

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC) MINUTES
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2018 9:30 A.M.
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA**

PRESENT: Chairwoman Debra Atwell; Vice Chairman Steve Erickson; Members: Jeffery Ray, Megan Hoots and Jessica Francis **Also Present:** Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director; Kira Honse, Assistant City Attorney and Tammy Bursick, City Clerk

Excused Absence: Dane Ullian

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Atwell called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) November 8, 2018

Mr. Erickson made a motion to approve the November 8, 2018 minutes. Mr. Ray seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Ms. Atwell requested that item 3-B) be moved and heard under Old Business as item 4-A). The Commission had no problems with this request.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A) Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director, to give a Presentation on the Procedures that need to be followed in order to have a home designated historic.

Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director, gave a Power Point presentation (please see attached). Questions and answers took place during the presentation.

Ms. Atwell explained that the HPC needed some clarification on the process and the time involved.

Mr. Jeffries explained that someone wanting to have their home designated historic would need to get with him and fill out the proper application. He said the application they fill out is very simple. He said then staff would need to do the necessary research and the whole process would take approximately 30 days.

Ms. Vicky Gould asked about the Gifford house and because it was moved they were wondering if it could be designated.

Mr. Jeffries said that there is a possibility. He would have to look at it.

Ms. Katherine Paliwoda, Executive Director for Mainstreet, explained that there were different reasons for becoming Nationally certified and certified on the local level. She said by going with a National certification there are tax credit perks and going with a local historic certification there is a little more that the local government can say as to what can be done with a building and at a local level the City is there to protect the building.

There was a short discussion on some of the houses that are on the local register in the City of Vero Beach.

Mr. Jeffries explained that right now the City Code only allows for local designation. He said it does not provide for district designation. He said if someone wants to have their home designated staff will have to review it based on that and its own significance.

Ms. Kira Honse, Assistant City Attorney, read from the Code on what it states concerning districts and said there could be districts according to their Code.

Mr. Jeffries said he was told by his staff to get this Ordinance passed they took out the district provision.

Ms. Vicky Gould mentioned that she has two (2) historic homes and she unified the title on the property so there are two (2) different styles. She asked because it is one (1) property, does she need to get both homes designated.

Mr. Jeffries explained that she really would be designating the house rather than the property.

Ms. Atwell commented that each home has its own merit. They are different architectural styles and built in different periods. She said then there are no handicaps to Ms. Gould having both of those homes designated.

Mr. Jeffries said he would need to look at them. He is still learning the history of the City.

Mrs. Peggy Landers asked if there would be restrictions as to what they could do to their home if it was designated historic.

Mr. Jeffries explained that once the home is designated historic any type of exterior change requires a Certificate of Appropriateness. When a property owner comes into his office looking for approval for that exterior change, staff evaluates it and looks to see if it would harm the integrity of the architectural building.

Mrs. Landers explained that she is looking at replacing a door to what it was and not what it is. Mr. Jeffries told her if she could document that someone had altered it there should

not be a problem. The guidelines for historic buildings allow for the restoring of buildings back to the original integrity of the building. He said these things would still need to meet the building code requirements.

Mrs. Ruth Stanbridge, Indian River County Historian, commented that the Building Department understands that there are historic properties all over the County and they will work with the City.

Mrs. Hoots asked if a residence is designated would the property owner get a tax incentive.

Mr. Jeffries said he will have to look into that.

Ms. Honse explained that the tax incentive is only for not for profit making buildings. There is always Federal tax credit for locals only.

Mrs. Stanbridge commented that one of the reasons there are so many buildings here on the National Register is because they did not have a local designation. She gave the history of the old Diesel Plant and how that building was saved because it was on the National Register. She said there are a number of buildings in the City and in the County that are on the National Register. She asked if those buildings were grandfathered in or do they have to go to each building at a time to get a designation.

Mr. Jeffries explained that the Planning and Development Department needs to be maintaining a list of what is on the Local and National Register.

Mrs. Stanbridge asked if the National Registers that are there, can be converted over or do they have to go through the whole process.

Mr. Jeffries said that the property owner would need to make an application.

Mrs. Hoots said according to Mr. Jeffries presentation it does not sound like anything is grandfathered in locally.

Mrs. Stanbridge told Mr. Jeffries that he should have the survey that they did back in the 1990's that would show the people that might want to move forward with the local designation.

Mr. Jeffries mentioned the site inventory list that the State maintains so if the City does not have the information he can get it from the State.

Mrs. Stanbridge asked if this Board recommends to the City on City owned historical properties.

Mrs. Hoots recalled that she spoke to someone when there was talk about selling Riverhouse. She asked if it needed to be designated so it could not be demolished or

sold. She said in order to protect their assets maybe that is what the Commission has to do.

Mrs. Stanbridge said that she was referring to the Dodgertown property, which is 35 acres, and has a very historical significance.

Ms. Atwell commented that this Commission has articulated with regards to Dodgertown the historic value at great lengths with the current Council who have demonstrated almost complete disregard. She reminded everyone that even if these places have a multiple of plaques it only helps to protect the place for so long. The people who make the decisions are allowed to make decisions that are unpopular for the public.

Mr. Erickson commented that it seems like what he is hearing is that the local designation does give protection. Ms. Atwell said it is not permanent. Mr. Erickson said he would like to know more about that and asked Mr. Jeffries to further explain how permanent they are.

Mrs. Hoots said that she spoke to the Recreation Director about the Riverhouse, which was built in the 1970's and part of the original Park.

Mrs. Stanbridge commented that it is hard for this Commission to ask the public to protect their property, when the City doesn't protect some of their properties.

Ms. Atwell agreed that it would not hurt referring to Riverhouse as a valuable historic property.

Mrs. Hoots felt that everyone in this room was on the same wave length as to what they want for the City of Vero Beach and its assets. If they need to do the formalities as outlined in Mr. Jeffries Power Point presentation and take it to the City Council, then they should do it. Even if the City Council says no then they have done their due diligence to help make a demonstration that these things are important. They know that showing up in numbers at City Hall maybe is not enough.

Mrs. Stanbridge recalled that they have wonderful history of that area starting at Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary all the way up through the old Sea Scout House (Riverhouse). She said the history shows how it came to be and how it was acquired by the City.

Mrs. Hoots commented by doing this at the very least it would defer a developer from saying that they want to develop the Marina or the Riverhouse.

Mrs. Stanbridge said that the Historical Society would be more than happy to help this Commission with anything that they need.

Ms. Gould asked if they have their homes designated locally and they sell their property, does it go with the home or does the new owner have to have it designated again.

Mr. Jeffries said that the designation stays with the land.

Mrs. Gould commented that some people are still very scared if they designate their property that they will be told what they can and can't do.

Mr. Jeffries said that is a common issue throughout the country because some people have had bad experiences.

Ms. Honse explained that there is a process for revocation, but it sounds like it is more if there is significant damage to the property that alters it so it no longer looks like the way it did. She said there is a process for the designation removal if the owner chooses not to comply.

Ms. Gould asked about ad valorem taxes.

Ms. Honse explained the process is outlined in Chapter 76, which she briefly went over.

Ms. Gould asked Mr. Jeffries if he said that he would help a property owner with the history of their property. She said that was another discussion that they had in her neighborhood because most of the people work and they do not have the time to do research.

Mr. Jeffries said that the Code requires that the Planning and Development Department does the research. He also said that most Certificate of Appropriateness are staff approved. He is looking at the processes that the Planning and Development Department does now and will be working with the Planning and Zoning Board in looking at the Land Development Code. He will also be looking at tweaking the Historic Designation section of the Code if there are changes that need to be made. He doesn't want to put the big burden on the property owner to have to do the research.

Ms. Atwell commented on some of the misconceptions out there like the City is going to tell me what color to paint my house. She said no one gets involved in that level. They still will be able to enjoy the same freedoms as they always have. The property owner has the authority to have their home historic or undo what has already been done.

Mr. Jeffries referred to Section 76.25 of the Code for Historic Districts, which he read.

Mrs. Hoots commented that so many of them (people in the audience) live in Osceola Park. She said maybe Osceola Park is not only nationally designated, but locally designated and they need to look at the language and go down that route instead of individual homes.

Mr. Jeffries explained that this would be a legislative process and it would need to go before the Planning and Zoning Board.

Ms. Honse added that they would need the buy in of as many property owners in that area that they can get. She said that usually historic designation does increase the value of their property.

Mrs. Linda Hillman asked what is the first step.

Mr. Jeffries said that the application is on the website and once the property owners fills it out they return it to the Planning and Development Department.

Ms. Honse cautioned the Commission that they were not the ones that need to be going out looking for people to designate their property historic because the Commission makes the determination if the property should be designated.

Mr. Jeffries recalled that once this Commission approved the designation then it is taken before the City Council for their final approval.

Mrs. Stanbridge commented that there are many benefits to being designated. She referred to the Woman's Club and what a wonderful asset it was for the City and should be recognized. She appreciated the Commission listening to her today. She said that Fellsmere was a fine example on allowing historical designates. She encouraged the Commission to recommend to the City Council that they protect their resources.

Ms. Gould thanked the Commission for this meeting and the work that they do. She said preserving history is so important to the beauty of their City.

B) Banner Design

This item was heard under Old Business.

4. OLD BUSINESS

A) Banner Design

Ms. Atwell briefly went over the HPC banners. She said that the purpose was to create fresh public interest. She said that they have three (3) banner options as she understands it. One of them could be the attention getter to hang a banner from the second story of a building. She is thinking of City Hall and there is an ideal spot near the Utility Department. This banner would measure 12 x 4. There would be space on 14th Avenue for smaller banners. She would recommend having eight (8) banners that they would create and disperse with eight (8) of the Mainstreet banners. The next choice would be to do one like the many hanging out there already, which are 6 x 2. She noticed that there is an empty bracket in front of City Hall. She said that ABC Printing has been very helpful and would see that the banner is hung up. They could do a banner that would resemble the other banners on 14th Avenue so they would need to know how many that they could get. Her first choice would be to go with a gigantic banner hanging off the top of this

building. The banner she would recommend using is bright red and would look very seasonal. She described what it would say.

Mrs. Hoots said that having the banners hang on Mainstreet is a great idea.

Ms. Honse thought the issue with the large banner would need to meet their sign Code requirements. She asked Ms. Atwell if she talked to Mr. Jeffries about that.

Ms. Atwell said that they exchanged several emails.

Ms. Honse explained that if the banner is going to be hung on City property they would need to get permission from the City Council in order to do that and any expenditures made would need to go to the City Council.

Ms. Atwell asked the Commission if they would like to endorse a particular design.

Mr. Honse asked if there was an estimated cost for these banners.

Ms. Atwell made a motion that this Commission requests a sum of money not to exceed \$500 to purchase designation banners. This would be for eight (8) banners, roughly 2 x 2 ½ feet in size to be used downtown and one (1) large banner to be used at City Hall. This would be subject to the approval of the sign Code. Mrs. Hoots seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

Ms. Atwell brought up printed material. She posted the ad about the Hayes house on facebook and it cost nothing. She made a few extra copies to distribute. She took a copy to Lowes and put it on their community bulletin board. She said it would be nice to have an operational budget where they could purchase things like this and not have to spend 90-days going through the process.

Ms. Honse explained that City Boards and Commissions don't have their own budgets. It is through the departments. So during the budget process next year the Planning and Development Department or Public Works Department would need to incorporate it into their budget. The Commission needs to be thinking about what funds they would like to have in the Planning and Development Department's budget for next year.

Mr. Jeffries agreed that this sounds like this would fall under his budget. He asked for some time in putting together how historic preservation will fit into the budget and this could be talked about at their January meeting.

Ms. Atwell brought up a piece of property located on Royal Palm Boulevard. She said that she spoke with the owner about this property.

Mr. Jeffries suggested that the property owner get in contact with him. He said there are some code compliance issues on the site and there is an order to demolish the home by the County.

Ms. Atwell said that is what is alarming to the property owner. He does not know what to do because the County determined that this building needs to be demolished. She knows in other cities before this is done if the property is historic it would be referred to the HPC and they would look at the property and make recommendations.

Ms. Honse said if this is the property that she thinks it is that property owner has had more than ample time to make corrective measures and it is a safety issue regardless of the historic nature, especially if it is not designated.

Ms. Atwell explained that the property owner was not familiar with designation. He would like to have it evaluated by a contractor to see if it could be saved.

Mr. Jeffries explained that if this person owns the building it would be his responsibility to have a contractor evaluate the building to see if it meets the Code.

Ms. Atwell asked how much time is involved. The property owner is scared that he is going to drive by the building and it is going to be gone.

Ms. Honse stated that if it is the property she thinks that it is the property owner has had ample time to get a contractor to look at the property and have the repairs made. She said he failed to do this so the last step for the Building Department was to order the demolition. At this point he is out of time because he has been given ample time to do what he needed to do.

Ms. Atwell mentioned that the property owner visits France a lot so maybe it has not come to his attention.

Mr. Jeffries told Ms. Atwell to have the property owner contact him and he will assist him in getting a contractor.

5. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

None

6. MEMBER'S MATTERS

None

7. STAFF MATTERS

None

8. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

/tb