

## HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES MARCH 8, 2007

The Van Buren Historic District Commission held its monthly meeting Thursday, March 8, 2007 at 5:30 P.M. in the City Council Room at the Municipal Complex. The following items were on the agenda:

1. Approval of minutes from previous meetings
2. Certificate of Appropriateness for signage for 502 Main Street
3. Update on CLG Funds for current cycle and discuss upcoming Grant Cycle
4. Update on CLG, Main Street Arkansas, and HDC meetings in Little Rock
5. Discuss new COA form
6. Discuss bringing Fairview Cemetery into the district.
7. Discuss conveying easement of Fairview Cemetery to AHPP
8. Discuss allowing residential property owners to apply to the To the Commission for inclusion in the Historic District
9. Any other business that comes before the Commission

PRESENT:

Dwight Hopkins, Chairman  
John Symonds, Co-Chairman  
Vickie Davis  
Jody Rhoads  
Cami Brown, Rec. Sec.  
Will Trentham, Atty.  
Michael Marxz, Atty.  
Seth Bickett, Atty.  
Kristie Boucher  
Randy Smith, Liaison for Fairview Cemetery

Chairman Dwight Hopkins called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. The first item on the agenda was the approval of the minutes from the previous meeting. Jody Rhoads made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was given a second by Vickie Davis, and the motion carried with a unanimous decision.

The next item on the agenda was Certificate of Appropriateness for signage for 504 Main Street by William Trentham for law office at this address. After review, John Symonds made a motion to approve with the stipulation that matting for the lettering is not a glossy finish. Vickie Davis gave the motion a second, and the motion carried with a unanimous decision.

The next item in front of the Commission was item number 6, discussion of bringing Fairview Cemetery into the Historic District. Chairman Dwight Hopkins handed out copies of a letter he drafted to Mayor Bob Freeman and the City Council about expanding the boundaries of the Historic District to include Fairview Cemetery. Fairview Cemetery Liaison Randy Smith was present, and agreed to deliver a copy of the letter to members of Fairview Cemetery Board, letting the members know if they would like to meet with Dwight Hopkins and Mayor Freeman before this Public Hearing on this matter, they could contact them for any questions they may have, or any issues they would like to discuss. It was agreed that the Commission would hold a Public Hearing on April 12, 2007, at the next Historic District meeting, on this matter. Dwight Hopkins commented the purpose for bringing Fairview Cemetery into the District was strictly to protect the historical monuments in the cemetery. John Symonds commented he would send a copy of the draft, along with a cover letter to the City Attorney for him to review, to which Mr. Hopkins replied that would be done on Friday, March 9, 2007, the following day. Mr. Hopkins also commented that a final draft would not be sent to the Mayor or City Council until after the Public Hearing. Jody Rhoads commented it was important the Fairview Cemetery Board understand the Historic District Commission does not, by any means, want to take over any of their duties as a board, but only want to enhance what they do as a board are going to be able to do. By being able to do repairs and restorations the right way, professionally, it is only going to make the Fairview Cemetery Board look good, as well. Dwight Hopkins commented that Historic District Commission is strictly looking at protecting the historic character of Fairview Cemetery. Randy Smith commented there are monuments in Fairview Cemetery that are one of a kind, and very rare, to say the least, and the preservation of those monuments has been his concern all along.

The next item on the agenda discussed was item 7, conveying an easement of Fairview Cemetery to AHPP. Mr. Hopkins commented there are three structures in Van Buren that have such easements, those being the Depot, the King Opera

House, and the Courthouse. This easement to the State provides another level of protection above and beyond the local level. Mr. Hopkins commented bringing Fairview Cemetery into the Historic District is first and foremost, and the discussion of the easement is a completely different issue, and is something to be considering, but is not the priority issue at this time. Mona Hughes from AHPP agreed to send a representative up to look at Fairview Cemetery, and explain to everyone the benefits of conveying an easement to AHPP. Mr. Hopkins commented this may be on down the road, but it is something that should be considered.

Due to the shortage of time, as some Commissioners were pressed for time, Chairman Hopkins tabled items 3 and 4, then asked the Commission to be thinking about the CLG grant cycle coming up, and anything they feel might need to be included on this grant. At this time Mr. Hopkins commented he did not have everything in front of him to discuss item 5 on the agenda, therefore this was tabled until further notice.

Item 8, discussion of allowing residential property owners to apply to the Commission for inclusion in the Historic District, was mentioned at this time. Chairman Hopkins commented Van Buren Historic District does not encompass any residential property at this time. Although several residential owners have approached the Commission and asked for their property to be included in the District, the Commission does not have a mechanism in place to provide this at this time. Mr. Hopkins went on to say this is something that the Commission may want to think about, and maybe have a study session over this issue this next year. Mr. Hopkins commented the Commission would not go into a residential area and say that area is in the Historic District, and that down the line there will probably be an application process.

The next topic of discussion was banners on Main Street. Chairman Hopkins asked Cami Brown, Recording Secretary, to turn in a list of banners on Main Street to Code Enforcement/Building Inspector for letters to be sent to these businesses asking them to remove their banners. The businesses included Kristi's Salon, Mr. George Tompkins business, and Rowe Tax Service.

With no other business, this meeting was adjourned.

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Dwight Hopkins, Chairman

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Cami L. Brown, Rec. Sec.