

MINUTES OF A WORK SESSION OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION HELD APRIL 14, 2009

The Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Eufaula met in work session Tuesday, April 14, 2009, at 3:30 p.m. in the Municipal Courtroom at the Eufaula Police Department Complex, 545 East Barbour Street. Upon call of the roll the following members were present: Chairman David Ongemach, Joel Smith, Sr., Doug Purcell, Bruce Turner, Judi Mathisen. Vice Chairman Curtis Williams entered at 3:35 p.m. Absent: Terry Honan.

Chairman Ongemach called the meeting to order and recognized the following visitors: Mary Mason Shell of the Alabama Historic Commission, Mayor Jay Jaxon and City Council President Jim Martin.

Mrs. Shell explained the importance of the Commission maintaining its Certified Local Government status, and encouraged members to participate in continuing education opportunities. She distributed information regarding upcoming workshops, and discussed the Commission's work plan and member questionnaire and the need for public input.

Mrs. Shell complimented the Commission on its recent purchase of an extensive collection of publications with grant funds made available by the AHC, and noted the Commission's page on the City of Eufaula website is very informative and contained valuable resource information for the public.

She expressed the AHC's sorrow at the passing of City Planner Tim Milner, and noted the AHC is available to answer any questions that may arise in the interim until a new planner is appointed to prepare staff reviews of pending certificates of appropriateness. She reminded members the role of the Commission is that of a decision making body. Mrs. Shell also distributed a matrix of varying levels of work, many that could be approved more expeditiously than by formal Commission approval. Mr. Purcell stated the Commission has a work review process in place and has also made it known that special meetings can be called. Mrs. Shell stated the AHC has a grant opportunity available that could provide funding for staff support in completing COA reviews and administrative matters.

Chairman Ongemach asked how the Commission should deal with property owners who complete work without applying for a certificate of appropriateness. Mrs. Shell stated city staff should send a letter requesting the property owner submit a COA and appear before the Commission. She noted although the work has been completed, the Commission could still deny the COA if it deems the work is inappropriate, but a plan should be agreed upon with the property owner to address correcting the problem.

Mayor Jaxon also addressed the Commission and thanked the members for their work. He pointed out the City is currently advertising for a city planner, and offered to have the city attorney attend the monthly meetings or provide input as necessary. Mayor Jaxon also recommended all communication to the public be made by staff at City Hall, as well as enforcement action. He also suggested a joint meeting of the Commission and City Council, noting he feels this is an appropriate time to “fine tune” what is being accomplished by the Commission.

Mr. Purcell asked Mrs. Shell to outline how to validate expansion of a legally defensible district. She stated she will forward the information when she returns to Montgomery.

Chairman Ongemach stated the Commission is currently faced with a series of dilemmas that have reached an impasse, and asked how the Commission should proceed in having them resolved. Mayor Jaxon stated if the Commission has made an official decision regarding the matters, it should be forwarded to the appropriate City department for disposition and further review. Mrs. Shell reiterated it would be more appropriate for someone from city staff to contact the property owners.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the work session was adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF EUFAULA, ALABAMA
A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

David Ongemach, Chairman

ATTEST:

Teri Bush, Secretary/CLG Liaison