

Athens City Historic and Architecture Preservation Commission
MINUTES
February 8, 2021 5:30 PM

1. Call to Order Chairperson Mary Ann Reeves called the meeting to order at 5:30PM. Members present include Reeves, Pam Callahan, Cyrus Moore, John Valentour, Mark Snider, and Richard Vedder. Members not present include Guy Philips. Quorum was established. Non-commission members present include Dominick Brook, Director of OU Real Estate, city planner Paul Logue, and city planning intern Lauren Conner.

2. Disposition of Minutes Richard Vedder made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Mark Snider seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

3. Next Meeting—March 8, 2021 at 5:30PM

4. Old Business

A. Prisley Award – Mary Anne Reeves did not believe that a lengthy history section was needed for the Prisley Award wording and believed basic history and a one page the description would be sufficient. Pam Callahan suggested that the plaque be very brief and mention the Historic Preservation Committee, or the Prisley Award, as well as the date the award was given. Mary Anne shared that she would send the wording around once it is completed. Cyrus Moore asked if someone from the 1st Presbyterian Church should be present at the next commission meeting to discuss the next steps regarding the presentation of the award to the church. Richard Vedder suggested inviting Rev. Martin to the next meeting.

B. Ridges – Guest speaker, Dominick Brook, updated the commission about the current structural condition of The Ridges. There is a dire need to fix the roof which is causing water infiltration throughout the buildings. A temporary replacement of the roof would cost \$650,000, another temporary solution is around \$1 million, and a long-term roof repair would cost upwards of \$4.5 million. OU is willing to put up a fraction of the roof repair costs but is hoping to rely on community support to help with the remaining. Mark Snider asked if a private entity could obtain a long-term lease at The Ridges, which would make them responsible for a large portion of the repair costs. Dominick expressed that with 100,000 square feet of space, developers find the magnitude of The Ridges' rehabilitation costs too risky. However, OU's ideal private partner would be one developer who was willing to take on the whole 100,000 square feet project. Dominick expressed how it would mostly likely be a few years before a private entity occupies The Ridges due to financing, plans, and construction. This is why a temporary roof replacement is sought after to prevent from any further water damages in the meantime. Mark asked if there are grants that would match the funds that OU is willing to put up for repair costs. Richard stated that money had already been allocated for this year and mentioned the importance of talking to political powers and advocating for this project. Mary Ann wondered if changing the status of The Ridges from state to national significance would open up more grant funding options. She volunteered to fill out the national registry's questionnaire. Paul shared that the deadline

for this year's registration has already passed, but if the commission can start the process and get paperwork completed in the next several months, The Ridges could be eligible for the next funding opportunity. Mary Ann asked if there are any OU Alumni contractors who would be interested in this project. Dominick said that he noticed more interest in the funding side than on the contracting side but will follow up on the idea. He closed The Ridges discussion by stating that an open mind needs to be prevalent when discussing potential repair solutions and usages of The Ridges' buildings.

5. New Business - There was no additional new business topics.

6. Announcements and Updates

A. Historic Preservation Commission Informational Brochure - Pam shared the status of the historic preservation informational brochure. She asked Paul if he could make an attractive map that showed only the new proposed district so that it could be included in the informational brochure. He replied by saying he can make a map and collaborate with Pam on any edits.

7. Adjournment with all agenda items satisfied and no additional business or announcements, Richard Vedder motioned to adjourn the meeting. Pam Callahan seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Lauren Conner (city planning intern)