

Historic NBS Preservation Commission Meeting

September 8, 2021 at 5:30 pm - Video of the meeting can be found [here](#):

Commissioners Present: Joanna Mahood (chair), Christie Abramovic, Lianne Bennett, and Terry Bledsoe. Curtis Hodges (vice chair) arrived after roll call. **Absent:** Angeline Barretta-Herman, Suzanne Ladd. **Others Present:** Assistant City Manager Brian Fields, Assistant City Attorney Shey McCurdy, Senior Planner Robert Mathen, and Board Secretary Stephanie Ferrara.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES for the July 14, 2021 meeting were approved.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

NSB realtor and museum director Greg Holbrook asked the commission to do its best to ensure that, in the face of enormous pressure for development, any changes to city Ordinance 50, Historic Preservation, would be made to strengthen preservation NSB.

Sally Gillespie, founder and Past President of the NSB Residents' Coalition, encouraged the Commission to amend Ordinance 50, rather than rewrite it. She noted that NSB received federal certified local government status for its preservation program in 1986. It was modified in 2013, and in 2018 the state of Florida reviewed the city's historical preservation program and found it fully compliant with state and federal guidelines. Removing Ordinance 50 could result in loss of state training and grants for NSB. Citizens now can easily find Ordinance 50, which would be untrue if it was buried in voluminous land development regulations. Significant demolition and development are poised to come to historic districts in NSB; the Commission needs to get ahead of such things. The Coalition, with 1900 members, fully supports the Commission.

New Business

Assistant city attorney McCurdy gave a summary of parliamentary procedure and Robert's Rules of Order.

The Commission then heard an update on local historic districts from Mr. Mathen. National Register historic districts were approved in 1990 (around Canal St., about 400 properties) and 1997 (west end of Flagler Ave., about 100 tracts), but they still are not local districts. The Commission and staff desire local districts. Staff has sent two letters to property owners asking support for local districts; a two-thirds majority is needed, but the highest owner support is only 32 percent. Most owners did not reply. According to Mathen, much of ordinance 50 is unenforceable without local districts.

Beachside resident Adele Aletti says many property owners fear restrictions imposed by a local district. Greg Holbrook said original standards do appear strict, but owners do not realize NSB is very reasonable and flexible on them.

Staff will send a third letter this month and hopes to hold community meetings to explain and build support after covid eases. Mr. Mathen said the staff would ensure any changes do not

jeopardize NSB's certified local government status.

Commissioners Bledsoe and Hodges voiced the idea of asking the city commission to amend the required majority from 67 percent to 51 percent.

Assistant city manager Brian Fields summarized city conceptual plans to create and/or expand turn lanes at Flagler and Peninsula Avenues. To do so the city purchased 120 Flagler Avenue in the historic district. Part of the land is now public parking. A community meeting and workshop have yielded many ideas. A key issue is possibly moving an existing, much altered building on the site. Commissioners expressed several ideas, among them returning more of the structure to its original look. Moving it would cost an estimated \$50,000 to \$100,000. Ms. Aletti said few historic features likely remain in the building; it probably is not worth saving, and Flagler has a great need for more parking. Mr. Holbrook suggested Echo funds and possibly moving the structure to Highway 44 as a visitor center for NSB.

Comments from Commission Members and City Staff

Mr. Mathen showed slides of demolition and renovation of the City Hall Annex.

Commissioner Abramovic suggested more use of existing social media to communicate with citizens.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2021.