

**GAINESVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
OCTOBER 2, 2017**

Members present: Chairman Dick Bachman and Commissioners Jack Bailey and Jim Walters (via telephone)

Members absent: Vice Chairman Kevin Meyer and Commissioner Bill Bush

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

Others present: Applicants Sara & Gregg Venable and Observers Warner & Cathy Day

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 APRIL 10, 2017 MEETING

Motion to approve the Minutes as presented.

Motion made by Commissioner Bailey
Motion seconded by Chairman Bachman
Vote – 3 favor, 2 absent (Meyer, Bush)

NEW BUSINESS

A. Certificate of Appropriateness

- 1) Request from **Sara & Gregg Venable** for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a Major Work Project involving a building change on a 0.19± acre tract located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Ridgewood Avenue and Simmons Street (a/k/a **200 Ridgewood Avenue, NW**).

Ward Number: Two
Local Historic District: Ridgewood Neighborhood
Tax Parcel Number(s): 01-041-001-024
Proposed Work Project: Building change involving new construction of a porch addition on the front façade

Applicant Presentation: **Gregg Venable** stated they want to add a front porch to the house because the current concrete pad is falling apart and the stairs are uneven. The proposal is to add a wood deck and a third brick pier as shown on the sketch he presented with the application in order to have some symmetry and tie in some of the historic materials. They would like to extend the smallest gable, which is over the stone arch, out to the face of the porch and add a shed, standing seam metal roof to the left of the porch, supported with either 6 x 6 or 8 x 8 timber columns with a wooden railing consisting of 2 x 2, 4 x 4 and 2 x 6 which would be painted white or stained to keep as natural and simple as possible. However, they have also researched using a metal railing such as black wrought iron. In conclusion, the proposal includes a decorative arched truss at the stone gable and moving the stairs from the front to the side.

Staff Presentation: Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar stated the design guidelines suggest additions should be simple and reversible, so the proposal should be considered to ensure they comply with those guidelines. She stated the existing stone arch is a defining feature of the home and the design should be simple so it does not distract from arch. As well, whether or not the proposal is reversible should be clarified.

Mr. Venable stated the concrete pad and stairs would be demolished because they are damaged, unsafe and not up to code and those would be the only things which would not be reversible, everything else could be removed.

Mrs. Tullar shared the following suggestions to simplify the proposal: 1) Remove the decorative timbering on the new porch roof so there is not a view obstruction of the character defining feature of the stone arch; and 2) Leave the area open between the brick piers instead of bricking it so you can see more of the historic house.

Open Discussion: Sara Venable stated she wanted the porch to be classy and of high quality and she believed the decorative truss accomplishes that goal, noting you can still see the stone arch through the truss as it is not solid. Mr. Venable agreed that he liked the truss as well but could tone it down and asked for thoughts from the HPC.

Commissioner Walters felt the applicant had done a remarkable job with the sketch and the proposal would be an improvement to the home and would fit in nicely with the street.

Upon inquiry by Chairman Bachman, Mr. Venable clarified the depth of the current landing was about 7-feet and the proposed porch would not exceed that depth.

Chairman Bachman commented that the proposed ribbed metal roof is not permitted within the historic district according to the design guidelines. Mrs. Venable stated that was just an idea and they could use shingles instead to match the rest of the house.

Chairman Bachman also took issue with the decorative truss, stating it looked more contemporary instead of keeping with the historic character of the neighborhood. However, he did like the arch in the truss which does fit in with the historic character of the neighborhood.

Commissioner Bailey stated the proportion is distorted on the professional drawing as compared to the actual home dimensions and even the sketch, noting the area of brick above the left window is larger and the decorative truss is narrower and taller. He agreed with Chairman Bachman that the added columns and arch seem to be from another era. However, he felt they conflict with the existing stone entrance and asked if the front porch would be usable or if it was simply for aesthetics.

Mrs. Venable stated the main reason was to provide an area for their toddler to play which would be safe for him and currently they cannot go out the front door because the steps are a safety hazard.

Upon inquiry by Commissioner Bailey, Mrs. Venable felt an open porch would not look very good and stated she would prefer to have the front porch covered so they could have shade and shelter when it rains.

Commissioner Bailey asked the applicants why they want to move the stairs to the side of the porch. Mrs. Venable stated to give them more room on the front porch. Mr. Venable stated there is not enough room on the landing to open the door without stepping back down the steps.

Commissioner Bailey questioned why the round door was changed to a rectangle door with brick shown above it on the professional drawing. Mr. Venable stated it should not be brick as they were not planning on changing anything about the stone façade or the front door. He stated he did the drawing and would have to go back and redo measurements to make sure the dimensions on the drawing are accurate.

Commissioner Bailey agreed with Mrs. Tullar's comment regarding the area between the piers should be open. He also agreed with Chairman Bachman's comment about the metal roof. He stated his biggest problem was a conflict between the skinny columns with the heavy stone behind it, the new with the old, and did not know how to resolve it. This opened up more discussion regarding the size of the columns and whether they should be decorative or simple in design.

Mr. Venable stated the sketch was closer to where they were headed than the drawing and tells the story better, particularly with the arch, noting they wanted to compliment what was already there. Commissioner Bailey stated he like the sketch more and felt it had more character than the drawing; however, he felt a more accurate drawing was needed as he did not how it would turn out.

Special Projects Manager Jessica Tullar suggested, if the HPC liked the sketch better, they could include that in the motion and add any modifications to make it more compatible with the historic character of the house. She also stated the design guidelines suggest whenever there is a new element introduced that it should be simple in design and should not be more ornate than the house because it did not exist. Chairman Bachman stated he felt the truss work was not compatible with the look of the house.

Chairman Bachman asked if the item could be tabled until the applicant could produce a more accurate sketch. Mrs. Tullar stated it could, however, a called meeting would need to be held shortly to make a decision and meet the state and local timeline requirements for action.

Commissioner Bailey felt a new drawing should be completed, taking into consideration all the comments that were made by the HPC, noting he had no problem with the porch itself, the brick piers or the railing. However, he would prefer the steps continue to go out front instead of to the side and the metal roof would have to go. He stated if the drawing was revised to be more simplified and the proportions correct, it would be a doable project.

Mrs. Tullar suggested Chairman Bachman and Commissioner Bailey propose some ideas on how the applicant could simplify the project and the applicant complete a new drawing with those ideas implemented, then the HPC could exchange the information via email and make a decision at that point instead of having a called meeting.

Commissioner Walters was agreeable to that as long as the applicant was agreeable with the suggestions by the HPC.

Mr. Venable asked for a timeline and examples of what the HPC would like to see. He also asked if they liked the sketch better, if it could be approved based on that with whatever modification they deem necessary.

There was a motion to table the request to allow Commissioners Bachman and Bailey time to provide ideas for a more compatible design and to give the applicant time to make changes to the proposal which would be simple in design and more in keeping with the historic character of the home. A decision could be rendered via e-mail by the Commissioners once the changes have been made in lieu of having a special called meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Walters
Motion seconded by Commissioner Bailey
Vote – 3 favor, 2 absent (Meyer, Bush)

Mrs. Venable asked for examples of traditional railings and what materials could be used.

Mrs. Tullar shared with the applicants that the application must be acted upon with 45 days of the application or it is an automatic approval. However, that timeline was altered due to the cancellation of the originally scheduled meeting because of inclement weather.

Chairman Bachman asked the applicants to take a close-up picture of the front of the house and give the dimensions on there so they can use it to develop a sketch.

Mrs. Tullar also shared with the applicants how the process works once the HPC votes to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Mr. Venable stated he would complete a scaled precision drawing with revisions if necessary. Mrs. Tullar stated a precision drawing was not necessary unless the addition is 5,000+ square feet. Therefore, the applicants stated they would not do another precision drawing.

According to the historic survey, the house was built in 1931.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

Motion made by Commissioner Bailey
Motion seconded by Chairman Bachman
Vote – 3 favor, 2 absent (Meyer, Bush)

Respectfully submitted,

Dick Bachman, Chairman

Judy Foster, Recording Secretary