Director of
Planning and Inspections
MEREDITH GUNS

Building Inspector
MARTY SHAW
CHARLES THUMAN

Code Enforcement Officer
JORDAN BLYTHE

THE TOWN OF KILL DEVIL HILLS
NORTH CAROLINA

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Assistant Director of
Planning and Inspections
CAMERON RAY

Senior Planner
RYAN LANG

Zoning Administrator
DONNA ELLIOTT

November 13, 2023

Memorandum

To: Debora P. Diaz, Town Manager

From: Ryan Lang, Senior Planner

Subject: Schedule Public Hearing – Local Historic Landmark Designation – 500 West Avalon Drive: Sharp Cottage

Attached with this memorandum you will find an ordinance for designation of 500 West Avalon Drive, Sharp Cottage, as a Local Historic Landmark. You will also find the designation report, which provides justification for the designation and State comments.

The attached designation report for 500 West Avalon Drive was reviewed by the NC Department of Cultural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office and has obtained non-binding State comments regarding the designation. On November 1, 2023, the Historic Landmarks Commission held a public hearing for designation of 500 West Avalon Drive with all comments positive for its designation.

The Commission is forwarding the ordinance designating, the Sharp Cottage, located at 500 West Avalon Drive, as a Local Historic Landmark to the Board of Commissioners recommending adoption after the required public hearing. Once adopted, the ordinance will be filed with the register of deeds and the structure will be subject to the regulations outlined in Chapter 31 of the Town Code.

Staff recommends setting the required public hearing for this designation for December 11, 2023.

ORDINANCE NO._____

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING PROPERTY LOCATED AT
500 WEST AVALON DRIVE AND KNOWN AS SHARP COTTAGE
AS A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

WHEREAS, pre-requisites to the adoption of this ordinance as prescribed in Part 3C, Chapter 160D-945 & 946 of the North Carolina General Statutes have been met; and

WHEREAS, the Kill Devil Hills Board of Commissioners has taken full consideration of all statements and information presented at a public hearing on_____ and considered the recommendations of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources on the question of designating the property located at 500 West Avalon Drive, Kill Devil Hills, known as Sharp Cottage as a local historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, the structure known as Sharp Cottage is located in the Avalon Beach Subdivision, which was the first development marketed and priced for the middle class that offered financing; and

WHEREAS, the structure known as Sharp Cottage is of historic, architectural, and cultural significance in that it embodies the distinctive architectural characteristics of an Avalon Beach flat top; and

WHEREAS, in the 1950's and 1960's, Avalon Beach Subdivision was the largest residential development in Kill Devil Hills, over a hundred flat top structures were constructed and sold by Robert Young and Clarence A. "Sug" York; and

WHEREAS, Sharp Cottage is one of Avalon Beach Subdivision's original remaining flat tops from that era; and

WHEREAS, Sharp Cottage was constructed in 1960 for Mrs. E.R. Russell of Norfolk, Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Sharp Cottage maintains its original integrity of design, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association on both the exterior architecture and interior finishes; and

WHEREAS, Sharp Cottage maintains it original architectural appearance with concrete block exterior, a screen porch, and flat top roof; and

WHEREAS, Sharp Cottage survived the Ash Wednesday Storm of 1962 with little damage, as well as multiple other hurricanes and nor'easters that caused major damage to surrounding structures; and

WHEREAS, Sharp Cottage was built as a summer rental home but was converted to year-round use in the mid-1990's; and

WHEREAS, although Sharp Cottage has undergone no additions since its construction, there have been upgrades including central heating and air conditioning; however the house maintains the original floor plan layout; and

WHEREAS, the Sharp Cottage is one of the best examples of this type of architecture built in the time period, maintaining the traditional colors for this type of dwelling, as well as the enclosed porch and flat roof synonymous with Avalon Beach flat tops; and

WHEREAS, the location of Sharp Cottage in the Avalon Beach Subdivision on Avalon Drive is connected to the history of the structure; now, therefore be it

ORDAINED BY THE KILL DEVIL HILLS BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

1. All of the property located at 500 WEST AVALON DRIVE in the Town of Kill Devil Hills is hereby designated as a local historic landmark pursuant to N.C.G.S. Chapter 160D-945 & 946. The property is presently owned by Kathryn R. Sharp and is identified on Dare County Tax Maps as Pin No. 988517009173 and is further described on Exhibit A attached hereto and made a part hereof.

2. The significant features of the building located on said property may not be demolished, materially altered, restored, or removed, nor any new structure built upon the lot without a Certificate of Appropriateness being issued by the Kill Devil Hills Historic Landmarks Commission. Any application for the demolition of this building shall require the waiting period set forth in 160D-946 & 946 of Chapter 160A.

   For purposes of this designation, "significant features" shall be understood to include:

   A. The exterior of the building
   B. The grounds

3. Nothing in this ordinance shall be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance or repair of any architectural feature in or on the said building and property that does not involve a change in design, material or outer appearance, nor to prevent the construction, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, demolition or removal of any such feature when a Kill Devil Hills Building Inspector or similar official certifies to the Kill Devil Hills Historic Landmarks Commission that such action is required for the public safety because of an unsafe or dangerous condition. Nothing herein shall be construed to prevent the property owner from making any use of this property not prohibited by other statutes, ordinances, or regulations.

4. A suitable Town-approved sign or plaque shall be posted indicating the property has been designated as a local historic landmark and containing any other appropriate information. If the owner consents, the sign or plaque shall be placed upon the building or property. If the owner objects, the sign or plaque shall be placed in the nearby public right-of-way.

5. The owner and occupants of the building known as "Sharp Cottage" shall be given notice of this ordinance as required by applicable law and copies of this ordinance shall be filed and indexed in the offices of the Town Clerk, Dare County Register of Deeds, the Town's Building Inspector, and Dare County Tax Department as required by applicable law.

Adopted and approved by the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Kill Devil Hills at a regular meeting held on the _____ day of _____, 2023, by a vote of _____ in favor and _____ opposed.

SEAL

_____
Ben Sproul
Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
James Michael O'Dell
Town Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_____
Casey C. Varnell
Town Attorney

NORTH CAROLINA
DARE COUNTY

I, the undersigned Notary Public do hereby certify that James Michael O'Dell personally appeared before me and acknowledged that he is the Town Clerk for the Town of Kill Devil Hills and that by authority duly given and as the act of the Town of Kill Devil Hills, the foregoing instrument was signed in its name by its Mayor, and attested by him as its Town Clerk. Witness my hand and official stamp or seal, this _____ day of _____, 2023.

SEAL

_____
Notary Public

My commission expires _____

Local Historic Landmark Report
500 West Avalon Drive

This application initiates consideration of a property for designation as a Kill Devil Hills Local Historic Landmark by the Historic Landmarks Commission and the Board of Commissioners. It enables evaluation of the resources to determine if it qualifies for designation.

1. Historical Name
   Sharp Cottage

2. Location of the Property
   500 West Avalon Drive
   Pin #988517009173
   Attached is a copy of a Dare County Tax Map depicting the property.

3. Owner of the Property
   Kathryn R Sharp
   1506 Ketch Lane
   Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

4. Representative Photographs of the Property
   Photos are attached.

5. Deed Book and Legal Description of the Property
   Attached is a complete chain of title for the property. The most current deed reference is in Dare County Deed Book 2422 page 0100. The property is shown on Dare County Tax Map 9885(17). The Tax Parcel number is 001530000. Dare County tax Record is attached for reference.

6. Architectural Description of the Property
   The house located at 500 West Avalon Drive is comprised of a one-story single family structure with a flat membrane roof. The footprint is largely rectangular with a carport to the right of the structure. The home is low and horizontal in character. In terms of materials, the house is a roughly troweled stucco finish. It is painted grey and there is no trim at the corners of the house. The windows and doors are white with wide white trim. The roof is a horizontal white band to match the windows. A white chimney peeks over the elevation from the center of the home. The front of the house faces South and is largely flat in appearance. Windows are double hung units. The carport wraps along the East side and contains a door to the interior. The side of the carport has grey stucco on the bottom and white trimmed board/batten above. On the North side, there are bump-outs for living area as well as a screen porch. This is much less flat than the other elevations. The East side has several windows, a grey painted exterior shower as well as access to the screen porch. Large operable white and grey shutters allow for the screen porch to be enclosed.

7. Historic Discussion of the Property

This house was built in 1960, according to Dare County tax records. The structure is located in the Avalon Beach Subdivision, which was developed by Robert Young and C.A. "Shug" York in the 50's and 60's. Mr. Young contracted many houses in the subdivision all flat tops with the same floor plans. Mr. Bullock purchased the property from Robert Young in 1957. This was the first subdivision in the area that was marketed and priced for the middle class. Mr. York and Mr. Young sent promotional flyers and other advertisements to employees at the Norfolk shipyard and Ford Motor Company Plant in Tidewater. The lots sold for between $3,000 and $5,000 at the time. The house was sold by Mrs. Bullock to George Samko of Hopewell, Virginia in 1967. The Samko family bought the house fully furnished along with the adjacent lots for $30,000. Lorraine Samko owned and maintained the house until 2020 when it was sold to Kathryn Sharp of Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina. The Bullock and Samko families used the house for vacations in the summer and was not rented out. Lorraine Samko recalled that she and her mother would come for the summer, while her father came on the weekends until fall. Ms. Sharp currently has the house in a rental program.

8. Assessment of the Significance of the Site

a. *Special Significance in terms of its history, architecture, and/or cultural importance:* Built in 1960, this structure ushered in the era of affordable homes on inexpensive land. This was the first working class development on the Outer Banks. Its unique architecture was prominent at the time for its affordability. In the 1950's Avalon Beach was the largest residential development on the Outer Banks. The property is well preserved and maintains its original historic character. The house was used as a vacation home by both the Bullock and Samko families until it was sold to Ms. Sharp who has it in a rental program. CA York and Robert Young were the primary developers and realtor in Avalon Beach and were the first to market to the middle class even offering financing for the land.

b. *Integrity of the property's design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and/or association:* The property is unaltered from its original appearance. The house was constructed in 1960 for Mr. J.C. Bullock of Camden, South Carolina. CA 'Shug" York constructed most of the houses in the Avalon Subdivision. He used family and friends to build the houses. Wallace Shannon of Manteo did all the block work, Rosco Gallop was the roofer and Smitty Smith was the electrician. There have been no additions to the original footprint of the house since it's construction in 1960. The house is approximately 884 square feet constructed of concrete block on slab with a flat roof. Because of the simple architectural designs, bright and vivant colors were utilized for individuality and aesthetics

9. Assessment of the Property's Suitability for Preservation or Restoration, Educational Value, and Possibilities for Adaptive or Alternative Use

The property is in very good condition. The property has no physical changes since it construction in 1960. There are approximately a dozen of these structures in their original condition in Kill Devil Hills. It is one of the best examples of this type of architecture built in the time period. The colors are traditional for this type of dwelling along with the flat roof. The interior has been largely unchanged since it was constructed with just minor upgrades to appliances and bathroom fixtures. The property and structure would provide a great addition to

the Town's Historic Landmark inventory. It embodies both the recognizable style from the flat top designs from the 1950s. It also provides an example of how both the design and build of the flat tops were able to endure the elements.

10. Total Tax Value of the Property
    Total value of the property is $176,600 according to the Dare County Tax Office.

11. Documentation of Historical Significance to the Town of Kill Devil Hills.
    The structure was built in 1960 in the height of development in Avalon Beach. J.C. Bullock purchased the property from Robert Young who also constructed the house. His partner, financial backer and brother-in-law was CA "Shug" York, who held various political seats (Commissioner and Mayor) in Town from 1959-1973. Mr. York moved to the Outer Banks in the late 1940's from Greensboro, NC. He brought with him about seven families of relatives, including Robert Young, and they worked with him on the Avalon Beach development. In the 1950's there were hundreds of structures of this type built creating the largest residential development on the Outer Banks at the time. The Avalon Beach Subdivision was marketed as affordable second homes for the working class. Previous owner Lorraine Samko recalled that the house never had flood waters from either the sound or ocean reach the property from hurricanes or the Ash Wednesday Storm. And never received any major damage from past storm events.

12. Documentation of Architectural Significance to the Town of Kill Devil Hills.
    The house is an original concrete block structure with stucco siding. The Avalon flattop style was copied form the flat top designed and built by Frank Stick in Southern Shores. It is similar to a number of houses built in Kill Devil Hills in the late 50s and early 60s whose design is unique to that period for its architectural significance. Mr. Young constructed this house and many others with the same design and floor plan. He used friends and family to construct the houses and was able to do so quickly and inexpensively. These structures introduced an era in Town that attracted the working class to the Outer Banks making it no longer just for the wealthy elites. The structure is in excellent condition, having minor upgrades for HVAC, it remains basically unchanged since it was constructed with few minor renovations. These original flat top structures are becoming rare on the Outer Banks. Adding this house to the historic designation would provide the Town the ability to preserve a unique architectural design and classic style that was once prevalent both in this subdivision and throughout the adjoining towns.

13. National Register Criteria met by Property
    Non-Applicable

14. Documentation for Inclusion of Accompanying Land
    The lots on which the structure is located provide an appropriate setting for the building.

Bibliography

1. Lorraine Samko, Family owned the house and surrounding lots from 1967 to 2020. Ms. Samko lives in Virginia Beach, contacted by phone.
2. Kathryn R. Sharp, bought the house in 2020. Ms. Sharp lives in Kill Devil Hills, NC. Contacted by phone.
3. Christopher Nason, AIA Beacon Architecture and Design, PLLC Conducted the architectural review, and author of the architectural descriptions, Item No. 6

CHAIN OF TITLE

1. 23rd day of May 1957 by Robert A. Young and wife Mary Young of Dare County, State of North Carolina, as parities of the first part, to J.C. Bullock and wife, Beulah Bullock of 1815 Jefferson Davis Highway Camden, South Carolina. Hereinafter designated as parties of the second part whether one or more. A certain tract, lot or parcel of land in Atlantic Township, Dare County, North Carolina, and described as follows: Being Lot No. 165, as shown on Map or Plat of Avalon Beach, made by T.R. Pettit, Registered North Carolina Engineer dated June 1950, which said Map or Plat is duly of record in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Dare County, North Carolina, in Map Book 1, at page 107. Together with easements in, to, on and over all roads and community beaches on the Atlantic Ocean and Kitty Hawk Bay as designated on the aforesaid Map or Plat, which said privileges shall be in common with other property owners of Avalon Beach and annexes thereto.
2. THIS DEED, made this 13th day of October, 1967, by and between Beulah Bullock, widow, as Grantor to George Samko and wife Margaret P. Samko, as Grantees, of 107 North 14th Avenue Hopewell, Virginia; All that certain lot of land lying and being in Kill Devil Hills, Atlantic Township, Dare County, North Carolina, and more particularly described as follows: Being Lot No. 165 of the subdivision known as Avalon Beach as shown on map or plat thereof made by T.R. Pettit, Registered North Carolina Engineer, dated June, 1950, and duly of record in Map Book 1, page 107, Public Registry of Dare County, North Carolina.

3. This deed, made and entered into this 24th day of October, 2011 by and between George Samko, widower, hereinafter referred to as "Grantor"; and Lorraine E. Samko, trustee of the George Samko Irrevocable Trust dated March 18, 2011 and any amendments thereto, hereinafter referred to as "Grantee". Grantor and Grantee's mailing address is 637 Sirine Avenue Virginia Beach, VA 23462-2133. Tract Three: Being Lot No. 165, of the subdivision knowns as Avalon Beach as shown on map or plat thereof made by T.R. Pettit, Registered North Carolina Engineer, dated June, 1950, and duly of record in Map Book 1, page 107, Public Registry of Dare County, North Carolina.
4. THIS DEED made 7th day of October, 2020 by and between GRANTOR Lorraine E. Samko, Trustee of the Lorraine E. Samko Revocable Trust dated September 13, 2013, and any amendments thereto 637 Sirine Avenue Virginia Beach, VA 23462 and GRANTEE Kathryn R. Sharp, divorced and not remarried 1506 Ketch Lane Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948. Being Lot No. 165 of the subdivision known as Avalon Beach as shown on map or plat thereof made by T.R. Pettit, Registered North Carolina Engineer, dated June, 1950, and duly of record in Map Book 1, page 107, Public Registry of Dare County, North Carolina.

September 20, 2021

North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office
ATTN: Kristi Brantley, Local Preservation Commission/CLG Coordinator
4617 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4617

Subject: Proposed Historic Landmark Designation Reports – 500 Avalon Drive West

Dear Ms. Brantley:

Attached to this letter is a Local Historic Landmark Designation Report for State review. The property is located at 500 Avalon Drive West. The site has a unique historic, cultural and architectural significance to the Town of Kill Devil Hills. The Historic Landmarks Commission has been diligent in creating and landmark inventory and prioritizing potential landmarks for designation. The site has owner cooperation and the owner has assisted in recreating the history of the structures. The Landmarks Commission is eager to receive state comments and guidance regarding these prospective Landmarks.

If you have any questions or need more information please do not hesitate to contact me at 252-449-5315 or rlang@kdhnc.com.

Cordially,

Ryan Lang, Senior Planner

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