



# City of Richmond

*Where History Meets Opportunity*

## Richmond Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

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

**Tuesday, August 18, 2020, at 8:00 am.**

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The Richmond Historical Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. Cindy Drabek, Chairperson, called the meeting to order. A quorum was present, with the following members in attendance:

Cindy Drabek  
Carol Edwards  
Karen Bleil  
Jess Stuart  
Lonnie Meadows  
Clair Rogers

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

Chairperson Cindy Drabek declared the meeting open.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item number A2., Public comments. She asked if there were any public comments. Hearing no public comment, the agenda item was closed.

Chairperson Drabek introduced consent agenda items B1. - Review and approve minutes from December 17, 2019 regular meeting; and B2. - Announce the next Richmond Historical Commission meeting to be held on September 15, 2020. Commission member Bleil moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commission member Stuart seconded the motion. The vote for approval was unanimous.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C1a., Community and Museum Events Update.

- Museum is open Thursday through Saturday, must purchase tickets ahead of time;
- George Ranch Historical Park is open Thursday through Saturday, must purchase tickets ahead of time;
- Railroad Museum is open;
- Nonprofit fund-raising events have been rescheduled;
- Check online to see what events are taking place.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C2a., Certificate of appropriateness for façade improvement and expansion of the Fort Bend Museum Building located at *500 Houston Street*. Jose Abraham, HPO, indicated that the subject site is located at *500 Houston Street*; northwest corner of Houston Street and S. 5<sup>th</sup> Street. He explained that the project includes expansion of the existing building and overall exterior improvements. He clarified that the proposed addition would include some storage spaces, some restrooms, a catering area, and a lobby with an expansion of the gift shop area. He further explained that since the existing building does not meet the current setback requirements, a variance was granted by the Zoning Board of Adjustments. He also confirmed that the proposed exterior finish materials and colors conform to the Unified Development Code requirements and the Historic District Design Guidelines. Mr. Abraham concluded by recommending approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness. Commission member Bleil made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the façade improvement and expansion of the Fort Bend Museum Building located at *500 Houston Street* as recommended by staff. Commission member Stuart seconded the motion. The vote for the motion was unanimous.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C2b., Certificate of appropriateness for façade improvement and roof replacement for the City of Richmond Old Fire Station Building located at *112 Jackson Street*. Jose Abraham, HPO, indicated that the Certificate of Appropriateness was for a proposed façade improvement and exterior finish replacement on the Old Fire Station Building located close to the intersection of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Morton Street. He explained that the proposed work would include cleaning up the existing exterior brick work, painting the building, replacing the roof with a standing seam metal roof, and replacing the existing roll up doors with a storefront type façade so the building may be used commercially. Mr. Abraham stated that staff has comments that have been communicated to the architect and staff is awaiting a response. Mr. Abraham concluded by recommending approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness with a condition that the review process is completed and the proposed exterior finished and colors conform with the Historic District Guidelines; and that the review and permit process is completed. Chairperson Drabek indicated that she did not a schedule of proposed colors and asked if Mr. Abraham considered that in the review. Mr. Abraham responded that that was one of the comments on the initial drawings, and that this has been communicated with the architect. Commission member Stuart asked if any improvements would be made to the small parking area that goes along with the building. Mr. Abraham indicated that there was no mention of proposed improvement to the parking lot, but that he would follow up on this question. Chairperson Drabek asked if this proposed project will be brought back to the Commission for approval. Mr. Abraham stated that staff will review it and approve it, and provide an update to the Commission. Commission member Rogers made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed façade improvements and roof replacement of the building located at *112 Jackson Street* with conditions recommended by staff. Commission member Bleil seconded the motion. The vote for the motion was unanimous.

Mr. Abraham, Historic Prevention Officer, noted that Commission member Rogers had indicated via email that she planned to abstain from voting on Agenda item C2a., and requested that

Commission member Rogers confirm that at the meeting. Commission member Rogers confirmed that she abstained from voting on the item and was not sure how to express that and was glad that it was addressed.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C2c, Certificate of appropriateness for exterior repairs and façade improvements, including doors and window installation and exterior finish repairs to the Old Theater Building located at *206 Morton Street*. Mr. Abraham, explained that the applicant is proposing to replace the existing finish material with limestone on the first floor, add windows and doors on the first floor, windows on the second floor, and replacing or repairing the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor exterior finish to match that of the adjoining building. He added that since the building has gone through several changes on the front, it is difficult to restore the structural brick as the exterior finish. He also indicated that there are some buildings in the historic district that have limestone as the exterior finish material. He specified that exterior door and windows is being manufactured and installed by a company called Renewal by Anderson. According to Mr. Abraham, the manufacturer uses a proprietary material called Fibrex, which gives a wooden finish look and has better durability. He clarified that the existing doors and windows have deteriorated to the extent that restoration is cost-prohibitive and impractical.

He also mentioned that the property owner is in the process of finalizing a contractor for the exterior stucco on the second floor and will submit an application after finalizing a contractor. Mr. Abraham indicated that staff is excited about the proposed façade improvement since it will be a significant value addition to the district. Mr. Abraham also mentioned due to the size of the limestone, the façade may extend a few inches further compared to the current façade. Mr. Abraham recommended approval of Certificate of Appropriateness with a condition that appropriate applications for each individual work will be submitted and inspections are scheduled in a timely manner. Commission member Stuart expressed his appreciation for the progress on this building, and the look of the limestone. Mr. Abraham also mentioned that the City of Richmond Code Enforcement Department, Building Department, and previous Economic Development Director worked with the property owner extensively. He added that Fire Chief Mike Youngblood also worked extensively with the property owner to help her make progress on the project. Commission member Bleil asked if there was a particular reason for the shapes of the windows on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Mr. Abraham responded and explained that the shapes are based on the existing openings and since it is on structural brick and changing the shape is not advisable. Chairperson Drabek inquired about future development and the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the building. Mr. Abraham clarified that the façade improvement is proposed to be executed in phases. Commission member Rogers asked how the limestone meets up with the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor façade, and if this will be a smooth fit. Mr. Abraham explained that he is not certain how the final look will be after installation of the plaster and that the detail has not been provided yet, and that staff will update the Commission once they get to that phase. Chairperson Drabek inquired about whether or not the colors meet the historic guidelines and Mr. Abraham confirmed that colors are proposed to conform and will be reviewed and approved prior to issuing permits. Commission member Bleil moved to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior repairs and façade improvements including door and window replacement, and exterior finish repairs to the Old Theater Building located at *206 Morton Street*. Commission member Stuart seconded the motion.

The vote for the motion was unanimous.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C2d, Staff updates on activities within historic district since December 2019, regular meeting. Jose Abraham, Historic Prevention Officer, indicated that staff administratively approved a few items while the Commission was not able to meet due to the pandemic. Mr. Abraham provided the following update:

- Fence improvement to provide screening for old City of Richmond Wastewater Treatment plant located at *206 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street*.
- Roof and window repairs at the City of Richmond Police Station at *600 Preston Street*. Mr. Abraham explained that urgent repairs were needed considering the weather conditions.
- Roof repairs at the City of Richmond Annex building located at *600 Morton Street*. Mr. Abraham explained that these were localized repairs and checking the roof to prevent leaks.
- Sign reface for TLC on Brazos was administratively approved due to the absence of a quorum for the initial meetings this year.
- City Commission approved Historic Property Tax exemptions for Darst Yoder Home; Morton McCloy House; and Peareson-Winston House.
- A presentation on the Improvements made to the Old Exchange Hotel was made. Commission member Rogers added that she was called in during the improvements to the parking lot for the process of closing a cistern. She explained that archeologists were brought in to evaluate what was in the cistern and there did not seem to be anything of great significance. Commission member Rogers also commented on the beauty of the office spaces done on the inside of the building. Mr. Abraham agreed and shared that he was able to tour the area. Chairperson Drabek inquired as to whether the office spaces were being occupied. Mr. Abraham confirmed that they spaces were occupied. Commission member Rogers clarified that a Cyber Security Firm that occupies that space. Mr. Abraham indicated that they went above and beyond to preserve some of the materials that were in the building and very creatively used it as part of their interior design.

Chairperson Drabek introduced agenda item C3., Consider agenda item requests by Commission Members for September 15, 2020 regular meeting. Chairperson Drabek asked Commission members if there were any requests for agenda items for the next Commission Meeting. Mr. Abraham mentioned that Commission member Edwards joined during the staff meeting. Chairperson Drabek asked to encourage updates on the progress of recently considered development projects in the Historic District.

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

Approved

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cindy Drabek". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

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Cindy Drabek, Richmond Historical Commission Chair

