

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

Regular Historic Architectural Review Board Meeting
March 20, 2003

The Historic Architectural Review Board met in formal session at 2:00 P.M., Thursday, March 20, 2003 in The Alcazar Room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Peter Rumpel, and the following were present:

1. ROLL CALL

Peter Rumpel, Vice-Chairman
Roy Barnes
Sally Ann Freeman

Excused: Dana Ste. Claire
Absent: Henry Whetstone

City Staff: James Wilson, City Attorney
Mark Knight, Director, Planning and Building Department
David Birchim, Senior Planner
Pam Halterman, Recording Secretary

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
(February 20, 2003 regular meeting)

MOTION

Mr. Barnes moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Ms. Freeman seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

3. CERTIFICATE OF
APPROPRIATENESS

Item 3(a) 2003-0117

Anthony Bushell

Bank of America

60 Cathedral Place

To replace windows with a door on a ticket booth.

Anthony Bushell, 135 Marine Street was sworn in. He stated that the booth had been

rented from the Bank of American, which owned the property. He noted that the location was 60 Cathedral Place, however, the building fronted on St. George Street. He explained that they operated the booth as a sales and advertising area for their businesses. He noted that the proposal included the replacement of a window on the east side of the building with a fifteen light French door similar in style and color to the present door on the south side of the building. He explained that the present entrance of the building was not easily seen and was often blocked by standing people. He added that installation of the door on the east side would allow much visibility and more public accessibility. He submitted photographs of the area to the board members.

Mr. Rumpel opened the public hearing but there was no response from the public.

Mr. Rumpel questioned whether the present door would remain on the structure.

Mr. Bushell indicated that they would keep the door if allowed, although it would seem out of place if removed.

Mr. Rumpel asked if the window area previously held a public notice board.

Mr. Bushell noted that the window area was previously an ATM machine location. He stated that they would no longer include the public notice board and would change the signage above the area.

Ms. Freeman questioned whether they would install a single door or a French door.

Mr. Bushell advised that they planned to install a single fifteen-light door.

Ms. Freeman stated that the building was not historic and the door appeared to be appropriate.

MOTION

Mr. Barnes moved to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Freeman seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Item 3(b) 2003-0179

John Daniels

Historical Society of St. Augustine

271 Charlotte Street

To install a ticket booth, a coin box and signage with a corporate logo.

Mr. Rumpel asked that a representative approach the podium, however, there was no response.

Mr. Knight suggested that Item 3B be moved to the end of the agenda.

** see page 13 for motion on Item 3B.

Item 3(c) 2003-0164

Cathedral Parish School

Diocese of St. Augustine

259 St. George Street

To remove playground equipment and replace with new playground equipment.

Nancy Knox, 3632 Lone Wolf Trail, St. Augustine was sworn in. She stated that the plan included the replacement of the swing set and adding three new pieces of equipment.

Mr. Rumpel opened the public hearing but there was no response from the public.

Ms. Knox noted that all the equipment would be painted forest green.

MOTION

Ms. Freeman moved to approve the application as submitted. Mr. Barnes seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Item 3(d) 2003-0165

Marcela C. Knight

David Gamsey

72 Spanish Street

To approve sign colors and fonts.

Andy Knight, 1356 CR 13 South, St. Augustine, was sworn in. He stated that the sign would be installed to an existing hanger.

Mr. Rumpel opened the public hearing but there was no response from the public.

Ms. Freeman asked if the City required the signage to be rectangular shaped.

Mr. Birchim directed attention to the staff report, which indicated that an oval shape would be appropriate according to AGHP guidelines.

Mr. Rumpel noted that the City required specific lettering for signage, although the proposed letter did not adhere to that requirement. He asked the applicant if he was aware of the lettering requirements.

Mr. Andy Knight stated that he was aware that a requirement existed, however, not the details of that requirement. He was advised by staff that the proposed lettering was clear and easy to read, although it would require board approval.

Mr. Birchim noted that the City had a variety of pre-approved fonts and colors that applicants could choose from. He explained that if an applicant chose a font or color not listed as pre-approved, they would be required to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the board.

Mr. Rumpel noted that the simplest thing would be to use the pre-approved fonts and colors. He suggested that the proposed signage appeared contemporary in style, although it worked reasonable well. He stated that the applicant could choose a pre-approved font, which would also remain within the character of the sign ordinance.

Mr. Andy Knight informed the board that they had the signage drawn up and felt that it would work well in the downtown area.

Mr. Barnes asked staff if the curve in the lettering could remain if the applicant used an approved font.

Mr. Birchim advised that simple graphics were allowed. He directed attention to page four of the boards' packet and noted that it listed appropriate signage shapes, which included oval shaped signs. He noted that the applicant was before the board that day to talk about fonts and colors and he reiterated that the size and shape of the signage appeared appropriate.

Ms. Freeman commented that the logo design was appropriate for a sports bar, but the lettering would need to be changed to comply with the historic area.

Mr. Rumpel advised that the board could table the application to allow additional time in which the applicant could review pre-approved fonts.

Mr. Mark Knight advised that the navy blue color was not listed as a pre-approved color, thereby requiring an approval from the board.

Mr. Rumpel stated that the navy blue color appeared to be appropriate.

Mr. Knight advised that the board could separate the font and color issue into two items.

MOTION

Ms. Freeman moved to approve the proposed colors on the signage, however, tabled the font portion of the application until April 17th, 2003. Mr. Barnes seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Item 3(e) 2003-0180
Elaine H. Darnold

Mr. & Mrs. James Zimmerman
3 Palm Row
To approve a wall.

Edith Hurst, 3 Palm Row was sworn in.

Mr. Rumpel opened the public hearing but there was no response from the public.

Mr. Rumpel questioned if the house was white with horizontal siding and asked if any brick was incorporated into the design.

Ms. Hurst confirmed that the house was white with horizontal siding and that the foundation was on brick piers along with brick steps, walkways and landings.

Mr. Rumpel asked if the applicant intended to match the brick on the wall to the brick currently installed on the property.

Ms. Hurst affirmed that to be correct.

Mr. Rumpel asked if stucco existed on the house.

Ms. Hurst noted that the house did not include stucco.

Ms. Freeman questioned whether the wall would be for privacy for the swimming pool area.

Ms. Hurst advised that the stucco wall would provide privacy along with being non-climbable for the pool area and more as a sound barrier than a wooden fence.

MOTION

Mr. Barnes moved to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Freeman seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. CERTIFICATE OF
APPROPRIATENESS/
CERTIFICATE OF DEMOLITION

Item 4(a) 2003-0085

Kenneth P. Meiring

76 Spanish Street

To remove the rear of a building and construct a new residential addition in the same area, remove an enclosed front porch and construct a screened porch.

Kenneth P. Meiring, 1715 Lakeside Avenue #5, was sworn in. He stated that at the previous HARB meeting they had submitted plans to demolish a portion of the rear structure of the house due to its deteriorated condition. He explained that the request involved converting an enclosed porch into a screened porch, however, they would withdraw that request and keep the porch at its present condition. He added that they would also withdraw the installation of a dormer over the existing roof. He noted that the board had requested additional information with regard to landscaping, windows and light fixtures. He stated that they had submitted a photograph of the north elevation, which showed the existing windows and shutters that they intended to duplicate. He noted that the new landscaping plan indicated two brick parking spaces, which would remain and they would install brick over a concrete walkway with sod over the sand areas.

Mr. Rumpel noted that it would have been helpful if that information had been included with the packet.

Mr. Barnes questioned whether staff had an opinion regarding the changes to the plans.

Mr. Birchim advised that staff received the changes two days earlier and had not been given a chance to review the newly submitted information. He stated that he had spoken to the applicant while in the Planning and Zoning Department and he was assured that the applicant had addressed all the boards' concerns.

Mr. Meiring stated that the board had requested details regarding the railings and had included with the packet a photograph of the railings installed on a house located "down the street", which they planned to use.

Mr. Rumpel opened the public hearing but there was no response from the public.

Mr. Rumpel suggested that the board had much additional information offered, which staff had not been given the chance to review, and the application should be a request for an Opinion of Appropriateness not for a Certificate due to the lateness of the submitted documents. He noted that the general intent was much improved, but he was unaware of the specifics involved.

Mr. Meiring reiterated that the board was concerned that one would be able to view the proposed spa through the open railings.

Mr. Rumpel noted that the railings could work, but needed to be reviewed as to whether the style of railing would be appropriate.

Ms. Freeman agreed that it should be an Opinion of Appropriateness application.

Mr. Meiring noted that they had attempted to simplify the boards' decision-making process by removing certain items of the application.

Mr. Rumpel indicated that it would be appropriate to approve the application as an Opinion of Appropriateness. He suggested that it would allow the owner time to consider the final details and allow staff to review the newly submitted documents.

Ms. Freeman suggested that the idea to open the front porch was good.

Mr. Rumpel agreed that the board had not objected to that request.

Mr. Meiring articulated that he was not the owner of the property. He explained that the owner, George Arnold, had asked him to simplify the application by removing the dormer and keeping the porch enclosed.

Ms. Freeman asked the applicant to clarify the brick work.

Mr. Meiring stated that the existing brick work would be removed and replaced with old brick in the pattern depicted on the submitted photograph along with the installation of brick over the existing concrete walkway at the same level.

Ms. Freeman suggested that the applicant plant additional trees on the property. She directed attention to the photograph and questioned the sidewalk size compared to (inaudible).

Mr. Meiring reiterated that the owner preferred to leave the porch as it was currently. He offered to approach the owner with the board's request to change the porch to a screened porch.

MOTION

Ms. Freeman moved to table the application until the April 17th HARB meeting with the recommendation that the owner give more consideration to the screened porch on the front of the structure along with additional landscaping to help soften the facade.

Mr. Meiring questioned whether the board had other concerns that they would like to state.

Ms. Freeman stated that she agreed with Mr. Rumpel concerning the balcony and visibility through the railings.

Mr. Rumpel noted that the balcony seemed out of place with the rest of the building, although adding railing to other parts of the structure might help the appearance.

Mr. Barnes seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Rumpel advised that he had received a request to hear Item #6A prior to Item 5A.

**see page 13 for motion on Item 6A.

5. CERTIFICATE OF DEMOLITION

Item 5(a) 2003-0150

Emily Alexander

Douglas Schull

1 Radio Road

To demolish the structure.

Steve Alexander, representative for Emily Alexander stated that Ms. Alexander had purchased the property in January 2003. He noted that the previous owner had informed them that the building was constructed in 1936.

Mr. Rumpel opened the hearing to public comments.

Sandra Parks, 9 N. St. Augustine Boulevard was sworn in. She stated that the building was not historic and any restrictions that would prevent the owner from moving forward with their project would be a hardship. Although, the building did not offer great historical merit, she stated that it was architecturally unique and was the only structure of its kind in St. Augustine. She asked the board to consider delaying the demolition permit for sixty days to allow citizens the opportunity to find a way to move the structure to another location. She stated that she realized the structure might not be in any condition to be moved.

William Adams, 1128 Coastal Highway, Director of Heritage Tourism for the City of St. Augustine, was sworn in. He explained that the building was not listed on the National Site File and had "slipped through the cracks" during surveys conducted in 1978 – 81 and 1998. He informed the board that the building was constructed in 1936 and was dedicated with the participation of then Governor Fred Cone in February 1937. He added that it was built by a former Mayor of St. Augustine, Walter Frazier, as a radio station and had remained in use as such every since.

Mr. Birchim asked Dr. Adams to clarify the architectural style of the building.

Dr. Adams stated that he had not examined the building, therefore, he could not vouch for the materials used to construct the building. He noted that the style was a framed vernacular with a stucco coating.

Douglas Shull, 9 Contera Drive was sworn in. He stated that the condition of the building ranged from deplorable to miserable. He explained that the building had housed a radio station since 1936. He noted that much inside remodeling had taken place over the many years and was not in good condition on the interior. He added that central air and heating did not exist and the building had been heated by two propane heaters during the winter. He advised that he had moved WFOY radio station out of the building one month earlier.

Mr. Rumpel asked what attempts had been made in order to move or relocate the building.

Mr. Alexander stated that two efforts were currently being made, one involved John Frazier and his children, which resulted in no interest from that family. He noted that the second attempt included communications with William Abare, President of Flagler College. He noted that the college was interested in the building, however, Mr. Shull had investigated the cost to move the structure and had received a figure of approximately \$40,000.00. He advised that Mr. Abare showed some interest, but the cost to relocate the building might create a funding problem for the college. He added that the radio station for Flagler College remained in the building until their lease expired in June 2003. He summarized that if someone did not come forward with the funds to relocate the building, they had no choice but to demolition the structure.

Mr. Rumpel asked if Flagler College had been searching for another location for their radio station.

Mr. Alexander affirmed that the college was presently searching for a new location and had possibly found an area west of town.

Ms. Freeman asked Mr. Alexander to clarify the cost to move the building.

Mr. Rumpel asked if the building's floor system consisted of a slab on grade.

Mr. Shull affirmed that the building was poured concrete with a concrete slab and no crawl space. He noted that Mr. Frazier had requested the appraisal and was told that it would cost \$40,000.00 to move the building 300 feet to the west on the Fountain of Youth property.

Mr. Rumpel commented that the construction of the structure made it difficult and more costly to move. He questioned whether the future plans for the property included condominiums and if a timeframe existed for its completion.

Mr. Alexander affirmed that the plans involved condominiums and the owner would like to begin the construction at the start of 2004. He added that the earliest start would be July 1st, due to the lease with Flagler College radio. He commented that the board could add a waiting period of six months to the approval of the demolition certificate and they would remain open to any offers to move the building during that time.

Mr. Rumpel questioned whether the building had received enough public advertising to make citizens aware of the situation. He questioned whether it would be a hardship for the owner to wait a year for the permit to demolish the structure.

Dr. Adams suggested that the only sure way to preserve a property would be to purchase the property and place it into public ownership. He noted that it was very difficult to legislate preservation and he felt that the board would not desire to cause a hardship to the owner of the property by placing the building in question into the public domain and preserving it at all cost. He advised that the City of St. Augustine had not mandated an agreement between the State Historic Preservation Office, nor was there a reason to have that agreement. He noted that the City of Jacksonville had a memorandum agreement with the State Preservation Office, therefore, when a building was demolished that was judged to consist of historic or architecture significance, the City assured that the building was documented, historically, architecturally and photographically before it was destroyed, thereby, preserving a record of how the building contributed to the City. He urged the owner to complete the documentation and asked the board to consider adding that requirement to demolition permits.

Ms. Freeman declared ex-parte communications regarding a letter and package from David Nolan, which she requested staff to furnish copies to the other members of the board. She indicated that the letter mentioned visitors to the radio building such as Ray Charles and Rev. Billy Graham. She commented that the building might not be architecturally important, however, it was important from the emotional standpoint. She suggested that Ms. Alexander place the building into use for the condominiums owners as public space.

Mr. Rumpel clarified that the owner would need to remove the building, because the

structure was located in the middle of the property.

A discussion ensued regarding the placement of the structure and it was determined that it would need to be removed prior to any construction on the property.

Mr. Alexander reiterated the condition of the interior of the building and its dilapidated state. He noted that the place was in shambles. He stated that they would agree to a stipulation of waiting 180 days to allow a non-profit organization or anyone time to remove the building. He noted that the owner would donate the building to anyone that showed interest in moving the structure to another location.

Mr. Rumpel advised that the previous demolition Code allow a six month waiting period and that the Code had changed the requirement of a twelve month waiting period if a denial was handed down by the board. He stated that the buildings' architecture was unique in many respects. He suggested that if the board denied the demolition, then it would be incumbent upon the owner to locate a person to move the structure, and he felt that it was not much of a hardship to the owner.

Mr. Alexander stated that if the board denied the application, he would need to withdraw the offer to wait six months and be forced to appeal to the City Commission. He noted that staff gave a favorable recommendation and no architectural significance existed with the structure. He reiterated that the building was a disgrace.

Mr. Rumpel noted that the applicant might or might not succeed with an appeal. He suggested that it would be difficult to find someone within six month to donate the

building to, but it would depend upon how diligent the owner was in their attempts.

Mr. Alexander asked the City attorney what requirements were placed on the owner to aid in donating a structure.

Mr. Wilson advised that no requirements existed in the City Code. He explained that the waiting period allowed HARB to develop a plan in conjunction with others in an attempt to salvage the property, although, the property owners could be part of that attempt.

Mr. Alexander reiterated that they had offered to wait six months prior to obtaining the permit to demolish the building.

Mr. Barnes suggested that the board not hold up the property owner. He noted that he liked Dr. Adams' suggestion regarding the documentation of a building prior to its demolition, thereby, retaining the knowledge and history of the structure. He stated that as a business matter to not allow the demolition would put more drain on the system. He commented that he would be in favor of allowing the applicant the demolition permit with a waiting period of six months.

Mr. Rumpel asked if the board would be allowed to set a timeframe as a condition of their approval.

Mr. Wilson affirmed that to be correct and said the purpose of the Code was to allow time to salvage the structure if possible.

Mr. Rumpel suggested that an eight month waiting period be a condition of the approval from the board.

Mr. Alexander commented that he would agree to that stipulation.

MOTION

Mr. Barnes moved to approve the application with the condition that a demolition permit was not obtained for eight months and the owner would actively pursue the relocation of the structure.

Mr. Alexander stated that they would install a sign at the property to inform the public of the buildings availability along with advertising the structure on WFOY and WAOC radio stations.

Ms. Freeman commented that there should be some way to retain the building and its memories for the community and she hoped the Alexander's would make every effort for its relocation.

Mr. Alexander reiterated that Flagler College had not completely rejected the idea of keeping the building for their radio station.

Ms. Freeman seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Item 5(b) 2003-0153

Ronald D. Mickler

31, 33, 34 Spanish Street

To demolish 31 Spanish Street, to move the house at 34 Spanish Street to the rear of the lot and move the house at 33 Spanish Street to the front of the property at 34 Spanish Street.

Ronald D. Mickler, 30 Spanish Street was sworn in. He stated that the plans involved building a Spanish style home on the lot currently occupied by the building referred to as 31 Spanish Street. He noted that the plans involved moving the building at 34

Spanish Street to the rear of the property, thereby, allowing room to move the building at 33 Spanish Street across the street to the front of the same lot. He added that the house at 31 Spanish Street was not historic and had been built in 1948 consisting of concrete block material. He articulated that 33 and 34 Spanish Street structures were built in the 1880's.

Mr. Rumpel opened the public hearing but there was no response from the public.

Ms. Freeman asked the applicant if he was aware that by moving the houses, they would be stricken from the National Historic list.

Mr. Mickler stated that he was not aware that they were on a historic list.

Mr. Birchim advised that those buildings would become non-contributing properties until one reapplied for contributing status on the National Register list.

Mr. Rumpel stated that architectural historic value did not exist with the building marked for demolition and it would be a large asset to the area if it were removed.

MOTION

Mr. Barnes moved to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Freeman seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Item 5(c) 2003-0197

Jayesh Patel

231 San Marco Avenue

To demolish the structure.

Ron Flick, representative for Compass Group, 231 San Marco Avenue was sworn in. He stated that the structure was built in 1951 with little architectural style, consisting of slab on grade block frame. He explained that with the wear and tear on the building over the years it would require much repair to create the structure as an economical building. He stated that the building could not be franchised because of the current condition of the structure.

Mr. Rumpel opened the hearing to public comments.

Gina Burrell, 27 Seminole Drive was sworn in. She stated that she had visited the St. Johns County Property Appraisers' office and discovered that two structures marked for demolition were built in 1927, five structures built in 1932 and two additional structures built in 1951. She noted that the square footage measured 11,774. She said the structures were much older than what was calculated. She suggested that the demolition permit should be denied to allow the applicant to remodel the structures on the property. She referred to the Cozy Inn, which had been remodeled and brought up to current standards. She commented that she was surprised that the City had not obtained the information regarding the age of the buildings. She added that a three-story building would not be appropriate in a residential neighborhood.

Mr. Rumpel closed the public portion of the meeting.

Ms. Freeman disclosed ex-parte communications with Gina Burrell.

Mr. Birchim advised that he had asked Dr. Adams to speak to the members of the board regarding the structures on the property,

because they were not listed on the Master Site File.

Dr. Adams stated that he had visited the Historical Society to review documents concerning the age of the buildings. He noted that the buildings were constructed in 1938/1939 and it was very possible that those buildings had been demolished and the current facility was rebuilt in 1951 or 1952. He commented that he had attempted to contact residents that had lived in the area during that time, but to no avail. He acknowledged that the county had provided a list of buildings constructed between 1930 and 1951 during the 1998 survey he had completed. He noted that the structures were omitted from the list at that time, therefore, he suggested that the county records should not be judged as accurate. He added that the building did not possess any particular definable style, just simply vernacular.

Mr. Birchim directed attention to the submitted photographs and noted that three sets of buildings existed on the property with one built of masonry and in the rear, two framed buildings, which were used as apartment houses, although currently vacant.

Mr. Rumpel suggested that the framed buildings might be the oldest structures on the property.

Mr. Flick stated that during acquisition with the current owner they used the dates of the buildings as indicated by staff. He advised that the two rear buildings drew much attention from the public, because the residents had suggested removal due to their close proximity to the residential area. He explained that it was very difficult to convert an older masonry building into current standards. He suggested that

economically, it would be an extreme hardship to the owner along with the possibility of losing a large count of rooms for the hotel. He added that the owners' intent had been to preserve as many trees as possible, which the owner had accomplished by manipulating the building design and parking plans. He referred to the height of the proposed building and noted that the FSDB structure was comparable in height and was located just to the south of the property. He added that the building to the east of the subject property was a two-story home or apartment complex. He summarized that to conserve the green space and amount of parking would involve the construction of a building at the thirty-five foot height limit and in compliance with the City's zoning ordinances.

Ms. Freeman commented that she would like to see the owner remodel the structure in the way that the Cozy Inn had completed their buildings. She noted that the area was a main entry corridor for the City and the City was attempting to preserve the area by ordinance. She stated that it was easier to tear everything down and start over. She questioned whether the owner would consider that alternative.

Mr. Flick advised that numerous feasibility studies had been completed and the owners had worked on the project for over eighteen months. He added that he was required to adapt many items in order to fit the franchise hotel into the St. Augustine environment such as the barrel tile and mansard style roof.

Mr. Rumpel noted that one issue with adaptation of current standards involved the flood plain. He stated that the only way to meet the flood plain would be to raise all the

buildings. He noted that the buildings consisted of minimal architectural value.

Ms. Freeman asked how the Cozy Inn had accomplished raising the buildings to the flood elevation.

Mr. Rumpel advised that at the time of the remodeling, the buildings were already at grade.

Ms. Freeman asked the applicant for the number of trees presently on the lot.

Mr. Flick stated that he could not offer a total number, however, they had saved seventy percent of the trees with only one larger tree being removed for construction. He articulated that the PZB had highly complimented the due diligence they had taken regarding preservation of trees on the property.

Mr. Rumpel commented that the remaining trees were the largest asset for the hotel. He noted that with the relationship of the parking and trees, it was very easy to lose trees unless properly designed.

Mr. Flick advised that their company took great pride in being able to save as many trees as possible with any construction project. He stated that the property would fit the value and quality of life that would be shared with resort visitors that came to St. Augustine.

Mr. Rumpel suggested that if the design involved a two-story complex, it would result in the demise of many more trees. He suggested that the structures, other than the two buildings located in the rear of the property, were probably constructed in the late 1930's or 1950's. He suggested that the design proposal be completed in a

sympathetic manner and related to the community. He suggested that the scalloped part of the front building was an interesting feature and he would like to see it incorporated into the new structure.

Ms. Freeman agreed with Mr. Rumpel regarding the scalloped feature.

Mr. Barnes disclosed ex-parte communication with Gina Burrell. He noted that Mr. Rumpel voiced a good point regarding the flood elevation, which was criteria forced on the owner. He added that the property was not located in the HP districts; therefore, the owner would not be required to follow those regulations. He reiterated that the businessman's right to use his property productively far out shadowed the hopes and wants of the public.

MOTION

Mr. Barnes moved to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Freeman seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Item 3B 2003-0179 continued;

Mr. Rumpel asked if the applicant for Item 3B had arrived.

Mr. Knight advised that the representative had not arrived and suggested that the board table the application. He noted that staff's recommendation had been to table the application due to the lack of information.

MOTION

Mr. Freeman moved to table the application until April 17, 2003 PZB meeting. Mr. Barnes seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
BY VOICE VOTE**

**6. HISTORIC PRESERVATION
PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION**

Item 6(a) 2003-0173

Leslee F. Keys

Virtu Cathedral Associates

24 Cathedral Place

To approve the completed work on the structure as part of the tax exemption process.

Leslee Keys, P.O. Box 457, St. Augustine, was sworn in. She indicated that part of the requirement for the tax exemption was that the minimum valuation must be \$20,000.00 or fifty percent of the assessed value, whichever was less. She stated that the owners had invested \$471,079.00 and of that amount \$130,000.00 went to the exterior repairs such as a new roof, painting, repairing the masonry and new door on the rear of the building along with security.

Mr. Rumpel opened the public hearing but there was no response from the public.

Mr. Rumpel commented that the completed work had enhanced the building and he was glad that it had occurred.

Ms. Keys suggested that the board members visit the lobby due to the enhanced beauty inside.

MOTION

Ms. Freeman moved to approve the application as submitted. Mr. Barnes seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**7. PLANNING AND BUILDING
DIRECTORS' REPORT**

There were no comments regarding the report.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Freeman suggested that the City Commission require owners to document historic properties prior to demolition. She noted that it would involve finding funds, however, it was necessary. She suggested that an ordinance be created for the City to purchase a property to save it from being demolished.

Mr. Wilson advised that State law allowed the City to condemn a property for historic purposes and place the property under public domain.

Ms. Freeman asked what was preventing the City from accomplishing that task.

Mr. Rumpel advised that the lack of funds was a large issue for the City.

Mr. Wilson agreed about the lack of funds along with the lack of willingness from the City Commission to purchase those structures along with having a use for the buildings. He noted that the Commission had not taken a chance in the past to acquire such properties.

Mr. Knight suggested that if a request to demolish a property came before the board and was denied, the board could forward a

recommendation to the City Commission to purchase the property.

Mr. Wilson advised that HARB was charged with reviewing a way to preserve or salvage a building through the City or other civic groups.

Ms. Freeman questioned whether an active group of citizens were currently attempting to raise money for the preservation of demolitions.

Mr. Wilson stated that he was not aware of any group currently handling that task.

Mr. Rumpel reiterated that Dr. Adams' remark to document structures was a good idea and noted that Jacksonville had begun that process with funding from the State. He questioned whether staff could include in an ordinance the requirement of documentation for owners on such properties prior to demolition.

Mr. Knight informed the board that staff had previously documented several buildings in the City. He noted that staff attempted to document significant structures, such as the Lion Building. He added that if the board desired more in-depth documentation, it would need to be on a case-by-case basis.

A discussion occurred regarding whether the board could direct an owner to complete the documentation of a structure prior to its demolition and it was determined that the board could place a condition with an approval for demolition to include the requirement of documentation of the structure by its owner.

Mr. Wilson advised that asking an owner to document the structure would be a reasonable request or condition. He

explained that the board could place a condition on an approval of demolition until the request was challenged in court. He noted that most people would not challenge the request due to the time and effort involved. He suggested that he could find justification in the ordinance to allow that request.

Ms. Freeman questioned whether the board could deny the application for demolition and still request that the owner document the structure.

Mr. Wilson stated that the board would not have that right to condition a denied application.

Mr. Knight explained that once an application was denied, generally, the owner would not be very delighted over the denial and attempting to gain access for documentation would be difficult because it involved private property.

Mr. Birchim suggested that a compromise could be reached between the board and the owner of the property regarding the documentation of a structure, just as it did with the previous application that came before the board that day.

Mr. Rumpel commented that the most important part of documentation would be measuring the entire building, which would require access to the structure.

Mr. Wilson suggested that a step could be added to the permit process that would include documentation of the structure, such as a requirement by submittal of a survey, photographs and dimensions, etc.

Mr. Rumpel and Ms. Freeman agreed that was a good suggestion.

MOTION

Ms. Freeman moved to direct staff to require the owner to include a minimum of two interior photographs, all sides of the outside building, height of the structure and a scaled drawing of the footprint of the building.

The motion lacked a second, however, board consensus was to include a step in the demolition process by requiring the owner of the structure to provide documentation to the board with their application for demolition.

NON-AGENDA ITEM

Ms. Freeman questioned when the building on the corner of Granada and Cedar Streets would be demolished.

Mr. Knight advised that the owner was currently waiting on the insurance company to complete the claim on the structure.

Ms. Freeman reiterated that the board approved the demolition because it was a public hazard.

Mr. Knight advised that the structure had been stabilized and cordoned off in order to protect the public.

9. REVIEW OF CONFLICT STATEMENTS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

None

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.

Peter Rumpel, Vice-Chairman

Pam Halterman, Recording Secretary