



# City of Richmond

*Where History Meets Opportunity*

## **Building and Standards Commission Minutes**

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

**Tuesday, August 2, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.**

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The Building and Standards Commission for the City of Richmond, Texas met on Tuesday, August 2, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. The session was held at 600 Morton Street, Richmond City Commission Room.

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. A quorum was present, with the following Members in attendance:

Albert Davis – Chair  
James Kinsey  
Zachary LaRock  
Damacio Sanchez  
Joe Garcia – Vice-Chair  
Michael Leonard

Staff in attendance: Scott Fajkus, Building Official; Howard Christian, Assistant City Manager / Public Works Director; Gary Smith, City Attorney; Aileen Heard, Code Compliance Officer; Brittany Mullings, Public Works Executive Secretary.

Chairman Davis introduced agenda item A2., Recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag and the Texas Flag. Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag and Texas Flag was recited.

Chairman Davis introduced agenda item A3., Public Comments. Hearing no public comments. This agenda item was closed.

Chairman Davis introduced consent agenda item B1., Approval of June 7, 2022, minutes. Board Member LaRock made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Board Member Kinsey seconded the motion. The vote for approval was unanimous.

Chairman Davis introduced consent agenda item B2., Date of next meeting. Tuesday, October 4, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. There was no objection.

Chairman Davis introduced regular agenda items C1a – C1f., Discussion for demolition on following addresses:

C1a. 1104 S 3rd – Dangerous Structure

Mr. Fajkus stated that the City has not been able to reach the owner. The last meeting resulted in the issuance of Substandard Orders. This address has been on the Dangerous Structure list since 2016. At this time, no progress has been made. Although the structure has been secured, it continues to be broken into. Staff's recommendation is to demolish the structure. Board Member Kinsey made a motion to demolish the structure. Board Member Sanchez seconded the motion. The vote for approval was unanimous.

C1b. 1101 (1103-1105) Jerry – Dangerous Structure

Doug Moore, the owner, stated he is awaiting insurance approval before pulling permits. He mentioned that he had done some work on the structure, but nothing that required a permit. Currently, no permits have been pulled at this address according to Mr. Fajkus. There has been some foundation work performed without permits, and several areas of the foundation are not supported, resulting in instability. Mr. Moore described the structure as having settled and several blocks were not supporting any weight, so he removed those blocks. After the meeting, he stated that he would put the block back in place. Mr. Fajkus reminded the Board that this address has been listed as a Dangerous Structure since 2018 and Substandard Orders were issued on June 2, 2022. Staff's recommended that the Board grant approval for the demolition of this structure, but the City is also willing to work with the owner if an initiative is shown. Mr. Moore stated there are three joints he plans on replacing. Mr. Fajkus inquired about the owner's plans for this property. Mr. Moore stated he is wanting to make it habitable. The trade work will be performed by licensed professionals, but the structural work will be performed by him. A Structural Engineer has also reviewed the property and informed Mr. Moore of what needs to be done to bring it up to code. A copy of that report was requested by Mr. Fajkus. Board Member LaRock asked if the structure was secure. It was assured by the owner that it was secure. Mr. Moore requested an additional 60-day extension. Board Member LaRock made a recommendation to give the owner an additional 60-days with the requirement of permits being pulled in that time. All the Board Members were in favor of the recommendation.

C1c. 411 Clay – Dangerous Structure

Mr. Fajkus stated that both notices of the Building and Standard meetings had been returned. The Building Department has not received the plans and no permits have been issued at this time. However, a Contractor applied for a demolition permit last week. The Building Department authorized a 30-day demolition permit. Staff's recommended the Board allow the City to demolish the structure if the owner fails to complete the demolition process within 30-days. Board Member Kinsey made a motion for the City to demolish the structure if the owner fails to complete the demolition within 30-days. The motion was seconded by Board Member Garcia. The vote for approval was unanimous.

C1d. 209 Calhoun – Dangerous Structure

The majority interest owners are represented by Mr. Byron Cobbins. An extension was requested so that a Structural Engineer could generate a report substantiating the

soundness of the building. He stated that code issues have been resolved. He asked the Board to consider a 180-day extension. In addition, he mentioned that the structure lies within the Historical District and that it is of particular significance for the fact that it is the only remaining standing structure in the City of Richmond that is still owned by African Americans. He asked if any other citations or concerns arise, they are given an opportunity to address those issues and provide a level of support if they have any questions. Board Member LaRock asked Mr. Cobbins if their goal is to restore the structure. In response, Mr. Cobbins indicated that the goal was to restore the building and ensure that it complied with the ordinances of the Historic District. The single largest owner of the property, Mr. Mike Elliot, also spoke on this property. He stated this is a cinderblock building on all sides, all doors and windows were secured, prior to the City doing their inspection. He mentioned he also owns the property at 101 S. 3<sup>rd</sup>, he had a Certified Engineer do an inspection at this address. He also conducted an inspection at 209 Calhoun but passed away before Mr. Elliot could receive the report. He stated the Engineer mentioned this structure was sound and safe, but it is not on paper. He mentioned the building is not a safety hazard to the public and would like to see it restored. He also requested an extension of 180-days. Board Member Kinsey asked Mr. Elliot what work needs to be done. Mr. Elliot stated the building will need a roof, doors, windows, and a concrete floor. Mr. Fajkus gave a brief overview of the current state of the structure. The exterior of the building was painted without a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historical Commission. Staff recommends an update in 60-days. Mr. Fajkus will be meeting with the Historical Preservation Officer (HPO) as it pertains to this structure, he will have an update at the next meeting. Mr. Cobbins indicated prior to the building being painted, the majority owners have sought out preservation to the City about putting a roof on the building. He is asking that if there are any further modifications to this building, that himself and the majority owners are notified. He is requesting an extension beyond the 60-days. Mr. Fajkus reiterated the Staff recommends a 60-day update, the HPO will be attending the next meeting. Mr. Cobbins asked if he could reach out to the HPO. Mr. Fajkus stated he would forward that information to Mr. Cobbins. Mr. Elliot clarified he does not have a structural engineer report on this structure, but the engineer told him it was structural sound. Mr. Cobbins is asking for time beyond the 60-days since there is not a current engineer report. Mr. Fajkus stated to hold off on an engineer report at this time and to reconvene in 60-days for the Building Department and HPO report instructed the owners on how to proceed. Mr. Cobbins and Mr. Elliot agreed to generate their own reports. Chairman Davis requested an update in 60-days. No further discussion.

C1e. 406 Burnet – Dangerous Structure

The son of Rosie Reza, Mr. Reza, stated that the family has discussed the possibility of selling or demolishing the structure. Currently, they are in discussions with potential buyers. A question was raised by Mr. Reza regarding how much time the Board is prepared to offer so that a sale can be negotiated. Chairman Davis reminded the owners that this property has been on the Dangerous Structure list for six years. The opportunity of a potential buyer never arose during those six years, as Mr. Reza mentioned. In order to sell or demolish the property, he is requesting more time. There was a brief discussion between the Board and Mr. Reza about the potential buyer he has been speaking to. Mr. Fajkus mentioned at the

last meeting, the Board allowed the City to move forward with the demolition after 60-days. Staff's recommendation is to move forward with demolition. To understand how the demolition process works, Mr. Reza requested documentation concerning the demolition and the lien. He mentioned the potential investor is aware of everything that is going on with this property. Chairman Davis made a motion for the City to move forward with the demolition of the property within 30-days. Mr. Reza interjected by requesting documentation regarding the demolition bids the City had received. To obtain this information, Mr. Fajkus indicated he could file an open records request. The motion was seconded by Board Member LaRock. The vote for approval was unanimous.

C1f. 217 Collins – Dangerous Structure

Mr. Fajkus stated the structure caught fire in May 2022. All the required notifications have been mailed out by City Staff, no progress has been made by the owner to remove the structure. The Building Department secured the structure in early May. The plywood was removed shortly after the property was secured and caught fire May 14, 2022. The property was secured again by the Building Department and a Do Not Occupy Notice was posted. There is currently no electrical or water service to this property. Staff recommendation to the Board is to issue Substandard Orders. Board Member Garcia made a motion to issue Substandard Orders. The motion was seconded by Board Member Leonard. The vote for approval was unanimous.

Chairman Davis introduced regular agenda item D1., Discussion and recommendation on following addresses:

D1a. 1205 Preston - Dangerous Structure

Mr. Fajkus stated the case was opened in June 2022. All the required notification has been mailed out by City Staff, no progress by the owner to correct the code violations has been made. They Fort Bend County Task Force conducted a raid and seized drugs and arrested individuals occupying the home. The property was secured by the Building Department and a Do Not Occupy Notice was posted. There is currently no electrical or water service to this property. A few weeks later, the plywood has been removed and there is a generator in the back of the property. He mentioned the owner of the property has passed away and the property has never been probated. Staff recommendation to the Board is to provide a 60-day extension to locate the owner of this property. No action required.

D1b. 103 S 3<sup>rd</sup> - Dangerous Structure

John Kovach introduced himself as the Attorney and son in law of the owner of the property, Robin Rosen. This address is the most recent purchase for the family, which owns four properties in Richmond. He briefly went over the development of each property. Currently, they are seeking ideas for this structure. He invited the City and Historical Committee to view the property last year. He states he received an informal approval for construction and asked to obtain a certificate regarding the foundation integrity, which was acquired. There has been some minor work done on the interior, including the removal of the ceiling. He mentioned the City conditionally approved of a Bar-B-Q

Restaurant last year, but problems arose. He mentioned he had received more quotes from contractors. The four issues he was made aware of are the front door being plywood, the back of the property has overgrown foliage, there was a gutter hanging down, that has since been removed, and there are some areas with warped wood. He stated the structure is secure and safe at this time. In order to see progress, Mr. Kovach is requesting a 180-day extension. The first step will be to repair the façade. They do not want to see it demoed; they would like to see this structure preserved. Board Member Kinsey asked how much progress can be made in 60-days. Kovach stated that not much can be achieved in 60 days, and he hopes to have 180 days to repair the facade. They have a contractor scheduled to provide them with a quote for the completion of the project. Mr. Fajkus recommended 60-days for an update to the Board. He stated he will meet with the Historical Preservation Officer to look at the building. Chairman Davis requested an update in 60-days. Mr. Fajkus stated a signed set of plans will be requested in the future. No action required.

Chairman Davis introduced regular agenda item E1., Demolition completed on following addresses:

E1a. 507 Travis – Dangerous Structure

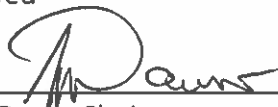
Mr. Fajkus stated the structure has been demolished. This address can be removed from the dangerous structure list.

Chairman Davis introduced regular agenda item F1., Discuss with the Commission on training. Mr. Fajkus briefly went over training options for the Commission.

Chairman Davis introduced regular agenda item G1., Excuse from attendance at the regular Building and Standards Commission Meeting. None to discuss.

There being no further business to be brought before the Building and Standards Board, Chairman Davis adjourned the meeting at 6:19 p.m.

Approved

  
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Albert Davis, Chairman

Attest

  
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Scott Fajkus, Building Official