On behalf of the Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission (HRC), I am pleased to present the Commission’s HRC Annual Report for 2018. The Commission once again experienced a year filled with many outstanding projects and activities. The Commission reviewed one Local Historic Landmark application that was approved by the Winston-Salem City Council. The Commission also reviewed and provided comment on two National Register nominations. The Historic Marker Program continues to grow in popularity. Three markers were approved in 2018, and we held two marker unveiling ceremonies. Historic Preservation Month in May was actively celebrated with a kick-off Historic House Ramble hosted by Preservation Forsyth featuring two Local Historic Landmarks. Commission members helped give tours of Home Moravian Church in the Old Salem Historic District and hosted two open houses at Local Historic Landmarks in the Washington Park Historic District. The Commission also continued to manage its consistent caseload of Certificate of Appropriateness applications from the local historic districts and landmark properties. Finally, we are extremely excited to announce that the HRC received a Historic Preservation Fund Grant from the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office to begin resurveying Forsyth County outside of Winston-Salem. This multi-year project will include the unincorporated areas of Forsyth County and the towns of Bethania, Kernersville, Lewisville, Rural Hall, Walkertown, and the Village of Clemmons.

We hope you enjoy reading about the Commission’s work over the past year. We certainly enjoy doing it and will continue to serve the citizens of our Forsyth County in protecting and promoting our historic resources. Thank you for your continued support of our rich historical and architectural legacy. The Commission looks forward to another productive year fulfilling our county’s preservation goals.

Kevin G. Owen, AIA, Chairman
Historic Marker Program

Each year, the HRC approves historic markers to be installed in the City of Winston-Salem and unincorporated areas of Forsyth County. The Historic Marker Committee selected three markers for installation during 2018. In the City of Winston-Salem, the historic Silver Hill neighborhood and the Polo Fields at Reynolda were commemorated with markers. In the county, the Double Springs A.M.E. Zion Church Site and Cemetery was selected for recognition.

In May, the marker recognizing the important history of Silver Hill was unveiled. African Americans began to build a community in Old Town Township, west of the City of Winston, at the end of the nineteenth century. By 1910, the Census recorded twelve families living in Silver Hill; half of the families were white and half were African American. By 1930, the racial composition of the neighborhood had changed and only African-American families were recorded in the Census. Five of the eleven families owned their homes. Several of the men worked in tobacco factories, but others had jobs as brick masons, gardeners, auto mechanics, truck drivers, and one as a theater porter. The women who worked were in service with private families. Between 1901 and 1951, 558 known burials took place in the cemetery adjoining a no longer extant church. There are likely other unknown burials; newspaper articles mention gravestones dated as early as 1895. The grave markers are now all gone, and the cemetery is owned by United Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church.

In October, the Polo Fields at Reynolda historic marker was unveiled. In 1923, Katherine Smith Reynolds Johnston built a polo complex on the western edge of Reynolda Estate. Charles Barton Keene designed a grandstand for the complex, which also included a practice field, an exhibition field, stables, and a club house. The forty-five acre polo complex served as home to the Winston-Salem Polo Team, whose members included James and Frederick Hanes; Katherine’s second husband, J. Edward Johnston; Thurmond Chatham; Benjamin Bernard Jr.; and Carl Ogburn. For a time in the 1920s, polo was quite popular in Winston-Salem, and games attracted as many as 3,000 attendees. Admission cost 50 cents. With the arrival of austerity during the Depression, the popularity of polo at Reynolda declined. Speas School was built on the site in 1957, but polo lives on in the name of Polo Road.

In the county, the new marker at the intersection of Williams and Double Spring roads commemorates the Double Springs A.M.E. Zion Church Site and Cemetery. The church trustees purchased a half-acre parcel of the former Panther Creek plantation in 1899 for $1. Two springs on the land gave the church its name, Double Springs. The congregation raised funds to construct the church and accomplished that goal in 1903. Until the Carver School opened in 1946, the church also functioned as a school for African-American children on weekdays. By the late 1970s, many of the original congregants had passed or moved away, and the last service was held at Double Springs on June 27, 1982. The vacant building became an attraction for criminal activity, causing the former members to dismantle and bury it on the site. Double Springs also owns a cemetery, and the earliest marked burials, from 1903, are of husband and wife, Glenn and Charity Jarrett. Thirty-four known burials, including the Jarretts, date from 1903 to 2015. According to oral tradition, the site is also the location of the original Panther Creek Plantation slave cemetery. In 2005, a marker honoring men, women, and children owned by the Williams family was placed in the cemetery. Its inscription reads, “In memory of the Williams slaves who worked at the Panther Creek Plantation from 1767 to 1865”.

Mayor Joines, Mayor Pro Tempore Burke and Council Member Larson unveil the marker with Commissioner Berry, Phil Archer and students from Speas.
Local Historic Landmark Program

Local historic landmark designation applies to individual properties in Forsyth County. This designation is an honor that recognizes a property’s importance to the heritage and character of the community. Local landmark properties can be buildings, structure, sites, or objects.

Once a property has been designated a local historic landmark, it becomes subject to architectural/site review and approval by the Commission. Prior to making changes to any portion of a designed landmark, the property owner must obtain approval from the HRC to ensure that alterations to the property are in keeping with its historical and architectural character. In addition, the property owner may apply to the Forsyth County Tax Office for up to a 50% property tax deferral, which runs with the property in perpetuity (unless designation is revoked).

New 2018 Forsyth County Local Historic Landmark

The Bunyan and Edith W. Womble House located at 200 North Stratford Road was designated by the Winston-Salem City Council in 2018. The house was built in 1927 and designed by Charles Barton Keen for the Wombles.

Identify

Winston-Salem’s Architectural Heritage

*Winston-Salem’s Architectural Heritage* is a narrative and photographic overview of Winston-Salem’s architectural development from the eighteenth century to the present. The book is a stunning survey of the city’s evolution containing almost 900 documentary and current images of architecturally and historically significant buildings and neighborhoods.

The book is available at local retailers, including Bookmarks, Historic Bethabara Park, Old Salem Museum & Gardens, Sunnyside Mercantile, Twin City Hive, and the City Revenue Office on the first floor of the Bryce A. Stuart Building at 100 E. First Street in Winston-Salem.

Architectural Survey of the County Outside Winston-Salem

The City of Winston-Salem’s architectural survey was finished in 2015. In 2018, the HRC received a Historic Preservation Fund grant for its Certified Local Governments to continue the survey work in the unincorporated areas of Forsyth County, the Village of Clemmons, and the towns of Bethania, Kernersville, Lewisville, Rural Hall, and Walkertown. The project is the first of approximately six phases. The ultimate goal of the project is to publish a companion book to *Winston-Salem’s Architectural Heritage* by Heather Fearnbach, which will focus on the rural beginnings of Forsyth County and elaborate on the unique histories and development of the county outside of Winston-Salem.
In June, April Johnson resigned her position with the Planning Division to take on a new role as Executive Director of Preservation Durham. In October, Heather Bratland joined the staff of the Historic Resources Commission. Heather has an undergraduate degree in history from the University of Chicago and a Master of Architectural History from the University of Virginia. Most recently, Heather served as Vice Chair and Commissioner of the Linn County (IA) Historic Preservation Commission. Her primary areas of responsibility are the West End Historic Overlay District and the Historic Marker Program.

One of the Commission’s core responsibilities is the review of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness (COA) in the City of Winston-Salem’s three historic districts – Bethabara, Old Salem, and West End – and for Local Historic Landmarks (LHL). The statistics for COAs reviewed during fiscal year 2017-2018 are below.

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**MAJOR PROJECTS**

- City of Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks History
- Section 106 Reviews
- Forsyth County Survey Update
- Historic Marker Program
- Historic Preservation Month Activities
- Land Use Administration and Comprehensive Planning Support
- Local Historic Landmark Designation
- National Register of Historic Places Nomination Reviews
- Outreach to District Residents and Real Estate Community
- Rezoning Petition Briefings

**ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS**

**Staff News**

In June, April Johnson resigned her position with the Planning Division to take on a new role as Executive Director of Preservation Durham. In October, Heather Bratland joined the staff of the Historic Resources Commission. Heather has an undergraduate degree in history from the University of Chicago and a Master of Architectural History from the University of Virginia. Most recently, Heather served as Vice Chair and Commissioner of the Linn County (IA) Historic Preservation Commission. Her primary areas of responsibility are the West End Historic Overlay District and the Historic Marker Program.

**Membership News**

During 2018, the Historic Resources Commission welcomed Sunny Stewart, Alanna Meltzer-Holderfield, Ted Guenther, and C.J. Idol as new members. Sunny serves as Vice Chair and was appointed by Mayor Joines to fill the Architectural Historian or Historic Preservationist membership requirement. Alanna serves as an at-large member, also appointed by Mayor Joines. Ted serves as an at-large member from Clemmons, and C.J. serves as an at-large member from Kernersville.