



# City of Richmond

*Where History Meets Opportunity*

## Richmond Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

City Commission Room | 600 Morton Street, Richmond, Texas 77469

**Tuesday, August 20, 2019, at 8:00 am.**

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The Richmond Historical Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, August 20, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. Cindy Drabek, Chairperson, called the meeting to order. A quorum was present, with the following members in attendance:

Carol Edwards  
Cindy Drabek  
Lonnie Meadows

Staff in attendance: Jose Abraham, *Historic Preservation Officer (HPO)*; Mason Garcia, *Associate Planner*; Howard Christian, *Assistant City Manager*; Jamie Walker, *Public Works Executive Secretary*; Lori Bownds, *Building Official*; Jordan Adams, *GIS Specialist*; Gary Smith, *City Attorney*

Chairperson Cindy Drabek declared the meeting open.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item number A2., Public comments. She asked if there were any public comments for items not included on the agenda. Hearing no public comment, the agenda item was closed.

Chairperson Drabek introduced consent agenda items B1. - Review and approve minutes from July 16, 2019 regular meeting; and B2. - Announce the next Richmond Historical Commission meeting to be held on September 17, 2019. Commission member Edwards moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commission member Meadows seconded the motion. The vote for approval was unanimous.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C1a., Downtown Richmond Updates. No updates were provided.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C1b., Community and Museum Events Updates. No updates were provided.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C2a., Certificate of Appropriateness for sign application for business located at 611 Jackson Street.

Before addressing the agenda item, Mr. Abraham, HPO stated that the City Commission

reappointed both Ms. Cindy Drabek and Ms. Karen Bliel for another term, and appointed new member Ms. Mary Jane Kocurek to the Richmond Historical Commission Board at the August 19, 2019 City Commission Meeting

Mr. Jose Abraham, HPO, indicated that agenda item C2a. pertained to a sign application for the building located at Jackson and 7<sup>th</sup> Street, which included several businesses: The Kombucha Company, Blockhouse Coffee, The Guild, and Studio Vibes. A sign permit application was previously submitted, which did not meet the requirements of the Unified Development Code (UDC). Since then, a revised proposal was submitted. Mr. Abraham stated that the proposed signs featured white acrylic letters on the building, and were within the sign area allowance per the UDC. He added that the total sign area of all signs combined conformed to the UDC's sign area allowance, but when considering individual signs, one of the signs exceeded the allowable sign area. Mr. Abraham noted this could potentially lead to a situation in which any new business replacing an existing business would be limited to the sign area presently allocated. Commission Member Edwards requested a picture of the sign, to which Mr. Abraham provided the applicant's sign illustrations with Commission members. Responding to Chairperson Drabek's questions, Mr. Abraham explained that the proposed sign conformed to all applicable standards of the UDC and Richmond Historic District Design Guidelines. He also explained that the sign would be attached to wall with the support of a clear railing. Mr. Abraham recommended approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed sign application. Commission member Edwards moved to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the sign application for the businesses located at 611 Jackson Street. Commission member Meadows seconded the motion. The vote for approval was unanimous.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C2b., Historic District Demolition by Neglect follow-up discussion. Mr. Abraham, HPO, briefly mentioned updates provided at the July 2019 regular meeting, regarding the property at 101 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Additionally, he indicated that a second courtesy letter was sent to the property owners of 206 Morton Street and 209 Calhoun Street. Furthermore, Mr. Abraham noted that the property owner of the old Exchange Hotel was in the process of selling the property, and any roof repairs prior to the sale would not be wise as the new owners planned to renovate the building, which could void the warranty on the repaired roof. He also informed the owner's displeasure with an article published in the Fort Bend Herald which did not accurately describe a discussion, involving his property, at a previous Richmond Historical Commission meeting. Mr. Abraham added that the owner intended to contact the paper to publish a correction to their story.

Regarding 206 Morton St, the Old Theater, Mr. Abraham (HPO) stated that the owner of the property, Ms. Nancy Hentschel replied to the letter from August 13, 2019, and explained that her property has a drainage issue caused by the adjoining property owners which she is attempting to resolve. He added that staff plans to meet with Ms. Hentschel to clarify their position regarding the drainage issue, fully explain the demolition by neglect process, and provide information about resources available to assist her with completing her renovation project. Commission member Edwards asked where Ms. Hentschel was currently in the permit process. Ms. Lori Bownds, Building Official, indicated that a temporary permit for driveway access was

conditionally approved, but that Ms. Hentschel did not want to pay the permit fees. Mr. Abraham further indicated that from his understanding, the demolition of a previously standing small building on the rear side along Calhoun Street had resolved the drainage issue. Mr. Abraham again expressed that staff intended to meet with Ms. Hentschel to assist her with the overall process. Chairperson Drabek clarified with Mr. Abraham that all applicants were required to pay the associated permit fees.

Mr. Abraham noted that he met with the property owners of the structure at 209 Calhoun Street, and that their response to the courtesy letter was positive. He stated that the owners had attempted to add a roof to the building in the past, but a permit was not issued for the renovations at the time. He also mentioned that according to the owners, the mural inside the building was fairly recent, and was not from the time past in which the building was in use. Mr. Abraham indicated that staff intended to meet with the owners again, and inspect the building and tentatively provide an update at the next Richmond Historic Commission meeting.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C3., Discussion on expenditure and budget related matters for Richmond Historical Commission by Commission member Becky Haas. Mr. Jose Abraham, HPO, stated that this item was requested by Commission member Becky Haas at the last meeting, but there were no scheduled budgetary items to discuss at that time. However, he mentioned that the Planning Department factors in Richmond Historical Commission needs into the budget, and that any decision by the Richmond Historic Commission that involves cost— such as office supplies or attending a training session—would be processed through the Planning Department’s budget.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C4., Consider agenda item requests by Commission Members for September 17, 2019, regular meeting. Commission member Edwards mentioned recent publications in the newspaper regarding the Development Corporation of Richmond (DCR) initiatives that involved the Historic District, and suggested that it was important for such decisions and updates to be communicated to the Richmond Historic Commission. Mr. Abraham (HPO) suggested that a continuing agenda item could be included to provide such updates.

There being no further business to be brought before the Richmond Historical Commission, Chairperson Drabek adjourned the meeting.

Approved

  
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Cindy Drabek, Richmond Historical Commission Chair