

**CITY OF COVINGTON**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES**  
**MAY 4, 2011**  
**7:00 PM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

James Hughes, Chairman  
George Hutchinson, Vice Chairman  
Juanita Thompson  
Jennifer Long  
Judy Hooten  
Jonathan Paschal

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Scott Gaither, Senior Planner  
Josephine Kelly, Main Street Program Director

**ABSENT:** Linda Shore, Gloria Freeman, Lisa Hanson

**1. OPENING STATEMENT & INVOCATION:**

James Hughes called the meeting to order. He welcomed everyone in attendance and stated a quorum was present.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Ms. Juanita Thompson made a motion to approve the agenda. Mrs. Judy Hooten seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Minutes of the February 2, 2011 meeting were previously approved via email vote.

**4. CITY OF COVINGTON: OLD BUSINESS: NONE**

**5. CITY OF COVINGTON: NEW BUSINESS:**

**ITEM – 1**

**COA #4(2011)**

**A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR THE  
RELOCATION OF THE FRONT DOOR, ONE FRONT  
WINDOW AND THE REMOVAL OF ONE FRONT WINDOW  
IN ADDITION TO THE PROPOSAL OF THE  
CONSTRUCTION OF A CIRCULAR DRIVE AND  
HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE RAMP FRONTING  
REYNOLDS STREET AS WELL AS THE CONSTRUCTION  
OF AN EIGHT FOOT WIDE WOODEN DECK ON THE REAR  
OF THE HOUSE.**

**APPLICANT:** Stuart Hamilton  
1112 Monticello Street  
Covington, GA 30014  
**LOCATION:** 1134 Reynolds Street  
**TAX PARCEL(S):** CO20-7-5

**PRESENTATION:**

Scott Gaither introduced the item and gave a brief explanation of the applicant's proposed renovations and improvements in order to operate his investment business from this location. Mr. Gaither stated that because the structure will be used in a non-residential manner the owner shall comply with the American Disabilities Act and a handicapped ramp is required since the business is open to the public. While the ramp may detract from the historic character of the property if located in the front, facing Reynolds Street, there is a possibility

of placing it in the rear of the structure. Mr. Gaither stated the driveway would require review and approval from the City Transportation Department and given its proximity to the intersection of Reynolds and Elm may require redesigning or not permitted.

Mr. Gaither stated the applicant has satisfied all the requirements of a COA as required by Covington Code Section 16.52.280 therefore staff recommends **APPROVAL** of the request as presented with the understanding that the circular driveway may or may not be approved for its current design and location by the City Transportation Department and the handicapped accessibility ramp may be moved to the rear of the structure as determined by the City Fire Marshal and Building Inspector.

**APPLICANT PRESENTATION:**

Mr. Stuart Hamilton provided a brief explanation of his proposal and stated the need for the circular drive way to provide some form of off street parking for his clients and if possible will construct the ramp on the rear. Mr. James Hughes stated he is the contractor for this project and will recuse himself from any discussion and vote but will be available to answer any questions.

Mrs. Jennifer Long asked what material the driveway will be constructed from.

Mr. Hamilton stated gravel if approved.

Mrs. Long stated there is another circular drive in the area so the proposed will not be the first.

Mr. Jonathan Paschal asked what is the probability of not having to construct the handicapped ramp in the front of the house.

Mr. Hughes stated there is a strong, 60/40, possibility of being able to locate the ramp to the rear of the house.

Ms. Nita Thompson asked if employees would be parking on the circular drive.

Mr. Hamilton stated no, it would be for clients only. There will be two employees plus himself at the location and he will ensure staff will park elsewhere such as the City lot on Church Street, adjacent to this location.

Ms. Thompson asked if the wooden deck would extend the length of the house.

Mr. Hughes stated it would.

Mrs. Judy Hooten asked if it would be possible to tie the handicapped access ramp to the wooden deck.

Mr. Hughes said that is hopeful and he has an onsite meeting scheduled with the Fire Marshal and Building Inspector to go over those options.

Mrs. Hooten asked if the original door will be used when relocated.

Mr. Hughes stated due to its poor shape it will not be reused. He will be using the existing window, trim and clapboards.

Mrs. Hooten asked if the new door will be in keeping with the historical character of the house.

Mr. Hughes stated that Mr. Hamilton has chosen a full beveled glass door with wooden frame and will match the character of the house and surrounding elements.

Ms. Thompson stated that it appears all members are supportive of the building renovations with concern over the handicapped accessible ramp more so than the driveway.

**SUPPORT/OPPOSITION:**

Mrs. Kathie Smith of 201 W. Clark Street, Oxford, GA stated her mother, Ms. Mae Hardy of 1134 Oak Street, Covington, GA, lives beside the property in question and their only concern is there is no curbing on Reynolds and if it were curbed it could be used as on-street parking. As of now during rain events her mother's yard and driveway gets a lot of water coming from the road and if Reynolds were curbed it could alleviate that. Mrs. Smith also asked if the handicapped ramp is in the front where currently proposed would there be any screening from her mother's property.

Mr. Hamilton stated he is open to the idea of the City putting curb and gutter along Reynolds but since that is within the right-of-way he would not be responsible for that work. He also stated that his plans are to landscape the site and would include a planted screening should the ramp be located near Ms. Hardy's property as shown on the proposed site plan.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Hughes removed himself from the room prior to any discussion among the members.

Discussion about the circular drive and handicap ramp was held among the members present.

**MOTION:**

Ms. Thompson made the motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness contingent upon the Fire Marshal and Building Inspector agreeing to authorize the handicap ramp to be constructed on the rear of the house, the circular driveway may be constructed from gravel which may help with site drainage and to allow City Planning and Zoning staff to approve the applicant's sign permit once it meets code and is approved by the Main Street program director. Mrs. Judy Hooten seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**6. REPORTS:**

Scott Gaither provided and update regarding the house on Floyd Street that has been of concern to the HPC.

Ms. Hooten inquired about the timeline for the Methodist Church to remove the sunroom from the parsonage. Mr. Gaither stated it is his understanding that the church has experienced some financial hurdles associated with this project but has been told that it will be removed but no timeline was given.

Ms. Josephine Kelly stated May is national preservation month and she is working on a newsletter and brochure for homeowners explaining strategic demolition as a protective measure to preserve historic neighborhoods.

**7. PUBLIC COMMENT (NOT REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA):**

Mrs. Kathie Smith stated she appreciates the Covington HPC and stated she has read and seen firsthand how Amherst, New Hampshire's historic preservation ordinance is very strong and limiting.

**8. ADJOURN:**

Ms. Thompson made a motion to adjourn. Mr. George Hutchinson seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

These minutes of the May 4, 2011 public hearing are approved.

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Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Recorder

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date