

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Tuesday, April 12, 2022
Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Alan Mesecher.....Chairman
Robin Craig-Hunt..... Vice Chair
Susan Pennington..... Member
Kenneth WheelerMember

Members Absent:

Robert Manning.....Member

Staff Present:

Kelvin Knauf, Director of Planning & Community Development
Wendy Lloyd, Planning Secretary
Marvin Benoit, Building Official

City Council Members Present:

None

Chairman Mesecher called the meeting to order at 5:43 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Mesecher asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 8, 2022, regular meeting

Member Pennington motioned to approve
Vice Chair Craig-Hunt 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Betty Odom – 1004 N 6th Street, Orange: Ms. Odom stated one of the things I'd like to call to attention is a lot of seniors are having a really rough time in Orange. They're having a rough time with paying their utility bills. I've called several times to ask them to please send a bill. They stopped sending me a bill when I told them to take me off of the equal pay where they take your money out of your account. My bill went up. It was only supposed to be \$105 a month and it never changed but after the storm, they went up to \$600. Mine was \$105 and I couldn't pay any more than that. In fact, I couldn't pay \$600 because I'm retired. I had to go on and retire because I got sick. I'm not able to work anymore. I'm still under the doctors. Seniors just need help because you can't get anywhere when you call. I've had them hang up on me when I've tried to talk to them on the phone and I've been paying my bill every month. I haven't stopped. Sometimes I get an agency to pay my bill for me so I can buy my medicine because I can't buy both. I can't pay both of them. It's just really been hard because a lot of people are going through the same thing. I worked in the medical field for 11 ½ years and they

took our retirement. I don't get retirement. All I have is a social security check. When I was working, I worked a lot and I was able to pay an electric bill but now I'm just not able to pay it because they keep going up. This month they called my daughter in Houston, my granddaughter in Houston and they told her that they're going to cut my electricity off in a few days. So, she said why are you cutting her utilities off when she paid her bill every month. I pay my bill every month and if I can't pay it myself, I get Friends Helping Friends one month, Ms. Jensen paid it. So, the money was in the bank. They sent the money back to the bank and said they would cut my bill off. They wouldn't take my money. They sent it back to the bank and I've never heard of a company doing that. So, these are some of the things that are going on and why we wanted to go with the solar system because we won't be paying if get the solar. We won't have to pay Entergy. We will pay solar and the bill would be cheaper. I just wanted to explain what's going on. I just don't know what to do.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

Consider an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Pedro Ibarra to make repairs to the primary structure located at 505 W. Park Avenue

Mr. Knauf stated this is a structure that experienced some fire damage. Mr. Ibarra would like to do some improvements to it and you have that in your application as far as what he would like to replace the rotted boards, paint the top part Birdseye Maple and the trim and the bottom white. In looking at this house or duplex, and I've asked Marvin Benoit our building official to be at the meeting tonight, there's a lot of damage to this house and more than what he is requesting to be fixed. Some of the work he's done does not meet code. Is that right Marvin? Mr. Benoit stated yes. Mr. Knauf stated we told Mr. Ibarra about the meeting when we met with him next week and told him that the HPC would be tonight at 5:30 here in this room and I don't see him here tonight. But Marvin do you want to just talk a little bit about what all is wrong with this structure. Mr. Benoit stated a couple things. He's done some work if you notice he did change out the windows. He didn't put the window frames back in properly. There's large gaps that's going to allow water intrusion into the house. The windows that he got to replace may not have been exactly the right size. The big thing on this house is the roof is in disrepair. He did put new shingles on the roof but he didn't fix the decking and so the roof is very wavy. It actually has bows in it and so in order for him to redo this house, he would have to completely tear off all that roofing, redo the decking and start there. The house is in a special flood hazard. Here in December, we got a new flood map and now instead of the base flood elevation being 8 feet, it's 9. So, this house he would actually have to pay someone to elevate this house in order to be in compliance in order to do the work. So that's going to be another large expense. Right here you can see the roof in the back. There's damage to the roof. Just because you put new shingles on top of shingles, it doesn't solve the problem. Unfortunately, the repairs of this house just like when I write it up for the judge on a substandard report, the repairs to repair this house far exceed the value of the house. Our advice to him when he came to visit with us was that he recovers the windows that he put in and then just go ahead and allow the city to demolish the house and clean the lot. That house is in really bad shape.

Member Wheeler stated what was he doing. Was he living there? Mr. Benoit stated no he has 44 rental properties here in Orange. He does bare minimum and rents them out to people. This house here actually that caught fire, the inside is all burnt, still smoky. I think he's just trying to slap some paint on it and put some more people in there. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated and that's dangerous. Mr. Knauf stated the sheetrock has been pulled off on the inside from the pictures I saw. It just exposed the studs. Chairman Mesecher stated and the

fire weakened all the rafters. Mr. Benoit stated right and that's what I'm saying redone because a lot of those rafters need to be replaced.

Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated I'm new to the board and kind of new to all this. So, you're with the city and how does this play out that your involved with this. Is it because this was a house that the city was deeming that needs to be demolished? I don't understand the process. Mr. Knauf stated well the way the process works is for any improvements in the historic district then there's a Certificate of Appropriateness. If it's something to the primary structure then the commission has to approve that and if that's done then they have to take out a building permit and then Marvin approves or denies the building permit and Marvin works for me. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated the city part is the part I'm learning. Mr. Knauf stated but on this house, he's not proposing a complete redo and everything that needs to be done even on the exterior. He's not proposing to fix everything that needs to be fixed so that's why I wanted Marvin here to explain the whole thing on this. My suggestion is that you not piecemeal this thing that either you table it or turn it down and require him to come back with a comprehensive approach if he's going to fix it up. He's got some major expenses to do that. Mr. Benoit stated on the other side there's a group of folks that are code enforcement and they go around town and they're looking for houses that are substandard that are really not fit for people to live in. This is a house that we would deem substandard so the police officers take me with them to go out and look and I look at the house from a structural standpoint and to look to see what it's going to take to fix it correctly. That's what I'm saying, on this particular house the repairs to do this house correctly far exceed the value that's on the appraisal district website. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated of course if he was willing to do that it would be a moot point. Member Wheeler stated I think we need to do a denial of this request. He's welcome to come back with a different proposal to do more. Mr. Knauf stated now at some point I think we will take this to a hearing and the judge may very well declare it substandard and that's when we come back to this commission with a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated but what he's asking for is within the realm of our part. I agree with what you're saying but technically what he's asking for us to refuse it. Mr. Knauf stated it's not enough. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated how do you do that. Member Wheeler stated his request is inappropriate for what is needed.

Member Pennington stated did he own this house at the time of the fire. Mr. Benoit stated yes he was the landowner. He got in a little squabble with the renters and so he claims they set the fire. The fire station is not showing any signs of arson. What they are saying it was an electrical short that caused that fire. Member Pennington stated I just know that it was in that shape for a long time before the fire.

Member Wheeler motioned to deny his request but welcome to come back with another proposal
Member Pennington 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Consider an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Sergio Arizager to make repairs to the primary structure located at 1301 W. John Avenue

Mr. Knauf stated the applicant is here. They would like to make some repairs to this structure.

Sergio Arizager – 1301 W John, Orange, Tx: Mr. Arizager stated I'm trying to replace the 6 by 6. It has 4 by 8's but they were rotten so I'm going to replace all of them and all the rotten boards, part of the siding and then level the house, fix the deck, and then fix the inside. The inside is really just the outside, the windows and everything. Mr. Knauf stated also the paint. Mr. Arizager stated yes get it nice. Mr. Knauf stated do you anticipate repainting it. Mr. Arizager stated yes I work in construction so that's why I wanted permits. Mr. Benoit stated will you replace the windows. Mr. Arizager stated yes I have everything; I just need a permit. Member Wheeler stated I guess we need to define a little more on the Certificate of Appropriateness. You're just starting to repair the 6x6 rotten posts and rotted wood from foundation and add termite shields. I understand that but before we can approve all of it. Mr. Arizager stated I was going to go in parts. Whenever I get a permit and get the money, I'll fix those and then get another permit. I didn't know I should get it for all of it. Member Wheeler stated is that typically the way it's done in stages. Mr. Knauf stated normally what we'd like is for people to present a whole plan on how they're going to bring the whole structure up to code before we issue the permit. We prefer a plan to steps you know here's the sequence of events, here's the timelines by which each sequence is going to happen and here's what we are going to use to do the work is normally what we like to do. Not to say these folks are that way but we get kind of burned from people that get into it and realize how much work and money it is and then they stop and then we have to go work it as a substandard building after they've made investments in it and it gets just messy.

Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated well the roof looks like it's in good shape. Ms. Martinez stated the roof is new. Mr. Arizager stated everything is and we're still paying for it. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated and are you all aware that there are certain colors that you can use to paint the house. You can't just paint it any color. Mr. Arizager stated no. Well, that's the thing, we were trying to get permits and she was telling us what we need like I changed the electrical box and they gave me how it needs to be done and everything. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated right so if you could do that because that's on the city side. So, what our side is more the structure aesthetically to stay within a historic look because this is clearly a historic house and can be a gorgeous home. It's beautiful. The roof looks fabulous. So, I personally would rather see them tell us the whole thing, colors, everything before we would approve it. Ms. Martinez stated do you have a color that you use. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated there's a complete chart that you can get from Kelvin so there's many to choose from, not just one. But we just want you to stay within those historic colors. Ms. Martinez stated well we don't know that yet. We just want to fix it.

Member Pennington stated is this house in the floodplain on the new flood map. Mr. Benoit stated I'd have to look it up. I don't know off the top of my head but I've been to that house because whenever they did the repairs after Laura the roof was damaged, the whole electrical panel was all tore off the house so they've been working on the house a little bit at a time. Mr. Knauf stated one of the things we do is we go out to the house and we make a list of things that they need to do to bring it up to code, isn't that right Marvin. Mr. Benoit stated that's correct. Mr. Knauf stated have we done that with this. Mr. Benoit stated no. Mr. Knauf stated that's something we probably need to do on a staff level is actually meet with you out at the house and let Marvin go through it with you and say here's what all needs to happen. Mr. Arizager stated yeah let us know what we need to change and everything. I know the windows are the old windows. They just assemble with the trim. I know if I take them out we have to put the new frame, the boards at the top and the headers. Mr. Knauf stated now you understand on things like the windows, we want you to replace that the new windows look like the old windows and not change the style. Mr. Arizager stated yes the 6 foot the same as those. Everything is

going to be the same size. I just got to reframe it because those they assemble with the trim. I work in construction and I do inspection on houses so if you tell me it needs to be code, I know what I need on code. Mr. Knauf stated now are you fixing this up to rent. Mr. Arizager stated no. Ms. Martinez stated it's for us. Mr. Knauf stated and I'm getting the direction from the commission that you don't want to see things piecemealed. You want to see things kind of the whole picture. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated right he may have to work on it in stages but we want to see the complete picture of the stages which includes the painting. Member Pennington stated I have no problem giving him a permit to do a termite shield. I mean I would hate for him to have to wait a year to put termite shields in. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated or maybe approve this with the understanding on the next phase come back. Mr. Knauf stated ok we can do that. Mr. Arizager stated I have the 6 by 6 posts, the termite shields and everything. I was just waiting for the permit. Member Pennington stated I just want to make sure you are getting it high enough you can get insurance on it. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated we are talking height when you are leveling it. Make sure it's high enough with the new standards. Mr. Arizager stated right on the front I'm going to raise it up and that's where I'll take the level back. Mr. Benoit stated we'll come out and go look at it.

Member Wheeler stated if this passes and you'll go ahead and have the opportunity to do your foundation work. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated what you had stated here. Member Pennington stated do you have the windows already? Mr. Arizager stated yes I have them on the side of the house. Member Pennington stated so do you want us to add that to this? Mr. Arizager stated yes. Mr. Knauf stated replace with like windows. Mr. Arizager stated yes I will go 4 foot up and put plywood and then put the Hardie siding and then like the rest of the siding of the house, I'll buy and replace it. They have those in Orange County. They don't have those nowhere else. Member Wheeler stated so you are going to put Hardie on it. Mr. Arizager stated just from 4 foot up. Member Wheeler stated just from the foundation down. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated but the windows are the same size. Mr. Arizager stated 3 by 6.

Member Pennington motioned to approve COA with the addition of 3 by 6 foot windows being replaced with understanding they will come back with proposal for paint colors and any other structural repairs

Vice Chair Craig-Hunt 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Discussion and possible action on housing styles allowed in the historic districts

Mr. Knauf stated one of the things as my memo says in the historic overlay zoning district ordinances there's really not much discussion about housing styles as far as what's allowed in the historic district and what we are trying to preserve. I think it becomes kind of problematic whenever we get rehabilitation, new construction and try to imagine is this what we want or not without having some kind of standards or at least maybe some pictures of something to compare it to and put the proposal up to some kind of standard and go yeah pretty close or not close at all or whatever. So, what I did is I went on the internet and found this site called oldhouses.com that talks about the different styles. What I'm looking for from the commission is maybe go through these pictures and yeah we want that or no we don't want that. We think that fits in or that doesn't fit in with what's existing in the historic districts both of them the Old Orange Historic District and the Dupont Bennett Homes Historic District. If we could maybe just kind of go through these one at a time and go yay or nay. Is that acceptable or do you just want to throw out and say we like everything but these kind.

Member Wheeler stated we can maybe broaden it a little bit. Like anything or styles before the 20th century or something like that or something in that time frame because that's the Old Orange Historical District established in 1874. I'm just thinking like that either prior to the 20th century styles and most of these are that you have here. I mean we have quite a variety in the historical district. I don't think any of us want to see another brick home built like we have on Pine Street that is abandoned now. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated the campfire house. It's red brick ranch. I agree. Member Wheeler stated it doesn't necessarily have to be wood structured but I don't think we want a long brick ranch style house. I guess anything prior to 1960 style. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated well you can't say that because 1940 is ranch. If you look over here, here's a 1937 International looks extremely modern but it is in that time frame. Look at Frank Lloyd Wright and some of his stuff so if you just say 1960 and before you're going to get some other things thrown in. Great research by the way Kelvin. You did a great job on this.

Member Pennington stated my concern is and I like these bungalow styles because that's what we're seeing being built. I was most upset when that last house was built on Park Street where it's 3 foot off the ground and there's no skirting because to me the skirting is part of the old area architecture. When you look at all these old bungalow styles that you have here whether they're a craftsman or California or whatever, they all and I think that's what brought this up because we're not happy with these GLO houses that are being built and they say they're this period. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated no they're shotgun homes. Some of them are that look like the Craftsman like there's one on 10th Street is very nice but then that one on Park is just not very nice. It could be if it had the skirting and character. We have these new flood maps going in that are requiring everything to be higher. I mean my house is 3 ½ feet off the ground but you can't tell it's 3 ½ feet off the ground.

Mr. Knauf stated in my mind if we choose these styles it will help us with the GLO. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated the problem I have with those GLO houses is that they all are looking the same. You can pick them out at a distance and in my opinion they're not a cottage, they're a shotgun house like row house that they used to build during the 1940s or 1950s after the war. Their trim work is not attractive. There's no extra embellishment whatsoever. There's no skirting. There's no garage even though I get that it's quite an expense. They look too cookie cutter and they're just popping up.

Member Wheeler stated I agree. We could definitely add some character details. The styles okay. The format but I think it needs to be enhanced with a different color trim. Some of them are all the same color. My concern 3rd Street we've got 8 or 9 side by side, porch on one side, porch on the other and it's the row houses. I don't want to see that happen in our neighborhood again if we can control that then that's one of the reasons to go through this process is to keep those style look-a-likes, they have to be so many feet apart or whatever. I don't know how that works with the city codes, but I consider that an apartment complex. That's what it looks like. They swap them back and forth but they're all chained together. I guess they have a firewall between them, I'm assuming. I'm saying 3rd Street. I might be wrong. Chairman Mesecher stated there's like 3 or 4 units together. That's on Burton across from the housing. Mr. Knauf stated yeah those are outside the historic district. Mr. Benoit stated that is the Housing Authority and they're duplexes. There's 3 duplexes right in row but it is north of the historic district. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated well regardless that could very well happen right here in the historic district if we don't put some type of guideline for when this comes up again. That last house that ended up getting approved, I think we all were kind of shell shocked at the fact that there was nothing more that could be done because we did not have something in our ordinances or on the books on what to expect. Don't we have something where garages have to be set back? Mr. Knauf stated I don't think so. Chairman Mesecher stated I think on the driveways in front of all the GLO houses are terrible.

Member Pennington stated Kelvin do you have any idea on how we can word something? All of these houses are good until you get to page 49 in the packet. It says modern house style. Mr. Knauf stated yeah to me that doesn't fit in the historic district at all. Member Pennington stated the only one I don't want to see built anymore is those 1940 Ranch. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated so on page 49 and the only one on 50 is that International. It's the 1937 International and then the 1940 Ranch would be a no. Then the very first one on the modern house style page. So, are we just approving all of these except for? Mr. Knauf stated ok yes so you like them all except some of the modern house styles. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated right not the one on page 49, then the one in middle on page 50. Mr. Knauf stated the 1937 International. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated and then on page 51, the 1940 Ranch. Also, the 1903 Prairie Style. Mr. Knauf stated what about the Spanish Classic. In Colonial, the 1918 Spanish Eclectic. Member Pennington stated you know there was a house that was pretty much like that on Green Avenue and it got torn down. They called it old Mexico. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated there's also that one over on Pine. Mr. Knauf stated so you're ok with this. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated I'm ok with that. I don't personally like Tudor homes because Tudor to me was not American. It was English that they brought over here but it still fits. It fits the criteria. I just want to be clear about something. On that First-Period English on page 31, will that be confused as an unpainted house because if so, let's say no. Mr. Knauf stated it is unfinished. I'm with you on that one. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated I think all the others seem ok. Mr. Knauf stated what about this Gothic Revival. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated that's one that we were talking about if someone wanted to build that, we'd be ok with it. Mr. Knauf stated so you're ok with it. It looks like a church. It's not necessarily homes but also businesses. Member Pennington stated that's my next question. The rumor has been going around that the Stark Foundation is going to tear down the old Baptist church. Mr. Knauf stated I have not heard that. Member Pennington stated do they have to come to us for appropriateness. Mr. Knauf stated yes. They can't tear it down without a COA. To answer your question Susan, I think what I'll do is I'll work with the city attorney on this and we can actually incorporate these pictures into the ordinance. That's perfectly legal. Use some of this verbiage here as shown in these descriptions in the examples below and that's where you would incorporate the pictures into the ordinance. I would like to do more of that with our ordinances, incorporating pictures, diagrams. Member Wheeler stated at the same time, is there any way to work with the attorney and try to keep the apartment style or HUD style group homes or group collections at a minimum. Mr. Knauf stated I think so. I think we can put a regulation in there that says there shall not be any of the same style within or side by side or adjacent to each other. Member Pennington stated there's a set of apartments or townhouses that they've built in The Heights and they're gorgeous. They are all different but they're stuck together. To me that's the model we would want to follow.

Mr. Knauf stated so what I can do is I can put these pictures on a big board so that as we get things, we can have them in the room here. When we get things we can go ok your proposal maybe with a few tweaks or something matches that style where we have more of a visual aid and guide. Member Pennington stated I think that would really help because the government houses that we've approved, we've said put shutters on it but we just didn't catch or they didn't tell us it was 4 feet off the ground. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated so how do we put those standards onto the GLO houses. Mr. Knauf stated well I think we work with the General Land Office on that and that's the next item. Mr. Benoit stated any of those with the General Land Office when they send in for approval, if there's anything in our ordinance because I had to go back to them because we require more concrete then they wanted to provide because in our ordinance it requires that we have 2 parking spaces and it requires that each parking space be 9 feet by 20 feet. Well, they were trying to come in with smaller driveways. I had to show them in the ordinance and I had to provide the ordinance. Any changes that you wanted to develop, if you want these houses to have skirting because from here on out they are all going to be elevated and if you want them to have skirting, we just need to put that in the ordinance and then all I have to do is

provide them a copy of the ordinance and they'll make whatever changes we tell them. Member Pennington stated these are small lots and when you have that much concrete it looks like the front yard is concrete and that's against our ordinance. I know its for one ordinance but it's kind of against ours, the historic one. Now when you drive down Park, concrete, concrete, concrete. Mr. Benoit stated I guess if there wants to be an exception in the historic district for the parking area. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated but they also can't park on the grass. Isn't that a city ordinance? Mr. Knauf stated no, only in the historic districts. Mr. Benoit stated those 20x20 pads are throughout the whole city and that's why it looks so much because they are trying to get a house usually onto a 50 foot lot and most of the time push the house back and they're trying to put that concrete right up in the front up to the sidewalk and out into the street but that's because it's what our ordinance requires them to do.

Mr. Knauf stated ok so to wrap up the last item, I'll work on the ordinance and everything and then we will schedule it where Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council have a public hearing and I'd appreciate if you guys could attend and kind of lend support and maybe even explain to P&Z and Council more what revisions. I don't anticipate a lot of resistance to it but I think it's always helpful. But we will let you know when that is.

Discussion and possible action on adopting regulations concerning the requirements for houses funded and constructed through federal grant programs

Mr. Knauf stated on my discussion with the GLO, I've had some discussion with them and they did seem interested in working with us on if we make ordinance changes and things to maintain and make the houses to what we are wanting. They would actually like to come to Orange and drive through the historic districts. I will arrange that where they would actually pay a visit. I would like to maybe even have a special meeting by the commission when they're in town and not only give them the tour but then come and talk to the commission and us about what our concerns are and what we would like to see. They asked me about the process and everything and I told them what's been happening is that these builders, they go and get GLO approval and the GLO gives them a timeline by which to get it accomplished. They're not going to have an open ended date. So, these builders come to us and say we got to get this thing built within 45 days otherwise it runs out. Well, the city is not going to deny somebody a new house when their house has been damaged by flood or hurricane. That makes us look bad and so it's almost like we're compelled. They said oh. They went back and checked their records and they have since changed that to where GLO will not approve anything until the local government approves it first. They were approving things before the local government approved it and they went oh no. Member Pennington stated that's not our intent. To me what we require only helps the homeowner have a nicer looking house. Mr. Knauf stated like I explained to them, it's not just the homeowner it's the people that live around them. Chairman Mesecher stated we will be overrun with all these GLO houses. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated yes that's the concern. Mr. Knauf stated and that's why we want to address it now, ordinances and things to try to avoid having that. But I think by taking away from the builders saying I've got this deadline if it's not approved then they lose the house. I think that is a huge step. It doesn't put us under the gun where we're forced to choose you get the house or you don't and it's awfully hard to explain. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated we never want to deny someone to have a home. Mr. Knauf stated I think that was a very positive step. I'll keep working with Jill Seed and Shonda Mace with GLO and see if we can't make some time for them to come down. It might be during the day when they're here.

WORKSHOP

Conduct a workshop on the installation of solar panels on properties located in a historic district

Mr. Knauf stated I know on the last meeting I loaded up with a whole lot of information on what other cities and trying to find out a whole lot of information about what other cities are doing in historic sites. For cities of our size I could just not find anything. They are pretty silent. I whittled a lot of that information down and tried to do Texas cities with San Antonio and Houston and so that's in your packet. Maybe because the place to start is just start with that and we can always change it, tweak it, reject it.

Member Wheeler stated I definitely want the ones in need to be able to save on electricity. Of course, we're here to keep the historical district in the historical era. I've looked at this a lot and studied this a lot. I don't know what they would be furnishing would meet the cosmetic appeal that we would want or style that we would want. Those are very expensive. They get very expensive real quick. I know that they have them that you can actually put in your backyard that would do as much as siding the houses and they're on stands and they can be fenced in with a privacy fence in the backyard that is if they have the unshaded backyard. That's the concern. The one that we looked at in the picture before, you can see if from every angle that you drive up to it that the panels are on the roof. Something in those situations if we can't hide the panels in the back out of public's eye, that's where I have concerns. I know it can be done. They're not that more expensive to do it that way by putting them on stands in the backyard. You might lose some backyard over it but at the same time the cosmetic appeal is much better if you can put a privacy fence around it in the backyard rather than on the roof in front of everybody. They have them made that they would definitely appeal in a restricted neighborhood like ours but they're real expensive and I don't think government subsidy will help you with that. Those are concerns of mine. I hope that we can work with the owners that would be assisting in giving these a plan in the historical district proper that we could possibly if they're going to be in the public's eye, they would have to be on the ground on stands with an enclosed fence. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated I think that what you're saying is that they would not be in the public's eye. Member Wheeler stated yes ones that would be in the public's eye.

Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated I'm to the opinion that in reverse to the words that you shared with us because you definitely shared your heart in what's happening and please understand that the way we feel about these, it's not that we don't have sympathy for what you're going through. It's not maybe a matter of if but when that I might be in your shoes as we get older and it's terrible and I'm very sorry. I just wanted to make note of what you expressed. Ms. Odom stated what he just said about being in the backyard and enclosed, I would have enough room because my lot is big on each side. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated do you have fencing that would shield it so no one sees it? Ms. Odom stated no I don't have an enclosed fence and that's something else I wanted to bring to the committee. I'm having problems with the lot in back of me. All kind of animals are running in my yard. They have trees and they have grass and every now and then somebody mows but it's a mess. The trees in the other yard are growing in my fence. Mr. Knauf stated we can have code enforcement look at it. That's not really this commission. We've got a brand new code enforcement officer coming on too so we will be up to 3. Ms. Odom stated the house next to me there was a garage and it's about to fall down. Part of it is on my property but they finally tore it down because I went several places around town trying to get help to get it torn down. Well, it's down now but for a historical street, it looks horrible. They have all kinds of stuff in the back of the house and the back of the house faces the side of me. They've got all kind of things out there, a commode, toilet. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated Kelvin would you be able to get her the information that she needs. Mr. Knauf stated yes.

Member Pennington stated the San Antonio guidelines are what we need. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated I do have a problem when they say not highly visible. I'm working in Galveston right now and I'm in a historic district that actually has them but I don't know what Galveston's historic commission or if they even have one. But I will say the only thing when you say not highly visible, still means that they're visible. I've seen some as I've taken the dogs for a walk when I had my dogs with me. When you're going on a walk and you're looking at these lovely homes and then all of sudden bam there's one of those solar. It's still visible. It just immediately takes away from the structure in my opinion. I just want to make sure that they're not visible whatsoever. Saying that it's not highly visible but you see them. That's the only thing I have. I just don't want to see them because they're not historic and even when they lay flat on the roof, they are still very visible. You still can see them. Mr. Knauf stated so when you say visible, you mean visible from the street or visible from any angle. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated my opinion is any angle. Member Wheeler stated from public side. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated right if they can only see them from their own back yard then that's fine. But that becomes very persnickety because these 2 story houses and you can see them from the other street or you see them down through an alley. So, I think it becomes a very slippery slope. That's my main concern that this opens up a floodgate.

Member Wheeler stated I think if they're not able to keep them out of the public side by putting them on the roof, then they should be placed on a stand and a privacy fence. A lot of this refers to that but they say minimize visibility. A lot of words that stand up but the San Antonio one is very good. Have we looked or asked Galveston theirs. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt no I don't know but I can check while I'm there. Mr. Knauf stated yeah if you can get a copy that would be great. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated yeah I just worry about words with like limited visibility. What your limited visibility and what your limited visibility is very subjective. That bothers me. I'm not saying that San Antonio doesn't have the best of the guidelines but the not highly visible, the words that minimizing, I see that as a problem. We're going to run into some roadblocks with that.

Chairman Mesecher stated The Oaks in Beaumont historic district, I've been through there and haven't seen any solar panels. Mr. Knauf stated I didn't really find anything there. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated there's a girl that works at the French museum in Beaumont. Her name is Shelby but she'll know. She knows all that's going on in Beaumont and if they have any regulations, she would know. I'm sure it's online. Mr. Knauf stated probably, I just haven't been able to find it.

Mr. Knauf stated what I would suggest is let me take a stab at an ordinance using the San Antonio guidelines but with the requirement that they be on the ground and not be placed on the roof. Let me try to wordsmith it. Member Wheeler stated I mean they can be on the roof but out of sight. Vice Chair Craig-Hunt stated but that's virtually almost impossible. Member Pennington stated if someone was to tell me I couldn't put solar panels up, I would not be happy because my electric bill in the winter is \$600 and if somebody was giving me solar panels and telling me I can't put them up. I sympathize with you because my electric bill is where I can hardly pay it. On the other hand, I'm on this committee to preserve the look of the historic district but I think we have to hit some kind of happy middle ground. Mr. Knauf stated yeah I think that's under what kind of conditions can they do it. You know the orientation of the house itself; I don't know if it's on the ground because of the shadow of the house and all that kind of stuff and how that's going to affect them either. I think probably what I'm hearing is you don't want to ban them outright but just want to restrict where they can be located to try to preserve the historic look. I'll take a stab at an ordinance and then bring that back to you. We won't take it to P&Z and Council until you guys are satisfied with it.

Anna Thibodeaux – 812 N 3rd, Orange: Ms. Thibodeaux stated have you all discussed that now. Mr. Knauf stated you tabled it last month. That came before the commission last month and they tabled it because they wanted to talk more about the regulation of solar panels generally. I think it's still tabled, both of yours until we get this worked out and then that will give you some direction as far as solar. Member Wheeler stated yes we are just trying to have this workshop that we're having now and discussion that we're having now to determine a way that we can minimize the view of those on the roof.

Member Pennington motioned to adjourn

Vice Chair Craig-Hunt 2nd

Chairman Mesecher adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.