

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING
SEPTEMBER 24, 2009**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dawn MacGibbon, Chairman
Dianne Bettmann, John Chalifoux, Nancy Lisby,
Karen Maxey, Christel Schmidt

MEMBERS ABSENT: Nancy Miller-Houck

OTHERS PRESENT: Mitchell Austin, Urban Design Planner
Erica Raffel, Brenda Lynch, Ron Norsell

CALL TO ORDER/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Roll Call
- B. Next Scheduled Meeting - October 22, 2009
- C. Last Scheduled Meeting - August 27, 2009
- Ms. MacGibbon welcomed Ms. Bettmann, recently appointed by City Council to the Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Meeting of July 23, 2009
- Ms. Maxey MOVED, Ms. Schmidt SECONDED approval of the July 23, 2009 minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- B. Meeting of August 27, 2009
- Ms. Schmidt MOVED, Ms. Lisby SECONDED approval of the August 27, 2009 minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Certificates of Appropriateness
- 1. HPAB Review
- a. CA-21-09 - Dockside Scooters - 308 West Marion Avenue - Sign Request
- Mr. Mitchell Austin, Urban Design Planner, displayed an overhead of a rendering of the proposed signage, providing a brief description of same. He explained the building located at 308 West Marion Avenue currently contained two other businesses, the Tropical Store and the Vacuum Cleaner Clinic, each having their own signage. He clarified the proposed signs would face West Marion Avenue and U.S. 41 South, adding they met the size and locations requirements of City Code; however, the applicant had not originally provided any detail regarding letter depth, material or method of attachment, confirming the applicant had been made aware of these deficiencies and had since rectified same.

- Ms. MacGibbon questioned the material to be used for the sign letters.
 - Ms. Erica Raffel, applicant, replied exterior grade wood, which would be painted and sealed. She assured the Board she loved Punta Gorda and was a City resident, adding she would never be party to anything visually offensive. She then displayed an overhead depicting a rough drawing of the building and its dimensions, stating the sign manufacturing company would provide large, stencil type material for placement of the sign letters.
 - Ms. Lisby asked if the sign would be lit.
 - Ms. Raffel replied it would not but rather would be painted a soft white.
 - Ms. Bettmann welcomed Ms. Raffel to the City, commenting favorably on her proposal.
 - Ms. Bettmann MOVED, Mr. Chalifoux SECONDED approval of CA-21-09. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- b. CA-22-09 - Strang, Olsen & Lynch - 334 West Olympia Avenue - Sign Request
- Mr. Austin displayed an overhead of the proposed sign, as denoted within the agenda material, stating this was a case of the applicant maxing out signage but doing same in a very tasteful manner.
 - Mr. Chalifoux questioned the location of the incidental sign.
 - Mr. Austin replied staff would work with the applicant on site to determine same.
 - Ms. Bettmann stated she was happy the sign would not be lit or changeable.
 - Ms. Schmidt asked if the moving sign would remain at the applicant's current location.
 - Mr. Austin replied he was unsure; however, he opined it would be removed.
 - Ms. Brenda Lynch, applicant, interjected she believed City Council had acted to allow the sign to remain in place.
 - Ms. Bettmann MOVED, Ms. Schmidt SECONDED approval of CA-22-09. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

OLD BUSINESS

- Ms. MacGibbon recalled the Board had discussed a potential set of murals for the parking garage depicting Punta Gorda's history as the City of Hibiscus.
- Mr. Ron Norsell, Punta Gorda Mural Society (PGMS), submitted a document into the record depicting the steps by which a mural was realized, specifically, theme, scope, funding and execution, stating the theme must become a historically accurate representation, which to this point he had loosely named "City of Hibiscus." He asked if Ms. Schmidt could collectively accumulate this information and share same with the PGMS. He stated there was absolutely no pride of authorship but rather the goal was to bring out ideas of what was expected and then to reduce that to paper. He asked if the mural should be simple and placed on a panel or would it be a placard, stating

these were just a few examples of potential concepts. He advised the PGMS had the ability to provide input on the theme and historical accuracy, adding other organizations within the community were welcome to collaborate. He noted 11 potential panel locations existed at the parking garage, adding decisions must be made as far as single or multi panels/single or multi phase. He acknowledged funding would have some bearing on the above decisions. He explained funding was typically derived through building owner/sponsorship; however, he stated he understood the City was not able to provide same in this case. He mentioned grant funding was possible or perhaps a combination of same with contributions. He urged the Board to develop their “big picture” immediately, which could then be reduced to paper. He noted several philanthropic organizations existed which engaged in this type of activity, albeit these commitments were not made until the first of each year. He expressed his belief this was to be considered as a City of Punta Gorda project; thus, he felt a local artist would be appropriate. He clarified he did not wish to delve into a detailed method of execution at this point. He mentioned murals typically cost \$5,000; thus, this 11 panel project would run roughly \$55,000, with 10% dedicated to future maintenance.

- Ms. Schmidt commented ideas had already been discussed at a recent meeting of the PGMS, stating she had since met with two artists who recommended against an excessive number of panels but were in favor of multiple artists. She noted the two artists also suggested completion of one panel at a time.
- Ms. Lisby commented on historical accuracy, asking if the parking garage panels were adjacent to each other.
- Mr. Austin replied they were fairly well scattered around multiple facades of the building.
- Ms. Lisby stated Mr. Harry Goulding should be incorporated into the story told by the murals.
- Ms. MacGibbon agreed, noting in 1926 City Council reaffirmed their adoption of the City of Hibiscus moniker. She mentioned City Hall and the old Courthouse were under construction in 1926 as well.
- Mr. Norsell cautioned the murals did not need to go into great detail but rather the artists would interpret that history into same.
- Ms. Maxey clarified the mural was not meant to be a photograph but rather an example of art history.
- Mr. Norsell urged the Board to give this project some thought.

- Ms. MacGibbon stated she felt the project should move forward, asking members to address theme, scope, funding and execution in a general manner.
- Ms. Bettmann questioned the City's desire for the parking garage, noting there were other themes relevant to Punta Gorda's history.
- Ms. MacGibbon explained this was simply the Board's idea at this time.
- Ms. Lisby asked if PGMS had a grant writer.
- Mr. Norsell replied affirmatively, specifically Mr. Ray Rose.
- Ms. Lisby asked if grant sources had been identified.
- Mr. Norsell replied Selby Gardens was the most likely prospect.
- Ms. MacGibbon opined multiple grant sources existed, adding more than one source could be utilized, particularly if the project was phased. She then questioned members' feelings with regard to the project's theme.
- Ms. Schmidt replied she believed significant years should be incorporated into the murals, stating same would create a type of walking tour. She cautioned against excessive art on the building. She suggested "Hibiscus Plaza" be used as a designation of the walkway between the old Courthouse and parking garage.
- Ms. MacGibbon commented favorably on same.
- Mr. Chalifoux asked if City Council was aware of this idea.
- Mr. Austin replied affirmatively, albeit at a very vague level at this point in time.
- Ms. MacGibbon explained plans at this point were simply too conceptual to begin involving the City on an official level.
- Mr. Chalifoux countered City Council may not want anything on the building.
- Mr. Norsell responded the PGMS had the City's respect and confidence to not only move forward but their encouragement to present a plan, acknowledging there was no assurance of automatic approval. He explained the approval process was comprised of four steps before a mural was presented to the City for approval, adding the idea would not be presented to City Council until an artist's rendering was in hand.
- Discussion ensued with regard to the proper sequence of events.
- Consensus of the Board was to proceed as follows: Theme - City of Hibiscus, panel; Scope - multi-panel, multi-phase; Funding - combination of contributions and grants; Executive - multiple artists, organizational collaboration.
- Ms. Maxey raised the possibility of funding contributions from local higher education institutions, offering to research same.
- Ms. MacGibbon clarified Ms. Schmidt would continue to act as the liaison between the Board and PGMS.

- Mr. Norsell concluded he believed the next step was for Ms. Schmidt to present this Board's consensus to the PGMS' board at their next meeting on Monday, October 5, 2009.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Punta Gorda Historical Society, Inc.

- Ms. Lisby announced work had begun on the Christmas project for the History Park, the focus being on Punta Gorda in the 1940s during the war years. She announced the History Park would be decorated with multiple tea lights, adding over 200 hibiscus plants had been ordered. She advised the Price House would be decorated as a 1940s home, with seven different Christmas trees decorated throughout, adding this would be a "for profit" endeavor.

B. Punta Gorda Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Status Report

- Mr. Austin stated he had nothing specific on which to report.
- Mr. Chalifoux recalled the Board had discussed screening the mechanical equipment at the old Courthouse, suggesting the City consider an added panel decorated with a simple design.

C. Discussions on Historic Markers for Structures with a Special Workshop with the Charlotte County Historical Society

D. Joint Meeting with Charlotte County Historical Advisory Committee (CCHAC)

- Ms. MacGibbon clarified Item C was in reference to plaques placed on National Register District structures designating the significance of each site. She expressed hope all entities could work together on a County and City level to ensure there was no duplication or overlapping of effort; thus, she recommended a discussion of various sign/plaque/marker issues and ideas for what was already in place and what was planned for the future. She asked if members had any items they wished to place on the joint meeting agenda.
- Ms. Lisby questioned the County's funding source for the \$2,000 markers.
- Ms. MacGibbon replied there was no more funding. She noted the most recent historical marker dedication was on the former site of the Punta Gorda Bank, a copy of which was provided in the agenda material.
- Mr. Austin added a marker was planned for the Indian Springs Cemetery, stating the funding for same had been rolled over from a previous year. He then announced the CCHAC had proposed the following dates for the subject meeting to be held at the Charlotte County Commission Chambers at 9:00 a.m.: October 1, 8, 15 or 29, 2009. He recommended the Board select one of the later dates to ensure an appropriate amount of time to compile a productive agenda. He requested members' thoughts on

possible agenda items, suggesting the following items derived from previous discussions: (1) next steps for joint County-City Historic Marker Program; (2) National Register listed structure plaques; (3) historic archives; (4) status update of County historic survey.

- Consensus of the Board was to meet on October 29, 2009.

Note: Ms. Lisby left the meeting at 9:45 a.m.

- Ms. Schmidt requested a discussion of screening the mechanical equipment at the old Courthouse as stated earlier by Mr. Chalifoux.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- Mr. Chalifoux expressed concern a business may not be able to open while awaiting the approval process for a Certificate of Appropriateness, particularly during these difficult economic times.
- Ms. MacGibbon concurred; however, the situation this date was due to the applicant's submittal of insufficient information.
- Ms. Bettmann announced the City was offering a video presentation, "Understanding Government in the Sunshine," on Monday, October 5, 2009, at 9:00 a.m. in Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting Adjourned: 9:50 a.m.

Dawn MacGibbon, Chairman

Mary Kelly, Recording Secretary