

**THE CITY OF FORT MYERS  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 27, 2022 MEETING**

On January 27, 2022, at 4:00 p.m., the City of Fort Myers Historic Preservation Commission met in the City Council Chambers, Oscar M. Corbin, Jr. City Hall, 2200 Second Street, in the City of Fort Myers, Florida.

**ROLL CALL**

Gina Sabiston called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Members Present

Gina Sabiston  
Michelle Santucci  
Mary Joe Walker  
Lisa Belcher  
Kevin Williams  
Sawyer Smith

Members Absent

John McKenzie  
Carly Schwartzel

Planning Staff Present

Nicole DeVaughn, Planning Manager  
Monique John, Administrative Assistant  
Taryn Thomas, Senior Planner

Other Staff

Grant Alley, City Attorney  
Anthony Palermo, Assistant Director  
Liston Bochette, Councilman Ward 4  
Christian Gempesaw, ITS Department

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Grant Alley, City Attorney, swore in all witness that intended to speak on any of the agenda items.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: PUBLIC HEARING: CERTIFICATE OF REVIEW COR21-0056,  
2050 MCGREGOR BLVD., LANDMARK: NEW SIGNAGE.**

**EX PARTE COMMUNICATION:** None

Nicole DeVaughn, Planning Manager, Planning Division, Community Development Department, stated that staff findings were as follows:

**BEGIN STAFF REPORT**

**AGENDA ITEM #1  
CERTIFICATE OF REVIEW# COR21-0056  
ADDRESS 2050 McGregor Boulevard**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
Landmark

**HISTORIC NAME**  
Towles-Engelhardt Home

**PROPOSED PROJECT**

New signs

<b>DATES</b>	<b>CASE HISTORY</b>
11/8/04	The City added this property to the Landmark Legal Descriptions (Section 114-158).
Early 2004	The building was moved to its current location, directly opposite of its original location.
07/24/04	Application approved to restore the historic structure.
03/28/06	Application approved to install new signage on the banister of the open front porch.

**STAFF FINDINGS**

Architectural / Historical Elements

1. The property located at 2050 McGregor Boulevard is designated as a local landmark. The historic two-story wood frame vernacular structure was constructed in 1885 for William H. Towles.
2. The application proposes to install a 36"x96.3" (24 sq. ft.) wall sign on the western (Bayside Parkway) and a 25"x86.8" (19 sq. ft.) sign on the southern

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(McGregor Boulevard) side attached to the banister of the front porch. The signs will not be illuminated.

3. The signs will be made of stainless-steel letters flush-mounted on an aluminum composite back panel and attached to the building with threaded studs.

**STAFF REVIEW**

***Design Guidelines for Historic Properties, Chapter II. Design Guidelines***

**Q. SIGNS**

Appropriate signage in a Historic District can enhance its historic character. Signs citing the name and the year of construction of commercial buildings are fairly common practices.

In reviewing applications for new signs, the Historic Preservation Commission considers their proposed dimensions, graphics, materials, colors, supports, and locations. All proposed signs must also conform to the City's Sign Ordinance. Sign proposals should be submitted directly to the city.

1. New signage should be kept unobtrusive by selecting traditional materials such as wood, metal, or stone, and carefully placing signs in locations that do not damage or conceal architectural features and details.
2. New signs should be sized to be consistent with the pedestrian scale of the District. Graphics should be kept simple and legible.
3. Generally, freestanding signs should be no larger than necessary and should be mounted fairly low to the ground to avoid blocking the pedestrian's and motorist's view.
4. Graphics painted on windows or applied to fabric awnings are also appropriate.
5. Limit the number of colors on signs and relate the colors to adjacent structures.

Staff concludes after a site visit and a review of the documents in this application, that Land Development Code, Chapter 114 Historic Preservation, Section 114-72 Review criteria for existing buildings is applicable to this application, specifically:

(b) ***Additional criteria for commercial and mixed-use buildings.***

- (2) **Signs.** Signs should not damage or conceal architectural details or overwhelm the pedestrian scale of historic districts. Guidance can

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be found in Chapter III, section B.2. *Design Guidelines for Historic Properties.*

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Staff makes a finding that the proposed wall signs comply with the City of Fort Myers Land Development Code, Chapter 114, Section 114-72 (b)(2).
2. Staff recommends to the Historic Preservation Commission the approval of the Certificate of Review, Application COR21-0056.
3. The proposed sign shall be installed as shown on the plans prepared by Axe Signs + Wayfinding, included with this Certificate of Review.
4. All required permits shall be obtained prior to commencement of construction.
5. The Certificate of Review shall become effective immediately.

**END STAFF REPORT**

**PUBLIC INPUT:** None

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Santucci asked for clarification on when the home was built as there were conflicting reports on the age of the home. Ms. DeVaughn advised the home was older and built in the 1800's. Ms. Santucci asked regarding the southeast elevation railing, if the railing was four feet and had it been raised for code requirements or was it a historically accurate smaller railing.

Ms. Sabiston stated that she did not feel that the railing was historic.

**MOTION:** It was moved by Walker to approve COR21-0056, for 2050 McGregor Boulevard with staff recommendations 1 through 5, seconded by Mr. Smith and unanimously approved 6-0.

**ITEM 2: CERTIFICATE OF REVIEW COR21-0057, 2701 DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD, LANDMARK: SUPPORT NOMINATION TO NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES.**

**EX PARTE COMMUNICATION:** None

**BEGIN STAFF REPORT**

**AGENDA ITEM #2 - McCollum Hall Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Local Landmark

**PROPOSED PROJECT APPLICATION**

National Register Designation

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The attached National Register nomination was completed and submitted by Lucy Jones, Senior Architectural Historian for Cardno, Inc., to include McCollum Hall on the National Register of Historic Places.

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:**

The Historic Preservation Commission supports the nomination of McCollum Hall to the National Register of Historic Places.

**END STAFF REPORT**

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Sawyer asked why the site drawings provided in the agenda packet showed poor quality around the property. Ms. DeVaughn advised the pictures provided were to show how the property had been improved over time.

Mr. Williams stated it was common to show the conditions of the building in its current condition.

Ms. Sabiston stated that the exterior picture provided showed the improvements of the property that had been done.

Mr. Sawyer asked if the pictures provided that contained debris on the property were permitted or if the applicant needed to provide better pictures of the property.

Ms. Walker stated that she liked the applicant's packet and that she loved seeing the history on the building and property and that the pictures provided insight to how the property had been improved.

Ms. Santucci asked if the original wood flooring would be sustained.

Staff stated they were unsure if the floors would remain. Staff stated the applicant was not present to answer any questions.

**PUBLIC INPUT:** Ann Martindale, city resident, stated that she supported the application and was very happy that the property was getting improved.

**MOTION:** It was moved by Mr. Williams to approve COR21-0057 at 2701 Dr. Martin Luther King Boulevard, landmark status for the support of the register of historic places by the Historic Preservation Commission, seconded by Ms. Santucci and unanimously approved 6-0.

**ITEM NO. 3: DISCUSSION ITEM: HISTORIC BUILDINGS TO BE INCLUDED ON OTOCAST MOBILE APP:**

**AGENDA ITEM #3**

**Discussion Item:** Presentation by Tom Hall, consultant to the Public Art Committee, on the Otocast phone app, on potential historic buildings to include on the app.

Mr. Hall discussed the following points as an update the Ottocast application:

- Narratives, photos, and audio for historic properties added to the app

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- Functions that will be available in the application
- Historic Preservation Commission collaboration with the application
- Notable Tenants mentioned in narratives
- Sponsorship opportunities for the application
- Who shall Review of proposed narratives and audio scripts?
- Who should determine which historic sites to include in the application?
- Other possible collaborators

**PUBLIC INPUT:** None

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Sabiston stated that she liked the proposed idea of “notable tenants” being mentioned.

Ms. Santucci stated that she liked the idea of the current tenant having the sponsor opportunity.

Mr. Hall asked the board’s opinion on what level the current tenant would sponsor, i.e., financially.

Mr. Sawyer advised that it was not in the Historic Preservation Commission’s purview to set a fee as it was not permitted.

Mr. Hall stated that a resolution would need to be thought of on how to pay for each of the historic sites that would be added to the Ottocast application.

Liston Bochette, Councilman Ward 4, stated that Ward 4 contains the bulk of the buildings being proposed to be added to the application and that he would like to make his ward discretionary funds available to help pay to include historic structures on the app.

Mr. Williams suggested also looking into the Property Owners Association for financial support.

Ms. Sabiston asked Mr. Alley if it was appropriate for a business that wanted to donate funds for their particular site to cover the costs.

Mr. Alley advised that was permitted and that the Historic Preservation Commission could not solicit funds for the project but that the members on the board could, on their private time, talk about the project.

Mr. Sawyer asked what, ultimately, was the request from the Historic Preservation Commission to help move the project along.

Mr. Hall advised that the input of the Historic Preservation Commission on what historic sites would be added to the application and also crafting the narrative and choosing the photos and script for each site was being requested as well as who would do the recordings for each historic site that was added to the application.

Ms. Sabiston suggested that each board member find 3 buildings that they would want to be added to the app and bring their choices to the next meeting for deliberation or forming a subcommittee to work on the project and report back to the board.

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Mr. Sawyer stated that the board needed to abide by the Sunshine Law and that he liked the idea of each member bringing back historic buildings to discuss to be added to the app.

Mr. Hall asked regarding the level of review for the scripts on each historic site if the board wanted to draft scripts to come before the board to be reviewed and approved. The board agreed that they would want to review and approve the scripts.

Ms. DeVaughn stated that the scripts should be emailed to staff and then distributed to the board in order to abide by the Sunshine Law and avoid any violations.

The board agreed to come back with five historic buildings that they would like to be added to the Ottocast app.

**MOTION:** N/A

**ITEM NO. 4 MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:** Ms. Sabiston stated that the power pole at the Luminary hotel had still not been removed.

**ITEM NO. 5: PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** None

**ITEM NO. 6: COUNCILPERSON UPDATE:** Councilman Bochette spoke on the following points during the councilperson update:

- Ward 4 meeting summary
- Time and Date update for the “Committee of 8” meeting of the Board Chairs.
- Bayside property concerns
- Concerns and improvements to McGregor Boulevard
- Budget for relocating the Hall of Fifty States
- Final surfacing of crosswalks

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:55 o'clock p.m.

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