

MINUTES

Pine Bluff Historic District Commission Meeting

May 21, 2010 – 3:00P.M.

Mayor's Conference Room

Call to order by Chairman, Commissioner Dave Sadler.

Roll Call: There were four (4) commissioners present: Commissioners Dave Sadler, Dee Herring, Darnell Hawkins and Vivian Flowers. Additional attendees included Robert Tucker, Norma Payne, Kathy Majewski, her mother Mrs. Majewski, Jean Painton, Marlene Davis Lilly & Hurtis Lilly.

Minutes: Minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed. Motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. Motion approved.

Financial Report: Due to unconfirmed balance, the financial report was not approved. It was recommended to be approved at next meeting.

Certificate of Appropriateness Review: 817 West Fifth Avenue

- **Presentation by Owner:** Mr. Jack Stradley, applicant, gave a presentation of the work that he and Kathy Majewski propose to do to the house. He showed a photograph of the house in 1918, just after the columns were added in a major re-styling of the house from its original appearance as built in 1896. The proposed work will include replacement of one of the large columns and repairs and refinishing of the remaining columns. They will be replaced and repaired to match the original.

He indicated they propose to repair the roof of the house as well as a porch addition to the house on the NE corner. This porch, enclosed sometime in the past, will be re-opened as it originally was built and screened in. He stated there would be repairs and replacement, where required, of the original clapboard siding. He provided samples of roofing shingles, wooden shake shingles and clapboard siding that he will be used to repair the roof, siding and shingles that clad the two turrets of the house. He indicated the house will be painted in a multi-toned paint scheme and provided samples of the colors to be used.

He also indicated that the clear-glass transoms on both exterior front doors of the house will be replaced with stained glass transoms and that the current, inappropriately-scaled light fixtures would be replaced with historically accurate, properly-scaled fixtures. He indicated that there would be repairs made to the two-story carriage house in the rear of the property. These would include structural repairs and replacement of the obsolete, non-functional garage doors with new, appropriately designed doors.

He indicated he would remove several old sidewalks and replace them with new, brick-on-sand walks laid out in a more usable pattern and would lead to a new rear screened in porch that he would proposed in the rear of the house, not visible from either Fifth Avenue or Elm Street. He also mentioned that in the future (2-3 years) he would install a privacy fence for the back yard. Staff stated that a privacy fence 6-8' in height would be allowed without the need for a variance or COA. Anything else would require a variance, as will the fence around the front yard which the applicant proposes to do in the future.

- **Discussion:** The commission members discussed the renovation work as presented by Mr. Stradley. They commented how extensive the work was and how carefully it was being planned to be in keeping with the historic nature of the structure. It was observed that stained glass transoms would be appropriate for a house of this period and that it would be a big improvement to have properly, designed and scaled light fixtures on the house. The commission favorably reviewed the material samples and color chips that Mr. Stradley presented. Commission Vice-Chairman Herring observed that it would be important to select attractive replacement garage doors for the carriage house.
- **Staff Recommendation:** Robert Tucker indicated that he had reviewed Mr. Stradley's application carefully and found that some of the proposed work did not require a COA review. These items included all work that was ordinary maintenance or replacement in kind of materials that have degraded. Also determined by staff not to require COA review were the removal and replacement of certain sidewalks on the property as well as the addition of the new screened in porch in the rear of the property where it is not visible from either Fifth Avenue or Elm Street. On the other items which did require COA review, Staff recommended approval of the applicant's COA. Staff noted that the work as proposed was in keeping with the Fifth Avenue design guidelines and the architecture of the Honnett-Barrow House.
- **Commission Action:** The Chair asked for a motion on whether or not to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for work on the Honnett-Barrow House as proposed by Jack Stradley and Kathy Majewski. A motion was made and seconded to approve the COA for this project. The commission voted unanimously to approve the COA.

Old Business:

- **Report from the Economic Development Meeting 5/11/10:** Darnell Hawkins and Robert Tucker described the meeting and its topics to the group. It was mentioned to the group that the man from Arkansas Capital described the new market tax credit program as a "gap" financing tool, which meant that it is not a grant program or a program to provide venture capital to someone who has a project in mind. It serves to bridge a gap in an already conceived and financed, profit-making project that is almost, but not quite

fully funded. It was discussed at the meeting that public infrastructure projects, e.g. streetscaping projects, were not eligible.

- **Fifth Avenue District Expansion:** Robert Tucker he would draft a petition for the owner of the Du Bocage House to sign, if he wishes, to request that the City Council enlarge this district to include this house. The commission felt this would be a good thing to do to help protect the famous house.
- **Main Street District:** It was agreed by the commission (again) to proceed with the designation of the Pine Bluff Downtown Historic District (as defined and listed on the national Register of Historic Places) as a locally-designated district. This will extend the commission's reviewing authority over changes to structures in the district. Robert Tucker indicated he is currently reviewing and revising a list of current owners in the district, which will be used to provide notice of the public hearings that will be required before the City Council action to create local designation.
- **CLG Grant 2011:** Robert Tucker stated that he got the grant application for just under \$8,000 submitted to AHPP (Boyd Maher) in time for the deadline of 4/23/10.
- **Boone-Murphy House:** Robert Tucker indicated we will know by 6/22/10 if we do or don't get an HPRG grant. Either way, stabilization work will begin in July or August. If an HPRG grant is received, this will free up funds to complete the interior restoration of the building. Additionally, a \$4,500 grant was received by the City on behalf of the Historic District Commission (HDC) to be used to correct the grading and drainage of the Boone-Murphy House site and to stabilize the soil with turf or other plant materials.
- **Arkansas Historic Preservation Conference in Helena:** Robert Tucker stated what a good learning opportunity and chance to meet other historic preservation officials from around the state it provided. He thanked the HDC for supporting his attendance there.

New Business: The Commission had an open discussion on redevelopment of Pine Bluff in general and of downtown in particular. It was agreed after much discussion that the HDC would focus on those specific items that it could directly influence this year, namely the expansion of the Fifth Avenue District and the local designation of the Pine Bluff Historic District. Robert Tucker indicated he was and will continue to work towards the goal of having these actions accomplished by the end of 2010.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. Then the meeting was adjourned.