

Minutes of the meeting of the  
**Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)**  
City of Belton  
333 Water Street  
Monday, November 5, 2012

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The Historic Preservation Commission met at 5:30 P.M. in the Wright Room at the Harris Community Center. The following members were present: Larry Guess, Randy Stumberg and Nelson Hutchinson. The following Staff Members staffre present: Erin Newcomer, Planning Director and Sam A. Listi, City Manager.

**1. Call To Order.**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 P.M.

**2. Elect chair and vice chair.**

Mr. Stumberg made a motion to elect Nelson Hutchinson as chair and Dan Kirkley as vice chair. Mr. Guess seconded the motion and it was approved with 3 ayes, 0 nays.

**3. Z-12-26 Hold a public hearing and consider an historic district designation for South Main Historic District.**

Ms. Newcomer presented the staff report. She gave an overview of the historic district designation process and sequence of events leading up to the public hearing.

Mr. Guess asked if there are any properties in the proposed historic district on the eastern side of Main. Ms. Newcomer stated the location is along the western side of South Main.

Ms. McDougal said that when they looked at the districts, they looked at all of the properties that staff previously included in the historic districts. In 2009, properties on the east side of Main Street were not included in the historic district.

Mr. Stumberg asked how a property can be an historic landmark but non-contributing, such as along College Street on the map?

Ms. McDougal stated that the map Mr. Stumberg is referring to is a map indicating those who returned a response card stating they are not in favor of being in a historic district. The blue shading is causing properties to look like it's non-contributing, but it is contributing.

Mr. Guess made a motion to recommend the South Main Belton Historic District as proposed to City Council. Mr. Stumberg seconded the motion and it was approved with 3 ayes, 0 nays.

**4. Z-12-28 Hold a public hearing and consider an historic district designation for Lower West Belton Historic District.**

Ms. Newcomer presented the staff report.

Nancy Alexander, resides at 706 North Main, stated that she was located in the proposed Upper West Belton Historic District. Ms. Alexander wanted to ensure what was approved in her area was the same as the Lower West Belton area and that the Lower West Belton boundaries are within the boundaries of the previously designated West Belton Historic District.

Ms. McDougal stated that it is concluded that Ms. Alexander's map of what was designated in 2009 where she has a hand drawn boundary is now in agreement with the map that is presented here with one correction that she just made.

Mr. Guess asked if there is another opportunity to designate a district or a property within a district.

Ms. McDougal stated that the City of Belton expects once the historic districts are completed, there will be an opportunity to consider individual landmarks. Anyone can come forward and nominate their property or a group of neighbors can come together and nominate their area for a district. This is not the one and only chance.

Mr. Guess made a motion to recommend the Lower West Belton Historic District to City as proposed. Mr. Stumberg seconded the motion and it was approved with 3 ayes, 0 nays.

**5. Z-12-29 Hold a public hearing and consider an historic district designation for Downtown Belton Historic District.**

Ms. Newcomer presented the staff report.

Ms. McDougal asked the commission if they have any questions.

Mr. Guess asked if there are any properties in the proposed historic district beyond Penelope Street. Is there no district encompassing the remainder of Central Avenue?

Mr. McDougal stated that is correct. She showed the original boundaries and said that many of the properties in the Downtown Belton Historic District have been altered since 2009. The most significant aspect of Pittman's Cleaners is the sign, and there is nothing architecturally significant about this building. First United Methodist Church was previously in the Central Belton Historic District, it is already a recorded Texas Historic Landmark. It currently has protection and oversight from the Texas Historic Commission (THC) because it is a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL). Staff elected to not jog up the over the parking lot to include it because you can protect it in other ways. Staff tried to make the boundaries very simple, unlike previously when they were difficult to interpret and understand. The other buildings that were included previously were the residential properties along North Pearl and, are no longer in the proposed district because of inappropriate alterations and because the properties included in this historic district are commercial, institutional, and governmental, not residential. Staff elected to make this a non-residential area, this is an area where people are served by various organizations and those buildings reflect that.

Mr. Hutchinson stated that currently in the Downtown Historic District area there are white street signs identifying they are in a historic district. If these boundaries change and the signs fall outside the boundary, will those signs need to change?

Ms. McDougal stated that the commission would need to decide how to handle that. When the City of Belton comes up with a policy for identifying all of the historic districts in the city, then it would apply to these signs as staff as other ones.

Ms. Newcomer stated that she would look into that further.

Mr. Guess stated he has gone to other towns and looked at their historic districts. In Tyler, TX and Savannah, GA he said that he was impressed that they had a street sign and a sign on top identifying the historic districts.

Ms. McDougal said that staff could provide the commission with examples of how other cities did that. One is to provide the double signs and signs that you can put at gateways to historic districts to identify them that way. That is a common way to identify the historic district areas.

Mr. Guess made a motion to recommend the Downtown Belton Historic District to City as proposed. Mr. Stumberg seconded the motion and it was approved with 3 ayes, 0 nays.

**6. Z-12-30 Hold a public hearing and consider an historic district designation for Central Belton Historic District.**

Ms. Newcomer presented the staff report. Ms. McDougal explained the Minimal Traditional type of home. She stated that a Minimal Traditional type of home does not have stylistic elements that staff typically sees for example, a Craftsman, Queen Anne, or Italianate home. A Minimal Traditional is what staff call the houses built in the 1940s and 1950s primarily for returning servicemen and their families after World War II. They were built in forms and shapes that echoed those traditional architectural styles that had been built before, such as front gables and side wing porches. That has to do with the traditional. The minimal part has to do with their ornamentation, there's very little decoration on those houses. If you look at the two examples, the one on Penelope is a great example of this. It was built in the 1940s and has more of a Craftsman feel to it. It's a little different than the property on Wall, but each is a great example of Minimal Traditional built during that decade.

Mr. Hutchinson asked Ms. Newcomer if there were any pictures of those houses in the packet. Ms. Newcomer stated that they are not there.

Nancy Alexander, resides at 706 North Main, asked if the homes at 437 North Wall and 401 North Main were built during the 1950s time frame. Ms. McDougal said the one on Penelope was built in the 1940s and Wall was built in the 1950s.

Mr. Guess made a motion to recommend the Central Belton Historic District to City as proposed. Mr. Stumberg seconded the motion and it was approved with 3 ayes, 0 nays.

**7. Z-12-30 Hold a public hearing and consider an historic district designation for North Central Belton Historic District.**

Ms. Newcomer presented the Staff report to the Commission.

Ms. McDougal stated that she would like to explain the change in the boundaries and why. The northern edge of the map, where there are newly built duplexes, is cut out. The duplexes are non-contributing and a big chunk in the middle of that area. They are non-contributing because of their age; however, they were built in a way that compliments the district. They were included in the district this time. The convenience store at the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Main is not included. At the periphery of a historic district, especially on a corner like this where you have a building that does not relate to the rest of the district and is visually divided from it, it is appropriate to exclude. You don't want to have a donut hole in the middle and I do not advocate saw tooth boundaries that staff did before in the previous historic district. It is difficult for the public to understand and for you to keep track of, and for you to sign and interpret. Not including this property is appropriate. No one is going to look at the gas station and ask why it isn't a part of the historic district. The other difference is the area west of Main Street on the northern part of the previous historic district and many people thought it was part of the West Belton Historic District which it was not. Staff elected not to include it here for a couple reasons. The homes shown with the "L" are eligible for landmark status. There are a couple buildings that are contributing but not super strong. They haven't had a lot of exterior alterations, but aren't good examples of their architectural style. Rather than extend the historic district over, staff elected to draw a line down along the east side of Main Street. You could choose to accept this with revised boundaries if you wish to include those, but I don't think it's necessary or helpful in this case.

Mr. Hutchinson asked who is going to be confused by that boundary.

Ms. McDougal stated a lot of people were confused previously, both at the city level and in the public. It's a little different now that the rest of West Belton is not in a historic district, but having that Main Street boundary is necessary because people didn't associate that area with this part of the city. Instead they associated it with the West Belton neighborhood. It can be told at this point if that would be confusing now that the rest of the West Belton is not designated.

Mr. Guess asked if there is any University owned properties in that area that Ms. McDougal was referring to. Ms. McDougal stated she would have to check on that.

Mr. Stumberg asked if someone can come in on an adjoining block and have that area included in the historic district. He also asked if staff would have to go back to everyone in the entire district and if that area would be included in an existing district or would they be a district by themselves.

Ms. McDougal stated that when staff surveyed property owners, staff did not include this area. If the commission would like to include the properties in the historic district, the district will need to go back out and have everyone surveyed. This area may be re-surveyed and since National Registry guidelines are utilized as the basis of the City of Belton guidelines, she suggests the City continue to follow that for guidance. If a group like this wanted to be added to it, you would bring forward that request, but you would have to re-poll all of the property owners in the historic district that has already been designated. Those properties can then be added to that district.

Mr. Guess made a motion to recommend the North Central Belton Historic District to City as proposed. Mr. Stumberg seconded the motion and it was approved with 3 ayes, 0 nays.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:48 PM.

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Chair, Historic Preservation Commission