

MINUTES

Valdosta Historic Preservation Commission

*Valdosta City Hall Annex Multi-Purpose Room
300 North Lee Street, Valdosta, Georgia*

September 14, 2020 5:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dr. Harry Hamm
Dr. Alex Alvarez
Mr. Tommy Crane
Ms. Sally Querin
Ms. Laura Yale

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ms. Celine Gladwin
Ms. Sandie Burkett

STAFF PRESENT

Mr. James Horton

VISITORS PRESENT

Kimblee Copeland
Jeffery Copeland
Nancy Warren
Vickie Everitte

I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by Chairman Alvarez. It was determined that a quorum, consisting of five members, was present. Chairman Alvarez thanked everyone for coming and asked the guests to please sign the register.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes

The August 3, 2020 minutes were reviewed by the Board and there was one clarification suggested. Ms. Querin moved to approve the minutes and Mr. Crane seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (4 – 0 vote).

III. Consideration of Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Applications

Chairman Alvarez announced the first item for consideration, **HPC-2020-115, 506 N. Troup Street**. He then read the request which was to add a 1,000 square foot addition to the rear of the home including a master bedroom/bath, additional bedroom and to additional bathrooms. At this time, he asked Mr. Horton to give a staff report and recommendation on the request. Mr. Horton showed a PowerPoint presentation and explained that the request met the design guidelines with the exception of the enclosure of the porch on the south side of the home. Mr. Horton suggested to approve the request as submitted with the exception of denial of the proposed enclosure of the porch on the south side.

At this point, Chairman Alvarez asked if there was anyone in the audience to speak in favor of the proposal. Mr. Jeffery Copeland, owner of the home with his wife, came to the podium. Mr. Copeland told the board that he had developed this plan to support his family because he has four children under the age of nine and may have a mother-in-law to move in at a later date. He explained that since the virus his kids have been home and that the

house has proven to be too small. He said that he and his wife would like to stay in the home and have it as a family home for years. He is also interested in investing in the community and to help it get back to where it used to be years ago. He told the group that a lady had stopped by his house recently and told him that she had lived in the house next door 55 years ago and that it looked the same as it did then.

Mr. Copeland went on to further explain that his mother-in-law is sickly and may need to move in with the family in the future. He wants his new addition to have windows to match the ones in the existing house and went further to say that he plans to put a window in the enclosed porch to make it look like the rest of the house. He also told the group that he wants a fence in the front and rear. The front fence would be to keep people from walking across his yard and up to his house and keep the kids away from the street since the cars are going by so fast. The rear fence would be to protect the children while playing in the yard. He also discussed the fact that the existing house has vinyl siding that was done before he owned the house and that he wants to match that on the new addition for cost savings. He knows that it was not recommended but he wants to match the rest of the house. Dr. Hamm then asked him if the covering in the window of the room on the north side of the house was plywood and Mr. Copeland replied that it was a shade.

At this point there seemed to be no further questions or comments so Dr. Alvarez asked if there was anyone else in the audience to speak in favor of the proposal and there was no one. He then asked if there was anyone to speak in opposition to the proposal and there was no one. He then turned the matter over to the board for questions. Mr. Crane asked Mr. Copeland if he would be keeping the windows from the rear of the house that he would be removing for the additions. Mr. Copeland told him that he would be. Ms. Querin then commented that she would not oppose Mr. Copeland using vinyl siding on the rear of the house. Mr. Crane then asked him what size the porch on the south side was. Mr. Copeland replied that it was 13 feet by 8 feet. Dr. Hamm clarified that the existing house has vinyl siding on it.

Ms. Querin then asked Mr. Horton to take the slides back so she could see the floorplan. She wanted to see if there was a way to add another bedroom and retain the porch. She then commented that the porch does look like it belongs to the house but that she could see filling it in and making it look like the rest of the house. Ms. Querin asked Mr. Copeland if he was sure that he did not want a porch and he said that he didn't need one. Mr. Copeland stated that his idea to fill in the porch was an effort to create extra needed space with the least amount of money since wood was so expensive right now due to COVID. He explained that he wanted to use the existing ridge of the porch for the new construction to save on construction. Ms. Yale agreed that wood is expensive and that would be a good idea. Mr. Crane asked Mr. Copeland if he would be keeping the decorative trim that is around the porch and he said that he would.

At this time there seemed to be no more questions so Dr. Alvarez closed the public hearing and moved to board discussion. Mr. Crane asked Mr. Horton if he knew if the current windows were vinyl and he said that he did not know. Mr. Copeland confirmed that they were. Ms. Querin confirmed that she did not oppose the vinyl being used on the new addition on the back of the house. She also stated that it seems ok to fill in the side porch and make it look like the rest of the house. She then asked the group if the cement siding would match the rest of the siding on the house and Ms. Yale confirmed that it would. Mr. Crane asked Mr. Horton when the house was built and he estimated that it would have been a post WWII house. Mr. Crane commented that if the house was a 1920's through 1960 constructed house that the design guidelines discourage fences since they were designed to have open front yards. Mr. Crane knows that the fence has not been discussed but that it is on the COA application and may be affected by the design guidelines since it is not recommended. Dr. Hamm replied that the design guidelines may say that but that the street is busy and the family has small children. Mr. Crane replied that he understood that but wanted to bring it up. Ms. Copeland asked if she could say something at this time and Dr. Alvarez replied that she could. She came to the podium and told the group that next door an elderly lady used to live there and people from the street ended up on her porch several times. She reiterated that they had four small children and that there had been people arbitrarily walking through their yard like it was the street and that they had stopped people and made them go back. That, she said, plus most of all, the safety of the children is the reason they wanted the yard enclosed. Mr. Crane responded by telling Ms. Copeland that he understood the need but just wanted to bring up the design guidelines. Ms. Querin spoke up and told the group that a fence can easily be taken down at a later time if desired.

Dr. Alvarez asked if there was any further discussion and there seemed to be none so he entertained a motion on the proposal. Ms. Querin moved to approve the proposal as submitted. Ms. Yale seconded the motion. The vote was not unanimous – (3 – 1 vote).

IV. Consent Agenda

Next Chairman Alvarez moved to the Consent Agenda and asked the Board if they had any questions. There were no questions or comments.

V. Old Business

Chairman Alvarez then moved to the Old Business section of the agenda. Mr. Horton asked Chairman Alvarez if it would be ok for Ms. Nancy Warren, an investor with the group that owns the homes on Oak Street from 909-915, to come and talk about the preservation of the property. He thought it to be a good idea. Ms. Warren came to the podium. She told the group that she was involved in the preservation of the Deming house at 915 N. Oak, that it was listed on the Places in Peril, and that she was the one who took down the boards from the windows on the front of the house. She said that the group is looking for a preservation-minded buyer to save it and love it. She said that a group had gotten together with a teleconference with Ben Sutton of the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation and that he had given hashtags for national contacts. She did report some activity from an advertisement that she had placed in the Georgia Trust's magazine. She is planning an open house within about a week so that locals can go into the house and see it for the first time in many years.

Ms. Querin asked if she had contacted the VSU Board of Regents and she said that she had not thought about it. Ms. Querin wondered if Mr. Crane would be able to contact them. Ms. Yale volunteered to reach the Board of Regents. Mr. Crane replied that he could make the contact but that it was not a good time for VSU since the virus has tightened up the budget.

Ms. Warren went on to tell the group that she and her husband were part of the group that originally purchased the property in 2006. She said that the property was grouped for sale for many years and that she has separated out the house at 915 for individual sale by owner so the real estate fee was no longer an issue. Dr. Hamm clarified that the house at 915 was not the only one available, but that the others along there would be available as well. Ms. Warren agreed that the other houses adjacent to it could be purchased individually or as a group. Ms. Querin commented that she hopes that the group can get someone interested. Dr. Hamm then asked the condition of the interior of 915. Ms. Querin replied that it was very sound. Ms. Warren commented that all of the windows are intact behind the boards. She said that she would love to restore the home herself but that it was too big of a project for her. Ms. Warren said that she was going to plan on an open house September 18 from 4:00 pm until 6:00 pm. She invited the Board to come to open house. She is planning for Valdosta Magazine to be there and take some pictures for an article.

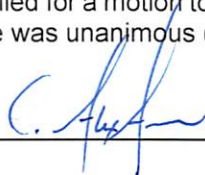
VI. New Business

Next Chairman Alvarez moved to New Business from the floor. No one had any New Business to bring up so he moved to the adjournment of the meeting.

VII. Adjournment

Chairman Alvarez called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Hamm moved to adjourn and Mr. Crane seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (4 – 0 vote).

HPC Chairman



Date

11/12/2020