

**City of Homestead
Historic Preservation Board
Meeting Minutes**

3:30pm Wednesday, May 28, 2008

The Homestead Historic Preservation Board met on this date in the City Hall Council Chambers. The following were present: Chairwoman Yvonne Knowles, Vice Chairman Larry Diehl, Secretary Susie Petersen Randolph, Doug La Rue, Dennis Ross, and Sofya Belair. Code Enforcement Officer Theresa Pickles was a guest.

The following is an abridged section of the meeting as prepared by Sofya Belair, Historic Landmark Officer.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Knowles called the meeting to order at 3:33p.m., and welcomed Officer Pickles.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Doug La Rue made the motion to approve the minutes of April 30, 2008 and Dennis Ross seconded the motion. There were no changes requested to the minutes and they were approved unanimously.

Sofya took roll call. Clara Waterman Powell and Luis Avila were absent (excused.) All other members were present.

III. DESIGNATION OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES OR DISTRICTS

Chairwoman Knowles opened the Public Hearing for a proposed designation of **139 N.E. 15th Street** – Maria Elena Gutleber, owner. Mrs. Gutleber was absent. There were no guests for Secretary Randolph to administer the Oath for testimony. Dennis Ross confirmed with Sofya that we could proceed.

i. Preliminary statement by Chair

We are grateful Vice Chairman Diehl proposed this property for designation and contacted the new owners to promote it. Vice Chairman Diehl thanked staff.

ii. Presentation by Staff of report, and any testimony or other evidence

Sofya provided calendar dates of actions leading up to today's public hearing. She gave a brief summary of the designation report. The Webb Leiby House was constructed circa 1926 and found eligible for city historic designation as 1) a good example of Mission Revival style architecture, and 2) designed by prominent architect H. George Fink, who along with George Merrick, is credited with designing Coral Gables. George Fink designed a few other Homestead houses. Around 1990 the house was converted to a medical office and has remained a doctor's office since. Sofya recommended that a separate guesthouse located to the north of the main house constructed circa 1930, be included in the historic designation.

Chairwoman Knowles asked whether the house across the street was also designed by George Fink. Sofya replied no, but that Ron Webb told her Fink also designed the "Dreyden House," which is two or three houses west of the Webb Leiby House, on the same side of NE 15th Street. She is unsure which house this is. It is

confirmed that Fink designed the Lindeman Johnson House at 906 N. Krome Avenue, now used as the offices of Girard Title.

iii. Presentation by Respondent Property Owner of its position on proposed designation, and any testimony or other evidence

Chairwoman Knowles explained that in her absence, the Board will accept staff's testimony that the property owner was appraised of this public hearing and supported its nomination for historic designation.

iv. Testimony from Other Persons, if any, supporting the designation

None.

v. Testimony from Other Persons, if any, opposing the designation

None.

vi. Respondent Property Owner may offer rebuttal argument and evidence

None.

vii. Staff may offer rebuttal argument and evidence

None.

viii. Chair closes public hearing

Chairwoman Knowles closed the hearing at 3:42pm.

ix. Board member discussion

No comments.

x. Roll call vote on designation

Chairwoman Knowles Yes

Vice Chairman Diehl Yes

Secretary Randolph Yes

Doug LaRue Yes

Dennis Ross Yes

xi. Motion to adopt a Resolution confirming the designation

Vice Chairman Diehl made a motion to adopt Resolution HPBR2008-05-28, confirming historic designation of the Webb Leiby House at 139 NE 15th Street, and forwarding the Resolution to City Council. Doug LaRue seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Sofya read aloud Resolution HPBR2008-05-28.

IV. DESIGNATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES OR DISTRICTS

No business

V. SPECIAL CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS

No business

VI. MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF DESIGNATED PROPERTIES

A. Officer Theresa Pickles, Code Enforcement Updates:

i. Citations issued within historic district/historic properties

Board members reviewed a list of properties issued citations within the historic district. Officer Pickles said 51 N. Krome Avenue and Homestead Television on NE 2nd Drive are scheduled for the June 5th compliance hearing. Chairwoman Knowles spoke with Officer Pickles about black mold on an interior wall of 51 N. Krome Avenue.

ii. Update on fencing at Shaw House, 1090 NE 18th Ave.

Officer Pickles was unfamiliar with the property and said she would look into it. Vice Chairman Diehl asked Officer Pickles to check the set back requirements of the property next door to the south, where a house was

recently built very close. Was a variance granted? Officer Pickles did not know and said she would check with Officer Arzuaga.

Chairwoman Knowles asked for an update on the correct address number of the Sanctuary at Art South, at 240 N. Krome Avenue. Sofya said Board Member Luis Avila was researching the address discrepancy and could provide a report at the next meeting. Discussion followed about an open Certificate of Appropriateness for repairs to the Sanctuary; Chairwoman Knowles asked whether there was a June deadline. Sofya confirmed that she mails a letter of warning to the owner about 30 days before a C.O.A. is to expire.

Secretary Susie Randolph reported that she spoke to the owner of the Shaw House at 1090 NE 18th Avenue. The house is currently up for sale but the owner is not aggressively marketing it because he is unsure what he wants to do. He told Secretary Randolph he planned to clean it up this summer. Chairwoman Knowles and Vice Chairman Diehl confirmed with Secretary Randolph that the real estate agent was aware of the property's historic designation, including the landscaping.

Dennis Ross reported that a royal palm tree is dead on the corner of NW 297th Street and Krome Avenue. Chairwoman Knowles reminded Officer Pickles that the royal palms are landmarks. Officer Pickles said last week she met with the Mayor and discussed prosecuting people who nail signs to the royal palms. Chairwoman Knowles said she would work with Staff to write an article for the local paper to remind the public that these palms are protected. Dennis suggested the dead palm be replaced. Chairwoman Knowles spoke to Sofya about following up on this matter with Parks & Recreation and Code Enforcement.

B. Staff report on Historic Town Hall, 41-43 N. Krome Avenue

Sofya reported that tomorrow a City bid closes for exterior renovations to Historic Town Hall. Robert Barnes, Architect, prepared the renovation plans and will oversee repairs. Sofya said she is working on a C.O.A. detailing all work to be done, and will meet with the hired contractor to ensure they know the building is an historic landmark. Chairwoman Knowles asked whether this Board will have a chance to view the renovation plans showing the façade. Sofya said plans were shown to the Board some 8-10 months ago when Robert Barnes came to a Board meeting with general plans that including signage. The green awnings on the façade are relatively new and will not be replaced. All green trim will be the same color as the awnings.

VII. NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS

N/A

VIII. SPECIAL STUDY ITEMS

A. Luis Avila report on address issue with Sanctuary at Art South, 240 N. Krome Ave.

Luis Avila was absent. Chairwoman Knowles deferred his report to the next meeting.

B. Doug La Rue report on Seaboard Railroad Depot, 214 N.W. 9th Avenue

Doug La Rue said the owner has not responded to his messages, but he saw new windows and exterior renovations on site. Nothing has been done to the interior yet. Vice Chairman Diehl said he spoke to the owner previously about historic designation, who does not see it as a viable option. Vandals recently damaged a window and Code Enforcement cited the owner while a new one was being ordered, which furthered her frustrations with the City. Discussion followed.

C. Chairwoman Knowles report on 140 N.E. 15th Street

Chairwoman Knowles said she has not yet met with the property owner but discovered that Dr. Houseman, an early physician of Homestead, lived there in the 1920s and that his daughter, a school teacher, lived nearby on the same street. The current property owner is converting the house into a spa. Vice Chairman Diehl said he was told by a City Officer that vandals crawled under the house and sawed off the copper pipelines about three

months ago. That resulted in flooding for twelve hours until it was discovered, and they now fear the flooding may have destabilized the back of the house.

Dennis Ross said the dedication held at the Lily Lawrence Bow Library on May 23rd was nice but that he was personally insulted that the Chairwoman of this Board did not speak or stand with the group cutting the ribbon. Chairwoman Knowles thanked him and said she understood the CRA was directed to make the agenda as brief as possible. Sofya apologized for the oversight and said she would communicate Dennis's comments to the CRA Director.

Vice Chairman Diehl commented that the National Preservation Trust listed Vizcaya as an endangered historic property on their annual list of national properties that are threatened. Miami's Vizcaya is endangered because of the potential construction of a high-rise nearby that would destroy the surrounding views. Vice Chairman Diehl made a motion that the Homestead Historic Preservation Board send a letter to the Miami City Commission, endorsing preservation of Vizcaya and its sky-line by rejecting the proposed construction. Doug La Rue seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vice Chairman Diehl agreed to work with Staff on drafting the letter. He added that three weeks ago a Judge of the District Court of Appeal rejected the override of the Mayor's veto of that building code order, and struck down the developer's lawsuit against the City of Miami. He recommended that our letter stress preservation issues rather than legal battles.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Board Member Term

Sofya announced that Chairwoman Knowles's term will expire on July 23rd. She has served five years. Per Section-14-22 (b), members shall be eligible for reappointment and no member shall serve more than eight consecutive years on the board. Sofya asked Chairwoman Knowles if she is interested in serving another term of three years. Chairwoman Knowles replied yes, if the Board agrees. Doug La Rue made a motion to approve Yvonne Knowles's term renewal for an additional three years. Dennis Ross seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

X. OLD BUSINESS

Ownership status of 5 N.E. 2nd Rd. & 217 N.E. 1st Rd.

Secretary Randolph reported that Mr. Frank Abad has owned the property at 5 N.E. 2nd Road since 2006. It is a coral rock building that contains four apartment units. It is for sale as both commercial and residential. The historic designation of the property is noted on the sale postings. The property is in good condition.

Secretary Randolph reported that the Hall House at 217 N.E. 1st Rd. is also for sale. It is marketed as a residence and the historic landmark status is noted. Marleen Hall is still listed as the owner, although deceased. The agent told her the sale is in pending status but doubts the closing will be successful because there are five children involved with settling Ms. Hall's estate. Not all children are in agreement to sell the house. The potential buyer owns the pink apartment complex next door to the south, and also purchased the house next door to the north. The agent told Secretary Randolph that the potential buyer wants to use the Hall House as a rental.

Chairwoman Knowles confirmed with Secretary Randolph that both sellers are aware their property is a city designated historic landmark.

Eagle statue

Dennis Ross asked Secretary Randolph for an update on purchasing the eagle statue from JGT Transportation. Secretary Randolph replied that she stopped by the property twice and found it closed both times. The property owner has not called her. Her husband is willing to use his truck and lift gate to move the statue. Secretary Randolph suggested we decide on a counter offer to negotiate with the property owner, and to also find out

where we can put it and if there are organizations willing to take it. Chairwoman Knowles suggested calling the new director at ArtSouth. Chairwoman Knowles asked how they would pay for it. Secretary Randolph replied that Dennis would pay for it. Dennis said he is willing to go to ArtSouth to propose the artists and/or students make the statue a restoration project. Discussion followed.

XI. PRESENTATIONS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Staff update: Heritage Network session, May 29th

Sofya explained that the nonprofit preservation group, The Villagers, is hosting a session tomorrow morning to launch a Heritage Group in order to unite various preservation and environmental groups in Miami Dade County. Chairwoman Knowles and Sofya are attending and will report on it at the next board meeting. Years ago the Villagers awarded the City a grant to purchase the neon Seminole Theatre sign. Discussion followed.

XII. PRESENTATIONS BY STAFF

A. Miami Herald Newspaper interview

Sofya said a reporter of the Miami Herald recently interviewed her about the listing of the downtown district in the National Register of Historic Places. She will notify board members when the article prints.

B. Distribute subscriptions

Sofya distributed copies of the following subscriptions:

Forum News, May/June 2008

The Florida Preservationist, Spring 2008

Common Ground, Spring 2008

Forum Journal, Spring 2008

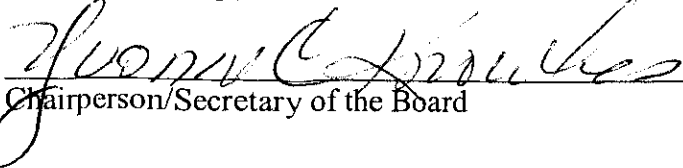
XIII. SCHEDULE UPCOMING MEETING

Chairwoman Knowles asked whether members wanted to break for the summer. Discussion followed. Everyone agreed to break for the month of July. The next meeting will be June 25, 2008, at 3:30pm.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Chairwoman Knowles adjourned the meeting at 4:26pm.

APPROVED BY:


Chairperson/Secretary of the Board

DATE: 6-25-08