

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Historic Architectural Review Board Regular Meeting January 16, 2020

The Historic Architectural Review Board met in formal session at 1:00 P.M., Thursday, January 16, 2020, in the Alcazar Room at City Hall, St. Augustine, Florida. Catherine Duncan, Chairperson, called the regular meeting to order, and the following were present:

1. ROLL CALL:

Catherine Duncan, Chairperson
Barbara Wingo, Vice-Chairperson
Jon Benoit
Paul Weaver, III
Gaere MacDonald

City Staff:

Jenny Wolfe, Historic Preservation Officer
Julie Courtney, Historic Preservation Planner
Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney
Candice Seymour, Recording Secretary

2. General Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda

(None)

3. Approval of Minutes

MOTION

Mr. MacDonald MOVED to APPROVE the December 19, 2019 minutes as presented Motion SECONDED by Mr. Weaver and APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

4. Modification and Approval of Agenda

Ms. Duncan advised that applicants for item 5(a) requested a continuance to the February 20, 2020 meeting.

MOTION

Mr. Weaver MOVED to CONTINUE application 2019-0122 to the February 20, 2020 meeting. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. MacDonald and APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

5. Continued Items from Previous Meetings

5. (a) Design Approval for the Design Standards for Entry Corridors 2019-0122 – Dixon Design Studio LLC – Applicant Desai Somabhai – Owner 88 San Marco Avenue

To build a new parking structure on the northwest corner of the property that is one story and stucco-finished with metal roof.

Applicant requested a continuance prior to the meeting. See Modification and Approval of Agenda for motion to continue.

6. Certificates of Demolition and Partial Demolition

6. (a) 2019-0134 – Don Crichlow & Associates – Applicant John and Joanne Rosenberg – Owner 39 Water Street

For partial demolition to include the historic front porch.

Mr. Benoit recused himself from the item.¹

Ms. Wolfe read the staff report and said The HARB should use this case as an opportunity to direct staff in the interpretation of the AGHP and City Ordinances related to partial demolition review. The applicant had completed the design and obtained Planning and Zoning Board approval and submitted a building permit application before he was notified of the demolition requirements. The original fabric of the porch had now been demolished following the options presented by staff and issuance of a building permit. The HARB may find that reconstructing the porch does not constitute partial demolition and make a determination whether the permanent removal has a detrimental impact on the character of this contributing resource to the Abbott Tract National Register Historic District. The HARB may find that staff erred, and that the removal constituted permanent removal of a feature in which case the application may be approved if its demolition does not represent a loss of quality or character of the historic integrity of the city.

John Rosenberg and Don Crichlow reviewed the application.

The Board provided their ex parte communications.

26 certified notices were sent, 1 was returned in favor.

Public hearing was opened; however, there was no response.

Public hearing was closed.

The Board discussed:

- Clarification that the front porch was detailed on the Sandborne map
- Porch was in good condition when it was demolished

¹ Form attached to original minutes

- Hurricane damage to structure was limited to underneath the structure
- Proposed replacements did not necessarily constitute a reconstruction
- Board consensus that the applicant had proceeded with demolition in good faith
- Removal and reconstruction of the porch was necessary to lift the structure for flood protection
- HARB's authority over replacement design was limited to recommendations that the applicant was not required to act upon
- Applicant did a good job bringing the intent of the original porch back into the design, and it could not have been reconstructed exactly with the raising of the structure

MOTION

Mr. MacDonald MOVED to APPROVE application 2019-0134 with a recommendation that the transition come eight feet off the building; however, there was no obligation to do so. The motion was SECONDED by Ms. Wingo.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: MacDonald, Wingo, Weaver, Duncan

NAYES: NONE

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mr. Crichlow, to preface the upcoming discussion, advised the importance of clarifying the language so that the construction and design communities clearly understood what was expected.

7. Staff Communications

7. (a) Planning and Building Staff Approved Permits Report

Mr. MacDonald asked whether staff had received a survey from 58 St. George Street

for pavers to which Ms. Wolfe responded that she had not, but would look into what has been done with the paving on the property

8. Other Business

8. (a) Discussion regarding implementation of partial demolition standards

Ms. Wolfe reviewed the subject with a presentation. She reviewed sample photographs of applications that could use further clarification and facilitated Board discussion utilizing a worksheet of questions.²

The Board discussed:

- Possible twenty-five percent threshold for demolitions
- HARB would only have authority over exterior chimney features
- Defining the elements that trigger partial demolition review including:
 - Porches
 - Steps
 - Roof structure:
 - Eaves
 - Decking
 - Truss-work
 - Roof Supports
 - Exclusive of the sheathing
 - Foundations
 - Structural walls
 - Chimneys
 - Balconies and balustrades with exception of raising a railing to meet code
 - Historic Additions
 - Front entries, stairs/stoops
 - Original windows
 - Unique fretwork, trim details, and siding
- Financial tools/incentives available to encourage to seek HARB input and restore historic houses
- Limiting HARB review jurisdiction to National Register Historic Districts may inhibit other areas from becoming National Register Districts
- Characteristic defining features such as siding or architectural details may be less important to maintain on more-common structures or architectural features
- Historic Preservation Trust Funds
- Definitions of Partial Demolition to exclude reconstruction of a historic feature
- Adding definitions:
 - Significant Architectural Feature
 - Significant Portion
- Flood mitigation changes may not require HARB review
- Consensus to use inventory of contributing buildings and National Register designated structures as the list of structures requiring HARB review
- Former residents of historical significance could make a structure eligible for the National Register or Local Landmark designation
- Review of any demolition over a certain percentage of an entire structure
- Consideration of necessary alterations/partial demolitions due to other changes in the building, such as raising a structure for flood mitigation and being forced to remove a porch or addition
- Significance of specific building components shall be reviewed within the context of the significance of the building
- Subjectivity of the process
- Window size and placement on the building with exception of muntin pattern which may be too much detail

² All items attached to original minutes

- Replacing in-kind (shape and basic design) should not constitute partial demolition
- Dictating original windows outside the HP district may be too intrusive
- Removal of a roof may not be constituted a demolition since roof replacement was common
- Possibility of allowing partial demolition on condition of HARB architectural review to promote more compatible replacement designs
- Concern that allowing architectural review for demolitions would promote more demolitions
- Consider adding the term "vernacular" to the code with a definition
- Recommendation of adding a definition for "ordinary maintenance"
- Intent of partial demolition regulations was to prevent removal of a sound significant feature of a building and would not cover features that were substantially altered or in poor condition
- Expectations of reconstruction-in-kind with compatible materials or designs
- Removal of unique physical characteristics outside of HP districts
- Caveats for flood mitigation or potential review for elevating structures
- Roof sheathing, if metal, clay tile, or cedar shakes, limited to buildings determined to be significant or unique, could be considered partial demolition if removed³

Public Comment was opened, and the Board heard from the following:

- Charles Pappas

³ Brief recess from 4:12p.m. to 4:17p.m.

The Board continued discussion regarding the following:

- Case-by case basis renovations
- Projects that staff would be more comfortable with HARB reviewing
- Possibility of stricter preservation for houses that have maintained more historic architectural integrity over time
- Board consensus to maintain fifty-year-or-older standard for review
- Request to see a district matrix or map with overlays of the different districts and relation to flooding concerns

Ms. Wolfe asked for Board feedback regarding the administrative approval of the historic porch from item 6(a) with Board consensus that it likely would have been approved; however, it should have gone through HARB review.

There was further discussion regarding crafting code language that would allow for HARB review of replacement designs outside of the historic districts.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 P.M.⁴



Catherine Duncan, Chairperson

⁴ Transcribed by Candice Seymour