

**RUSSELLVILLE
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

MINUTES

**Regular Meeting – Thursday, October 24, 2019
CITY HALL – COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Commissioners Present:

Suzanne Alford-Hodges – Vice-Chair
Steve Newby
Betsy McGuire

Judy Galloway – Secretary
Polly Hardin
Kathy Price

Commissioners Absent:

Greg Barborek - Chair, Linda Carnahan, Beverly Hooten

City Council Liaison Absent:

Phyllis Carruth

Staff Present:

Sara Johndahl, City Planner, Temporary Historic Preservation Officer

Advisors Present:

Mayor Richard Harris

Advisors Absent:

Danielle Housenick, MSR Director, Brian Holstein, Director City Development, Trey Smith, City Attorney

Call to Order & Welcome:

Ms. Alford-Hodges called the October 24, 2019 meeting of the Russellville Historic District Commission to order at 5:02PM, the roll was called and a quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Alford-Hodges asked if everyone had read the minutes of the September 26, 2019 regular meeting. Ms. Galloway asked which commission member had seconded the motion to approve the sign for Cherokee Nation Business, LLC, since she failed to write it in her notes. Mr. Newby said he was the second and the minutes were corrected. Motion was made by Mr. Newby to accept the minutes as corrected. Ms. Price made the second and the minutes were approved unanimously by voice vote.

Staff Report:

Ms. Jondahl presented the commissioners with a copy of the preliminary draft for the streetscape design for the downtown after the sewer, water, gas and electric revisions are completed. Ms. Galloway was concerned about the design of the street lamps for the downtown. Her concern was that they would be like the lamps on El Paso, which are not appropriate for the Historic District. She also pointed out that the 2015 Master Plan was never brought before the commission for a COA approval. Ms McGuire noted that several commissioners and Main Street Board members were present for the planning. Mayor Harris indicated that the lamps would most likely be like the ones installed on Inglewood and were like the lamps on the square in downtown Bentonville. Ms. Jondahl assured the commission that they would see a COA for the downtown project when it was completed.

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Agenda:

The first item on the agenda was review of a COA for a wooden sign **Board and Brush Creative Studio** at 312 West B Street by Amanda Cooper who has the franchise for the business. Ms. McGuire made the motion to approve the COA because it complies with the criteria in the Design Guidelines, Page 47-48, Section 10.27, Parts A., B., C. and G. Mr. Newby made the second. The motion was approved by a voice vote.

The second agenda item was a presentation By Christy Graham, Director of the Russellville Advertising and Promotion Commission, regarding the upcoming Sesquicentennial Celebration planned for June 7th in conjunction with the Downtown Art Walk. The actual Sesquicentennial is June 7th. Ms. McGuire had reached out to Ms. Graham and asked about how the Historic District Commission could contribute to the celebration. She indicated the A&P Commission was working on a commemorative coin and logo for the occasion. The Calendar Girls calendar will have a sesquicentennial theme. A&P are hoping for old photos of the downtown to place by downtown buildings to show the contrast in the time frame. Hans Stirtz is putting together a documentary about the town that will be available for viewing and that he plans to enter in the Arkansas Film Festival. Danielle Housenick and Daniel Freeman are working on strollers in costume. Arkansas Tech has a class that will be helping with the celebration. Todd Sweeden & Matt & Mel White have agreed to open their homes for a house tour.

The Historic District Commission is considering a walking tour of the Old Town Neighborhood and/or of the downtown. The upcoming 2020 sesquicentennial will be a good opportunity to increase the HDC's visibility and promote education and understanding of Russellville's heritage. The Historic District Commission needs to come up with a plan for the celebration.

Grants for African American Civil Rights were discussed. The HDC continues to try to find a way to save the Latimore Tourist Home listed in the Green Book for African American Travelers. Mayor Harris is interested in saving the structure asked if it would be possible to move the building to another site and suggested James Park, the former site of James School that has been razed. It was his understanding from speaking to the Reverend Tyus that the New Prospect Baptist Church was only interested in the property and not the structure. Ms. Alford-Hodges said that it was her impression after meeting with the church leaders that they weren't interested in people outside their community trying to tell them what to do with their property. She has reached out to New Prospect, Tech-Dr. Jeff Woods @ Humanities Dept., HDC, Dept. of AR Heritage, Pink Rose Society and Progressive Men's Club to see if she could raise some interest. No word back from them at the time of the meeting. Ms. McGuire will contact the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program about the possibility of moving the house and maintaining the National Register Designation.

Revision of the sign guidelines was briefly discussed. Ms. Jondahl is planning a revision of the city permitting process and hopes to address some of this in her revision. The city newsletter that has previously been circulated among city employees only will become available to the public. Ms. Jondahl asked for a volunteer to write a paragraph about the Historic District Commission and its specific mission. Mr. Newby volunteered for the job.

Old Business:

Ms. Alford-Hodges reported on her progress with establishment of a National Register Historic District in the Old Town Neighborhood south of downtown Russellville. Mason Toms will be in town on October 30th to conduct a windshield survey to determine if the area qualifies for a National Register Historic District.

New Business:

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Adjournment:

Ms. Hardin made the motion to adjourn at 5:50PM. Mr. Newby made the second. Motion passed by a voice vote.

Greg Barborek - Chair

Date