



HISTORIC TOWN OF EATONVILLE, FLORIDA HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 14, 2024, at 1:00 PM

Town Hall (Council Chamber) - 307 E Kennedy Blvd. 32751

SPECIAL NOTICE: These meeting minutes are presented in an abbreviated format intended as a public record discussion of stated meeting according to the Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine law. Meetings are opened to the public, noticed within reasonable advance notice, and transcribed into minutes for public record. ***Audio Recording are available through the Town's website on the Council Agenda Page.*

CALL TO ORDER AND VERIFICATION OF QUORUM: Chair Rosa Pickett called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and quorum was established by roll call through Mrs. Veronica King asking each board member to state their names.

PRESENT: (4) Chair Rosa Pickett; Vice Chair LaDwyana Jordan **Board Members:** Laverne Bellamy Williams; Jane Turner (**Absent:** Ann Dawkins)

STAFF: (2) Veronica King, **Town Clerk;** Cobbin McGee, **Planner 1**

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Board Member Turner led the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Meeting Minutes July 14, 2022 – This item was tabled by consensus of the board; **Comments:** New Board Members were not present during the July 14, 2022, board meeting to vote. The clerk will share the audio of the meeting with the board. This item will be brought back to the next meeting for voting.

Meeting Minutes September 12, 2024: MOTION was made by Vice Chair Jordan to approve meeting minutes for September 12, 2024; **SECOND** by Board Member Turner: **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES.**

BOARD PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS:

National Trust/African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund (AACHAF) – Melissa Jest (Senior Manager for preservation projects representing the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund at the National Trust for Historic Preservation) presented an overview and status of Historic Preservation Planning Support to the Town of Eatonville Accepted By The Town In March 2024. The National Trust is a private, charitable, educational, nonprofit corporation chartered by U. S. Congress in 1949. Further, the preservation, historic preservation policy of the United States and to facilitate public participation in preservation in our nation's history. The Action Fund is a national preservation program with the National Trust dedicated to protecting historic African American places. The National Trust has been involved in preserving historic communities like Eatonville for 75 years, and the Action Fund has been a dedicated program focused on African American history and preservation since 2017. Also offer technical assistance as well as grant support to the town. Convened as the town's advisors attending the kickoff on September 28, 2024, held in Eatonville, where citizens expressed their consent to have the National Trust continue to serve as an advisor to the master planning process. The preservation planning recommendations are currently underway. Currently reaching out

with Miss Gragg and Mrs. King to receive existing public reports that would advise how various projects impact historic resources, such as, public work projects, streets, water, and sewer, to include any type of code enforcement that might impact historic resources and community redevelopment planning. Information can help to advise and compile recommendations for the town's leadership to consider and would help to include preservation into the town's policies and practices. The National Trust provided a letter of support for a recent meeting with the county school board. The National Trust granted the town \$200,000 to support preservation planning currently underway that will support community education, outreach, and, to support implementation of preservation actions, practices, and policies. The National Trust is here to support you in the current and ongoing efforts to preserve the history of Eatonville that is reflected in the built environment and to support property owners and residents interested in preserving their properties that contribute to your overall history and sense of place. Information about the National Trust of Historical Preservation was provided inside the board packages as well as emailed, to go along with the presentation. **Board Comments:** This newly board is in need of education, the fundamentals of what preservation is. The community education and outreach that the National Trust offers will focus on the residents. The State Historic Preservation Office that manages the Certified Local Government (CLG) program is a resource for education for the board. As a Historic Preservation Board for a local certified government, the Town of Eatonville is supported by the certified local government program. Dr. Carol Lucas is the director of the CLG, she is available to conduct training with the board in person and virtually. It would probably be a part of the overall education and training that she does for all certified local governments in Florida. The board needs face-to-face meetings and written documentation/written information to refer to. In reference to the handout provided, each year, the National Trust announces the 11 most endangered places across the country that deserve preservation to make the public aware of what the threats are to make the public aware of how they can support preservation, Eatonville was listed this past May. It provides information on how Eatonville came to be on that list, what the listing means, what the significance, and how Eatonville contributes to history and what are some of the threats. Why is Club Eaton not considered a non-contributing resource to Eatonville historic history; the first determining criteria is the property must be fifty years or older to be listed on the national register, the next criteria is its integrity, the building may have undergone significant changes with additions, the current owner did show photos of the building and the roof was changed, with additions in rear. The National Trust as an advocacy organization continue to advocate to the National Park Service and the Secretary of Interior that with African American resources, there needs to be specialized considerations rather than holding us or our resources up against standards that were established in 1908. Another criterion for the National Register to consider is what events took place on that site that have impacted America reflective of American history. Club Eaton is documented as one on the chitlin circuit that African American performers. The town along with the preservation board should engage the State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO) in a little deeper conversation about Club Eaton being a cultural resource, one deserving of preservation because of its heritage and culture, not so much the architecture. Also make the same argument with FEMA that Club Eaton should be considered a contributing structure, despite the condition of the current condition of the building. The town could take the FEMA recommendations or do something different; it would be up to the preservation board. The property (Club Eaton) received a grant to preserve the structure from the National Park Service, the grant application and grant approval documents the significance of the site. The National Park Service is the operation and arm of the Department of Interior who would not have awarded a grant for the preservation of that structure (Club Eaton) if the historic significance had not been documented and approved. The preservation board's role is to be the watchers and defenders of the history of the Town of Eatonville. The National Trust can support the preservation board's advocacy. The next steps are official action from the board establishing a line of communication with the State Historic Preservation Office on the Club Eaton and begin gathering information supporting the board's argument, the board has directed Mr. Cobbin to begin collecting information from Michael Jones (architect) and the CRA as it pertains to Club Eaton's restoration project. It is believed that both the motel and Club Eaton should be on the National Registry list. There is a deadline of November the 22nd for individuals to turn in historical data and information to the architect and the CRA office. Ms. Jest stated that

most certified local governments are empowered through their preservation ordinance to do a local designation, where the town can establish its own local register of historic places, another way to demonstrate the town's commitment. Can designate locally those places that are significant to the architectural and cultural history, the ordinance does have that provision. For the National Registry, the criteria that support cultural heritage are criteria A and B. There are 51 properties in Eatonville on the registry, the majority of which are residential structures named as contributing structures. There is no local registry established. The Historic Preservation Board has the authority to advise the Mayor and Council on preservation matters and how to proceed, along with your discussions with SHPO about Club Eaton.

STAFF COMMENTS: Cobbin McGee: The board is requesting hard copies of the information pertaining to the zoom meetings that the board was not able to attend. Mr. Cobbin provided information about the zoom meeting that took place. It was a meeting with the planner, the owner, the Architect of the project, Councilwoman Randolph (serving as the interim Executive Director for the CRA), and Vice Chair Jordan (representing the Historic Preservation Board). The meeting connection was disabled. The meeting was held to discuss the terms of the agreement; in reading the agreement, planning does not have a role in the agreement, it is between the CRA and the state. According to the deliverables in the agreement, the architect is at 30% of the design, requesting information on the exterior of the building, how it looked, and alterations that took place; this will provide a basis for the design. There was an extension given on the agreement and filed with the state.

Councilwoman Randolph (Interim CRA Executive Director) There are bi-weekly meetings that will take place to ensure the project stays within the timeline. The design will be based upon the stories, the cultural and heritage data being requested for the nightclub. Information can be brought to the CRA office, emailed, or sent to Mr. Malcolm Jones (Project Architect). The project has been secured and there are no issues concerning the structure, hoping to move this project along to make this reality come true because it is a part of Eatonville's history. Referred to an article that references a female by the name of Carol Alexander, who is a part of the Alexander family here in the Town of Eatonville, she worked at Club Eaton as a waitress and her name is mentioned as part of the Groveland Four. She was supposedly a witness about the two gentlemen that had stopped by Club Eaton and got a beer. There is a map that shows their travels from Oklahoma, Florida through Groveland, to Clermont, to Orlando, and stopping at Club Eaton, and thereafter to Club 436. This is an example of useful information that can be gathered (for the architect) to show the racism of these individuals from the incident up to Club Eaton and over to 436. Plan to submit this story as data from a newspaper. Will have the administrative assistant send another notice to all the emails received at the visioning session informing them of the deadline; phone calls were also made to individuals without emails. There are about forty individuals interested.

COMMENTS (Staff/Board):

Veronica Kung, Town Clerk – There may be staff related meetings that will take place internally that is not a public meeting, the board will not be able to attend. Because the board consists of appointed officials, and to prevent from violating the Sunshine Law, it is important that if the board is expected to be a part of a meeting, that the meeting be noticed properly as a public meeting according to the Florida Statutes. In talking with Mr. McGee, the staff representative, he can provide updates on meetings that may take place, to ensure that the board is updated and aware of related matters. **Vice Chair LaDwyana Jordan** – Provided clarity that she was on the meeting, was quickly informed that it would be a violation of sunshine, immediately disconnected and did not hear anything in the meeting.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: (By consensus, board allowed comments from the public)

David Washington – (Owner of the motel and restaurant on East Kennedy Boulevard) Thought that his request for a facade grant was going to be discussed or mentioned at this meeting. He is inquiring about the status of the request. The motel is not contributing structure to the historic district. It does not have to be reviewed by the historic preservation board. The agreement for the facade grant does require review by a committee consisting of a member of the CRA board, staff appointed by the CAO, and a member of the community.

Staff are working now to schedule that review. It is recommended that the community member be a member of the historic preservation board. Vice Chair LaDwyana Jordan has agreed to serve on the reviewing committee for the facade grant.

ADJOURNMENT:

ADJOURNMENT Chair Rosa Pickett adjourned the meeting **at 1:54 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

Veronica L King, Town Clerk