

The Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Harlem, Georgia met for their Regular Meeting on Thursday, April 4, 2024, at the Public Safety Building at 6:30 p.m. with Chairman Bill Speer presiding.

Present: COMMISSION: Chairman Bill Speer, Vice Chairman Diane Holland, Commissioner Lynda Morris, and Commissioner Brett Rogers; STAFF: Community Development Director Robert Fields, City Clerk Leona Holley, and City Attorney Adam Nelson.

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 Vice Chairman Holland.

Approval of the Agenda: Commissioner Rogers made the motion to approve the Agenda as presented; 2nd by Commissioner Morris. The motion carried with Commissioners Holland, Morris, and Rogers voting in the affirmative.

Approval of the Minutes: Vice Chairman Holland made the motion to approve the Minutes of the March 14, 2024 Regular Meeting as written; 2nd by Commissioner Rogers. The motion carried with Commissioners Holland, Morris, and Rogers voting in the affirmative.

Continued COA Applications: N/A

New COA Applications: N/A

OLD BUSINESS:

Scheduled Walk-Through of Historic Structure: Chairman Speer asked City Attorney Nelson if the Commissioners of the HPC could or could not require a walk-through of the historic structures; City Attorney Nelson explained the Historic Preservation Act was set in place by the legislature with the intent to regulate the exterior of the structure to specifically ensure that we do not act on what is going on inside the building. If there is a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for demolition and the owner is willing to allow a walk-through by the HPC prior to demolition for the purposes of preserving certain historic features, he believes the state law would allow the same. The statute intended to allow flexibility without obligation. City Attorney Nelson commented that we also need to be aware of the limited capacity for the city to take in items for preservation.

Vice Chairman Holland commented if the Commission is to consider the COA for demolition, she feels the Commission needs to look at the structure to see if there is anything of historical value. After further discussion, the Commission feels like they need to look at the structure for consideration of demolition. Mr. Fields will reach out to the architect to see if April 22nd is available to schedule a walk-through for the Commission and the owner.

OLD BUSINESS (cont'd):

Scheduled Walk-Through of Historic Structure (cont'd): City Attorney Nelson commented Mr. Fields provided a copy of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) application in the packet; subsection (c) Demolition explains the seven factors that the Commission needs to consider when reviewing a proposed demolition. The seven factors to consider are:

1. The historic, scenic, or architectural significance of the building, structure, site, tree, or object.
2. The importance of the building, structure, site, tree, or object to the ambiance of a district.
3. The difficulty or the impossibility of reproducing a building, structure, site, tree, or object because of its design, texture, material, detail, or unique location.
4. Whether the building, structure, site, tree, or object is one of the last remaining examples of its kind in the neighborhood or the city.
5. Whether there are definite plans for use of the property if the proposed demolition is carried out, and what the effect of those plans on the character of the surrounding area would be.
6. Whether reasonable measures can be taken to save the building, structure, site, tree, or object from collapse.
7. Whether the building, structure, site, tree, or object is capable of earning reasonable economic return on its value.

City Attorney Nelson commented that the decision of the demolition should be based on the seven factors when considering the COA; items 6 and 7 pertain to the interior of the building. The Commission may have a conversation with the applicant about attempting to preserve items of historic value, but the Commission needs to keep in mind the city has limited storage.

Commissioner Morris asked if the property/building has been sold; Mr. Fields stated he does not know if they have closed on the property. City Attorney Nelson commented that the contract is probably contingent on the decision of the Historic Preservation Commission and the zoning.

Model T Restoration Project: Chairman Speer reached out to former HPC Commissioner John Paul Stout about acquiring the contact list for the Motel T Restoration Project but has not heard back from him. Chairman Speer stated after speaking to Museum Director Meghan Foster he and Planning Commissioner Herbert Flick is scheduled to go to the Museum on Saturday, April 6th at 10:30 a.m. to take measurements for the Model T display case.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

Public Comment: None.

Staff Report:

- **COA O'Reilly's (Postponed until May Meeting)** –The COA for O'Reilly Auto Parts has been postponed until the May meeting. Mr. Fields stated a variance for a landscape buffer went before the Planning Commission; the recommendation was for approval. After some discussion by the HPC Commission on brick colors and the color palette for bricks, Mr. Fields will email the Commissioners the city's ordinance on the color palette for bricks. City Attorney Nelson explained

Staff Report (cont'd):

- **COA O'Reilly's (Postponed until May Meeting) (cont'd):** a text amendment had gone before Council from the HPC on regulating brick colors, the Council does not want to regulate the color of bricks. The HPC can mandate the building material but not color of building materials. Mr. Fields noted on the design plan for O'Reilly's it shows Exterior Insulation Finishing Systems (EIFS), which is not allowed for use of building materials in the city; Mr. Fields will address this with the architect.
- **Demolition Relevant Factors** – Demolition relevant factors were reviewed by Mr. Fields and the Commissioners.
- **COA Refresher** – Mr. Fields commented that a copy of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) application has been provided as a refresher for the Commissioners. Mr. Fields went over the COA with the Commissioners.

Chairman's Report: None.

City Attorney's Comments: None.

With there being nothing further before the Commission for discussion, Vice Chairman Holland made the motion to adjourn the meeting; 2nd by Commissioner Morris. The motion carried with Commissioners Holland, Morris, and Rogers voting in the affirmative. The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leona H. Holley
City Clerk