

**Historic Preservation Board
Pinellas County
July 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

The Historic Preservation Board (HPB) met in regular session pursuant to Section 146, Pinellas County Code, at 9:30 AM on this date in the First Floor Conference Room, 310 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida.

Present

Brian Scott, Chair, Board of County Commissioners (BCC)
Allison Dolan, Vice-Chair, Clearwater Historic Society
James Bachteler, Community Advocate (alternate)
Jeffrey Brown, Real Estate Broker (late arrival)
Tina Bucuvalas, Historian
Vincent Luisi, Dunedin Historical Museum
David MacNamee, Emergency Management
Ramona Pletcher, Real Estate Appraiser
Brian Smith, Planning

Not Present

Gregory Cahanin, Building and Fire Code

Others Present

Derrill McAteer, Senior Assistant County Attorney
Nancy McKibben, Assistant to County Administrator
Tom Scofield, Housing and Community Development (HCD) Principal Planner/Staff
Liaison to the Board
Carol Stricklin, HCD Director
Scott Swearngen, HCD Long Range Planning Manager
Cynthia Watkins, HCD
Shirley Westfall, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk
Other interested individuals

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Scott called the meeting to order, welcomed those in attendance, and requested that the members and others present introduce themselves.

Chair Scott explained that the Board is becoming more formal; that minutes will be prepared by the Clerk's Office; and that applicant comments will be limited to five minutes, and citizen comments will be limited to three minutes.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

A motion was made by Ms. Bucuvalas to appoint Allison Dolan as the Vice-Chair. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pletcher and carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. MacNamee related that under section three of the April 19, 2023, minutes, a reference to staff's recommendation to approve *the demotion* should be corrected to read *demolition*.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith to approve the April 19, 2023, minutes, as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bucuvalas and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith to approve the March 15, 2023, minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dolan and carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ACTION ITEMS

Consideration of a motion to rescind the April 19, 2023, vote by the Pinellas County HPB to delegate review authority of the compatibility of the proposed new contributing structure to be located at 1026 Florida Avenue pursuant to Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Application 20-0001 within the Palm Harbor Historic District to Pinellas County staff, and further, for the HPB to conduct review of said structure pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 146 of the Pinellas County Code at its earliest regularly scheduled meeting after the application is found by staff to be complete and ready for Board review.

This item was taken in two parts.

(1) Mr. Smith made a motion to rescind the April 19, 2023, vote. The motion was seconded by Mr. MacNamee and carried unanimously.

(2) In response to a query by Chair Scott, Attorney McAteer provided an overview of his memorandum dated July 10, 2023, included in the agenda packet and provided to the Board, regarding his reasoning for recommending rescinding the previous vote on COA Application 20-0001. He related that under Chapter 146 of the Pinellas County Code, there are no separate definitions for terms "contributing structure", "contributing building", or "contributing site", as those are all included under the term "contributing property"; that Chapter 138 sections of the Pinellas County Code pertaining to the Downtown Palm Harbor Form-Based Code indicate that the Board review and approval of the staff's analysis of the proposed new structure are required if the property on which the structure is to be built is considered a contributing property; and that the Code is not clear on

whether the property would be contributing or non-contributing once the historical building that is currently on it is demolished, noting that the Board unanimously voted to demolish it.

Attorney McAteer recommended that the Board review the staff's approval of the new structure pursuant to the Palm Harbor Form-Based Code to ensure the approval is accurate and clarified that if the property was determined to be non-contributing, it would not come before the Board.

Neil Valk, owner of the subject property, expressed concern and frustration with Attorney McAteer's recommendation and requested that the Board not rescind the previous approval and allow him to continue with the construction of a new building. Attorney McAteer read the Code definition of "contributing property" and reiterated that if the property is considered contributing, it would be reviewed by the Board, and in response to a query by Chair Scott, he read the definition of a "non-contributing property" and indicated that the Code is not specific as to whether upon demolition of a historic structure, the site would become non-contributing, and Mr. Valk disagreed.

During discussion and in response to comments and queries by the members, Mr. Scofield stated that there are nine contributing properties within the Downtown Palm Harbor Historic District. Responding to a query by the Chair, Attorney McAteer agreed that certain verbiage in the Code could be clarified by an action of the County Commission.

In response to a query by Chair Scott, Mr. Valk stated that he is currently working with the County to obtain a demolition permit for the current structure; that the architects are designing a demolition plan that would meet the guidelines of the Downtown Palm Harbor Form-Based Code; that the proposed new structure is a multi-story building with apartments, also meeting the guidelines; and that his site plan permit is expiring and has previously been extended. Mr. Scofield confirmed that the Board's approval for the demolition at the April meeting remains in effect; whereupon, in response to queries by Chair Scott, he discussed the staff and Board review timeline and related that a new COA would be required, noting that there would be no additional fees involved.

Discussion ensued wherein the members provided their respective opinions regarding contributing versus non-contributing properties and the associated actions, and in response to a query by Attorney McAteer, Mr. Scofield stated that every property within a historic district boundary is tagged as either contributing or non-contributing; and that the subject property is currently tagged as a contributing property. Attorney McAteer noted that Section 146-5, Section 4 of the Pinellas County Code discusses the Board powers and duties of reviewing and acting on COA applications for alterations,

demolitions, relocations, and new construction to designated properties in a historic district, or a landmark on a landmark site; and that he would be happy to discuss the possibilities of amending that section with staff.

In response to a query by Chair Scott, Mr. Scofield indicated that he does not believe the Board has the authority to designate the property as non-contributing after a demolition, and Attorney McAteer agreed; whereupon, Chair Scott indicated that the BCC would be the entity addressing the issue, and discussion ensued wherein John Barie, former Board member, Preservation Architect, commented on the Board's review process, relating that the Board is unwilling to listen to a preservation architect's input in the matter, and noted that is why he resigned.

Mr. Smith moved that staff review the COA and bring it before the Board for final approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. MacNamee and carried by a vote of 5-3, with Chair Scott, Mr. Brown, and Ms. Pletcher dissenting.

Request to fund a Florida Historical Marker for Pinellas High School, Clearwater

Mr. Scofield related that the request is for the Board to fund a double-sided Florida Historical Marker for Pinellas High School and provided a history of the high school and the property, noting that the Pinellas County School Board changed the name of the high school to Pinellas High Innovation on March 21, 2023. He provided details regarding the proposed historical marker, pointing out that the proposed marker text exceeds the number of characters allowed, but that he will work with the applicant to reduce it. He added that a letter of authorization is needed from the property owner, the Pinellas County School Board, along with a list of sponsors for the state application; that the HPB will be listed on the marker as a sponsor; that a specific geographic coordinate for the marker needs to be defined; and that because the property is in the City of Clearwater, a delivery location, installer, and marker caretaker need to be identified; whereupon, he stated that he serves as the applicant for the state review and recommended that the Board fund the marker.

Discussion ensued wherein Mr. Scofield responded to queries by the members, provided the address of the high school, and indicated that the draft text provides a progression in the storyline of why the school was originally needed.

Barbara Sorey-Love, speaking on behalf of Pinellas High School, provided input regarding the history of the school and stated that the proposed text for the marker is acceptable, except for a correction to the school's song name. Isay Gulley, retired Clearwater Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc. CEO, provided input regarding the importance of sharing the history of the high school on the marker; whereupon, Ms.

Bucuvalas concurred with an earlier comment by Mr. Luisi and suggested that the marker text include something about the school being needed as a result of segregation.

Mr. Brown moved that the Board fund the marker; and that staff work with the applicant on meeting the criteria for the marker. The motion was seconded by Mr. Luisi and carried unanimously; whereupon, Clint Herbic, Pinellas County Schools, related that a room is being designated to hold all the history of the Pinellas High School that will not fit on the marker.

Request to fund a Florida Historical Marker for St. Matthews Baptist Church Cemetery

Mr. Scofield related that the request is for the Board to fund a double-sided Florida Historical Marker for St. Matthews Baptist Church Cemetery and provided a history of the property, pointing out that it is now owned by FrankCrum company (Crum); that Crum has requested that the City of Clearwater relocate the 328 bodies that were discovered, or at least the ones located on the Crum property; that Crum had an understanding with the City that the cemetery had been removed; and that the marker should reflect if the bodies are moved.

Mr. Scofield provided details regarding the proposed historical marker, pointing out that the text exceeds the allowable number of characters, but that he will work with the applicant to reduce it; that a letter of authorization is needed from the property owner, either the City or Crum, depending on where the marker would be located; that a list of sponsors is needed for the state application; that a specific geographic coordinate for the marker needs to be defined; and that a delivery location, installer, and marker caretaker need to be identified; whereupon, he recommended that the Board table the request until the City and Crum resolve the relocation of the bodies.

Barbara Sorey-Love, speaking on behalf of St. Matthews Baptist Church Cemetery, related that the Crum family has agreed to put a marker in place; and that tabling the request is improper; whereupon, she requested that the Board not table it, and in response to a query by Mr. Scofield, indicated that she will obtain clarification from Crum regarding funding and location of the marker. Ms. Dolan reiterated that tabling the request allows for a resolution between the City and Crum before placing the marker so that if the bodies are relocated, the marker will reflect where they were moved.

In response to a query by Chair Scott, Mr. Scofield indicated that he is unaware of a timeline for the City to respond to Crum's request to move the bodies; and that he will have a conversation with the City regarding the matter.

During discussion and in response to queries by Mr. Brown, Ms. Dolan, with input by Mr. Scofield, indicated that the Board can approve the request to fund the marker; that there

is no deadline on the approval; and that the funds would remain in a queue of markers pending resolution.

Mr. Brown moved to approve the funding of the marker subject to the resolution of the relocation of the bodies. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith and carried unanimously.

Request to fund a Florida Historical Marker for Heritage Village

Ms. Bucuvalas recused herself from voting on the item due to a possible conflict of interest and submitted a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form for the record.

Mr. Scofield related that the request is for the Board to fund a single-sided Florida Historical Marker for Heritage Village and provided a history of the property, noting that it houses the three oldest buildings in Pinellas County; whereupon, he stated that he does not have the marker draft text available; that the property is a County park facility; that a list of sponsors would be needed; and that a specific marker location needs to be determined; whereupon, Monica Drake, Heritage Village Historical Museum Operations Manager, provided input.

Mr. Scofield recommended that the Board approve funding of the marker, and in response to a query by Mr. Luisi, stated that its location is to be determined.

Ms. Dolan moved that the Board approve funding of the marker. The motion was seconded by Mr. MacNamee and carried unanimously, with Ms. Bucuvalas abstaining. Following the vote and in response to a query by Mr. MacNamee, Mr. Scofield briefly discussed the proposed marker text and stated that he will work with Ms. Drake on it.

Ms. Dolan left the meeting at 11:04 AM.

Request to Fund a Florida Historical Marker for Clearwater Lawn Bowling Club

Mr. Scofield related that the request is for the Board to fund a Florida Historical Marker for the Clearwater Lawn Bowling Club a/k/a Clearwater Lawn Bowls Club, and provided a brief history of the property, pointing out that it is owned by the City of Clearwater and includes the club and the adjacent Clearwater shuffleboard court; and that the club will be celebrating its 100-year anniversary in 2024; whereupon, he recommended that the Board table the request pending further research.

Ellen O'Donnell, Clearwater Lawn Bowling Club, provided a history of the club and invited the members to visit, and in response to comments and queries by Mr. MacNamee, she indicated that there is the potential for the shuffleboard court and the club to share a

marker; whereupon, Mr. Scofield stated that depending on the outcome of his research, the club could be represented on one side and the court on another side of the marker.

Responding to a query by the Chair, Mr. Scofield confirmed that no action by the Board is needed on this item today.

WORK PLAN UPDATES AND DISCUSSION

Observations of the 2023 Historic Preservation Summit

Mr. Scofield indicated that the preservation summit was held in May in partnership with Preserve the 'Burg; that attendance exceeded 100 individuals; that several positives came out of the summit; and that it is anticipated to occur again in May 2024, and in response to a query by Chair Scott, related that the Clearwater Historical Society has volunteered to host it. The members provided feedback on the 2023 summit, and Mr. Scofield pointed out that the County Marketing Communications Team recorded it this year; and that there is a hot link on the YouTube channel with all of the presentations.

Work Plan Updates

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Responding to the Chair's call for public comment, John Barie, Preservation Architect, spoke regarding his service on the Board and related matters.

CHAIR/BOARD/STAFF COMMENTS

Ms. Stricklin related that the County's historic preservation ordinance has not been revised since its adoption in 2012; and that she will bring the ordinance and the review of Chapter 146 of the Pinellas County Code before the Board to determine, in its advisory capacity, if any changes are desired, particularly, regarding clarifying the interaction between the Palm Harbor Form-Based Code and the ordinance and references to "contributing property"; and that any proposed changes would then go through the code amendment process.

Ms. Stricklin reminded the Board of an upcoming retreat; whereupon, Attorney McAteer indicated that he would be conducting Sunshine Law update training for this and other County boards. Mr. Scofield suggested that the rules of procedure be reviewed as well.

Attorney McAteer related that House Bill Number 49 was the only legislation to pass of the legislation he was monitoring with regard to the Board; that it created the historic cemeteries program, which provides guidelines for local governments regarding historic cemeteries, with an emphasis on African American cemeteries, and creates the Historic Cemeteries Advisory Council.

Mr. MacNamee suggested that formal training for new Board members be put in place outlining the codes relevant to the Board matters and responsibilities. Mr. Scofield related that he currently holds one-on-one orientation with all new Board members; and that any new training should be put on hold until the Board fills the architect position, which is currently being advertised and closes on August 3, 2023; whereupon, Chair Scott suggested that the Board have a regular agenda item annually to go over its mission and purpose.

Mr. Brown provided insight into his background, noting his experience in preservation and restoration, in addition to real estate.

Chair Scott read an email from Louise Goetz, Palm Harbor Main Street, Inc.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:28 AM.