HUNTSVILLE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

### December 11, 2017

The Huntsville Historic Preservation Commission met in the Conference Room on the 1st Floor of the Public Service Building located at 320 Fountain Circle on December 11, 2017. The members present were:

Mr. Mike Holbrook Ms. Sheree Holland

Mr. Peter Lowe Ms. Drenda King

Mr. Jan Williams Mr. Randy Cunningham

Mr. Dave Ely

Also present at the meeting was Ms. Katie Stamps, Historic Preservation Consultant, and Ms. Sharon Mize, Recording Secretary. The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Mr. David Ely, Chairman. Mr. Ely read the preamble and introduced the Commission members. This is Mr. Ely’s last meeting; he is retiring from the Commission. He introduced Ms. Sheree Holland as a new Commission member.

**1121 Beirne Avenue – Mr. Greg Sanders**

Mr. Sanders came before the Commission to request an addition of ten feet to the rear of his house, construct a new detached garage, and a driveway. Mr. Sanders said he had permission to remove a handicap ramp from the front porch, which he did, and then he had to repair the steps.

The garage will be 42 feet in length and 30 feet in width. There will be a distance of ten feet between the house and the garage. The original garage design had a second story but it would be too tall for the house so the second story has been removed from the plans.

Mr. Sanders said there is an existing set of stairs to a root cellar he would like to replace because they are too steep. They would also like to add an egress window in the basement on the side of the house. The new driveway will be an exposed aggregate driveway to match the existing driveway.

Mr. Holbrook said the garage doors presented are sixteen foot garage doors and he asked if there was any way he could reduce the size of the garage doors since it faces a side street. Mr. Sanders said he has a large truck and a trailer and he wants to keep them in the garage. The garage will be full when he gets his truck and trailer parked inside. Mr. Holbrook said he thought the truck would fit through a twelve foot garage door. The doors will have the look of an old barn door with the strap hinges and there will be no windows. Mr. Holbrook said he liked the look but not how wide the doors are. Mr. Sanders said they approved the sixteen foot doors at a previous meeting when he asked to erect a garage. He is afraid he will not be able to make the radius of backing into the garage.

Mr. Sanders asked if he could move the front porch awning up four inches because he keeps hitting his head on it. Mr. Ely asked if Mr. Sanders had exceeded the lot coverage. Mr. Sanders said he has been to the Zoning Department and they said he was fine with the lot coverage and a variance is not required.

Ms. King said there used to be a blacksmith shop at the back of the property and the owner was very interested in the Boy Scouts. Mr. Sanders said there was a blacksmith shop in the back yard at one time and since he has been living there he has found several Boy Scout items and has returned them to the family.

Mr. Ely asked what type of material would be used. Mr. Sanders said the materials on the house will match the house and the materials for the garage will be hardiboard. Mr. Lowe said the hardiboard needs to use the smooth hardiboard. The hardiboard will need to have the same exposure as the house.

Mr. Ely said the brick base on the garage should be flush and should not have a water table. Mr. Sanders said he would make it flush to match the way the brick is on the house. Mr. Holbrook recommended he use the twelve foot doors on the garage.

Mr. Holbrook recommended Mr. Sanders add a vertical corner board to mark where the old house was and the addition begins. Mr. Sanders asked if the kitchen window could be made wider, and said it is an original window. Mr. Ely said since it is an original window it should be left as is. Mr. Sanders also asked about adding shutters to the side windows. Mr. Ely said he did not think the shutters were a good idea.

Mr. Ely said the side did not look like it had room for an egress window in the basement. Mr. Sanders said there is enough room it just looks like there is not enough room due to the slope of the lot.

Mr. Holbrook made the motion to approve the house addition and the new garage with the exception that the garage doors be twelve feet wide and the corner boards be added on the house addition for demarcation, and raise the awning on the front porch no more than 4 inches.

Mr. Larry Bricker said he thought the garage would look better if it were set back 10 – 20 feet to the west and get it further away from the road and the alley. This will also make the garage more subordinate to the house. Mr. Holbrook said it would look nice if it were lined up with the portico. Mr. Ely said he has a problem with the size of the garage and the amount of paving on the lot. Mr. Lowe said if the lot were not so large he would agree with them, but the lot is large enough to accommodate the garage. Mr. Sanders said there is a telephone pole that is in the way if they set the garage back as well as the gas line.

Mr. Holbrook modified his motion to allow the option to move the garage back ten feet, raise the canopy on the front porch 4 inches, and add a corner board to delineate between the old and new part of the house. Mr. Lowe seconded the motion. Mr. Sanders said he does not have enough room to get his truck and trailer in because of the small street, which is only 20 feet wide. Also if the garage is moved then he would not have room in the rear yard to play ball with his boys. The Commission voted to approve the motion, with the exception of Mr. Ely who voted nay due to the size of the garage.

**402 Andrew Jackson Way – Ryan Sharp**

Mr. Sharp requested replacing the metal roof with a Weathered Wood shingled roof and to repair the fascia as needed. The building is currently occupied by Big Spring Survey Company. The metal roof is a stamped metal tin roof and is in very bad shape and needs to be replaced. Mr. Lowe made the motion to approve replacing the roof with shingles and repairing the fascia board. Ms. King seconded the motion. Mr. Holbrook asked if there was any way to salvage any of the tin roof for reuse. Mr. Sharp said they could. Mr. Holbrook said there are several places around that will take the roofing and repurpose it.

Mr. Cunningham said someone replaced the large window in the building with a vinyl window within the last ten years without approval. They need to come back with a different window that looks more like the original window. Mr. Ely said the chimney needs to remain and needs to be capped and repointed. Mr. Lowe modified his motion to include cleaning, properly flash and repointing the chimney. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion.

**1119 Clifton Avenue – Mr. Trey Propst**

Mr. Propst requested to remove the aluminum siding off of this house and after removing the siding found the siding underneath was in bad shape and removed it as well. He is requesting to replace the siding with a new wood siding on the sides and the rear. The new wood siding will match the existing wood siding on the front of the house. Mr. Propst brought a piece of the original wood siding to show that it was lap siding and the poor condition of the siding.

Mr. Holbrook said if the siding is not beveled like the original siding the profile is completely changed. Mr. Ely agreed and said he did not think the new wood would router very well because it is not as strong a wood as the original. Mr. Propst said the siding will be made of poplar wood.

The front elevation will be preserved as is with the exception of the gable. When they removed the aluminum siding from the gable there was no siding underneath. They will use new wood for the gable. Mr. Ely said the front gable did have a folk arch, as do several of the houses on that street, and he would like to see it put back. Mr. Propst said they do not have a picture of what it looked like.

Mr. Lowe said he was impressed with the progress they have made with the house and that he had saved as much wood as he did for reuse. Mr. Lowe asked if they would be leaving the “bird boxes”. Mr. Propst said that was the way it was when they purchased the house. Mr. Ely suggested they push them back one rafter and Mr. Propst said he could do that.

Mr. Holbrook made the motion to approve taking the existing siding up the rake, cutting the bird box back to the face of the house, and using new siding on the front gable milled to match. Mr. Lowe seconded the motion and said he was impressed with the work that has been done on this house.

Mrs. Margaret Watson of 1122 Clinton Avenue said Mr. Propst has done a very good job on this house and they are pleased to see the improvement in the neighborhood. Mr. Ely said he was pleased to see wood siding instead of hardiboard siding. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion.

**Old Business:**

Mr. Holbrook made the motion to approve the minutes from the October and November meetings. Mr. Williams seconded the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of both meetings.

Ms. Stamps said the McThornmor Acres RFP has been sent out.

Ms. Stamps met with the Normal Historic District Association to discuss the Heritage Development Plan and suggested to give the A & M University administration small doses of proposals at a time. Also, it was suggested that A & M provide someone on staff to act as a preservation officer to oversee and guide preservation.

There was some damage done to one of the columns on the front of the bank building downtown. It was an accident because someone stood on the side of the column and it broke. They have saved the piece and Mr. Broadway is in the process of trying to find someone to repair it properly. The City is working on placing an easement on the building.

Homeowners are submitting tax credit applications. The tax credit has been re-established recently. Mr. Holbrook recommended they do some training on the tax credits available. Ms. Stamps said she is working on getting some training set up and she has been passing out information on the tax credits with each application submitted to the Commission. Mr. Ely recommended she send one to each of the presidents of each district for distribution throughout the districts. He said the tax credit has to be reinstituted each year and it was tough to get it through this year.

Ms. Stamps said the Federal Tax Credit has been slashed and is in jeopardy. Mr. Ely recommended everyone write to their congressmen to support the tax credit.

Ms. Stamps is scheduled to meet with the Bicentennial African American Group next week to discuss their plans for the upcoming bicentennial. They are considering erecting a statue somewhere in the city.

Ms. Stamps said at the next meeting they will need to elect new officers. Mr. John Kvach has also been appointed to the Commission and should be at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Madsen

Manager of Urban and Long Range

Planning