

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Tuesday, September 12, 2023
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present:

Robert Manning.....Chairman
Bridget Trawhon..... Member
Codie Vasquez.....Member
Kenneth Wheeler.....Member

Members Absent:

Robin Craig-Hunt..... Vice Chair

Staff Present:

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

City Council Members Present:

None

Chairman Manning called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Manning asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 8, 2023, regular meeting

Member Vasquez motioned
Member Trawhon 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

Consider and possible action on a finding of no significance for a structure located at 1409 Main Avenue as part of the Orange County Housing Buyout Program

Mr. Knauf stated if you'll remember this was brought to you last month and you tabled it because you wanted us to find some more information about this property to see if it had any historical significance. I contacted the Heritage Museum and they didn't find any historical significance. I also contacted Margaret Toal as she's a local historian and she did not see any historical significance of this property either. Also, this is part of the buyout program by which the property will be demolished and it has to remain vacant forever after that because that is part of the grant requirements.

Chairman Manning stated I drove by this several times. What is surrounding this? Mr. Knauf stated other houses beside it and across the street.

Chairman Manning asked for any discussion. Member Wheeler stated I appreciate your effort.

Member Vasquez motioned to approve no historical significance

Member Wheeler 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Consider and possible action on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Siblings Helping Siblings to demolish a structure located at 504 Park Avenue

Mr. Knauf stated these next items are all kind of related. They're all owned by Taurian Brue. These are located on 4th Street north of Park Avenue and also on Park Avenue and 4th Alley. They're all houses that were similarly designed and built at the same time. Mrs. Brue came before us last year and got permission to rehabilitate them. She has been rehabilitating 2 of the houses. At that point, Mrs. Brue was intending to repair the other ones but now I understand has decided that it's not economically feasible to do that. So, the rest of these involve either demolishing existing houses that can't be economically repaired and then building new houses and then there's a couple vacant lots. One where a house previously burned down and then another vacant lot. But the others would involve demolishing existing structures and building new structures and Mrs. Brue would like to build the new structures the same as what she's done on the current ones.

Taurian Brue – PO Box 2854 Humble, TX: Mrs. Brue stated they're all going to resemble the first houses that you see with the newer ones. Not only is it not economical but it's not safe. They tried to level to the FEMA requirements to raise them and that was not safe. They had a truck to put the beams under it and all that at the same time. So, I would like to get them all rebuilt like that which is not as expensive as if I had them torn down and built back the same style. It will still resemble the historical look that it had at first but I only have 2 things to add that I did not put on there. One of them is because it's so high and the way the piping and stuff is, I know it's PVC but I don't want the dogs to come under there and I don't know if it would be part of historical code if we had some kind of like gating to go around the bottom. Member Vasquez stated like skirting. Mrs. Brue stated yes because it definitely sits up way high. The other one is once the project is complete, I wanted to fence off. At that point it would be 9 or 10 houses and just fence them off. I know before I owned it Mr. Mello had them originally and had it fenced off because it was a huge area. I didn't want to have to come back before the commission and wanted to add that in now. Mr. Knauf stated now are you asking for each property to be fenced with side fences or like one side fence and a big, long back fence like around the perimeter? Mrs. Brue stated yes just one big one around. Chairman Manning stated now the fencing is just an application through your area right? Mr. Knauf stated right I can approve administratively on the fence. Chairman Manning stated there's code and ordinances for fencing on the heights and all that stuff. Mrs. Brue stated so I don't have to come before the commission. Mr. Knauf stated no.

Member Wheeler stated on the rebuilding, I know one of them you replaced the bottom skirting with the flare and I know the ones that you're proposing to tear down also has the skirting. Will you be doing that to these new structures? Mrs. Brue stated yes so like when I first came to the meeting. Each house the way they were originally had to go back the same style with the skirts. Some have them and some do not. I think that one in the back has it and another one. Member Wheeler stated yes I think one didn't but 2 of them did. Mrs. Brue stated yes so some

have it and some didn't. So, exactly how it was taken we have the contractors to put it back exactly the same and the request for the little arches at the top. Member Vasquez stated the corbels. Mrs. Brue stated yes that was supposed to go back. All of them actually have them but some may be missing a few due to floods and hurricanes but that was one of the requirements and the ones that did have the flare skirts had to remain. Member Wheeler stated so what type of skirting were you planning to put there? Is it going to be board? Mrs. Brue stated they have like a oh I don't know the technical name. Chairman Manning stated the lathe. Mr. Knauf stated lattice. Chairman Manning stated yes it's the lathe that goes like this and has the holes in it. Member Trawhon stated yes lattice work.

Chairman Manning stated I would like to say that I appreciate the effort that has gone into recreating some of the historical aspects of those homes. There's been some detail thought put into that. I would like to ask though. There's one picture here where it looks like these have been completed for a while and there's quite a bit of debris still around the place. Mr. Brue stated it's getting cleaned up. Mr. Knauf stated they have not received their COs yet. Chairman Manning stated I just noticed all the grass growing up. Mr. Brue stated oh it's down now. All of that has been cut. Mrs. Brue stated yes that's an old picture. Mr. Brue stated we had to get all those bricks and stuff out yesterday because they were supposed to take them. Mrs. Brue stated we still have to go through the second part. The second part will be the demo which we already had a proposed contract and they'll be going through and cleaning out that whole entire part which we did before this. It looked like a horrible city dump before this. So just that part cost a bundle. Chairman Manning stated I think what we are talking about right now is the demolition of the structure at 504. Mr. Knauf stated right that's the actual item you are on. Mrs. Brue stated so it's going to be a complete demo of 504 & 506 Park & 508 4th Alley. So, everything in that yellow with the exception of 1009 and 1011.

Member Wheeler stated I noticed on the ones proposed to be demo'd they have windows. Are you planning to go back with windows or leave a blank spot? Chairman Manning stated oh at the top, the attic vent. Mr. Brue stated it wasn't attached in the inside. Member Wheeler stated I think cosmetically it makes it a little bit different. Mr. Brue stated well we will put the trim like Mr. Marvin said. Mr. Knauf stated yes it will be a fake one but will look like that. Member Wheeler stated I admire you for what you've done.

Mr. Brue stated what about those alleyways. I'm getting tired of us cleaning up other people's trash. They throw old beds and pipes and everything you could imagine in those alleyways. Chairman Manning stated what alleyways are you talking about? Mrs. Brue stated 508 4th Alley and 1011. Right there where that brick slab is at. Mr. Brue stated at first it was chained off behind the houses but I think someone cut it off. Chairman Manning stated is that a city street alley. Mr. Knauf stated I don't think there is a city alley there. The alley is 4th Alley that runs east and west. That's a city alley. We can send the grapple truck down there every so often to clean that up. Member Vasquez stated so when there is debris dumped there they need to contact the city. Mr. Knauf stated right. Now the grapple truck is on a regular route. We have 3 of them and they're on regular routes. Chairman Manning stated are we talking about illegal dumping. Mr. Brue stated oh all the time. Mrs. Brue stated yes and even for us to clear it, it took between 12 to 15 40 foot dump trucks full for the yard just to clear the property. Chairman Manning stated I'm not code enforcement or anything but we have some illegal dumping that's near our house every once in a while and I just call the city. Mr. Knauf stated now if there were some Ring cameras on the back of those houses that could maybe you know. Mrs. Brue stated they will be coming. I'm hoping and praying that once it gets demo'd and everything comes out and they see it's rebuilding that it will stop. Mr. Knauf stated and maybe having people living there who can keep an eye on it or if they see it, then they call the police department. Member Vasquez stated we had a lot of that after the flood because a lot of people didn't have insurance and couldn't afford to get someone to come haul away debris so they were finding illegal places to dump it. Hopefully you won't find that amount again. It could have been left over. Mr. Knauf stated and what we found is when we come down on people for not keeping a

yard up then they go find city property to dump it on and then it becomes the city's problem. Chairman Manning stated also needs to be said that actions like what you're doing and improving an area also helps with that. It was near an abandoned lot. It was a place where people would dump things. So, you improve the living standards and people quit doing that. At least in that area. They'll find somewhere else to do it.

Mr. Benoit stated I hate to be the bad guy but somewhere on the site plan we need parking. Each of those dwellings will require 2 parking places. You may have to come in from the back alley and put some parking in the back but somewhere you have to have parking because 4th Street is not wide enough to park on the side of the street. Mrs. Brue stated so each house out front actually has a gravel one. Mr. Benoit stated it needs to be concrete or asphalt. I did see on one of the new houses it looks like they did put a culvert in. So, if you can work out something in the front that's good but there will have to be parking because you can't park on the street. Mrs. Brue stated so you said concrete or asphalt what are the specifications from like the city sidewalk. Mr. Benoit stated each parking slot has to be 20 feet long and 9 feet wide.

Chairman Manning stated so where we're out all of these items, we're talking about certificate of appropriateness to either demolish or to construct. So, all of the code stuff we can agree here is historically appropriate for these actions. The rest of that work out with code enforcement. Work out with the city and permits and all that. I just wanted to make sure you understand we're not giving you the blanket approval to do all these things. Mrs. Brue stated yes sir.

Member Wheeler motioned to approve

Member Trawhon 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Consider and possible action on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Siblings Helping Siblings to construct a new house located at 504 Park Avenue

Member Vasquez motioned to approve COA to include faux window

Member Trawhon 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Consider and possible action on an application for a Certificate of appropriateness from Siblings Helping Siblings to construct a new house located at 506 Park Avenue

Member Trawhon motioned to approve COA to include faux window

Member Vasquez 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Consider and possible action on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Siblings Helping Siblings to demolish a structure located at 508 4th Alley

Member Vasquez motioned to approve

Member Trawhon 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Consider and possible action on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Siblings Helping Siblings to construct a new house located at 508 4th Alley

Member Trawhon motioned to approve COA to include faux window

Member Wheeler 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Consider and possible action on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Siblings Helping Siblings to demolish the structure located at 1001 4th Street

Member Trawhon motioned to approve

Member Wheeler 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Consider and possible action on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Siblings Helping Siblings to construct a new house located at 1001 4th Street

Member Vasquez motioned to approve COA to include faux window

Member Trawhon 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Consider and possible action on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Siblings Helping Siblings to demolish the structure located at 1003 4th Street

Member Trawhon motioned to approve

Member Wheeler 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Consider and possible action on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Siblings Helping Siblings to construct a new house located at 1003 4th Street

Member Vasquez motioned to approve COA to include faux window

Member Trawhon 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Consider and possible action on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Siblings Helping Siblings to demolish the structure located at 1005 4th Street

Member Vasquez motioned to approve

Member Trawhon 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Consider and possible action on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Siblings Helping Siblings to construct a new house located at 1005 4th Street

Member Trawhon motioned to approve COA to include faux window

Member Wheeler 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Consider and possible action on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Siblings Helping Siblings to construct a new house located at 1007 4th Street

Member Trawhon motioned to approve COA to include faux window

Member Wheeler 2nd

Vote: 4 – 0

Motion Carries

Chairman Manning adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.