

City of Gulfport Florida
Historic Preservation Committee/Certified Local Government
Meeting
Wednesday, October 20, 2010

The Regular Meeting of the City of Gulfport Historic Preservation Committee was held on Wednesday, October 20, 2010, in the Gulfport Historical Museum, 5301 28th Avenue South, Gulfport, Florida.

Christopher Ross, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present were: Committee Members Carol Valdes, Cathy Culler and John Milford; Alternate Committee Member David Steinke; Vice Chairperson Mary Stull; and Chairperson Christopher Ross. Committee Member Deborah Frethem was not present.

Also present were Community Development Director Fred Metcalf, Principle Planner Michael Taylor, Vice Mayor Michele King and City Clerk Lesley DeMuth.

1. Discussion of the proposed Preservation Overlay District Ordinance.

Chairperson Ross advised that Vice Mayor King was invited to attend the Meeting to have a discussion on what the Committee is thinking and what she thinks since this is her Ward.

Chairperson Ross asked Vice Mayor King if she could provide an overview of what she knew about the District. Vice Mayor King stated originally this started as a way to make the downtown redevelopment district historic; to preserve the buildings and look of downtown Gulfport. She spoke on this area being within a flood zone and that having a historic ordinance in place, may allow some of the FEMA regulations to not apply. Vice Mayor King advised the Committee that the Planning Department has been working on an overlay for new development within this area which would make anything new that is built look older. Vice Mayor King felt the historic ordinance and the proposed overlay could work together to preserve what we have all been trying to keep.

Chairperson Ross explained what the Committee has been trying to do over the last few years and what they needed to have clarified is what are the advantages for this area. The issues which seem to be the most attractive to people who are expanding or remodeling is the relaxing of parking and FEMA regulations.

Suzanne Armbruster, a homeowner on the westside of 56th Street, stated her reason for being present was to ask if the redevelopment and historic area could be expanded as she is an owner of an historic home. Community Development Director Metcalf explained that she could apply for historic designation at this time, but this would not allow her to have a mixed use. He explained the approvals needed from the state and county to expand the current Waterfront

Redevelopment District and said that unfortunately it took two years to make the changes the City just made. Community Development Director Metcalf advised Ms. Armbruster that there may be something she can do from a home occupation standpoint, and he would be happy to talk with her about that.

Patsy, a twenty year resident, spoke on the need to put art back in the Art Walk if the City wanted to be known more as a historical/cultural designation. Committee Member Milford felt the combination of whatever it is now, brings thousands of people here on Friday nights.

Community Director Metcalf reviewed the City's current Design Guidelines Ordinance; a copy which was provided to the Committee, and spoke on the Design Standards/Conservation Overlay for that area. He stated the idea of the District was to have a list of structures that you would consider contributing and then Staff would have the required documentation if someone came in and wanted to get their property designated historic.

In discussions with the Committee on the current Historic Preservation Ordinance, Community Development Director Metcalf felt this Ordinance, which is the City's foundation, has some problems and was an excellent use of the Committee's time to review. Chairperson Ross felt the construction of a Preservation Overlay District Ordinance may not be necessary, and it may be best for the Committee to review this Ordinance and work with Staff on what they are doing.

Vice Mayor King suggested to the Committee if they are looking at a commercial historic ordinance, the one the City of St. Petersburg wrote for Central Avenue is probably something they should look at.

Community Director Metcalf stated that Mike Taylor will be attending the meetings as the City's Staff Representative.

In response to questions by Committee Member Steinke, Community Development Director Metcalf explained that within the District, there is only a small portion of it that is in the "V" Flood Zone; the remainder is in the "A" Flood Zone. The base floor elevation in the "V" Zone is 13 feet and the "A" Zone is in the vicinity of 12 feet. The City's Codes allow for a historic structure to get a variance to the requirements for elevation, and he explained that the difference between commercial and residential buildings is that a residential building has to be elevated. This does not mean that every elevated structure has to look like a FEMA house, and a commercial building can be flood proofed.

Committee Member Steinke asked if the Casino were to be completely damaged, would the City be able to build it back the way it is or would it have to be elevated. Community Development Director Metcalf said the City would have to comply with the flood requirements, either flood proofed or elevated.

In response to a question by Vice Mayor King about this applying if buildings are historic structures, Community Development Director Metcalf stated that if the building is totally gone, it is gone, and this is a different situation; everyone will have to start from scratch. Vice Mayor King spoke on the 50% rule for repairs and improvements in the flood zone. Community

Development Director Metcalf spoke on FEMA rating, and that he would like to push for flood proofing.

2. Discussion of Committee Member Terms.

City Clerk DeMuth reported that the City Council has reappointed John Milford, Deborah Frethem and Carol Valdes to the Committee for two year terms. The Committee will need to take action at the next meeting to fill the unexpired term of Woody Matthews. Two applications have been received from residents interested in serving; Judy Ryerson and Dolly Tickell.

3. Adjournment.

In response to a question by Chairperson Ross regarding a workshop this month, City Clerk DeMuth said this meeting was to be held if there had been a response from the owners of the Lincoln Cemetery for Historic Designation, and now that the Committee is going to review the Historic Preservation Ordinance, rather than move forward at this time with the Overlay District Ordinance, a workshop can be held with the City Council once the Committee has discussed and finalized recommended changes.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Date Approved: 11-17-10



Lesley DeMuth, City Clerk



Christopher Ross, Chairperson