



CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG  
COMMUNITY PLANNING & PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
PUBLIC HEARING

Council Chambers  
City Hall

March 11, 2014  
Tuesday, 3:00 p.m.

MINUTES

**Present:** Robert "Bob" Carter, Chair  
Jeffery "Jeff" M. Wolf, Vice Chair  
Will Michaels  
Ed Montanari  
Gwendolyn "Gwen" Reese  
Lisa Wannemacher  
Arnett Smith, Jr., Alternate  
Thomas "Tom" Whiteman, Alternate

**Commissioners Absent:** Jeff Rogo, Alternate<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> *excused*

**Staff Present:** Dave Goodwin, Director, Planning & Economic Development  
Derek Kilborn, Manager, Urban Planning, Design & Historic Preservation  
Kim Hinder, Historic Preservationist, Urban Planning, Design & Historic Preservation  
Aimee Angel, Historic Preservationist, Urban Planning, Design & Historic Preservation  
Michael Dema, Assistant City Attorney, Legal  
Vicky Davidson, Administrative Assistant, Planning & Economic Development

The public hearing was called to order at 3:04 p.m., a quorum was present.

**I. OPENING REMARKS OF CHAIR AND SWEARING IN OF WITNESSES**

**II. ROLL CALL**

**III. MINUTES**

The minutes from February 11, 2014 meeting were approved as written by a consensus vote.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments made.

## V. QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARING

*(Deferred from 2/11/14 Meeting)*

**A. City File HPC 13-90300005**

**Contact Person: Kim Hinder  
892-5451**

**Request:** Third party-initiated Local Designation of the North Ward School located at 327 – 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.

### Staff Presentation

Kim Hinder gave a PowerPoint presentation based on the staff report.

### Applicant Presentation

Peter Belmont began with Emily Elwyn concluding the presentation in support of the application. Both speakers are with the St. Petersburg Preservation, Inc.

### Owner Presentation

Heather Wallace, Pinellas School Board Attorney, began with Tim Rhode, architect, concluding the presentation in opposition of the request.

Commissioner Montanari asked for the results of the School Board vote. Ms. Wallace stated that it had not been presented to the School Board.

Commissioner Montanari asked if any information can be shared regarding the potential buyers of the property and what they may want to do with it if this designation is moved forward. Ms. Wallace stated that she is unaware of what any of the potential owners want to do with the property. All who have presented offers have been spoken with; three have indicated that their offers will be withdrawn if the designation is approved and the final offer has written in the contract a price reduction if the designation is approved. At this point, none of the offers have been presented to the School Board because of the pending designation.

Commissioner Wannemacher cited two examples (Southside Fundamental Project which was purchased and is now a charter school, and Jordan Park Elementary School which was purchased by the City and is now a Head Start facility) and then asked for an explanation on how they are different. Commissioner Wannemacher went on to say that both examples were built in the 1920s, used for a long time by the community, closed by the school system and fell in disrepair but were then eventually sold and bought and repurposed. Ms. Wallace explained that at this point they have no buyers willing to purchase the property at the School Board's asking price if designated. In regards to the two examples, Ms. Wallace stated that she is unable to compare because she is fairly new to Pinellas County and not familiar of where they were located. However, the subject property is located on 4<sup>th</sup> Street and believes many of the potential buyers are looking for frontage along this road and is not sure with this property as it is currently configured would fit in to that ideal. The subject property has been on the market for several months and the School Board has received only the four offers.

Commission Chair Carter explained that the Commission does not consider financial means to which Ms. Wallace stated that she understood but just wanted the Commission to be aware of the practical impacts.

**Public Hearing**

Burt Kline, 1122 – 2<sup>nd</sup> St N, spoke in support of the request.

Rachel Wein, 200 – 18<sup>th</sup> Ave N, spoke in opposition of the request.

Susan Cook Lahey, 206 – 14<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, spoke in support of the request.

Peter Motzenbecker, 112 – 10<sup>th</sup> Ave NE and representing and President of the Historic Old Northeast NA, spoke in support of the request.

Mary Dowd, 1025 – 4<sup>th</sup> St N, spoke in support of the request.

James Vestal, 1114 – 3<sup>rd</sup> St N, is undecided but is not in support if a viable plan for the site is not in place.

Monica Kile, 5879 – 27<sup>th</sup> Ave S, spoke in support of the request.

**Cross Examination****By City Staff:**

Waived

**By Owner:**

Waived

**By Applicant:**

Waived

**Rebuttal****By City Staff:**

Waived

**By Owner:**

Ms. Wallace stated her sympathy for the Commission's position and understood the importance of historic preservation but is not sure if the designation is warranted for the subject site given the fact that it had been significantly altered throughout the years and does not appear at this point to have a practical purpose.

**By Applicant:**

Mr. Belmont stated that this is a wonderful application, and that heritage tourism is really about the community as a whole and not about any one building; it's the feel of St. Petersburg that attracts people to live and visit. As individual resources are lost, you lose that feel and character. An effort needs to be put forth in identifying what needs to be preserved and make our best efforts to preserve those resources. Throughout history, this City has always been a tourist town and continues today. The St. Petersburg Preservation has great success with their walking tours and a tremendous amount of tourists find them (without any type of advertising) because they are looking to visit what makes St. Petersburg special. Mr. Belmont went on to say that they have talked with the possible owner and find his idea great for the subject property and hopes he gets the project. Mr. Belmont believes that this property meets the four (4) criteria stated in the staff report with only one criterion needing to be met for designation. Mr. Belmont urged the Commission to designate the entire site, as stated in their application and not just the portion that the staff is recommending.

Commissioner Michaels asked about the staff's recommendation and why it was modified from the original recommendation. Mr. Kilborn explained that when the original application was received, the application was showing the entire property and when this item was rescheduled from last month, staff took additional time to review the material. The final report reflects staff's recommendation of the modified boundary which includes the 1914 building as well as the 1931 addition and excludes the 1948 addition located at the rear of the property.

Commissioner Michaels asked why the change in the staff's recommendation. Mr. Kilborn stated that because this is a third-party application with an owner objection, staff looked very comprehensively at the criteria for evaluation as well as balancing the practical details of how to interpret those criteria and the impacts upon the subject property.

Commissioner Michaels asked that despite the removal of the parapet if there were enough architectural elements to the building to meet this architectural criterion and to justify the recommendation. Ms. Hinder stated that it is really significant as an historic school in the school form more so than a mission-style building. The building could be brought back to mission-style; its current form is largely masonry vernacular but the real importance is the form and the function of an historic neighborhood school,

Commissioner Montanari asked the meaning of increased heritage tourism cited on Page 3 of the staff report. Ms. Hinder explained that heritage tourism consist of tourists who come to specifically see the historic structures and character of St. Petersburg.

Commissioner Montanari asked if heritage tourism is significant in the City and are tours expected to go to this school, if the designation is approved. Ms. Hinder stated that the St. Petersburg Preservation has almost weekly tours consisting of 50 to 60 people which indicates the interest in historic structures but does not know specifically about possible tours to the subject property if designated.

Commissioner Whiteman asked what gives a third party the right to do this. Ms. Hinder replied that the City ordinance allows any individual or group in the City of St. Petersburg to submit a designation (e.g. a neighborhood association, St. Petersburg Preservation, any person or group including the City).

Commissioner Whiteman asked that because the significance of the subject property is the form and function of a neighborhood school, does the form and function continue now that the school is empty and may be used for something else in the future. Ms. Hinder stated that it would be part of the alterations review to ensure the character and defining school features remain intact.

Commissioner Whiteman asked about the process and procedures if someone were to remodel and construct, and what would someone have to do to develop the frontage between 4<sup>th</sup> Street and the building. Ms. Hinder stated that anything exterior within the designated boundaries would require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA); anything interior is not reviewed unless a tax exemption is being pursued.

### **Executive Session**

Commissioner Wolf stated that the community history guideline has been met without question in terms of the evidence presented as well as the other guidelines (at a lesser extent) and will vote to support the historic designation. A discussion may be needed in regards to including the entire site as originally recommended or the modified site that staff is now recommending.

Commissioner Wannemacher stated that the school being an eyesore (as referenced by some people who oppose the designation) is because of some of the alterations made by the School Board over the years; 10-foot tall chain link fence surrounding the property, asphalt parking, no grass or pervious surface, and big mechanic vertical package units on the exterior called bar units, all of which can be eliminated/removed. The structural integrity of the building is sound. Commissioner Wannemacher went on to say that she is in favor of the modified boundary being proposed by the City for designation and appreciates the City using some flexibility because it allows additional opportunity for redevelopment for a potential addition along 4<sup>th</sup> Street and placing the parking in the back. She feels that this is a nice compromise and allows for additional redevelopment opportunities on the entire site.

Commissioner Michaels stated his agreement with most of the previous statements and believes the subject property meets the criteria set forth in the staff report and supports the designation in some form.

Commissioner Montanari stated that his initial concern was the lack of plan for this project and how the subject property in its current state is not attractive and is not reflective of the City's nature (the chain link fence and the amount of asphalt). Commissioner Montanari stated he will vote in favor of the request with the modified boundaries recommended by City staff.

Commissioner Reese stated that much of the African-American history has been lost and feels it is very important to preserve buildings because they are not just buildings; they are history and they are stories of what makes St. Petersburg it is today.

Commission Chair Carter stated his agreement with the previous comments and feels the subject property meets all three criteria.

Mr. Dema reminded everyone that a super majority vote is needed because this is a third-party application with owner objection.

**MOTION:** *Commissioner Wolf moved and Commissioner Wannemacher seconded a motion to approve the Local Designation with the modified boundaries of the North Ward School in accordance with the staff report.*

**VOTE:** *YES – Michaels, Montanari, Reese, Wannemacher, Smith, Wolf, Carter  
NO - None*

*Motion was approved by a vote 7 to 0.*

*Commissioner Wannemacher recused herself from the next case (COA 14-90200010) due to a conflict.*

**B. City File COA #14-90200010**

**Contact Person: Aimee Angel  
892-5470**

**Request:** Certificate of Appropriateness approval for the construction of a single story addition under the existing ancillary double shotgun building located at 750 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Street North.

**Staff Presentation**

Aimee Angel gave a PowerPoint presentation based on the staff report.

**Applicant Presentation**

Tim Rhode, architect and representing the applicant, Ken Grimes, made a presentation in support of the request.

**Public Hearing**

No speakers present.

**Cross Examination****By City Staff:**

Waived

**By Applicant:**

Waived

**Rebuttal****By City Staff:**

Waived

**By Applicant:**

Waived

**Executive Session**

Commissioner Michaels asked if there is some issue of concern because the subject property is on the street and not the alley. Ms. Angel stated that most of the garages shown in the Old Northeast were set back further from the street than the alley but the fact remains that they were visible from the street and they were two-stories.

**MOTION:** *Commissioner Wolf moved and Commissioner Smith seconded a motion to approve the construction of a single story addition under the existing ancillary double shotgun building located at 750 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Street North in accordance with the staff report.*

**VOTE:** *YES – Michaels, Montanari, Reese, Smith, Whiteman, Wolf, Carter*  
*NO - None*

*Motion was approved by a vote of 7 to 0.*

**VI. REPORTS****A. Downtown Waterfront Master Plan Update**

Derek Kilborn gave a status update of the Downtown Waterfront Master Plan and then answered questions from the Commissioners.

**VII. EXECUTIVE ACTION**

**A. Establishing a subcommittee to initiate a plan for historic preservation**

Commission Chair Carter asked the Commission members for volunteers. Commissioner Michaels agreed to serve as the subcommittee's Chair and Commission Chair Carter will assist. Mr. Kilborn advised the Commission members that City staff will need to be given instructions of the specific intent of this subcommittee to adequately prepare the resources and to be able to provide any assistance needed. Commission Chair Carter stated that he envisions a meeting between the subcommittee members, legal and a possible representative from City staff to create parameters of what this subcommittee wants to accomplish.

**VIII. CPPC MEMBER COMMENTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No comments or announcements made.

**VIX. ADJOURN**

With no further items to come before the Commission, the public hearing was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.