

The Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Harlem, Georgia met for their Regular Meeting on Thursday, November 9, 2023, at the Public Safety Building at 6:30 p.m. with Chairman Bill Speer presiding.

Present: COMMISSION: Chairman Bill Speer, Commissioner Scott Eremus, Commissioner Lynda Morris, and Commissioner John Paul Stout; STAFF: Community Development Director David Jenkins and City Clerk Leona Holley; ABSENT: Vice Chairman Diane Holland; GUEST: Robert Fields.

The Meeting was called to order by Chairman Speer at 6:30 p.m.

The Invocation was given by Commissioner Morris.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Eremus.

**Approval of the Agenda:** Commissioner Stout made the motion to approve the Agenda as presented; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Morris. The motion carried with Commissioners Eremus, Morris, and Stout voting in the affirmative.

**Approval of the Minutes:** Commissioner Stout made the motion to approve the minutes from the October 12, 2023, Regular Meeting as written; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Morris. The motion carried with Commissioners Eremus, Morris, and Stout voting in the affirmative.

**Continued COA Application:** None.

**NEW COA Application:** None.

OLD BUSINESS:

**Digital Historic Districts/Properties Map:** Mr. Jenkins commented that the Columbia County IT department is still working on bringing the digital historic district and properties map online for the city.

NEW BUSINESS:

**Adoption of 2024 Meeting Calendar:** Mr. Jenkins presented the draft for the 2024 Meeting Calendar. There is a conflict for the April meeting because of Masters Week. The recommended dates for April's meeting are Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup> or Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup>. A vote was not taken at this time; Mr. Jenkins will bring this back to the Commissioners at the December meeting.

**Georgia Outdoor Cemetery Program:** Mr. Jenkins stated the Commissioners had requested information for a Cemetery Program; Mr. Jenkins presented a slide presentation on the Georgia Outdoor Cemetery Program for the City of Washington.

**Bylaws:** Mr. Jenkins presented copies of the HPC bylaws for review. Discussion was given on the length of terms for the Commissioners. Mayor Roxanne Whitaker addressed the Commission on the length of terms for the Historic Preservation Commission. The HPC has a set term length, the Mayor has the authority to

**NEW BUSINESS (cont'd):**

**Bylaws (cont'd):** ask Commissioners to stay on the Commission. Mr. Jenkins will review the ordinance and come back with the length of terms.

**Harlem Museum Update:** Chairman Speer asked Museum Director Meghan Foster to attend tonight's meeting to give an update on the museum. Ms. Foster explained the focus of the museum is on the history of Harlem and Laurel and Hardy. She gave updates on the education sections of the museum. Discussion on how HPC could help the museum. The items discussed were helping to identify funding and resources, grant writing, and the walking tour brochures with QR codes. Ms. Foster commented she would like to see if there is a grant for a display case for the Model T automobile in the museum. Chairman Speer stated his vision of the HPC is working on projects and working with the staff at the museum. Chairman Speer thanked Ms. Foster for attending the meeting.

**Harlem HPC Mission Statement:** Chairman Speer commented there is no mission statement for HPC; he presented a draft of a mission statement for the Commission. Commissioner Morris made the motion to accept the HPC Mission Statement as presented; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Stout. The motion carried with Commissioners Eremus, Morris, and Stout voting in the affirmative. Mr. Jenkins will consult with City Attorney Nelson to see if City Council needs to approve the mission statement.

**Rosenwald Schools:** Mr. Jenkins commented at the last HPC meeting that there were projects discussed and Rosenwald Schools were mentioned. Mr. Jenkins provided information on Rosenwald Schools and stated there is a Rosenwald School in Harlem located on Verdery Street, now owned by New Holt Church; the building is now a youth center for the church and has been heavily modified. Chairman Speer commented the HPC needs to work on projects and see if volunteers could help with projects. Project possibilities for next year discussed were to develop a walking tour for the cemeteries, develop QR code posters to help promote Harlem and tourism, African American History – Reconstruction in the South and Rosenwald Schools. Commissioner Stout commented that in order for something to be a project it requires scope, schedule, and cost if it does not have those three things it is not a project. Commissioner Stout suggested to table project discussions until the Commissioners can see what information and needs the museum has to help develop a scope then have a discussion at the December meeting.

**City Attorney Report:** None.

**Staff Report:** Mr. Jenkins provided a map of the historic properties in Harlem. The map shows areas of increased development interest and greater stress upon historic structures. Mr. Jenkins stated the Commission needs to be prepared to look at the needs and knowledge of new developments that will be coming to Harlem.

**Chairman's Comments:** None.

HPC Meeting, City of Harlem, Georgia  
November 9, 2023  
Continued from Page 2

Page 3

With there being nothing further before the Commission for discussion, Commissioner Eremus made the motion to adjourn the meeting; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Stout. The motion carried with Commissioners Eremus, Morris, and Stout voting in the affirmative. The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leona H. Holley  
City Clerk