

The Wauchula Historic Preservation Board met Monday, May 22, 2017 at 5:01 p.m.

The following members were present: Raafat Zakhary, Chair Tanya Royal Dr. Sylvia Collins and Linda Burnett.

Board Members Jennifer Clark, Cynthia Paxton and William Boynton were absent.

Also present were Community Development Coordinator Kyle Long and Deputy City Clerk Victoria Thompson.

Royal called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

Certificate of Appropriateness – 231 W Main Street – Clay Cobb

Mr. Long explained for the Board the original Certificate of Appropriateness for this project expired in April, and construction had not yet begun, which makes this Certificate tonight brand new. Burnett asked for clarification on the date for this new certificate to which Mr. Long replied April. Collins stated we are ground zero. Royal asked if the previous discussions should be ignored. Mr. Long stated not necessarily.

Mr. Long clarified the time frame on the certificate. Burnett presented information to the Board which she felt related to this Certificate of Appropriateness and reviewed the information it contained.

On the grounds of this information, Burnett motioned to reject the Certificate of Appropriateness based solely on the definition of Purpose in Article 2, *Regulations for Specific Districts*, Section 2.02.02.09, *Historic Downtown Commercial HC-1*, subsection(B), *Purpose: to provide a commercial district that recognizes the City's historic structures*;; seconded by Zakhary.

When Collins asked if she had any input on the topic, Ms. Newman stated Mr. Cobb had done all the changes the Board had requested of him and she felt the project should move forward. She further elaborated on the process of the approval of Mr. Cobb's concept by the other committees and stated although it may not look exactly like those in the RFQ, some compromise with Mr. Cobb was needed. Ms. Newman presented that Mr. Cobb's concept does recognize the historic district but is a new construction which attempts to blend the old with the new, historic with modern. Ms. Newman elaborated and discussed the lack of building stock in downtown making this building appear to stand out more than it actually would. The lack of consistency along Main Street was discussed. Collins then compared Mr. Cobb's concept to Wauchula State Bank and discussed the similarities between them. Discussion was held on the colors of Wauchula State Bank and their similarity to those of Mr. Cobb's concept.

Board Member William Boynton arrived at 5:11.

At this time, Royal requested a restating of Burnett's motion to bring Boynton up to speed on the topic. Collins asked Mr. Long to go over the original certificate expiring due to time. Mr. Long reviewed again the expiration of the originally approved certificate and Deputy Clerk Thompson restated Burnett's motion explaining the information she handed out.

Ms. Newman then reviewed the difference between Mr. See's project of renovating an existing building and Mr. Cobb having to go through so much more of the process for the approval of a new building.

Ms. Newman elaborated Mr. Cobb's building would be an improvement over the vacant lot which the CRA has now owned for almost five years. Since the CRA could not afford to build on it, they needed a partner to make this project possible; Mr. Cobb was willing to do so. She felt this partnership could be a win for everyone with a very much needed development downtown. There is nothing "not old" to rent in Wauchula, was pointed out by Royal.

Burnett recalled the discussion on inconsistency on Main Street and stated it was in direct support of her motion. The lack of knowledge of local citizenry about the Historic District and the fact that Wau-

chula's is fading was discussed. Boynton stated that was due to lack of maintenance of the historic structures that are in downtown. He continued with the fact that Hurricane Charlie had taken out some of the more historic buildings and Collins stated fires took out quite a few in the past as well. Discussion was held on this subject. Discussion was held on the Coker Fuel building that originally stood on the property and its historic significance as well as the role of the Board. Burnett reviewed the research she did on how to try to historically blend a new building with the spirit of the historic district as done in other communities. Boynton asked if she felt there was enough left to preserve and Burnett responded there was enough worth fighting for. The two held more discussion on the matter of preservation. Collins questioned the possibility of Mr. Cobb's building conceptually fitting in with the other Main Street buildings and Burnett discussed what she believed was the cosmetics of the building. Burnett further elaborated on her thoughts.

Boynton sees Mr. Cobb's building as Florida as it is today, not as it once was but he did admit he was not as familiar with Wauchula's historic buildings as he has only lived here for the last 25 years. Burnett stated the Board must preserve what little is left in the historic district; it was the Board's fiduciary duty to do what they could to preserve what is left. Much more discussion was held.

Royal addressed Olivia Minshew in the audience about anything she might like to say.

Ms. Minshew directed them back to the Staff Report presented by Mr. Long and explained to the Board their duty regarding a decision on the Certificate of Appropriateness. She stated this project had gone around in circles and a decision needs to be made tonight and progress must be made. Boynton clarified that this was more or less a learning experience for the Board as they will be dealing with this in other areas in the future; mainly vacant lots. Ms. Minshew clarified all the different elements have an impact on the district as a whole but what bearing do they really have? Nowhere does it state it has to exactly match; just consider how well would it blend. Ms. Minshew further discussed the improvement this building would be over what we originally had at the location. It would tie in better with the other buildings along Main Street better than the flat fronted building. Boynton brought up the Coker Fuel building's historic significance which Ms. Newman clarified. The original structure on the property only met criteria of being historic because of its location and that it was an old building but it did not meet the criteria necessary to be classified as a nationally registered building on its own. It had no historic features left.

The Board recognized Clay Cobb who stated he had taken into consideration everything the Board has said and he wanted to breathe new life into downtown because if not, we are left with stale and death. It has been an emotional roller coaster for him. He elaborated further before concluding he had been excited about this project and was eager to get started on it.

Royal asked the Board if they had any questions of Mr. Cobb. No one responded.

Mr. Long then again explained the different options for approval if they choose not to deny it.

Collins began a discussion on the colors of the paint to be used on the exterior of the building.

Royal called for a short break at this time 5:45 – 5:48.

Discussion was continued regarding the color scheme on the exterior of the building. The mixing of warm and cool colors as well as exactly which shade of gray would be used on the second floor was also discussed.

With no further discussion, Royal called for the vote on Burnett's motion.

All those in favor of rejecting the Certificate, Zakhary and Burnett responded aye.

Those opposed, like sign; Royal, Collins, Boynton responded nay.

Motion denied three votes to two.

Collins motioned to grant the Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition that the colors on the swatches, Proper Gray and Grayish, seconded by Boynton.

Burnett clarified the design of the building is a go, which was verified.

With no other discussion, Deputy Clerk Thompson polled the Board, all responded in favor.

Motion carried 5 – 0.

Approval of Minutes from April 10 and May 8, 2017 Meeting

Mr. Long explained Boynton had not included a stipulation in his motion, but that it had been discussed earlier in the discussion.

Burnett motioned to approve the minutes of April 10, seconded by Collins.

With no discussion, Royal called for all in favor; four responded aye.

For those opposed, like sign; Boynton responded nay.

The minutes were approved 4 – 1.

Burnett motioned to approve the minutes of May 8, seconded by Boynton.

Burnett was unclear whether or not she voted nay on two items and stated since the motion did not carry it was not an issue. However, Deputy Clerk Thompson stated if those corrections needed to be made, they would be made.

Burnett amended her motion to approve with corrections if needed, seconded again by Boynton.

Royal called for all in favor, all responded aye.

For those opposed, no response received.

The minutes were approved 5 – 0.

Public Comment

There was no public present.

With there being no further business, Boynton motioned to adjourn, seconded by Burnett.

Royal called for all in favor, all responded aye.

Motion carried 5 - 0.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Victoria Thompson, Deputy City Clerk