

**ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

March 15, 2017

The Athens-Clarke County Historic Preservation Commission met and considered the following items at a public meeting on Wednesday, March 15, 2017, at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was held at 120 W. Dougherty Street, Athens, Georgia.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Barry Allen, Danny Bass, Jeff Bishop, Mary Cook, Jud Doherty, Drew Dekle, Scott Reed

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Sandy Beasley, Amber Eskew, John Hawkins (Attorney's Office,) Bruce Lonnee, Carrol Perrin

CALL TO ORDER:

1. Determination of Quorum: Quorum present.
2. Introduction of staff reports and all other documents submitted to the Historic Preservation Commission at this meeting into the official record: Mr. Allen moved to enter staff reports and all other documents submitted into the official record, Ms. Cook seconded and the motion passed unanimously with no discussion.
3. Adoption of the minutes of the February 15, 2017 meeting: Ms. Cook made a motion to adopt the minutes as written. Mr. Reed seconded and the motion passed unanimously with no discussion.
4. Ex-Parte Communications: Mr. Dekle received a phone call from James Sloan regarding 238 E. Clayton Street. Mr. Dekle advised Mr. Sloan that he could not discuss the project.

CONSENT AGENDA: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 287 Henderson Avenue

COA-2017-01-305

Petitioner: Gabe and Jennie Comstock

Request: Rear Porch Addition

Information: 171C1 E009, Henderson, RS-8

Ms. Eskew presented the staff report with a recommendation to deny the application.

Agent / Owner: Gabe and Jennie Comstock, owners

In Favor: Joan Birch, Peggy Galis, Diana Jackson, Jennifer McDowell

In Opposition: none

Discussion: Mr. Comstock described at length the changes and repairs already made to the property. Mr. Bishop offered his appreciation to the neighbors for providing input and to the Comstock's for a thoughtful presentation.

There are issues with the rhythm of the fenestration on the rear of the house, along with concern for the extreme continuation of the shed roof, which dramatically affects the character of the rear elevation. A shorter, standing-seam steel roof would be appropriate for the porch addition. Mr. Comstock noted that his goal is to get the elevation to less than thirty inches so that handrails are not needed. The gate is an obtrusive element. Mr. Comstock suggested solid wood with tight horizontal and vertical slats. The slats on the trellis would be similar to the gate.

Motion: Mr. Bass moved to approve the application with the following conditions: approximately two feet be removed from the rear roofline to align with the steps; remove the metal handrails unless it is determined by code that they are required; the trellis lattice to be changed to rectangular with a gate design of solid horizontal wood; use of metal standing-seam rather than a corrugated roof; and that each of these will be submitted to staff for approval. Mr. Dougherty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. 1225 Boulevard

COA-2017-02-421

Petitioner: Casey Bergman

Request: Rear screened porch addition

Information: 114C2 E005A, Buena Vista, RS-8

Ms. Eskew presented the staff report with a recommendation to approve the application with conditions.

Agent / Owner: Casey Bergman, owner

In Favor: Angus Moeller, Deborah Stanley

In Opposition: none

Discussion: Mr. Reed appreciates that the owner is using wood products. The design is responsive to the architecture of the house and to the district. He asked that the owner work with staff to find the most appropriate standing-seam metal roof. The Commission expressed appreciation that the owner took the time to incorporate the guidelines into his description.

Motion: Mr. Reed moved to approve the application with the condition that the standing-seam metal roofing be brought to staff for recommendation of the most appropriate standing seam to use. Mr. Allen seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. 697 South Milledge Avenue

COA-2017-02-427

Petitioner: Ella S. Grondahl
Request: Replacement siding
Information: 171C3 C007, Milledge, C-O (MAC)

Ms. Eskew presented the staff report with a recommendation to deny the application.

Agent / Owner: Ella Grondahl, owner; unknown male

In Favor: none

In Opposition: none

Discussion: The material requested does not meet the guidelines regarding siding.

Motion: Making a significant negative impact upon the historic neighborhood and the historic structure, Mr. Reed moved to deny the application. Mr. Doherty seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

4. 238 E. Clayton Street

COA-2017-02-440

Petitioner: High Country / James Sloan
Request: Wall & Projecting Signage
Information: 171B8 B002, Downtown, C-D

Ms. Eskew presented the staff report with a recommendation to deny the application.

Agent / Owner: James Sloan, owner; John Sloan

In Favor: none

In Opposition: none

Discussion: Mr. Sloan noted that this application includes 235 E. Clayton Street. John Sloan said that using a natural material such as wood would resonate with the outdoor industry and the historic district. The guidelines are very specific about using stain/paint on wood to be used for signage. The sign itself is appropriate, the stain is not allowed according to the guidelines. Mr. Bishop noted that there are three faux wood signs on Clayton Street that are considered acceptable.

Mr. Bishop added that, at some point, the guidelines should further define painted signs to eliminate faux painted wood or open the door to allow artfully done, unpainted wood that fits the context of painted signs.

Motion: Mr. Allen moved to approve the application with the condition that the material, both metal and wood, be painted and approved by staff. Mr. Bass seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

5. 121 East Clayton Street

COA-2017-02-441

Petitioner: Christopher Evans for Russell Edwards
Request: Storefront Renovation and Rear Modifications
Information: 171B5 A003, Downtown, C-D

Ms. Eskew presented the staff report with a recommendation to approve the application.

Agent / Owner: Chris Evans for Russell Edwards

In Favor: none

In Opposition: none

Discussion: Mr. Dekle said this is an exemplary application. He commended the architect for the work put into this project. This project represents the whole idea of the downtown historic district.

Motion: Mr. Doherty moved to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Cook seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

CONCEPTUAL PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW:

1. 629 Hill Street

COA-2017-03-628

Petitioner: Jeff Squier / JOMA Construction for Ben Brainard & Kira Ep
Request: Modifications and Accessory Building
Information: 122B2 J002, Cobbham, RS-8

Ms. Eskew presented the staff report. Since this is for conceptual review, it is submitted for comments only.

Agent / Owner: Jeff Squire

In Favor: none

In Opposition: none

Discussion: This house was probably built in the late 1800's as a Greek Revival, then later renovated to a Queen Ann. After being a rental since the 1960's, the applicant is bringing this to the HPC as a single family residence. There was significant work done to the house in 1998.

Suggestions from the Commission include:

- Replacing the porch with a window of consistent size and style of the others is appropriate.
- The French doors installed in the back be of a proportion appropriate to other openings in the house and have divided light.
- The replacement of the gable vents with windows is not appropriate. The gable vents are a strong decorative element of the Queen Ann renovation. It may be possible to add light to the side gables where needed.
- The deck behind the screened porch is appropriate. Find a handrail style that responds.

- The accessory structure is an appropriate response.
- Historically, the columns on a back porch were simplified and almost always had a chamfered edge.

2. 387 South Milledge Avenue

COA-2017-03-639

Petitioner: Lori Bork Newcomer / Bork Design, Inc. for Thomas H. and Ann C. Wilkins

Request: Major Addition

Information: 171C1 D008, Milledge, C-O (MAC)

Ms. Eskew presented the staff report. Since this is for conceptual review, it is submitted for comments only. It should be noted that this project will also come before the Planning Commission and County Commission for a Special Use application.

Agent / Owner: Joe Schmidt, architect; Lori Bork Newcomer, architect

In Favor: Joan Birch

In Opposition: Diana Jackson, Gabe Comstock

Discussion: Mr. Schmidt noted that the house is an 1860's structure with the porch being a neo-classical Revival addition from the early 20th century. It is proposed to accommodate a sorority; therefore, a major addition, site parking and landscaping is requested.

Ms. Bork Newcomer described two Landmark properties that are Greek houses – 250 South Milledge and 530 South Milledge. The Commission noted that one of these two properties was modified prior to designation.

Suggestions include:

- An addition of this scale will have a significant negative impact on this Landmark structure. It is not appropriate per the guidelines for the integrity of the district or the character of the house. The main structure should remain prominent. There was significant discussion regarding the scale of the rear addition and how to mitigate its impact.
- Ms. Bork-Newcomer noted that the gardens in the front would be preserved.
- It is necessary to maintain the sense of symmetry, which is a character defining feature of the property. Step in the wings to make sure that the columns stand significantly proud of the addition. Mr. Schmidt said that the 20 foot north side setback drives the asymmetry of the rear addition.
- Aesthetically, and in form, the addition needs to respond to the original house and aesthetics need to pick up the elements and details of the original structure – deviate enough to know that something has changed.
- Consider lengthening the hyphen (the original rear portico) and reducing the bedroom addition. Make sure that the importance of the hyphen/portico is not lost.
- Bring the portico back as a restoration project, allowing them to go further north to make up some of the footage, extending beyond the column line. Possibly create a corridor to create a stronger sense of separation.
- Consider a grand, yet subdued, exit from the house which would take the tenants through a glass atrium into a separate structure. This would help with the massing.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Designation Committee Report: The Committee did not meet this month.
2. Education Committee Report: The Committee did not meet this month.
3. Miscellaneous Announcements:
 - From the agenda setting meeting, discussion included having the Education Committee pick projects to include in the newsletter for examples of how the HPC's process works.
 - Mr. Reed discussed the demolition application on Milledge Circle. The HPC would like to take the position that the ninety day demolition review is pertinent in this case. Mr. Reed will research the house, supporting the case that it is an important property. He would like to cooperate with the Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation in a formal setting to address the Mayor and Commission on the number of demolition permits and delays. Questions include:
 - What happens after the ninety day delay passes?
 - What is the procedure to ensure a demolition request is considered for the full ninety days if warranted?Mr. Lonnee discussed how to plug in the HPC into the deliberation of the ninety day demolition hold. He also discussed developing a plan of action after analysis of the structure. He noted that the HPC can serve an educational role as well as a regulatory role; the Heritage Foundation has the ability to serve in an education and advocacy role.
 - Consider contacting the Board of Realtors for preservation-related training.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.