

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Tuesday, June 9, 2020
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present:

Alan Mesecher.....Chairman

Members Present Via Telephonic/Video Conference:

Ben Meadows..... Member

Robin Craig-Hunt.....Member

Members Absent:

Suzanne Perry Vice Chairman

Staff Present:

Kelvin Knauf, Director of Planning & Community Development
Wendy Lloyd, Planning Secretary
Marvin Benoit, Building Official
Mike Zeto, CIS Manager

City Council Members Present Via Telephonic/Video Conference:

Larry Spears, Jr.

Chairman Mesecher called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Chairman Mesecher called an identification of quorum (roll call).

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

REGULAR BUSINESS - APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Mesecher asked for a motion to approve the March 16, 2020 special call meeting minutes

Member Meadows motioned

Member Craig-Hunt 2nd

Members Voting Aye: Chairman Mesecher, Member Craig-Hunt & Member Meadows

Members Voting No: None

Motion Carries

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Consider an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Wilson and Shann Lewis to place a portable building for use as a drive-through daquiri shop at 84 Green Avenue

Mr. Knauf stated this is a request from Wilson and Shann Lewis to construct a drive-through daiquiri place there at the corner of Simmons and Green Avenue. They will buy a portable building, but it will become a permanent building on site. It will be located so that it is actually a permanent building. You have a picture of the building that they would like to place on the site with you and then you have some plans also for the building. In order to do that, they would need a Certificate of Appropriateness from the commission to place that building at that location. The zoning does allow them to have a drive-through daiquiri shop at that location so there is no problem with the zoning. It is a matter of the Historic Preservation Commission approving the style, colors, and layout of the proposed building. Mrs. Lewis would you like to add anything?

Shann Lewis – 2207 Spring Oak Ln, Orange, TX: Mrs. Lewis stated my husband was unable to make it because he had something come up. But, whenever we first started this idea, we didn't realize that it was historical district. It's a weird I guess because the street, so we didn't realize it was in the historical district but after getting with the city and Kelvin, they let us know that it is. I just wanted to let you all know that we are willing to do whatever we have to do to preserve the historical aesthetics of the building. They have different options as far as window awnings, painting can be any color, any color roof, any color shutters and basically whatever we need it to be that still keeps it kind of reasonable and affordable. We're excited about that area. We think that with all the things going on that it is going to be an area that will be progressive and hopefully kind of get a facelift with new businesses and new things in Orange. Really, the idea came from, I'm from Lafayette, Louisiana and we have daiquiri shops on every corner there. Everybody drives to Vinton to get daiquiris so we said why not put this in Orange where the tax money and the money can go back into the community and I'm sure you are aware they are wine daiquiris because we can't sell hard liquor in drive-throughs so it will be wines and we are going to incorporate some small foods later like boudin egg rolls and things like that. With y'all's permission, we would love to be able to do that and start with this. This is one of hopefully a few businesses that we're going to try and open in Orange. We're just excited about the progress. I've always said Orange has a lot of potential and I'm glad that it's kind of starting to move along and things are starting to happen.

Member Meadows stated where is this. I'm trying to look at this on a map.

Member Craig-Hunt stated I would like to ask what's the name of it going to be because I'm a little confused. The sign that says coming soon versus what was written on what was submitted to us was two different names. One said the Orange Freeze on the paperwork that was submitted. Mrs. Lewis stated it should be the Frozen Orange. Member Craig-Hunt stated or the Frozen Orange, I'm sorry. So why does it say that on the paperwork and then on the outside it says coming soon. Is that for y'all's place the iron something sports bar. Mrs. Lewis stated originally, my husband is going to open a sports bar and grill. We already tried it and he had started it on 16th Street but had some issues with zoning but that property was originally supposed to be for the Grid Iron Sports Bar and then decided to go a little bit easier and start with the Frozen Orange and go from there. That's why it's there.

Member Craig-Hunt stated so if it's a portable building, why are you saying or did Kelvin say it was going to be a permanent building. Mr. Knauf stated that is correct. They are going to set it

on a concrete slab, and it will be a permanent building. Member Craig-Hunt stated ok. I didn't get to but what are our ordinances on landscaping and so forth. I guess one of my concerns is does it represent what we consider uplifting the historic area. I've seen your plans and the way the drive-through is going to go through. I don't see the aesthetics of it really matching up with what we are trying to stand with here in the historic area. I think my concern is that it sounds like a portable building is going to be plunked there. So, when you say you are going to put a portable building and just because it has a shingled roof doesn't make it look like something that is part of the historic district. Mrs. Lewis stated right, I completely understand that when you think a portable building. We had already talked to landscapers to kind of incorporate maybe putting in some different ideas with landscaping and like I said the awning, shutters historical. Whenever we filed it, it kind of threw us for a loop because we realized it was in the Historical District but I understand that concern and like I said we will do whatever y'all feel is acceptable to make it represent the historical aesthetics. It is very misleading down there because the businesses down that road are really old and the buildings look kind of scary and dreary. Member Craig-Hunt stated they do, you're right. Is anybody else concerned about this or is it just me? I'm just more concerned with what the overall look is going to be, and I don't feel like this gives us enough information to really say what it's going to be. I don't see any landscaping on it whatsoever on the plan. I don't know what all the city ordinances are for parking but that looks like you don't have enough there. But, I'm just more concerned with how that building is going to look to really fulfill and uplift the area. Just because it's a new building doesn't make it fabulous or reflect the historic either.

Member Meadows stated how big is the building. Member Craig-Hunt stated 12x36, is that correct? Mrs. Lewis stated right. We went with that one because it has the big porch on the front with the nice woodwork. We were going to incorporate aesthetically with nice things on there. It can be whatever. The reason why we did the portable building is because obviously for a drive-through that is the most efficient thing to do other than building this massive building or area for it just to be a drive-through. That is basically the reason we went with a portable building because that would be the easiest to accomplish our goals. We are kind of at a catch twenty-two also.

Member Meadows stated that well at this point a pier and beam building is not much different than a portable building. It's already got a slab underneath it for a foundation. Are you going to put it over the existing slab? Mrs. Lewis stated right and that is where all the plumbing and sewer is already. We had a plumber come out there and give us some info on it. Member Meadows stated I'm not sure what that would look like. I'm not really in favor of it but on the other hand there is not much down there. Kelvin, that house that is a little bit to the west of that, is that still down there. Mrs. Lewis stated yes, it is. We looked at that place also. Mr. Knauf stated yes, I think it is. Member Meadows stated you all did look at that. Mrs. Lewis stated yes sir we did. Member Meadows stated is there anyway you could use that. Mrs. Lewis stated it's possible, but I was going to tell you. There will be a building built on that area also later on. We will get into that later for the sports bar and grill. That will be a big metal building, a nice building and of course we will come before y'all again. We were just trying to get something going that was quicker and more reasonable first. It is an option. We can't make it a drive-through. We did look at it and talked to the guy. He is in Florida and we were trying to work some numbers with him about purchasing it. The only thing is it would be a takeout. You would

have to come in and get it to go. You couldn't do a drive-through because of the business on the side of it is still there, that building. Member Meadows stated so there is not enough lateral room on the lot. Mrs. Lewis stated right.

Chairman Mesecher stated that location is prone to a lot of flooding. Are you aware of that? You don't want your building to be carried away. I mean it does get pretty deep. Member Meadows stated it would have to be at least eighteen inches off the ground. Mrs. Lewis stated yes that is another thing when the plumber came out that we were talking about.

Member Meadows stated I don't think that would look right to be quite honest. I just don't know how that would look. I can't picture it and that's kind of unusual for me.

Member Craig-Hunt stated well I did notice on your sketch where you show where the drive-through window is and you do show all the internal parts but I think that what we need to see is really what this would look like finished meaning not the 2D image more of a 3D drawing and then also integrating the landscaping. How are you really going to make this look special versus just a portable building where somebody drives through and gets a daiquiri. I mean that going to be the only concern that I can see. Other than that, it looks like you have plenty of parking. I agree with Ben, it's not like there is a lot there. That is kind of like the end of the road sort of thing but it's still the Historic District and I know we are all trying to make the Historic District something special here in Orange. It has a lot going for it.

Member Meadows stated what you are envisioning doing with this, would it be something similar to the Hut Barbeque on 16th? Mrs. Lewis stated not as big but kind of the same concept. Member Meadows stated that is a portable building there is it not, Kelvin. Mrs. Lewis stated right it's a metal portable building. Member Meadows stated and they put landscaping around that. Mr. Knauf stated I'm not really sure how that was built and if it was permanently attached to a foundation. I really don't know. I don't have that information.

Member Craig-Hunt stated the other concern that you also brought up is that you are also planning another phase besides just this. I wouldn't just assume even if this got passed that the second phase would pass. I'm just saying that maybe you should let us know what you're planning with that phase as well because just because you get one doesn't mean the other one would. I would hate to see that be a problem for you. Does that make sense? Mrs. Lewis stated yes, and I just want to ask because you have been doing this a long time. I'm just going to be honest. It's really hard to open a business in Orange and find locations and property. The property on 16th is considered commercial and it's priced for commercial, very high commercial even though it's all rundown older buildings and there is not a lot going on in some of them. On 16th Street, the coding was different, and you had to sell a lot of food and that's not what we were trying to do at the time. I guess it's just kind of hard because we really tried to find so many locations and we found this place and like I said we weren't aware that it was historical because of the surrounding areas but I understand what you are saying. We've kind of run out of areas to do business. There's not very many so we were just trying to utilize the pavilion going up, the bass tournaments and stuff like that and plus Lamar where it's kind of easy on their way home if they want drive through and get an egg roll or something. There's really nothing down there and I know from being in school there. I did the nursing program there and you only have

a few minutes to do stuff and we just thought it might be good for them to get something quick. Member Craig-Hunt stated, I'm just curious and we would want you to succeed. We would want you to do fabulous. Is this a building that you are purchasing yourself personally that then belongs to you? Should you in the event that you choose for this business to not go forward for whatever reason, is this something that you're just going to abandon the site or you're going to take the building with you. Mrs. Lewis stated right, no we wouldn't abandon it there. We would be purchasing the property. Member Craig-Hunt stated so you've bought that already. Mrs. Lewis stated we are in the process and we are actually planning on buying the lots next door that has the house that Mr. Ben had mentioned. It would have been a lot easier to go with that at first but like I said the drive-through area we couldn't do it. Member Craig-Hunt stated if you are buying those properties, couldn't you go through it and go out the other way instead of going behind it. Member Meadows stated is there a business between the house where you're putting the business in or is it adjacent. Mrs. Lewis stated no there's not. I think it was a gas station at one time. You all might know better than I do. Member Meadows stated on the corner it was a gas station. Mrs. Lewis stated yes so there is a lot of clumps of grass and I guess it was where gas pumps were. Member Meadows stated Mrs. Lewis did you say the property was uneven between the two lots and couldn't do that or are there some obstructions on the lots? Mrs. Lewis stated both and I wish my husband was here because he would know exactly what is going on with it but from what I've walked it's both. It would be a lot of scenic work and a lot of slab that would have to be purchased for the drive-through part. We are just trying to be efficient also for a drive-through as far as just do the circle drive-through and if we had to do the cement there, we would just basically have to slab all of that which is a lot of property to slab. Member Meadows stated oh yeah. I would like to figure out a way to make this work. I need to personally go down and take a look at it.

Chairman Mesecher stated what we can do is we can either approve it, disapprove it, or just table it and get some more information.

Member Meadows stated are you big hurry to get this started. I mean I don't know where you are in your building phase. Mrs. Lewis stated well this is our last step. I mean everything else has been approved, been submitted, and started working on everything else but this was our last step. I do want to say though. I'm not sure if everyone has been to New Orleans at one time. New Orleans in Louisiana, they have a lot of what they call shotgun homes and those are historical and that's kind of the same type of vision that I had for it once I found out that it was historical with kind of a more shotgun looking home with the French shutters and things like that with the easements that have the inserts and stuff like that. That's more of and I should have had it more prepared but COVID has thrown everyone for a loop or I would have had like you said a 3D/4D image or maybe even got my architect friends.

Member Craig-Hunt stated I would like to see how you plan to modify one of those buildings because even if just one little side that is prefabbed is cute but then we've got just plain on whole sides that is just metal. Mrs. Lewis stated it is wooden. It looks like kind of shiplap wood. Member Meadows asked is it vertical. Mrs. Lewis stated yes sir. Member Craig-Hunt stated that is my concern is that I just don't feel like there is enough submission to really know how you're going to modify that building to blend well enough as a historic even though we know well enough that it is not historic. It's the epitome of what we don't like in the Historic District.

We don't even like metal buildings in terms of residential, but this is commercial. I just want to see more of what the actual plan is. Mrs. Lewis, I am an interior designer and actually do sketches and drawings. If I can help you all in anyway, I would do that on my own if that is all right. I'm a little busy right now because I just went back to work but if I could help you with that, I would be happy to help you with it. Mrs. Lewis stated yes that would be great. I do want to ask this, Mr. Ben. You mentioned if for some reason you all go against the idea of the portable building, the house that we talked about that is already up. It's the same just bigger, wood with the metal roof. They don't have to go and be approved; they are already there. It's just new construction. I mean we could still utilize that. Member Meadows stated if you do any kind of major modification to the outside, that is when it comes to the board. What is there obviously would be grandfathered. If you open it as a business, you would have to talk with Kelvin. Mr. Knauf stated yes like you said if she makes any modifications to the exterior, then she would have to fill out an application for Certificate of Appropriateness. We would meet and talk about it and that would be a whole new application. Member Meadows stated that house used to be across from my driveway. He moved it down there. He probably spent more moving that house and fixing it then he would be building a new one. Mrs. Lewis yes, we called, and it was going to be \$18,000 moving it four miles down the road. We tried it all.

Member Craig-Hunt stated could you move it to where the concrete is. Mrs. Lewis stated well we haven't thought of that yet. Member Craig-Hunt stated you talk about a draw. People love the old houses. Mrs. Lewis stated we didn't ask him about moving it, but we totally can. There is a lot of unutilized space that would be happening in the house because it is so big and 1800 square feet for a drive-through basically snow cone stand, but a daiquiri stand is a lot. We didn't really think that far and surely moving it a few feet wouldn't be \$18,000. Member Craig-Hunt stated but you didn't say it was just a daiquiri stand. You said you were going to be cooking food and it's also thirty-six feet long. That's a good size. Mrs. Lewis stated I was just using it as a reference like a snow cone stand is a drive-through. Member Craig-Hunt stated I say to table to get more information. Member Meadows stated that is fine with me. I would really like to discuss this more with some drawings and if you could do a drawing with her and I'll do a little more looking.

Chairman Mesecher asked for motion to table

Member Meadows motioned

Member Craig-Hunt 2nd

Members Voting Aye: Chairman Mesecher, Member Craig-Hunt & Member Meadows

Members Voting No: None

Motion Carries

b. Consider an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from Christine Vermeulen to install three lamp posts at 711 8th Street

Christine Vermeulen – 711 8th Street, Orange, TX: Ms. Vermeulen stated there's three of them and they are approximately seven feet tall. They are aluminum and are kind of heavy but not as heavy as cast iron or rot iron would be. They are painted shiny black and they have a round ball on the top which is kind of opaque and a decorative base which I found quite

attractive. I've had that corner on 8th and Orange and that is just too dark for me there and I can't even see one part of my house at nighttime because it is so dark. It doesn't matter if I have a back porchlight on, so I have to lighten that up somehow. So, I want to put those three light poles there. Now, I also have light poles at 607 and 605 5th Street that were approved by Jimmie Lewis when he was acting in Kelvin's position and of course then Tom Reynolds who was also overseeing that particular building when it was under renovation by me. So we put light poles there too and that wasn't a problem and now I want to put these light poles in my yard and it is just going to add to the beauty of it as far as I'm concerned. Maybe later on, when I was getting approval for the painting of the fence, I did say that I was going to put light poles in the yard. I did say that then and now I'm doing it now. I've got a master electrician who is already doing all the work and he came down to pull the permit for it but it had to be first approved and this is a month later and I'm still trying to get those poles put in.

Member Meadows stated if they are in yard, I don't have a problem with it. Ms. Vermeulen stated I know the precedence has already been set because there are light poles in other people's yards.

Member Craig-Hunt stated they are not in their yards. I made an extra trip and I drove all around just before this came up. The properties that you own have them and we have that lights up are the ones that were with the city. Ms. Vermeulen stated ok I'm not understanding. Member Craig-Hunt stated I drove around the Historic District to see how many of them were in people's yards. It was my understanding; it was your rent property has them. The blue kind of shaker box has them. Ms. Vermeulen stated yes. Member Craig-Hunt stated you have those because someone approved that. I have a problem with the amount that you're going to put in and I guess the other problem I have is we already have some lamp posts in the Historic District that got started at one time. That was before my time and Alan was telling me about that. Ms. Vermeulen stated yes those are streetlamps and I'm not talking about streetlamps. Member Craig-Hunt stated right and I can understand why you want that but I noticed on here, Kelvin, that you said the Historic Preservation Commission will need to discuss the following and there is a criteria for the lamp posts so do we not have any kind of criteria on personal lamp posts. Mr. Knauf stated yes, we really don't. There's just no direction in the ordinance or anything on lamp posts on are they approved, disapproved, are there conditions or what. There is just nothing there and so that is why it is before the commission to get some direction from you. Member Craig-Hunt stated right so I don't think this is a situation where we should just say yes, she is allowed to put them. I think all those points that need to be talked about are very important because it affects all properties, not just Ms. Vermeulen's. I think we do need to talk about each one of those points and just because you were allowed before and just because it was mentioned before is not what is before us today. Ms. Vermeulen stated ok now we are not talking about streetlamps. Member Craig-Hunt stated I know. I drove by your house and I see what you want to install, and I see the picture. They are considered lamp posts.

Member Meadows stated how tall are they Christine. Ms. Vermeulen stated they are about seven feet with the globe, and they give off a soft white light. Member Meadows stated so they are not a full height light like the streetlights. Ms. Vermeulen stated no they are not. They give a really pretty romantic soft glow which I think is very pretty and I bought three of them. I am going to wait and see how this goes so I would like to know if I can or I cannot. So, will you all let me

know? Member Meadows stated I personally don't have a problem with it if they are in your own yard and under the streetlight height. Member Craig-Hunt stated yes but it is three. Two on one side and one on the back side. I think we need to have some guidelines. I don't think it's oh yeah go ahead willy nilly how many you want to put. I do have a problem with that. Ms. Vermeulen stated well I have a problem with not being allowed to do that. I wouldn't do anything that would cause my home to be gaudy or ugly. I don't think I would allow that to happen and I think the people of the Historic District trust me enough to be able to decide where I want to put a lamp post. No disrespect to you intended. I don't think those lamp posts are going to affect anybody's property values. I think they will increase the property values. So that is how I feel about it and I'm going to leave it with you now.

Chairman Mesecher stated well I feel that with those lamp posts, you have one in your front to light your sidewalk to your house but if you have numerous ones, it leads to somebody else wanting to put in maybe ten lights in their yard. Ms. Vermeulen stated no let me say this. On the far side of the back half of the house next to the fence that was painted with the flower. So that is over there. Then I have one way over towards the corner of the house right there. That is over in my front yard. I think Kelvin has sort of a sketch from that. Then over on the other side of the house where my back door is, is where I'll have another one by my air conditioning system. So, I don't think that is gaudy. I think they are well placed and really thought out. Chairman Mesecher stated so those three, you want to add more to them? Ms. Vermeulen stated no. It is just the three. Member Craig-Hunt stated well the paper says two and the picture shows three. Ms. Vermeulen stated well it's always been three. One is on the back side by my air conditioning system which is totally not in view from 8th Street. On 8th Street you will see one towards that fence on the corner of the house and then directly across from that which you will be able to see from Orange and 8th right there to light up that area too.

Member Craig-Hunt stated I want to go back to my point that whoever set up the agenda, I do not believe that we can tell her yes or no until we figure out the criteria of what parameters lamp posts should be. That seems counterintuitive to me. Each one of these are good points. Ms. Vermeulen stated well this style that I have is very similar to your streetlamps. Member Craig-Hunt stated I'm just saying we cannot say yes or no to her until these are answered.

Mr. Knauf stated that is up to the commission on how to proceed. Do you want to establish some guidelines, or do you want to go ahead and approve this and consider each one on a case-by-case basis? How do you want to proceed? Chairman Mesecher stated I think guidelines. Member Craig-Hunt stated I think guidelines. Even though it's still going to have to be case-by-case, they are still going to have to put it before us. I think we still need to have some guidelines to have for it. Member Meadows stated ok. Do we need to have a workshop on this or what? Chairman Mesecher stated I think so because if we start on how many lights and not having limits on locations, anybody is going to try to put any kind of light anywhere. Not maybe in this situation. We have to have some kind of guideline.

Ms. Vermeulen stated are we now in a HOA type of situation with the Historic commission. When I bought these properties and invested a lot of money in the Historic District, a lot of money. So, I've got all this, and I need to know if this is going to be a HOA and if this is what we are going to be dealing with for the future. Member Meadows stated well here's my feelings

on the thing. If it's in somebody's yard, I don't have a problem with it because it kind of gets into when you start talking about what you can and can't do in your own yard, decorating it like you want to then that's overstepping bounds. If they were doing streetlamps on city property and trying to match what we have in that area, that's one thing. I think its kind of overstepping bounds here and that's how I feel. Ms. Vermeulen stated I appreciate that Ben but I'm not putting pink flamingos out in my yard. I'm not putting fake stainless flowers or anything like that for decoration.

Member Meadows stated did you just buy the house. Mr. Strong stated no, it was 2014. So, I replaced the round ones. That was the only solid one left out of the five and replaced with the square decorative ones. Member Meadows stated those posts are all over the place. Mr. Knauf stated yes, we have those elsewhere in the Historic District. Member Meadows stated however, the long part usually goes at the bottom but that's ok.

Chairman Mesecher asked for motion to table

Member Meadows motioned

Member Craig-Hunt 2nd

Members Voting Aye: Chairman Mesecher, Member Craig-Hunt & Member Meadows

Members Voting No: None

Motion Carries

Member Meadows motioned to adjourn

Member Craig-Hunt 2nd

Chairman Mesecher adjourned the meeting at 6:39 p.m.