

The following minutes are from the Historic Commission meeting on Tuesday, March 15, 2022 in the Abita Springs Town Hall. The meeting convened at 6:03 p.m.

Commissioner Blicht called the meeting to order, and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioners in attendance included Ron Blicht, Thad Mancil, Otto Dinkelacker, Andre Monnot, and Paul Vogt. Kristin Tortorich and Mark Fancey were also present.

The Commission reviewed the draft minutes from the February 8, 2022 meeting. Commissioner Blicht noted the date of the minutes needs to be corrected. Commissioner Mancil motioned to accept the minutes of the February 8, 2022 meeting with the correction noted. Commissioner Vogt seconded the motion. All commissioners were in favor.

#### **Certificate of Appropriateness 71364 St. Charles Street**

The request is to renovate the existing home, demolish the garage, and construct new fencing. Stucco on the exterior of the residence would be replaced with siding and the roof would be replaced. The applicant is considering several siding options. Commissioner Blicht noted that when the siding is replaced the window trim needs to remain visible. Discussion ensued regarding the columns on the existing screened porch. Commissioner Blicht explained that if the porch is demolished and re-constructed it would need to meet the Historic Design Guidelines and drawings would need to be submitted. He said if the porch is repaired then additional review is not needed.

The applicant proposes to construct picket fencing in the front and 6-foot high privacy fence along the south property line. Commissioner Blicht noted that the privacy fence must be set back 1/3 the depth of the house.

Commissioner Mancil motioned to approve the request as proposed with final approval based on the front porch construction. If the porch is demolished and re-constructed, then additional drawings must be submitted. Commissioner Monnot seconded the motion. All commissioners were in favor.

Commissioner Mancil motioned to approve the request to construct fencing provided the 6-foot high privacy fence is setback 1/3 of the depth of the house. Commissioner Monnot seconded the request. All commissioners were in favor.

Commissioner Blicht the paint colors for the house can be submitted via e-mail. Commissioner Blicht is assigned to the application.

#### **Certificate of Appropriateness 71260 St. Charles Street**

The request is to renovate an existing residence. The roof and siding will be replaced, and the front steps will be rebuilt. The metal roof would be replaced with similar material. Commissioner Blicht noted that if vinyl siding is used the window trim must remain visible.

Commissioner Mancil motioned to approve the request. Commissioner Dinkelacker seconded the motion. All commissioners were in favor. Commissioner Vogt is assigned to the application.

#### **Certificate of Appropriateness 22059 Hwy 59**

The request is to renovate the building as a coffee shop. The renovation includes new columns, laminate beams, and a new higher canopy. The existing concrete block would be covered with board and batten siding. At the rear of the building a long rectangular window would open accordion-style to allow outdoor service. Several other windows, including a drive-up window, would be removed. Discussion ensued concerning signage and the front fence. Commissioner Blicht suggested hanging baskets or potted plants to soften the appearance at the front of the building. Commissioner Mancil noted that how signage is designed and located will be important. Commissioner Blicht said signage options can be provided via e-mail.

Stewart Eastman objected to the design stating it is too modern and the canopy looks futuristic. Commissioner Mancil and Commissioner Blitch both responded that the awning design is sympathetic to the previous use of the building as a service station.

Commissioner Mancil motioned to approve the request subject to final details regarding the signage and fence. Commissioner Monnot seconded the motion. All commissioners were in favor. Commissioner Mancil is assigned to the application.

#### **Certificate of Appropriateness Hwy 59 between Millar Street and Southwind Subdivision**

The request is to construct a new Dollar General store on a property zoned Commercial District. Commissioner Blitch complimented the design for moving the building close to Hwy 59. He had some questions about the site plan. He asked if a buffer zone of trees can be preserved along adjacent property lines and if landscape bays can be installed in the parking lot. He also asked if the ice machine shown at the front corner of the building could be re-located so it would not be visible. The applicant's representative said that they would try to preserve as many trees as possible. He said that landscape bays can be added to the parking lot and the ice machine can be moved.

Commissioner Monnot asked if buffer zones need to be provided adjacent to residential properties. Mark Fancey said he would need to check zoning requirements.

Commissioner Monnot noted the 8-foot high fence proposed along the west and south property lines. Discussion ensued regarding fence height requirements.

Commissioner Mancil said his biggest issue is the brown infill siding. He said the brown wood does not look appropriate and suggested extending the brick or simply removing the siding. He also suggested adding color to the building signage at the corner of the building to make the corner stand out.

Commissioner Blitch noted the roof projection in the southwest corner of the building and asked if that could be reduced so that is not visible from the street.

Stewart Eastman said he opposes the design as too modern. Commissioner Blitch noted several newer commercial buildings in Covington designed to be appropriate within the historic downtown. Commissioner Dinkelacker said the building design looks good and is absolutely appropriate. He appreciates the effort that went into the design.

Commissioner Mancil motioned to approve the request with the changes discussed. Commissioner Dinkelacker seconded the motion. All commissioners were in favor. Commissioner Mancil is assigned to the application.

#### **DISCUSSION**

##### **Town Hall Expansion Project**

Commissioner Blitch provided an update on the Town Hall expansion project. The Commission reviewed drawings showing the floor plan and building elevations. New features include the lobby and gallery area connecting the existing Town Hall building to the expanded office area. This area will make the building accessible with ramps and stairs.

**Proposed amendments to Sec. 9-306 – Historic District Commission Jurisdiction**

The Commission reviewed draft amendments to Sec. 9-306 that would expand the authority of the Historic Commission along highway corridors to include properties on Harrison Avenue. The amendments will be discussed by the Planning & Zoning Commission at the March 31, 2022 meeting.

**Public Comment**

Stewart Eastman said the Commission needs to consider the appearance of corridors into town including the Tammany Trace when approving building designs. He noted the privacy fence approved on a property along Hwy 435. Commissioner Blitch said the Commission forwarded amendments regarding fences on corner lots, but the proposed amendments were not adopted by the Town Council. He said the Historic Commission should work with the Planning & Zoning Commission to develop landscape standards, including planter bays in parking lots.

Commissioner Mancil motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Dinkelacker seconded the motion. All commissioners were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

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Kristin M. Tortorich, Planning and Zoning

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Date