

**CITY OF PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 24, 2022, 9:00 A.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peterman, Chair
Colbert, Gamblin, Magnin, Perry, Ponte

MEMBERS ABSENT: Andreae

OTHERS PRESENT: Mitchell Austin, Principal Planner; Kent Kretzler; Stephen Valdes;
Gene Murtha; Sandy Moon

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Peterman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

[Election of Chair and Vice Chair](#)

Recording Secretary Pues opened the floor for nomination of Chair.

Ms. Colbert **NOMINATED** Ms. Peterman.

As there were no other nominations, Ms. Peterman was appointed Chair by acclamation.

Recording Secretary Pues opened the floor for nomination of Vice Chair.

Mr. Gamblin **NOMINATED** himself for Vice Chair.

As there were no other nominations, Mr. Gamblin was appointed Vice Chair by acclamation.

HPAB Member Election to the Donation Review Committee

Exhibit:

[Cover Page](#)

No discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

1) [APPROVAL OF MINUTES](#)

1.a January 27, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Exhibits:

[Cover Page](#)

[01-27-2022 Minutes](#)

Mr. Gamblin **MOVED** approval of the January 27, 2022, minutes, **SECONDED** by Mr. Perry.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

2) CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS

2.a CA-01-2022 - 321 Taylor Street - Certificate of Appropriateness - Info Only - Fence

Exhibit:
[Cover Page](#)

Mr. Mitchell Austin, Principal Planner, reviewed the information considered during staff's evaluation of CA-01-2022, concluding staff approved the request administratively as same would have no adverse impact on the structure or character of the district.

2.b CA-02-2022 - 108 Gill Street - Certificate of Appropriateness - Info Only - Fence

Exhibit:
[Cover Page](#)

Mr. Austin reviewed the information considered during staff's evaluation of CA-02-2022, concluding staff approved the request administratively as same would have no adverse impact on the structure or character of the district.

2.c CA-03-2022 - 212 Gill Street - Certificate of Appropriateness - Info Only - Roof

Exhibit:
[Cover Page](#)

Mr. Austin reviewed the information considered during staff's evaluation of CA-03-2022, concluding staff approved the request administratively as same would have no adverse impact on the structure or character of the district.

3) GENERAL BUSINESS

Mr. Austin stated the Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society intended to present an update to the Board regarding the Local Black History mural; however, same was not available as of yet and would be presented at a future meeting.

3.a Partnership Discussion - A.C. Freeman House

Exhibit:
[Cover Page](#)

Ms. Peterman verified appointments to the Donation Review Committee would be continued to the March 24, 2022, meeting. She then recalled discussion regarding renovations of the A.C. Freeman House (AC House) at the January 27, 2022, meeting, inquiring whether the application to reestablish the AC House on the National Register of Historic Places would be considered in May 2022.

Mr. Austin replied affirmatively, adding staff would be submitting the draft for same to the State the following week. He indicated the grant anticipated from the State was subject to the legislative process, noting the City could know whether the grant was approved by June 30, 2022. He confirmed the grant was for \$500,000, verifying the exact cost for renovating the AC House would not be known until the project was at 90% plans and a minimum of \$1 million would be needed for construction costs.

Ms. Peterman explained the intent of discussions this date was to consult with representatives of local organizations on methods for fundraising to preserve the AC House, opining same was important to the characterization of the City. She recalled the Punta Gorda History Center (History Center) expressed interest in contributing to the restoration project, noting members of the Board were limited by the Sunshine Law. She requested feedback on obtaining civic support for the project.

Mr. Gene Murtha, History Center, noted the infrastructure of the AC House had been neglected, then provided examples of initiatives other organizations had taken to fund historic preservation projects, which included collaboration with Charlotte County. He suggested a strategic plan to restore the AC House in phases over a period of time, the formation of a 501(c)(3) to attract public interest and allocation of funds for ongoing maintenance, opining fundraising efforts from various organizations was a solution for the project.

Mr. Stephen Valdes, Military Heritage Museum, pointed out there was no method for local organizations to collaborate with each other, noting a group that could accomplish same would be beneficial.

Ms. Sandy Moon, Punta Gorda Historical Society (Historical Society), agreed with Mr. Murtha's suggestion to complete the project in phases, noting there were stipulations for grant funds such as specific time frames for completing projects. She opined the issue was how to approach the project rather than raising funds, adding her desire was for the organizations to continue working together on projects beyond the AC House.

Ms. Peterman stated the next topic would be how to proceed with the project, speaking in favor of utilizing the AC House project to implement cooperation between the various local organizations. She indicated there was a fundraising event for nonprofit organizations which could potentially focus on the AC House, noting same could broaden community appeal. She then questioned if the City could convene a meeting with officials of organizations to discuss initiatives that focus on the AC House, suggesting one member could attend the meeting as a representative of the Board.

Mr. Austin expressed hesitancy to do so, expressing concern regarding the potential appearance of impropriety. He recommended a member of the Board be appointed to lead the process instead.

Mr. Kent Kretzler, Royal Order of Ponce de Leon Conquistadors, indicated there was a vast amount of talented individuals in the City waiting for direction, noting local organizations might not be aware of the meetings relating to preserving historic structures. He stated changes in leadership of organizations led to inaccurate contact information over time, suggesting an updated database be developed for same.

Mr. Austin indicated the City had limited options for notifying the public, opining person-to-person contact was more effective.

Ms. Moon stated an understanding of the City's intentions for the AC House was needed for local organizations to assist, adding the benefit to the community needed to be offered as well to gain more support for the project.

Mr. Austin summarized the intended use of the AC House, which included using the ground floor as a house museum and for small events.

Mr. Murtha stated a database containing contact information for local organizations would not take long to develop, noting there were numerous grant opportunities as well. He suggested a decision for how to move forward with the

project should be made soon, concluding the AC House would continue to deteriorate the longer decisions were postponed.

Ms. Peterman offered to speak with Team Punta Gorda and/or the Charlotte Community Foundation regarding the status of the project and how to move forward with same, adding she would report back to the Board.

Mr. Perry agreed to be a representative of the Board once a group, which was unnamed at this time, was developed.

STAFF COMMENTS

None.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Ponte provided a summary of the meetings she had between Messrs. Kretzler and Austin regarding the updates to the historic structures in the Ponce de Leon Park (Park), which included evaluating currently funded projects as well as needs and discussions regarding the intention to develop a history walk at the Park. She stated the first step was to develop the proposed projects and goals along with the costs and potential sponsorship for same, concluding she would continue to provide updates to the Board as the project progressed.

Ms. Peterman spoke positively on the progress, suggesting the History Center be included in development of the Park's historic markers. She anticipated the revised language on the markers would be more appropriate.

Mr. Kretzler indicated enthusiastic feedback was received for the proposed history walk, noting a Quick Response code would provide pedestrians access to additional information.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Chair

Recording Secretary