GAINESVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
MARCH 5, 2012

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

Members absent: Commissioner Jim Walters

Staff present: Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar and Recording Secretary Judy Foster

Others present: None

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 PM.

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 6, 2012 MEETING

Motion to approve the Minutes as presented.

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

OPEN DISCUSSION

Chairman Bachman asked if someone had approached the City regarding the Banks House at 756 Green Street. Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar stated that was one of the applications submitted for the March 29th meeting. Discussion was held regarding Chairman Bachman and Commissioner Bailey serving as architects on record and needing to recuse them from voting on certain issues. Mrs. Tullar stated they could still answer direct questions for clarification, but could not vote due to a conflict of interest.

STAFF ISSUES

Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar stated the training offered in Valdosta this month could be cancelled since only 22 people have registered; however, a one-day training session will be offered around the end of September and the same statewide training which is offered in Valdosta this month, will be offered somewhere north of Macon next spring.

MISCELLANEOUS – TRAINING

A) Review Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Procedures

Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar stated that everyone was in favor of changing the April meeting date to March 29th and there are two Certificate of Appropriateness applications on the agenda; 1) a major work project involving eight building changes; and 2) a major work project for a site change involving the demolition of an historic building and replacement with an outdoor sculpture garden. Therefore, she felt a review of the COA process was needed. She provided the Commission with two handouts: 1) a print out from a power point of the COA Process; and 2) a print out of an article regarding Applying

Guidelines and titled "Making Judgments in the Review Process: Using Guidelines to make Sound Decisions."

Mrs. Tullar highlighted the following topics during her presentation:

- Point of Contact
- Map & Flow Chart
- Application & Checklist
- Sample Application & Materials
- Good Guidelines
    - What do the guidelines say?
    - How do I apply the guidelines?
        - Subjective vs. Objective
        - Questions to Ask
- Process Between Application & Meeting
- GHPC Board Action

Since Commissioners were encouraged to ask questions, the following is an overview of those questions/discussions:

- Architectural drawings are only required for a 5,000+ square foot structure. Sketches are allowed for projects less than 5,000 square feet.
- Consistency is important since the HPC is setting precedent with every action taken.
- Staff reports include the COA history for that particular property, as well as what other similar requests were made within the district or another district.
- It is the applicant's burden to prove they have an economic hardship. The Commission also has a right to ask the City Council for funds for an independent estimate to compare to the applicant's estimate when deemed necessary.
- When torn between preservation and adaptive uses, think of things which are temporary or reversible when deciding upon changes to structures.
- When an applicant states that the property was not in a historic district when they bought it, the guidelines should still be followed, i.e. to determine the impact of the loss of the structure, whether there is an economic hardship and if it is structurally sound.
- Perceived conflicts of interest are addressed in the by-laws and any conflict should be stated for the record.

Some other important comments that were made are noted below:

- During the HPC public hearing, the Commissioners have the right to ask the applicant to table the matter until a certain date in order to obtain more information; however, the applicant must agree to the matter being tabled and it should be recorded in the official minutes because legally, any matter which is not resolved within 45 days is automatically considered an approval unless the applicant agrees to table the matter to a later date.
- Anyone who feels adversely affected by the determination of the HPC has a right to appeal the determination to the City Council within 15 days of the date of the action letter. From there, it can also be appealed to Superior Court.
- To table a matter rather than deny it, shows you are still trying to work with the applicant.

- State law explicitly prohibits HPC's from dictating color schemes as paint color is considered easily reversible.
- Signage is also considered temporary and reversible as long as it does not alter the historic building itself.
- The staff report does not give a recommendation but does guide the Commissioners to the facts and the applicable guidelines to each issue.
- Requests for demolition have been approved and denied throughout the state.
- Statement of findings should be grounded in the guidelines and stated on the public record when making a motion to approve or deny a request. This is important because if it goes to court, the judge will only look at the minutes and does not generally call for testimony.

Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar stated that Building Official Joe Davidson would be at the March 29th HPC meeting to answer any questions and he is also available if anyone would like to do a site visit.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 PM.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Dick Bachman, Chairman

Judy Foster, Recording Secretary