

# MINUTES

## Valdosta Historic Preservation Commission

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

May 1, 2023 5:30 p.m.

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Ms. Celine Gladwin  
Dr. Harry Hamm  
Dr. Alex Alvarez  
Ms. Sally Querin  
Mr. Tommy Crane  
Ms. Laura Yale  
Ms. Sandie Burkett

### MEMBERS ABSENT

### STAFF PRESENT

Mr. Jeff Brammer

### VISITORS PRESENT

Jeanette Strickland  
Tiffany Bentley  
Daniel Bayman  
Diane Stewart  
Lawrence Thomas  
April Thomas  
Avery Walden  
Brad Bergstrom  
Howard Dasher  
Chris Kendrick  
Kellie McTier  
Carol McDonald  
Ernest McDonald

### I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum

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

### II. Review and Approval of Minutes

The April 3, 2023, draft minutes were reviewed by the Commission. Dr. Hamm motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Crane seconded the motion. It was called and carried 6-0.

### III. Consideration of Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Applications

- A. HPC-2023-39 — 1611 North Patterson Street:** Mr. Brammer presents. The petitioner requests approval to make exterior changes to the house and the site. These changes include replacing the wood shingle siding, replacing the metal roof, altering the concrete ribbon driveway, replacing the exterior windows, and replacing the front door.

Staff noted that the applicant had supplemented their initial application with additional information and documentation about the proposed materials and changes. Staff noted that the applicant would provide the Commission with material examples and photographs during their portion of the hearing. Staff

recommended approval of the project as proposed, if HPC determined the applicant's documentation and information complied with district design guidelines.

Ms. April Thomas, applicant, spoke on behalf of the application. Ms. Thomas noted she wanted to change the roof from metal to architectural shingles to correspond with neighboring properties. Ms. Thomas passed around example photos showing what she had in mind for the rest of the project. She said she wanted to refurbish the house as an updated cottage. She said she wanted to mix styles of siding to give the home additional character. She said the existing staggered cedar shingle siding is badly deteriorated and cost prohibitive to replace in-kind.

Ms. Thomas also said she would like to center the front door on the porch. Ms. Thomas said the replacement door would be a hickory style door with sidelights. She said she would also like to put board and batten style siding in the gables. Currently, the gables have plain flush wood siding. Ms. Thomas said they wished to replace the driveway with crushed gravel.

Mr. Lawrence Thomas, husband of the applicant, said they originally wanted to replace all of the exterior windows. However, upon inspection, he said he believed that the windows were in decent condition. Mr. Thomas said he believed that they could repair the windows as needed and retain them. He said there may be a couple of windows that would need to be replaced, but that they would be replaced with in-kind (wood-framed) replacements. Ms. Thomas said they would like to replace three rear-facing louvered windows.

Ms. Querin asked for clarification about the extent of siding replacement. Ms. Thomas said the plan was to replace all siding. Mr. Thomas said the plan was to use fiber cement lapped siding and board and batten siding on the entire house, with fiber cement shingles as an accent. The shingle siding would be a minimal part of the exterior siding. Mr. Thomas said replacing the existing cedar shingle siding costs almost 6 times the amount of the lapped fiber cement siding.

Ms. Gladwin said the fact that the house is almost entirely covered by cedar shingles is what makes the property unique. Dr. Hamm asked if the applicants had tried to remove the siding to see its condition. Ms. Thomas said no because they do not own the house yet. Dr. Hamm asked if it was possible to save some of the cedar shingle siding and use it in the most prominent places. Mr. Thomas said that might be possible in some areas, especially the shingles under the eaves. Mr. Thomas said all the siding has to come down anyway because the house lacks insulation.

Ms. Gladwin asked the applicants what interested them in this house. Mr. Thomas said they remodel houses. Ms. Gladwin said removing character-defining features and replacing them with a "more trendy" look is not appropriate. She said if the goal is to remodel the house to give it a new look, that is not appropriate. She said the project as proposed would bring about the loss of what makes the house unique.

Mr. Crane asked about the proposal to move the front door. Mr. Crane asked if the alteration was sought for aesthetics or function. Ms. Thomas said she didn't have to move the door placement. Ms. Gladwin asked if the applicants had renovated a historic home previously. Ms. Thomas said never. Ms. Gladwin said the idea behind preservation was to retain the historic characteristics of the property. (Ms. Gladwin excused herself at 6 p.m.)

Ms. Querin asked if this property was to be restored for residential or professional purposes. Ms. Thomas said it was their intention to rehabilitate the property and sell it for commercial purposes.

Mr. Howard Dasher, a real estate agent for the owner, also spoke in favor of the application. He said the property has been listed for over two years. He said the property has been viewed by many interested parties. He said each time they learned what would be necessary to rehabilitate the property, they backed

out. He said it takes a special person to want to take this project on. Unfortunately, he said, that is a shallow pool.

Mr. Chris Kendrick, a real estate agent for the purchasers, spoke in favor of the application. He said he was sure that the owners had the capacity to do the renovations properly. He said the property is a hazard, and it will require a devoted investor to properly rehabilitate it. He said the property is an eyesore. He said the fact that somebody would want to take this on should be embraced.

There being no one else speaking either in favor or opposition, the Commission discussed. Ms. Yale suggested the Commission should table the application to allow the applicants to further consider the historic guidelines. Ms. Yale said the applicants may use the additional time to examine the condition of the cedar shingle siding. Dr. Hamm said the applicants came with a strong vision, but have already reconsidered certain items, including the windows and the door.

Dr. Hamm asked if tabling the item would kill the sale. Mr. Kendrick said that would be a question better posed to the bank. He said the bank has already graciously extended the offer for lending. Dr. Alvarez said that there have been greater limits of late on speculative lending. Ms. Querin said the main issue for her is the shingle siding. She said a good solution may be to leave it on the front and around the front of the sides. She said it was fine with her to remove it elsewhere.

The Commission discussed further. Ms. Yale made a motion to approve the project as proposed, with one condition: Retain and/or replace in-kind the staggered wood shingle siding on the face and around both the north and south elevations at least 12" to 18". Mr. Crane seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0 vote).

- B. HPC-2023-40 — 212 West Alden Avenue:** Mr. Brammer presents. The petitioner requests approval to move an existing historic structure, rehabilitate and construct an addition on the same historic structure, and construct a new single-family residence on an adjacent lot. The petitioner also requests approval of a conceptual site plan to develop eight additional single-family residences as part of a planned development.

Specifically, the applicant proposed the following: 1) move the house 15' to the west and rotate it 3 degrees counterclockwise; 2) construct a new attached rear garage addition and covered, open porch on the existing house; 3) construct a 3,200 square foot single-family residence on the adjacent lot; 4) receive conceptual approval for a residential village of single-family residences to the rear of the historic houses (also 216 W. Alden Ave.). The houses range in size between 2,300 and 3,200 square feet.

Staff recommended approval of the project as proposed with the following condition: Plans for future individual residences must receive HPC review and approval prior to permitting and construction.

Mr. Avery Walden, applicant, spoke on behalf of the application. Mr. Walden said this proposal is the fruits of about five months of work. He said the two houses in this part of the project are not spec houses. He said the clients are already involved, and that they know that they are buying properties within the Local Historic District.

Dr. Hamm asked about the materials for the house rehabilitation. Mr. Walden said the materials for the principal residence will be in-kind replacements. He said the materials for the rear garage and open porch would be differentiated with fiber cement siding.

Dr. Alvarez said he believed Mr. Walden addressed, in the current application, all the questions the Commission had during a preliminary showing of the project late last year. Ms. Querin asked if the applicant thought he was using too many different architectural styles. Mr. Walden said he sees all kinds of architectural styles in the Local Historic District. He said he believed he was not using too many different styles, but instead offering a nice representative mix of what already exists.

Dr. Alvarez said he believed the proposed homes would serve as a catalyst for revitalization in the area. Ms. Querin said she agreed, and that this would be a great project.

Mr. Ernest McDonald, owner of the property who is selling it to the applicant, spoke in favor of the application. Mr. McDonald said that all this property once belonged to his parents. He said one of his daughters would be moving into one of the new houses. He said his daughter had a history of rehabilitating historic houses. He said Mr. Walden does fantastic work and that the Commission should approve the project.

There being no one else speaking either in favor or opposition, the Commission discussed. Dr. Hamm asked for clarification about what was before the Commission for consideration. Ms. Yale said it was the relocation of the existing house, the rehabilitation and rear addition to that existing house, the construction of a new house on an adjacent parcel, and the concept of the residential village. Dr. Hamm motioned for approval of the project as proposed. Ms. Yale seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0 vote).

- C. HPC-2023-41 — 101 East Central Avenue:** Mr. Brammer presents. The petitioner requests approval to install a 2' x 10' faux neon square channel letter projecting building sign. The sign has interior lighting and will be attached to the exterior of the building at second-story height.

Staff acknowledged that the proposed sign both complies and conflicts with the district guidelines. The sign conflicts with district guidelines concerning overall size and interior lighting. However, the sign complies with district guidelines, which allow for exposed neon lighting. Furthermore, historical photos show this area of the building to have been the location of previous signage. Staff recommends approval as proposed.

Mr. Daniel Bayman, applicant and owner of the subject property, spoke on behalf of the application. Mr. Bayman said the historic renovation of the subject property is nearing completion. He said the sign would only be lit at night. He said it is not neon gas, but LED. He said the Luke Brothers (historical occupants) had three neon signs on the building previously. Mr. Bayman said he would be placing just one such sign on the building.

There being no one else speaking either in favor or opposition, the Commission discussed. Dr. Hamm said he thought the sign looked very nice. He said it would make a nice addition to the downtown. Ms. Yale concurred. Ms. Yale motioned to approve the project as proposed. Mr. Crane seconded. The motion passed unanimously (5-0 vote).

- D. HPC-2023-42 — 206 North Patterson Street:** Mr. Brammer presents. The petitioner requests approval to paint a vertical wall sign on the building exterior. The petitioner proposes a 1' x 25' vertical painted "DOWNTOWN SOCIAL" in block letters at the corner of the north facing elevation. The sign would be painted on exposed brick.

Application withdrawn by applicant prior to Commission consideration.

**IV. Consideration of Administrative Review and Approvals**

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

**V. Other Business**

**(A) Preservation Awards Certification** – Mr. Brammer informed the Commission that the selection committee had voted on, and selected the winners for the 2023 Valdosta Preservation Awards. The winners were: 1) 1609 North Patterson Street (Distinguished Merit); 2) 202 West Alden Avenue (Excellence in New/Compatible Construction); 3) 904 North Patterson Street (Stewardship); 4) 220 North Patterson Street (Outstanding Achievement); 5) 101 East Central Avenue (Outstanding Achievement). Mr. Crane motioned to certify the winners as selected by the committee. Ms. Querin seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously (5-0).

**(B) Preservation Month Event** – Mr. Brammer said preparations are ongoing for a Historic Preservation Month observance event on Friday, May 12. The event is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. at the Roberts House (206 Wells Street). Mr. Brammer said the City issued a press release and flyer to publicize the event. Mr. Brammer said the City will have brochures and information for distribution. He said Mayor Matheson will issue a proclamation recognizing May as Historic Preservation Month. Ms. Yale and Ms. Querin said they were organizing a Champagne toast following the proclamation.

**VII. New Business**

**VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Mr. Crane made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Burkett seconded the motion. It was called and carried unanimously (5-0 vote). The meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

HPC Chairman 

Date 7/19/23