



402 LEE STREET
DECATUR, ALABAMA 35601
APRIL 13, 2023

Council Chambers

Architectural Review Board

4:00 PM

I CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

II APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 9, 2023

III EXPEDITED CoAs SINCE THE MARCH MEETING:

638 E Mouton (Flores) repair in kind (#9 for the CoA)
514 Oak (Klepper) repair in kind (#9 for the CoA)
821 Johnston (Lisaukas) repair in kind (#9 for the CoA)
215 Cain (Prater) new roof (#49 for the CoA)
1017 Jackson (Speegle) new roof (#49 for the CoA)
911 Line (McCormick) demolition of old deck (#10 for the CoA)
614 Sherman (Brueggeman) window repair (#9 for the CoA)
701 Line (Sandifer) new rear fence (#26 for the CoA)

IV ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR:

Election of New Chair and Vice Chair:

Lynn Schuppert has served one year as chair, and Jacob Woods has served one year as vice-chair. Terms last for one year, with a two year maximum.

B: Election of Officers

1) Officer Election- The Commission will elect its own Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, and other officers from time to time as it determines necessary, all of whom shall be members of the Commission. Officers will be elected at their first regular meeting in January of each year, and the candidate receiving a majority vote of the entire membership of the Commission shall be declared elected. Officer Qualification Considerations Officers should be interested in holding the position(s), be able to devote sufficient time to Commission business, be committed to attend as many regular

and special Commission meetings as possible, be prepared to make presentations to City Council, citizens, committees, neighborhood groups, and service clubs regarding commission responsibilities, projects, plans, and policies, and have sufficient experience on the Commission to understand its role and function and to have a basic understanding of the City's applicable policies and development regulations.

2) Terms- Officers shall serve for one year or until his/her successor takes office. Officers shall be eligible for reelection; but no member shall serve as Chair for more than two (2) consecutive years.

3) Absence of Chair and Vice-Chair- When both the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, the members present shall select a member to temporarily act as Chair for that meeting by consensus or by a majority vote.

4) Officer Vacancy- A vacancy in an officer position shall be filled by election at the next regular or special meeting of the Commission from current Commission members. Until such election, the Vice-Chair shall serve as acting Chair, if the Chair position is vacant. All members elected to fill an officer position shall serve until the next annual officer election.

C: Officer Duties

1) Duties of Chairperson- The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings and hearings of the Historic Preservation Commission and shall have the duties normally conferred by parliamentary usage of such offices. The Chairperson may succeed himself/herself subject to the conditions outlined in Section B part 2 above. The Chairperson shall have the privilege of discussing all matters before the Commission and to vote thereon. All resolutions adopted by the Commission and Commission correspondence shall be signed in his/her name as the Chair of the Commission.

2) Duties of Vice-Chairperson- The Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the Chair in the event that the Chair is absent or unable to perform their duties.

V **New CoA REVIEWS:**

CoA #1: 511 Vine (Pline)

Background: Prior owners sought to demolish house, sold house to the Plines who looked at the feasibility of rehabilitating the structure. Plines worked with staff to determine a viable path forward and determined there was none given the current state of the building. Building was condemned on March 15, 2023.

Action Requested: Demolition

Decatur's Design Review Standards: 17. Demolition and Relocation 1. Not Recommended. Demolition of contributing buildings and outbuildings is inappropriate unless warranted by structural conditions, economic hardship (as defined by city ordinance 90-2882A) or where the public safety is endangered.

Staff Findings: Staff spent considerable time with the applicant and the state preservation office looking for a path forward. House is structurally unsound, is missing parts of its roof, is almost completely gutted on the inside, has no operating plumbing system or heating system.

CoA #2: 911 Line (McCormick)

Background: Staff already issued a demolition CoA for removing a rotting raised wood deck on side of house.

Action Requested: Concrete paver/gravel patio where raised wood deck once stood.

Decatur's Design Review Standards: 3. Porches 8. New Porches/Decks. Porches should not be added to principal elevations on buildings which were constructed without porches at these locations. The addition of new porches or decks is allowable on rear elevations which are not readily visible from major streets.

Staff Findings: Rear of house is almost on the property line, so a rear patio is not viable. A side patio provides access to the existing side door, and is at grade, with landscaping.

CoA #3: 217 Cain (Pate/Underwood)

Background: Commission conducted a courtesy review of property in November of 2022. The majority of the changes requested are shown on the document with the exception of the proposed front door.

Action Requested: New construction

Decatur's Design Review Standards: A full copy of the new construction policy and recommendations are in the commission packet this month.

Staff Findings:

House on one side of the site is a one story Craftsman, house on other side is a two story Four-Square. Both have a similar setback from the main lot.

Height: The height of the proposed infill appears to meet the standards.

Proportion: The proportions of width to height vary on this street, but the proposed infill has a similar proportion to period homes in the district.

Rhythm: The rhythm is similar to existing houses in the district.

Setbacks: A site plan needs to be submitted showing set backs for final review.

Design: In general the design appears to be architecturally compatible. The only incongruent elements are the proposed 2 over 2 windows (1 over 1 is more standardized in the district) and the porch railing. The front door as shown in the plans has a design that is “modern farmhouse” in styling. A single glass pane with no dividers and a smaller proportion of glass in the door or a multi-light French door would follow the design of neighboring properties. Plan is unclear if a porch railing will be installed or not (railing is a requirement if the porch is more than 30” off the ground, but that does not appear to be the case with this submittal.)

Materials: Smooth Hardie plank or wood siding would be appropriate for this house based on the standards. The proposed windows have been approved in the past.

The door is not a style that is found within the district, a full light on the upper portion of the door instead of divided light would be in keeping with the standards. Board should discuss this point further with applicant.

Roofs: The roof appears to be consistent with Craftsman houses in the neighboring lots. Staff defers to the commission architect to determine appropriate roof pitches.

Porches: The building has a full width front porch. The detailing on the porch in terms of the number of porch supports has been addressed, see CoA for more details.

Board should clarify with applicant that there will not be a railing on this porch, since it is low to the ground.

CoA #4: 633 Sherman (Stokes)

Background: Property received a stop work order for installation of shutters without a CoA. Owners removed aluminum siding in 2022 (there were aged shutters, with horizontal slats on the house, those shutters were not in a condition where they could be reused).

Action Requested: Approved CoA for newly installed shutters.

Decatur’s Design Review Standards: 10. Window Shutters, Blinds, and Awnings 4. Replacement. Paneled wood shutters and louvered blinds are both typically appropriate for Decatur’s historic residences.

Staff Findings: Installing shutters on the house appears to be consistent with the design review standards.

The style of shutter currently installed (often called a Board and Batten shutter) is not consistent with the standards, nor is it a style found within the district. If the homeowners would like to use the existing Colonial Revival hardware, then a paneled shutter would be appropriate that hardware. If they would like a louvered shutter, then the window hardware would need to be minimized.

VI COURTESY REVIEW:

809 Line (Thomas)

Background: The commission approved a CoA for an addition on this house in 2021.

Action Requested: Applicant is proposing a substantial redesign to reduce construction costs.

Decatur’s Design Review Standards: A copy of the standards for new construction are included in your packet.

Staff Findings:

Height: Appears to meet the standards.

Proportion: Appears to meet the standards for most of the house. The Line Street porch supports do not appear to meet the standards.

Rhythm: Appears to meet the standards.

Setbacks: No site plan was included. Board should request a site plan to determine setbacks.

Design: Main design, minus the porches and the doors is consistent with the district, the house and the standards. Hyphen could be articulated more clearly to show that it is a bridge between the main house and addition with change in siding material or fenestration profile. The door selections based on the current design are not consistent with doors in the neighborhood, a single light in the upper portion of the door, a multi-

light French door, or even a door with a bracket and smaller lights (Craftsman style) would be consistent with design details found in the district.

Materials: No proposed materials yet.

Roofs: Pitch of roof is as low as possible to still meet requirements for shingle warranty.

Porches: Size and proportion appears to meet the standards. The inclusion of four Craftsman posts for each porch instead of 2 is not consistent with other homes in the neighborhood. Four posts are used with full length front porches, with smaller porches, two posts are the standard. The design proportions and style of the posts on Line Street is not consistent with Craftsman supports found in the district.

For a final review, board should clarify materials, set back, landscape plan, porch supports, doors, and windows.

VIII BOARD BRIEFING/BUSINESS:

Vote on option to livestream ARB meetings

Background: The HPC, at the request of the city, began having meeting sessions live-streamed during the pandemic. This action supported pandemic related legal changes which among other things allowed commissioners to dial in without being present, and vote. The legal framework that allowed for that meeting flexibility has expired and has not been renewed by the state. Commission members must meet in person now to cast votes. Streaming the meeting requires resources from the IT department. Some commissioners asked if the commission still needs to utilize these municipal resources for our meetings. The HPC voted to suspend livestreaming at their May 2022 meeting.

Staff Findings: Staff queried the legal department and was told there is no legal requirement to streaming the meetings. It is at the board's discretion. Some municipal boards do livestream (Ambulance Review Board, Planning Commission), some do not (Park and Rec, Personnel, Library Board).

Staff checked with IT, meeting recordings are not archived by the city.

Staff checked with the other CLGs in the state, the vast majority do not livestream HPCs or Architectural Review Boards. Huntsville does, Birmingham records audio only (no video).

VII STAFF UPDATES:

Planning

Preservation Month in May

CoA/Compliance Updates

1036 Sherman (Vann & Parker)

411 Walnut: (Kennedy)

217 Church: (Dickey)

Court dates set:

504 Walnut (Hereford): Court date set for June 20, 2023.

Current Grants

Updated Design Review Standards