

The Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Harlem, Georgia met for their Regular Meeting on Thursday, May 9, 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 Lyndia Morris, and Commissioner Brett Rogers; STAFF: Community Development Director Robert Fields, City Clerk Leona Holley, and City Attorney Tom Watkins.

The Meeting was called to order by Chairman Speer at 6:31 p.m.

The Invocation was given by Commissioner Morris.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Chairman Holland.

Approval of the Agenda: Chairman Speer requested to amend the agenda to move Old Business – Model T Restoration Project before the New COA Application. Commissioner Rogers made the motion to approve the amended agenda as requested; 2nd by Commissioner Morris. The motion carried with Commissioners Holland, Morris, and Rogers voting in the affirmative.

Approval of the Minutes: Commissioner Rogers made the motion to approve the Minutes of the April 4, 2024 Regular Meeting as written; 2nd by Vice Chairman Holland. The motion carried with Commissioners Holland, Morris, and Rogers voting in the affirmative.

OLD BUSINESS:

Model T Restoration Project: Chairman Speer reported Vice Chairman Holland, Planning Commissioner Herbert Flick and himself recently viewed the Motel T at the Laurel and Hardy Museum last month. Chairman Speer stated Civil Engineer Kenneth Meyer created a car viewing design to place the Model T behind. Mr. Meyer estimated the cost to be around \$3,600.00.

Continued COA Applications: None.

New COA Applications: COA-2024-05-01; Demo and New Construction (O'Reilly Auto Parts): The applicant is Craig A. Schneider on behalf of O'Reilly Automotive Stores. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for the demolition of an existing structure located at 370 W. Milledgeville Road and construction of an O'Reilly Auto Parts store.

Mr. Fields stated the current property owner is Louis Anthony Williamson. The property is located in the Downtown Commercial Overlay and there are historical guidelines that are applicable for this project. Based on the best available data, the structure of the property was once the home of Dr. George Sanders. The home was built between 1910-1919. There has been no information found before 2002. Based on meeting minutes from 2008, the property was rezoned from R-1B Residential to B-3 Business. Currently a used car dealership is occupying the property and has been there since 2008. No account of any prior building permits or Certificate of Appropriateness between 2008 and now.

New COA Applications: COA-2024-05-01; Demo and New Construction (O'Reilly Auto Parts) (cont'd): Mr. Fields reviewed the Certificate of Appropriateness application. The applicant is proposing construction of a new commercial building of approximately 7,300 square feet. The trash receptacle was located at the front left entrance and the Planning Commission recommended that the receptacle be placed at the rear of the property. The applicant has proposed a 6-foot composite fence on the eastern boundary with a residential property to the east. Another 6-foot-high fence is proposed for the rear of the property or northern boundary. The fencing along with landscape buffer on the eastern boundary will add a screen for the residential property to the east. Staff referenced the Downtown Commercial Overlay document and the Downtown Harlem Design Guidelines for review. Mr. Fields reviewed the seven relevant factors for the demolition.

Mr. Fields stated with the proposed building is in substantial compliance will the Downtown Commercial Overlay and Downtown Harlem Design Guidelines staff is recommending approval of Application COA-2024-05-01 with the following conditions:

1. Applying brick veneer on the front façade to be more in line with the newer commercial properties in the district.
2. Place "Recessed" faux windows to break up the "Solids to Void" Ratio on the front façade.
3. Placing a 'plaque' on the property or the building acknowledging the historic nature of the property.
4. Screening mechanical units if visible from street view.

Applicant – Architect Samuel Teleki, Esterly Schneider & Associates & Ins.: Mr. Teleki explained O'Reilly Auto Parts is proposing to build a 7,300 square foot commercial block building, with architectural screen around the rooftop HVAC units, and gooseneck lightening fixtures.

Commissioners – Chairman Speer asked what the intent is to do with the cedar and pecan trees on the property; Mr. Teleki responded usually they would remove and discard. Chairman Speer stated he does not want to see the wood disposed of; he would like to see if someone in the community could benefit from the wood. Mr. Fields stated there is a local sign company that does sign work in the CSRA, and he builds signs out of cedar post; Mr. Fields stated he would be interested in the wood. Chairman Speer asked City Code Enforcer/Fire Marshal Pamela Nickles what happens to the trees when they start covering the areas where the tree roots have expanded; Ms. Nickles replied the trees will die and then they will become a hazard. Vice Chairman Holland asked if there are plans beside the shrubbery; Mr. Teleki stated there will be different types of shrubs as well as Trident Maple and Dogwood trees. City Attorney Watkins stated a condition can be added for repurposing or reuse of trees removed from the property.

Vice Chairman Holland stated on the previous plans EIFS (Exterior Insulation Finishing Systems) was showing, Vice Chairman Holland asked if this has been changed; EIFS is a material that is not allowed. Mr. Teleki responded stucco and textured masonry block are the materials that are currently being used.

Vice Chairman Holland commented the recommendation is for brick façade; all the other buildings around this location have brick and this is in the historic section, Vice Chairman Holland commented to keep this in mind. Chairman Speer commented with this being a commercial building the more consistent the buildings look the better the streets look. Mr. Teleki pointed out the split face masonry block they are

New COA Applications: COA-2024-05-01; Demo and New Construction (O'Reilly Auto Parts) (cont'd):

currently showing around the building is one of the colors in the city's ordinance color pallet. Mr. Teleki stated they understand it is not brick masonry, but it is very similar to the look the ordinance describes. Chairman Speer commented he does not think the Commission has a problem with the split face masonry block being on three sides of the building, but the front is important to the overall look.

Chairman Speer asked Mr. Teleki what the plans for lighting and the plans for the historical monument on the property are; Mr. Teleki stated Mr. Fields sent over the ordinance on lighting and they have made some changes to the lighting from the previous plans, they will have building lighting and goose neck lighting. Mr. Teleki explained they have not discussed the monument for the property yet. Chairman Speer stated the language of the monument is important to the Commission. Chairman Speer recommended the Museum Committee or someone from the museum to compose the writing for the monument sign. Mr. Fields stated there could be a plaque placed on the building or a historical monument by the road; the advantage of the monument being placed by the road is it would be more visible to the traffic going by. The consensus of the Commission is to amend condition item #3 to read "Placing a 'plaque' on the property acknowledging the historic nature of the property." Mr. Teleki asked if the Commission had a preference of what they would like for the monument sign to look like, the type of material, and placement of the monument; Chairman Speer stated he thinks the southeast corner of the property would be the appropriate area and the decision should be left to city staff and information based off city ordinances for the placement. The type of materials was discussed for the monument, during discussion Harlem Police Officer Jeffrey Davis asked if he could make a recommendation to place the monument on a cedar post from the cedar tree off the property; Chairman Speer was in favor of the recommendation. Chairman Speer stated to consult with the museum on the language to go on the monument.

Mr. Teleki asked if condition item #2 could be a type of shutter system; Mr. Fields explained his recommendation was to break up the solid wall with recessed faux windows; he compared this with the Hardee's building and the KJ's market building.

Public Comment: None.

With there being no further discussion Commissioner Morris made the motion to approve application COA-2024-05-01 Demo and New Construction for the property located at 370 W. Milledgeville Road with the following conditions and amended condition item #3 and an addition of condition item #5:

1. Applying brick veneer on the front façade to be more in line with the newer commercial properties in the district.
2. Place "Recessed" faux windows to break up the "Solids to Void" Ratio on the front façade.
3. Placing a 'plaque' on the property acknowledging the historic nature of the property.
4. Screening mechanical units if visible from street view.
5. Where feasible and conditioned upon an interested individual being identified to take possession of the wood, make available for repurposing, or reuse the wood from trees removed from the property.

Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion. The motion carried with Commissioners Holland, Morris, and Rogers voting in the affirmative.

NEW BUSINESS:

Staff Report:

- **Tree Report** – Mr. Fields reported the new property owner for 160 W. Trippe Street contacted him regarding a Chinese pine tree in their yard. The property owner stated their insurance company would not insure the property until the tree is removed, the tree is too close to the home. Mr. Fields reported the property is in the historic district. Mr. Fields asked for the homeowner to send the information from the insurance company to him. After he received an email from the insurance company, Mr. Fields gave the homeowner permission to take the tree down.

Chairman's Report: Chairman Speer reported on the following:

- Historic Survey – Chairman Speer commented according to state guidelines the historic survey needs to be done every 10 years. The last survey was done 15 to 20 years ago. Chairman Speer stated he has two copies of the survey from different years, and they are not the same. Chairman Speer stated there are programs from the University of Georgia (UGA) and Augusta University (AU) where students could do the survey and receive credit for doing the survey. Chairman Speer asked if there is a possibility on another survey. Mr. Fields stated he will make a note and look into this.
- Golf cart tour of historic properties – Chairman Speer would like to schedule a golf cart tour for the Commissioners to look at the historic properties. After some discussion, the Commission decided not to do the golf cart tour at this time.
- Walking Tour Booklet - Staff at the museum has done a 56-page walking tour booklet, Chairman Speer stated some of the information in the booklet seems to be inadequate and he would like for the Commission to help with this.

City Attorney's Comments: None.

With there being nothing further before the Commission for discussion, Commissioner Rogers 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 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leona H. Holley
City Clerk