

MINUTES

Valdosta Historic Preservation Commission

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

July 11, 2022 5:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ms. Celine Gladwin
Dr. Harry Hamm
Mr. Tommy Crane
Ms. Sally Querin
Ms. Sandie Burkett

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dr. Alex Alvarez
Ms. Laura Yale

STAFF PRESENT

Mr. Jeff Brammer
Ms. Lauren Hurley

VISITORS PRESENT

Hunter Ogle
Wes Simpson
Virginia Hall
Ansley Wright
Terry Dennis

I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Celine Gladwin. It was determined that a quorum of members was present. Ms. Gladwin thanked everyone for coming and reminded audience members to sign the attendance register.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes

The June 6, 2022, draft minutes were reviewed by the Commission. Dr. Hamm had a minor correction. Mr. Crane made a motion to approve the minutes with the edit. Ms. Gladwin seconded the motion, and it was called and carried unanimously (3-0 vote).

III. Consideration of Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Applications

- A. HPC-2022-51 — 908 North Patterson Street:** Mr. Brammer presents. The petitioner requests approval to remove and replace the existing pitched roof system on the main building. This is a revised application from the previous month. However, the applicant still proposes to replace the fired-clay Mission tile roof with a metal tile system. The applicant proposes a galvanized steel, S-Tile system, with convex pantiles. The guidelines recommend either in-kind repairs or in-kind replacements of historic materials—i.e., a new fired-clay tile roof and applicable fastening system.

Though staff acknowledges that this proposal may be better than the previous proposal in profile and appearance, it remains inconsistent with the design guidelines. Staff recommends disapproval of the project as proposed. Mr. Brammer also took a few moments to show some pictures of various tile roofing systems in the historic district. He said these pictures might help provide some context for Commission deliberations.

Wes Simpson, with JH Strickland Construction, spoke on behalf of the application. He was accompanied by co-worker Hunter Ogle and property owner Virginia Hall. He spoke favorably of the proposed material. Mr. Simpson stated that the fired-clay tile is impossible to get. He stated that they plan to take down the tiles and save them for other projects around town where they could be utilized. They then plan to put a watertight membrane on the roof and then the metal roofing system on top. He stated that the weight of the metal material is much less than the clay tiles. Because of the age of the building, the weight of the material is important. Mr. Ogle stated that the difference in this material and

what was presented last time is its profile being more like the existing Mission tiles. Ms. Hall stated that the building is the Law Office of Hall and Mullis. There is a leak in one of the attorney's offices. She stated that every time it rains, the attorney must put a trash can on his desk to protect his work. Mr. Simpson stated that not only is the tile failing, but the membrane underneath is also compromised.

With no one else in support or opposition, the Commission discussed. Ms. Gladwin stated that she knows that fired-clay roof tiles are difficult to acquire. She stated that there are three components that the Commission should be looking for: Scale, Color, and Texture. She continued that the shape of the new proposed material is similar to the shape of the tiles than the previous proposal. The color that most similarly matches is the Spanish clay version. Ms. Gladwin suggested that the front pediment (front entrance) remain covered with fired-clay tiles and the rest of the roof be replaced with the proposed material.

Dr. Hamm stated that the First Presbyterian Church has a similar situation and they sourced and replaced their tile with in-kind tile by saving what they could and filling in where needed. Ms. Gladwin commented that the applicant is trying to find a solution for their roof issue and have done as the Commission suggested. Dr. Hamm made the motion to deny the request to maintain the integrity of the building. Mr. Crane seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-1 vote).

Ms. Hall asked for Commission feedback on what could be approved. Mr. Simpson reiterated that synthetic tile is hard to get and clay tile is not available. Mr. Simpson asked if there could be some type of temporary solution so that they can get their building dry. Mr. Ogle stated that the flat roof sections were approved last time, so that that work may commence. Mr. Simpson continued that there are many buildings around town that have roofs that are not nearly as nice as the proposed product. Ms. Gladwin stated that the motion has been voted on. Procedurally, the next step would be to re-apply with a new product or to appeal the decision to City Council.

- B. HPC-2022-59 — 1905 Williams Street:** Mr. Brammer presents. The petitioner requests approval to remove and replace 19 exterior windows and surrounds. The property features predominantly 6/1 wood-framed windows, which appear to be the original windows. The applicant proposes new 6/1 vinyl-framed windows in place of the existing wood-framed systems.

A visual inspection by staff revealed the windows are old, but intact. Staff told the Commission that the applicant informed staff that they would like to replace the windows for reasons of safety and efficiency. Staff believes the windows are in decent condition and could benefit from maintenance and/or the addition of storm windows and weatherstripping. Staff recommends disapproval of the project as proposed, and recommends replacements, only if necessary, with in-kind materials.

The applicant, Jennifer Blanc, spoke in favor of the application. She stated that her windows are functioning as intended, but they pose a security risk and are inefficient. She said that there is no weatherstripping and that replacing the windows with in-kind wooden windows would be cost prohibitive creating a hardship. She stated that there is a lack of resources and availability when it comes to purchasing wooden windows. She said she has a contract for vinyl windows with Window World, which was signed in February.

She stated that she has had 5 contractors come to her house to address several issues and no one is available for work. She stated that she purchased some storm windows costing around \$3,500 but the contractor who said he would install them has not returned. She stated that the lack of available materials and contractors is a barrier.

Ms. Blanc stated that she would simply like to have what her neighbors have. She said the new vinyl windows would have the same look as the existing windows. She said that she was shot by gunman in front of her home and wants to ensure that her house is safe. Mr. Crane asked if the windows are working and functioning. Ms. Blanc said that they are keeping the rain out. She said that bugs can get in from the

windows because they are not sealed around the frames. There were no other people present in support or opposition to the case. The Commission discussed.

Dr. Hamm stated that based on the photos presented, these are the best-looking windows that have ever come before the Commission. He said most of the time the windows the Commission sees are badly rotted and/or falling out. Ms. Blanc said that the window in the back is in the worst shape and falling apart. Dr. Hamm stated that the intention of the Commission is to preserve the architectural integrity of the structures in the historic district. Dr. Hamm stated that he has a neighbor in the historic district whose home was built in 1894 who put single sheets of glass outside of every window so that rain and wind don't get in and they work efficiently. Ms. Blanc asked if that woman could open her windows. Dr. Hamm said no. Ms. Blanc asked if it was a fire hazard to have windows that were permanently shut. Dr. Hamm stated that the windows could be easily broken.

Ms. Blanc asked if she could replace her storm windows without approval. Ms. Gladwin stated that she could. Dr. Hamm made a motion to deny the request. Mr. Crane seconded the motion. The motion passed (4-0 vote).

- C. HPC-2022-67 — 320 East Gordon Street:** Mr. Brammer presents. The petitioner requests approval to modify the rear roofline, to repair and reposition the front brick steps, and to remove and replace the corrugated plastic foundation skirting material. In addition to this COA application, the petitioner received administrative approval for general exterior maintenance. This maintenance included replacing wood siding with in-kind materials and stabilizing the brick pier and beam foundation.

Staff informed the Commission that the applicant proposes a project with three main components. First, to modify the rear slope roofline for improved moisture and debris removal and protection. Second, to repair and add new brick handrail columns to the front steps for safety and access, and to center the steps to the porch door. And third, to remove the corrugated plastic foundation skirting and install new ornamental brick infill with venting to shore up the foundation and for aesthetics.

Staff presented the following district design guidelines: 1) historic roof shapes should be preserved. Repairs and changes shouldn't alter the shape along the visible plane; 2) existing porches should be maintained. Porch steps should be maintained. Handrails are discouraged, unless required for safety and access; and 3) infill of a historic pier foundation is a common alteration. Brick is the preferred infill material. Ventilation is encouraged at regular intervals.

Staff recommends disapproval of the proposed alterations to the roofline. Instead, staff recommends exploration of potential alternatives for improved moisture protection. However, staff recommends approval of repositioning the steps and installing new brick handrail columns, and adding ornamental brick infill with venting as proposed.

Mr. Terry Dennis, the applicant, spoke in favor of the application. He stated that the foundation of the home has settled on the right side, so it is slightly tilted. Water has leaked into the roof and moisture is in the studs, inviting termites. The beams the home sits on have been eaten by termites. The back roof is flat and the debris from the trees settles on the roof, creating a dam of water. The studs on the outer wall are rotten. He stated that he would like to change the angle of the roof so that vegetation and debris is able to come off and allow the water to flow freely.

He said the windows are totally falling apart. He said that he talked to Window World and Mackey Lumber to find replacements. Window World does not have wooden windows. Mackey Lumber says that there is a chance to send the window dimensions to their supplier to get them made. Mr. Dennis said that the front stairs are cracked up and coming apart. He would also like to replace the plastic underpinning with the brick underpinning.

Dr. Hamm asked what he would do to the front porch steps. Mr. Dennis said that he would shift them over so that they will be centered with the door and add rails, keeping them the same size. Ms. Querin asked what the proposal was for changing the pitch of the roof as it would tie into the house. Mr. Dennis said that there are two gables in the rear of the house and that he would angle the roof on the back so that the two gables are still showing to allow the water to flow on the backs side of the house.

With no further questions, and no one else in support or opposition, the Commission discussed. Ms. Querin stated that the roof on the back porch cannot be seen, and it is imperative to fix it. All commissioners agreed. Ms. Querin motioned to approve the COA as requested. Mr. Crane seconded the motion. The motion passed (4-0 vote).

- D. HPC-2022-72 — 915 West Street:** Mr. Brammer presents. The petitioner requests approval to demolish and remove three existing structures and construct a new residential apartment complex. The project appeared before the Commission for preliminary review in December 2020. The applicant has returned with a nearly identical proposal. The property is 1.64 acres and mostly wooded. However, there are three existing buildings on the lot, none of which are considered historic.

Staff informed the Commission that the first building is a one-story residence. The residence is approximately 1,250 square feet. The other two structures are storage buildings. The first storage building is about 2,800 square feet, for which the siding is a combination of wood and sheet metal. The second storage building is about 2,200 square feet and made of concrete block.

Staff informed the Commission that the new apartment complex will have three buildings, each roughly 7,600 square feet, with 8 apartments apiece. The facility also will have a large paved parking lot. The exterior materials for the apartment buildings will be a combination of brick veneer, fiber cement siding, wood stairs and railings, battered columns, and architectural shingles. Each apartment is 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, about 950 square feet.

Staff reminded the Commission that the project was received favorably during a preliminary review in December 2020. Staff recommends approval as proposed.

Mr. Ansley Wright, spoke in support of the application. He stated that they started the project back in 2020, but COVID-19 stopped them from proceeding. He asked if the Commission has any questions for him. Dr. Hamm asked if the project was advertised. Mr. Brammer stated that it was, and that there has been no contact from the public.

With no one else in support or opposition, the Commission discussed. Ms. Gladwin stated that this project has street frontage that is large compared to all the surrounding properties. The road frontage is 232 feet for this project, with all the other neighboring properties having small, single-family houses and street frontages. Traveling down West Street, this project will have a wide and large frontage with mainly a parking lot and cars, making it stand out as vastly different from its surroundings. Ms. Gladwin stated that she would like to see a site plan that places the buildings, so that the parking lot is not the prominent feature.

Dr. Hamm asked if the Commission could take one part of the COA, the demolition, approve that, and request that the applicant take the Commission's comments and alter the site plan. He stated whatever is being replaced is an improvement from what is there now. Ms. Gladwin agreed that that was a good plan. The Commission wants to ensure that the rhythm of the neighborhood is consistent with this addition. Everyone agreed that the buildings look nice and are more appealing than what is currently there. Dr. Hamm made the motion to approve the demolition of the structures and requested a follow up COA with an alternate site plan. Ms. Burkett seconded the motion. The motion passed (4-0 vote).

IV. Consideration of Administrative Review and Approvals

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

V. Other Business

(A) Local Historic District Survey Update (Phase II) – Mr. Brammer stated that the second draft's comments are due on the 15th of July.

VII. New Business

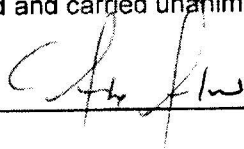
(A) Public Art Projects Update - Mr. Brammer presented the Public Art Commission's mural that they are proposing to paint on the side of the Dosta Theater in Bennie's Alley. He said that he is extending this rendering as a courtesy to the Commission. Dr. Hamm asked if the Commission needs to vote on this. Ms. Gladwin stated that she believes that HPC does need to vote on the mural. She stated that if the brick façade was never painted before, there is a question of if it is appropriate or not. Mr. Brammer stated that the wall is already painted yellow. Ms. Gladwin stated that it was done without approval. She stated that they would alter the historic character of the building with such changes. They discussed and stated that the azalea mural across from the historic courthouse was voted on and the Commission gave feedback on scale. Ms. Gladwin said that murals are part of the sign ordinance. Mr. Brammer stated that the sign ordinance did not address public art and unless it is blatant advertising, it would not be considered a sign. Mr. Brammer asked if the mosaic installation came before the Commission for approval. The commissioners stated yes.

Mr. Brammer also presented drawings of a sculpture installation that is the Mayor's project that will be on public property next to City Hall and Western Auto.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, Dr. Hamm made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Crane seconded the motion. It was called and carried unanimously (4-0 vote). The meeting adjourned at 7:08 pm.

HPC Chairman



Date 8-2-22