

**GAINESVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
NOVEMBER 5, 2012**

Members present: Chairman Dick Bachman, Vice Chairman Kevin Meyer and Commissioners Jim Walters, Cheryl Morrow and Jack Bailey

Members absent: None

Staff present: Community Development Director Rusty Ligon, Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar and Recording Secretary Judy Foster

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was held in the Green Street Station Training Room and was called to order by Chairman Bachman at 5:30 PM.

MINUTES OF OCTOBER 11, 2012 MEETING

Motion to approve the Minutes as presented.

Motion made by Commissioner Walters
Motion seconded by Vice Chairman Meyer
Vote – 5 favor

OLD BUSINESS – Tabled from October 11, 2012 meeting

A. Certificate of Appropriateness

- 1) Request from **RPC Partners LP** for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a Major Work Project involving a site change on a 0.34[±] acre tract located on the south side of Ridgewood Avenue, 260[±] feet west of its intersection with Northside Drive (a/k/a **569 Ridgewood Avenue and 595-A & 595-B Northside Drive**).

Ward Number: Five
Local Historic District: Ridgewood Neighborhood
Tax Parcel Number(s): 01-025-008-002
Proposed Work Project: Remove a total of six (6) trees: five (5) along Ridgewood Avenue and one (1) along Northside Drive

Staff Presentation: Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar reported that after this item was tabled at the October 11th GHPC meeting, she contacted several consulting certified arborists to obtain pricing for a report to show the risk analysis of the trees in question. She reported that in order for a consulting certified arborist to do a visual inspection, probe the trees and make recommendations, the prices ranged from \$1,300 to \$1,500 for the report. She also obtained pricing from certified arborists to make pruning only recommendations. Mrs. Tullar shared a letter from Mr. Harvey Rooks, Managing Partner of RPC Partners, LP, stating that they would like to amend their request to remove only the two trees in front of the house located at 569 Ridgewood Avenue. Mrs. Tullar stated that one of the consulting certified arborists she contacted made a site visit and his observation was that one of the smaller water oak trees should be removed because of structural issues and its close proximity to the house, but none of the other trees showed impending failure in his opinion. The tree recommended for

removal was not one of the trees Mr. Rooks requested to be removed. Mrs. Tullar stated that since Mr. Rooks did not formally withdraw the application, the item needed to be removed from the table and action taken on the request.

Motion to remove this item from the table.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Meyer
Motion seconded by Commissioner Morrow
Vote – 5 favor

Historic Preservation Commission Comments: Discussion was held and confirmation made that the applicant is willing to modify his request from removing six trees to removing two trees and pruning the other four.

Motion to approve the request with the following conditions:

Conditions

- 1) **The 20-inch oak tree shall be removed since it was deemed structurally unsound by a certified arborist.**
- 2) **The remaining five trees shall be pruned as recommended by the certified arborist on staff.**

Motion made by Vice Chairman Meyer
Motion seconded by Commissioner Morrow
Vote – 5 favor

NEW BUSINESS

A. Certificate of Appropriateness

- 1) Request from **Quinlan Visual Arts Center** for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a Major Work Project involving a site change on a 0.244± acre tract located on the north side of Candler Street, 290± feet east of its intersection with Green Street (a/k/a **431 Candler Street, NE**).

Ward Number: Two
Local Historic District: Green Street
Tax Parcel Number(s): 01-039-001-012
Proposed Work Project: Site change involving the demolition of an historic building (Moon-Apperson House), and replacement with an outdoor sculpture garden that also includes an outdoor classroom and program area

Staff Presentation: Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar made the following staff presentation:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the removal of a historic building located at 431 Candler Street. In August 2010, a similar request from the applicant was reviewed by the Commission. It was this Board's determination that the request for removal via relocation was approved with conditions. Since then, the applicant has attempted to find a new suitable site for the relocation of the historic

building. Copies of letters and other documents showing the applicant's attempts to relocate the structure are included in your packet. The applicant also submitted a copy of a structural engineer's report developed by Georgia Engineering Associates, Inc. in 2002. The purpose of the 2002 inspection was to (1) determine the general condition of the building, (2) identify specific areas where maintenance is presently required or likely to be required in the near future, and (3) offer suggestions regarding changing the appearance of the building. Findings and recommendations are outlined in the structural engineer's report, which was included in the Commission packet for review.

City staff visited the subject property and toured the inside earlier this year in response to a previous request for demolition that was withdrawn. Observations made and photos taken during that site visit were included in your packet.

The Preservation Ordinance charges the Commission:

- To review pre- and post-demolition plans.
 - Determine whether the proposed plans conform in design, building materials, placement and orientation, and landscaping as specified in the design guidelines.
- To determine whether the COA process and procedures are in compliance.
- To consider the:
 - Historical, environmental and architectural value and significance;
 - Architectural style; general design and arrangement, texture and material of the architectural features involved; and
 - Relationship thereof to the exterior architectural style and pertinent features of other structures located in the immediate vicinity.

In addition the Design Guidelines provide guidance to the Commission regarding requests for removal, stating that...

- Demolition or relocation can diminish the district's historical significance and should be avoided, where possible.
- When removal is unavoidable, relocation is preferred over demolition.
- A building scheduled for relocation or demolition must be carefully photographed and documented prior to obtaining a COA.
- Factors for consideration:
 - Structure poses a threat to public safety;
 - An economic hardship has been demonstrated; and
 - Structural instability or deterioration has been demonstrated through a structural engineer or architect's report, which details the physical condition, reasons for why rehabilitation is not feasible, cost estimates for rehabilitation versus demolition, and future plans for the subject property.

Applicant's Presentation: **Mr. Frank Norton, Jr.** stated that he has been involved with the Quinlan since 1964 and shared some examples of its contributions to the area, noting it is a vital part of Gainesville and Green Street. Mr. Norton shared some history about the vision of the Quinlan and expressed that the Apperson property was purchased for the land, not the structure. Mr. Norton stated that when the Quinlan first

envisioned their plans for the future, those plans and original intent were made known to the City and they encouraged the City at that time that the two Quinlan properties should be withdrawn from the historic district because it would be in conflict with their plans. He stated that two years ago the Quinlan decided to proceed with the sculpture garden and tried unsuccessfully to relocate the house. Now they are asking to demolish the house, recycle materials where feasible, and complete the sculpture garden and outdoor classroom. Mr. Norton stated that maintaining the house is a financial hardship to the Quinlan.

Amanda McClure, Director of the Quinlan Art Center, stated that they have attempted to relocate the house within the city limits and within the time frame specified by this Commission. She stated that they had three offers; from an individual, a non-profit agency and a school. However, all three prospects fell through. Mrs. McClure stated that the Quinlan is a non-profit in a challenging economy and as such, renovation of the house would be a financial hardship.

Frank Norton, Jr. presented a concept plan to the Commission, noting Syfan Landscaping would develop the site for a terraced outdoor classroom, arbor pavilion area and a sculpture garden including an attractive iron fence to separate traffic on Candler Street from the classroom and garden. They are creating a public park and garden and wish for the public to come and explore the environment. Mr. Norton stated that they understand this is a sensitive and complicated issue, but the Quinlan has worked within the guidelines and request the Commission to consider their original intent.

Chairman Bachman stated that the Commission would like to see the type of materials used and the fence structure.

Opposed: Kathy Amos, 721 Crestview Terrace, stated that she sat on the Commission when this issue was first presented. She shared a story about Peggy Cathey and gave some history of her old home place on Green Street and how a part of Gainesville's history was preserved. She agreed with Frank Norton, Jr. that the Quinlan Arts Center is a wonderful asset to the City. She stated that the Quinlan promised to maintain the structure unless they found someone to take it. She stated that it has not been maintained and is a case of demolition by neglect. Ms. Amos stated that the job of the HPC is to preserve history and asked the Commission to consider that as they vote. She stated that the biggest pockets in Gainesville are involved in the Quinlan and they can afford to renovate the house if they so choose, but they chose not to renovate it. Ms. Amos stated that a Commissioner had stated previously that everything around the subject property was brick except for that one house, noting she believed that is why the house should be preserved, because it is different.

Favor: Mark Taylor, stated that he was a Quinlan Board Member, and a former Arts and Design Professor at Brenau. He stated that the benefit of this expansion would be of great value not only for the Quinlan, but for the community and the students at Brenau as well.

Rebuttal: Frank Norton, Jr. stated that he was bothered by the comment "demolition by neglect." He stated that the Quinlan has maintained the house as is, but they have not put additional money into the house, noting that they have tried to "freeze frame" the house while going through this process.

Historic Preservation Commission Comments: Chairman Bachman stated that some developers in the past have allowed properties to go vacant and then come before the HPC and say that it has fallen apart. Mr. Norton stated that it was implied that the Quinlan had neglected the structure and they have not done so.

Upon inquiry by Vice Chairman Meyer, Mr. Norton stated that they do not have an estimate as to the cost of developing the sculpture garden.

Chairman Bachman asked for an assessment by Building Official Joe Davidson. Mr. Davidson stated that he was very familiar with the house, having been there several times over the years. He reported that in 2005, a permit was issued to Lake Lanier Construction for renovations, noting he did all the inspections for that permit until it expired. He stated that the structural engineer's assessment from 2002 is invalid because of the work done to the house since then. Mr. Davidson stated that from the time work stopped on the permit until their site visit six months ago, there has been quite a bit of dilapidation to the rear, noting no water was coming into the house previously. However, now the ceiling is collapsing, allowing water in, and there are quite a few structural problems. He noted that relocating the house would be difficult. Mr. Davidson concluded that there are extensive structural issues and code violations with the house.

Upon inquiry by Commissioner Walters, Mr. Norton clarified that the Quinlan asked for their two properties to be excluded from the historic district, as did others in the area, but all were denied.

Commissioner Walters stated that he was curious about the significance or historical value of the subject property. Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar stated that it was built in 1920 and is a craftsman style house that is prevalent throughout the City, however, it is one of the few examples of craftsman style housing in this historic district. She also noted that there was some history shared regarding Mrs. Moon who lived there and her ties to the City.

Mrs. Tullar also clarified the Green Street Local Historic District boundaries.

Commissioner Walters stated that the sculpture garden would be available to the public and in his opinion is of greater value to the City than trying to restore the house.

Motion to approve the request with the following conditions:

Conditions

- 1) **The house must be fully photographed and documented in a report for its history and architectural significance.**
- 2) **The full plans for construction of the sculptural garden and outdoor classroom and program area must be submitted to the GHPC for their review prior to obtaining a permit for construction.**
- 3) **There shall be a Moon-Apperson interpretive plaque located on the site.**

Motion made by Commissioner Walters
Motion seconded by Commissioner Bailey

Commissioner Bailey stated that cities are like evolving entities and if they didn't change, they wouldn't grow. He stated that Gainesville is not the same Gainesville it used to be, noting things were torn down that shouldn't have been, but other times demolition has benefited the City. He felt it would be a shame to lose the benefit the sculpture garden and outdoor classrooms would bring and that is the reason he is voting for demolition.

Commissioner Morrow stated that her job on the HPC is to preserve the house, not to see the City grow, although she does want to see the City grow and she agreed that the sculpture garden would be good for the City. Mrs. Morrow stated that the house is part of Gainesville's history and she could not vote to destroy the history.

Chairman Bachman read a few things from the Model Design and Construction Guidelines for Residential-Style Local Historic Districts:

A) Demolition or relocation can diminish the district's historical significance and should be avoided where possible.

B) When removal is unavoidable, relocation is preferred over demolition. He stated that the Quinlan has gone through the relocation process to no avail.

C) Factors for consideration: 1) the structure poses a threat to public safety, 2) an economic hardship has been demonstrated, and 3) structural instability or deterioration has been demonstrated through a structural engineer or architect's report, which details the physical condition, reasons for why rehabilitation is not feasible, cost estimates for rehabilitation versus demolition, and future plans for the subject property. Chairman Bachman stated that he has been through the house and there are some structural items to be corrected. The floor plan is not good to begin with, but it would be a financial hardship on the Quinlan to do the necessary rehabilitation of the house.

Commissioner Bailey stated that the Quinlan has gone through the process as outlined in the guidelines and he felt that gave the Commission the authority to approve the request.

Vote – 3 favor, 2 opposed (Meyer, Morrow)

MISCELLANEOUS

Model Design and Construction Guidelines

Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar reported that she is in the process of completing a purchase requisition for the work to begin on the new guidelines before Thanksgiving. She stated that the Commission will be given drafts to review and make comments.

Possible Applications

Mrs. Tullar commented on a couple of possible applications to come before the HPC in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 6:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dick Bachman, Chairman

Judy Foster, Recording Secretary