



Historic Preservation Board Agenda April 2nd, 2015 - 4:00 PM

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of the January 8th, 2015 Minutes
3. Appeals Procedures
4. Old Business
5. New Business
 - A. Case: 15-16
Location: 114 S 4th St. (St. Monica's Catholic Church Old Rectory)
Applicant: Steven Mack, Y2K Construction
Request: Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to add a front porch and handicap ramp (South Historic District).
6. Other Business (Discussion)
 - B. Certified Local Government Grant Opportunities
7. Adjourn

ANY PERSON WISHING TO APPEAL ANY DECISION MADE BY THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT SUCH MEETING WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS THAT INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED, AT THE EXPENSE OF THE APPELLANT. F.S. 286.0105 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES REQUIRING ACCOMMODATIONS IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING SHOULD CONTACT THE CITY BUILDING DEPARTMENT AT 329-0103 AT LEAST 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE TO REQUEST SUCH ACCOMMODATIONS.

Attachment A

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
CITY OF PALATKA
DRAFT Meeting Minutes January 8th, 2015

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Roberta Correa at 4:01 pm. Other members present included Larry Beaton, Elizabeth van Rensburg, Meri Rees and Lynda Crabill. Absent: Gilbert Evans Jr., Robert Goodwin and Laura Schoenberger. Staff present: Planning Director Thad Crowe and Recording Secretary Ke'Ondra Wright.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Ms. van Rensburg to approve the December 18th, 2014 minutes with minor corrections, seconded by Mr. Beaton. Motion passed unanimously.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

Chairperson Correa read the appeals procedures.

NEW BUSINESS

Case: HB 14-41
Locations: 923 Laurel St

Applicant: John Nelson, Palatka Housing Authority
Request: Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of one condemned dwelling 923 Laurel St. (South Historic District)

Mr. Crowe summarized the facts of this case and noted that there were two structures demolished, with 913 Laurel St being a non-contributing structure and therefore not requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for demolition. Staff did determine that 923 Laurel St was a contributing structure and did require a COA for demolition. The City's building official and fire marshal inspected the structure and determined that it was destroyed beyond the point of restoration, and would in fact require new construction. It was determined that the structure was a life and safety hazard and quick action was needed in the form of demolition. Staff recommends after-the-fact COA approval based on the recognition that building restoration was impossible and also based on the need for reasonable justice and equity for the property owner.

Board Discussion

Mrs. van Rensburg asked how long ago the fire was where the structure was. Mr. Crowe responded that has been a while since the fire and he did not have the exact date. Chairperson Correa said there have been multiple fires at the building along with vandalism. When city staff did get into the buildings they took quick action to address the problem. Mrs. van Rensburg said she understand the reason for a retroactive permit if the homeowner has a giant hole in the roof and the rain is coming in inside the house, but she questioned the quick action after the years of the building standing in a derelict state. Chairperson Correa said that the flooring is now in another building on South 4th St and looks very nice. Chairperson Correa said she did see the inside of the structure and has also lost a house that couldn't be saved and she could see the difference. You could get to the flooring and remove it without the house caving in, someone removed the flooring about a year or two ago, but and as the house sat vacant after a fire and exposed to the elements it disintegrates rather quickly. Ms. Crabill said she observed other people taking components from the house that were salvageable. Mr. Crowe said the house was

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not secure and once city staff was able to get on the property they moved quickly. Chairperson Correa agreed, adding that private ownership of a property makes it hard to enter the property.

Ms. Crabill asked if the burned duplex on 13th St. was a similar situation. Chairperson Correa responded that there is not an answer to the question and it's not in the district in any case, therefore it is not the Board's jurisdiction. Chairperson Correa suggested that maybe in the future the staff could handle things in a more coordinated and quicker fashion. Ms van Rensburg said that it is a moot point as the house is gone, but by the same token from the perspective that just about anything can be saved, it's just really sad. Mr. Crowe agreed and said that staff learned from these experiences and in the future when something like this happens Staff will strive to conduct a quick assessment and enter private property when needed Chairperson Correa agreed said that after a year or two of being open to the elements there is very little of a structure to be saved.

Motion made by Mr. Beaton to demolish the condemned dwelling at 923 Laurel St., as recommended by staff. The motion was seconded by Ms. Crabill.

Public Comments

Anthony Harwell, 322 Madison St., said he thought it was unusual to approve something that's already done and the approval should be given right when someone wants it torn down. Mr. Harwell suggests that if the Board did not want this to go on the record to approve the demolition of the property then maybe you should deny the request Chairperson Correa said that she understood Mr. Harwell's perspective but advised that the motion had been made. Mr. Harwell advised Chairperson Correa that the motion was made prior to hearing public comments and asked if another motion would be made. Chairperson Correa responded that was up to the board members to make another motion.

Ms. van Rensburg asked what would be the ramifications of denying a request that had already been carried out other than creating a lot of paperwork for the City and possibly proving a point that we just can't knock down historic things. Mr. Crowe replied that on the last page of the staff report the board is obligated to look at reasonable justice and equity for the property owner, meaning that the Board needs to balance on one hand the importance of saving an historic structure against any prohibitive cost of complete reconstruction. The cost for reconstruction will far outweigh the need to save the structure, and he believed that the Board was obliged to grant this COA

Mr. Beaton suggested that the Board rescind the vote, since it was made prior to public comments.

Motion made by Mr. Beaton to rescind the vote. The motion was seconded by Ms. Crabill and approved.

Mr. Harwell asked if any consideration should be made for what the projected use of the property is. Chairperson Correa responded that the board can't approve the projected design for

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the property at this meeting, eventually that will come before the board but right now the Board can only discuss what's before them.

John Nelson, Palatka Housing Authority, 400 N 15th St, said that the demolition was ordered by the courts prior to the PHA purchasing the property. Chairperson Correa asked Mr. Crowe to explain the process. Mr. Crowe responded that code enforcement has a process that must be followed when the City is trying to acquire or demolish a structure, which includes getting a judge's approval to go on the property.

Mr. Harwell asked if the COA process required notification of property owners within a certain distance for the Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Crowe answered affirmatively.

Chairperson Correa closed the public comments period.

Ms. van Rensburg questioned this property being a total loss as the entire front section of the property and the foundation looked as if was constructed out of concrete decorative block, which survive fires nicely. Chairperson Correa responded that the determination also comes from an insurance standpoint.

Mr. Beaton asked about the chronological order of events and how was this handled. Mr. Crowe responded that he did not have an exact chronology of how things went, but could go back and create one. He added that he was not aware of the total loss until recently and the code enforcement was working through their channels. Mr. Beaton asked if the Board got a copy of the COA notification. Mr. Crowe answered negatively. Mr. Beaton asked if all residents in the block were notified of the demolition. Mr. Crowe answered that property owners within 150 feet were notified. Mr. Crowe said that on the code enforcement side these things can drag out for a long time and there are some owners who are not responsive.

Motion made by Mr. Beaton to demolish the condemned dwelling at 923 Laurel St., as recommended by staff. The motion was seconded by Ms. Crabill. Members voted in favor, with Ms. van Rensburg voting no.

Case: HB 14-42
Locations: 220 S 4th St

Applicant: John & Patti Vogt
Request: Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to add a 12X16 wooden shed (South Historic District)

Mr. Crowe said the applicant requested a shed in his back yard. In similar past cases the Board has approved such sheds when they were screened from public view so as not to present a negative visual impact from public right-of-ways or contagious properties. The site plan showed existing vegetation in the rear yard that will serve as a screen. A review of the Secretary of Interior Standards indicated the shed was an incompatible structure. There were certain things that could be done to improve compatibility, for example the vertical siding could be changed to horizontal, the windows could be more vertical, and the roof could be steeper, but Staff's

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concern was all these changes would create a cost burden that would be at cross-purposes with the need to provide reasonable of justice and equity to the property owner, particularly when the shed can just be hidden from view. In lieu of requiring a more compatible structure Staff recommends approval with the condition that the proposed fence be a six-foot tall wood picket fence, painted white, with the pickets positioned close together to ensure maximum screening effect. An additional condition would require the fence to be supplemented (when determined necessary by Staff) with vegetation, including a shrub planted at the eastern terminus of the fence.

John Vogt, 220 S 4th St, said that the shed would be painted white to echo the color of the main house Mr. Beaton said he thought the white color would blend in much better Chairperson Correa asked how what the length of the fencing was. Mr. Vogt answered that the fence would be 24 feet long. Ms. Crabill asked if Mr. Vogt looked at any sheds that might fit in better with the area. Mr. Vogt answered that he looked at the aluminum sided ones but was trying to stick to the natural finishes, and the wood sheds offered are vertical rather than horizontal siding.

Board Discussion

Public Comments

Jeff Passeno, 614 River St, said that he would coming before the Historic Preservation Board for a shed request and just wanted to hear the discussion. He added that he brought a picture (file) of a 1920s-era shed with vertical siding, which might help the Board's decision.

Motion made by Mr. Beaton to approve a storage shed and fence in the rear yard with the condition that the proposed fence be a six-foot tall wood picket fence, painted white, with the pickets positioned close together to ensure maximum screening effect, and the fence to be supplemented (when determined necessary by Staff) with vegetation, including a shrub planted at the eastern terminus of the fence. The motion was seconded by Ms. van Rensburg. Motion passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS –

ADJOURNMENT - Motion to adjourn made by Ms. van Rensburg to adjourn the meeting, at 4:42 pm.

Attachment B

Certificate of Appropriateness

HB 15-16

114 S. 4th St.

STAFF REPORT

DATE: March 19, 2015

TO: Historic Preservation Board members

FROM: Thad Crowe, AICP
Planning Director

APPLICATION REQUEST

This application is for the addition of a front porch and handicap ramp to an existing contributing building within the South Historic District. Public notice included property posting and letters to nearby property owners (within 150 feet).



Figure 1: Property Location



Figure 2: 1982 photo, with screened porch



Figure 3: later photo, with porch closed in

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

The property is located in the South Historic District, an historic neighborhood that includes a diverse collection of architectural styles from simple bungalows and cottages to Queen Anne Victorian-style homes. The period of significance of the district dates back to the Victorian era of the late 19th century and runs up to the Second World War.

Per Sec. 54-78(a) of the Palatka Code, under Article III Historic Districts, a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is required to erect, construct or alter a structure or sign located in a historic district. All elements listed above constitute structures and are thus subject to the COA process.

The Florida Master Site File for the house indicates that this Frame Vernacular-style home was built between 1909 and 1915, with the caveat that it may have been built prior to 1884 and remodeled during the later time period. Many original elements of the home remain such as the shingle siding and metal roof type. However as Figures 2 and 3 show the porch was enclosed for office space sometime after 1982, when the site file photo was taken. This action was an inappropriate alteration as it changed a distinctive and original element of the structure.

The building, formerly the church rectory, is now used for office use, counseling, meetings, and other church-related activities. The Church is taking a proactive stance toward accommodating its older parishioners by improving the handicap access of the building. Unfortunately, site characteristics and the floor plan of the building would not accommodate a more hidden ramp in the rear of the building. Specifically the ramp would have to block part of the existing parking lot access, the rear door was not wide enough for legitimate handicap access, and the rear part of the building would require another internal ramp to reach the level of the front part of the building. The original proposal submitted to Staff was an open deck along the front of the building with a ramp wrapping around from the south side. A windshield survey of the South Historic District revealed few if any open/unroofed front porches, although there were a handful of unroofed stoops limited to a smaller area around the front door as opposed to the

If, after a thorough evaluation of interior solutions, an exterior addition is still judged to be the only viable alternative, it should be designed and constructed to be clearly differentiated from the historic building and so that the character-defining features are not radically changed, obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

Recommend locating the attached exterior addition at the rear or on an inconspicuous side of a historic building; and limiting its size and scale in relationship to the historic building.

3. Section 54-79(a) also requires that the decision include consideration to the immediate surroundings and to the district in which it is located or to be located.
4. Section 54-79(b) requires that the board shall make each of the following findings to approve a COA:
 - (1) In the case of a proposed alteration or addition to an existing structure, that such alteration or addition will not materially impair the architectural or historic value of the structure.

STAFF RESPONSE:

The proposed porch does not damage any existing historic elements of the structure, since the building front is a later addition created by closing in a historic porch. The porch respects the symmetry of the building in its centered location around the front door. As previously stated, the symmetry can be enhanced by planting a hedge on each side of the porch, which will also serve to screen the modern appearance of the ramp. Columns and spindles should be simple and unornamented, to not call attention to the addition and to respect the simplicity of the Frame Vernacular style.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of COA HB 15-16 for the front porch as presented in Figure 4, with the following conditions:

- to not call attention to the new feature, porch supports and spindles shall be simple and unadorned, and shall be painted white or a color resembling the exterior blue/grey color; and
- a hedge shall be planted on each side of the porch and front sidewalk, grown to a height of around four feet, so as to provide a level of screening for the porch and ramp.

Attachments: Florida Master Site File

Attachment C

STAFF MEMO

DATE: March 19, 2015

TO: Historic Preservation Board members

FROM: Thad Crowe, AICP
Planning Director

RE: Certified Local Government Grants

Certified Local Government (CLG) grants are federally-funded small matching historic preservation grants available only to Florida's Certified Local Governments to assist their historic preservation programs. Due to Palatka's location in a Rural Area of Critical Concern, these grants are 100% funded, with no match required. Grants average around \$25,000 and not exceed \$50,000. These grants fund survey and planning activities, the preparation of National Register nominations, and community education projects. The application deadline is June 1, 2015. Grant categories are listed below.

Protection and Education activities

(including surveying for historic and archaeological sites, and preparing ordinances or preservation plans)

Community Education projects

(such as walking tour brochures, educational programs for school children and videos illustrating historic preservation principles)

National Register Nominations

Historical Markers

Staff is seeking input from the Board on grant applications for this cycle.