

NORTH LITTLE ROCK HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

**506 Main Street
North Little Rock, Arkansas 72114
Telephone (501) 371-0755**

**MINUTES
NORTH LITTLE ROCK HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
December 8, 2022
506 Main Street
North Little Rock, AR
5:30 P.M.**

Commission Members Present:

**Tom Marr
Debra Roberts
Charlie Hart
Susan Markman**

Others Present:

**Sandra Taylor Smith, Director
Kelli Peters, Staff
Becky Tanner
Iain Montgomery**

Commission Members Absent:

Mason Toms

Commission Chairman Tom Marr called the meeting of the North Little Rock Historic District Commission on December 8, 2022 to order at 5:30 P.M., and quorum was established. Commissioner Mason Toms had an excused absence.

CORRECTION AND ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Mr. Marr asked if Commissioners had read the minutes of the November 10, 2022 Historic District Commission meeting. Debra Roberts moved to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2022 HDC meeting as written. Charlie Hart seconded the motion and it was approved 4-0 in roll call vote.

New Business:

A. 501 W. 5th St. – Replace rear porch and paint brick house

Property owner Becky Tanner was in attendance. Sandra Smith told the Commissioners that the applicant wants to tear out the existing rear porch and rebuild it, as well as paint the entire brick house, which has not been previously painted. Ms. Tanner said she is planning to remove the existing lattice and paneling on the rear porch, and replace it with Hardie board siding. She will also add transom windows. She will use the porch as her laundry room. She added that she will paint the Hardie board in the same neutral color that she uses to paint the brick on the house. She also added that she will do her best to repair the front doors which are broken.

Susan Markman asked if the doors are part of the application they're reviewing at this

NORTH LITTLE ROCK HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Meeting December 8, 2022

Page 2

meeting. Ms. Smith said they are not, but this is something the applicant will be addressing soon. Ms. Tanner detailed to the Commission the damage that has been done to the doors due to break-ins. In addition to broken glass, there is a large gap in one of the doors. She did an online search of “vendors for 1920s doors” and presented the Commission with a printout of the door she is considering as a replacement. She told them that the door will cost around \$2,000, and that she has two front doors so she will need two of them. These doors are similar to what’s there now but they are more full glass.

Charlie Hart told Ms. Tanner that they will not approve the painting of her brick. Ms. Tanner presented various documentation of other brick houses in the district that have been painted. She showed the Commission images she had printed from Google street view which showed that some of the brick houses in the district have been painted. The timeline of when those houses were painted was discussed. Director Smith then pointed out that more than one of those had already been painted, then they were repainted. Some of the houses had already been painted prior to the creation of the historic district. Ms. Markman and Mr. Hart then told Ms. Tanner about the disadvantages of painting brick, and that she needs to make repairs to the existing brick & mortar, and have the brick cleaned, that simply painting it doesn’t fix anything; in fact, it creates even more problems. Ms. Markman added that when she bought her house in the Argenta Historic District, she wasn’t allowed to paint her house, either. She also pointed out that Ms. Tanner’s 1920 brick is in really good condition, it’s just the mortar that’s at issue. Debra Roberts told Ms. Tanner that she has been on the Commission for a long time and they have never approved painting previously-unpainted brick. Charlie Hart added that a lot of the houses in the district have been redone multiple times before the historic district was created, and that’s where that pre-painted brick came from. He added that they’re just trying to help people (by advising them on the best way to care for their historic properties). Ms. Tanner then told the Commission that she may decide to do very little to the house and just rent it. She reminded the group that there are gaping holes where bricks are missing. Susan Markman asked the location of the missing bricks. Ms. Tanner responded that they’re on the left side of the house toward the front. She had a foundation company look at it and the biggest problem is that the house leans to the left and needs to be lifted. However, when it’s lifted, she wants to make sure it’s repointed properly, should any shifting occur. Debra Roberts asked Ms. Tanner where she has looked for replacement bricks to match. Ms. Tanner told her that she has checked with Acme Brick to see if they can tell her where she can find some antique bricks. Susan Markman told Ms. Tanner that the staff of the North Little Rock Historic District Commission can provide resources and advice during the renovation process.

Charlie Hart asked Director Smith if the porch, being an original porch (according to the Sanborn maps), could be rebuilt on the back. Smith answered that it could. Mr. Hart asked Ms. Tanner if there is any wood siding on the house now. She answered that there isn’t. Mr. Hart told Ms. Tanner that she has a choice of material to use on the porch since

NORTH LITTLE ROCK HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Meeting December 8, 2022

Page 3

she doesn't have anything she has to match, but it must be wood, and cannot be Hardie board. He also added that the windows must be wood, also. Mr. Marr said that he is okay with the porch itself but not with the Hardie board siding. It needs to be wood siding. Ms. Markman & Mr. Hart both told Ms. Tanner that they're thrilled that she is renovating the house, but things like this are difficult; they want to be a resource and be helpful, even though it doesn't feel that way now. Director Smith asked Iain Montgomery, the Certified Local Government coordinator with the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, if *any* of the historic district commissions in the state allow unpainted brick to be painted. He answered that *none* of them allow it. Ms. Tanner expressed her disappointment that she sees so many other houses in the district that have been painted, and that's a hard pill to swallow. Chairman Marr gave Ms. Tanner a chance to revise her application but she declined. He then stated that they would vote on the application as presented. Debra Roberts moved to approve the application for removing and rebuilding the rear porch of the house at 501 W. 5th Street with wood or another material, but not Hardie board, and that the transom windows closely match the windows on the house in material and style, but she denied the request to paint the brick; it was seconded by Susan Markman. The motion was approved 4-0 in roll call vote.

Staff Report

Sandra Smith reported that the lady who lives at 223 W. 8th Street has asked about replacing her front door due to numerous break-ins. Ms. Smith advised her to only replace the glass with tempered glass, making it harder to break, rather than replacing the door.

Sandra Smith next reported that she received an email with photos of a fence being erected without a permit behind the building at 705 Main Street. She had also had a previous conversation with the tenant of that building who expressed his desire to put up a wooden awning over the front entrance. She advised against that but he didn't seem to understand the importance or purpose of the HDC regulations. She asked the Commission if they wanted her to request a Stop Work Order on the fence and she agreed to do that.

Sandra Smith also reported that she contacted Elaine Lee, with the city attorney's office, but Ms. Lee had not heard anything from Mr. Coleman, the owner of the house at 311 W. 7th Street, so Ms. Smith asked Ms. Lee to take the steps necessary to take him to court. She then explained the background of this situation to Iain Montgomery, the CLG coordinator at the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, and asked for his help.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra Taylor Smith, Director