

Shreveport Historic Preservation Commission

MINUTES February 18, 2020

Room 440, Metropolitan Planning Commission Conference Room
Government Plaza
505 Travis Street
Shreveport, Louisiana

Commissioners

Commissioner Billy Wayne, Vice Chair
Commissioner Frances Conley
Commissioner Cheryl White
Commissioner Lane Callaway, Secretary
Associate Commissioner Jazzmin Jernigan

Visitors

None

Shreveport-Caddo Metropolitan Planning Commission

Mr. James Djamba, Planner, Community Planning Department
Ms. Maryan Moradian, Planner, Land Development Department

1. Meeting was called to order at 4:01pm by Commissioner Wayne as acting Chair with a quorum present.
2. Opening Remarks:
 - 2a. Commissioner White read memorandum titled, *Identifying Procedures for Review of Applications* to all present.
 - 2b. Commissioner Callaway publically thanked Ms. Arlene Adger, Assistant to the CAO. Ms. Adger consistently assisted HPC since January 2019 in posting the HPC's monthly agenda to the City's website to be in compliance with the state's open meeting law. Ms. Adger last day in the CAO's office was February 14.
 - 2c. Commissioner Callaway reminded all on the special showing scheduled for April 6 at the Strand Theatre of a recently completed historic documentary film on the Wiener Brothers' architectural impact on Shreveport.
 - 2d. Comments on Section 106 Requests: Commissioner Callaway mentioned beginning work on 10 proposals to install telecommunication towers in Shreveport. Mr. Djamba stated an additional Section 106 request had been received. These requests for comment by contractors came through Metropolitan Planning Commission. These request fulfill requirements in accordance with Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act. Requested comments from HPC pertain to potential effect of these tower installations within rights-of-way of NRHP-listed historic districts, impact on individual historic properties, and effect on archeological-sensitive areas. These proposals will be summarized on the HPC agenda for March.
3. Approval of Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) Minutes for January 21, 2020: Chair asked for questions or discussion on the Minutes; and requested a motion to approve these

Minutes. Motion to approve made by Commissioner White and seconded by Commissioner Callaway; unanimous vote to approve.

4. Old Business: Certificate of Demolition – COD 19-329-HPC: 1504 Peabody Street, multiple Shotgun-style dwellings (single and double styles) all Contributing Elements to St. Paul’s Bottoms Historic District.

Background: Deferred on October 15, 2019; tabled pending evaluation by City Attorney’s office. Update given by Courtney Harris, City Attorney’s Office during January 21 meeting. City Attorney’s office to ensure no issue in advising both HPC and Property Standards office that submitted COD request. As well, City Attorney noted subsequently that the out-of-state owner of the Peabody Street properties had been properly informed of the City’s request for demolition.

MPC Staff Case Report: Mr. Djamba presented the application submitted by Shreveport Property Standards with the application containing a map and 14 photographs showing these buildings and their deterioration. MPC staff recommends approval of the demolition request.

Public Comments: There was no public comment on this application.

HPC Discussion and Vote on Recommendation: Commissioner Wayne visited these properties recently and noted at least three, in his estimation, that could be preserved and re-purposed. However, these historic buildings show much neglect. Commissioner Callaway recalled a few years ago of an advocate endorsed by Downtown Development Authority, who conducted fund raisers so to obtain these buildings, move them closer to downtown, and re-purpose them to commercial purposes. Nothing came of this effort. Commissioner White stated it would be better to save them even if only three. Many Shotgun style buildings that had given St Paul’s Bottoms it historic character had been torn down by the City resulting in vacant lots. Commissioner Callaway stated of knowing a local person who expressed interest in perhaps purchasing these properties to start preservation efforts and willing to contact them.

Commissioner White made a motion to table the request to allow 30 more days. Commissioner Wayne expressed his concern about anyone, especially a homeless person using these open buildings for shelter and unwittingly starting a fire or getting hurt. Commissioner Callaway seconded the motion and stated of contacting the person but also noted the property would be placed on the March agenda. Having no other discussion, the Chair called for a vote to table the request for demolition with this motion unanimously approved.

5. New Business: Certificate of Demolition – COD 20-2-HPC: 1126 Texas Avenue, Contributing Element to St. Paul’s Bottoms Historic District (within 1999 boundary update).

MPC Staff Case Report: Mr. Djamba presented the application submitted by Shreveport Property Standards with the application containing a map, Case log sheet, two inspection reports, three letters from the City on the property, and 46 photographs of the building’s exterior and interior. Mr. Djamba noted the City of Shreveport is the owner of the building. MPC staff recommends approval of the demolition request.

Public Comments: There was no public comment on this application.

HPC Discussion and Vote on Recommendation: Commissioner Wayne provided first hand observations of the building from his recent visit and noted, in his opinion, of severe deterioration. Commissioner Callaway provided an overview of area which was very much part of the historic African-American Central Business District and had noted this building when working other historic preservation projects in the vicinity. Having no additional comments or discussion by HPC, the Chair asked for a motion. Commissioner Conley made the motion to approve the MPC recommendation to approve the request for demolition; with this motion seconded by Commissioner Callaway. The Chair called for a vote and the motion carried unanimously.

6. HPC-Public Event: Commissioner Callaway provided HPC an appreciation of the ceremonial event conducted at Booker T. Washington High School on January 23, 2020 marking the 70th Anniversary of the schools opening. HPC had collaborated in this historic school being listed on the National Register of Historic Places as well as advising on the application for a Louisiana Historical Marker. Commissioner Callaway was one of six dignitaries asked to make remarks and showed HPC Commissioners the event's program.

7. Historic Preservation Advising:

7a. Commissioner Callaway updated HPC about contacting the owner of 1544 Milam Street (Allendale Neighborhood) with additional information on the "how to" of the nomination process to the National Register and history of the building. Commissioner Callaway shall follow-up.

7b. Commissioner Callaway updated HPC about responding to a request for assistance from a committee appointed by St Rest Baptist Church (Allendale Neighborhood) to obtain a Louisiana Historical Marker. The Church was urged to contact HPC for advice and assistance by Councilman Willie Bradford (District A). Commissioner Callaway has continuously communicated with the Church's point of contact and has begun working on the application.

8. Historic Preservation Commission Business Item – HPC Webpage: Associate Commissioner Jernigan is taking the lead to contract the contractor and make any modifications to tailor the webpage for HPC and public use. Commissioner Callaway made a motion to table further discussion until March. Seconded by Commissioner White and with no further discussion, motion was unanimously approved.

9. Public Comments: None.

10. Adjournment: Having no additional business to conduct, the Chair requested a motion to adjourn. Commissioner White made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Conley; with resulting unanimous vote. Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:50pm.