

Historic Preservation Commission
May 21, 2019 Meeting Minutes

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Chair Pamela Sue Anderson, Vice-Chair Sharon Whitaker, Commissioner Shirley Marquardt, Commissioner Richard Parson, Commissioner Tina Steiner, and Commissioner Andrew Wolfe

Absent: Commissioner Patti Jordan

Staff present: Principal Planner Joelle Jordan and Planning Tech Kerstin Harding

Also present: Jennifer Henderson, Brian Aust and Sarah Roberts

C. Citizen Communication

There were no citizens wishing to speak during this agenda item.

D. Approval of Minutes

D.1 Consider approval of the minutes of the April 16, 2019 Historic Preservation Commission meeting.

Motion: by Vice-Chair Whitaker and Second by Commissioner Wolfe to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2019 HPC meeting as submitted.

Vote: Aye: Chair Anderson, Vice-Chair Whitaker, Commissioner Marquardt, Commissioner Parson, Commissioner Steiner, and Commissioner Wolfe. Nay: none. The vote was 6-0.

E. Tax Exemption Applications

E.1 Consider an action regarding applications for the 2019 partial tax exemption for historically significant sites.

Principal Planner Joelle Jordan gave an overview of the historic tax exemption program and thanked the Commissioners for returning their inspection forms promptly. The process of inspecting properties and processing applications is a little different this year. Previously the HPC has offered conditional inspections, which allowed some outstanding issues to be addressed in the three-week period between the HPC and City Council meetings. Last year so many conditional inspections were pushed forward that the Council had to postpone its consideration of the exemption ordinance. Since the ordinance must be adopted by July 15 each year, any delay is problematic.

This year staff has done considerable outreach to applicants who had maintenance items noted on their 2018 inspection forms that were to be completed by the 2019 inspections, and several owners requested early inspections to ensure that their properties had met these conditions. Four properties were tentatively assigned “needs maintenance” ratings, but the inspecting Commissioners wanted the HPC to discuss these inspections or overall ratings before making its recommendation to the City Council.

402 E. Main Street:

The owner of this property last applied for an exemption in 2016, and although all the maintenance issues relating to the main house have been addressed, there are still unaddressed items on the carriage house relating to broken windows and door panels. The owner had described additional structural problems with the carriage house and is considering demolishing it.

Owner Sara Roberts came to the podium and explained that in addition to the door and window damage, a tree root has made the wooden floor buckle, and the whole structure is leaning a bit. She is considering demolishing it but because the main house has been her first priority she hasn’t looked into how much demolition or repairs would cost, or how it might be used if repaired. Chairman Anderson and Commissioner Marquardt emphasized that the carriage house has historical value and recommended that she research and price what repairs would be needed to make it usable. The 2019 rating for the property would remain “needs maintenance.”

603 E. Liberty Avenue:

Commissioner Marquardt clarified that the property had two maintenance issues to discuss. The leaning fence had been noted on the 2017 and 2018 inspection forms, although both times the property was given a “pass” rating that did not require the fence to be fixed. Ms. Jordan noted that although the fence is not a historic feature, the condition of fences and outbuildings is one of the maintenance criteria specifically listed in the exemption ordinance and on the inspection form.

During the inspection, Commissioner Marquardt also noted that a contractor was in the process of filling in the doorway of the detached garage without obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness for doing so. The garage is the same age as the house, but the hinged garage doors have been missing for many years and were covered with a piece of corrugated metal. Commissioner Marquardt didn’t think the leaning fence was a safety hazard, but she was unsure whether the unapproved work on the garage would preclude awarding the exemption in 2019. Her recommendation was to give a property a “needs maintenance” rating for 2019 and give the owner a year to apply for and comply with a Certificate of Appropriateness. The other Commissioners agreed.

121 E. Main Street:

In 2018 the west wall of 121 E. Main Street (visible from the patio behind 119 E. Main) was noted in the inspection for delayed maintenance resulting in eroded mortar between stones. Some parts of the wall that had been covered with stucco had become cracked and were peeling away from the stone wall. Ms. Jordan explained that the property had been given a “needs maintenance” rating in 2018, and the contractor and property manager were instructed to remove the loose stucco, repoint any areas where the mortar between stones had eroded, and contact staff before applying a finish coat to the stucco. The contractor, however, filled the holes in the stucco using the same coarse mortar used for repointing. Vice-Chair Whiakier asked whether the new stucco could be removed and redone correctly. Ms. Jordan replied that she didn’t know whether it was possible to remove the patched stucco without damaging the wall, and that she would have liked to know the final condition of the repointed stonework before it was stuccoed over. Since removing the stucco might damage the wall, Ms. Jordan suggested that it might be noted as a “needs maintenance” item but would not be required to be fixed until the wall needed additional repairs. Until then the item would be a sort of perpetual “needs maintenance” item appearing on the inspection form each year.

802 E. Liberty Avenue:

The final property recommendation to be discussed had a list of maintenance items that had been deferred over many years. In 2018 the property had received a conditional inspection that required repairs to two of the windows and a work plan for the remaining items. As of the 2019 inspections the only item on the 2018 work plan that had been completed was repair and repainting the picket fence.

Applicant Brian Aust stepped to the podium to answer questions about his property at 802 E. Liberty. He has focused on restoring the interior and acknowledged that the exterior maintenance issues were significant. He proposed the following work schedule:

- Part of the water damage has been caused by leaky gutters, which are still under warranty. This will be addressed in the near future.
- End of June: move items stored on porch to the garage
- End of July: repair broken pane on kitchen window
- Mid-October: repairs to porch columns, siding, soffits and other areas affected by wood rot.
- January-March 2020: repaint entire exterior with appropriate surface prep. Repainting will include a color change, which will require an administrative Certificate of Appropriateness.

Motion: by Commissioner Parson and Second by Commissioner Marquardt to accept Exhibit A with possible amendments as described in this memo or altered by HPC at this meeting, specifying that although inspection reports may change as property information is updated, the ratings recommended this evening will be forwarded to the City Council as they are recommended.

Ms. Jordan clarified that the conditions on the properties discussed will be taken from the minutes and added to the inspection forms. Commissioner Parson asked that this statement be added to the motion as an amendment.

Vote: Aye: Chair Anderson, Vice-Chair Whiakier, Commissioner Marquardt, Commissioner Parson, Commissioner Steiner, and Commissioner Wolfe. Nay: none. The vote was 6-0.

F. Local Legend Selection

F.1 Consider an action regarding guidelines for the Local Legend Selection Committee.

The commission discussed the following suggested changes to the guidelines, but since the nomination period was almost over decided to approve the guidelines as presented and discuss possible changes at its September 2019 work session.

Suggested changes to be discussed at the 2019 work session:

- Since there will be more than one local legend, should the first paragraph read “in selection of local legends” rather than “in selection of a local legend”?
- Should the number of legends each year be strictly limited to three? Is the significance of the award diminished if there are more than three?
- What does the Commission feel about having no more than one selection in each category? What if one year we have more than one outstanding nomination in one category?
- Should each category of local legend have a different name? If so, would people have to nominate them for a specific category? Would this make the selection criteria too narrow? What if a nominee would rather be in a different category?
- Should one Legend each year be more prestigious than the others? Should there be ranked awards? Example:
 1. Local Legend of the Year (for early day historical contributions);
 2. Distinguished Local Legend (for modern day historical & educational contributions);
 3. Invaluable Round Rock Entity (for historical significance)
- If the selection criteria is too undefined does the award become less special?
- Should the HPC review its guidelines to the Selection Committee each year?
- Why 40 years between recent and historic local legends? Is an explicit cutoff necessary?

Motion: by Commissioner Wolfe and Second by Commissioner Parson to accept the guidelines as presented.

Vote: Aye: Chair Anderson, Vice-Chair Whitaker, Commissioner Marquardt, Commissioner Parson, Commissioner Steiner, and Commissioner Wolfe. Nay: none. The vote was 6-0.

G. Planner Report

G.1 Consider an update regarding Preservation Month.

Ms. Jordan recounted the activities that had taken place for Preservation month: a city council proclamation, dedication of the old town boulder sign, a history lecture by local historian Jane DiGesualdo, and kid activities at a Music on Main concert (other concerts had been rained out). She called the Commissioners’ attention to the online poll for input on the upcoming Preservation Plan that would be active for another few weeks. Vice-Chair Whitaker noted that the Williamson Museum would host a Mother-Daughter Tea on May 26 at the Williamson Museum on the Chisholm Trail.

H. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kerstin Harding
Planning Technician

