

**Historic District Regulatory Board
Minutes of September 14, 2020 meeting**

City of Lake Wales
201 W. Central Avenue, Lake Wales, FL 33853

A training workshop for the Historic District Regulatory Board was held on September 14, 2020 at 4:30 P.M. virtually through GoTo Meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Brandon Alvarado at 4:28P.M.

Agenda Item Number 1. Roll Call

Members Present: Brandon Alvarado (Chairman), John Turley, Larry Bossarte.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Mark Bennett, Director of Development Services; Autumn Cochella, Development Services Manager; Cheryl Baksh, Secretary; Ronni Wood, Office Assistant for the CRA.

Agenda Item 2. Welcome

Mr. Bennett and Chairman Alvarado thanked everyone for attending. Chairman Alvarado expressed his appreciation to Ms. McLaughlin for working with staff and putting together her presentation.

Agenda Item 3. Introduction: Megan McLaughlin

Mr. Bennett introduced Megan McLaughlin to the Board. He stated she has a strong background in architecture and historical preservation. Ms. McLaughlin also previously worked as a City Planner and she is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Agenda Item 4. Historic Preservation Training

Ms. McLaughlin stated the intent of today's training is to review and open a discussion. She stated, Historic Preservation is to protect the heritage and the story of our community to tell future generations. Ms. McLaughlin proceeded to show examples of buildings that had been historically preserved in different parts of Florida. She emphasized that these pictures showed the power of preservation. Ms. McLaughlin explained the power of preservation is to manage change and make sure it follows certain procedures and guidelines while allowing the public to have some input.

Ms. McLaughlin gave a general overview of the difference between Local and National Register. She said, the locally designated Historic District is overseen by the City itself and allows the community more control over change. She then stated, every time someone makes a change externally to their building a Certificate of Appropriateness is required.

Ms. McLaughlin explained that the National Register Historic District is administered by the National Park Service but also has relevance through the Main Street program here in Lake Wales. She stated if federal funds are being used, then certain requirements must be followed. Ms. McLaughlin mentioned the National Register Historic District does not give the community a lot of control as opposed to the Local Register.

Next, Ms. McLaughlin introduced the Secretary of Interior's Standard to the Board, she stated their job is to provide guidelines. She said the Standard for Rehabilitation would be the most important and used. She stated Standard's number(s) 2-6 would be the most important for Lake Wales to refer to. Ms. McLaughlin recommends the Board use this for reference when reviewing Certificates of Appropriateness.

Ms. McLaughlin then discussed the Design Guidelines book. She stated it was written about 30 years ago, yet it is still relevant. She then showed an example of a building to use as a guideline that contained an essential storefront.

Ms. Wood addressed the Board and spoke of her background experience. She stated she became the Main Street Director in 1995 for Downtown Winter Haven. She said when she first started the area was about 75% - 85% vacant. She then showed some before and after photos of Downtown Winter Haven.

Ms. McLaughlin then referred back to the Design Guidelines. She showed a diagram of what changes to store fronts would look like. She stated there's guidance for where there should be a window and where not, how many windows, awnings, etc.

Ms. McLaughlin mentioned Chapter 23 and stated this was another really good tool to have. She said Chapter 23 has guidelines for materials, textures, color, building proportions, etc. She also stated there was a section that specifically mentioned Certificate of Appropriateness.

Mr. Bennett stated he was in the process of getting some proposals for more specific design standards. He mentioned it may be as simple as adopting some of the guidelines Ms. McLaughlin presented.

Ms. McLaughlin then asked the Board if they had any questions.

Mr. Bossarte asked if a property located off of Park Avenue that previously had work completed, should have gone in front of the Board for approval? Mr. Bennett answered yes, and stated that as soon as someone even mentions purchasing a property downtown we need to have them talk to us, Ronni, or Karen to open a dialogue so they understand there are guidelines and standards. Mr. Bossarte agreed and stated it was important to make buyers aware. Ms. Wood mentioned she would give copies of the Design Guidelines to buyers in order to be proactive.

Agenda Item 5 Future Activities

Agenda Item 5.2 Additional Historic Preservation Training

Ms. McLaughlin stated the value of walking down Park Avenue and Stuart Avenue together while looking at the buildings and talking specifically will be very helpful. Chairman Alvarado agreed and stated it would be beneficial especially when making educated decisions. Ms. Wood stated the Historic Lake Wales Book would also be helpful as a reference.

Agenda Item 6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:26P.M.



Brandon Alvarado, Chairman



Attest: Recording Secretary