

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES (HPC)
THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2016 9:30 A.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA**

PRESENT: Chairman Anna Brady; Vice Chairman Debra Atwell; Members: Deborah Daige, Jeffery Ray and George Childers **Also Present:** Gayle Lafferty, Planner and Tammy Vock, City Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) May 12, 2016

Mr. Ray made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Atwell seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

4. OLD BUSINESS

A) Status of the Historic Plaque

The company developing the plaque did request some additional dates for the plaque, which were provided to them.

B) Letters to Property Owners/Rack Card

Mrs. Brady announced that she changed the wording of the letter to the property owners to include information about the plaque. She wants to get property owners enthusiastic about the program. The letters will be sent out in early fall, which would give the Commission enough time to define which properties they are mailing the letters to. She asked the members to read the letter to see if there are any changes that they would like made to it and then they can discuss those changes at their next meeting. She will also be including the rack card with the letter. The rack card will have a picture of the plaque on it.

Mrs. Daige asked if they are still working on the brochure.

Mrs. Brady said that they do need to revisit the brochure. She asked Mrs. Vock to send it out to the members and commented that it would be something that the Planning Department could easily reproduce on their copier.

Mrs. Daige commented that she still needed input from the members on the brochure.

Mrs. Brady asked Mr. Childers where they were with cleaning up the database (referring to the letters that will be sent out).

Mr. Childers explained that the final database has been presented by the City's GIS department. There are about 600 names on the list and that could be divided out among the different members. There are entries on that list that will need to be eliminated.

Mrs. Brady had some concerns about sending the letter out to property owners where the property has been demolished. She didn't want the City Council to have to deal with an irate property owner after they received the letter. She asked Ms. Lafferty to send out a divided list of property addresses for each of the Commission members to work on.

Mr. Childers thought that they were going to have the information on the tablet in order to do the survey. He asked would they obtain the tablets first.

Mr. Brady explained that she would be going to Tallahassee next week requesting the grant money, but even if they get the grant money this will not occur until next year. She said they would have volunteers (not the Committee members) go out and do the survey, but again it won't be until next year.

Mr. Childers said if that is the case then it would behoove this Commission to create the format that these volunteers would be using when they go out and do the survey. That would include the size of photos they would shoot, etc.

Mrs. Brady explained that there is a standard set that the volunteers would follow and is a part of their training.

Mrs. Brady asked Mrs. Vock to have the Assistant City Attorney review the final draft of the letter making sure that she was okay with it. In the meantime, Ms. Lafferty can be working on divvying up the address list for each of the members.

Ms. Atwell suggested putting wording in the letter that says if the building is still in existence and the property owner is interested in finding out more about the historical designation process to contact the Planning Department. She felt that might handle the problem in case the home has been demolished. Mrs. Brady said that she could do that.

Ms. Lafferty commented that when the Planning Department sends out letters they typically don't get a lot of responses back. She suggested just using a generic letter to send out to all of the property owners.

C) City Hall Marker Installation – Rain Date/June 15th, 2016 at 10:00a.m.

Mrs. Brady reported that the date for the dedication of the City Hall marker has been rescheduled for June 15th at 10:00 a.m. She hoped that all of the members could be there. She said they are the ambassadors of the City and the City's resources. It would be helpful if they (Commission members) were there to talk to the public about their program. The agenda will be the same as what they planned to use on May 17th (date event was cancelled). She asked the Commission members to be a part of a photo for the "This Place Matters Campaign" that can be put on the City's website.

Mrs. Brady will send the itinerary for the dedication ceremony to the City Clerk to send out to the Commission members. This gives some brief history of City Hall.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Brady commented that it has come to her attention after driving down Route 60 that the old Henry Gifford home is for sale (information provided to the Commission members). She received a lot of this information from Mrs. Pam Cooper, Library Historian, which includes the background of the house. She looked up the real estate listing for the house, which says that the property has no value. She noted that the property dates back to the 1900's. It was pointed out that the construction date for the house was 1887 and it is one of the most historic buildings in the City. She wanted permission from the Commission to share this information with the realtor so he has it.

Ms. Atwell was in favor of Mrs. Brady doing that. She hoped that whoever purchases the home would do it justice.

Mrs. Brady thought the history of the house was that it was moved to the location where it is now from across the street. The asking price for the property is around \$115,000, which is basically just for the land. If a non-profit organization was to purchase the property there is grant money available, but it would have to be applied for by next month. Mrs. Brady said that the County Historian is aware this property is for sale. This property is zoned POI. Mrs. Brady asked Ms. Lafferty to describe to the Commission the potential uses for that piece of property.

Ms. Lafferty went over the standard site plan for a piece of property that is zoned POI. She said there are neighborhood meetings held, then the plan is reviewed by all the pertinent departments and it goes before the Planning and Zoning Board for approval. She said it was not uncommon for homes converted to uses allowed in POI to remain single-family and whoever purchases it could live in the home.

Mrs. Brady asked if there could be an office in the back of the house.

Ms. Lafferty was not sure, but said if someone purchases the property they could put a 7,000 foot building on it.

Mrs. Brady felt that if someone inquires about the property it is the Planning Department's job to supply some historical data on the home.

Ms. Atwell added that the public needs to be aware of the fact that they could retain the historic building on the property and then add to it to meet the additional square foot building that they wanted to have.

Mr. Ray asked if the house was designated historical. Mrs. Brady said that it was not and that could be because the property owner did not know the significance of the history behind the house. She said that this Commission has to be careful as to how proactive they can be about designating historic places.

Mr. Ray felt this City should consider doing something not to allow a historic building to be demolished.

Mrs. Brady commented that the property owner may want to donate the building, but the first thing they need to do is get this information to the realtor.

Mrs. Daige commented that the house itself could be restored and then the new property owner could still add on to it in keeping with the character of the building.

Mrs. Brady wondered if the Planning Department could speak with the realtor. Ms. Lafferty did not know if that would be appropriate. Mrs. Brady would send the information that she has to the realtor and would follow up with Mrs. Vock if anything transpires and she can send that information out to the Commission members.

Mrs. Daige said no matter what the zoning is in different areas throughout the City they need to encourage people to live in the mixed use zoning designations.

Mrs. Brady asked for the Commission member's thoughts on sending a letter to the City Council making them aware of this.

Mr. Childers commented that this will be a test for the Commission to come up with a way to resolve this.

Mr. Ray asked if the house has been nationally recognized. Mrs. Brady explained that it has not, but that it would probably qualify. She cautioned that this Commission has to walk a fine line with the owner and realtor, which is why she has suggested reaching out to them first about the historical value of the home. She was concerned that they could lose this building. She reiterated that the grant cycle is coming up where the City could acquire this building. However, she knows that is not the mindset of the City. They are getting rid of property instead of buying property.

Mr. Childers questioned getting the County involved. Mrs. Brady explained that is done through the County Historian. Mr. Childers felt that it was incumbent of this Commission to look at all the ways possible that they can in saving this home. He reiterated that this was a test for the Commission.

Mr. Ray felt they could look at having fundraisers to purchase the property and maybe get the John's Island Foundation involved.

Mrs. Daige commented that they need to have more public relations done and maybe have a spokesperson to do that.

Mrs. Brady explained that typically what other communities have done is have someone on their planning staff talk to the homeowners. She asked Ms. Lafferty if either she could do that or Mr. McGarry could serve as the historical planner. She said in other communities the planning staff would approach the realtor and owner informing them about the historic significance of this building and continue to be proactive.

Mrs. Daige wondered if they needed to figure out how to contact the property owner.

Mrs. Brady said that she would provide the information to the realtor.

Ms. Atwell volunteered to draft an article for the press and also a letter to the City Council letting them know about this piece of property. She would send it to Mrs. Vock to send out to the Commission members for their review.

Mrs. Brady added if additional support is needed that they will reach out to the planning staff because that is their role.

The Commission recessed the meeting at 10:17 a.m. and reconvened the meeting at 10:23 a.m.

6. MEMBER'S MATTERS

Mr. Ray reported that there is a home that is up for sale and being listed as a historic landmark. He said the address of this home is 989 Bay Oak Lane.

7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

Mrs. Brady reported that she works for Florida Atlantic University (FAU) and they have discovered ancient bison bones in Vero Beach at the Old Vero Man Site (OVMS). She said OVMS is applying for grant money and are looking for support letters. The Commission agreed that a letter should be sent on their behalf.

Mrs. Brady provided the Commission with a copy of the latest newspaper entitled "*The Alliance Review*." She said the next national conference will be held in Alabama, which she plans on attending. She hoped that the Commission enjoyed the newsletter. She felt it was very informative.

Mrs. Brady provided the Commission members with an article entitled "*The challenges of preserving Midcentury Modern homes* (attached to the original minutes).

8. STAFF MATTERS

None

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

A) August 11, 2016

The Commission agreed to hold their regular meeting in July. The date of that meeting will be July 14, 2016.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

/tv