



City of Richmond

Where History Meets Opportunity

Richmond Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

City Commission Room | 600 Morton Street, Richmond, Texas 77469

Tuesday, February 19, 2019, at 8:00 am.

The Richmond Historical Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 19, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. Cindy Drabek, Chairperson, called the meeting to order and a quorum was present, with the following members in attendance:

Karen Bleil
Cindy Drabek
Lonnie Meadows
Becky Haas
Jess Stuart
Claire Rogers

Staff in attendance: Jose Abraham, *Historic Preservation Officer (HPO)*; Howard Christian, *Assistant City Manager*; Jamie Walker, *Public Works Executive Secretary*; Laura Scarlato, *City Secretary*; Terri Vela, *City Manager*; Lori Bownds, *Building Official*.

Chairperson Cindy Drabek declared the meeting open.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item number A2., public comment. She asked if there were any public comments. Hearing no public comment the agenda item was closed.

Chairperson Drabek introduced consent agenda items B1. - Review and approve minutes from January 15, 2019 regular meeting; and B2. - Announce the next Richmond Historical Commission meeting to be held on March 19, 2019. Commission member Haas moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commission member meadows seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous for approval.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C1a., Downtown Richmond Updates. Commission member Haas reported the following updates:

- Foot traffic has decreased and things are slowing down;
- The Historical Richmond Association is going to have a Motor Madness & Art Walk in March;
- The little blue house down by the cement slab at the intersection of Preston St and 4th Street is being demolished;
- Joseph's on Calhoun Street has painted the exterior façade and it looks good.

Commission member Haas stated her intent to make a presentation at the next regular meeting, to discuss her observations about four buildings within the historic district that could potentially be deemed demolition by neglect. She identified the four buildings to be the Hotel Building, the Old Theater, the white building across the street from the Lone Star on Calhoun, and the cinder block building without a roof on Calhoun. She also mentioned that the cinder block building has a mural inside it and suggested that it be saved. Chairperson Drabek stated that a presentation could be made but asked if Commission member Haas reached out to staff. In response, Commission member Haas said that she would like to talk to the Commission first. Mr. Abraham, HPO, briefly explained the demolition by neglect procedure as indicated in the Unified Development Code (UDC). He said that staff would follow-up on Commission member Haas's observations included in the presentation with inspections to determine whether demolition by neglect would apply to the subject buildings.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C1b., Community and Museum Events, and Commission member Rogers provided the following updates:

- Ongoing exhibition at Fort Bend Museum honoring African-American churches in Fort Bend County;
- Fort Bend County Historical Commission Meeting at the Gus George Academy, on February 19, 2019 at 3:00 pm;
- Archeology Meeting at the Gus George Academy, on February 19, 2019 at 7 pm;
- Event for the Fort Bend Boys Choir at Safari Texas Ranch on Saturday, February 23, 2019;
- Tea Party at the Dew House in Missouri City on Saturday, February 23, 2019;
- Attack Poverty will host a 5K event on March 9, 2019;
- Fort Bend County Historical Commission will hold the 2019 Bert E. Bleil Heritage Award presentation at Safari Texas Ranch on March 5, 2019 at 7pm.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C2a., Certificate of Appropriateness for proposed exterior painting of the building located at 501 Morton Street. Mr. Abraham, HPO recommended approval of this Certificate of Appropriateness. Commission member Rogers moved to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the exterior painting of the building located at 501 Morton Street. Commission member Jess seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous for approval. Mr. Abraham also mentioned that an exhaust was added to the building to meet building code requirements and asked if the commissioners had a preference as to whether the exhaust is painted or left with the steel finish. Commissioners agreed that the exhaust could be left unpainted.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C2b., Historic District Mural Guideline update. Mr. Abraham, HPO, indicated that the City Commission considered the mural guidelines on 2 separate occasions, but tabled the agenda item so that staff could provide additional information and make changes to the language. He also indicated that the guidelines would be presented at the City Commission Special meeting scheduled on February 21, 2019. Commission member Haas brought up a concern about the murals being on the front of the buildings. In response, Mr. Abraham stated that murals proposed to be on the front of the building would be restricted to

20% of the front façade. Commission member Rogers brought up the concern that it is not mentioned that the mural could or could not be a sign used as advertisement. Mr. Abraham, HPO, clarified that by definition a mural cannot be used as a sign. In response to Commission member Haas's concern about appropriateness of the mural, Chairperson Drabek reminded that all applications shall be reviewed by staff, followed by Richmond Historical Commission's recommendation forwarded to the City Commission for consideration. Commission member Haas suggested that the documentation mention that a business not paint a mural on a fence. Mr. Abraham, HPO, stated that under subsection *Location* in the guidelines, it specifically states where the mural can go, but if that is a pressing issue it is something that could be added.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C2c., Potential Unified Development Code (UDC) Text Amendment to certain regulations and provisions within the Old Town (OT) District. Mr. Abraham, HPO, and the Commission members discussed reconsideration of the following allowances and restrictions within the OT district.

- Detached single family use is allowed only if the use existed on the effective date of the UDC. Conversion of a non-residential use to residential use within OT district is not permitted. Commission members expressed general support for allowing conversion of a non-residential use to residential use within OT district to promote flexibility in terms of landuse.
- Live/work units (*residential use combined with non-residential uses such as an office or a studio*) are not permitted within the OT district. Commission members expressed general support for allowing live/work units within OT district.
- Accessory dwelling units (ADU) are not allowed within OT districts. (*ADU is allowed within Suburban Residential and General Residential districts*). Commission members expressed general support for allowing accessory dwelling units within OT district, however, mentioned that Airbnb type short term rentals may rise due to this allowance.
- On-street parking is not counted towards the required parking within OT district. (*In Downtown district, certain amount of on-street parking is counted towards the required parking*). Commission members expressed general support for considering on-street parking along street frontage towards required on-site parking.
- UDC is more focused on tree preservation and requirements for new development projects and appears to be lacking on provisions for redevelopment projects that include mature trees and existing landscaping. Commission members expressed general support for a tree credit system for existing tree on a property proposed for development or redevelopment.
- The lot size requirements within Old Town District is a minimum of a 6000 square feet lot area and 50 foot lot width, which means if there is a property that is 90 feet or 95 feet, that would have to be one large parcel. Commission members expressed concerns about

reducing lot size requirements and suggested that any reconsideration of lot size requirements should include protections to ensure desirable development outcomes.

There being no further business to be brought before the Richmond Historical Commission, Chairperson Drabek adjourned the meeting.

Approved

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cindy Drabek", written over a horizontal line.

Cindy Drabek, Richmond Historical Commission Chair