

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING
JANUARY 22, 2009**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dawn MacGibbon, Chairman
Teresa Evan, Darlene Gunderson, Nancy Miller-Houck,
Julia Moore, Christel Schmidt

MEMBERS ABSENT: Larry Sandles

OTHERS PRESENT: Mitchell Austin, Urban Design Planner
Teri Tubbs, Zoning Official
Joan LeBeau, Chief Planner
David Hilston, Urban Design Manager
Don McCormick, Councilmember
Sandy Pond, Fran Petrow, Magda Ruiz

CALL TO ORDER/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Roll Call
- B. Next Scheduled Meeting(s)
 - 1. Historic Punta Gorda Neighborhood Meeting - February 7, 2009, Gilchrist Park, 10:30 a.m.
 - Ms. MacGibbon announced the subject meeting would be held in a “potluck” type setting, primarily for historic district residents. She mentioned Ms. Nancy Lisby, Punta Gorda Historical Society (PGHS), had volunteered to assist with dissemination of flyers. She then noted Councilmember Don McCormick was present, expressing appreciation for his attendance.
 - 2. Regular Board Meeting - February 26, 2009
- C. Last Scheduled Meeting - December 18, 2008

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Meeting of December 18, 2008
 - Ms. Moore MOVED, Ms. Gunderson SECONDED approval of the December 18, 2008 minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. The Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society - Mural at Sacred Heart Church located at 211 West Charlotte Avenue
 - Ms. Sandy Pond, Mural Society, introduced Ms. Fran Petrow and Ms. Magda Ruiz, who had painted the proposed mural.
 - Ms. Petrow displayed a rendering of the proposed mural, providing a brief description of same, as delineated in the agenda material. She noted the mural was being done as

a gift to their Parrish, Sacred Heart, in honor of the rebuilding of the Church which was destroyed by Hurricane Charley in August 2004.

- Ms. MacGibbon clarified this mural would be maintained in the same manner as other murals sponsored by the Mural Society.

- Ms. Evan MOVED, Ms. Gunderson SECONDED to recommend approval. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Certificate of Appropriateness

1. Staff Review (information only)

a. CA-02-09 - 403 West Olympia Avenue (6 foot high wood fence)

- Mr. Mitchell Austin, Urban Design Planner, displayed a rough sketch of the subject fence, as delineated in the agenda material, providing a brief description of same. He mentioned the property owners had installed the fence around their pool primarily as a safety measure. He noted CA-02-09 had been approved administratively and was being presented to the Board for informational purposes.

- Ms. Miller-Houck stated she believed six feet exceeded Code requirements.

- Mr. Austin responded the fence was constructed within the buildable area; thus, fence height regulations did not apply. He clarified the fence conformed to all Code requirements.

- Ms. Miller-Houck confirmed the fence was not in the front of the home but rather in the rear.

C. ZA-01-09 - An Ordinance of the City of Punta Gorda, Florida, amending Chapter 26 of the City Code of Ordinances known as the Land Development Regulations, Article 16, Application Review and Approval Requirements, amending Subsection 16.3, Application for Certificate of Appropriateness, clarifying requirements for Certificate of Appropriateness; amending Subsections 16.3(a), (b), (c), (e) and (f), clarifying the application, review, approval and appeal process; providing for conflict and severability; and providing an effective date.

- Ms. Teri Tubbs, Zoning Official, explained this proposed amendment would first clarify the fact that Article 16.3 regulations were applicable to the National Register Historic Overlay (HO) District and National Register Landmarks as well as property individually listed on the National Register or property listed on the Florida Master Site File; however, it did not include the Downtown HO District or the Trabue Woods HO District. She pointed out the requirement for review of special exceptions had been added in order to correct a conflict with Article 3.14. She noted the requirement for an advertised public hearing had been removed in an effort to expedite requests for Certificates of Appropriateness. She stated the appeal process had also been

streamlined by allowing scheduling of written appeals to be heard at the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting. She expressed staff's recommendation for approval of ZA-01-09, offering to answer any questions regarding same.

- Ms. MacGibbon expressed some concern with regard to elimination of staff review in certain sections, stating the Urban Design Division offered significant assistance in numerous other areas, particularly with regard to downtown; thus, she asked if staff was comfortable with this amendment.
- Ms. Tubbs explained Mr. Austin would continue to act as the Zoning Official's designee. She clarified all architectural submissions would be routed directly to Mr. Austin because of his architectural background, adding the existing architectural provisions in City Code which required specific building types were still in full force.
- Ms. MacGibbon responded her concern was relative to signage.
- Ms. Tubbs advised Mr. Austin would review sign requests as well.
- Ms. MacGibbon cited the Event Center electronic sign as an example of something which was missed.
- Ms. Tubbs countered that sign had simply not been mentioned prior to submission of the variance application, adding the Event Center fell outside of all historic districts and was not a historic structure.
- Ms. Miller-Houck interjected the Board was concerned with setting a negative precedent.
- Ms. Tubbs agreed, especially in the downtown, City Center (CC) zoning district where the sign code required signage to have architectural ties to the building.
- Ms. MacGibbon confirmed members had no additional questions or recommendations, thanking Ms. Tubbs for her presentation.

D. City of Punta Gorda Parks & Recreation Master Plan

- Ms. Joan LeBeau, Chief Planner, stated the City was required to complete the subject plan as part of its Comprehensive Plan, adding staff would utilize the City's advisory boards and Team Punta Gorda (TPG) in development of same. She explained the Master Plan would provide long term goals and objectives directed towards coordination of public and private recreation resources, provide policies to implement those goals and objectives, assure public parks were appropriately located, coordinate City facilities with those of other governments, acquire important open space systems to protect property from storm surge events and/or preserve important habitats and assist the City in providing logical, manageable development over a specific time period. She announced a series of public workshops were scheduled for February 24-26, 2009, in the Laishley Park Community Room. She expressed hope at least one

member of the Board would participate; however, all members were of course invited to attend.

- Ms. Miller-Houck asked if this Master Plan would focus on Punta Gorda's numerous, existing parks or if new parks were anticipated to be developed.
- Ms. LeBeau agreed there were many parks; however, she questioned how same connected, i.e., was there a "walkable" park system for Punta Gorda residents.
- Ms. MacGibbon commented the proposed Harborwalk would certainly add to everyone's enjoyment.
- Ms. LeBeau agreed, reminding members there was more to parks than the waterfront, i.e., tennis courts, hiking trails, etc.
- Ms. MacGibbon then stated she was recently advised the entire Harborwalk was contracted out; however, she had understood this was an in-house project.
- Mr. Austin responded most of the conceptual work on the Harborwalk and Linear Park had been performed either in-house or through various consultants. He stated the Procurement Division issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a Harborwalk Master Plan, resulting in selection of the highest ranked firm, Tetratex; however, City Council did not accept the selection committee's recommendation but rather would conduct individual interviews with the five original, short-listed firms.
- Ms. MacGibbon explained her question was relative to work which had been done up to this point in time
- Mr. David Hilston, Urban Design Manager, explained the City had received Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) funding through the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for work by private contractors, adding engineering was done by FDOT.
- Councilmember Don McCormick clarified City Council would interview the three, top ranked firms on February 4, 2009.
- Ms. LeBeau reiterated her hope at least one Board member would plan on attending the above mentioned public workshops.
- Ms. Evan asked how the general public would be made aware of the workshops and be encouraged to participate.
- Ms. LeBeau replied the notice was currently on the City's web site, adding advertisements were planned as well, perhaps including a radio broadcast.
- Ms. Schmidt acknowledged the desire to award local companies; however, she opined the best company should be the final selection.
- Ms. Miller-Houck asked when the Master Plan's goals were expected to come to fruition.

- Ms. LeBeau replied simply having the Master Plan in place would bring the City closer to realizing same, acknowledging the stumbling blocks presented by funding or the lack thereof.
- Discussion ensued with regard to Board representation at the public workshops.
- Consensus of the Board was to delay a decision on same to allow members to consult their personal calendars.

OLD BUSINESS

- Ms. MacGibbon commented on the Board's recent discussion regarding Main Street Punta Gorda (MSPG) as referenced in their December 18, 2008 minutes, confirming Ms. Evan had attended an MSPG sub-committee meeting and raised the issue of branding and/or an identifier for the City of Punta Gorda.
- Ms. Evan agreed, stating MSPG was still very concerned with identifying Punta Gorda and having a marketing tool.
- Ms. MacGibbon expressed concern in that MSPG could not try to identify, logo or brand a City with anything which was not historical or part of its past. She clarified it seemed MSPG was heading in a direction which was adverse to their charter. She pointed out there was no preservationist on MSPG's board as there should be in that it was a National Trust program. She mentioned the PGHS was concerned with this issue as well.
- Ms. Evan interjected she believed Mr. Louis Desguin was involved with MSPG, expressing uncertainty with regard to what capacity.
- Ms. MacGibbon confirmed members had been provided with copies of several documents issued by MSPG as well as by the National Trust, as delineated in the Board's December 18, 2008 agenda material. She commented on a recent MSPG meeting attended by four experts, stating a report had been expected by the end of 2008; however, she had not been advised of its availability.
- Mr. Austin expressed uncertainty as to whether or not the report existed.
- Ms. MacGibbon expressed concern in that the experts did not meet with any preservationists. She recommended issuing a letter to the MSPG board regarding these issues, questioning members' feelings regarding same.
- Consensus of the Board was to authorize the Chairman to do so.
- Ms. MacGibbon concluded she would work with Ms. Lisby and perhaps Ms. Helen Wrobbel on drafting the letter.

OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Punta Gorda Historical Society, Inc.
- Ms. Evan announced a chili cook-off would be held on the evening of January 23, 2009.

- Ms. MacGibbon added a dedication ceremony was planned for the Hector House Plaza at 4:30 p.m. on the same date. She expressed hope the old chess tournaments could be re-started as the Historical Society had located the large chess pieces first used many years earlier. She commented perhaps a chess board could be painted on the parking lot, stating chess games/tournaments could be held in conjunction with Gallery Walk on Thursday evenings, for example. She noted she had left a voice mail message for Mr. Austin in December 2008 regarding this issue, questioning staff's feelings regarding same.
 - Mr. Austin replied staff had not specifically discussed this issue. He opined discussion should shift to the Public Works Department as they would be able to more accurately address maintenance issues, for example.
 - Ms. Miller-Houck commented some municipalities provided chess boards/tables in their parks.
 - Mr. Austin responded two tables with game boards were currently provided in Hector House Plaza.
 - Ms. MacGibbon recalled midnight chess tournaments were held near the Town Clock several years earlier and had been quite popular.
- B. Punta Gorda Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Status Report
- Mr. Austin drew members' attention to the CRA Project Status Report, as delineated in the agenda material, providing an update on the parking garage, Laishley Park and the Cooper Street Recreation Center expansion.
 - Ms. Evan questioned the status of construction of the interactive fountain.
 - Mr. Austin expressed uncertainty regarding same.
- C. Bylaws Discussion
- Ms. MacGibbon drew members' attention to the proposed, amended bylaws, as denoted within the agenda material, stating the only proposed change was to expand Board membership to include residential property owners. She commented there may be a problem filling vacancies due to the new absence policy. She confirmed the proposed amendment would not take effect until City Council approved same.
 - Ms. Gunderson MOVED, Ms. Schmidt SECONDED to recommend approval. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- D. Historic Punta Gorda Neighborhood Meeting - February 7, 2009, Gilchrist Park, 10:30 a.m. - Update
- Mr. Austin announced flyers, posters and maps were available this date for members to take and distribute. He suggested a member be designated to communicate

specifically with him regarding the Board's thoughts specifically on how he could contribute.

- Ms. MacGibbon offered to meet with Mr. Austin this date.
- Mr. Austin displayed an overhead of the historic districts separated into zones.
- Discussion ensued with regard to distribution of flyers.
- Consensus of the Board was to assign sections as follows: Ms. Miller-Houck, Zone 1; Ms. Gunderson, Zone 2; Ms. Evan, Zones 4 and 5; Ms. Moore; Zone 6; Ms. MacGibbon, Zone 3; Ms. Schmidt; Zone 7.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- Ms. Miller-Houck commented on the Parks & Recreation Master Plan workshops as discussed earlier in the meeting, volunteering to attend on Day 3, February 26, 2009, in the afternoon.
- Mr. Austin provided a brief review of each day's agenda.
- Recording Secretary Kelly provided members with copies of the workshop notice.
- Ms. Miller-Houck then commented staff had done a remarkable job implementing historic characteristics into its parks and construction, citing the parking garage as an example.

STAFF COMMENTS

- Ms. LeBeau commented on the City's recently adopted Comprehensive Plan, stating staff had considered implementing a historical element but had been unable to bring same to fruition. She announced Ms. Lori Coventry-Payne, Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) advisor, had contacted her regarding assistance from her students in development of a historical element. She stated she would be looking to the Board for guidance, asking members to begin thinking about a historical element and be prepared for an in depth discussion in the future.
- Ms. Miller-Houck asked if any progress had been made on the City Marketplace property.
- Mr. Austin replied not to his knowledge.
- Ms. MacGibbon clarified there had been no activity with the exception of the Hilton Gardens Inn.
- Ms. Miller-Houck asked what was planned for the land nearest to the old Courthouse next to the parking garage.
- Mr. Austin replied the parking garage would encompass the entire block.
- Ms. Moore questioned the number of parking spaces which would be available.
- Mr. Austin replied approximately 300.

- Ms. Schmidt then asked if Ms. Tubbs should attend the Board's upcoming neighborhood meeting.
- Mr. Austin replied he believed he would be able to address the lion's share of residents' questions.

ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting Adjourned: 9:45 am

Dawn MacGibbon, Chairman

Mary Kelly, Recording Secretary