

**GAINESVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
MARCH 7, 2011**

Members present: Chairman Kathy Amos, Vice Chairman Dick Bachman and Commissioners Linda Hutchens and Kevin Meyer

Members absent: Commissioners Jim Walters

Staff present: Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar

Others present: Council Member Myrtle Figueras (Ex-Officio Member)

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was held in the Green Street Station Conference Room and was called to order by Chairman Amos at 5:35 PM.

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 1, 2010 MEETING

Motion to approve the Minutes as presented.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Bachman
Motion seconded by Commissioner Meyer

Vote – 4 favor, 1 absent (Walters)

NOTE: The following notes reflect what Ms. Tullar shared with the HPC Members.

MISCELLANEOUS – TRAINING

A) Preservation is Local!

a. What is Preservation?

Preservation is a planning tool dedicated to recognizing, protecting, using and appreciating our City's diverse historic resources. Simply put, historic preservation is the means for protecting our resources from destruction or deterioration and encouraging their active role in our community. Preservation refers to the maintenance of historic resources without significant alteration to the current condition – keeping in mind that changes which occur over time are in and of themselves evidence of history and development. As you can imagine, preservation can mean many things. It can mean renovating or converting a vacant residential dwelling into office space; it can mean nominating a historic site or area to the National Register of Historic Places; it can mean locally designating a site or district as historic; or it can mean a combination of any of these.

As you can see, historic preservation does not just mean the beautiful columned houses we see down Green Street nor does it just mean the downtown square; it also includes what most wouldn't normally think of...like older residential dwellings that haven't really stood the test of time, or the smaller homes nestled within the City, or even structures that don't look like the homes portrayed in *Gone With the Wind*. There are criteria for selection that a property must meet in order to be considered for designation – whether individually or as part of a district, whether locally or

nationally. While the National Register of Historic Places provides national recognition and promotes rehabilitation tax credits, it does not protect properties from inappropriate changes, incompatible buildings going in next door, or demolition.

b. National Register vs. Local Designation

The National Register of Historic Places is our nation's official list of historic places deemed worthy of preservation. This is a federal program administered by the National Park Service through the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Division. And, it simply recognizes a site's historical, architectural, cultural, or archaeological significance. Being listed on the National Register does not fully protect a site from irreversible changes that may alter the historical significance of the site or the district within which a site is located. (Referred to information on slide about significance and integrity, and how have to meet both).

c. How does a Historic Preservation Ordinance work?

A Historic Preservation Ordinance, passed by the elected officials, is the way to ensure that that change and growth happen in a beneficial way, because designated areas are protected through a design review process. A Historic Preservation Ordinance does not only provide protection for properties that are historic (50 years old or older)...Because what is built on a neighborhood's vacant lot has a significant impact on the rest of the neighborhood! (Referred to information on slides regarding what kinds of properties can be locally designated – historic, non-historic or vacant; and the criteria by which a district or individual landmark can be designated locally).

Benefits of local designation...Locally designated historic districts: ensure that major changes in the neighborhood do not take away from its character, encourage the reuse of existing buildings, are a visible reminder of the City's history, and provide a quality of life that many seek in a neighborhood with street trees, front porches, and nearby neighbors.

Contrary to what many argue, LOCAL DISTRICTS.....

1. DO NOT make you restore -- or even fix up -- your property...(Only if a property has gone so far as to be in danger of being beyond repair will the preservation ordinance require maintenance);
2. DO NOT regulate which colors you can use to paint your house;
3. DO NOT require you to open your home for tours;
4. DO NOT require/allow the Preservation Commission to review and approve changes to the interior of your home;
5. DO NOT prohibit you from adding on to your house, or require you to hire an architect to draw up plans. (Ms. Tullar explained that the City requires architectural drawings for new construction of principal buildings or any addition over 5,000-square feet in size);
6. DO NOT prohibit you from adding on to a building, it simply ensures that the addition is compatible with the original; and
7. DO NOT prevent new construction. For example, entire streets can be added to your neighborhood, as long as the new houses fit the existing character.

Historic buildings merely serve as a model for new buildings that are built nearby. Local districts will not prevent major retailers from opening up a store in town. But,

local designation can ensure that any new building conforms to OUR City's design standards. Having a preservation ordinance, a preservation commission and designated districts really means that any major changes proposed by the owner are first reviewed to make sure they are not incompatible nor compromise the character of the rest of the neighborhood. Studies across Georgia (and across the country) have proven that local designation protects and enhances property values, as well as preserves the physical history of a community.

As an added benefit, cities and counties that pass a preservation ordinance and appoint a preservation commission are eligible to participate in the Certified Local Government Program. Being a CLG makes you part of an active network of preservation commissions across the country, and makes your town eligible for preservation grants exclusive to CLGs. The City became a CLG in May 2006, and as result has received five historic preservation grants to help with our historic resources structural survey initiative.

B) History of Gainesville Program

Referred to notes on the slide, which explain when the historic preservation ordinance was adopted and the Commission appointed. It also highlighted the dates associated with the adoption of design guidelines, local designations, and CLG certification. Then, Ms. Tullar explained the local Certificate of Appropriateness process for the City while referring to the flow chart detailed on the slide.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Motion made by Commissioner Meyer
Motion seconded by Vice Chairman Bachman
Vote – 4 favor, 1 absent (Walters)

Respectfully submitted,

Dick Bachman, Vice Chairman

Jessica Tullar
Special Projects Manager