

**Historic Preservation Commission**  
September 16, 2024  
City Hall, Edward & Martha Berry Conference Room

**Attendance:**

Members – Bill Walker, Mark Snider, Mary Anne Reeves, Meghan Jennings, Richard Vedder, Cyrus Moore, John Valentour

Guests – David Riggs, Director of Athens' Code & Community Development

Absent – Tim Anderson

**Agenda**

1. **Call to Order** – Mary Anne, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.
2. **Disposition of Minutes** from August 12 meeting.
  - Richard motioned to approve the August minutes.
    - Bill seconded the motion.
  - All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed.
3. **Old Business**
  - Updates: Mansfield House, Lostro Building, & Presbyterian Church
    - Lostro Building
      - Mary introduced David Riggs, the Director of Code & Community Director as a guest. Mary announced that the Commission has questions about projects around town. Mary asked specifically about The Lostro building.
        - David stated that The Lostro building had an underground vault along both Court Street and Union Street under the city's right-of-way (ROW). The building itself directly abuts the city's ROW. He stated that at one time, the sidewalk used to contain the 4 in x 4 in glass in the sidewalk to provide light to the under-sidewalk vault. David stated that structurally, the vaults are failing and that they would collapse the sidewalks. He stated that the developer was going to fill in the vaults and re-do the sidewalks to preserve safety of the sidewalk. He clarified that the car lift was in the center of the building to take cars from the first floor to the second floor.
        - Mary Anne asked if the Commission could receive pictures of the vaults before they get filled in.
        - David stated that Andrew Chiki may have photos.
        - David stated that the vaults are very wet so the moisture eroded away at the framing, hence their need to fill in the vaults.
      - Mark asked if David thinks that the design of the building is historically compatible and respectful.
        - David replied that he did.
      - The Commission discussed the relationship between the Code Office and Commission. David stated that Code doesn't bring certain applications to the Commissions for their review.
        - John argued that awnings affect the fenestration of the building and so the Commission should review those applications.

- David stated that he would make sure future applications related to the façade of buildings in the historic district would come to the Commission.
- Mary Anne asked about the treatment or cleaning of the exterior bricks of The Lostro.
  - David stated that they had to clean the exterior bricks due to an asbestos coating.
- Richard asked what the future use of The Lostro building will be.
  - David stated that 22 hotel rooms would be on the upper floors and a Raising Canes on the ground floor, as well as another potential mercantile. He also stated there is potential for another restaurant in the basement of the building.
- John asked if the designs of the building were approved by the Commission.
  - David stated the designs haven't changed from what the Commission previously approved.
  - John stated that the project was getting financing or tax credits from federal historic preservation.
  - John asked if David could share schematics for the floor plans in order to assess the location of the windows and the wall divisions.
  - David stated that the replacement windows would be replaced with wood-frames. He stated that he would share the link to the State's approved plans in order for the Commission to look at the approved plans.
    - The Commission complained about navigating the files on the State's website.
    - Meghan volunteered to find the correct files and share them with the Commission.
    - John requested elevations and floor plans.
- Mary Anne asked about the PACE financing and Special Energy District.
  - Meghan clarified that the PACE district only needs City involvement for the creation of the district and that the financing and details are handled by the State.
- Mary Anne asked if David could check to make sure the State and Feds have received updated plans for The Lostro.
- Mary Anne asked the Commission if they had other questions for David.
- Mansfield House
  - Richard asked if David knew anything about the Mansfield House.
  - David stated that he did not have any updates.
  - Meghan stated that the plaque that Bill found is mounted on the front of the Mansfield House.
- Presbyterian Church
  - Meghan updated that the approximate ship date is October 10, 2024.
  - The Commission discussed reaching out to the reverend of the Presbyterian Church to schedule a time in late October or early November.
- Meeting with OU President

- Mary Anne stated that she has not yet called the OU President.
- Presentation to City Council
  - Mary Anne attended the City Council meeting last month and shared that the Historic Preservation Commission is involved with changes to historic buildings.
  - John asked if there are paper copies of records of reviewed and approved plans from the Historic Preservation Commission.
  - Meghan stated that she would look through the files in her office to see if they are there.
  - The Commission discussed how the State receives documentation of the Commission's approval of projects.
  - The Commission discussed how they can make sure that projects that receive their certificates of appropriateness stay in compliance with their approval. They discussed how the minutes can act as a receipt of agreements.
  - The Commission discussed ongoing projects including The Lostro, The Armory, Mount Zion Black Cultural Center. The Commission asked for updates on The Armory specifically and requested that Andrew Chiki could attend a future meeting to update the Commission and receive approval.
- Paul Logue Memorial
  - The Commission discussed installing a memorial, like a tree planting.
  - Bill recommended getting a tree and a plaque for dedication. Bill recommended an oak tree for his memorial. Bill recommended that the Commission reach out to Katherine Anne with Athens Arts, Park & Recreation.
  - Cyrus recommended that the tree would be nice at the art park at The Armory as a potential location; if possible.

#### **4. New Business**

- The Ridges
  - Bill shared photos of the degradation of the buildings at The Ridges.
  - The Commission discussed talking with the University President about the issues with the buildings' integrity.
  - Cyrus mentioned installing a historic sign on The Ridges property.
  - John recommended designating The Ridges as a historic landmark.
  - Bill stated that he would look into the Commission's regulations about how to designate a historic landmark.

#### **5. Announcements**

- Mary Anne asked Meghan for an update on the Heritage Square Tour.
  - Meghan reported that the tours were very successful, three tours were offered and sold out. About 100 people attended the tour.
- Mayor Patterson stopped by the meeting on his way to the Council meeting.
  - The Commission asked if the Mayor could attend a future meeting to discuss the Commission's authority and purview.
  - The Mayor stated that he would be happy to attend a future meeting.
- Mary Anne announced that the next scheduled meeting is October 14, 2024.

#### **6. Adjourn**

- Mark motioned to adjourn at 6:50 p.m.
  - Cyrus seconded the motion.
- All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed.