

HISTORIC PRESERVATION TASK FORCE

Location: **Planning Department Conference Room**

Date: **March 6, 2006**

Time: **9:00 a.m.**

Attendees: Commissioner Ronnie Duncan, Brian Smith, Bob Jeffrey, Wally Clark, Jan Luth, David Walker, Sam Casella, Cheryl Robinson, Becky Nielsen, Bob Ray, Reggie Hall and Terry Fortner

Opening Statement by Commissioner Duncan: Make sure that we are all on track - sometimes easy to lose focus and objective. Plan was to formulate a set of objectives which would not only be adopted by the BCC, but would be accepted by the municipalities as a cohesive policy, procedure as to how in the future we will look at historically significant properties, neighborhoods, etc. and how we look at them, preserve them and how we educate people about what is there and communicate to people about our past. We must do all of this or we are only doing half the job. End gain is to have it all. St. Petersburg, Dunedin, etc. have stepped out and been proactive regarding ordinances, etc. to make preservation a part of that community ... many others have not. What we are trying to accomplish is setting up a baseline and encourage those who have already started to continue to have the tools to make it work.

What do we have to do to get there? You all have already made tremendous strides in terms of just beginning to identify what's already in our community or what's not in our community. Secondly, putting together some criteria which are what we are going to talk about this morning. What I am going to propose we do some breakouts, some subgroups to focus on specific tools and how to build them; whether it be tax abatements from the preservation standpoint, or whether they be ordinances and rules and examples and models to use ... I think we need to start "putting the meat on the bones here". Is that where we are? Are we all on the same page? I thought it was time to have this conversation since we've been doing this for six or seven months – don't want to lose sight of our objective.

COMMENTS from attendees:

- Seems like we are discussing many of the same issues and not getting ahead.
- Like the idea of subgroups and tasks

Commissioner Duncan: Don't want to be here a year from now with no accomplishments. Your time is valuable and I want to move on this and keep it moving. I want to bring an update to the BCC. I want them to see what you have accomplished ... just a snapshot of where we are, what we've done. I'm going to try and get it on the agenda for early April, but that's not a mandatory item.

I. Call to Order

II. Minutes – January 31, 2005

- ◆ Sidebar - Discussion on Fort DeSoto and Website
- ◆ Moved to approve - carried

III. Updates

- ◆ Historic Programs Chart – Brian showed updated chart
- ◆ Program Website – Brian advised that the website is up-to-date
- ◆ State Grant Submittal – Grant is at the State and we are awaiting their response
- ◆ Commissioner Duncan sent a letter to each Mayor of each city asking about specifically what their codes, ordinances are and what was the tenor of their community in city on historic preservation. Approximately three-quarters have responded from everything from what Dunedin and St. Pete are doing to others who acknowledge that they have nothing. Good thing is .. not only the number of responses but they are encouraged by what we are doing and interested in having our involvement. I took that as a positive sign – we will chance those we've not heard from by the end of the month.

IV. Presentation on St. Petersburg Program by Bob Jefferey

- ◆ Bob Jefferey passed out packets
- ◆ Adopted a Historic Preservation Program in 1987
- ◆ About 84 local landmarks to date
- ◆ Two local districts they are comprised of 150 buildings
 - Mediterranean Revival District
 - Neighborhood District that has a variety of early 20th century homes on Booker Creek
- ◆ Ordinance(s) written with much help from the National Trust for Historic Preservation
 - Identifies nine criteria – cultural, architectural, archeological – structure, object or site (see Chapter 16, Article 8)
 - Rules and regulations to help protect
 - Allows for designation over other objections
 - It's one weakness is the criteria for alterations to historic buildings – maintaining character and/or scale – but common with a 20 year old ordinance
 - With a little “tweaking” could cover any municipality in the United States
- ◆ Preservation is not just about landmarks – general context – St. Petersburg has neighborhood after neighborhood that are intact (sidewalks, open front porches, etc) from the early 20th century – so in 1991 “Neighborhoods Design Review” was written.
 - Adaptive Reuse of Historic Buildings
 - FARs and MT Districts
 - Open Front Porches, Dormers, Turrets, Garages/street parking
- ◆ Downtown changes in St. Petersburg – currently an 8-month process between officials and contractors
 - Becky Nelsen commented that we can glean from the advice of St. Petersburg to build a foundation for our program
- ◆ LDRs being rewritten – go to City Council next week and then to CPA and other review agencies – comes back to City Council in August – then 45 days, etc. – bottom line – should be adopted October 31st.
 - Have an hour long LDR presentation that would be happy to do a workshop for the BCC

V. **Program Definition** (discuss attached draft and organize assignments of work)

- ◆ BCC is going to want to know how the information will get to the “average Joe on the street”
- ◆ What could we put together as a packet?
 - Five ordinances – procedural, marketing that would give anyone in any municipality something to pick up and operate out of – and just filling in a lot of the blanks
 - Generic ordinance, then specific guidelines ordinance, conservancy ordinance like NBR, then overlay ordinances like adaptive reuse
 - Zoning districts – neighborhoods, corridors and centers – which would cover anything and also do an agricultural one too
 - Economic ordinance – which would have taxes, TDRs, affordable housing components
 - Reorganization going on within the County regarding zoning and development so that everything is easier, clearer and more uniform and this should be coming out soon and should be posted on the website.

VI. **Criteria – Status of Subcommittee Work**

Not on tape ??

VII. **Tax Exemptions – Research from Sam Casella**

- ◆ Assembled a list of 12 historic preservation incentives – kind of a survey
 - Property tax abatement – in Florida it’s a local option
 - State Income Tax Credit – not available in Florida as there’s no state income tax
 - Federal Income Tax Credit for commercial properties - Even higher return if preservation creates low income affordable housing
 - Florida Community Contribution Tax Incentives – allows corporation to take an income tax credit of 50% of a donation that it makes to approved historic preservation projects – up to \$200,000 per year
 - Charitable Gift of Preservation Easement – able to take tax credit for the value of the easement
 - Grants (6) from Federal and State government:
 - HUD and DOT
 - DOT – Anclote Lighthouse and other is Belleview Biltmore because it was a railroad station
 - Go through the Division of Historic Resources and Department of State – usually \$5,000 to \$25,000
 - National Trust for Historic Preservation – a few very modest grants and not readily available
 - Transfer of Development Rights – classic examples across the country. Requires that there is something in local ordinances for TDRs. Some places have it – most places do not.
 - Purchase of Development Rights

- Tax Incentive Financing (TIF) – usually a redevelopment tool. Be very careful whose hands you're putting it into – redevelopment allows things to be torn down.
- Acquisition

COMMENTS:

1. What about loans?
 - a. There are some banks that take a very helpful attitude (such as Bank of America via Community Development Corp.).
 - b. Take a look at CAL-PERS (California retirement fund) website. They often loan and/or invest in historic areas – another place to look.
2. Insurance? Many insurance companies will not insure property over a certain age.

VIII. Other Business

Brian and Comm. Duncan to review the Subcommittees and email everyone with the top two or three and be ready for the next meeting

Next Meeting – will be either the first or second week in April but will get response from group via email.

We will continue to update the website as well as the mayor's response to Comm. Duncan's letter.

Something that should come out of this is a marketing brochure – not naming names, but that there are certain things that would be helpful to the general public to insure interest in historic preservation.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m..