HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC) MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2020 9:30 A.M.
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA

A G E N D A

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) January 9, 2020

3. NEW BUSINESS

4. OLD BUSINESS

A) Proposed Website Structure for Historical Preservation

B) Update on Szechuan Palace

C) Update on the Grant Writing Process to Fund the Update of their Historical Survey – Planning and Development Director

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

6. MEMBER'S MATTERS

7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

8. ADJOURNMENT

This is a Public Meeting. Should any interested party seek to appeal any decision made by the Commission with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, he will need a record of the proceedings made which includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. Anyone who needs a special accommodation for this meeting may contact the City's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator at 978-4920 at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC) MINUTES
THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 2020 9:00 A.M.
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA

PRESENT: Steve Erickson, Chairman; Jessica Francis, Vice Chairman; Members: Jeffrey Ray, Dane Ullian, Joy Todd and Diane Miller, Alternate #1 **ALSO PRESENT:** Planning and Development Director, Jason Jeffries; City Attorney, John Turner; and City Clerk, Tammy Bursick

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) December 12, 2019

Mr. Erickson said that his name was not correctly spelled in the minutes.

Mrs. Todd made a motion to approve the minutes with this correction made. Mr. Ullian seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A) Discussion of Informational Pamphlet

Mr. Erickson passed out the original brochure that was done by the HPC.

Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director, passed out a copy of the brochure in color that was sent to him by the City Clerk's office.

Mr. Erickson asked if everyone had a chance to look at the website.

Mr. Jeffries showed where the information concerning the HPC is located on the website, as well as where the brochure is located. He then showed what is known as "wrap cards" and thought that the HPC might want to use them rather than having a brochure. This would be creating a simple card directing the public to the website where they would find more information.

Mr. Erickson commented that there is some good information on the website, but it is badly organized. It doesn't tell the role of the HPC and the history of Vero Beach ends in 1955. He said that it really is not all that valuable. He felt that they needed to focus on historical preservation. There is no mention of Main Street, the fact that HPC is a CLG, the Tree City USA, etc. Also, it is not mentioned that historic surveys have been done. The latest one done was in 1990. There is different historical information located on the website, but

it is in different sections. He brought up the designation changes for buildings and where that is located on the website.

Mr. Jeffries agreed that needed to be prominent if people need to make changes that they know where it is. He said people do go to the website and look at different information. It is a regulatory process to do things. He understands Mr. Erickson's point if it is not designated how are they to encourage someone to go through the process. Some people buy designated homes and then figure out what they can do with them.

Mr. Ullian commented that step 2, which is what can be done to make a home historical jumps out on the website instead of the first step, which is how to get it done.

Mr. Erickson asked if the National Historical Designation involves this Commission at all. Mr. Jeffries answered yes.

Mrs. Francis suggested having the different links for the National Register, etc., be first on the website page instead of the historical overview.

Mr. Erickson commented that there are a lot of different ways to see different things on the website. He liked the idea of having a one (1) page flyer that they could include some of this information.

Mr. Jeffries commented that the flyer was inexpensive. In the meantime they could work on organizing the website.

Mr. Erickson expressed that the history needs to be on historic preservation. There is little about the history of Vero Beach and all the other things that he mentioned earlier in the meeting. They need to outline what the HPC does and what the different programs they are involved in look like. He thought the reasons for preservation outlined in the brochure were very good. It lists the National Designation and the process that goes along with it.

Mr. Jeffries pulled up the website on the computer and after scrolling through it agreed that there are multiple pages and different ways to find things.

Mr. Ullian agreed that there needed to be one (1) uniform landing page. Then a brief introduction of the history of Vero Beach and the history preservation of Vero Beach. It would be the fundamental things that they promote here.

Mrs. Todd agreed that the history is important because they are wanting to preserve the history. She said the local landmarks are a part of that history. She agreed with making it as simple as possible like why should I designate my property? What steps does someone have to go through to designate my property and what are the benefits. It needs to be user-friendly. Such as "historical preservation for dummies."

Mr. Erickson stated that the reasons for preservation are good. He doesn't think the designation process as listed in the brochure is helpful. That could be done in a couple of words. The criteria for designation is important, as well as the process to get there.

Mrs. Francis said if there is someone new to Vero Beach and had a question about historic preservation they could go to the website to find out information and get familiar with this Commission.

Mr. Erickson was not sure if the HPC was involved with the historic marker program. He said that it is a State program and they could provide direction for someone on the website on where they needed to go if they were interested in the historic marker program.

Mr. Ullian agreed that helping people find information on the National Designation program, the historic market program, among other things would be very helpful.

Mr. Erickson said that he would be happy to put something down on paper on how to structure this and then share it with the Commission and then they could go from there. It is important to know if they can afford to do the pamphlet as discussed earlier. But the first thing that they needed to start with is updating the website. One of their major goals this year is to get their promotional materials together. He will come back to their next meeting with a draft for the Commission to look at.

Mr. Ullian commented that the first step is the structure and it drives the content. He said structure drives how much content and where you are putting it.

B) Update on Szechuan Palace

Mr. Jeffries gave an update on the Szechuan Palace. He said that the property is owned by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and they were going to have a surplus sale of the property and there were errors that occurred on how they did it and now it is on hold. He said that the City will not get involved in that process at all.

Mr. Erickson commented that it is in the interest to some people to save as much of the building as they can because it is a historical structure.

Mr. Jeffries felt that if this was a concern of the Commission then they could relate that to the City Council and let them know how they want to proceed for the City of Vero Beach.

Mr. Erickson felt that they should do that.

Mr. Ullian made a motion that the HPC resolve and express to the City Council their resolution that the Szechuan Palace property is of significant historical significance to the City and the community at large such that they would ask the City Council to consider whatever means is available, whether formal or informal, to influence the process that the property be sold to someone who is interested in preserving the historic significance.

Mr. John Turner, City Attorney, suggested that the motion be to request the City Council to take the necessary steps in preserving this location. Mr. Ullian made that motion. Mr. Erickson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. OLD BUSINESS

This item was heard later in the meeting.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Rey Neville, City Councilmember, came to the meeting today to talk about the Szechuan Palace. He said that it is a huge piece of their history. He said not so much the property, but the structure. He would like them to preserve the structure. His idea was to purchase the structure and allow the land to be sold without the structure. He has had communications with Mrs. Ruth Stanbridge, County Historian, who had communications with the State years ago and was told that the building would be a preserved facility. He said they could move forward with the action of the sale of the building and then consider where they might relocate it. He suggested the Three Corners property. He briefly discussed the artifacts that could be put in the building for display. He suggested asking staff to directly communicate with the State on this, perhaps interface with the County on how to move fast on this. If the State had some sort of technical issue that could be corrected quickly and the State wants to get this property off of their books they will move quickly. He realizes that the building could be moved, but they would need to find the funds in order to do that.

Mr. Ullian thought it was ironic that Waldo Sexton saw the significance of this building and had it moved to where it is located now and now they are talking about moving the building again.

Mr. Erickson commented that if this is done they could put information about historical preservation in the building.

6. MEMBER'S MATTERS

Mr. Ullian expressed that their designation process is by application and some other locations don't require property owner's first apply. He asked in the case of being the State can they locally designate the process.

Mr. Jeffries agreed that other cities have it where the designation process starts with the HPC and they can make the recommendation and initiate the process. Then it would go through the Planning and Zoning Board and then to City Council. He said sometimes the application does not make it all the way through the process.

Mr. Erickson said that process for him personally is preferable to what they have now, which is the property owner starts the process. He said this would be something to think about for the future.

Mr. Erickson brought up Camp Haven, which is located near the Airport. He was told that there was a structure there, some sort of art deco design and it has been torn down. He knows there is a 30-day cooling off period when someone wants to demo a building and it has to be on the Florida master file to do that. He asked if that was done.

Mr. Jeffries was not familiar with this.

Mr. Ullian said that the property may be out of the City limits.

Mr. Jeffries requested time to look into this. He said that the 30-day cooling off period is for historical designated sites. He doesn't know how it is regulated if it is not designated historical.

Mr. Erickson read out loud from their Annual Report that was approved last month the verbiage on this (report on file in the City Clerk's office).

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Jeffries commented that their Land Development Code is outdated and significant work needs to be done in order to update it. He said that they are up to date on their Comprehensive Plan, but that is just a policy guide. It is one of his goals to get the Land Development Code up to date.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Erickson asked about the process and timing of the historic survey.

Mr. Jeffries said that they could apply for the grants in April so he will start working on this next month. He said applying for the grant gets folded into the budgeting process in case matching funding is approved. The last survey update was in 1990.

Mr. Erickson wondered if they could piece-mill the process.

Mr. Jeffries said that they could. He will need to look at that. He said if the cost proceeds the dollars that they receive from the grant they may have to do it that way.

Mr. Erickson said that Mrs. Anna Brady recommended that they start with downtown first. Mr. Jeffries agreed. Mr. Erickson said it would include Pocahontas Park, the Bank, the Furniture Building, etc.

Mr. Rey Neville brought up the Szechuan Palace again and wondered if they needed to make an amendment to the Code in order to speak with the State about the structure. He is hearing that they can't designate the State to do it because of a rule that they have. He asked the City Attorney to fix that. The City should be able to intervene any time they want because the State doesn't care anything about that structure.

Mr. Erickson explained the layout of the property. He said that the County owns the right-of-way and there is a bump out for that structure that doesn't fit the rest of the grid.

Mr. Turner asked if the structure was in the City of Vero Beach. Mr. Jeffries answered yes.

Mr. Turner said that he would proceed in bringing something to the City Council.

7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

None

8. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:01 a.m.

/tb