

HERITAGE PRESERVATION, INC.
Minutes of Meeting, 7-24-2017

Those present: Chuck Hyde, Betty Champion, Dick Jordan, Lee Freeman, Mary Peck, Wayne Williams, Judy Tiffin, Hester Cope, Carolyn Waterman, John VanSandt, Jay Hillis (guest), Billy Warren

1. Chuck Hyde made the motion that the minutes of the 6-26-2017 meeting be approved. John VanSandt seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

2. Billy Warren presented this financial report:
 - a. Checking Account Balance \$1,022.44
 - b. Forks of Cypress Account Balance \$3,234.78

John VanSandt made the motion that the financial report be approved. Carolyn Waterman seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

3. Dick Jordan made this report regarding current city projects:
 - a. Now that the City Council has approved the rezoning of property on the westernmost end of Irvine Avenue at the request of the developers who plan to build an apartment complex, the developer must seek approval from the Planning Commission to proceed.
 - b. Restoration work on the exterior of the Rosenbaum House now been completed.

4. Chuck Hyde made this report regarding the current work of the City of Florence Historical Board:
 - a. There is now some movement toward a resolution of the issue of property ownership in the slave cemetery that adjoins the Coffee Family Cemetery. That's very encouraging since plans are being made regarding both cemeteries as they relate to Florence's Bicentennial celebration in 2018.
 - b. The Historical Board meets on the third Tuesday of each month. Applications for the Board's consideration must be received by the first Friday of a given month in order for the Board to have time to do its preliminary work (e.g., make visits to the property in question) so it can render a decision at its meeting.

5. All Board members who attended the recent Open House of the new Gunrunner Boutique Hotel on East Tennessee Street expressed rave reviews on the magnificent work done by the owner, Billy Ray Casteel. Transforming an older building that began its life as a car dealership and spent years as a gun shop into an upscale boutique hotel is remarkable – and is a grand addition to downtown Florence. Each of the ten (10) suites in the hotel is themed on some aspect of local history (e.g., Billy Reid, Single Lock

Records, Smithsonian, Glencoe). Kudos to Mr. Casteel! It is historic preservation at its best.

6. Billy Warren distributed copies of these handouts:
 - a. An article from the September 10, 1920, issue of the *Florence Times* which describes a mock wedding at the Princess Theater; and
 - b. An excerpt from a letter written ca.1920, along with a photograph of Mr. Frank Perry, which heaped high praise on Mr. Perry because of his compassion toward a family member of the letter writer.
7. Billy Warren distributed paper copies of an email from Dr. Carrie Barske announcing the establishment of the tenth historic district in Florence. McFarland Heights Historic District includes all structures on Riverview Drive, Riverview Circle, Pleasant Circle and Grove Street and is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

It was suggested that a congratulatory letter should be sent to each homeowner in the new district and that the letter should inform the homeowner about the process for gaining approval for exterior changes to structures within the district.

8. Billy Warren distributed copies of the list of members of the Board of Directors, noting a couple of minor corrections from the previous copy.
9. Lee Freeman distributed copies of the July, 2017, issue of *Kidsville News*.
10. Billy Warren announced that the current issue of *Conde Nast Traveler*, a national publication, contains a big spread entitled "Seven Places to Visit in August, 2017." Here is the list:
 - a. Edinburgh, Scotland
 - b. Jackson Hole, Wyoming
 - c. Minneapolis, Minnesota
 - d. Grenada
 - e. Bologna, Italy
 - f. Geneva, Switzerland
 - g. SHINDIG IN FLORENCE, ALABAMA

Board members agreed that Billy Reid has brought international publicity to Florence through his flagship store on Court Street and the annual event known as "Shindig."

11. In an opening discussion about the possibility of HPI creating a list of outstanding local craftspersons (plasterers, masons, painters, upholsterers, etc.), the Board agreed on these guiding principles:
 - a. We must determine the criteria for listing a person.
 - b. We must include a disclaimer that the list is not an unequivocal guarantee of the quality of a person's work.

- c. The list must include the recommendation that anyone using the list check an individual craftsperson's references before hiring him/her.

With these guiding principles in mind, the Board considered both advantages and disadvantages of creating such a list:

- a. Advantages:
 - (1) The novice who has, at best, limited experience in dealing with craftspersons will have a sense of security that the person he/she is considering is highly-skilled and personally reputable.
 - (2) The list will show everyone that the Shoals does, indeed, have highly-talented craftspersons.
 - (3) Craftspersons on the list would have a committed focus on the architecture of the Shoals.
 - (4) The list will reveal that there are local craftspersons with highly-specialized skills such as plastering and faux painting.
- b. Disadvantages:

There is the delicate issue of how to answer the question by a craftsperson: "Why am I not on the list?"

Today's discussion was an excellent beginning on this topic. It will continue at the August meeting of the Board.