



Historic Preservation Board Regular Meeting Minutes

March 12, 2025 at 9:00 AM

City Hall Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue

Present

Aimee Spencer, John Skolfield, Kelsey Wolfe, Wade Miller, Kim Burst Wood

Absent

Lee Rambeau, Fay Pappas

Staff Present

Director of Planning and Zoning Allison McGillis, Planner I Corinna Lundgren,
Administrative Coordinator Mary Bush

1. Call to Order

Chairman Miller called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Consent Agenda

- a. Approve the minutes of the December 11, 2024 regular meeting.

Motion made by Aimee Spencer, seconded by Kelsey Wolfe, to approve the December 11, 2024 meeting minutes.

The motion carried unanimously by a 5-0 vote. (Fay Pappas and N. Lee Rambeau were absent from the meeting.)

3. Public Comments (for items not on the agenda): Three minutes allowed for each speaker

No one from the public wished to speak. The public hearing was closed.

4. Public Hearings (Public participation and comment on these matters must be in person.)

- a. HDA 25-01. Request by Michael Galletta and Elizabeth Gwinn to individually designate their home at 1501 Orange Avenue, built in 1948, zoned R-1A, as a historic resource.

Mrs. McGillis provided a summary of the item. She noted that the applicant's house, built in 1948, is located in the Orwin Manor neighborhood and features mid-century

modern ranch-style architecture. She added that the property includes elements typical of the era, such as a carport and a large arched window. While the home's style is not rare for the neighborhood, its preservation would help maintain the scale and historical character of the area.

Staff recommendation was for approval.

The Board noted that the exterior of the home is not brick but half-block.

The applicant, Elizabeth Gwinn of 1501 Orange Avenue, Winter Park, FL 32789 addressed the Board. Ms. Gwinn spoke about her long-term residency in Winter Park and the significance of preserving architectural diversity in the neighborhood. She emphasized that while the house has unique interior features that may not be immediately visible from the outside, it contributes to the overall character of Orwin Manor. She also expressed interest in possibly adding an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) at the back of the property, which could be permitted under historic preservation guidelines.

The Board expressed overall support for the application, noting that the purpose of the local historic board differs from the State board and its requirements. The Board explained that it aims to maintain the aesthetic and scale of the community, ensuring representation from different architectural periods. While many people associate historic homes with older, early 20th-century styles, the Board believes it is essential to preserve mid-century homes as well. The discussion briefly continued, highlighting the importance of retaining diverse housing styles to reflect the city's evolving architectural history, the importance of controlling housing scale, and the potential benefits of ADUs. The general consensus of the Board was in favor of approving the historic designation, reinforcing the value of maintaining architectural variety and neighborhood character.

No one from the public wished to speak. The public comment was closed.

Motion made by Aimee Spencer, seconded by Kelsey Wolfe, to approve the individual designation of the home at 1501 Orange Avenue, built in 1948, zoned R-1A, as a historic resource.

The motion carried unanimously by a 5-0 vote. (Fay Pappas and N. Lee Rambeau were absent from the meeting.)

5. Action Items

a. Minor Exterior Renovations to City Hall

Mrs. McGillis provided a summary of the item. She discussed the proposed upgrades and repairs to be made to City Hall, which is a designated historic resource within

Winter Park's downtown district. She noted that the primary upgrades include wall repairs, signage updates, exterior repainting, and replacing outdated windows and doors. The two-tone exterior paint of the building will be replaced with a single color that complements existing architectural elements. The current silver aluminum windows and front door, which are in poor condition and not energy-efficient, will be replaced with black aluminum versions to provide a modern yet cohesive look with the new paint scheme. Mrs. McGillis indicated that the goal is to enhance the building's appearance while maintaining its historical integrity.

Staff recommendation was for approval.

The Board discussed maintaining the existing window design, ensuring the new elements matched the original architectural style. It was confirmed that all windows throughout the building would be replaced, ensuring uniformity. The new color scheme was described as a warm, sandy tone, while the windows and downspouts would feature a coordinated darker color.

There was general Board agreement that the renovations were necessary and aligned with broader downtown design guidelines that encourage darker, more refined storefront esthetics. The Board supported the proposed changes and recommended approval of the renovation plan.

No one from the public wished to speak. The public hearing was closed.

Motion made by Aimee Spencer, seconded by Wade Miller, to approve minor exterior renovations to City Hall.

The motion carried unanimously by a 5-0 vote. (Fay Pappas and N. Lee Rambeau were absent from the meeting.)

6. Non-Action Items

- a. Request of Barefoot Brothers Construction for a preliminary review of the following requests for 747 McIntyre Avenue (zoned R-2):
 - Demolish the existing house on the lot;
 - Subdivide the property into two 52-foot-wide lots; and
 - Build two single-family homes, one on each of the newly created lots, that would adhere to R-2 zoning regulations.

Mrs. McGillis provided a summary of the item. She indicated that the applicant is proposing to demolish the existing house, which is classified as a contributing structure in the College Quarter Historic District, and then subdivide the lot into two 52-foot-wide

parcels, each meeting the minimum R-2 zoning requirements. The applicant's plan is to construct two single-family homes on the newly created lots. Additionally, a three-foot section of the property would be added to the neighboring lot at 767 McIntyre Avenue, though no structural changes are planned for that property.

During the discussion, Mrs. McGillis provided aerial views, surveys, and elevation images of the existing structure and surrounding homes to give context to the proposal. It was emphasized that while the applicant intends to build homes that align with the character of the neighborhood, they do not plan to maximize the square footage allowed under R-2 zoning. The applicant was seeking initial feedback from the Board before investing in detailed plans. Discussion ensued about the Board's feelings regarding demolishing the existing home, how properties were classified as contributing structures, and concerns about the window trim quality on a previous project at 767 McIntyre, which could affect expectations for new construction. The Board expressed a desire for a survey to reassess the contributing status of properties in the city. Mrs. McGillis indicated that two letters of support were received, one being from the seller of the property. She also indicated that the neighborhood has not yet been officially notified, but more community feedback is expected when the proposal reaches the formal application stage. She then explained the next steps in the application process, which includes submission of a formal application, public notice for community input, possible consideration of design modifications based on community feedback, and Board review and approval.

The applicant's representative, Ron Scarpa, at 767 McIntyre Avenue, Winter Park, FL 32789 addressed the Board. Mr. Scarpa outlined the applicant's plan to subdivide the large lot and construct two single-family homes. He noted that the project is in its early stages, with architectural designs already underway. He indicated that the intent is to create aesthetically pleasing homes that complement the surrounding neighborhood while maintaining a thoughtful scale. The proposal includes building one home first on the northern lot before deciding on the construction of the second. The homes would be around 4,000 square feet each, with two-car garages and potentially accessory dwelling units (ADUs). The applicant's design aims to provide curb appeal by maintaining a single-story front elevation that transitions into a two-story structure toward the back.

Discussion ensued regarding the logistics of the lot split and potential variances. The Board inquired about the applicant's plans for the second lot. Mr. Scarpa explained that while it remains an option for sale, the current intention of the applicant is to hold onto it for a family member. Concerns were also raised about the historical significance of the existing home, but it was noted that it had undergone various modifications over the years, including the addition of vinyl siding and non-original windows, reducing its architectural integrity. The Board exchanged views on the appropriateness of demolishing an existing structure and the possible variances involved with subdividing

the lot. Discussion then ensued about the requirements for a lot split application, including the need for building plans and elevations. The Board expressed interest in having different architectural styles for the homes, including options like stucco or Florida Cracker designs, to maintain a distinct look from the surrounding properties. They emphasized that the new homes must also blend well with the neighborhood, especially in scale and architectural details, such as windowsills. The Board also discussed construction logistics and the challenges of building in the neighborhood. Mr. Scarpa was informed that the applicant's plans must be submitted by the following week to be considered at the next meeting, with a focus on ensuring the design remains adaptable.

b. Demolition permit for 663 West Comstock

Mrs. McGillis provided a summary of the item. She noted that the property is listed on the Florida Master Site File, an active inventory of Florida's historical cultural resources that are typically, but not always, over 50 years old. She explained that the city's historic preservation ordinance requires that the demolition permit for such properties be put on hold for up to 90 days to allow for further review and possibly additional considerations. While staff has reviewed the application and is comfortable approving the permit, the item was brought before the Board for any additional input or recommendations. She further explained that the Florida Master Site File is a state-run program where properties can be added to the list, though the process to add is not fully clear. The Board indicated that the list is meant to identify properties of historical value, prompting further review before demolition. However, the properties on this list do not have any legal protection from demolition unless they are also locally designated by the city. The applicant's property is not locally designated. The Board then discussed the 90-day delay period, which is intended to allow for documentation and preservation of the property's history, not necessarily to block the demolition. It was confirmed that during this period, photographs and records could be taken to preserve the house's history before it is demolished. The overall sentiment was that while the property could be demolished, documentation of its existence was important for historical preservation.

7. Staff Updates

a. Update on Historic Preservation Community meeting

Mrs. McGillis provided a summary of the item. She indicated that staff had previously presented an update of Winter Park's Historic Preservation ordinance to the City Commission in January, which was tabled for further community engagement. A public meeting was then held on February 20th, with 45 attendees and 16 of whom spoke. Opinions seemed divided 50/50 regarding penalties for not adhering to Board preservation approval requirements, but there was general consensus that the ordinance needed clarification and updates for greater understanding and predictability. Mrs. McGillis expressed that staff is working on two versions of the ordinance—one with fines and one without—both aimed at providing clearer guidelines for historic

preservation processes. A key addition will require applicants to provide more upfront details on the extent of demolition work, ensuring they perform due diligence before submitting applications. The final decision on whether to include fines will be left to the City Commission, based on the feedback gathered.

Discussion ensued, and the Board asked for clarity on whether window and door replacements need to go before the Historic Preservation Board. Some Board members were surprised to learn that such replacements, if they maintain the same appearance, do not require Board approval. This led to a discussion about the distinction between "appearance" and "historical accuracy," particularly regarding modern materials being used to replicate traditional window styles. It was also noted that if the windows or doors were historically significant, their replacement should indeed come before the Board, and if there is any discrepancy, it should be reviewed.

Board discussion then ensued about the use of modern materials like vinyl windows in historic houses. The Board indicated that while vinyl is durable, it is not suitable for replicating historic windows, and there are more appropriate materials that meet building codes and preserve the home's integrity.

Mrs. McGillis noted that staff would present an updated version of the ordinance at the next meeting.

8. Board Comments

Vice-Chair Spencer discussed revitalizing the Historic Preservation Board's annual awards program, which had been on hold since before the pandemic. She noted that the goal is to reintroduce the awards during Historic Preservation Month in May, with a presentation at Casa Feliz's annual historic preservation party on May 1st. She also indicated that the city's Mayor has expressed support for resuming the awards, which recognize outstanding achievements in historic preservation in Winter Park. The list of nominees includes individuals and projects that have made significant contributions to preserving the city's architectural legacy. Vice-Chair Spencer noted that one key nomination is Jack and Peggy Rogers, who played a pivotal role in saving the Capen House and relocating it to the site of the Albin Polasek Museum.

Vice-Chair Spencer expressed the importance of reviewing and selecting nominees earlier in the year to ensure proper vetting, but for this year, the decisions were being made under a more expedited timeline. While some Board members expressed concerns about not being fully familiar with certain projects, they acknowledged that the nominations had been carefully vetted by Vice-Chair Spencer, and the majority voiced support for the selections. The Board's consensus was to move forward with the proposed awards for this year, affirming their support for the nominated individuals and projects. The awards will be presented at the Casa Feliz event on May 1st, and all Board members were invited to attend, with encouragement to join the Friends of Casa

Feliz organization if not already members.

9. Upcoming Agenda Items

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

Minutes approved by the Board on April 9, 2025.

ATTEST:

/s/ Mary Bush, Recording Secretary