successfully applied to have Chavis Park listed in the National Register of Historic Places and commissioned the study on the Historic Context and Physical Evolution of Nash Square to support future planning processes.
RHDC sponsored three Raleigh Historic Landmark designations: the Gethsemane Seventh Day Adventist Church, the Lillie Stroud Rogers House, and the Berry O’Kelly School Campus. The Rogers House was identified in the historic context report on the Method neighborhood, prepared by RHDC in 2016.

RHDC also recommended the designation of six Raleigh Historic Landmarks: the Owen & Dorothy Smith House, the H. J. Brown Coffin House Building, Fisher’s Bakery & Sandwich Company, City Cemetery, Mount Hope Cemetery, and the William A. Curtis House.

A partnership between RHDC, Preservation North Carolina, and the City of Raleigh prevented the demolition of the Lustron House and a group of sculptures by moving them to other sites in the city. (October 2017)
New Raleigh Historic Landmarks

**A** Gethsemane Seventh Day Adventist Church, ca. 1922 (501 S. Person Street)

**B** Owen & Dorothy Smith House, 1959 (122 Perquimans Drive)

**C** Lillie Stroud Rogers House, ca. 1940 (616 Method Road)

**D** Berry O’Kelly School Campus, 1928, 1931; ca. 1959 (514 Method Road)

**E** H. J. Brown Coffin House Building, 1907, ca. 1920 (200 S. Salisbury Street)

**F** Fisher’s Bakery & Sandwich Company, 1952, 1979 (1519 Brookside Drive)

**G** City Cemetery, 1798 (519 E. Hargett Street)

**H** William A. Curtis House, 1915 (1415 Poole Road)

**I** Mount Hope Cemetery, 1872 (1120 Fayetteville Street)
In 2015, RHDC commissioned a Historic Overlay District (HOD) report for the Glenwood-Brooklyn National Register Historic District which resulted in City Council designating the city’s first Streetside Historic Overlay District. An HOD report for Oberlin Village was prepared in 2016; the district was designated in February 2018. The City Council’s designation was due in large part to the efforts of the owners and residents of the respective neighborhoods.

After multiple rounds of public comment, in May 2017, City Council adopted RHDC’s updated Design Guidelines for Raleigh Historic Districts and Landmarks. One of RHDC’s core responsibilities is the review of applications for, and issuance of, Certificates of Appropriateness (COA).
COA Totals
2016-2017

205

- 78 Committee Decisions
- 127 Staff Approvals
- 14 denied in whole or in part (6.8%)

COA Totals
2017-2018

180

- 62 Committee Decisions
- 118 Staff Approvals
- 2 denied in whole or in part (1.1%)
Method Day

RHDC hosted events at two Method Days, presented the results of the archaeological and architectural studies and held a scanning event where descendants of the neighborhood and Berry O’Kelly School alumni brought photos and yearbooks.

Media

The commission added nine tours to RaleighHistoric.org, a website and corresponding smartphone application featuring Raleigh’s landmarks. The additions are the Historic Capital City Trail, Blount Street Historic Corridor, African American Landmarks, Raleigh Business Districts, Medical Care in Raleigh, Capitol Square Historic District Tour, Historic Method, Oberlin Village, and Foodie Tour.

Events

The commission’s behind-the-scenes tour of the Capitol Square Historic District gave special access to the Capitol, the Richard B. Haywood House, the Water Tower and the 1859 and 1904 First Baptist Churches. The event included a First Look Party at the Haywood House the evening prior to the event. (May 2016)

In partnership with Preservation North Carolina and the Department of City Planning, RHDC facilitated an event geared around preserving neighborhood character. Presentations on character preservation zoning tools were followed by neighborhood round table discussions. Following the event, RHDC published a brochure on Character Preservation Overlay Districts. (June 2016)

As part of its efforts to save the last known intact Lustron House in Raleigh, RHDC held two events. The first was a fundraising movie night and panel discussion co-sponsored by NC Modernist Houses and the second was a debut of the video series documenting the history of the house and its relocation. (December 2016 and November 2017)

In partnership with the NC Museum of History and the City of Raleigh, RHDC sponsored a free screening of “Rosenwald,” a documentary on the incredible story of businessman and philanthropist, Julius Rosenwald and his educational mission in African-American communities in the south during the early part of the 20th century. (February 2017)
Preservation Trends

Raleigh’s national visibility as a great place to live, work, and play, brings increased pressure on limited historic resources. Over the last few years, RHDC has observed the following trends and issues related to growth and our historic resources.

There is an increase in desirability of homes “inside the beltline” resulting in teardowns in older neighborhoods not designated as historic overlay districts. There has been a corresponding interest from neighborhood groups in considering character protection overlays.

The trend toward increased house sizes and accommodation of covered vehicle parking is creating pressure on existing historic overlay districts to find a balance between residents’ “wants” and preservation of a historic neighborhood’s character. One example of a related issue presently under discussion by City Council is backyard cottages.

There is a limited supply of downtown and vicinity vacant lots available to relocate buildings at risk of being demolished.

We are seeing an increase in high-rise development which is creating pressure to rezone properties in historic areas where such height is incongruent with historic character.

Growth has also highlighted the ongoing need for permit enforcement. There is insufficient trained staff to conduct field reviews resulting in more post-COA and during construction changes. There is a need for the city to provide an increased level of code enforcement during construction of COA approved projects.
COMMISSION/STAFF
• Conduct strategic planning process.
• Pursue use of unrealized authority.

COA COMMITTEE
• Constant improvement of the COA process.
• Begin the process of updating the Site and Setting Section of the Design Guidelines for Raleigh Historic Districts and Landmarks.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS COMMITTEE
• Launch mobile app tours.
• Publish DejaNews, the RHDC newsletter.
• Update the RHDC website and social media sites for improved customer support.
• Celebrate National Historic Preservation Month.
• Partner with the Historic Resources and Museum Advisory Board on a fall event.
RESEARCH COMMITTEE

• Identify, prioritize, and recommend historic properties and neighborhoods for Raleigh Historic Landmark, Raleigh Historic Overlay District, and National Register designation.

• Evaluate and publish a list of potential Raleigh Historic Landmarks.

• Recommend that the Lustron House be designated a Raleigh Historic Landmark.

• Review and comment on the Dix Park planning process.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

• Identify and nominate Commissioner candidates with the requisite skills to fill open positions for City Council consideration.

• Provide new commissioner orientation.

Established in 1961, the mission of the RHDC is to serve as the City Council’s official historic advisory body to identify, preserve, protect, and promote Raleigh’s historic resources. The duties and responsibilities of RHDC are outlined in the North Carolina General Statues (NCGS 160A, Article 19, Part 3C) and Raleigh Unified Development Ordinance (Section 10.1.4). Within this body of legislation, RHDC has established Council-ratified “Bylaws and Rules of Procedure,” as well as Design Guidelines for Raleigh Historic Districts and Landmarks.

As part of its responsibilities, RHDC performs the duties required to maintain the city’s federal Certified Local Government status. Its work is supported by City Council designated funding and three full-time preservation planners, one of whom is the executive director, provided through the Department of City Planning.

RHDC consists of twelve volunteers appointed by City Council for up to three consecutive two-year terms. It manages its activities through the work of five committees:

- Certificate of Appropriateness
- Community Awareness
- Executive
- Nominations
- Research
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### RHDC Membership Roster

- **Will Alphin** (2010-16)
- **Nicole Alvarez** (2016-18)
- **Travis Bailey** (2017-18)
- **Elizabeth Caliendo** (2012-18)
- **Sarah David** (2012-18)
- **Don Davis** (2013-18)
- **Miranda Downer** (2011-16)
- **Nick Fountain** (2017-18)
- **Sabrina Goode** (2016-17)
- **Esther Hall** (2015-17)
- **Jenny Harper** (2013-18)
- **John Hinshaw** (2016-18)
- **Laurie Jackson** (2014-18)
- **Rachel Rumsey** (2012-16)
- **Scott Shackleton** (2010-16)
- **Caleb Smith** (2015-17)
- **Jimmy Thiem** (2016-18)
- **Flora Hatley Wadelington** (2010-16)
- **Kaye Webb** (2015-18)
- **Gaston Williams** (2017-18)