

Charlotte-Mecklenburg

Historic Landmarks Commission

Subject: Rezoning Petition Comments

To: Charlotte Planning, Design & Development
From: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission
HLC Staff Contact: Tommy Warlick
Date: February 24, 2023

Petition #/Petitioner: 2022-084/Mission Properties

Parcel ID #: 02961112, 02961104, and 02961111

Location of Property: Approximately 20.85 acres located along the south side of Ridge Road and north side of the Interstate 485 interchange.

Existing Zoning: R-3

Proposed Zoning: R-17MF(CD)

Background Information

The parcels in question comprise an early twentieth-century farm. Such places are increasingly rare in and around Charlotte and serve as valuable reminders of the rich agricultural history of Mecklenburg County. Of particular interest is the well-preserved rural farmhouse at 429 Ridge Road on a one-acre parcel (tax parcel ID # 02961111). Built in 1920, the hipped-roof, one-story, Bungalow form, frame house resembles a large pyramidal cottage. The integrated front porch is indicative of both the Bungalow form and Craftsman style popular in the early twentieth century. A low but prominent hipped-roof dormer protrudes from the roof, centered over the integrated porch. The house appears to be in good condition with an appreciable degree of integrity as to its original design and materials.

Most Mecklenburg County farmhouses were constructed between 1860 and 1900 during the initial years of the post- Civil War cotton boom. During those latter decades of the nineteenth century, the continued popularity of the traditional I-house form – simple one-or-two-pile, two-story, side-gabled structures – reflected the conservative nature of the county’s typical rural homebuilder. By the early twentieth century, however, that rural building boom had ended. In those more infrequent instances in the 1910s and 1920s when rural residential structures were constructed, those farmhouses tended to reflect contemporary urban styles. As of the 1920 construction date of the 1429 Ridge Road farmhouse, “the most popular and fashionable smaller house in the country,” including within Charlotte and surrounding small towns, was the Craftsman bungalow.¹ Bungalow

¹ Emily and Lara Ramsey, “Survey and Research Report on the Jesse and Mary K. Washam Farm,” Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, January 30, 2002, 9-10 (quoting Virginia and Lee McAlister, *A Field*



farmhouses were therefore far less common, making this house architecturally significant as a rare surviving example of a Mecklenburg County bungalow farmhouse.

Impact Under Current Zoning

The current zoning for the parcel would not permit the purposed use.

Impact of the Proposed Rezoning/Development

The proposed rezoning and development would result in the demolition of all structures on the three parcels, including the century-old farmhouse at 1429 Ridge Road (tax parcel ID # 02961111).

Recommendation

Approval of Rezoning Petition #2022-084 would result in the demolition of a century-old farmhouse of local historical and architectural significance, due in part to the scarcity of such Craftsman bungalow style rural residences from the early twentieth century. Any approved rezoning to accommodate the proposed development should include a proactive plan for the preservation of the historic house. Accordingly, it is recommended that tax parcel ID number 02961111 (1429 Ridge Road) not be rezoned and instead retain its current R-3 zoning classification, and that the applicant consult with the Historic Landmarks Commission on an appropriate preservation solution for the property. As for the remaining subject tax parcels, it is recommended that any development incorporate proactive measures (including by way of example only appropriate setbacks from the farmhouse) consistent with and sensitive to the farmhouse's historical and architectural significance.

Guide to American Houses (New York: Knopf, 1997), 454), <http://landmarkscommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Washam-Farm-Jesse-Mary-K-SR.pdf>, accessed February 24, 2023.