



# Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission

204 East Academy St. ♦ P.O. Box 771 ♦ Asheboro, North Carolina 27204

May 27, 2014

The Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission (HLPC) met in the Meeting Room of the 1909 Historic Courthouse at 145 Worth Street, Asheboro, NC, and the meeting was called to order by Chairman Hal Johnson at 2:00 p.m.

Members present were Hal Johnson, Chairman; Fran Andrews, Vice Chair; Bill Johnson; Marsha Haithcock; Mac Whatley; Bill Ivey and Warren Dixon.

## **Approval of Minutes**

*On motion of Whatley, seconded by Andrews, the HLPC voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of October 22, 2013, and Special Joint Meeting of March 12, 2014, as presented.*

## **Presentation/Public Hearing for the St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, ca. 1879 Landmark Designation**

Chairman Johnson stated that the North Randolph Historical Society (founded in 1966) had requested that the St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church be designated as a historic landmark in Randolph County.

Chairman Johnson commended the Society on their efforts to protect the building and its historical value, after which the Society made a presentation.

Louise Hudson, President of the North Randolph Historical Society, introduced other members of the Society that were present: Bob Day, Nancy Henderson, and Ray Hudson.

Ms. Hudson stated that the original St. Paul's Church, built in 1755 and of wood, was originally founded in the settlement that was known as Union Factory, around a cotton mill of the same name. The land for the original small church and cemetery, which consisted of a small wooden structure that had been constructed on the present site, and sat on a hillside overlooking the nearby mill complex on Deep River, was donated by James Dicks, son of Peter Dicks of New Salem.

According to the local landmark significance summary, in 1868, John Banner Randleman and John H. Ferree purchased the factory along the river and renamed it the Randleman Manufacturing Company. In 1876, a group of businessmen petitioned the legislature in Raleigh for incorporation. Mr. Ferree and Mr. Randleman, as early community industrialists, were important not only as contributors to St. Paul's Church, but to the community and town of Union Factory as providers of jobs to the local citizens. The City of Randleman is named in honor of Mr. John Banner Randleman.

In 1878, the members of the church called for the erection of a new St. Paul's Church. Ms. Hudson said it is believed to be because they felt the church needed a larger presence in the community. John Ferree, who was a member of the church, commissioned Peter Clark, aided by Allen Redding, to build the church. The cost of the completed building was approximately four

thousand dollars and Mr. Randleman and Mr. Ferree donated the church to the community. Serving as a home for the congregation for over fifty years, the church was built in 1879.

She said that the St. Paul's Church has been fortunate to have maintained its special structural and architectural integrity since its construction in 1879. It is believed that the St. Paul's Church was the first brick church constructed in Randolph County and used a simplified Greek Revival-style design with a pointed-arch stained glass window behind the pulpit and the balcony is a suspension balcony.

Ms. Hudson said that it is believed that about one hundred yards behind the church near the small stream, clay, dug from the property, was hand pressed and fired in a kiln nearby for bricks for the church. The hand-made bricks were placed on a native rock foundation, cemented with lime, sand, and hickory ashes. Timber was cut in view of the church. Beams of immense size were hand hewn and sized to roof level, to form the peaked top and bell tower. Hand split shingles covered upright walls of the obelisk-like steeple. Since its original construction in 1879, a wrought iron hand-rail was added, ca. 2000, and the window panes replaced, ca. 1993.

In his homecoming speech in September of 1925, Reverend Amos Gregson gives credit to John Banner Randleman and John H. Ferree for providing the money and hiring the builders to construct the new brick St. Paul Church in 1879.



Ms. Hudson said that a significant feature of the church is its interior and that numerous inquiries had been made about its restoration, especially the walls which were designed and painted by a well-known North Carolina artist, Jules Gilmer Korner, from Forsyth County, who is remembered locally today by his trade name "Reubin Rink." Korner and two workmen lived in the town for several weeks, decorating the interiors of several homes as well as the church. The historical report states that Korner expanded on the theme of the pointed-arch stained glass window behind the pulpit and painted the entire walls of the balcony and sanctuary with airy designs of draperies, columns, and stained glass windows. The interior construction follows a shallow vestibule with stairs at the entrance leading to the gallery above. Plaster walls, wide plank floors, and a repainted flush board wood ceiling highlight interior construction. A paneled

balustrade is located at the front of the gallery that runs along three sides of the church. The gallery has a raised section for seating. There are two doors leading to the open nave/sanctuary and the projecting aspe at the far end behind a raised, curved dais with balustrade. St. Paul's Church was used continuously as a house of worship from its opening in 1879 until 1947, when the membership of St. Paul's combined with the Naomi Falls Methodist congregation and built a new church on Main Street in Randleman.

On May 1, 1968, the St. Paul's Church was donated by the Methodist Church District to the North Randolph Historical Society along with .32 acres of land. The United Methodist Church maintains ownership of the surrounding cemetery. The St. Paul's Church currently serves as a museum dedicated to preserving its history and the heritage of the Randleman/North Randolph County community. The Society repaired the leaking roof in order to preserve the historical building and they had the balcony restored back to its original design. Ms. Hudson said that over the years, walls had been added and the balcony had been used for classrooms.



Bob Day, Treasurer for the Society, said the Society received a letter in December 2013 from the family of Peter "Patrick" Clark. He was the mason commissioned for the brick and construction of the church. The family was trying to locate the burial location of their relative. The last letter they had received from him mentioned High Point, NC, but they had not been able to locate his name on any records in that area. The letter stated that he was born in 1834, a Civil War veteran, a brick mason and had left New York in the late 1870's. They knew he was building a church in the area and wanted to know if it happened to be the same Peter Clark that was listed as the mason for the church. Mr. Day said that the Society responded to the family, notifying them that it is believed that he is the same and that he is buried in the church cemetery, which is located beside the church.

At 2:26 p.m., the Commission adjourned to a duly advertised public hearing to consider the request to recommend to the Randleman Board of Alderman the St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, ca. 1879 for local historic landmark designation. Chairman Johnson opened the public hearing and closed it before taking action.

**Greg Patton**, Randleman Planning Director, spoke on behalf of the City of Randleman and said the City is proud to have the museum and the Society in Randleman and said the City is in favor of the designation.

*On motion of Ivey, seconded by Dixon, the HLPC voted unanimously to approve the request for local landmark designation and the resolution of support for the Randleman Board of Alderman's designation by ordinance of St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, ca. 1879 as a historic landmark, as follows:*

***Resolution Recommending Local Historic Landmark Designation  
St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, ca. 1879***

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 160A, Article 19, Part 3C of the North Carolina General Statutes provides for the designation of Local Historic Landmarks; and

**WHEREAS**, the Randolph County Board of Commissioners has appointed the Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission and provided opportunities for municipalities within Randolph County to designate the Commission as a joint historic preservation commission, having authority to exercise, within the planning jurisdiction of the municipalities, all powers and duties given it by the Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Ordinance; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Randleman and the County of Randolph have entered into such inter-local agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, the Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission has taken into consideration all information contained in the Historic Landmark Designation application as filed by the North Randolph Historic Society; and

**WHEREAS**, the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office, has been given the opportunity to review and comment upon the landmark designation and has commented that the report contains sufficient data for the Commission and City Council to make Local Landmark determination; and

**WHEREAS**, the Randolph County Historic Landmark Commission finds that the St. Paul's Church, ca. 1879, meets the following specific criteria outlined in the adopting Ordinance for landmark designation: (1) Critical part of the City of Randleman's heritage by having value as an example of the cultural, economic, historic, and social heritage of the city and county; (2) Exemplification of an architectural type distinguished by overall quality, design, materials, and craftsmanship; (3) the location of the St. Paul's Church, ca. 1879, provides a unique and distinctive structure representing an established and familiar visual presence in the City of Randleman and Randolph County; and

**WHEREAS**, the property is more specifically described as follows:

*The exterior of the building located at 401 High Point St., .32 acres, PIN # 7765051197, Randleman, Randolph County, N.C.*

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission approves the request for Local Historic Landmark designation, and recommends to the Randleman Board of Alderman that the St. Paul's Church, ca. 1879, be officially designated a Local Historic Landmark.

Chairman Johnson stated that the request for landmark designation would be heard by the Randleman Board of Alderman at a public hearing on Tuesday, June 3, 2014, at 7:00 p.m.

**Adjournment**

*At 2:36 p.m., on motion of Haithcock, seconded by B. Johnson, the HLPC voted unanimously to adjourn.*

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Hal Johnson, Chairman

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Amanda Varner, Clerk to the HLPC