

The following minutes are from the Historic Commission meeting on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, in the Abita Springs Town Hall. The meeting convened at 6:00 P.M.

Commission Chairman Mancil called the meeting to order. Commissioner Monnot led the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioners in attendance included Thad Mancil, Ron Blitch, Andre Monnot, and Paul Vogt. Commissioner Dinkelacker arrived after roll call, but before the first application for Certificate of Appropriateness. Kristin Tortorich and Heather Hockman were also present.

#### **Acceptance of Minutes**

The Commission reviewed the draft minutes from the May 9, 2023, meeting. **Commissioner Blitch motioned to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2023, meeting as submitted. Commissioner Monnot seconded the motion. All voted in favor.**

#### **Call For Agenda Modification**

None.

#### **Certificate of Appropriateness Abita Middle School, 72079 Maple Street**

The application is to add a playground to the Middle School property. The commissioners reviewed the site plan and playground design. Commissioner Mancil noted that the new playground will be visible from the Main Street side and will be near the new canopy.

**Commissioner Monnot motioned to approve the application. Commissioner Dinkelacker seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Assigned to Commissioner Mancil.**

Commission Chairman Mancil stated that Abita Middle School is also doing painting over the summer and emailed an application to request approval between meetings to repaint with existing colors during the summer break. Commissioner Mancil said he wanted everyone to be aware that the project would be happening, and they did seek approval.

#### **Certificate of Appropriateness 71465 Keller Street**

The application is to add a new shelter/pavilion near the shed. The homeowner stated the pavilion will be the same size as the existing shed and will adhere to the 5' setbacks. The pavilion will be installed over flagstone and used as a cover to an outdoor kitchen area. The homeowner stated he likely will add spindle railings to the north and east sides, as well as half of the south side, which will match the existing house. Commissioner Blitch said the guidelines require matching the roof slope of the accessory structure to the slope of the main house. Commissioners Blitch and Mancil said the roof slope appears to be 8/12 and should be matched. They also said they are not opposed to the choice of a metal roof on the pavilion.

**Commissioner Blitch motioned to approve the project as submitted with the additional notes to allow the addition of railings on three sides to match the house and to increase the slope of the roof to match the house. Commissioner Dinkelacker seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Assigned to Commissioner Blitch.**

#### **Certificate of Appropriateness 72269 Gordon Avenue**

The application is to change previously approved plans for a new home with guest house. The original application was for brick piers but will be changing to CMU piers with stucco on top. The doors on the guest house will be smaller than previously approved, as well as changing from 4 panels to a 2 panel Craftsman style door. Commissioner Mancil recommended installing a transom over the door to line up with the windows, since the smaller door alone would be lower than the windows. For the main house, the windows facing the street would no longer have transoms and would be raised for cost savings. Commissioner Blitch mentioned a fireplace being on the plans but not being shown. The homeowner stated the fireplace would be a ventless gas fireplace. The homeowner asked if she would have approval for scalloped shingles if she decided to change them. Commissioner Mancil said they are allowed, and he would make a note that they may change.

**Commissioner Dinkelacker motioned to approve the changes. Commissioner Blitch seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Still assigned to Commissioner Mancil.**

**Certificate of Appropriateness Nexus Luxury Imports, 21464 Hwy 36**

The application is to install two new signs for the business. The business owner said the sign on the building will be installed in the existing case, painted black, but without the lights that are currently installed. Commissioner Blitch reviewed the sizes of the signs. The monument sign out by the street will be a cedar V-shaped 2 panel sign with the point toward Highway 36 so the sign could be viewed from both sides. Commissioner Blitch expressed concern about the placement of the sign to make sure that it doesn't encroach on the neighboring property. Kristin Tortorich explained that a site plan would be reviewed when they apply for the permit. Commissioner Blitch asked about any lighting and said it could not be internally lit with fluorescent lights and would need to be shielded. The owner stated he was thinking about small, low wattage, stake lights to point at the sign.

**Commissioner Blitch motioned to approve the application as discussed. Commissioner Monnot seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Assigned to Commissioner Mancil.**

**Certificate of Appropriateness 71667 Leveson Street**

The application is for roof replacement, changing from metal to fiberglass shingles. The owner decided on the weathered wood option. Commissioner Mancil agreed the weathered wood option would be better.

**Commissioner Blitch motioned to approve the application. Commissioner Dinkelacker seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Assigned to Commissioner Blitch.**

**Commissioner Mancil reviewed the following applications that were approved between meetings:**

**Ahmeek Lane at Hwy 435** Replacement of previously approved painted wood sign with exact match.

**22316 Main Street** Changed from white vinyl siding to white Hardie board siding.

Commissioner Mancil stated there was a time sensitive issue that required review outside of the meeting date and emailed approval was given but he wanted everyone to be aware what was reviewed. Kristin Tortorich explained we will be reviewing applications that are approved between meetings at each meeting.

**DISCUSSION/PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Commissioner Dinkelacker wanted to discuss holiday lighting considering the permanent holiday lighting installed at a home in the Historic District and a sign being used for advertising at that location. Commissioner Mancil stated that the Commission doesn't review Christmas lighting. Kristin Tortorich stated the sign that was being used to advertise the lighting was not allowed and would be removed this week. Commissioner Blitch said he felt the Commission needed to know if this was going to be used every night or only at the holidays. Commissioner Dinkelacker said he brought it up in order to have the conversation about how to address permanent lighting. Commissioner Blitch said that he feels the process is to find out the intent and see about a possible modification to the guidelines. The Commission agreed the flashing or animated lights would be a concern, as that is not allowed on signs in town. Kristin Tortorich stated the Administration had been discussing the lighting. The Administration didn't know about the lights until they were installed and has received complaints mostly about the animation. Commissioner Mancil said it would be considered for additional discussion.

Commissioner Monnot questioned if the applications approved between meetings, although easy approval items, were allowed to be approved in that manner. Commission Chair Mancil stated that any new applications or drastic changes to applications would have to go to a meeting, but he didn't see an issue with these due to the nature of the applications. However, if there starts to be too many applications being submitted between meetings, then a formal change would have to be made. Kristin Tortorich explained that the only things that typically go to the Commissioners between meetings are emergencies. In these cases, the owners were unaware they needed to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA), they were reprimanded, then the

applications were approved after the fact. Ms. Tortorich gave the example of leaking roofs not being able to wait until the next meeting. Commissioner Blich stated that in the past there were staff approvals of some things but there is now structure in place that allows for two commissioners to review the applications in those emergency situations and in-kind replacements. Commissioner Blich recommended adding an article to the Live Oak magazine to help explain to residents when they need to apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

**Commissioner Dinkelacker motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Vogt seconded the motion. All commissioners were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 P.M.**

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Kristin M. Tortorich, Planning and Zoning

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Date