

**GAINESVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
MAY 3, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER Chairman Dick Bachman at 5:30 p.m.

Members present: Chairman Dick Bachman, Vice Chairman Cathy Day, Commissioners Jack Bailey and Emily Wiley

Members absent: Commissioner Ruth Bruner

Staff present: Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar and Office and Records Coordinator Gwen Fleming

Others present: Councilman George Wangemann

MINUTES OF July 6, 2020

Motion to approve the Minutes as presented.

Motion made by Commissioner

Motion seconded by Commissioner

Vote – 4 favor, 1 absent (Bruner)

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

A. Certificate of Appropriateness

- 1) Request from **Andrew Elliott (The Inked Pig)** for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a Major Work Project involving building changes on a 0.52[±] acre tract located on the east side of Main Street, approximately 200[±] feet north of its intersection with Industrial Boulevard (a/k/a **893, 895, 897 and 899 Main Street, SW**).

Ward Number: Three

Local Historic District: Big Bear Café Local Landmark

Tax Parcel Number(s): 01-019-001-012

Proposed Work Project: Building changes, involving an addition to expand restaurant dining area

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

The subject property is the site of the locally designated “Big Bear Café” historic landmark. According to the Historic Resources Structural Survey, the principal building is a store-type building type with no academic style that was constructed around 1940. The building is well known as the “Big Bear Café” and its history of serving railroad passengers.

The applicant’s request involves building changes, which are designed to expand service capacity of the existing restaurant. More specifically, the applicant would like to construct an addition across the open walkway or pass-through between the “Big Bear Café” building and the adjoining brick building. This connecting addition would be comprised of brick with windows to match those of the adjoining building to the right of the “The Inked Pig” (old Big Bear Café) restaurant. As illustrated on the expansion floor

plan and architectural renderings, the proposed addition would be set back from the front façade of the historic buildings and have a lower height.

Additionally the applicant wishes to install marine-grade canvas sunshades/canopies over the outdoor eating area to the left side of the restaurant building. These would attach to the brick building and stretch across, over the picnic tables, to poles on the opposite side of the building. These are intended to shade the eating area. They are made of material designed to withstand weather elements, but they can be easily changed out without requiring the removal or covering up of architectural features of the historic building.

Applicant Andrew Elliott stated he is co-owner with Jimmy Ellis of The Inked Pig. He said the roof was slopped to the rear because plan is to have patio seating and furniture outside so the water runoff would not be in that area of the alleyway.

Chairman Bachman, architect for the applicant stated the reason he slopped the roof toward the front was because of the patio seating planned for outside and the shingles could be changed to red if preferred.

Heyward Hosch, Sr., owner of the building stated his concern is if the buildings are joined, they might lose their historic designation/historic landmark. He said there are two buildings that had four businesses. He stated the building on the left (The Inked Pig) was built in 1936, and was the home of the Big Bear Café and Reynolds Meat Market. He said the building on the right was built in 1898, and had Dorsey's Barber Shop and Railroad Café. He said the building was distinguished by the Spanish/American War that started in 1898, and was built with Gainesville brick, which was porous and leaked so the building was painted. Mr. Hosch, Sr. said it was painted red/white/blue for the First Calvary of the Gainesville Company that was preparing to go to Cuba, but the war ended. He explained the Longstreet Hotel was one block down, and the railroad building that was built in 1910 is the most important historical building in Gainesville and should be retained according to the Carl Vinson report (2015 Downtown Master Plan). Mr. Hosch, Sr. said he has no problem with the use inside but feels it would lose its landmark designation because it changes the whole nature of the buildings to combine them. He said the railroad station is the big thing to be developed and would like to see the City to request a historical designation for it and develop it per the Carl Vinson Plan (2015 Downtown Master Plan), which he feels is excellent with seating, parking and trees which would be a better use of that area than to combine the buildings. Mr. Hosch said he does not want to see anything happen or change until the City decides what to do with the park (i.e. the adjoin gravel parking area owned by Norfolk-Southern Railroad) and creating one historic district from the railroad station to the Longstreet Hotel and Central Baptist Church as an arts and entertainment district. He stated again that he is against a change in the building until the overall plan is decided, and at that time, he might be for it as long as it retained its historical designation. Chairman Bachman asked him if he owned the building, and he said he has given it to his sons.

Heyward Hosch, III, stated he jointly owns the building with his brother. Chairman Bachman then asked if they were in opposition or in favor of this request. Mr. Hosch, III replied that receiving the notice letter a week ago was the first he had heard of this request. He was not aware that the change was being considered. He feels it is premature and agrees with his father, and feels the community is best served by preserving the historic authenticity of it. Chairman Bachman stated if he owned the building why did he not tell the applicant/business tenant that they were against the building change. Mr. Hosch, III stated it was the first he had heard of it when he

received the notice of the meeting. He said his brother read it in the newspaper, called his father, and received a letter from Jessica Tullar.

Andrew Elliott stated he had several discussions over the past two months with Mr. Hosch, Sr. Mr. Elliott shared that Mr. Hosch, Sr. had sat down with them at the restaurant and walked the site discussing the idea for expansion. He then stated that Martha was present during the conversation when Mr. Elliott was given the go-ahead to start the paperwork with the historical society and to start the drawings.

Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar stated that the local designation as a historic landmark would not be removed should the building modifications be approved by the HPC. She reminded them that the purpose of the design review process is to make sure any exterior material changes are in keeping with the historic character of the building while still making it a viable, functional building. She said the proposed connection has been set back so; it still appears as though there are two buildings. She stated if it is constructed with the display windows or a storefront window it would soften further the connection. She then reiterated that any modifications that are approved as presented or modified, whether for this property or any other locally designated property, would not result in the removal of the local designation as a historic landmark.

Mr. Hosch, Sr. stated the Carl Vinson Plan (2015 Downtown Master Plan) describes the railroad station as being the most important and is (or could be) the front door to the City. He said that what is most important to him is what would happen to that small area the city owns. Mrs. Tullar explained that the City does not own the vacant, gravel lot adjoining the subject tract. She stated that the railroad still owns that property and shared that the City has engaged in conversations with Norfolk-Southern but currently are not in a position to move forward with the City taking control of it. Mr. Hosch, Sr. stated he was unaware of it and thought the City bought it. Mrs. Tullar explained that the City originally had under contract the abandoned CSX right-of-way on the left side of the Big Bear Café building. Mr. Hosch, Sr. stated he was against anything until he knew what would happen to the Carl Vinson Plan (2015 Downtown Master Plan). Mrs. Tullar assured him the City does their part in moving those ideas forward, but it takes time to work with the railroad, as the leadership frequently changes, and requires funding to purchase property from the railroad because they do not want to assume any responsibility. Mrs. Tullar further explained that the "Carl Vinson Plan" sets a vision for that area of Midtown and is one idea for how to continue attracting businesses and to evolve with the other development occurring in the Midtown area. She stated the chances of that park happening in the next five to ten years is low, to which Councilman Wangemann reiterated the chances are "very low".

Chairman Bachman stated he is just trying to understand if there is a need for the meeting since Mr. Hosch, as the owner, does want them making the changes. Mr. Hosch, III said he thinks it is premature to decide either way and would like to talk with the applicant about other options and how they got to this point. Chairman Bachman stated the applicant was under the impression that they could do this. Mr. Hosch, III said he understands but would like more time to discuss the concept since he just learned of the plans a week ago when he received the notice letter.

Mr. Hosch, Sr. stated he is concerned about the railroad not being an historic district, and in the Carl Vinson Plan, it appeared to him that is what the City needed so badly. He further stated if he had the power to condemn the gravel, RR-owned lot that he would do so and would make it just like the Carl Vinson Plan. Mrs. Tullar expressed appreciation for Mr. Hosch's support of the 2015 Downtown Master Plan and the vision it

casts for this part of Midtown. She shared the City would not disagree. However, the City cannot condemn railroad property because the Railroad is not govern by local authority. Mr. Hosch, Sr. stated again that he does not want to move on their property until he knows what is going to happen.

Commissioner Bailey asked Mr. Hosch to clarify whether it is a matter that he does not want any changes made to their property and have it stay exactly as it is, or whether he is open to some improvements that would provide a better location where people would want to go out to eat. Mr. Hosch, Sr. stated very open to modifications, repairs, etc. in that the Blue Angel behind it will need to be replaced, the roof is gone and not even collecting rent from them the conditions are so bad. He said a tremendous restaurant could be built there but he does not not want anything to affect the Carl Vinson Plan (2015 Downtown Master Plan) without knowing what was going to happen. He stated he would like to put together enough power to do what the City wants and to make it the front door of the City.

Mrs. Tullar clarified that the Carl Vinson Plan to which Mr. Hosch, Sr. is referring is the 2015 Downtown Master Plan that has schematics of what could be if everything fell into place. She stated the plan embraces the restaurant space, and shows keeping the buildings as part of the front door and would be adding to it, enhancing it on the vacant tract – not taking the Big Bear properties, or reusing or tearing down the buildings. She said it would embrace the historic character of the old Big Bear Café, its legacy, and history. Mrs. Tullar said she recognizes the importance of this historic resource and its legacy to the area, but explained that the Downtown Master Plan simply is a vision for what can be in the future while embracing the past. She reminded them this request is about whether or not the proposed building modification is in keeping with the historic character of the property and whether or not the material change complies with the Design Guidelines. She stated the intent behind the changes is to serve a growing restaurant that may otherwise not be able to stay if more space is needed, given the City's regulations requiring one, connected building for the purposes of serving food and alcohol. The applicant, Mr. Elliott, shared that the proposed connection would nearly double the current seating capacity as well as allow the restaurant to add a full bar with seating and lounge area. Mr. Elliot explained that the City's ordinance on alcohol permits requires one building that is connected, and further explained that was the reason for bringing the two buildings together and bringing it as one whole building similar to the former Chili Bowl that once occupied the open space between the two buildings. Mr. Elliott said this appears to be a conversation to be held for another day.

Commissioner Bailey asked the applicant if the paint would be taken off the existing building and the old brick exposed. Mr. Elliott replied there was never any intention of taking it to the previous brick, just repainting and beautifying it like the outside of the current Inked Pig. He said the alleyway would be repainted and rotting wood would be replaced, but that the addition in the middle would be unpainted red brick. Mrs. Tullar explained the guidelines actually recommend not painting unpainted historic brick. She said if you paint it, it traps the moisture in and does not allow the brick to breathe properly so the guidelines would actually deter from approving the existing unpainted portions to be painted. Commissioner Bailey asked if the shingle roof would only be on the new addition and was confirmed to be correct. Mrs. Tullar suggested they could work with the architect and Building Official to finalize the roofline design to be more in keeping with the historic buildings.

Mrs. Tullar reminded the HPC that Chairman Bachman recused himself, and as such, he could not make or vote on any motion. Similarly, the acting chair Vice Chair Cathy Day

could not make a motion. Commissioner Bailey asked the applicant if they preferred the item to be tabled. Both the applicant and property owner agreed to table the request until the next regularly scheduled HPC Meeting, which is June 7, 2021.

There was a motion to table the request dated 04/02/2021 for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a Major Work Project involving building changes at 893, 895, 897 and 899 Main Street, SW until the next Historic Preservation Commission public hearing date on June 7, 2021.

Motion made by Commissioner Bailey
Motion seconded by Commissioner Wiley

Vote – 3 favor, 1 recusal (Bachman), 1 absent (Bruner)

MISCELLANEOUS

A. Training– Training opportunities were discussed. Information will be sent once available.

B. Training– An email will be sent regarding last training dates completed for each member.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 p.m.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Day
Second made by Commissioner Wiley

Vote – 4 favor, 1 absent (Bruner)

Respectfully submitted,

Dick Bachman, Chairman

Gwen Fleming, Recording Secretary