

MINUTES
The Spartanburg Board of Architectural Design and Historic Review
Thursday, January 8, 2015 ~ 5:30 PM
City Hall Council Chambers

Board Members Attendance: Dr. Phillip Stone, II., Michael Chewning, Carolyn Harrison, Lewis Settle, Sarah Love, Thomas Belenchia, and Thomas Koenig.

Absent Board Members: Matthew Manley.

City Staff: Joshua Henderson, Planning Coordinator; Julie Roland, Administrative Assistant, and Martin Meek, Preservation Specialist. Assistant City Manager Chris Story also attended the meeting.

Dr. Stone, the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. and stated the hearing procedures. Dr. Stone recognized the five board members that were currently present constituted a quorum, and he proceeded with the guidelines for the procedure of the meeting.

Mrs. Love made a motion to approve the Agenda for tonight's meeting, and was seconded by Mr. Settle. The motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Old Business

There was no old business for discussion.

New Business

Petition to have Bon Haven located at 728 N. Church Street (c. 1884) added to the City of Spartanburg Historic Site Pending List – Assistant City Manager Chris Story and Joshua Henderson.

Mr. Henderson came forward and was sworn, and submitted the report the Board Members had previously received, as well as the slides and presentation into evidence as Exhibit A. He informed the Board Members the request was a petition that was signed by ten (10) City residents to have the property located 728 North Church Street added to the Pending List for Historic Sites, with further consideration by City Council. Mr. Henderson said under Section 510, Historic Preservation of the City of Spartanburg Zoning Ordinance, any ten (10) City residents could file a petition with the Historic Architectural Review Board to consider a property, site, or historic neighborhood as historic, and to request such site to be placed on the Pending List for further investigation and consideration by City Council. According to this section the Board Members had the following options: 1) the Board may decide either to place the property and all structures, on the Pending List to then be reviewed by City Council; 2) vote to not put the property on the Pending List; or 3) table the request to seek further information to make a clear determination on the listing, or not listing of the property. He said if the Board Members decided to place the property and all structures on the Pending List, it would then fall under the purview of the Design Manual for the City of Spartanburg Historic Districts & Landmarks, which was the same set of guidelines used for the Hampton Heights Neighborhood. The purpose of the request was the desire to preserve the historical integrity of the structures located on the property.

[Editor's Note: Board Member Thomas Belenchia arrived to the meeting at 5:36 P.M.]

Mr. Henderson said according to the S.C. State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), this was listed on the National Register on June 29, 1976. Upon reviewing the description and original nomination form, it was explained that the main structure on the property was constructed c. 1884 and "is a Second Empire style structure with 1920's Neo-Classical additions." It was constructed by John B. Cleveland who played a vital role in the development of Spartanburg and, upon his death in 1928, became known as the town's "first citizen." The National Register described this structure as being "two stores high and set upon a raised granite basement, the house exemplified the eclecticism of two ages." The home consists of a Mansard roof, central tower, and arched windows which reflected the Second Empire style, while the large massive Ionic columns and portico reflected the Neo-Classical revival of the 1920's. The property also consists of a "brick servant's quarters, a brick 'tea' house, and the remains of a formal garden." Mr. Henderson said he heard in the last year, a large tree fell on the structure and caused a good bit of damage. Numerous slides were then shown of the property and signed petition, in order to better illustrate the request. Mr. Henderson concluded his presentation by introducing into Evidence as Exhibit B a copy of an email received from Michael Bedenbaugh, Executive Director for Palmetto Trust for Historic Preservation that in essence stated he could not be present at tonight's meeting due to just being notified within the last twenty-four hours, but he wanted the Board Members to know that as Director of the S. C. State-wide Preservation he could speak for the Board of Directors and membership

for Palmetto Trust of Historic Preservation that they fully supported some form of community protection regarding Bon Haven. They considered Bon Haven a historical asset and a treasure of State-wide significance. He had met in the past with Mr. Dexter Cleveland regarding creating solutions for this property's future; and they were willing to meet with him again, as well as heirs and community leaders to discuss saving this property.

[Editor's Note: Dr. Stone, the Chair noted for the record that Board Member Thomas Koenig arrived to the meeting at 5:42 P.M.]

Mr. William E. Walsh, Attorney in Spartanburg, S.C. came forward and was sworn; and said he was representing the Cleveland Family, as he had for the past forty years. He informed the Board Members during much of that time it had been the family's desire for the house to be preserved. The house was built in 1884, and was the home of John B. Cleveland until he died in 1927; at which time it became the home of Jesse Cleveland, and Jesse's son Giles and Gile's brother John B, who died in 1995. The house had been pretty much vacant since that time. The property was currently owned by five great grand children, only one of whom lived in Spartanburg, who was Dexter Cleveland. Over the last twenty years the family had made continuous efforts to find a solution for the future of the house regarding preservation. For a long time they were optimistic; and had contacted the hospital and Wofford College and hoped that one of them would possibly take on the challenge. Both of them turned down the opportunity because they did not have the use for it that would justify the cost that preservation would involve. The property had been on the market for years, but no offers had been received that would have resulted in anything other than destruction of the house. They recently inquired whether it would have a use as part of the Northside Initiative in Spartanburg, which had come to nothing. The Cleveland family was very sincere in their interest in historic preservation; and several years ago when Georgia Cleveland Home on Dean Street closed; the property was granted to the heirs of John B. Cleveland, and although First Baptist was very anxious to buy the property and pay full market value for it, the family chose instead to donate it to St. Luke's Free Medical Clinic in order that the property could be preserved and returned to its original use as the City Hospital, before Spartanburg General Hospital was built. Over the last several years, Bon Haven had begun to decay, and the cost of ownership continued to be a heavy burden for the owners, several of whom do not have the means to continue to bear this burden. Since John B. Cleveland passed away in 1995, the property had not qualified for owner occupied assessment ratio and the taxes this year alone were nearly \$17,500.00. The property was now classed as commercial for property tax purposes, and about nine months ago a big tree fell on the structure which accelerated the need to make a decision about the future of the house. The family believed under the circumstances, they had found the best solution possible; and they plan not to demolish the house down, but to save it. They entered into a contract this past November with a firm to deconstruct the house, move and reconstruct it on a site in Mississippi, where there was an individual who was willing to bear an astronomical cost in order to do this, which would enable Bon Haven to continue as a home. Mr. Walsh said they believe placing the site on the pending list would undermine this effort. Currently Bon Haven remains insecure, and the house has been boarded up. Everything of value has been taken out of the house. There have been months of vandalism, theft, rot and decay. Every week that passed by left opportunity for decay and vulnerability. Once vandalism got started it was hard to stop. For a family that had been waiting for their right next step for over twenty years, and had remained opened to all options, for the City to step in now would be a big disappointment. Designating the house as historic and placing it on the pending list would not address the decay and could be counter-productive for the house, as it would expose the property to more decay and further vandalism. If the property was placed on the pending list a Certificate of Appropriateness would be required to do any alterations, which would halt the current effort. Designating the house as historic was not an end in itself, and would not provide the funds for repairs or help pay the taxes. The provision in the Historic Ordinance allowing City Council to designate a site as historic was intended to allow a reasonable time to find economically viable use permitting preservation of a property, which designation would last for one year and could not be re-designated until another year had passed. The Cleveland Family had worked twenty years regarding preservation for the property, and every opportunity had already been explored. At this point a delay would jeopardize the family's desire to see the house preserved. It would only be reasonable to impose a delay if someone had a possible use that had not already been explored. It would be an injustice for the City to delay the current effort of preservation when the owner's had already spent twenty years looking at every other option. During that time the family turned down opportunities to sell the land that would have resulted in the destruction of the house. The deconstruction and relocation of the home was the family's best chance at preservation. They

are pleased that at last they have a chance to save Bon Haven, and therefore they ask the Board Members to please refrain from jeopardizing their efforts.

Board Questions:

- Mrs. Love asked Mr. Walsh had there been any means such as a trust set up for funds in which to save the house. Mr. Walsh explained there had been at one time, but that option had expired.
- Mr. Belenchia asked about the damage and cost of repair regarding the fallen tree. Mr. Walsh said the estimate for repair was \$90,000.00 and it had fallen on the back of the house.

Mr. Albert Jolly, Architect, came forward and was sworn, and informed the Board Members he had visited the house this past Monday to try and take a walk-through and see what the condition was; and he referenced a slide to show where the tree had fallen onto the back side of the house and caught the corner of the house and put a six to ten square foot hole in the roof. It caught the brick work in the window and came in to the kitchen area and completely collapsed the wall on that side of the house and pushed over part of the structure. There was very significant water damage in the flooring system in kitchen and dining area below; and he did not advise anyone going into those areas because it was soft, spongy and it shook.

- Mr. Belenchia asked if the tree had been removed and the damaged area covered. Mr. Jolly said no.
- Mr. Belenchia wondered why the area had not been covered. Mr. Jolly said he did not know.
- Mr. Koenig asked had any of the damaged area been covered during the last nine months. Mr. Jolly said it looked to him like it had been open.

Dr. Stone said this was not a public hearing, but informally asked if anyone present would like to speak in favor regarding putting the property on the pending list to come forward.

- Mrs. Linda Bilanchone came forward and said she had been an advocate for historic preservation since she had been involved in writing Spartanburg's Local Historic Preservation Ordinance along with Dr. Fisher. She perceived it was the responsibility of this Board to be the City's official advocate for historic preservation; and the means by which to do that was to vote to place the property on the pending list when the proper request was made. She knew the Board Members found themselves in a very desperate situation, and she felt for the petitioners as well.
- Mr. Al Jolly came back up again and said this was a dilemma. Since it was a brick building; you can't do the things that you would have to do to keep it a historic building, unless you had someone who was willing to pay for it. So what we had now was a derelict building and no one could blame the family for not wanting to pour more money into a hole. He said at least they had someone who was willing to deconstruct it and rebuild it somewhere else so it could at least have a chance to live on. Mr. Jolly felt the house should not be put on the historic register.

Dr. Stone asked if anyone else wished to speak informally.

- Mr. Koenig asked was there a plan for what it might cost to move the home intact to another location. Mr. Jolly said he did not know if it was feasibly possible to pick the house up. He had seen brick structures moved before, but never one of this size. He referenced a slide and explained what he thought the process would be involved to lift the house up in order to move. The cost would be horrific, and even then he did not feel it would be able to be moved intact.
- Mr. Koenig asked about when the Dupree House was moved. Mr. Jolly said the Dupree House was a frame house, and he explained a frame house was more sturdier than a brick home.
- Mr. Kyle Campbell came forward and said he was a Preservation Consultant and had worked on the Wilkins Mansion in Greenville, S.C., that was a brick structure that had been moved two blocks. He informed the Board Members it was \$300,000.00 to move the Wilkins Mansion. Mr. Campbell said Bon Haven would not be able to be moved to Mississippi any other way than to take it apart piece by piece.
- Mr. Koenig asked Mr. Campbell had anything been done with that structure since. Mr. Campbell explained they were finalizing the architectural plans.

- Mrs. Love asked Mr. Campbell his opinion about the rehabilitation of Bon Haven. Mr. Campbell said Mr. Cleveland met him and showed him around the house. He felt although there was some damage, overall it was in fantastic shape; and for him personally as a preservationist felt it was a great resource to Spartanburg, S.C., and it was very rare to have a Second Empire structure in the upstate.
- Mr. Koenig asked about the other building on the property. Mr. Cleveland said the contract they signed indicated all structures would be moved.

Mr. Stone asked if there were any other questions or comments. There were not anymore questions or comments.

- Dr. Stone said he was appointed to be the professional historian on the Board. He said looking through the Cleveland File at Wofford College and at the Preservation Ordinance, the structure clearly met the test of the ordinance, in that the structure was significant to the community; it represented a person, John B. Cleveland who was a significant person in the community. Mr. Cleveland was the father of the Spartanburg Water System and the City School System; a leading trustee of Wofford and Converse Colleges; a principal early donor of a lot of facilities, in particular at Wofford College. He was a leading member of the community for a number of years, and on the basis of that alone, it met the test. Dr. Stone felt there was clear evidence for the Board to move to put it on the pending list, and be forwarded to City Council. He felt on the other hand it was a tough call, and they ran the risk of the structure deteriorating even further sitting there. He informed the Board Members that this structure was one of a pair of structures in Spartanburg. John B Cleveland's brother Jesse also had a house similar to this one that was on the site of the former Cleveland Elementary School, which was now the Cleveland Academy. Dr. Stone informed the Board Members when he was originally pointed to this Board he was told by one of his mentor's, they hoped he along with the Board would do more to try and preserve some of Spartanburg's older homes.
- Mrs. Love agreed with Dr. Stone's observation of the property regarding that it should be placed on the Pending List of Historic Sites.
- Dr. Stone asked Mr. Henderson about the underlying zoning for the property. Mr. Henderson said it was R-15, Single Family Residential.
- Dr. Stone asked if any other use of the property beyond Single Family Residential if the home was deconstructed and something else put on the property, would it need to be rezoned. Mr. Henderson explained that any other use other than Single Family Residential use would have to go through the Planning Commission for a rezoning, and then through two readings of Council.
- Mrs. Love said something was said earlier about commercial taxes. Mr. Walsh said the tax assessor's office had the property listed as commercial.
- Assistant City Manager Chris Story said to clarify that statement, all properties by default carry a six percent assessment ratio, except for those that are occupied by resident owner.
- Mr. Walsh said the value of the property would be considered much lower for a commercial property.
- Mr. Koenig asked if the Board put the property on the pending list, would it fall under the guidelines for historic properties; and the fact that certain necessary repairs could not be made regarding not meeting the standards. Mr. Henderson said there were two sets of guidelines, the Design Manual for the City, and the Beaumont Village Guidelines. He said once a property was placed on the pending list, it would either need to be approved by Staff if applicable, or it would need to go before the Board for approval.
- Mr. Belenchia did not think if plastic was put over the roof to protect the structure from further damage, it would require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Henderson explained that would not be a minor or major work.
- Dr. Stone asked Mr. Henderson would the home remain on the pending list for sixty days or up to a year, if the owner did not ask for an expedited hearing; and sixty days if the owner did ask for an expedited hearing. Mr. Henderson explained after the hearing of the Board, it would go on the pending list, and the owner had the right to appeal the decision which would speed up the process from one year to sixty days for Council to have a decision. He further explained after that sixty days, or if there was not an appeal after that one year,

it would fall off the pending list and it could not be re-designated or reconsidered for one year after that point.

- Mr. Koenig asked if the house was put on the pending list, could it not be moved. Dr. Stone said it would need to get a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Board for demolition or deconstruction. He felt if property was on the National Register, and if it was moved it would come off of the National Register, like the Dupree House.
- Preservation Consultant Martin Meek said the Dupree House did not come off the National Register.
- Mr. Koenig asked if any of the people who submitted and signed the petition were present; and that they mainly all appeared to be from the same street and had signed on the same date.
- Mr. Belenchia said he was concerned that there did not seem to be that much public opinion on the matter. He felt if the people who signed the petition were present or cared about the building, they should get up and express their opinions.
- Mrs. Bilanchone came forward again and agreed with Mr. Belenchia's concern; but said she did not think there was a statement or anything sent out about tonight's meeting. When she heard of the meeting she tried to tell as many people as she could to come to the meeting, not knowing whether or not they would be allowed to speak. She felt maybe Staff should have done more to get the word out; but with that in mind, she felt she along with others that had heard of the matter at the last minute had done a pretty good job getting the word out.
- Dr. Vivian Fisher came forward and said this had happened very rapidly and they had just found out about it as well. She expressed to the Board Members she was in support of the property being placed on the pending list.
- Mr. Settle said it had really troubled him ever since he saw the windows boarded up on the house. He felt it was a place that people wanted it to stay where it was.
- Mr. Walsh said it was no debate that the house was historic; and the family had tried everything. It had gone to the State and everywhere. The family could not do it themselves, and it had been over twenty years, and the family could not continue to pour money into it. No one was happy about this, and they would like to save it more than anyone else. The family finally had a buyer that was going to pay an enormous cost to deconstruct it, move it and reconstruct it.
- Mrs. Harrison asked was the house structurally sound. Mr. Walsh said part of it was.
- Assistant City Manager Chris Story said he would like to clarify some earlier observations, and he explained the process described in the Ordinance was intended for public input to flow subsequent to the initiation of the process. He said Staff had acted accordingly.

Dr. Stone thanked Assistant City Manager Story for his clarification, and said if the Board wanted to move further with this case the next step was to hold a public hearing of the Board.

Mrs. Harrison moved for the house to be put on the pending list, and was seconded by Mr. Settle. The motion was approved by a vote of 6 to 1, with Mr. Belenchia voting in opposition.

Mr. Henderson said Staff would send a letter to the petitioners regarding tonight's meeting.

Update on Approved Certificate of Appropriateness for Minor Works since the December 11, 2014 Workshop meeting – Joshua Henderson.

Mr. Henderson went over the minor work cases approved by Staff since the December 11, 2014 Workshop meeting.

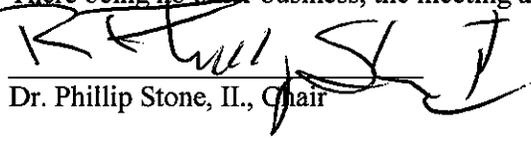
Other Business – none.

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mrs. Roland informed the Board Members there was still one Board Member vacancy position on the Board, and if they knew of anyone interested in serving on the Board to please let her know; and she would send them a form to be filled out and sent back to be sent to the City Clerk for consideration by the Mayor and City Council.

Mrs. Roland said all current Board Members would need to take their three hours of Continued Education Training for the year 2015.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 P.M.


Dr. Phillip Stone, II., Chair

Minutes by Julie Roland, Administrative Assistant