



Naples Historical Society

DATE: August 24, 2018

TO: Bill Barnett, Naples Mayor
Members of Naples City Council

cc: Bill Moss, City Manager
Roger Reinke, Assistant City Manager
Robin Singer, Planning Director
Craig Mole, Building Official
Christa Carrera, Floodplain Coordinator

FROM: Elaine L. Reed, Naples Historical Society, Inc.

Good Afternoon:

On July 27, 2018, I notified City staff about a decision the Society made with regard to the Naples Historic District Initiative. This is the same note, for the record.

As you know, Naples Historical Society has taken a lead position to address historic preservation and rehabilitation in the Naples Historic District for the last several years. The discovery of how it works, all of it, has been an intellectual exercise that has been good for everyone.

Over the course of the last two years, we advocated the value of a local program for Naples rather than "going to SHPO" for design review of modifications to historic structures. Admittedly, there are benefits both ways.

With significant re-evaluation and after a series of discussions with architects and other members of the "homeowner team," including homeowners themselves, we have come to this conclusion: Going to the State Historic Preservation Office for design review is better than endeavoring for and maintaining a Certified Local Government supervised historic preservation program.

Going to SHPO is the most reasonable option because of the following:

1. SHPO's design review turn-around time has often been less than 30 days that saves time and money for the homeowner;
2. The process of presenting design plans to SHPO is considered to be less complicated than preparing an in-person presentation for a 7-member DRB review;

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 201, Naples, FL 34106
Phone: (239) 261-8164

Location: 137 12th Avenue South, Naples, FL 34102
Fax: (239) 435-1438

www.NaplesHistoricalSociety.org

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3. The likelihood of pushing the envelope or designating historic structures out of the District are better handled by the State of Florida*;
4. The composition of the DRB will always be an issue, whereas it is not a at the State;
5. There is no City staff administrative time by going to the State, whereas there would be significantly more time with a CLG, and this means that going to SHPO will reduce the amount of time and money allocated by the City;
6. Going to SHPO allows the Society to spend time on rehab projects, meeting with owners and real estate professionals and architects, rather than on local program building or maintenance;
7. SHPO's review has been expeditious and fair;
8. The long-term evolution of some DRBs we have studied have begun to deviate from the original purpose, which is to keep things simple, and our thinking is long-term.

The end goal for everyone is to preserve or rehabilitate houses when an interested homeowner is compelled to do so; we can achieve that right now by going to SHPO. Mr. Moss, you specifically asked about this when you, Robin and I met in your conference room in May. A local program is appealing in that the program is locally controlled, but we've reconsidered the ease with which going to SHPO presents. There was no one we spoke with in our discussions who rejected this notion; in fact, they were unanimous that SHPO is fine, and that confirmed our thinking.

This topic was going to be on the City's agenda for August, but we'd like to remove that item. We respectfully ask for your agreement to continue to go to the State. It's effective, and the Society can still do good work in the Naples Historic District (and guide those interested in preservation out of the District).

Thank you, each of you, for your belief in the value of preservation. I especially wish to thank Council Member Penniman; she was a steadfast supporter during our early discoveries and for advocating our original position.

There is no doubt that the Naples Historic District and preservation are becoming important conversations in Naples these days; the awareness of the District is the biggest win for the community. The Society is committed to continuing its role in creating awareness of preservation and shepherding projects through as is needed.

Your call or reply is welcome at any time. Thank you.

Sincerely,


Elaine L. Reed

President & CEO

Naples Historical Society, Inc.

*There is one homeowner in Lake Park who is interested in individual acknowledgement and rehabilitation; it is likely that more will follow.