

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SANFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
7:00 PM, MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2009
WEST END CONFERENCE ROOM
SANFORD MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

Roll Call:

Commissioners Present: Al Roethlisberger, Tim Mercer, Lora Wright,
Peter Thompson, Vice Chairman Mark West, Councilman Charles
Taylor (City Liaison)

Commissioners Absent: Matthew Sakurada

Staff Present: David Montgomery, Anne Sears, Liz Whitmore

Citizens: Michael Humphrey

**APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 22, 2008
AND THE AGENDA FOR JANUARY 26, 2009.**

Vice Chairman West called the meeting to order and called the roll.

Vice Chairman West asked if there were any additions/deletions to the agenda for the January 26, 2009 meeting. Staff David Montgomery added two items to the agenda: (1) SHPO Pass through Grant and (2) Update on the PARTF application for Acquisition & Renovation of the Depot. Commissioner Tim Mercer noted that he would like to speak at some point in the agenda and ask questions about getting Hawkins Avenue as a local historic district. Commissioner Wright moved to approve the agenda as amended, and it was seconded by Commissioner Thompson; the motion passed unanimously.

Vice Chairman West entertained a motion to approve the minutes for December 22, 2008. Commissioner Thompson motioned to approve the minutes, and it was seconded by Commissioner Lora Wright; the motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment: Vice Chairman West shared that there were no COA applications for tonight's meeting. Vice Chairman West welcomed any guests and had them sworn in to testify for the public meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ad Hoc Committee Update

Guideline Committee: Guest Michael Humphrey gave an update on the Guidelines Committee. Mr. Humphrey stated that at one time there were twelve people on the Committee, but now there are four: Bailey Kohl, Laura Younger, Sheri Myers and himself. Over the last 19 months the

Committee has gone over the Guidelines and tried to clean them up. The Committee will be meeting Thursday night (1-29-09) and the Guidelines Committee would like a Board Member, preferably Al Roethlisberger there, as the Committee would like some representation from the Commission.

Mr. Humphrey stated that they submitted the current draft to SHPO for comments and said they received high remarks. Mr. Humphrey even stated that SHPO told him that the current draft as submitted was one of the top five Historic Guidelines in the state, but SHPO did suggest more definition into violations and penalties. Mr. Humphrey reiterated that when it comes to violations, it is up to the HPC board to decide if a violation has occurred. While there may be a discrepancy with City staff whether any newly adopted guidelines requires City Council approval, the Committee would like this to go before City Council, which will have a public hearing process.

Councilman Taylor shared the need for enforcement, that there are items that have been discussed in the past, which have not been enforced or resolved. Staff Montgomery said that Staff Whitmore is in the process of taking snapshots of all the buildings in the districts, which will show any improvements on a later date without prior approval. This will help staff in determining whether a violation has occurred.

Vice Chairman West asked Mr. Humphrey if he thought the Committee could have the first finalized draft by the next board meeting. Staff Montgomery thought you should have a vote today whether to put a Commissioner on that committee, or you could vote to have Chairman Sakurada appoint a person. Commissioner Lora Wright expressed that the process has gone on long enough, and Commissioner Al Roethlisberger would be an appropriate person to sit on the committee with his expertise. Commissioner Tim Mercer made a motion that the HPC assign Commissioner Roethlisberger to sit on the Guidelines Committee and act as a liaison for the HPC. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Peter Thompson; the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Lora Wright wanted to know if we needed a motion to request a copy of the final draft design guidelines in thirty days. Vice-Chairman Mark West stated that the guidelines committee would in good faith provide a final draft copy in thirty days without putting it into a motion. Mr. Humphrey commented that it was duly noted that the final draft design guidelines would be forwarded to the HPC Board by March 2, 2009. Commissioner Lora Wright again asked if the HPC was sure that this did not need to go to a formal motion. Commissioner Wright was assured that a formal motion was not necessary. Commissioner Roethlisberger accepted the nomination to be on the Guidelines Committee.

Marketing: Staff Whitmore shared that she will be working with Commissioner Roethlisberger on the newsletter. They had discussed items to include such as the historical entry signage, the photography inventory, the results of the urban tree survey (how many trees, were public and private), and the Commission's revised web-site going, and more photographs. Staff Whitmore also wanted to clarify in the newsletter the new process regarding final site inspections. Commissioner Roethlisberger mentioned that in the past they had showcased a property or two. Staff Whitmore was in agreement. Commissioners shared that they previously

had a newsletter with a trivia question, and a free gift card was offered, but they had no feedback to make it successful. Commissioner Thompson asked if a link on the website for the HP would be more effective instead of calling.

Staff Whitmore shared that she and Staff Anne Sears will be doing a “Meet and Greet” reception when her office is completed. Staff Whitmore would like to invite HP members, Appearance Commission members, Downtown merchants, and citizens that live in the Rosemount-McIver District. They can come and see where she is physically located, and refreshments will be served. Councilman Taylor shared that this may be a good avenue of communication especially with the friends on Green Street.

Commissioner Wright would like to be included in the Downtown Sanford newsletter, after relaying her situation in updating one of her buildings in the downtown area. Councilman Taylor said he has mentioned on numerous occasions to the newspaper that he would like for them to run an article on the history of buildings downtown. This would include what was there, when it was built, and what retail or market it imposes now. This would provide a whole collection for a book, very resourceful, informative and it can be named “Downtown Sanford”.

Staff Whitmore submitted a copy of the map to each board member relaying possible locations for the entry signage. Staff Whitmore has been doing some research on other historic signage, and how it has been done in other areas. They took some artistic license, so what you see here is not really a representative of what is going to be made, but there will be some re-working in the process. Commissioner Roethlisberger gave some feedback from the locations for entrance signage. Commissioner Roethlisberger also suggested putting some smaller individual plaques (house size) on the stone gates for McIver Park.

The tentative launch date for the website will be Feb. 6, 2009. Staff Whitmore has been in the Downtown and the Rosemount-McIver Districts taking photographs. The following week she will be going to Hawkins and Jonesboro to make sure they are included.

Safety and Security Committees: Staff Montgomery told the board, since Chairman Sakurada was not present that the stop signs bags have been uncovered at Vance Street. At this time, Commissioner Roethlisberger had a question for guest Mr. Humphrey. As part of the Safety and Security committee, at one point there was an effort to do a Community Watch which Kathy Carroll kindly got rolling, but never got traction, but sometime later Mr. Humphrey had volunteered to do that. Would this be something Mr. Humphrey would like to get going again. Councilman Taylor asked if it would be possible to get to the core, establish a solid group that put together the national night out, and to get those guys together, to talk about the community watch program, and getting them engaged. Mr. Humphrey agreed to take on the task if Mrs. Carroll did not mind.

Break-

New Business: Vice Chairman West relayed that everyone had the retreat summary in your packet. Staff Montgomery read over the items quickly and briefly highlighted the goals for next year: 1. Seek National Register District listing for East Sanford, 2. Initialize a Historical

Preservation Incentive Grant Program for Owner Occupant Residences, 3. Establish Hawkins Avenue as a Local Historic District, 4. Finalize Historic Entry Signage Design and Install, 5. Complete update of Rose-mount McIver Park Guidelines, 6. Update Rules and Procedures, 7. Develop a Procedure to Close out COAs with Database and Staff Verification, and 8. Begin the Green Street Renovations Project.

There were not a lot of changes in the budget from last year, except under Professional Services, where if the grant is a proved the City would hire a professional consultant to do the National Register for East Sanford. Another item that staff David brought to everyone's attention was that he put the Historic District entry signs again in there. Staff Montgomery also relayed to Councilman Taylor that at the retreat there was a discussion about a Preservation Incentive Grant. Only owner occupied residences could apply, and it would be targeted to low-moderate income owners. Mr. Finch, for example, would be a likely candidate. It would be a matching grant or a percentage type grant where the homeowner would have to put some money into it. Staff Montgomery said he would provide additional information to Councilman Taylor. Councilman Taylor had a quick question on the entry signs. What are the chances of that not being completed? Staff Montgomery said he was determined to have that completed, which he has now assigned the task to Staff Whitmore.

Rules & Procedure: Staff Montgomery had copies of the revised Rules and Procedures, and he asked everyone to look at them as discussed at the retreat. Mr. Humphrey noted that the Guidelines Committee was looking at those as well.

Guidelines used for Local Landmark Designations outside local districts: Staff Montgomery said the Commission needed to vote which guidelines would be used in reviewing projects with the W. B. Wicker School. One interesting thing Staff Montgomery noted that Salisbury does is they have residential guidelines and non-residential guidelines; this would allow future local landmarks or local districts to automatically fall under one category. Commissioner Roethlisberger made a motion that the guidelines for Downtown Sanford be used for the W. B. Wicker School; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Peter Thompson, and it carried unanimously.

SHPO Pass through Grant: Staff Montgomery stated that he suggested that the Commission recommend that City Council apply for a SHPO Pass through Grant for the purpose of getting East Sanford nominated to the National Register. The City has applied for the grant that past two years in a row. The applications must be postmarked by February 16th this year. Cost anticipated for the nomination is \$16,500.00; the grant would be for \$9,900 and the city of Sanford would pick up the remainder. One hundred sixty to one hundred eighty five structures are included in the proposed area. If nominated, East Sanford would be eligible for federal and state tax benefits. Commissioner Thompson made a recommendation that the Commission recommend to the City Council to apply for the Pass Thru Grant for the East Sanford District. The motion was seconded by Tim Mercer, and the motion carried unanimously. Councilman Taylor asked staff if it is possible to make sure that it is on the next Law and Finance meeting, and Staff Montgomery answered yes.

Staff Update: Staff Whitmore relayed that there were no minor or major COAs applied for in the month of January. The following HP dates have been changed: The HP date for February has been moved to March 2nd, May will be May 18th and June will be set for June 29th.

PARTF Application for Acquisition & Renovation of the Depot: Staff Montgomery shared that the city staff is putting together an application for a Park and Recreation Trust Funds Grant. The Grant would be for the acquisition and renovations of the Depot Depot Park. Councilman Taylor shared that the Lee County Commissioners had already had a hearing on it. Staff Montgomery said that City Council had agreed on a price, and hopefully the grant funds will be approved to make the acquisition a reality. Renovations of the building will be on interior and exterior. Plans are that the building will be available for rent, and John Payne from the County Parks and Recreation could use it for a variety of recreational opportunities, such as dancing, arts and crafts.

Commissioner Tim Mercer wanted to know if the Commission started today could we have everything completed to get the approval of Hawkins as a local historic district by late June. Staff Montgomery asked David what has to happen before City Council would adopt it. David said there would need to be at least two public hearings. Most of the legwork, however, was to get neighborhood buy in before taking it to City Council. There was discussion of not incorporating the entire National Register District into the local district and creating a smaller local district. Commissioner Al Roethlisberger mentioned that he would prefer for the local district to extend to Horner. Staff Montgomery said that the Commission would make a recommendation to City Council just like for the local landmark designation. In short Staff Montgomery said it was unlikely to be approved by June but that a majority of the work could get done by then.

Vice Chairman Mark West asked if we had an update on a search for a new commissioner. Commissioner Lora Wright said that she knew that Chad Blackwelder had applied. Staff Whitmore said she spoke with Bonnie White, City Clerk, today and they have had people call for an application, and the City will also be advertising in the paper for two weeks for a new commissioner.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

NEW BUSINESS:

Councilman Taylor wanted to mention a couple of items that he failed to mention under Marketing and Publication. Councilman Taylor commented due to the current status in the real estate market here, would this not be a time for the Commission to sit down and have a meeting with the realtors on how to sell properties in the historic district. The realtors would probably like to know how to market the properties; the Commission could hold a workshop educating them on what the Commission is trying to do, the guidelines, what compliance is, and where to get help when they need it, similar to the Backstage of Lee County, but from a historic preservation point of view. Staff Montgomery commented that he thought this would be a good time to pursue this, since it has been awhile since the Commission had done a presentation to the Board of Realtors. The theme could be “How to Market in the Historic District”.

Councilman Taylor also read a copy of the letter from Kathleen Turner, who is with Preservation North Carolina, about the status of Deaton House at 304 Oakwood. There had been several inquiries this fall, including from a descendent of the early owners Gene and Janie Favor. It sounds like they are working through the bank issues, and a lot of other issues and she said things are looking brighter at the moment. Staff Montgomery shared that the house on Hawkins is still for sale, and according to Woody Seymour probably would sell at a considerable discount. Board members expressed different concerns about homes that were for sale in the historic districts.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business to come before the Commission, Vice Chairman Mark West entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Lora Wright moved, and it was seconded by Commissioner Al Roethlisberger; the motion passed unanimously.

Adopted this _____ day of _____

BY: _____

Mark West- Vice Chairman

ATTEST:

Elizabeth Whitmore, Planner II