
Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes February 11, 2021

Members present: Danielle Stein, Rhonda Dempster and Laura Fanguy

Members absent: Marguerite Erwin and Murray Dennis

Also Present: Roland Soignet, Jr. Zoning Administrator & Asst. Public Works Director, and Ruby Maggio, Secretary

Ms. Stein called the meeting to order.

Ms. Dempster moved to accept the minutes as presented for the October 8, 2020 meeting, motion was seconded by Ms. Fanguy. All board members present were in favor.

Ms. Stein noted the item on the agenda was to review proposed 8' x 15' temporary mural on building located at 404 W. 4th Street to be completed by the Purple Penguin Art Company on behalf of Thibodaux Main Street. Ms. Dempster moved that the item be moved to the bottom of the agenda and to go on to the next item, motion seconded by Ms. Fanguy.

Ms. Stein noted the next item on the agenda was to review proposed 4' wooden picket fence to be installed at 602 St. Philip Street by Michael Bernard. A representative for Mr. Bernard came forward to state Mr. Bernard was out of town & he was there on his behalf. Mr. Bernard is trying to resurrect a fence resembling very similar to the original fence of the house and he believed it was in the best interest of the Historical Board as well as the historical nature of his home to do so but if they had any questions he would be happy to answer them. He stated he didn't know if any of them had gone by the house lately but he has actually started to restore the front. Ms. Fanguy stated yes it looks nice, she runs there every day and sometimes you had to walk off of the sidewalk because of the vines but it will be nice once they are cut down. Ms. Dempster asked if the gate was going to be like the top picture or the bottom picture. He stated so right now if you look at the top picture it is very similar—that cyclone fence gate that you see in the picture from the 60's is not there, if you look at Exhibit D you can see the metal post that is there and there is a black metal fence gate that is there so he wasn't sure if he plans to convert that to a wooden gate or not -- but it definitely will not be a cyclone gate. Ms. Dempster stated it looked like a wooden fence but the kind with those springs on it that will spring back. His representative replied correct, he doubted that he would put that in -- it is going to be more of a secure gate rather than just something you can push in and open but there will definitely be a gate there if that answers your question. Ms. Dempster asked if this was his house originally or a family member's house. His representative replied no, this house was for another couple that had it before he bought it in '98 but they bought it from the original owners or at least a family member of the original owner, so technically the Bernard family is the 3rd family that would own the property as far as names & he didn't know the other names. He knew it was the old Maude Billiu house and thought she was the original owner or a niece of the original owner who built the house so there was a lot of history with the house. Ms. Stein asked if there was a motion to approve the proposal, it was moved by Ms. Fanguy, seconded by Mr. Dempster, all members present were in favor.

Ms. Stein noted the next item was to review the proposed 8' x 15' temporary mural on building located at 404 W. 4th Street to be completed by the Purple Penguin Art Company on behalf of Thibodaux Main Street. Ms. Dempster stated she thought it was phenomenal and was going to be a great asset to downtown -- just some kind of color instead of this brown plywood wall and she asked if this was this something that you guys came up with? Ms. Stein stated I told her we want something Instagram worthy because we have a lot of young kids that come for pictures down here, we just want something fun and vibrant and that represents Thibodaux. I sent her a few examples of murals that she had seen throughout Louisiana and she came up with the sugarcane. I told her just simple, just Thibodaux prominent you can put Louisiana on it, it's the colors that bring it out. Ms. Stein asked if they wanted to request that she swap the fonts so the Louisiana was in the script and Thibodaux in block letters and where the white space is in the middle to fill that in so the white Thibodaux stands out. Ms. Dempster stated her only thought on that is if this is a mural and she is an artist I don't know that we need to tell her how to do her mural. Ms. Stein replied she agreed and has just gotten questions about the font on the Thibodaux. Ms. Dempster stated she thought that was what stands out the best in it and if you put it this way it is going to be hard to read more than this is. Ms. Fanguy stated you mean instead of script looking. Ms. Dempster stated you would do this in this font and this in that font. Ms. Stein replied right it would be still be white and this is just something that a board member had a question on. Ms. Fanguy replied she agreed with both of you, it would look prettier probably but it probably stands out a little more when you have block. Ms. Stein stated or just change the "o" and the "a". Ms. Dempster stated to caps you're talking about. Ms. Stein replied yes just a regular block letter. Ms. Fanguy stated the font is a little off. Ms. Dempster stated she was not the artsy person so she didn't know. Ms. Erwin joined the meeting via telephone call at his

point, Ms. Dempster stated we just have a quick question because Laura, Danielle and I are the only three that are at the meeting, Danielle is going to recuse herself because it is a Main Street project but number one it is going to make us not have a quorum, and the City is paying for it so should I recuse myself, could we put you on speaker and you vote or can we not do that? Ms. Dempster stated so one of the things that Danielle is talking about is changing the font of Thibodaux. Ms. Stein stated either swapping the fonts or just making the "o" and the "a" consistent with the rest of the letters Ms. Dempster stated so the other suggestion would be to make the "o" a capital letter and the "a" a capital letter and leave everything else the way it is just for it to be consistent and like Danielle said it was supposed to be Instagram worthy, social media worthy where kids could come take their pictures in front of it so that they would see Thibodaux so what about changing the small "o" and the small "a" to a capital letter? Ms. Erwin replied she just had a problem with asking the artist to change her creative design and she thought this was just a mural, she didn't understand that this was also going to be used for advertising. Ms. Dempster replied well it will be but kids are going to come and take their graduation pictures by it, that is just the nature of downtown. It is not for a specific thing it is just that that is what they are going to use it for. Ms. Erwin replied I mean we either want the mural or we don't and if somebody wants to make changes, I'm not going to do that. Ms. Dempster asked if it was ok that we have you on speaker and you vote on speaker phone... Ms. Erwin replied well only because I actually talked to Archie about the rules for public meetings and the only way that this is legal if it is for a quorum, otherwise it is not legal, so if it is for a quorum then it is legal. Ms. Stein stated so are you able to vote Rhonda? Ms. Dempster replied yes because like she said you recused yourself from the very beginning, I didn't that was just a conversation we had, should I, could I you know whatever so she said yes, then I can go ahead and vote. Ms. Erwin commented it is not as if you are benefiting from it personally. Ms. Stein stated ok, can I get a motion to approve the proposal as presented for the mural project, the motion was made by Ms. Dempster and seconded by Ms. Erwin. Ms. Dempster, Ms. Erwin and Ms. Fanguy were in favor, with Ms. Stein abstaining from the vote.

Ms. Stein asked if there were any other matters to be discussed at this time, if not meeting adjourned at 4:18.