

Historic Preservation Commission
Minutes - February 11, 2025

1. Call to Order: Chairman Griffin called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.
2. Roll Call: Chairman Griffin; Commissioners Beroza, Hubbard, Taylor, and Sanders were present.

Staff: Bryan Wood – Community Development Director, Emily Carson - Community Planner and Christine Sewell – Recording Clerk

3. Citizens with Input – Jim Mehserle – JMA Architecture, Curtis George, Weston Ekey, Brandon James, Blake Lancaster, Corey Lumpkin, Carol Davis, and Robbie Russell
4. Approval of the Agenda – Commissioner Sanders motioned to approve as presented; Commissioner Beroza seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.
5. Approval of Minutes – January 14, 2025, meeting – Commissioner Hubbard motioned to approve as submitted; Commissioner Sanders seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.
6. Announcements – Chairman Griffin referred to the notices as listed.
 - a. Procedures for Public Hearings
 - b. Please place cell phones in silent mode.
7. New Business
 - a. Public Hearing:
 - Ordinance to Designate the Swift Street Local Historic District.

Mr. Wood provided an overview of the proposed district which consists of approximately 26.8 acres located on the eastern edge of downtown. The district contains (46) total properties and consists of properties fronting Swift Street, from the 1100 to the 1400 blocks; the 1000 block of First Street; the 1000 block of Second Street; the 1000 and 1100 blocks of Third Street, and the north side of the 1300 block of Houston Lake Drive. (41) properties are contributing with (5) non-contributing.

Chairman Griffin opened the public hearing at 6:10pm and called for anyone in favor of the request.

Mr. Weston Eskey – 1308 Swift Street inquired of the style of the home and why 1310 Swift Street was not included (Mr. Wood advised it doesn't retain its original architectural character). Mr. Eskey advised he was in the process of remodeling and is he able to continue; Mr. Wood advised he was.

Mr. Blake Lancaster – 308 Stonegate Trail – owner of 1307/09/11 Houston Lake Road inquired about the pros/cons of being in the district and any restrictions. Mr. Lancaster was provided with a FAQ's concerning historic districts and Mr. Wood advised guidelines do not impact interior renovations or use of property. Mr. Lancaster also inquired about demolition; Mr. Wood advised he would need to provide what would replace it.

Corey Lumpkin – family owns 1303 Houston Lake Drive, 1003 3rd Street and 1400 Swift Street – does the city have plans for neighborhood improvements such as lighting and signage; Mr. Wood advised at this time there are no plans. Commissioner Beroza advised one of the benefits is maintaining and keeping the integrity of the area. Commissioner Taylor stated maintaining history attracts people and investors. Chairman Griffin noted federal applications are not the city's regulations. Commissioner Sanders noted the design guidelines are posted on the city's webpage.

Carol Davis – 1200 Swift Street – asked why her property did not have a driveway; it was advised public records may indicate, but the Commission has no knowledge of. Mr. Wood advised she would be able to add a driveway just not circular.

Mr. Wood advised the public staff is available to assist with COA applications.

Chairman Griffin called for anyone opposed; there being no further public comment the public hearing was closed at 6:32pm.

Commissioner Sanders motioned to recommend approval of the Swift Street Historic District as presented; Commissioner Hubbard seconded; all in favor and was unanimously recommended for approval.

- **COA-0006-2025.** Certificate of Appropriateness to replace windows at 906 Evergreen Street. The applicant is Brandon James.

Mr. Wood advised the applicant proposes to replace the existing windows and storm windows on the right-side elevation of the house with vinyl windows with grills between the glass. The applicant requested preliminary comments from the Commission at its December 2024 meeting. Excerpt from the December minutes: *The owner, Mr. Brandon James, stated that he is updating his historic house to make it more energy-efficient. He has added insulation to his home's attic and crawl space; at this time, he has not insulated his walls due to lead paint and costs. Mr. James has spoken to a window company, and due to cost only looking to replace the windows on the side of the house on the east side of the home at this time. That side of the home is worse than the other windows. He was quoted to replace the wood windows with vinyl, from one-pane glass to two-pane glass with the grids. After discussion with the applicant and the Commissioners, Chairman Griffin asked the applicant to come back to the Commission with more specifics relative to the windows i.e., pictures of the windows being requested to be repaired/replaced, cost estimates, and dimensions of the windows being replaced.*

Mr. Wood advised the applicant provided photos of the existing window conditions, but did not provide evidence that he sought cost estimates for repair or replacement in kind. The proposed vinyl windows will have a flat muntin placed between the two panes of glass. Staff believes the existing windows are character-defining elements of the house. The pertinent design guideline states the goal is “to maintain the historic windows, their design, and placement.” Actions to achieve the goal are firstly to replace damaged portions of windows rather than replacing them in total. Secondly, if windows are damaged beyond repair, historic windows should be replaced with windows of matching size, materials, pane configuration, and muntin profile. Aluminum

clad wood windows may be allowed in some instances. Common mistakes include replacing damaged windows with stock windows of a different size, design, or with flat muntins; and using vinyl or aluminum replacement windows.

Chairman Griffin opened the public hearing at 6:35pm and called for anyone in favor of the request. The applicant, Mr. Brandon James, advised since December he has reached out to three window restoration companies and only one responded and could not come out until June and was advised wood windows are cost prohibitive and what is there cannot be repaired. Mr. James advised Georgia Power has also been out and has done the insulation that can be done. Will preserve the front windows, but is wishing to replace the sides. The storm windows will be completely removed and will do a single double line that creates a shadow. Mr. James stated based on his research and costs will do the side elevations. Mr. Ekey advised SDL windows are used in historic properties and Cadence Bank has them on their side elevations. Mr. Russell felt at some point if you can't find or fix it anymore, they need to be replaced.

Chairman Griffin called for anyone opposed; there being none and no further comment the public hearing was closed at 6:45pm.

Commissioner Beroza advised the Commission doesn't ignore costs and staff is reviewing and making the recommendation based on guidelines. Chairman Griffin had concerns that no cost was provided and wood with vinyl sets a precedent and would like to see an estimate. Mr. James advised for seven windows on one side is \$30,000.00. Mr. Wood advised the Commission they could make a decision based on undue hardship; the Commission as follow up from the December meeting had requested written cost estimates and would like to see them. Mr. James voiced frustration that he was asked to find vendors and the only one he was able to find won't do the project. The Commission again asked for the written estimates as this is the first application addressing window replacement and would like the documentation to be able to back up their decision.

Commissioner Hubbard motioned to table the application to allow the applicant to obtain written estimates to support the varying costs; Commissioner Taylor seconded; all in favor of tabling with Commissioner Beroza opposed.

- **COA-0012-2025.** Certificate of Appropriateness to renovate and add onto the existing house located at 705 Washington Street. The applicant is JMA Architecture, Inc.

Mr. Wood advised the applicant proposes to renovate the original portion of the existing house, remove an addition located on the rear and shed carport on the left side, and construct a new addition on the rear. An existing shed at the rear of the property will remain. The wood siding on the existing house will be renovated with hardi plank to match on the addition. The base and porch piers will be brick to match existing building piers. The roofing material on the original house and the addition will be galvalume finished standing-seam metal with exposed rafter detailing to match the existing house. Windows will be true divided light. Exterior doors will be 5-panel wood doors. Hardware will be polished and lacquered nickel. Screening on the rear porch will be aluminum with painted wood framing. The driveway and patios will be natural

concrete and decks adjacent to the house will be synthetic wood. The existing house was constructed circa 1920 with Craftsman elements and contributes to the Washington-Evergreen Historic District. The house currently has vinyl or metal siding, vinyl replacement windows, with a rear addition and shed carport which are all noncontributing modifications. The existing porch columns are probably not original. The proposed addition encroaches into the required rear setback and a variance request has been submitted to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Wood also reviewed the following: Roof Shape and Dormers – Maintain the original form of the house, especially as seen from the public view. The applicant proposes to maintain the existing hip roof form. Roof Materials and Features –. The current roof material is asphalt shingles. These are clearly not the original from 1920. The original roof material is unknown. The applicant proposes a galvalume finished standing-seam metal roof. Such material was available and would have been used on a Craftsman style house of this period. A chimney addition is proposed on the right-side elevation of the existing structure. The guideline suggests new chimneys should be placed on toward the rear on side elevations, use traditional design, and be brick. The proposed chimney addition is toward the front of the right-side elevation and is brick and hardi board. Materials – Maintain the texture created by historic exterior materials. The original wood siding is proposed to be renovated. Foundation – Maintain the original design of the foundation. The foundation of the house is skirted with stamped metal panels. The applicant indicates the new foundation skirting will match the existing brick house piers which are not readily visible. Some existing brick at the porch step has been painted. The guideline suggests open pier foundations be maintained, particularly on porches. The applicant is proposing to infill the foundation on both the house and the front porch. Details – Maintain detail elements typical to historic houses, many of which impart a specific architectural style. The existing exposed rafter tails of the hip roof will be maintained. Windows – Maintain the historic windows, their design, and placement. All of the existing windows are vinyl replacements. On the front façade the applicant proposes to replace the vinyl windows with true divided light 9/9 windows. Existing location and size of windows will remain. Window material was not indicated. Windows on the side elevations will be 1/1. On the right-side elevation, the applicant proposed to replace two single, double-hung windows with 1) two short, high-set windows flanking the chimney (an arrangement typical of Craftsman-style houses), and 2) double French doors with sidelights opening onto a new open porch. On the left-side elevation, one long double-hung window is proposed to be replaced with two double-hung 1/1 windows, and a short double-hung window is proposed to be replaced with a shed-roofed bump out with two casement or fixed windows. Doors – Maintain historic doors their design, and their placement. The existing front door is a replacement. The applicant proposes to maintain the existing placement and size but replace with a 5-panel door. Porches – Maintain the form, design, and materials of historic porches. The existing front porch form and design will be maintained. New brick piers and columns are proposed, and the porch floor will be replaced with synthetic wood. Additions – Allow for the expansion of a house while maintaining its historic character. The proposed addition will be located on the rear elevation, with a garage set well behind the facade of the existing house. The addition does not obscure the form or orientation of the original structure. A discernable break is proposed between the historic structure and the addition. Brick, horizontal lap siding, double-hung windows, and hip roofs consistent with the historic structure are proposed.

Mr. Wood advised while some modifications are proposed to the historic structure, the integrity of the Craftsman house remains. The addition is complimentary to the character of the house and set fully behind the original structure. Staff recommends approval of the request subject to the new chimney being full brick.

Chairman Griffin opened the public hearing at 7:00pm and called for anyone in favor of the request.

Mr. Jim Mehserle with JMA Architecture representing the applicant provided a brief history on the home which was constructed circa 1925 by JP Cooper. As staff advised, the dwelling is identified as Craftsman and is 784 square feet and reviewed with the Commission the proposed design as outlined in the staff report and it is intended to replicate and maintain the character-giving element of the structure. Mr. Mehserle then reviewed the specific details of material with the addition with the PowerPoint presentation.

Mr. Curtis George – 705 Washington Street he and his wife are excited to be in the downtown area and understand the guidelines for the historic district and feel the proposed design adheres to them.

Chairman Griffin called for anyone opposed; there being none the public hearing was closed at 7:26pm.

Chairman Griffin commented on the addition and the brick roof line; Mr. Mehserle advised that was done to delineate the addition and is maintained with similar materials, but there is a difference in the height, and it develops a different visual interest and works in the spirit of the guidelines. Commissioner Sanders felt on the addition the brick did not fit in with the character of the neighborhood. Chairman Griffin commented on the height of the garage as there are no adjacent two-story structures. Mr. Mehserle advised it is not a garage; there is a half bath, laundry and living quarters and is connected to the main dwelling. Chairman Griffin asked if it could be moved to the rear of the yard; Mr. Mehserle advised it could but then there would be no backyard.

Commissioner Beroza motioned to approve the application as submitted; Commissioner Hubbard seconded; all in favor with Commissioner Sanders opposed; resulting in 4-1 for approval.

8. Old Business – None

9. Other Business

- a. Update on possible delegation of COAs – Mr. Wood advised the city attorney has reviewed and is not permissible to delegate some applications to staff, so all COA's in a historic district will come before the Commission.

In follow-up to the approval of the new houses on Massee Lane, the builder is varying the façade exteriors.

The March 11th meeting conflicts with an anticipated large event downtown and requests to move the meeting date; the Commission concurred, and it will be held March 12th.

Mr. Wood asked if the Commission was ready to move forward with the downtown district designation; the Commission advised they were; staff will proceed.

10. Adjournment – there being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm.

Approved 03.12.25