
Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes May 21, 2020

Members present: Danielle Stein, Rhonda Dempster, Murray Dennis, Marguerite Knight Erwin and Skipper Holloway

Members absent: Skipper Holloway

Also Present: Roland Soignet, Jr. Zoning Administrator & Asst. Public Works Director, and Liz Guidry, Secretary

Ms. Stein called the meeting to order. Ms. Dennis moved to accept the minutes as presented for the January 9, 2020 meeting, the motion was seconded by Ms. Dempster. All board members present were in favor.

Ms. Stein noted the item on the agenda was to review proposed renovations to building located at 410 W. 2nd Street for Robin Bell by Pelican Builders Group. The application states that they plan to convert the existing building into a duplex, each unit will contain a one bedroom, one bathroom apartment and the wall of the existing building will contain a new entry door and vinyl window for each unit. The wall will be built with hardy plank siding and will have any awning to help protect from the weather. Ms. Erwin inquired about the color plan. Ms. Bell noted she had the colors picked out for the outside and the trim -- it will be London Fog which is kind of a greyish beige and just a little bit lighter for the walls of the building it will be pale oak.

Ms. Robin Bell noted it took her a while to get it all in her head and she hated that because it was such an eyesore and derelict building that was close to her. She was real excited about it and very excited to have Brett Broussard doing the work. Mr. Broussard replied he was excited to build it. She thought it was God's work that she was able to purchase that since it will improve the looks of our block and will allow her daughter the ability to live independently yet be right next to her. Her 87 yr. old mother who needs her to be close would be on the other side. Her daughter was named for her mother so it is the Mary's, the Mary's are both going to be right next door. Brett included in the plans for cameras and alarm systems so we are going to be safe and sound and right together which will be nice. Ms. Stein stated that is amazing and such a really neat use of the space for what your needs are now and couldn't wait to see the finished product. She appreciated how Robin and Brett valued the preservation and integrity of building and the effort that they were putting into this, it would be a huge asset to the block and to downtown as a whole. Ms. Erwin made a motion to approve the renovation, it as seconded by Ms. Dempster, all members were in favor.

Ms. Dempster asked Ms. Bell if she knew what the building was in the early days. She stated she had done all the research on the buildings and ran titles all the way back to the 1860's to find age of the building but titles don't say that. She then researched the materials that they used and thought that the building was probably constructed during the new deal since it had textured blocks that was big in the 30's. Now hers was a shotgun which was very popular in the early 1900's after the civil war and it was the house of the time. The one next door is wider so it may be a little younger because after the shotguns they started doing cottages and it's more of a cottage and a little bit more craftsman style with the size of the windows. Ms. Dempster asked if she knew if it was residential or it was commercial? Ms. Bell replied it was commercial as far as she knew back it was commercial and was a café, Jenny's Café in the 50's. Ms. Jenny bought this place in the 50's and when she passed away they used it as rental property then Dr. Dolese, who was a dentist, bought what will be the duplex in the 30's.

Ms. Dempster noted we have a unique downtown because it is not right on the beaten path and if you go to any other downtown in the State most of them have a road running straight through their downtown. We're kind of unique in that way but in a good way because ours kind of stretches for three blocks where most of it is just one straight through. She really appreciated the work that was being done and couldn't wait to see the finished product.

Ms. Dempster mentioned she talked to Skipper about his Board appointment and he would stay if we needed him to but if we could find somebody else that would good. He give her a couple of names and suggested either E.A. Angeloz or Kevin Gros. Ms. Erwin noted this is an appointment made through the Mayor's office, not for us. Ms. Dempster replied right but Tommy said it was up to us so she was throwing these couple of names out there and if anybody else has any suggestions we can run that by him too. Ms. Erwin noted she might have one that they could discuss. Ms. Dempster replied we can come up with a few names to give to him and let him decide. Ms. Stein stated she thought their next regularly scheduled meeting is in July if she was correct. Ms. Dempster indicated she was staying on if they would have her. Ms. Stein replied ok.

Ms. Bell thanked the members for their time. The board members thanked her for her inspiration.

Ms. Dempster motioned to adjourn, it was seconded by Ms. Dennis, meeting adjourned at 5:26 P.M.