

Shreveport Historic Preservation Commission

SPECIAL MEETING **Thursday, March 28, 2019** **4:00pm**

Government Plaza
505 Travis Street
Shreveport, Louisiana

Meeting located in Room 440
Metropolitan Planning Commission Conference Room

Commissioners Present

Commissioner Gary Joiner, Chair
Commissioner Billy Wayne, Vice-Chair
Commissioner William Lane Callaway, Secretary

Legal Advisor

Ms. Karen Strand, Office of City Attorney

1. Meeting was called to order at 4:07pm by the Chair with a quorum present. The Chair asked for any opening remarks and recognized Commissioner Callaway.

Comments by Commissioner Callaway: The MPC Director made a decision on five COAs without benefit of an independent historic preservation viewpoint, advice, comments, and recommendations from HPC. This unilateral decision missed an opportunity to further implement the intent and spirit of Chapter 36 Historic Preservation Ordinance. Also an opportunity was missed to further synchronize MPC and HPC operations.

This unilateral decision set precedence early in the approval process for new construction within a historic district. The inaugural round of COAs applications on February 22, 2019 dealt with three alternations and one demolition. This second round consisting of five applications added the dimension of new construction within a historic district – three of the five COA applications – the other two were alterations.

I question the judgment calls of specific items and information in these five COAs of being within the intent and spirit of the UDC much less the Standards 9 and 10 of the U.S. Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The way these five COAs were presented to the HPC points to the need for HPC to continue working with the Ex-Officio and MPC to develop a cutoff date for **completed** applications to be placed on the HPC agenda and for these applications to contain correct information.

Mr. Chair, I urge the HPC sit down with the Interim Director of MPC and start a direct dialogue. I shall have further comments on each specific COA as they are discussed.

Thank you Mr. Chair.

2. Review and comment on five Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications:
- 2a. COA HPC 19-04: 708 Cotton Street, Shreveport Commercial Historic District¹
- MPC Staff Case Report: All Commissioners had the opportunity to review this application.
 - Public Comments: None.
 - HPC Discussion for the Record:

Attorney Strand comments: This application is applicable to the project at 708 Cotton Street. The adjacent property of Arlington Hotel (700 Cotton Street) is not being considered as noted on the application's Exhibit C (Architect's Preliminary diagram).

Commissioner Joiner comments: Questioned if the proposed new construction at 708 Cotton Street was contingent on the acquisition of the historic Arlington Hotel next door. The scope of the new construction impacts on this historic property listed on the National Register of Historic Places in it appears to incorporate the Arlington into the new construction plans. The proposed building at 708 Cotton is indeed new construction but appears to be incompatible with the historic street view and the historic fabric of the surrounding area. Commissioner Joiner visited the property to make an assessment.

Commissioner Wayne comments: Had a similar concern in what if the Arlington Hotel is not acquired by the applicant. The application contains information connecting it to the Arlington.

Commissioner Callaway comments: Echoed concern if new construction project hinges on the successful acquisition of the Arlington Hotel. Noted the application contained 11 items of design standards applicable to the 708 Cotton Street project. Sensing the project as presented is not compatible with at least four of these design standards – Setback, Maintaining Materials, Trim and Detail, and Entrances. On page 3, MPC states the "proposed development uses modern materials which are complement the adjacent historic Arlington Hotel." Unless completely misunderstanding the materials to be used in the new construction, the MPC statement is in error and very difficult to grasp how corrugated metal and wood siding reflects bricks from 1914. Commissioner Callaway visited the property before this meeting and finds it difficult how to justify most of the MPC Staff Comments on the five Approval Standards on the application's page 4. And questions one of the two Conditions of the MPC Staff Recommendation for a materials list. Materials for the proposed new construction is noted in the application. Why isn't the required final material list included in the application?

Consensus of HPC: HPC could not have supported this COA application until concerns and questions were clarified.

2b. COA HPC 19-05: 320 Texas Street, Shreveport Commercial Historic District

- MPC Staff Case Report: All Commissioners had the opportunity to review this application.
- Public Comments: None.
- HPC Discussion for the Record:

Commissioner Joiner comments: After visiting the property before the meeting, understood the alternation and had no questions.

¹ Case numbers shown on these Minutes reflect correct numbers in sequence although several case numbers reflected on the initial version of applications provided to HPC were out of the correct sequence.

Commissioner Wayne comments: No questions on the proposed alterations.

Commissioner Callaway: Provided a brief history of this building which in early 1930s was the site of the former S.H Kress & Company (a five & dime store) in the commercial heart of old downtown. The façade of this two-storied brick building was replaced with the current façade with a balcony within last 30 years or so. Commissioner Callaway noted the corrections needed in the application. Application received by Commissioners noted the address as 320 Texas Avenue although the correct address of 320 Texas Street is noted in the body of the application. Also questioned by Commissioner Callaway was the MPC statement, “proposed alternation is consistent with the Shreveport Downtown Commercial District of promoting creativity and designing sustainability.” Questions to Attorney Strand by Commissioner Callaway were: Are these priorities part of the UDC? Do they have legal standing? How many priorities are there, are they written down, and who approved these priorities? Attorney Strand believes the MPC staff copied these priorities from a Shreveport Master Plan but would check.

Consensus of HPC: HPC could have supported this COA.

2c. COA HPC 19-06: 940 Caddo Street, St Paul’s Bottoms Historic District

- MPC Staff Case Report: All Commissioners had the opportunity to review this application.
- Public Comments: None.
- HPC Discussion for the Record:

Commissioner Joiner comments: Made visit to the property before the meeting. This block contains no buildings but still within the St Paul’s Bottom Historic District. For the record submitted a publication titled, “Cultural Resources Survey of Blocks 3 and 4 Bayou Grande Development” with these Blocks corresponding to 940 Caddo Street and 1040 Caddo Street. This survey was conducted by the Red River Regional Studies at Louisiana State University Shreveport for the ITEX Group developing these blocks for residential apartments. Scope of this survey covered the history of these two blocks, prior residential and commercial uses, and explained artifacts found. Commissioners and Attorney Strand had a chance to look through this very professional survey.

Commissioner Wayne comments: Wondered why there were two separate COAs for the same project, same proposed buildings to be construction, and on blocks next to each other. No specific questions on the new construction proposal.

Commissioner Callaway: Noted two different and incorrect history districts listed in the application. After visiting the site, questioned how the MPC could make a call on several of the Approval Standards for this project (as well as for the companion project at 1040 Caddo Street). The surrounding lots are empty and nearby buildings (Milliendum Studios and two-storied residential townhomes are new and a church circa 1960) are poor examples to use to determine that these proposed apartments are harmonious with the historic character of the past buildings in this area. Proposed apartments are compatible architecturally with the newer buildings in the immediate location of the block to be infilled.

Consensus of HPC: HPC could have supported this COA.

2d. COA HPC 19-07: 1040 Caddo Street, St Paul’s Bottoms Historic District

- MPC Staff Case Report: All Commissioners had the opportunity to review this application.
- Public Comments: None.

- HPC Discussion for the Record:
 - Commissioner Joiner comments: Made note that the cover sheet for this application had the incorrect case number and same incorrect historic districts listed as listed in COA HPC-19-06 above. Planned new construction is exactly as in COA HPC-19-06 but noted as Phase II of the larger project with Phase I being 940 Caddo Street. No further questions or comments.
 - Commissioner Wayne comments: No further questions or comments.
 - Commissioner Callaway: No further questions or comments.
 - Consensus of HPC: HPC could have supported this COA.

2e. COA HPC 19-08: 717 Crockett Street, Shreveport Commercial Historic District

- MPC Staff Case Report: All Commissioners had the opportunity to review this application.
- Public Comments: None.
- HPC Discussion for the Record:
 - Commissioner Joiner comments: Made note that the cover sheet for this application had the incorrect case number and incorrect address. Besides the MPC application form, a draft Historic Rehabilitation Commercial Tax Credit Application was also attached. During a visit and per #4 item of the Tax Credit Application, noted an applied mural stuck on the western exterior wall of this historic building and covering almost the entire length. Mural is clearly visible from the street and impacts on the historic street view. Expressed concern if an applied mural covering would be removed without harming the 1930-era brick and mortar. The mural's material seems to be vinyl and appears to be firm adhered to the brick's face and in some places to the mortar as well.
 - Commissioner Wayne comments: Asked about the addition of a new canopy along the front of the entire building which is not existing in the current building.
 - Commissioner Callaway: Provided a brief history of this 1931 building and its unique Art Deco style with rare Mayan design elements. A photo from 1940 of this building with its original occupant (Andress Ford) was shown. Per the new canopy, the 1940 photo shows individual cloth canopies over each window along the first floor facing Crockett Street. So the building length proposed canopy would be new to the building. Notwithstanding, with sight of this building is the Strand Theatre with an awning original to that building still in service. And around the block on the Louisiana Avenue side of Arlington Hotel, the canopy along this street view was taken down but in storage available to be re-installed by a new owner. And the canopy would not obscure the Art Deco decorative detail along the front of the building. The Tax Credit Application contains several some three items on removing graffiti to restore this historic building to its former appearance. Returning to the original appears denotes removal of the applied mural on the exterior west wall. Commissioner Callaway is to contact the architect listed on the application to determine if the mural could be removed without harming the west facing exterior wall.
 - Consensus of HPC: HPC could have supported this COA.

3. Approval of HPC Special Meeting Minutes for February 22, 2019: Chair asked for questions or discussion. Being none, Chair requested a motion be made to approve these Minutes. Motion made by Commissioner Wayne, seconded by Commissioner Callaway and unanimously passed.

4. Permanently move HPC's meeting location to MPC Conference Room (Room 440) at Government Plaza: Moving HPC meetings from the Chambers Conference Room would provide a better physical arrangement to conduct HPC meetings in terms of presenting video-visual presentations on COA / COD applications on the available big-screen television and allowing more seating for attending applicants, visiting public, and expanded number of Commissioners. The Chair asked for questions or discussion and being none, requested a motion. Commissioner Wayne made motion to adopt, seconded by Commissioner Callaway and unanimously passed. Commissioner Callaway is to coordinate change of location with the Office of the Mayor to reflect on the City Calendar.

5. Forward HPC Commissioner Candidates to the Office for the Mayor: Three nominations were considered for the fifth Commissioner and two Associate Commissioners to forward to the Mayor for consideration. Associate Commissioners were added in the substitute Chapter 36 ordinance. Curriculum Vitae for each Commissioner candidate was reviewed.

- Commissioner Joiner made the motion to forward the name of Dr. Cheryl White, Ph.D. to be the fifth Commissioner. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Wayne and unanimously passed.
- Commissioner Joiner made the motion to forward the name of Dr. Frederic Washington, Ed.D. for Associate Commissioner. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Wayne and unanimously passed.
- Commissioner Joiner made the motion to forward the name of Amy Oakes Wren, J.D. for Associate Commissioner. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Wayne and unanimously passed.

Commissioner Callaway is to forward the three candidates with their respective Curriculum Vitae to the Office of the Mayor.

6. Public Comments: None.

7. Adjournment: The Chair requested a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Wayne made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Callaway; with resulting unanimous vote. Chair adjourned the Special Meeting at 5:21pm.