



HAMMOND HISTORIC DISTRICT

Minutes of the Hammond Historic District Commission

January 16th, 2019 11:00 AM

Hammond City Council Chamber- 312 East Charles

- Meeting called to order by Chairman, Mr. Ryan Faulk, at 11:00 a.m.
- Verification of meeting notice given by Director, Ms. Jennie Garcia
- Roll call taken:
 - Present: Jessica Shirey, Shauna Seals, Howard Nichols, Susan Seale, Marguerite Walter, Ryan Faulk, and Jen White
- Motion to approve the minutes from September 19th, 2018 by Mrs. Shirey. Second by Mrs. Seals.
 - Vote: Ryan Faulk (Y), Jessica Shirey (Y), Howard Nichols (Y), Marguerite Walter (Y), Susan Seale (Y), Shauna Seals (Y), and Jen White (Y)
 - Motion Approved: 7-0
- Motion to approve the minutes from December 19th, 2018 by Mrs. White. Second by Mr. Faulk.
 - Vote: Ryan Faulk (Y), Jessica Shirey (Y), Howard Nichols (Y), Marguerite Walter (Y), Susan Seale (Y), Shauna Seals (Y), and Jen White (Y)
 - Motion Approved: 7-0
- **New Business:**
 - **106 W. Morris (Shea Tyler Salon)– Signage**
 - Application presented by: Bridgette Brooks
 - *The project will include the re-use of the current sign. Essentially the old sign will be turned over and re-used with a change from “Shea Tyler Salon” to Parlour 106.” The update sign will be re-installed into the bring inset on the front of the building and centered above the door and awning. Since the old sign will be re-used, the dimensions will stay the same. The sign will have a width of 24 inches and a length of 225 inches or 21 ft. and a mounted height of 9 ft. The sign is made of bond aluminum with cast white vinyl lettering. The sign will be mounted with plastic inserts drilled into the mortar with stainless screws.*
 - *Ryan Faulk confirms that the business will still occupy both addresses and that storefront. – This is confirmed by Bridgette Brooks.*
 - *Ryan calls for any public input – none was given.*
 - *Jessica Shirey reiterates that the only thing of issue was the signage that was discussed at the working session. **The business and building owner are the*

*same, there are currently two addresses for this property. A combined address allows for the size of the signage. If the property is split, then the signage will have to be changed. ***

- *Ryan restates this and stresses this is why he confirmed that the business will still occupy both addresses.*
 - Motion to approve the application as presented, by Susan Seale. Second by Howard Nichols.
- Vote: Ryan Faulk (Y), Jessica Shirey (Y), Howard Nichols (Y), Marguerite Walter (Y), Susan Seale (Y), Shauna Seals (Y), and Jen White (Y)
 - Motion Approved: 7-0
- **123 S. Cate – Paint**
 - Application presented by: Bob Gabriel
 - *Essentially the building located at 123 S. Cate will be repainted. Currently, it is painted without HHDC approval. The building is now under a new lessee who seeks to repaint the exterior. The new paint will be exterior paint from Gabriel Painting Supply Company and will be applied to areas currently painted blue. The new paint color is called “Knight’s Armor.”*
 - *Ryan confirms that proposed paint color (swatch) was shown at the working session.*
 - *Susan Seale asks if the name of the business will be changed. This information is confirmed by Jennie Garcia and Bob Gabriel. Susan states that new signage will have to come for approval. – Jennie states that Chanc (lessee) has relayed the intention to apply for new signage in February.*
 - Motion to approve the application as presented, by Jessica Shirey. Second by Susan Seale.
- Vote: Ryan Faulk (Y), Jessica Shirey (Y), Howard Nichols (Y), Marguerite Walter (Y), Susan Seale (abstain), Shauna Seals (Y), and Jen White (Y)
 - Motion Approved: 7-0
- **207 & 211 W. Morris– Demolition Request**
 - Application presented by: Jennifer Lee
 - *Essentially the buildings located at 207 & 211 W. Morris Avenue will be dismantled piece by piece. The building materials will be used to construct a new family home on property located in Denham Springs, Louisiana.*
 - *Jennifer Lee – This is for a proposed redevelopment of Georgetown Row and asked for more information; we have scrambled over the past few days and now have more information - site plans, landscape plans, and renderings so that the HHDC can better visualize redevelopment.*
 - *Representative states that the properties are not in the Historic District but faces it, so the property owners now seek a COA from the Historic District. There have been changes made to the proposal to propose four buildings or eight units, there*

were six in the original proposal; property is zoned MXC and surrounding properties are both commercial and residential. Shows renderings of what the front of the proposed property will look like.

- *Landscaping plan features green space, shrubbery, and trees – this complies with city requirements. Actual plant selection is still being determined but special attention will be paid to the HHDC Design Guidelines regarding landscape.*
- *Development – last time there was talk of it being mixed use; but due to the reduction it may be primarily residential and there is precedence for that as there is residential on surrounding properties. Commercial and residential mixed use is in compliance with the MXC zoning. This will be the transition from commercial to residential, it will be right in the middle.*
- *The National Register Coordinator – Jessica Richardson talked about that, who they contacted about redevelopment, suggested a smaller scale development of 1 to 2 stories would be most appropriate in terms of the site’s relation to the Historic District. Georgetown Row fits that.*
- *Jennifer Lee - About the houses currently on the property, the houses are Minimal Traditional Houses with a plain design and no architectural significance and as Ms. Garcia researched and her findings, this type of housing was popular after the war (WWII) to encourage homeownership. This would be analogous to today’s DSLD or tract housing that are designed with affordability in mind and home ownership and not necessarily design or materials. Owners tried to trace the historical use of these homes and properties by researching family history to find out what the homes have been used for. Based on these findings by talking to family members, friends, etc. these homes were used for commercial uses as they are now. In order to develop Georgetown Row, again much thought over the past three months have been given to the current houses and what can be done because they are joined to the Historic District so there is thought given to that.*
- *Jennifer Lee - First thing considered was the preservation and rehabilitation of these homes. The homes are about 1,000 square feet and have 4 rooms and a half bath. There is no full bathroom. The original intention of the homes for residential have been modified a long time ago. Current interior configuration is inadequately laid out for most businesses. These homes will have to be substantially modified to be most useful for businesses and residents.*
- *Jennifer Lee – The second consideration that was given was relocation on the property, repositioning the houses and adding a new structure. These new buildings would be substantially different in layout and in terms of size. The owner wants to comply with all city requirements for setback, parking, and landscape, etc. and that was in consideration in the repositioning of the buildings. This would look like a hodge podge and create a cheap looking development. This led to the determination that the relocation of the homes would adversely affect the historic district and its character.*
- *Jennifer Lee – The third option was relocation off the property. The owner met with thirteen different individuals and each person performed site visits of the property and measurements and gave estimates on whether they would be willing*

to do that. Due to the height and the size of the homes the roofs would have to be removed in order to move the homes and then they would have to be restored and this would change the structure of the buildings. These individuals did not offer to buy the homes but declined the homes to be given to them.

- Jennifer Lee – The final option is demolition of the existing homes. Owner went through the guidelines for demolition and considered all options: Whether another site would serve the purpose as well, the purpose of the request is to redevelop this site not to do something else – this is implausible. Next is whether the existing homes could be adapted to meet the owner’s needs. It really isn’t feasible because of the current layout and square footage to then rehabilitate to do something and to make them aesthetically pleasing for either commercial or residential purposes. Another factor is whether the homes could be sold to someone who is willing to use them. Well not only could they not be sold they could not be given away. And finally, could the existing homes be moved to another site and they could not. So the owner concluded based on the architecture of the home, which is insignificant it is minimalist, the inability to use the existing property without substantially modifying it and the inability to find anyone who would take and relocate the homes unfortunately demolition would be needed to further enhance the aesthetics and viability of the Historic District and this property. So in summary the owner went through an exhaustive review of how the houses could be preserved and then relocated and reused and this process was so that Georgetown Row could be developed in these homes place which would add to the historical district and the value of it and the culture of it though they do not necessarily contribute to the age because they are new construction. The UDC provides that the Historic District has three charges. One is promoting the education, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through preservation of buildings, sites, and monuments of historic interest or importance. And we would have the opinion that this is unlike this building or other buildings is not the same. The second is to improve property values. And the third is to foster economic development. So the homes are not of historic interest or importance and the development of Georgetown Row is certainly would improve property values and foster the areas economic growth. So in light of the HDC’s charge and bouncing off of these factors and specific facts of the situation and the proposed development which would enhance the district, the owner is seeking a COA for demolition of the homes located at 207 & 211 W. Morris so that the Georgetown Row development can proceed.
- Shauna – Can you say more about how you said the homes couldn’t be sold or given away?
- Jennifer Lee – what was provided in the packet earlier was a list of thirteen contractors and real estate people who came to the site who offered to take the homes and move them to another site to flip or use a rental properties. And thirteen different people declined to take them. They would be given the homes and move them.

- *Susan states that she likes the development. The problem is that we are supposed to protect the structures in the historic district and those homes do have historic significance and I don't know if you could just tear them down. With some reinvestment they could be more valuable and with some renovations they could be more attractive to someone that would want to put a business or residence there.*
- *Jennifer Lee – It is not just the attractiveness of it it's the functionality. Homes built today have a different layout. Substantial modifications would be needed and this would change the historic value of the homes. If you change it all you would lose all of that.*
- *Susan states that there are creative ways to modify the current homes. Ryan also states that this is one of the challenges in owning a historic property.*
- *Jen White states that they do currently have businesses in them. So people are willing to use the space.*
- *Jennifer Lee states that one business is relocating and 1,000 sq. ft. is not a large enough space for a growing business. The space could be perfect for a startup company.*
- *Marguerite confirms that the proposed duplexes would each be about 900 sq. ft.*
- *Spencer Rossie confirms that the bottom unit would be 900 sq. ft. and the top unit would 950 sq. ft. Renderings do not show windows on the side. There would be windows in every bedroom and halls and on back of the buildings.*
- *Jessica Shirey states that she has nothing against the proposed development it is attractive from what has been shown at this point. It is a difficult place we have been put in because it is our charge to preserve our inventory. And you have stated that this is not significant or architecturally significant, but these are significant. Just because someone might not think they are much because they are minimalist, but this is what makes them significant. My concern is that once something is gone it is gone and there is a precedence that is also set by destroying our inventory and what we have. It's not that we don't appreciate what you have. Our job is yes, we are supposed to contribute to commerce, these properties were actually in commerce. That needs to be removed from the table. The houses are in excellent condition and for us to say (this is my personal opinion), to me it goes against our charge.*
- *Jennifer Lee states that personally she is not a preservationist but she realizes the balances that need to be made. She has even thought about taking the houses to see if she can restore them on her own property, however, it is beyond her scope as the representative of the owner. She appreciates the difference of opinion on the architectural significance. Her comment is that yes the charge is preservation but you cannot look at everything individually but the potential of developing the property to preserve and enhance the Historic District.*
- *Shauna states that the applicant is not proposing to rehabilitate the property but proposing to demo the properties and this goes against preservation. We can all have our opinions but there is a checklist in our guidelines that should be followed.*

These items are not met with the application and we have to look at everything on an individual basis.

- *Howard Nichols states that it is not our charge to involve ourselves in economic development. We have an economic development district, downtown development district that is charge of that. Economic development is not something we all need to consider.*
- *Jennifer Lee states that she respectfully disagrees and calls out Lacy as the UDC expert. The UDC states in two different places that the charge is to establish property values and foster the economic development of the areas affected. You have to look at everything holistically.*
- *Howard- our charge is to maintain the downtown. Over the last 30 years the commission has done a fine job of maintaining the architectural fabric of the downtown and this is what's attractive to movie companies, restaurants and bars are doing well. We have maintained the notable character of the downtown. I just don't see that seeking a higher monetary use means we should allow the demolition of two houses of architectural value that is not seen elsewhere in Hammond.*
- *Jennifer Lee agrees with Howard. She says it is a thankless job of volunteers and she gets that.*
- *Susan states that what she sees looks wonderful. What she would like to see that the two properties that have not been maintained by the owners. They have never been kept up by the owners. They should be given a chance, to clean them up and tweak them with decent landscaping. This could make them more attractive. This is why she would not be in favor of demoing, however, they have a specific place in our history. They are American Small Homes and should be given a chance.*
- *Jennifer Lee states that they still won't function.*
- *Susan states that if they are maintained and designed correctly they could function and could be aesthetically pleasing. They have not maximized the possibilities up to this point.*
- *Jennifer Lee says it's about making the place beautiful and enhance the district.*
- *Jen White states that removing houses that are historically significant not matter how small they are goes against the historic district. It would be removing the character. Maintaining these two rare examples is in fact enhancing.*
- *Ryan Faulk states that he has been wrestling with this issue. Standing on its own the redevelopment is not the problem. This point of the district, the size and position relative to the street and the amount of the green space taken does not provide a proper transition to the Historic District. That is the main issue with the proposal and scale.*
- *Jennifer Lee tries to clarify that more green space and set back would be more appropriate.*
- *Ryan confirms that that could help and two story structures are not appropriate.*
- *Jennifer Lee states that a block away is significant because it is a block away.*
- *Ryan confirms that it is the red brick down the street Jennifer is referring to.*

- *Susan says a good example is what the Neill Corporation has done because it is in the scale of small homes. The proposal is attractive. What you have done in the past with the property has deteriorated the property but you have never tried to maintain them.*
- *Ryan opens it up to the public.*
- *Tracie Schillace from Planning states that they have looked at the new proposal and confirms that the new proposal does meet the UDC requirements for frontage, parking, and green space. The UDC does encourage buildings along Thomas and Morris to have a minimal front yard requirement.*
- *Melanie Ricketts – wants to take into consideration that the buildings in this style are at risk in other parts of the city in Hyer Cate and Iowa, these are disappearing at an alarming rate. Points out a Sears post war house that has disappeared. Original materials in the landfill. Even though this might not be a popular style, these houses are becoming very scarce. These houses were custom built with materials we can no longer get. Uses the proposal for demoing the Pontalba buildings in the French Quarter and the impression this would have made. It is not the charge of the Historic District to make profits for property owners. There are protections in the Historic District Guidelines for these houses.*
- *Jennie Garcia comments that in the report that was given out at the working session the survey in 2018 only 7% identified this house type.*
- *Shauna – if we just did this in steps. The first step is to determine if demolition should be approved. To do this items need to be addressed one at a time for demolition. Not what you are proposing, the proposal looks great, however this is not the issue. It seems that we keep moving away from the demolition to the new construction. For example, is there a subsequent use for the site? Yes there is but there are probably things not aligned with the guidelines. Has the structure been rendered unsalvageable? The answer is No. And who makes that determination, someone would need to make that determination if someone says it is unsalvageable. Is the structure a public safety hazard? No. It is not a public safety hazard. These questions need to be addressed. If the answer is not yes this is a yield for demolition.*
- *Jennifer Lee asks for the page number. Confirms that demolition guidelines can be found on page 75.*
- *Jennie Garcia states that something that was brought up at the working session and is stated in the guidelines, might the existing buildings be adapted to meet the owner's needs? You keep saying that is not feasible to renovate or redo the interiors, but why. Where is the documentation showing that this is not feasible? Why can't we redo the interiors to create duplexes, or maybe take down some walls to work more for commercial spaces? These are economically feasible structures. Are the tenants leaving because they are being asked to leave? Or is rent too high? This is why I keep going back to, can we adapt the structures to meet your needs and maintain the preservation of the buildings.*

- *Jennifer Lee confirms that renovating the interior is acceptable would you say that enlarging is acceptable. Jennie Garcia states that this is changing the exterior but additions are allowed and is addressed in the guidelines.*
 - *Jessica Shirey asks why it needs to be larger. Jennifer states that several perspective tenants need larger spaces. Marguerite states that the proposed redevelopment is even smaller. Jennifer Lee states that the proposed redevelopment is of a different use, not commercial.*
 - *Jessica Shirey states that if the space doesn't work for the tenant they should look elsewhere. You don't just add on for a specific tenant.*
 - *Shauna states that there probably many other uses that have not been thought about such as museums or visitor center. From an aesthetic perspective, those buildings fit the historic district.*
 - *Ryan confirms that there are appropriate ways to add additions to a historic property.*
 - *Susan states that there are ways to creatively add on and add square footage to historic buildings.*
 - *Jessica Shirey confirms that the property has been in the owner's family for a long time and they should be aware of the historic district guidelines. No one is against the proposal, the problem is the removal of the current historic structures.*
 - *Ryan states that they are not dismantling and rebuilding, you are actually salvaging materials to build another building. Relocating to the structures to another site within the historic district is not feasible.*
 - *Jen White confirms that the application as presented is to dismantle and rebuilding something else.*
 - *Susan confirms that Davie Shoring and DeRousse were consulted on moving the houses.*
 - *Spencer Rossie states that he can get a report from Davie Shoring for the relocating of the structures.*
 - *Susan questions the reasons why it is so difficult to move the houses. States that the family should may be get together to discuss how to make the properties economically viable to their liking if the demolition comes to a dead end.*
 - *Jennifer Lee confirms that they can reapply with a different application for next month.*
 - *Motion to deny the application as presented, by Shauna Seals. Second by Jen White.*
- *Vote: Ryan Faulk (Y), Jessica Shirey (Y), Howard Nichols (Y), Marguerite Walter (Y), Susan Seale (Y), Shauna Seals (Y), and Jen White (Y)*
 - *Motion Approved to Deny: 7-0*

- **Updates From Director:**
 - Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation (LTHP) is now accepting nominations for most endangered properties. The deadline for nominations is Friday, March 1, 2019.
 - Banner Compliance
 - Mojitos – 2 banners on Front and 1 on back of the building. Violation letter was sent in December. Will send another letter to notify that a fine will incur and be retroactive if not taken down by the February meeting.
 - Samurai Ramen has taken down their temporary banner
 - Our Mom’s & Aveda Institute has “Best of Tangi” banners up.
 - Planet Fitness & The Buzz just put up new temporary banners.
 - Will visit Taco’s and Beer to notify that their open sign should not flash and move.
 - Jessica Shirey mentions meeting of the DDD tonight to present new plans for the community pavilion.

- **Public Input:**
 - Melanie Ricketts invites everyone to a public lecture on Charles Daggs on January 24th at 6:30 pm at the Hammond Branch Library.

- **Adjournment:**
 - Motion to Adjourn by Jessica Shirey and seconded by Howard Nichols.
 - Vote: Ryan Faulk (Y), Jessica Shirey (Y), Marguerite Walter (Y), Susan Seale (Y), Shauna Seals (Y), and Jen White (Y)
 - Motion Approved: 7-0