

Architectural Review Committee  
June 13, 2016

Present: George Ewing, Bettye King, Melanie Greer

City Officials: Roy Edwards, Community Development

Guest(s): Ronnie Morton, Chris Hoffman, Aimee Hudson, David Stevens, Patricia Whitton, Johnny Ruth Hudson, Mr. & Mrs. Ryan Theel

Minutes recorded by Kelly Hall, Administrative Assistant

George Ewing called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

Minutes of the meeting held February 8, 2016 were unavailable at this time, so review of the minutes was deferred until the next meeting.

**New Considerations:**

**307 E. College Street – Dimensional Variance – Ronnie Morton**

Ronnie Morton, an attorney, is requesting three dimensional variances so that he can operate his estate planning and elder law practice at this location. He is one of two certified elder law attorneys in the State of Mississippi. He has five people who will be working in the office and generally sees 1-3 clients per day at most. The first variance is a 20' foot variance on the lot width from 100' to 80'. He plans to add less than 2,000 sf to the present parking area in the rear of the property. The existing garage will be used for handicapped parking to meet ADA requirements. The path from the garage to the rear porch will be paved and a wheelchair ramp will be installed leading to the relocated rear entrance. The landing between the first section of the ramp and the second section will be large enough to permit wheelchairs to maneuver easily. He is requesting to expand the existing crushed limestone parking instead of using asphalt or concrete. This will make it easier to reclaim the area should the use be returned to residential in the future. No changes to the south, east or west sides of the home are planned. Mr. Morton is, however, requesting a sign in the front yard similar to the sign that was approved for Runnels Insurance on the same street.

On the west side of the house there is a portico over the drive that extends 12' from the house. 20' is the required side setback and a 4.5' variance is needed so as not to remove the portico. Fencing is also required and Mr. Morton indicated he would put up whatever type of fence is acceptable to the property owners who are adjacent to this property. It was noted that there is currently a thick buffer area of vegetation along the edge of the property and the act of putting up a fence could result in removal in some of this vegetation.

Aimee Hudson, of 305 E. College Street, feels that approval of this use will begin a domino effect on this street and increase the number of commercial properties, which will increase traffic on an already busy street. Also, the amount of water runoff from the parking area will increase if

it is paved. She noted that while Olde Towne on the west side of the Clinton Parkway is a combination of commercial and residential properties, the east side of the Clinton Parkway is primarily residential.

David Stevens, a local realtor, was asked by Mr. Morton to assess the impact of commercial properties on the residential properties in Olde Towne. He presented a list of properties bought and sold in the Olde Towne Clinton district since 2010 and noted that there were several properties that transitioned from residential to commercial and back again with no apparent loss in property value.

Johnny Ruth Hudson noted that East College Street is also a federally approved historic residential district. Anne Macke, who was not able to attend this meeting, is knowledgeable about the process they went through to obtain this designation. She sent a letter to the City and Mr. Edwards has not yet had an opportunity to discuss this with her. Mr. Edwards informed the commission that he had contacted the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and was told that use of structure is not usually dictated and would be a local decision. Mrs. King asked if it would be possible to get something in writing from either the city attorney or the Mississippi Department of Archives and History as to placement of commercial businesses in a historic residential district.

Patricia Whitton, also a local realtor, stated that she has a family who would like to buy 307 E. College Street as a residence if the variances requested are not approved. Mr. & Mrs. Ryan Theel are ready to purchase the property to use as their primary residence. Ms. Greer reminded the commission that the voting is to be done only on the dimensional variance requests, not on the use of structure. Melanie Greer moved to recommend approval of the 4.5' variance related to the portico on the west side of the house. The motion was seconded by Betty King and the vote was unanimous in favor. Betty King moved to recommend approval of the 20' dimensional variance request related to the frontage on East College Street but the motion died for lack of a second. Betty King moved to recommend approval of the use of crushed limestone in the parking area instead of asphalt or concrete. The motion died for lack of a second. Betty King moved to recommend approval of the changes to be made on the rear of the house and was seconded by Melanie Greer. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

**Other Business:**

There was no other business to come before the Committee.

Mr. Ewing noted that the next regular meeting, if needed, would be scheduled for Monday, July 11, 2016.

At this time Betty King made the motion, seconded by Melanie Griffin, to adjourn the meeting. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 5:59 p.m.