

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD  
MEETING  
FEBRUARY 24, 2011**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** John Chalifoux, Chairman  
Cynthia Beauford-Johnson, Gordon Bower, Bill Cote,  
John Hagerman, Nancy Lisby, Karen Lyons

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mitchell Austin, Urban Design Planner  
David Hilston, Urban Design Manager  
Joan LeBeau, Chief Planner  
Nina Sedule-Ross

**CALL TO ORDER/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- A. Roll Call
- B. Election of Officers
  - Mr. Chalifoux opened the floor for nominations for Chairman.
  - Mr. Cote NOMINATED Mr. Chalifoux for Chairman.
  - As there were no other nominations, Mr. Chalifoux was appointed Chairman by acclamation.
  - Mr. Chalifoux opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chairman.
  - Ms. Lyons NOMINATED Mr. Cote for Vice Chairman.
  - As there were no other nominations, Mr. Cote was appointed Vice Chairman by acclamation.
- B. Next Scheduled Meeting
  - 1. March 24, 2011

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. January 27, 2011 Meeting
  - Mr. Bower noted a correction to page 9.
  - Ms. Lisby MOVED, Mr. Cote SECONDED approval of the January 27, 2011 minutes as amended. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A. CA-03-11 - 502 King Street
  - Mr. Mitchell Austin, Urban Design Planner, announced Gilligan's of Punta Gorda, formerly known as Anchorman Marina and, most recently, the Darkwood Center, had submitted this application for a façade sign. He advised the building, constructed circa 1927 as industrial space, was listed on the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) and was nearly demolished in 2005 after being damaged by Hurricane Charley in August 2004. He mentioned a copy of an approved demolition permit was located in the FMSF office

file; however, a 2005 sale of the property resulted in its stabilization. He explained in 2008, after 2 additional property sales and nearly 4 years of disuse and ongoing damage, the structure was finally renovated to habitable condition with work delineated in DRC-10-08, such as major interior improvements, connection to City utilities, addition of a parking lot and exterior improvements. He explained the proposed façade sign would face King Street and would meet City Code requirements. He recommended approval of CA-03-11, offering to answer any questions.

- Ms. Lisby expressed delight the structure was saved as this was the site of one of the first manufacturing businesses in Punta Gorda.
- Mr. Chalifoux called three times for anyone to speak on CA-03-11.
- Mr. Cote MOVED, Ms. Lyons SECONDED to close the public hearing. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- Mr. Chalifoux expressed disapproval of the sign next to the building, stating he believed signage should be in keeping with that seen at the Ice House.
- Mr. Cote MOVED, Ms. Lyons SECONDED approval of CA-03-11.
- VOTING AYE: Beauford-Johnson, Bower, Cote, Hagerman, Lisby, Lyons.
- VOTING NAY: Chalifoux.
- MOTION CARRIED.

B. CA-04-11 – 210 Taylor Street

- Mr. David Hilston, Urban Design Manager, announced the applicant had requested the Board's reconsideration of CA-24-10, previously denied on August 26, 2010. He explained issues relative to signage on the subject building were ongoing, adding the applicant attempted unsuccessfully to have the property owner meet with staff to discuss various options. He noted visibility from Marion Avenue was currently afforded as no building was located on the corner of Taylor Street and Marion Avenue; however, the tenants to the rear of 210 Taylor Street would suffer visibility issues once a building was constructed on that corner. He acknowledged the optimum solution was to bring everyone's signage out to the front; however, he reiterated the property owner was not amenable to working with staff. He recommended approval of the proposed sign as same did not take away from the historic character of downtown and would afford the applicant an option.
- Mr. Bower questioned the plans for other businesses located in this building.
- Mr. Hilston replied same would present a problem for the property owner once the vacant property on the corner was filled, stating all signage would need to be incorporated into one.

- Mr. Hagerman confirmed this would be the only projecting sign ever to be approved in this location. He clarified other businesses were operating in the building. He opined no building would be constructed on the above mentioned vacant property, noting one of the lots had been sold recently. He expressed concern with allowing one business to have this projecting sign as he believed same encouraged similar tendencies downtown.
- Mr. Hilston stated the proposed sign was in keeping with the direction given by City Council to City staff. He noted staff would work with future applicants on an overall signage plan which would adequately advertise their businesses, adding approval of CA-04-11 could be made contingent upon an awareness of future issues. He explained the proposed signage would alleviate the current problem.
- Mr. Hagerman expressed disagreement with allowing signage for one business owner which did not comply with City Code.
- Mr. Hilston explained City Code allowed for creative sign concepts.
- Mr. Hagerman countered the proposed sign would not allow other businesses the same type of signage in the future.
- Mr. Hilston agreed that was a valid argument, stating a variance may be needed in the future. He reiterated the applicant and staff were attempting to deal with a property owner who was not willing to work with their tenants.
- Mr. Chalifoux interjected the Board had not denied the previous application because of the sign itself but rather because the building owner was responsible for placement of signage which sufficiently maximized the structure's square footage and allowed all tenants space for advertising. He questioned the other tenants' thoughts with regard to the proposed sign. He expressed approval of the sign's style, particularly in the downtown area.
- Mr. Bower clarified the other tenants utilized façade signs above the building's arches.
- Mr. Hagerman expressed concern those other tenants were not being allowed the same opportunity with regard to signage as the applicant, stating he anticipated this being a problem in the future.
- Mr. Hilston suggested perhaps no action should be taken at this time to allow staff time to meet with the building's other tenants to determine their interest in participating with the applicant to create a single sign.
- Mr. Bower questioned the maximum sign size for a unified sign.
- Mr. Hilston expressed uncertainty regarding same.
- Ms. Nina Sedule-Ross, applicant, confirmed she had spoken with the building's other tenants, stating a business owner upstairs had recently obtained her own sign and did

not wish to change same due to her investment of time, effort and money. She clarified she was not opposed to other tenants advertising on her sign; however, she did not believe the other tenants wished to do so at this time. She explained she had been placed in a position of owning a business and being unable to advertise same through signage.

- Mr. Chalifoux asked Ms. Sedule-Ross if she would be opposed to replacing the sign if same became necessary in the future.
- Ms. Sedule-Ross replied absolutely not.
- Mr. Bower commented favorably on the sign's design; however, he clarified he did not wish to see a proliferation of signs downtown.
- Mr. Hilston interjected City Code limited a suspended sign to ten square feet.
- Mr. Chalifoux called three times for anyone to speak on CA-04-11.
- Mr. Cote MOVED, Mr. Bower SECONDED to close the public hearing. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- Ms. Lyons expressed agreement with Mr. Bower's comment regarding the sign's appearance. She suggested approval be made contingent upon no objection from the other tenants.
- Mr. Chalifoux concurred.
- Mr. Bower MOVED, Ms. Lyons SECONDED approval of CA-04-11 contingent upon no objection from the other building tenants. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

C. CA-02-11 - 130 Tamiami Trail

- Mr. Austin announced CA-02-11 was an application for a side awning at the subject location. He advised the application was approved administratively by staff, confirming same was being presented for the Board's information only.
- Mr. Chalifoux confirmed he met with Mr. Austin regarding CA-02-11 and had not foreseen this being a problem.

D. Historic Districts

- Mr. Austin announced the City had established three historic districts as follows: National Register Historic District (NRHD), 1988; Trabue Woods Historic District (TWHD), 2007; Downtown Commercial Historic District (DCHD), 2007. He explained the historic districts were based primarily on the two major historic resources surveys conducted in 1987 and 2002-2003. He stated the 1987 survey catalogued 252 structures and formed the foundation for creation of the NRHD and the listing of 8 individual structures on the National Register of Historic Properties, adding the 1987 survey examined all structures from 1887 to 1937. He continued the 2002-2003 survey identified structures in a slightly broader area, approximately the boundary of

the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) area. He explained this survey looked at 117 additional structures, most of which were built sometime between 1937 to 1953, acknowledging several structures built prior to 1937 were identified which were not listed in the 1987 survey. He summarized as a result of both the 1987 and 2002-2003 surveys, a fair number of structures existed outside the three designated historic districts. He concluded structures built sometime between 1953 to 1961, a time of fairly significant local growth and potential architectural significance, mid-century modern, were not currently catalogued.

- Mr. Chalifoux confirmed a structure must be 50 or more years old to be considered.
- Ms. Lyons clarified another survey should be conducted.
- Mr. Chalifoux agreed, stating this Board had recommended same be included in the City's Strategic Plan in 2010 and would do so again in 2011. He mentioned an opportunity for grant funding had been missed as the Board's recommendation was not approved. He opined all three identified historic districts should be considered with regard to the award program being discussed by the Board.
- Mr. Austin acknowledged the data on hand was outdated by several years.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

##### A. Joint City/County Meeting

- Mr. Chalifoux announced the next joint meeting would be held on Wednesday, March 9, 2011, at 10:00 a.m., at the Charlotte County Historical Center, 22959 Bayshore Road, Port Charlotte, FL 33980. He drew members' attention to a draft agenda, as delineated in the agenda material, commenting on a recent newspaper article on a County Commissioner's desire to establish a historic archive storage area. He mentioned Team Punta Gorda (TPG) and City staff were attempting to develop a historical museum in Punta Gorda. He noted there were many entities interested in history throughout the County.
- Mr. Austin commented any expenditures of taxpayer funds on historic preservation must be tied to economic development and heritage tourism. He mentioned the Scenic Highways Program was recognized as being a component of same.
- Mr. Chalifoux then noted Mr. Cote would be unavailable to attend the joint meeting.

##### B. Construction Guidelines and Board Input within the NRHD

- Mr. Chalifoux announced this item would be removed from future agendas.

##### C. Fund Raising for Historic Projects

- Mr. Chalifoux expressed appreciation to Mr. Hagerman for providing the brochures presented at the Board's previous meeting. He noted \$120 had been raised thus far.

D. Criteria for Award Program

- Mr. Chalifoux confirmed members had been provided with a list of types of criteria, as delineated in the agenda material, for a proposed award program, as had been discussed at the past several Board meetings. He outlined his own recommendations as follows: to promote and preserve the historical structures in Punta Gorda by adding a sense of pride; make awards on annual basis in three categories – restoration/renovation of a historic structure, new structures representing a period design, landscaping in any of the districts chosen by the Board; brass building plaque; awards to be presented by the Mayor and a Board representative at a regularly scheduled City Council meeting; costs of \$320 to \$350. He suggested period restoration include removal of vinyl siding and removing and replacing historical, exterior details.
- Mr. Bower opined an award program could not be administered mathematically as same would be too subjective. He clarified he believed awards should be granted based on a decision by the Board as opposed to a checklist approach.
- Mr. Chalifoux suggested structures could be considered based on issuance of building permits.
- Mr. Bower disagreed.
- Ms. Lyons spoke in favor of taking aesthetic value into consideration. She further suggested structures be considered only after a final inspection or issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy (C.O.).
- Mr. Hagerman countered he was personally involved in a renovation which began shortly after Hurricane Charley in August 2004.
- Ms. Lisby recommended using the same criteria as that used by the now sunsetted Revitalization Committee (RC).
- Mr. Austin responded there had been no specific criteria.
- Mr. Hagerman mentioned his Sarasota home had been recognized based on structure and circa. He noted TPG was already running an award program, suggesting the Board may wish to operate more of a recognition program.
- Ms. Lyons clarified TPG was not an official board of the City.
- Ms. Lisby noted area architects had judged this Board's former Architectural Award Program based on preservation, restoration and new construction. She advised that Program had been made a part of the Historic Home and Building Tour. She pointed out March was Historic Preservation Month in Florida.
- Ms. Lyons then stated she felt awards should be given quarterly.
- Mr. Bower spoke in favor of an annual program.

- Ms. Lyons recommended four categories: landscaping; historical structure restoration; remodeling of non-historical structures; new construction.
- Mr. Austin offered the following categories for the Board's consideration: commercial; residential; institutional; special, i.e., landscaping.
- Discussion ensued with regard to establishment of boundaries of the area to be considered and the costs associated with the proposed plaques.
- Mr. Hagerman stated when his Sarasota home was recognized, as stated above, he received a letter indicating same, signed by all of the County Commissioners, adding he was given the option of purchasing a plaque for placement on his house, which he gladly did. He expressed disappointment with regard to the lack of members of the public who were interested in historic preservation and the subsequent lack of funding for same.
- Ms. Jan Sidebottom, Alternate Board member and Main Street Punta Gorda (MSPG), commented there were numerous non-profits in the area, all of which were attempting to raise funds. She clarified people were being overwhelmed. She noted she had widely disseminated the Board's brochures throughout businesses and agencies downtown.
- Ms. Lyons pointed out the brochures had only just started to be made available.
- Mr. Chalifoux then polled members with regard to their desired boundaries, confirming the majority were in favor of limiting same to the CRA area.
- Mr. Hagerman expressed opposition to a category for "new construction," pointing out the Board would never vote in favor of demolition of a historic structure to allow for new construction.
- Ms. Lisby agreed the Board always opposed demolition of a historic structure.
- Mr. Chalifoux mentioned the applicant for CA-01-11, Ms. Maria Gauta, had appealed the Board's denial to City Council.
- Mr. Hagerman clarified the subject structure was located at 501 East Olympia Avenue.
- Mr. Chalifoux then polled members to determine the majority's wishes for the other categories, concluding awards would be granted in the areas of commercial, residential, institutional and special.
- Mr. Bower expressed agreement with the system used by Sarasota County, as outlined by Mr. Hagerman, in which a property owner would be recognized with a letter signed by the entire City Council and then given the option of purchasing a plaque.
- Mr. Hagerman noted same was due to the currently difficult economic times, adding the Board could revisit the issue of expenses in the future if budget restraints allowed.

- Mr. Chalifoux stated he would like to see the Board assume the cost of the plaques as soon as possible. He confirmed members were in agreement with having awards granted through an application process.
  - Ms. Lisby urged members to be proactive with regard to dissemination of the Board's brochures.
  - Mr. Chalifoux agreed, stating he planned to provide each Councilmember with a brochure as well. He then asked for a volunteer to draft an application form.
  - Ms. Lyons replied she would do so.
  - Mr. Austin commented on the eventual judgment of applications, suggesting it may be incumbent upon staff and the Board to reach out to local architects. He clarified the final decision would be made by the Board.
  - Mr. Chalifoux asked members to be prepared to discuss the four above mentioned categories at the Board's next meeting.
  - Ms. Lyons commented she believed the awards should be granted in March of each year in light of Historic Preservation Month.
- E. City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan, Evaluation & Appraisal (EAR) Report – Update
- F. City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan – Historic Element
- Ms. Joan LeBeau, Chief Planner, announced the first draft of the EAR was complete, adding public hearings would be held regarding same on March 28, 2011, before the Planning Commission, and April 20, 2011, and May 4, 2011, before City Council. She urged members to review the EAR, available on the City's web site, and provide any comments on line prior to March 28, 2011. She noted web site location and contact information were both denoted in the Board's agenda material. She explained the EAR represented an evaluation of the past seven years as well as implementation of the existing Comprehensive Plan (Plan) which was adopted in 2008. She acknowledged this Board was most likely primarily interested in the creation of a Historic Element, stating same commenced on page 152. She mentioned updating of the historic survey, as discussed earlier, could be included as a policy and goal.
  - Ms. Lisby confirmed staff would include same during their presentation to City Council.
  - Mr. Chalifoux interjected he still wished to see the historic survey included in the Strategic Plan.

#### **STAFF COMMENTS**

- A. CRA Project Status Report
- Mr. Austin announced work on Carmalita Street was moving forward and should be complete within the next few weeks, adding the Harborwalk East and Dr. Martin Luther

King Jr. Boulevard (MLK) projects were proceeding as well. He mentioned a decorative intersection treatment was planned for East Marion Avenue.

- Mr. Chalifoux questioned the status of the bricking of Olympia Avenue in the business section.
- Mr. Austin replied that project was not yet underway due to some timing issues, explaining certain traffic signal and structural improvements must first be accomplished.
- Mr. Bower clarified Harborwalk East construction was estimated to be complete within months as opposed to years.

#### **MEMBERS COMMENTS**

- Ms. Beauford-Johnson asked if sidewalks were being constructed on both sides of Carmalita Street.
- Mr. Austin replied there was insufficient right-of-way (ROW) to support same.
- Mr. Chalifoux reminded members the appeal of CA-01-11 would be heard by City Council on March 2, 2011.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

- Meeting Adjourned: 10:20 a.m.

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John Chalifoux, Chairman

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Mary Kelly, Recording Secretary