

**City of Dahlonega
Historic Preservation Commission Minutes
July 24, 2017, 6:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Bebe Blount, Larry Grimsley, Mary Owens, Jimmy Anderson and Alice Sampson

City Staff Present: City Manager Bill Schmid and City Clerk Kimberly Smith

Call to Order

Chairperson Blount called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Following discussion regarding additional detail it was decided to delay approval of minutes from July 6, 2017 meeting to the meeting August 28, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

Oath of Office

City Clerk Smith administered the Oath of Office for a Historic Preservation Commission Member to Jimmy Anderson.

Election of Vice Chairman

There was discussion regarding the postponement of this election at the last meeting because all members were not in attendance.

HPC Member Sampson made a motion to nominate Jimmy Anderson, seconded by Owens, motion carried unanimously.

Review and Finalize of Amendments to the Historic Preservation Guidelines

Chairperson Blount said the suggested changes to the guidelines in the agenda packet were from Chris Worick.

There was discussion regarding tree species for replacement of damaged or dead trees. Discussion included the current list of trees in the guidelines being from ten years ago; using or not using native species for replacement; recommendations for replacement made by Certified Arborist Nancy Lovingood; the necessity to use trees that will grow in urban areas and the fact that native trees that may grow in open fields will not always do well in an urban setting.

City Manager Schmid will prepare recommendations for the Historic District Guidelines regarding tree replacement and present it at the August 28, 2017 meeting.

There was discussion regarding changes in the Historic District Guidelines with regard to demolition.

City Manager Schmid said it may be a good idea to wait on any demolition changes until the matter with the Parks Building is settled so it will not seem that changes were made to the Guidelines because of the pending demolition. Even though any changes made now would not pertain to that building since the issue of demolition and reconstruction at the area is currently in process and has been in process for a while.

Discussion ensued regarding conceptual reviews only being performed for approximately one year. HPC Member Grimsley said the conceptual reviews have been done only as a courtesy and are not binding. The conceptual review done for the hotel proposed for the location where the Parks building is located was not an application.

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HPC Member Owens replied, the applicant sees what was submitted as an application even though it is not.

City Manager Schmid said, they say their application is complete even though it was not all submitted at the same time different parts were submitted independently from other parts. A review of the submittals as of today does not result in a complete application.

HPC Member Sampson said there are more questions to be answered about the application

Chairperson Blount asked that any further questions regarding the proposed hotel be addressed separately from the guidelines review. Ms. Blount asked if there were more comments regarding the Historic District Guidelines review.

HPC Member Anderson said the proposed changes to the portion of the guidelines regarding relocation and demolition are needed very much.

City Manager Schmid reminded everyone that the HPC can initiate changes to the Guidelines, however the Council must formally adopt any changes.

HPC Member Grimsley said the proposed changes put conceptual reviews in to the Guidelines which creates something that there are no specifics for.

Chairperson Blount said, the process of conceptual review, if it is to be added to the Guidelines, should be included in Section 1.2, Design Review Process. It would not be appropriate to address elsewhere and not in Section 1.2.

Following further discussion it was decided that City Manager Schmid would review the suggested changes to Chapter 6.

City Manager Schmid said something should be required to have the appropriate integrity, and not just be old to be in the Historic District. With demolition requests for multiple buildings each structure should have a separate Certificate of Appropriateness.

City Manager Schmid offered the suggestion of considering Historic District Guidelines from other jurisdictions that the Commission likes. Dahlonega's Historic zoning districts include B-3 and CBD.

City Manager Schmid said the question needs to be posed of "what is the incentive for someone to come in to the Historic District."

HPC Member Grimsley replied, grants and loans are the motivation to want to be in a historic district.

City Manager Schmid said the height restriction in downtown limits the value of properties, so we need other areas in town that buildings can be taller to compensate.

HPC Member Grimsley said, fire codes can and do limit heights of buildings and would be a good topic for discussion in a work session.

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Discussion of Work Session

There was discussion regarding holding a work session with HPC to formulate a plan for work session that includes HPC, Planning Commission and City Council. Discussion continued regarding how appointments are currently made to the HPC by the Mayor. That could change with a new Mayor and Council. There was desire to have the new Community Development and Downtown Development Authority Directors on board prior to a work session. The decision was made to hold a work session with just the HPC followed with a larger work session that includes the HPC, Planning Commission, Mayor and Council sometime after January 2018.

HPC Member Sampson reminded everyone that 2018 will be the 20th anniversary of the Historic Preservation Commission and May is Historic Preservation Month.

City Manager Schmid said this would be a good opportunity to let the general public know exactly what the Historic Preservation Commission does.

HPC Member Sampson suggested meeting with groups such as the Rotary Club to offer a presentation of why, what and how the Historic Preservation Commission functions.

Chairperson Blount asked all members to email questions and topics they would want to see discussed at a work session of the Historic Preservation Commission.

Discussion of Meeting Posting Requirements

Chairperson Blount said this item is on the agenda as a result of Mr. Frank Gilkeson's comments at the last meeting.

City Manager Schmid said all legal requirements are being met by notifying the legal organ of the meeting dates and time and posting agendas on the bulletin boards at City Hall and to the City website. The only agenda that is published as a display ad is the agenda for the regular monthly Council meeting. The cost to do this is \$240.00. There is a balance point between when the agenda is posted, if it is changed and the meeting occurs.

Discussion of Posting Minutes on City Website

City Manager Schmid said proposals are currently being sought for website upgrade. Once the upgrade is completed HPC minutes will be posted to website.

Chairperson Blount asked if there were any additional comments regarding the hotel Roberta Green-Garret has proposed for construction on the site where the Parks building currently stands.

City Manager Schmid reported that the last meeting with Mrs. Green-Garrett and her attorney will not be the last.

City Manager Schmid encouraged the HPC Members to utilize all portions of the Historic District Guidelines, not just the section on demolition.

There was discussion regarding the minutes from July 6, 2017 HPC meeting needing more detail including detail on findings, Chairperson Blount's comments and the concept review comments by City Manager Schmid.

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Chairperson Blount asked if there were any further comments or discussion. With there being none, Chairperson Blount called for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by HPC Member Sampson, seconded by HPC Member Grimsley. The motion passed unanimously with all members present voting in favor

The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.