

**GAINESVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF SPECIAL CALLED MEETING  
JUNE 16, 2014**

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

**Members absent:** None

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

**Others present:** Council Member Myrtle Figueras, Applicant Madison Ledford, Laura Ledford, Contractor Robert Bonds and Kyle Frederick

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**MINUTES OF DECEMBER 2, 2013 MEETING**

**Motion to approve the Minutes as presented.**

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

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Certificate of Appropriateness**

- 1) Request from **Madison Ledford** for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a Major Work Project involving a building change on a 0.31± acre tract located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Ridgewood Avenue and Denton Drive (a/k/a **635 Denton Drive, NW**).

Ward Number: Five  
Local Historic District: Ridgewood Neighborhood  
Tax Parcel Number(s): 01-025-001-011  
Proposed Work Project: Building change involving the installation of vinyl siding and vinyl soffits

**Staff Report:** Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar stated that it is her understanding that the proposal is to install the vinyl siding and soffits over the existing wood material. The house was constructed in 1932, with an historic small addition to the rear, and is classified as a Craftsman-style bungalow house. The Staff Report shows the Applicable Guidelines and Significant Factors to be considered when rendering a decision. According to the newly adopted Design Guidelines, historic materials should be retained, preserved and maintained whenever possible, and if they have deteriorated to the point that they cannot be repaired, then the Design Guidelines encourage they be replaced with in-kind materials, i.e. same fabric, design, shape, style, etc. Any new wall cladding materials should be installed in a manner that does not cover trim or any other architectural features of the house. Mrs. Tullar stated that this is the first request of its

kind to come before the HPC, noting that a request for a Minor Work Project was approved for vinyl siding to be removed from a house and repair with historic wood materials. She stated that spot replacement with Hardiplank or cementitious siding has been approved by the HPC in the past, but not vinyl siding. She provided the Preservation Brief #8 which is a technical brief published by the National Park Service which discusses historical siding materials.

**Discussion:** Contractor Robert Bonds stated that the applicant purchased the home through a realtor with the Norton Agency and was not informed that she could not make any exterior changes because it was located within a historic district. He stated that the cost of painting versus vinyl siding was too expensive.

Chairman Bachman asked about the reason for the request, noting that he made a site visit and the house looked good to him. He asked if it was strictly a maintenance issue. Applicant Madison Ledford stated that the house has been painted over old paint and is now coming off in layers. She stated that the old paint would have to be scraped off and the house sanded to get a smooth surface again because of all the layers of paint. She stated that someone painted over the doorknobs and light sockets. Ms. Ledford stated that the cost and maintenance issues are the reason for the request.

Commissioner Bailey asked about the condition of the wood itself on the house. Mr. Bonds stated that by the time the wood is sanded down it would be damaged. Commissioner Bailey asked if there was rotting wood on the house. Mr. Bonds stated that there was rotting wood on the eaves side and corners. Chairman Bachman disagreed with Mr. Bonds, noting he examined the house and didn't see any problems with rotting wood and commented that other adjacent homes have the same type of siding and haven't had any problems or tried to replace anything. Chairman Bachman stated that the siding that is proposed does not come close to matching the size of the existing siding or the character that it exemplifies.

Vice Chairman Meyer stated that he believed the existing siding is called channel rustic siding, which was a technique that was very unique to craftsman style houses. He stated that he tried to find a vinyl product to match the rustic style but was not successful, but noted that there are a lot of wood suppliers that have readily available wood to use to replace any problem areas.

Laura Ledford stated that there are other homes on that street that have vinyl siding. Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar stated that if the house had vinyl siding on it prior to being designated within a historic district, they are allowed to keep and maintain it. However, no requests for vinyl siding have come before the HPC since the historic district was designated.

Chairman Bachman stated that putting vinyl soffits on the house would destroy the craftsman character of the home.

Commissioner Bailey stated that he is concerned about setting a precedent, noting that if this request is approved, it would be difficult to turn down another request in the future. He believed there has actually been a tendency to remove vinyl siding from homes.

Commissioner Walters asked if the painting cost had been priced out. Mr. Bonds stated that there is a \$4,500 difference between painting and vinyl siding. Ms. Ledford stated that there is also the durability issue to consider.

There was discussion about the fact that there was no disclosure of the home being located within the historic district and when the applicant discussed it with the realtor, they were told that a buyers disclosure was not required on rental property.

Laura Ledford asked for clarification of the boundaries of the historic district and how it was that some houses are located within the district and some are not, noting this house faces Denton Drive, not Ridgewood Avenue.

Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar presented a map of the Ridgewood Neighborhood Local Historic District which was designated because of a residents-driven application and shared some history of the process.

Madison Ledford stated that there are 17 to 18 homes on Ridgewood Avenue which have vinyl siding. Mrs. Tullar explained that if the homes are located on the south side of Ridgewood Avenue, between Simmons Street and Bradford Street, they are not in the district.

Chairman Bachman stated that the homes on Ridgewood Avenue that do have vinyl siding, had original clapboard siding which is not the same type of siding as we are dealing with on this request.

Vice Chairman Meyer stated that he lives on Ridgewood Avenue, noting it is a great place to live and would hate to see her leave the historic district. He stated that homes located within historic districts tend to hold their value better and even gain value. He stated that some homeowners choose to remove the vinyl siding and restore the original wood siding only to find that the vinyl caused a lot of damage to the original wood because of water coming down behind the vinyl which is not visible, so he implored her to look at other options.

Ms. Ledford stated that her great grandfather built the house and her family lived in it up until 10 years ago. She stated that she doesn't want to make it modern and would like to keep the historical aspects since it belonged to her family. Ms. Ledford stated that unfortunately, she was not informed that the property was in the historic district and as a young buyer, doesn't have the available resources to hire a lawyer. Laura Ledford stated that Madison was told by both her real estate agent and the seller's agent that a buyer's disclosure was not required, and it was even discussed at closing.

Commissioner Bailey expressed his concern again about setting a precedent on the issue.

Commissioner Walters stated that beyond setting a precedent, the Design Guidelines won't allow it. Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar stated that the Guidelines encourages preservation and retention of historic materials, but the HPC can consider new materials, however, the new materials should mimic the original materials to help preserve the historical integrity of the property.

**Public Comments:** None

**Motion to deny the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a Major Work Project involving a building change at 635 Denton Drive as presented.**

Motion made by Commissioner Morrow  
Motion seconded by Commissioner Bailey  
**Vote – 4 favor, 1 opposed (Walters)**

- 2) Request from **Kevin Meyer** for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a Major Work Project involving a site change on a 0.228± acre tract located on the north side of Ridgewood Avenue, 250± feet west of its intersection with Simmons Street (a/k/a **230 Ridgewood Avenue, NW**).

Ward Number: Two  
Local Historic District: Ridgewood Neighborhood  
Tax Parcel Number(s): 01-041-001-021  
Proposed Work Project: Site change involving the construction of a wooden picket fence in the front yard

**Staff Report:** Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar stated that the plat shows the approximate location of the fence, and noted that the height falls within both the Design Guidelines and zoning regulations for fences. She stated that the applicant wants to enclose the flat grassy area of the front yard because it falls off towards the street and can be a safety issue. She shared some information regarding two other front yard fences in the district, noting that this proposal meets the style precedent already established in the district, and confirmed that wood is considered an appropriate material for the fence. She stated that this is the first COA request for a fence in the front yard within the district.

**Applicant Presentation:** Kevin Meyer stated that the Ridgewood neighborhood is becoming more of a sidewalk community and he would like to use the front yard more for their dogs, gardening, and for visitors. He wants to stay connected with the community and keep the fence within the Guidelines. Mr. Meyer stated that the fence will have a gate along the driveway and the pathway leading to the front of the house. He stated that he wants to be neighborly and doesn't want the fence to close off his property, so the fence will be open enough between the slats for visibility. He stated that the fence would be of wood material, but has heard that he should not use pressure treated wood as he had proposed because it tends to warp. He stated that he would like to go with more of a spear shape picket since it is more in keeping with his simple English Vernacular Revival style house and presented a picket sample to the HPC.

Commissioner Walters asked if Mr. Meyer plans to paint the fence. Mr. Meyer stated that he did not plan to paint the fence because he wanted more of a natural look to blend in more instead of standing out.

Commissioner Walters recommended Mr. Meyer use cypress wood for the fence.

Chairman Bachman stated that he researched historic fences online and 99% of them are painted white; and he encouraged Mr. Meyer to paint it white. Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar suggested it be painted the same color as his trim, a cream color, if painted at all.

Commissioner Bailey asked if any gates would be in keeping with the style of the fence. Mr. Meyer stated yes, it would be made of the same style pickets and would blend in nicely with the fence.

Upon inquiry by Commissioner Bailey, Mrs. Tullar stated that the fence would be located more than 3-feet off the right-of-way which would meet the setback requirement and as long as the fence was under 6-feet in height, a building permit was not required.

**Public Comments:** None

**Motion to approve the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a Major Work Project involving a site change at 230 Ridgewood Avenue as presented with the following condition/modification:**

**Modification/Condition:**

The proposed picket fence shall be painted.

Motion made by Commissioner Walters  
Motion seconded by Commissioner Bailey  
**Vote – 4 favor, 1 abstained (Meyer)**

**MISCELLANEOUS**

Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar stated that each member received a handout of training information that was received at the last training she attended regarding the different types and styles of houses in Georgia that she thought would be helpful to the HPC.

Also, there is a one-day training opportunity to be held on Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Decatur for anyone that can attend.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:06 p.m.**

Motion made by Commissioner Walters  
Motion seconded by Commissioner Bailey  
**Vote – 5 favor**

Respectfully submitted,

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Dick Bachman, Chairman

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Judy Foster, Recording Secretary