

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2010**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dawn MacGibbon, Chairman
Dianne Bettmann, John Chalifoux,
Nancy Lisby, Christel Schmidt

MEMBERS ABSENT: Karen Maxey

OTHERS PRESENT: Teri Tubbs, Zoning Official
Mitchell Austin, Urban Design Planner
Caroline Thonon, Sandy Pond, Peter Aratari

CALL TO ORDER/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Roll Call
- B. Next Scheduled Meeting - February 25, 2010
- C. Election of Vice Chairman
 - Ms. MacGibbon asked members if they wished to delay the election of Vice Chairman to February 2010 to coincide with the previously scheduled, annual elections.
 - Ms. Schmidt MOVED, Ms. Lisby SECONDED to continue the election to February 2010.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- D. 2010 Meeting Dates
 - Ms. MacGibbon confirmed members had reviewed the list of 2010 meeting dates provided in their agenda packets.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Meeting of November 19, 2009
 - Mr. Chalifoux MOVED, Ms. Schmidt SECONDED approval of the November 19, 2009 minutes.
 - Mr. Chalifoux asked if the Board planned to address the historical tour at this meeting, as stated at the Board's November 19, 2010 meeting.
 - Ms. MacGibbon suggested delaying same to the end of the meeting to ensure sufficient time for members to travel to the joint meeting with Charlotte County immediately following this meeting.
 - MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- B. Joint City/County Meeting of October 29, 2009
 - Mr. Chalifoux MOVED, Ms. Lisby SECONDED approval of the October 29, 2009 minutes.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- Recording Secretary Kelly swore in all participants.
- C. V-02-10 - Request for a variance to the Land Development Regulations per Chapter 26, Article 16, Section 16.10, City Code, to allow an existing ground sign to remain in place for the multi-tenant commercial building located at 212 West Virginia Avenue instead of removing said ground sign, which would otherwise be required by Chapter 26, Article 11, Section 11.4(e)(7)(c), City Code, upon installation of 3 new façade signs as proposed by the applicant (a prior variance was granted to allow the existing ground sign to be 30 square feet in area instead of 16 square feet in area as permitted and to allow the ground sign to be 9 feet/8 inches in height instead of a maximum of 5 feet in height as permitted by City Code).
- Ms. Teri Tubbs, Zoning Official, displayed an overhead of the subject structure including the proposed façade signage, as delineated in the agenda material, stating the building was constructed in 1979 and was set back from the fronting rights-of-way (ROWS) of West Virginia Avenue and Sullivan Street. She noted the existing ground sign had sufficient space to identify all five tenants; thus, no hardship existed for the property owner. She advised approval of the variance would not be of substantial detriment to adjacent properties; however, the Historic District’s character could be compromised by allowance of a proliferation of additional signage in that the existing ground sign could be utilized, reiterating no hardship could be found to justify additional modification. She stated the variance request did not involve any use which was prohibited in the City Center (CC) zoning district and was consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. She concluded with a recommendation for denial of the request as it did not meet the literal definition of the required criteria, offering to answer any questions.
- Ms. MacGibbon asked if V-02-10 had been presented to any other boards/committees.
- Ms. Tubbs replied affirmatively, specifically the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA), which had recommended denial.
- Ms. MacGibbon asked if the applicant was proposing a larger sign.
- Ms. Tubbs replied in the negative, advising the current sign had sufficient room for five “name plates.”
- Ms. MacGibbon clarified a variance had previously been granted to allow for a larger sign.
- Ms. Tubbs agreed, stating that variance was granted in 2007. She explained City Code did not allow for a ground sign in conjunction with façade signage in the CC zoning district.

- Mr. Chalifoux clarified the regulations allowed one or the other but not both. He asked if the façade signage was intended to be painted on or actual signs.
- Ms. Caroline Thonon, applicant, expressed uncertainty regarding same, stating she would do whichever was more aesthetically pleasing.
- Ms. Tubbs interjected she believed the CC zoning district provided for individual letters attached directly to the façade.
- Ms. Lisby asked if the façade signage depicted on the overhead was already in place.
- Ms. Thonon replied it was not.
- Ms. MacGibbon recalled a request for signage for this building approximately one year earlier, adding there had not been a complete sign design at that time; thus, the Board recommended denial of the request.
- Ms. Thonon advised the building was approved for five businesses, specifically two units, two entrances and two restrooms on the first floor and three units on the second floor. She explained she wished to provide signage for all tenants, adding clients would be unable to determine in which unit a particular business was located if signage was restricted to the ground sign.
- Ms. Tubbs mentioned the building's architecture did not lend itself to façade signage for all five businesses.
- Ms. Schmidt suggested numbering each unit and placing that number on the outside ground sign.
- Ms. MacGibbon expressed agreement with Ms. Schmidt's recommendation.
- Ms. Thonon explained it was difficult for people driving by to read all five names.
- Ms. MacGibbon pointed out parking was available directly in front of the building, adding she did not see an existing hardship. She reiterated the Board must base their decision on the criteria spelled out in City Code.
- Ms. Sandy Pond suggested placing one sign in the center of the building front, stating she believed same would lend some presence to the structure.
- Ms. MacGibbon called three times for anyone to speak on V-02-10.
- Ms. Schmidt MOVED, Ms. Bettmann SECONDED to close the public hearing. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- Ms. Lisby MOVED, Ms. Bettmann SECONDED to recommend denial of V-02-10 based upon the evidence and testimony presented.
- Mr. Chalifoux opined assistance should always be provided to private industry and businesses. He recalled a recent request for outside signage and window lettering which had been approved.

- Ms. MacGibbon clarified a hanging sign would not be permitted in the CC zoning district. She stated she felt placing signage out front, as described by Ms. Schmidt, made the most sense based upon the site layout
- VOTING AYE: Bettmann, Lisby, Schmidt, MacGibbon.
- VOTING NAY: Chalifoux.
- MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Certificates of Appropriateness
 - 1. HPAB Review
 - a. CA-31-09 - 252 West Olympia Avenue - “Giuditta” Signage (continued from December 17, 2009 due to lack of quorum)
 - Mr. Mitchell Austin, Urban Design Planner, announced the subject building was constructed as a single family home in circa 1920, was listed as a contributing structure in the National Register Historic District (NHRD) and was located in the CC zoning district. He mentioned the structure received a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) variance in 1994 to allow for improvements needed to accommodate commercial usage. He explained proposed signage consisted of a projecting sign facing West Olympia Avenue and an awning sign facing Sullivan Street, both of which met City Code requirements. He announced staff recommended approval of CA-31-09 based upon the information provided by the applicant, offering to answer any questions.
 - Ms. MacGibbon confirmed there were no questions for staff or the applicant, Mr. Peter Aratari.
 - Mr. Chalifoux MOVED, Ms. Schmidt SECONDED approval of CA-31-09. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
 - b. CA-01-10 - 212 West Virginia Avenue - “Papillion” Signage (contingent upon V-02-10)
 - Ms. MacGibbon announced this was the same property as that discussed under V-02-10. She confirmed CA-01-01 was denied per their recommendation relative to V-02-10.
 - c. CA-02-10 - 308 West Marion Avenue - “A Fabulous Hair” Signage
 - Mr. Austin announced the signage being proposed for this location, situated between the existing Tropical Store and Vacuum Cleaner Clinic, consisted of a façade sign facing West Marion Avenue, confirming same met the requirements of Section 11.4(a) of City Code. He stated the applicant provided illustrations of the sign, which appeared to present no conflict with the overall architectural character of the building; thus, staff recommended approval of this application.

- Ms. MacGibbon commented a number of businesses were operating in the subject area.
- Mr. Chalifoux MOVED, Ms. Bettmann SECONDED approval of CA-02-10. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- 2. Information Only
- a. CA-29-09 - 312 Sullivan Street - Driveway (continued from December 17, 2009 due to lack of quorum)
 - Mr. Austin explained this was simply a driveway improvement, specifically installation of brick pavers adjacent to an existing structure.
- b. CA-30-09 - 724 Palm Avenue - Shed (continued from December 17, 2009 due to lack of quorum)
 - Mr. Austin advised the shed was compliant with City Code and was not visible from the street. He stated substantial vegetation was in place to screen the shed.
 - Ms. MacGibbon noted the shed had the appearance of a playhouse and was absolutely gorgeous.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Ms. MacGibbon announced there would be a follow-up discussion on the hibiscus mural idea, as discussed at several of the Board's previous meetings.
- Ms. Schmidt distributed copies of the mural concept for the City's parking garage, Herald Court Centre, reading same into the record as follows: Phase 1, Garage Levels - 1 flower color for each floor as identifier, 2-3 flowers of same color per level, outside plaques with hibiscus flower on each level to identify same; Phase 2, Mural Locations - elevator, public bathroom and entrance; Phase 3, Plaques - artists; mural development, development of plaques (through community involvement), sponsors, fund raising and advertisement. She asked if members felt sufficient information was available for presentation to City Council, acknowledging costs were unknown at this time.
- Ms. MacGibbon recalled Mr. Ron Norsell, Punta Gorda Mural Society (PGMS), spoke of what she believed was a Selby grant, adding she believed a grant tie-in was missing. She expressed uncertainty with regard to securing interested sponsors at this point but agreed with the idea of involving landscapers and nurseries, for example. She advised the Hibiscus Festival committee had attempted to promote local growers and companies. She voiced concern with having nothing concrete to present to City Councilmembers in that they may only be willing to grant conceptual approval.
- Ms. Schmidt clarified having sponsors in place would enhance the Board's chances.
- Ms. Bettmann suggested contacting the Master Gardener's Club.
- Ms. Schmidt interjected a botanical garden was planned for Punta Gorda as well.

- Ms. MacGibbon noted former Councilmember Marilyn Smith-Mooney remained involved in same. She commented the Downtown Merchant's Association (DMA) may be interested as well. She expressed approval of identifying each level of the parking garage with flowers and/or colors.
- Mr. Austin commented favorably on the phasing aspect of the idea; however, there must be at least estimated figures in place.
- Mr. Chalifoux agreed financing must be a significant part of the presentation to City Council.
- Ms. Lisby recommended the Board show evidence of fiscal responsibility, adding perhaps a large corporation would be willing to help promote the idea through donation of prize money, for example.
- Ms. Bettmann asked if Mr. Harry Goulding's family had documentation available on growth promoting methods.
- Ms. MacGibbon replied affirmatively, recalling she had displayed numerous photographs of various hibiscus strains at the Board's previous meeting.
- Ms. Pond confirmed she was a member of the PGMS, stating the only cost she anticipated was to the artists themselves. She advised the cost for the size murals the Board was considering was \$5,000 each or less. She clarified costs may not be as significant as members may believe.
- Ms. MacGibbon commented on the flowers to identify garage levels, asking if Ms. Pond was suggesting the City absorb those costs.
- Ms. Pond replied in the negative, explaining a plan was proposed where people would present photographs, perhaps at a fundraising event, adding the artisans would then paint same at no cost. She continued each mural picture would be displayed at another public event for purchase by members of the community. She pointed out this was a wonderful opportunity for amazing community involvement.
- Ms. MacGibbon expressed strong support of Ms. Pond's idea, asking if contributions were tax deductible.
- Ms. Pond responded affirmatively. She stating the maximum cost would be \$15,000 for an artist to paint three murals. She clarified no money was being sought from the City but rather from the community.
- Mr. Austin then stated he was somewhat concerned with regard to the cost of frames.
- Ms. Pond explained Plexiglas was typically used and attached with screws and/or the same material as that used for Stop signs, the latter able to be cut with a clean edge. She clarified the murals did not necessarily have to be framed.

- Mr. Austin countered Plexiglas would become badly scratched within a very short amount of time, adding Lexan was more durable; however, even the latter would need replacement approximately every two years, expressing concern with regard to the costs associated with same.
 - Ms. MacGibbon agreed that was a concern; however, the PGMS had been doing a fabulous job for a number of years, of which Council was well aware. She suggested the Board approach area civic organizations to request letters of support, citing the following as examples: Team Punta Gorda (TPG), DMA, Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce (PGCC), Mr. Terry Yonker, Herald Court Centre leasing agent, Main Street Punta Gorda (MSPG), Punta Gorda Historical Society (PGHS), botanical gardens and Mr. Dennis Murphy, Growth Management Director.
 - Mr. Chalifoux interjected he would contact Mr. Yonker. He then asserted a date for presentation to City Council must be set.
 - Discussion ensued with regard to the timing of same.
 - Consensus of the Board was to be prepared to have a complete agenda item packet to staff by February 17, 2010, for presentation to the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) by March 3, 2010, Ms. Schmidt and Ms. Pond to make the actual presentation.
 - Ms. MacGibbon concluded the Board was extremely grateful to the PGMS.
- A. Best Practices - Storage for Historical Archives and Artifacts (continued from December 17, 2009 due to lack of quorum)
- Ms. MacGibbon confirmed members had no objection to holding this discussion at the joint meeting later this date.
- B. Punta Gorda Historical Society, Inc.
- Ms. Lisby announced the pre-Christmas History Park event was extremely successful, adding donations of historic goods continued. She advised the Historic Home Tour was scheduled for March 6, 2010, expressing hope the renovated Courthouse would be included. She mentioned the PGHS had experienced problems relative to the pictures originally hung in the Courthouse, requesting a discussion of same at the joint meeting. She clarified there seemed to be some reluctance on the part of Charlotte County to re-hang the pictures.
 - Ms. MacGibbon recommended Ms. Lisby express her concerns at the joint meeting. She then commented on the NRHD Tour, available on the City's web site, recalling Mr. Chalifoux had raised a concern in that same was not being updated and, in fact, was more than two years out of date. She drew members' attention to her electronic mail to City Manager Howard Kunik, as delineated in the agenda material, stating she had advised City Manager Kunik of the Board's offer of assistance to accomplish this task.

She explained the City's Information Technology (IT) Division Manager, Ms. Elizabeth Meneely, had indicated Mr. Austin would be working with the Board; however, she was later advised the program was insecure in its editing mode; therefore, the IT Division would not permit anyone other than City staff to input data. She continued staff had been unable to contact the original programmer nor did they have a programmer on staff to fix the security flaw; however, she understood an attempt would be made to update the files over the coming weeks and months.

- Mr. Austin asked members to provide information to him by electronic mail on individual properties depicted incorrectly, stating he then could update those files as time allowed.
- Ms. MacGibbon pointed out every structure affected by Hurricane Charley in 2004 was depicted inaccurately.
- Mr. Austin then announced Mr. David Hilston, Urban Design Manager, had requested a letter of support from the Board for the City's upcoming budget year process for funding to update the historic survey.
- Consensus of the Board was approval of same, Ms. MacGibbon to contact Mr. Hilston directly.

STAFF COMMENTS

A. CRA Project Status Report

- No discussion.

B. City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan - Historic Element

- Mr. Austin announced Ms. Joan LeBeau, Chief Planner, had been in communication with Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) regarding information research on the history of Punta Gorda and the planning process with regard to creating and drafting an historical element and policies for the Comprehensive Plan itself. He advised Ms. LeBeau intended to meet with the Board at their February or March 2010 meeting.
- Ms. MacGibbon requested members be provided with back-up information to ensure the Board was prepared for same.
- Mr. Austin responded he would do so.

MEMBER COMMENTS

- Ms. Bettmann stated she was happy to be back after her recent absence.
- Mr. Chalifoux stated at the December 2009 Joint City/County Meeting, Mr. Murphy raised the idea of a screening wall to shield the mechanical equipment at the old Courthouse as previously suggested by this Board. He reported the Charlotte County Administrator, Mr. Roger Baltz, was in favor of screening and landscaping the equipment in its current location, adding the County required design review once a

cost estimate was available. He concluded City Manager Kunik would forward the estimate to Charlotte County when it was provided.

- Ms. MacGibbon announced the 2010 Florida Trust for Historic Preservation State-wide Annual Conference would be held in Lee County from May 13-15, 2010, confirming attendance required a fee. She opined the City should bear the cost of Board members to attend same, pointing out the Conference's close proximity negated the need for overnight accommodations. She asked Mr. Austin to research whether the City would provide funds for payment of the required fee.

ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting Adjourned: 10:06 a.m.

Dawn MacGibbon, Chairman

Mary Kelly, Recording Secretary