

Perry Planning Commission
Minutes – February 09, 2015

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Martin Beeland called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

ROLL: Chairman Beeland; Commissioners Clarington, Jefferson, Mehserle, Poole, and Williams were present. Commissioner Yasin was absent.

STAFF: Mike Beecham – Director of Community Development and Christine Sewell – Recording Clerk.

GUESTS: Pastor Jamie Powell, Jimmy McCloud, and Terre Walker.

PRESS: None

INVOCATION: was given by Commissioner Mehserle

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 26, 2015 MEETING: Commissioner Jefferson motioned to approve as submitted; Commissioner Clarington seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

ANNOUNCEMENT Chairman Beeland referred to the Campaign Notice, per O.C.G.A. 36-67A-3, please turn cell phones off.

NEW BUSINESS

1. First Baptist Church – 1007 First Street – removal of structure

Mr. Beecham advised the church inquired of the process for removing the structure from the property as they had recently purchased and per the Perry Land Development the commission would need to review as the property is in the historic district. Chairman Beeland opened the hearing at 6:05pm and called for anyone in favor of the request. Pastor Jamie Powell spoke in favor and advised the dwelling in its' current state was of no use to the church and would be relocated by an outside contractor to a location on Forest Hill Drive behind the carwash. Pastor Powell advised once moved the area would be utilized as additional outdoor greenspace with a projected future use of landscaped parking. Commissioner Jefferson inquired of the intent of the garage located on the property; Pastor Powell advised it would remain for the time being and be used for storage.

Chairman Beeland called for anyone opposed. Mrs. Terre Walker addressed the board and stated as a member of both the Perry Historical Society and the Perry Main Street Board Design Committee advised the City had just received their classification as a Main Street Community and future reporting as part of the program will require justification on why the dwelling was moved. Mrs. Walker further advised the completion of the City's master plan noted a need for downtown living and with the removal of the dwelling an opportunity for this is lost. Mrs. Walker further stated Perry is unique in nature with its' historic structures and when lost we are losing a part of history never to be regained. There being no further comment Chairman Beeland closed the hearing at 6:15pm.

Commissioner Clarington inquired of Pastor Powell when was the last time the dwelling had been occupied; it was estimated approximately five years. Commissioner Clarington also inquired as to why the church purchased the property. Pastor Powell stated the church was in need of additional outdoor space and the future need for parking should there be an expansion.

Commissioner Mehserle commented that Mrs. Walker articulated the point on historic properties, however, unfortunate as it may be the economy of the market is a factor and properties located in traditional areas fall victim often times.

Commissioner Mehserle motioned to recommend approval of the removal of the structure; Commissioner Clarington seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

2. Discussion of form based zoning

Mr. Beecham in follow up to the previous meeting provided additional information on form based zoning. Mr. Beecham noted the concept was not intended to be implemented city wide, but could perhaps be considered for General Courtney Hodges Blvd. as the spur needed for the corridor for future development and economic impact. One concept of form based zoning was to put the focus back on outdoor areas, such as sidewalks, plazas, etc. and if considering the commission would need to determine a conceptual vision for this. Mrs. Terre Walker spoke briefly and advised she had been researching and was impressed with the concept and supported the direction the commission was going in pursuing the concept.

ADJOURN: there being no further business to come before the board the meeting was adjourned at 6:57pm.