



City of Jacksonville, Florida

Lenny Curry, Mayor

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ONE CITY. ONE JACKSONVILLE.

July 31, 2020

Dr. Cheryl Brown, Director/Council Secretary
Jacksonville City Council
117 West Duval Street, 4th Floor – Suite 425
City Hall – St James Building
Jacksonville, FL 32202

RE: Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission Required Annual Report

Dr. Brown:

On behalf of the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission, The Chair and the Planning and Development Department are pleased to provide this Annual Report, which details the Commission's activities, members, and an assessment of the Commission's effectiveness, as prescribed by Ordinance 2016-521 and codified in Ch. 50, Section 110, Part B.

Kind Regards,

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Jack C. Demetree III
Chairman
Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission

CP/BK/KR



City of Jacksonville

Historic Preservation Commission

Annual Report

July 31, 2020

Prepared by the Planning and Development Department
In Compliance Chapter 50, Section 110 Part B

Introduction

This report contains a breakdown of all the activities of the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission (“Commission”) from July 2019 to June 2020, as well as the current makeup of the Commission. Additionally, there is a brief narrative assessing the Commission’s effectiveness over this period.

There is a table beginning on page three that details all of the different activities of the Commission. There are a number of application types addressed in the table. There are definitions provided for reference, which are taken from Chapters 307, 320 & 780 *Code of Ordinances*.

Chapter 307 is the governing legislation for most of the Commission’s actions. Additionally, Chapter 320 is a section of the Code dedicated to building permits. Part of Chapter 320 enables the Commission to review requests for demolition of certain qualified historic structures. These are noted in the table below as “320s.”

The Commission hears appeals of staff determinations related to applications for local Historic Rehabilitation Tax Exemptions, as defined and codified in Chapter 780, Part 3. The Commission reviews all Certificates of Appropriateness that have not been delegated to staff. The review all landmark designation requests and make recommendations to City Council on those applications. The Commission reviews requests for the renaming of public streets, and the designation of scenic corridors. The Commission reviews applications for approval of work after-the-fact as violations. The Commission also reviews nomination applications for National Register of Historic Places listing, and additionally nominate sites themselves for listing on the Register. They also, from time to time, give out awards of recognition for preservation work in the City.

The Commission holds regular meetings once a month, on the 4th Wednesday beginning at 3:00 p.m.

Commission Members

The Commission is currently comprised of seven members.

The members are as follows:

| Position | Commissioner | Term end date |
|---------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Chair: | Jack C. Demetree III | 2021 |
| Vice Chair: | Andres Lopera | 2021 |
| Secretary: | Erik Kasper | 2020 |
| Commissioner: | Tim J. Bramwell | 2020 |
| Commissioner: | Ryan P. Davis | 2019 |
| Commissioner: | Maiju Stansel | 2019 |
| Commissioner: | Maximillian Globber | 2020 |

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Definitions

Administrative Review: Planning and Development Department staff level review for approval, approval with conditions, and/or denial of COA applications for routine alterations and minor repairs or other work as set forth in Section 307.107, *Code of Ordinances*. Staff shall have the discretion to refer an application to the Commission for consideration for any reason.

Certificate of appropriateness (COA): An order voted on by the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission at a public hearing or an application administratively approved by the Planning and Development Department pursuant to Section 307.107 allowing an applicant to proceed with approved alteration, demolition, relocation or new construction of a designated landmark, landmark site or property in an historic district, following a determination of the proposal's suitability to applicable criteria.

Landmark: A building or structure which is at least 50 years old and meets at least two of the criteria contained in Section 307.104(j), Ordinance Code, and which has been so designated by the City Council, and has significant archaeological or architectural features or the location of an historical event.

Minor Modification of Appropriateness (MMA): An application to modify a previously approved COA.

Opinion of Appropriateness (OOA): An application for a non-binding opinion from the Commission. These are typically used by applicants to get a feel of the Commission's reaction to a project before it is ready for a full COA review. The Commission does not take any action and no decision is made. They simply provide feedback on an applicant's design and request. Each Commissioner expresses his or her individual opinion.

Historic Rehabilitation Tax Exemption: Qualifying property that has completed a qualifying improvement project shall be exempt from that portion of ad valorem taxation levied by the City on 100 percent of the increase in assessed value resulting from the substantial improvement project during the exemption period. The exemption does not apply however, to taxes levied for the payment of bonds or to taxes authorized by a vote of the electors pursuant to Section 9(b) or Section 12 of Article VII of the State Constitution. The amount of the exemption shall be determined by the Property Appraiser based upon his usual process for post-construction inspection and appraisal of property following rehabilitation or renovation.

Downtown Investment Authority / Downtown Historic Rehabilitation Trust Fund: Per Chapter 111.910 created a process for the Downtown Investment Authority, in conjunction with the Historic Preservation Section of the Planning and Development Department, to administer Trust Fund monies to eligible historic structures that go through a preservation rehabilitation process for returning the structure to active use. The structures must be designated a Local Landmark, per Chapter 307. The Commission must make a positive recommendation to City Council for the eligible landmark for the project to proceed, with final designating as a landmark by City Council. The projects are reviewed by Historic Staff, and the Commission, in some cases for COA compliance.



Table of Commission Actions

All applications heard by the Preservation Commission, as well as other items they addressed though the reporting period.

| | COAs | Violations | OOAs | MMAs | 320 Reviews | Letters of Support | Landmark designations/ changes to staff approvals/ other non-COA applications, ETC. |
|--------|------------------|------------|------|------|-------------|--------------------|---|
| Jul-19 | 7 | 1 | | | | | |
| Aug-19 | 9 | 1 | | | | | |
| Sep-19 | 13 | | | | 7 | | |
| Oct-19 | 14 | 1 | | | | | |
| Nov-19 | 11 | | | | | | Street Rename Request for Johnson Street |
| Dec-19 | 5 | | | | | | Road Renaming for University Boulevard |
| Jan-20 | 10 | 1 | | | | | Designation Recommendation for Landmark of the Jacksonville Garden Club & Independent Life (233 W Duval); Road Renaming for one block of Old Kings Avenue |
| Feb-20 | 8 | | | | 1 | | Road Renaming Request for Bonneval Road |
| Mar-20 | COVID-No Meeting | | | | | | |
| Apr-20 | COVID-No Meeting | | | | | | |



| May-20 | COVID- No Meeting | | | | | | |
|---------|-------------------------|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| June-20 | 12 | 2 | | | | National Register Nomination for Palm Springs Cemetery | |

Commission Effectiveness

In the case of the Commission, as a quasi-judicial body, the review of applications is an easy benchmark to demonstrate effectiveness, as shown in the table and graphs contained herein. But the true goal of the Commission is to preserve history, through the preservation of historic structures and places. The most obvious cases are requests to demolish historic structures, particularly those that are contributing to a local historic district. Though the best outcome is preservation, this is not always possible. The Commission has done a great job of preserving structures that truly are salvageable, and not allowing these structures to be demolished. By the same token, the Commission has been amenable to requests for demolition of structures that have been damaged by the elements, insects, or general deterioration to the point of structural failure.

The Commission has worked over the last year to improve the process for Certificates of Appropriateness (COA) review, by encouraging staff to review certain applications though expanded administrative approval with noted limitations. The Commission periodically examines these specific limitations and has expanded the scope for staff, and thereby reduced the amount of applications that must go before the Commission. This was done in an effort to alleviate the time delay and additional costs placed upon applicants for projects that the Commission felt staff could review and make a determination on.

Staff has worked with the Commission to resolve violations though the normal Special Magistrate process, as opposed to Commission review, which is an option outlined in Chapter 307. Staff has been working with the Office of General Council to explore various alternatives for enforcement to prevent large number of violations going before the Commission. Violations tend to be the most time consuming applications, and typically result in other enforcement actions, either through the Special Magistrate, or in some cases, City Council.

The Commission has migrated from paper applications to using the current Land Use and Zoning Application Portal and mailed Commission meeting books to electronic formats, though the use of City provided tablets. This has made the use of staff time more effective, and has given the Commission access to better quality



application information, in the form of scalable pictures and plans, and color images. Additionally, it has led to better transparency with the public, which can now simply log into a website and see all applications going to the Commission without the need to visit the office to view paper applications. This year, Staff has worked with other departments in the City to help select a new product that will replace many of the existing systems for various applications within the City. This new enterprise system should make the submittal and tracking of online applications easier for applicants and staff.

Additionally, there is the element of Appeals, which may be considered an additional benchmark. Appeals are not a common outcome for most of this Commission's actions. When they do happen, it is the goal of the Commission that their decisions be upheld. The Commission only had one appeal go before the LUZ Committee for the reporting period. The Staff has worked with the Commission to attempt to settle appeals related to violations as an alternative to the costly process of appealing to the LUZ Committee. Generally, the Commission offers guidance on what would be acceptable outcomes to resolve violations, and staff works to achieve those goals through negotiation.

Lastly, the Commission, though the extraordinary events of the last 6 months, have not been able to hold meetings for the months of March, April and May. Also, with the Governor's Declaration for a State of Emergency, the Commission has been able to hold one Zoom Commission Hearing, with plans to conduct a second at the end of July. These meetings have proved effective, and has allowed citizen participation, while maintaining safe separation for the public, staff and Commissioners. Although the first meeting was long, dealing with a backlog of COAs from the last three months with no hearings, including a complicated multi-structure PUD in Springfield, they were able to conduct an efficient and effective meeting, in spite of the various challenges.

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