

MINUTES

Valdosta Historic Preservation Commission

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

November 1, 2021 5:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dr. Alex Alvarez
Mr. Tommy Crane
Ms. Sally Querin
Ms. Sandie Burkett

Dr. Harry Hamm
Ms. Celine Gladwin
Ms. Laura Yale

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Mr. Jeff Brammer
Ms. Lauren Hurley

VISITORS PRESENT

Jolyn Smith
Joe Smith
Joe Clark
Tammy Borders

I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m. by Chairman Alvarez. It was determined that a quorum of members was present. Chairman Alvarez thanked everyone for coming and reminded audience members to please sign the attendance register.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes

The October 4, 2021, draft minutes were reviewed by the Board. Dr. Hamm had two grammatical changes to the minutes. Mr. Crane made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Gladwin seconded the motion, and it was called and carried unanimously (6-0 vote).

III. Consideration of Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Applications

A. HPC-2021-94: 221 High Street

Jeff Brammer presented the staff report for the case. He stated that the petitioner is requesting approval to remove an unpermitted and nonconforming driveway and parking pad and replace it with a conforming driveway and parking pad. The property is in the local historic district in the Brookwood North neighborhood. It is considered a noncontributing resource to the Brookwood North National Register District, located in Subarea 1, and zoned DR-10. The property is a contributing resource to the Local Historic District. The house is a 1950s one-story Ranch house with a brick foundation, brick veneer, and side gable roof covered in asphalt shingles. The windows are a series of vinyl framed 8 over 8, 6 over 6, and 4 over 4 double hung sash windows. The L-shaped floor plan offers a large rear addition. The rear features a large grassy yard space. The front yard parking area is exhibited via photos. The parking pad area extends from the driveway roughly two thirds the length of the house. Mr. Brammer exhibited photos of the neighboring properties to orient Commission members to the location of the subject property and gave examples of driveways in the neighborhood. The proposed project is to remove the un-permitted, non-nonconforming driveway and parking pad, which measures 16 feet wide and runs about 122 feet with the parking pad measuring 30 feet by 31 feet. They plan to construct a new driveway and parking pad with an 11 feet concrete skirt/apron, 40 feet by 12 feet crusher run driveway, and 10 feet by 18 feet wide parking space. They propose to sod a large portion of the front and side yard and construct two concrete ribbons on the rear East side of the house. The site plan exhibits the existing and proposed changes. The proposal received right of way approval from the engineering department last month. The materials are consistent with district guidelines and the smaller footprint on the property is more in line with existing driveway and parking pad designs of neighboring properties. Staff acknowledges the proposal is a significant improvement on the existing

un-permitted and non-conforming design. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the changes to the existing driveway and parking pad as proposed.

The applicant was asked to speak in support of the application. Jolyn Smith, the daughter of the applicant, spoke in representation of her mother (the applicant) because she is ill. She stated that the family has had the house since 1939 and it has gone through many transitions. She stated that the family was unaware that the house was in the Local Historic District. Ms. Smith stated that there were many potholes in the front yard from various renters. She then said that her brother in laws were willing to help with the potholes, so they got Reames to bring crusher run in to fill in the holes. Once the crusher run was spread out, it was larger than they anticipated. So, the family has taken the recommendation from HPC planners and reducing the size of the paved area. She stated that her mother is willing to sell the house now and they have a buyer ready to purchase the home. She stated that they were a week away from closing when they were made aware of the violations. The buyers are willing to wait on the project to be finished and the renters have moved out, so the family is trying to finish this up quickly once HPC votes. She said the only difference that they plan on making from the presentation is to not include the concrete ribbons in the back of the driveway. They plan to leave it crusher run as it is now because of the cost of the project and getting someone to work on it has been difficult. She stated that the buyers approve of their proposed changes.

With no one else in support or opposition of the application, the Commission held their discussion. Ms. Querin stated that she thinks the new design looks great. She wanted clarification for how HPC became involved after the owners put the house on the market. Ms. Smith stated that they put it on the market back in May and were a week away from closing on October 1st and someone turned them in for the crusher run being too big. They had to go back and start over and lost their closing date after finding out that they were in the Local Historic District and learning what they needed to do to get the issues resolved. They had to submit their plans for the skirt to the road from the driveway to the engineering department. She stated that the crusher run was put in in February. She stated that Reames brought more than what was expected and that the renters always had 2 or 3 cars there, so they needed a place to park other than the grass causing all the potholes. Ms. Querin asked if they could have sold the property and let the new owners handle it. Dr. Alvarez stated that with pending litigation, it would have needed to be cleared up before transitioning to new ownership. Ms. Yale stated that she would like to make a motion. Dr. Alvarez closed the discussion portion. Ms. Yale motioned to approve the removal of the unpermitted and nonconforming driveway and parking pad and the construction and placement of the new driveway and parking pad as proposed without the concrete ribbons. Ms. Burkett seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (6-0 vote).

B. HPC-2021-95: 515 East Gordon Street

Mr. Brammer presented the staff report on the case. The petitioner requests approval to construct a new wheelchair accessible ramp and an enclosed wraparound walkway addition. The property is in the East End National Register District. However, the property is considered a non-contributing resource to both the Local Historic District and the East End National Register District. Constructed circa 1972, the property is in Subarea II and zoned in the Neighborhood Commercial zoning district. The subject property is a one-story linear Ranch commercial structure with a concrete foundation, vinyl siding, and a lateral side gable roof with clustered pediments covered with asphalt shingles. The windows are a series of vinyl-framed 12/8, and 6/6 double-hung sash-type style windows. The rear elevation facing North Troup Street has three, vinyl-framed 6/6 windows and no other means of ingress or egress. The south elevation features similarly minimal fenestration, although there is a rear door and two, coupled vinyl-framed 6/6 double hung sash windows. They were updating the AC units when Mr. Brammer was there taking pictures. From Gordon Street, the property features a large drive-through parking lot with rear access onto North Troup Street around to the left. As for the neighboring properties, 511 E. Gordon Street abuts the property to the west. 720 North Troup Street abuts the property to the south, separated by a privacy fence. 725 North Troup Street is an adjacent property located directly across the street on the rear face of the subject property. The proposed project is to construct a new wheelchair ramp on the west elevation measuring 4 feet by 10 feet with

a concrete slope and metal railings. They would also like to construct a new enclosed wraparound walkway addition on the west and south elevations. The wrap around dimensions are 5 feet by 20 feet and 5 feet by 18 feet with 8 feet tall vinyl sided walls with coupled vinyl-framed 20 feet by 28 feet windows and an asphalt shingle shed roof. Mr. Brammer exhibited photos of the location of the proposed projects. The petitioner provided some floor plan drawings for the proposed project. Given that 1) this property is considered a non-contributing resource to both the Local Historic District and East End National Register District, 2) the scale of the proposed changes do not dwarf the main structure, and 3) the materials are consistent with the existing building, staff sees no reason to disapprove the project. The additions are to the front of the building, but the front faces west to the side of the property. This is a non-contributing resource at the far edge of the Local Historic District across from a heavily trafficked convenience store. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the project as proposed.

The applicant was called upon to speak in support of the application. Joe Clark, the general contractor for the project, approached the podium. He stated that the restaurant wants to make the property wheelchair accessible and give the option to customers to have a pick-up option where they can walk in and get their order without passing through the restaurant, which has become a preferred method of service during COVID times. Mr. Crane said that according to the images, there is already a ramp. Mr. Clark clarified that it will be wheelchair accessible from the front after the renovations and with the addition. Mr. Crane also wanted clarification on where the window on the addition will be. Mr. Clark verified that they will be covering some of the windows up with the addition but will add a window to the addition as well.

With no one else in favor or opposition of the application, the public hearing portion was closed, and discussion was open for the commissioners. Ms. Gladwin commented that the building is not historic nor contributing so the commission is looking to see if the improvements are compatible or negatively impact the area. Ms. Gladwin made a motion to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Querin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (6-0 vote).

IV. Consideration of Administrative Review and Approvals

Board members reviewed the Administrative Reviews for the month of October with no questions.

V. Other Business

(A) Local Historic District Survey Update (Phase II) – Mr. Brammer stated that he had given each commissioner the updated schedule for the survey. The main changes noted are that the field work will begin the week of November 15th (in two weeks) and the first reporting date will be January 1st. He stated that the state is still behind in getting him the contract, so there should be no issue with the surveyors starting later than initially expected as their conclusion date will remain the same.

(B) Follow-up HPC Workshop Session – Mr. Brammer wanted to address some questions that came up during the work session regarding changes to the map and historic context to the changes. He exhibited a map from 2007 where changes occurred in the northwest part of the district. The map from 2007 matches the map from 1998. He exhibited another map from 2008 with a difference in suggested changes from a consulting group wishing to extend the district down past Savannah Avenue and to the west. The next map presented shows the overlay districts and the proposed historic district that went to City Council. Then he presented the map that was adopted in 2009. No minutes or records could be found recording the reason for the change in the map from 2008 to 2009 or an explanation for the change. Nevertheless, the maps show the progression of the changes in the Local Historic District. What can be determined is that the proposed additions were not accepted, except for adding a small portion of the Brookwood North National Register District which wasn't already part of the Local Historic District.

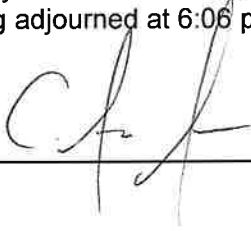
VI. New Business

(A) New Business on the Floor – A reminder was rendered to the commissioners regarding James Horton's recognition dinner at 306 North on November 15th at 6 p.m. Also, Paige Dukes is being contacted again to meet with the Commission at the next HPC meeting in December to discuss changes to the courthouse in the center of Downtown Valdosta.

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Alvarez called for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Gladwin made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Crane seconded the motion, and it was called and carried unanimously (6-0 vote). The meeting adjourned at 6:06 pm.

HPC Chairman



Date

12-7-21