

Shreveport Historic Preservation Commission

Minutes May 26, 2020

Virtual Meeting via Video/Conference (Zoom) due to COVID-19 Restrictions
Shreveport, Louisiana

Commissioners

Commissioner Gary Joiner, Chair
Commissioner Billy Wayne, Vice Chair
Commissioner Lane Callaway, Secretary
Commissioner Frances Conley
Commissioner Cheryl White
Associate Commissioner Jazmin Jernigan
Associate Commissioner Amy Wren

Visitors (from taped video-conference)

Brad Schmidt, COA 20-3-HPC
Sam Dugan, COA 20-5-HPC
Director Bonnie Moore, COA 20-6-HPC
Community Development, Shreveport
Lisa Hayes, COD 20-7-HPC
Property Standards Inspector, Shreveport
Randy Craig, COA 20-8-HPC
Tom Arceneaux, COA 20-8-HPC
Tyler Spears, COA 20-8-HPC
Jason Russel, COA 20-8-HPC
Charlotte Russell, COA 20-8-HPC
Brad Massy, COA 20-9-HPC
Mohr & Associates, COA 20-9-HPC
Jeff Spikes, architect, COA 20-10-HPC

Ex-Officio

Mr. Adam Bailey, Shreveport-Caddo Metropolitan Planning Commission

Shreveport-Caddo Metropolitan Planning Commission

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

Administrative Note: Minutes for May 26, 2020 summarized from video-recorded tape.

1. Meeting called to order by Chair at 4:04pm with roll call taken of Commissioners; a quorum was present online.
2. Opening Remarks: The Chair read memorandum titled, *Identifying Procedures for Review of Application* to all present. As well, the Chair noted for all to show courtesy by not talking over each other since the session was being conducted via video-conference, mute conference when not speaking, for Commissioners to identify themselves before speaking, and the Chair would call each Commissioner by name for voting purposes. Also the Chair thanked the MPC staff for coordinating the video-conference.
3. Approval of HPC Minutes for February 18, 2020: The Chair asked for questions or discussion on the Minutes for the last meeting conducted by HPC prior to the closing of Government Plaza in response to the COVID-19 situation. Having no discussion or questions, the Chair asked for a motion to approve. Motion to approve Minutes was made by Commissioner White and seconded by Commissioner Wayne; unanimously passed.
4. Seven requests were considered.

4a. Certificate of Appropriateness – COA 20-3-HPC, 4118 Fairfield Avenue, Intrusion to South Highlands Historic District

MPC Staff Case Report: Mr. Djamba virtually presented the application containing map, five diagrams, and six photos. The requesting property owner was virtually present. Application contained several actions; namely demolition of the existing two vehicle garage, rebuild a larger two vehicle garage on at the same location, and then new construction of living space as a second story to the new garage. MPC review contained two conditions which were met by the applicant before the HPC session; MPC recommending approval.

Public Comments: The applicant, Mr. Schmidt appreciated those Commissioners who visited the property and had no further information to add. The Chair asked for any comments against the request; there was none.

HPC Discussion and Vote on Recommendation: The Chair asked for comments from the Commissioners. Commissioner Callaway stated of visiting the property from Fairfield Avenue. The property is on a hill side, tucked away from the road, landscaping obscures the dwelling from the street view, the neighboring historic house on the hill top looks like a skyscraper in comparison, and even after adding the second storied part – someone who was not looking for the house, would not see it from the road. Commissioner Conley as well visited the property from Fairfield Avenues and noted vegetation covered the street view of the residence. Commissioner Joiner recalled visiting property years ago and agreed it is down the hill and hidden. Commissioner Wayne asked if MPC was recommending approval. (Yes, from Mr. Djamba.)

The Chair thanked all for a good discussion and asked for a motion. Commissioner White made the motion to approve with second by Commissioner Conley; unanimous approval.

4b. Certificate of Appropriateness – COA 20-5-HPC: 850 Prospect Street, Contributing Element to Fairfield Historic District

MPC Staff Case Report: Mr. Djamba virtually presented the application containing one map, two diagrams, and two photos. The property is a turn of the 19th Century residential building. MPC review resulted in three conditions met by the applicant before the HPC session with MPC recommending approval.

Public Comments: Sam Dugan, contractor summarized the alternation to be addition of a sun porch on the corner of the porch with most of the new sun porch taking in the portion of the porch on the side part of the house away from the street view. Commissioner Joiner asked Mr. Dugan if the alternation would result in raising the height of this historic house. Mr. Dugan indicated no, all within the porch area. The Chair asked for any comments against the request; there was none.

HPC Discussion and Vote on Recommendation: The Chair asked for comments from the Commissioners. Commissioner Callaway stated he visited the property. The house built circa 1910 is well maintained and looks neat. He also states of visiting houses along the two immediate blocks of Prospect and several historic houses either have their porches untouched, some with half the porch enclosed by screening, and some with roughly half of the original front porch enclosed for living spaces.

Having no additional discussion, the Chair asked for a motion. Commissioner Wayne made the motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Callaway; unanimously approved.

4c. Certificate of Appropriateness – COA 20-6-HPC: 854 Williamson Street, Contributing Element to St. Paul’s Bottoms Historic District

MPC Staff Case Report: Ms. Moradian virtually presented the application containing one map, 14 diagrams, and one photo. The hash marks on several diagrams reflect areas to be rehabilitated as well as a recommendation by the requester to change damaged materials on the roof of the Old Galilee Church. The aim of the proposed action is to stabilize this historic church and then rehabilitate to be re-purposed into a civil rights museum. MPC review had one condition, in that the requester had to follow preservation guidelines from the National Park Service (NPS) due to grants.

Public Comments: Director Bonnie Moore, Community Development of the City of Shreveport stated support for approval. She told of the exciting work done on collaboration with the Northwest Louisiana Civil Rights Coalition to promote the history of Civil Rights in Shreveport. Director Moore that over one million dollars of NPC grants plus City matching funds have been allocated for this stabilization effort. Mr. Steve Terese has contributed mightily to the effort. The Chair asked for comments against the request; none.

HPC Discussion and Vote on Recommendation: The Chair opened the discussion by the Commissioners by stating Old Galilee Church is the crown jewel of Civil Rights movement in Shreveport. Commissioner Callaway reflected on visiting the property twice; once with the staff of the State Historic Preservation Office and then another time with two planners from NPS. He continued by giving kudos to Director Moore and her staff for their effort and assured that he had over time kept HPC Commissioners informed on the effort at Old Galilee. Commissioner Callaway concluded with whole hearted support to the entire effort. Mr. Bailey added that this specific COA covered the stabilization phase and was needed to gain a permit from the City but later expect another COA covering the rehabilitation.

Having no additional discussion, the Chair asked for a motion. Commissioner White made the motion to approve the COA, seconded by Commissioner Conley, unanimously approved.

4d. Certificate of Demolition – COD 20-7-HPC: 427 Wyandotte Street, Highland HPOD

MPC Staff Case Report: Ms. Moradian virtually presented the application containing one map, one diagram, and 77 photos. This lengthy COA request contained the memorandum and support documents from the City’s Property Standards office. The requestor is the City of Shreveport. The MPC recommended approval with no conditions attached.

Public Comments: Ms. Lisa Hayes, an Inspector from Property Standards stated that the dwelling was beyond repair and a potential safety hazard to the community especially if children tried to explore. From the photographs contained in the request, the rear portion of the house is severely damaged. The Chair asked for any comments against the request; there was none.

HPC Discussion and Vote on Recommendation: The Chair thanked Ms. Hayes for a solid report and asked for comments from the Commissioners. Commissioner Conley noted of passing the building and noted what seemed to be changes in windows among other items of what looked like was possible repairs. Commissioner Joiner added that recently passing by the dwelling, it looked like a bomb had landed on the building and he speculated the changes in windows noted by Commissioner Conley were either windows either being replaced or salvaged.

Having no additional discussion, the Chair asked for a motion. Commissioner Callaway made the motion to approve the COD, seconded by Commissioner Conley, unanimously approved.

4e. Certificate of Appropriateness – COA 20-8-HPC: 1519 Creswell Avenue, Highland Historic District, Vacant Lots

MPC Staff Case Report: Mr. Djamba virtually presented the application containing one map, two diagrams, memo on the proposed project from Mr. J. Andrew Craig, and one photo. There were no MPC Conditions to the recommendation to approve. Request is for parking lot for 10 vehicles, fencing, retention pond, and landscaping with tree and scrubs. Property is to join two contiguous vacant lots with entrance / exit to Jordan Street and rear connection to a drive way with entrance / exit to Creswell Avenue with parking lot for health clinic building facing Creswell.

Public Comments: Mr. Arceneaux (resident of Highland Historic District - HD) stated the building was not a health clinic but rather administrative office for medical personnel who make off-site visits. There would be an impact on the HD in that parking is not needed on historic street of Jordan to operate the business on Creswell Street. Mr. Arceneaux provided orientation to HPC through photos of the street, historic buildings within the vicinity of the proposed parking lot, and different viewpoints looking from the clinic building on Creswell towards Jordan. His photos included residential dwellings and one commercial building (with compact parking on side and rear of that building) and how proposed entrance / exit on Jordan would change the pattern of traffic orientation and pattern on Jordan. Parking is available behind the administrative office building facing Creswell with this parking space more than probable adequate for the amount of visitors to the building.

A formal letter against constructing of the parking lot from M. Tyler Spears (Highland HD resident) stated the addition of unnecessary traffic with safety concern for kids. Green space was needed and should not be filled in by a parking lot. This letter was read by Mr. Bailey.

Jason Russell (Highland HD resident) stated the parking lot does not flow with the neighborhood nor good for traffic – not that best use of that space.

Charlotte Russell (Highland HD resident) is opposed to the construction, noting the parking lot would not flow with the surrounding neighborhood; and there are other examples of clinics whose parking is suited for their specific neighborhood.

Mr. Bailey stated that a 2018 special use permit submitted by the owner of the building is null and void; and the case is scheduled for July to be heard by the MPC.

J. Andrew Craig, contractor – noted the two vacant lots are outline in red (on the diagram) and owned by the clinic building's owner and believed the building was used as a mental health clinic but not absolutely sure. He was asked to work with the planning commission to get a parking lot sited and met the MPC aspects.

HPC Discussion and Vote on Recommendation: Commissioner Joiner started the discussion asking what several questions: What is the type of clinic? (MPC answer, unknown.) Does the applicant own both lots affronting Jordan? (MPC answer, yes.) Does the clinic owner own the lot at the corner of Jordan and Creswell? (MPC answer, no.) What is the height of the proposed fencing between the parking lot and corner residential dwelling? (MPC answer, height is 8 foot max and 6 foot minimum.) Was the office originally changed for in-or-out patients? (MPC answer, unknown.)

Commissioner Callaway stated that he had passed the clinic building several times when looking at other COA requests in this part of Highland HD. Per the photo, there is space behind the current building. He sense it would be a waste of land affronting Jordan for a parking lot when a residential dwelling could be built on it. He noted the proposed parking lot from the diagram seemed to be larger than the clinic building and the parking lot doesn't flow.

Commissioner White stated more concrete is not needed but green space and she expressed concerned about the impact on the integrity of the neighborhood.

Commissioner Conley noted this type of addition does not fit well with the neighborhood.

Mr. Bailey noted that the COA addresses design standards of the lot not so much land use. The applicant's use of the land is to be discussed with MPC in July.

The Chair noted an appropriate motion could be approval, approved with conditions, or denied. Commissioner White countered that land use alters historic character of a neighborhood.

Mr. Bailey explained that in considering land use, MPC looks at setback, massing, and historic aspects – the look of the historic environment.

Commissioner White emphasized that an important aspect of this Commission is the historic integrity of any proposal and wondered out loud why a HPC review before the MPC decision on zoning.

Commissioner Callaway drew attention back to the two lots with only one becoming a parking lot – not proper use of vacant land.

Associate Commissioner Wren spoke about delay a HPC recommendation until MPC makes a decision in July and then HPC can re-look historic integrity.

Mr. Bailey is to provide HPC information on the MPC decision in July on this property.

The Chair asked for a motion. Commissioner Wayne made a motion to delay which was seconded by Commissioner Conley with unanimous support.

4f. Certificate of Appropriateness – COA 20-9-HPC: Corner of Wall St/Highland Ave, Highland Historic District, Vacant Lot COA

MPC Staff Case Report: Ms. Moradian virtually presented the application containing one map, two diagram, and three photos. The COA is for a parking lot on two adjacent vacant lots owned by Brentwood Hospital. She described the closing of an alley by the City so to make the new parking lot contiguous with the current and larger parking lot. The MPC recommended approval without conditions.

Public Comments: Andy Craig stated that since the physical expansion of the hospital itself, additional parking is needed so to remove the congestion of curb parking along Highland Avenue and other side streets. The hospital looks eventually to buy two additional lots facing Wall Street (one vacant and one with a dilapidated house) for future parking areas. The hospital and contractor wants to do everything right through HPC and have met the landscape requirements of MPC. Also the black wrought iron fencing along the current parking lot facing Highland shall be continued along the new parking lot facing Highland; with black chain link fencing along Wall Street and the back part of the new parking lot. The alley way as note will add continuity of the fencing along Highland Avenue.

Brad Massy, contractor reinforced the urgent need for additional parking; with the landscaping and fencing a desire to add to the neighborhood making the addition pleasing to the eye.

The Chair asked for any comments against the request; there was none.

HPC Discussion and Vote on Recommendation: Commission Joiner citing the historical significance of Wall Street – as the location of the old Confederate defensive wall thus giving the street its name, as well as a nearby artillery battery emplacement – suggested doing a cultural resource master plan of the area so to be sensitive to this very history area of old Shreveport. Commissioner White suggested to extend the wrought iron fencing along the entirety of the new parking lot affronting Highland Avenue to the continuity of this fencing.

Commissioner Callaway asked for clarification if the new parking lot would intrude on the adjacent vacant lot owned by the Pickett Family noted on one of the diagrams. (No it does not.) Commissioner Callaway reflected on visiting the property in March 2017 with Commissioner Wayne looking at a demolition request on the old Pickett residential dwelling that was in poor shape; the HPC approved the Pickett Family's requests for demolition in September 2017. Therefore, high probability of Brentwood Hospital purchasing the two adjoining

properties – Pickett’s vacant lot and the lot with the current dilapidated house – so recommended the wrought iron fencing turn the corner at Highland Avenue and Wall Street and continue on to the length of the new parking lot down Wall Street. The Chair clarified, however, the black chain link fencing would remain on the back side of the new lot. Commissioner Callaway concurred. Commissioner Wayne added the wrought iron fencing should be along Wall Street as well.

Having no additional discussion, the Chair asked for a motion. Commissioner White made the motion to approve the COA with condition the wrought iron fencing would turn the corner and continued along Wall Street; seconded by Commissioner Wayne. The approval with condition was unanimous.

Commissioner Joiner restated his suggestion to review the property for historic artifacts and items before asphalt and landscaping is applied.

4g. Certificate of Appropriateness – COA 20-10-HPC: 408 Cotton Street, Contributing Element, Shreveport Commercial Historic District

MPC Staff Case Report: Mr. Djamba presented the application with one map, 18 diagrams, and 12 photos. This is a rehabilitation of a contiguous vehicular parking garages built circa 1920s-1930s. The historic building is to be re-purposed into office spaces. However, the original façade is to remain unchanged. The single condition by MPC was the requestor was to follow the guidelines for tax credits which are in the process of reviewing.

Public Comments: Jeff Spikes – architect, property owner, and applicant – explained the rehabilitation concept. As for the front façade, the plan is to replace chain fencing that had been added by a previous owner to secure large entry ways and to remove non-historic metal signage to expose historic front elevation. He noted, that Part 2 of Tax Credit application has been approved, but the State Historic Preservation Officer wants to keep the openness of bays. The Chair asked for any comments against the request; there was none.

HPC Discussion and Vote on Recommendation: Commissioner Joiner began the discussion asking the MPC planner if the building under consideration did not go to the corner of Cotton Street but did extend from Cotton Street to the back alley. (MPC answer; not to corner but does extend to back alley.) Commissioner Joiner stated to the applicant to be sensitive and not harm the brick or historic signage by pressure washing.

Commissioner White noted of sensitivity keeping the integrity of the brick façade and historic signage.

Commissioner Callaway noted that he spoke with Mr. Spikes just before the pandemic closed Government Plaza, urging the HPC be provided a concept of the rehabilitation effort on this unique historic building. He reminded the Commissioners that Mr. Spikes was also working on the historic Andres Ford Building on Crockett Street (Shreveport Commercial HD) and had worked with Community Development in designing the Kitchen Incubator on Milam Street (St Paul’s Bottoms HD). Commissioner Callaway noted the thoroughness of the rehabilitation and impressed with the creativity of keeping the street view essentially the same but with the newer rehabilitation effort set back into the front cover of the old open bay parking garage.

Being no further discussion, the Chair asked for a motion. Commissioner Conley made the motion to approve with condition of keeping the signage as discussed; seconded by Commissioner Callaway. Motion to approval with condition was unanimous.

5. HPC Advising:

- a. Update on St Rest Baptist Church (Allendale Neighborhood) – Application for Louisiana Historical Marker: Commissioner Callaway updated HPC on the submission

of an application. Historical event was a fire bombing at the church in 1961 during the era of the Civil Rights Movement in Shreveport. The approval process the State of Louisiana was summarized with expectation of approval at the State's hearing in August. The application was a collaboration between HPC and the St. Rest Baptist Church Committee. Commissioner Joiner added that St Rest Baptist Church is part of the proposed Civil Rights Heritage Trail.

b. Commissioner Callaway also noted a future COA to be submitted for the Uneeda Biscuit Building on Milam Street within the Shreveport Commercial Historic District. Per Mr. Bailey, DDA wanted to give a presentation. Commissioner Callaway asked if the City owned the building. Mr. Bailey stated no, owners were Mr. Taylor and Mr. Brown. Mr. Bailey noted as well that the Uneeda Biscuit Building had been green lighted by SHPO and had application for tax credits. Commissioner Callaway noted it that was great however, a COA is required. Commissioner Joiner noted that the building had been built in 1904 and had unique vintage and historic signage on its upper exterior wall from the 1920s-1930s.

6. Public Comments: The Chair asked for any public comments.

a. Commissioner Joiner noted the proposed 5G poles examined in May were good; no archeological sensitive areas.

b. Adam Bailey, Ex-Officio announced that HPC's application for renewal of Certified Local Government designation was approved and is good for three years.

c. Commissioner White requested HPC to return the normal monthly HPC meeting on each third Tuesday of the month. Commissioner Callaway, as HPC Secretary concurred. He recalled Government Plaza was closed to the public the day before the scheduled March meeting but when the procedures for a video-conference was confirmed and the administrative items arranged; the fourth Tuesday of May was the best solution.

7. Adjournment: Having no addition business to conduct or comments from visitors, the Chair requested a motion to adjourn. Commissioner White made the motion and seconded by Commissioner Wayne; with resulting unanimous vote. Chair adjourned the Meeting at 6:08pm.