

City of Blanco
BLANCO HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

Monday, April 24, 2023

Byars Building, 308 Pecan Street, Blanco, Texas 78606

AGENDA

1. Chairperson Ryan Moses called the meeting to Order: 6:03pm
2. Roll Call/Quorum established:
Present: Ryan Moses, Wendy Cambridge, Hollis Boatright, Gail McClellan, Barnaby Cox. Not Present: Pamela Capps
Advisors Present: Retta Martin
3. No Announcements
4. No Public Comments

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Applications for new commissioners: Ryan has one complete application with a resume from Maria Mathis. Patty Haas has completed the application portion, but still needs to submit a resume. Ryan encouraged the community to submit applications with resumes because there may be openings after our City's election.
2. Ryan is preparing the BHPC Annual Report for the next City Council meeting.
3. Retta Martin suggested we establish a group of folks who want to get involved in specific projects and call it Friends of Blanco Historic Preservation Commission (For BHPC). Gail motioned to establish a committee called the Friends of Blanco Historic Preservation Commission. Barnaby seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Ryan agreed to give everyone present who is interested in becoming a member of the For BHPC his contact information and to organize the new group.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Minutes from March 27, 2023 were approved. Hollis motioned to approve minutes. Gail seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Discussion related to current projects and their status:
 - a. **Downtown Banners:** Ryan reported he continues his request of PEC (numerous times) that they remove old banners and install our new ones. PEC has not responded but he will continue contacting them.
 - b. **Trifold "Discover Historic Blanco" brochure:** Wendy – The final draft has been given to the printer, Debra Lee Cortez with INK Print Design. A small group of Commissioners will meet this week to look it over and discuss what changes are needed. It will then be sent back to the printer for updating.
 - c. **281 Overlay:** Brandon Melland with K. Friese & Associates, who designed the overlay, was available to answer any questions. There was a long discussion, but the final outcome was a motion by Ryan: The backbone overlay will not apply to the historic district and to have it removed from the 281 Overlay proposal. By doing so the existing UDC and Design Standards will continue to apply. The motion was seconded by Hollis and passed unanimously.
For more specifics regarding the lengthy discussion, see the recorded video.
 - d. **281 Relief Route:** Jo Nell Haas, Blanco County Historical Commissioner is actively seeking and documenting historic facts. Wendy is working with her. A community meeting was held upstairs in the courthouse for those with questions, pictures or documents that could be scanned for documentation, and it was filled to capacity. Jo Nell Haas and Kenneth Welch were MC's.
-Wendy has written a letter to TxDOT (as earlier requested) from the BHPC, basically mirroring what the county has asked for in regard to studies needing to be done. The difference is we are asking for 2 additional studies to be done: 1. Sound and traffic vibration studies. 2. Emissions study of pollutants due to increased traffic, and emissions expectations. Mayor Lumpee requested Wendy sign the letter and give it to Warren so the City will be sending it out. Warren requested Wendy send him the names and addresses of

those who are to be cc'd and he will email us when it is sent. Barnaby motioned to accept the letter written by Wendy and for the city to send it. Hollis seconded the motions. Motion passed unanimously. The letter was signed and given to Warren.

-Regarding historic tunnels under Blanco that may have been used over the years for various activities, one being slaves escaping and seeking freedom in Mexico, Ryan is asking folks who may have information about it. Jo Nell is also investigating an "underground railroad" for slaves seeking freedom and going through Blanco. All things Historic are absolutely essential to investigate and document.

e. **Projects on HOLD:**

Suggestion from Wendy to have the new committee, Friends of the Blanco Historic Preservation Commission, get involved with the various projects that are 'on hold'.

Projects are: CLG Survey and Inventory update; Historic Markers; Gateway; Portrait of Blanco; Blanco's 175 Anniversary Celebration; Possible museum location.

3. Warren: Request submitted by BHPC at October 31, 2022 meeting to City/Warren to correct the UDC signage infractions at Tenuta Bianco: Hill Country Wine, Texas Craft Beer" 312 Pecan. Gail questioned why there has not been any resolution, and Warren said the ally issue in the back has been resolved, but not the windows. Ryan suggested perhaps the police department could step in to resolve this outstanding violation. It was also decided that a letter should be written to the owner stating the violation.
4. Compensation plan/scale for Historic Preservation Officer: Ryan has developed a compensation scale, with the expectations of the HPO only doing COA reviews at this time.
Three funding ideas are: 1. The Mayor told Ryan there may be possible funding from hot funds. 2. To add the cost amount to our next budget. 3. Warren explained another option is for the city council to pass an additional fee for COA review that could cover the costs for said review. He also said there would be a council meeting on Wednesday and will talk with the mayor regarding hot funds. The annual amount discussed was \$1000.
After lengthy discussion Wendy motioned to approve the pay scale presented by Ryan with the condition that the HPO be qualified as identified in the UDC. Hollis seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
\$200 COA review including major construction or remodel of building.
\$100 COA review for minor construction, small remodel or addition.
\$ 50 COA review for new business sign or new business use.
5. Ryan wrote an official letter from BHPC to TxDOT regarding the construction already done on the 4 corners of 4th street and Pecan Street but did not add the drainage issue. It was agreed that Wendy will re-write the letter including the drainage issue and will send it to Ryan. Ryan motioned to have Wendy edit the letter, send it to Ryan for signatures and approvals. Barnaby seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Streetscape:
 - At a meeting on May 8, 6pm the architect will present the final designed renderings for Phase One for the Historic Square. The community is invited.
 - Part of Streetscapes master plan is the repair/replacement of the rock wall behind Cranberry's and have secured an engineer's study and plan for that portion.
 - Warren reported that the city does have that plan, but not the money to fix the rock wall. The Corp of Engineers is willing to come look at the wall. Together with the existing plan and the Corp of Engineers involvement, which may bring in the needed money to fix it. On Wednesday they will vote to authorize and move forward for the Corps of Engineers to look at the existing study Retta has talked about and then a possible grant. They will need councils, okay?
 - Money still may need to be raised.

A WORD BY CHAIRMAN:

Ryan read a letter of thanks from Wendy Cambridge stating she will not continue as a BHPC commissioner at the end of the current term. Her term expires at the end of May 2023, but she needs to leave a month early.

ADJOURNMENT: At 7:49pm Gail motioned to adjourn, Barnaby seconded, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Cambridge, Interim Secretary

Attachments:

- Proposed HPO Pay scale.
- Letter to TxDOT regarding 281 Construction.
- Letter to TxDOT regarding 281 Relief Route
- Wendy Cambridge letter of thanks

PROPOSED HPO Pay Scale
By Ryan Moses, April 24, 2023

\$200.00= COA for major new construction or remodel of building.

\$100.00= COA for minor construction, small remodel or addition.

\$50.00= COA for New Business sign or New Business Use.

May 4, 2023

To: Texas Department of Transportation,

We are the Blanco Historic Preservation Commission (BHPC) for the City of Blanco, Texas, and we are writing you to protest your actions AND determine the remedy for the street corner project you undertook in the City's Historic Town Square District in October of 2022. The project was located at the four intersections of 4th Street and Pecan Street and involved the new construction of stop signs and pedestrian friendly corners.

The BHPC, with the city's approval, has been working on a Streetscape design for our historic square. The design features include the sidewalks, street corners, lighting, parking, landscaping, etc. The Streetscape Committee (SC) was formed by the citizens and business owners of our community.

The SC has commissioned a Streetscape design by a San Antonio architectural firm, which is funded completely by private donations from the community, which was developed by the community and for the community. Much time, effort and money has gone into this project, and we believe that our design reflects the true voice of the people of Blanco.

As you know, all projects conducted in our Historic District are required to obtain approval from the BHPC, Streetscapes Committee, and the City, yet the approval for your project was not obtained through these channels for the 4th and Pecan Street project. We believe Texas state law and procedures governing historic districts were therefore violated.

As a result of your construction, the northeast section between the corners is completely covered in standing water when it rains. If you had sought the appropriate approval from BHPC, we would have shared the drainage study that has already been completed and our current safety issue would never have happened. We request you send us your drainage study performed and prepared before your construction is done.

First, you did not seek appropriate approvals.

Second, we must now deal with drainage and safety issues you have created.

Third, your design is not the design approved by our community and commission.

Fourth, at the very least that part of your project will need to be removed and reconstructed at great expense.

Fifth, and of significant concern is that you may have put our hard-earned Historic Designation in jeopardy.

We are asking you two questions:

1. What will be done to remedy this unapproved project?
2. What procedures will TxDOT implement to ensure that this does not happen again in Blanco or in any other Texas Historic District?

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter and your reply.

Sincerely,

Ryan Moses, Blanco Historic Preservation Commission Chairperson

CITY OF BLANCO

BLANCO HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

a Certified Local Government

RE: TxDOT 281 Expansion through the City of Blanco, TX

TO: Joseph Muck, P.E, Area Engineer, TxDOT
3029 E. SH 29, Burnet, TX 78611

As the wheels of the 281 Expansion through the Historic Downtown District of Blanco Texas continue to turn, the Blanco Historic Preservation Commission is requesting specific studies be performed and completed before ANY ACTION is taken which will further increase the flow of traffic down our Historic Main Street. Without a relief route constructed the integrity of our structures, our town's character, and our town itself are in jeopardy.

Over the years, with the increased traffic going through the heart of Blanco with its historic homes, buildings, structures, and downtown area, we have found (with great concern) that a number of issues are impacting our safety and the safety of our historic buildings, which can be dated as far back as the mid 1800's.

Our historic courthouse built in 1885 is just one of our Downtown Historic Districts structures recognized by the National Register of Historic Places. Others are the Conn Adrian Edwards house and the Cage Building, all on the 281 in our Historic District. These structures embody the feeling and spirit of Blanco and are recognized as "awe inspiring landmarks and an unequalled symbol of Texas history and American ingenuity." They are at risk of damage. Of course there are numerous structures along our Main Street, aka 281, that are at risk as well. The Methodist Church, recognized by the State of Texas as an historic landmark, was built in 1882 and is only one of many along 281.

The safety of our residents and our visitors is another priority and concern. The current 281 rating allows for oversized/extra wide semi-trucks to ramble through our downtown area, taking up all available lanes and often causing traffic congestion and confusion. All of the semi-trucks and additional traffic has and is causing extreme vibrations from both the sound they emit and the ground vibration. These same trucks have great trouble turning the corner at 4th Street and 281, often going over the curb, taking up the entire intersection, stopping traffic and endangering pedestrians and bicyclers.

We've only mentioned two concerns, there are many more. Current worries about one of the few authentic Historic Hill Country Towns will only multiply with the increase in traffic flow. What damage has been done over the previous years will only worsen.

We are talking about the future of our Town and preserving and protecting what all those early families and settlers built for us. Blanco is our heritage AND our future.

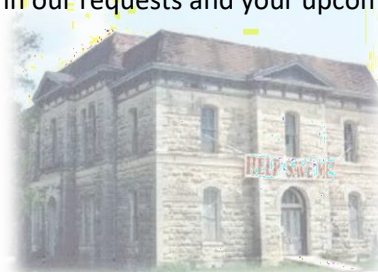
The BHPC is asking for the same studies that the County of Blanco has requested but specifically for the City of Blanco within its city limits boundaries. These studies to be performed, analyzed, completed and then shared to both our County government officials as well as our City officials.

In ADDITION to their studies, we also request 2 other studies: 1. Analysis of traffic noise impacts, to include a vibrations analysis of our historic structures. Those studies should identify a baseline of noise AND vibration levels, as well as projected levels based on increased traffic volumes. 2. Analysis of gas and diesel emission levels on our Main Street from 100's of vehicles daily. Between the sound and road vibrations our buildings and our residents will not hold up for future generations of residents or visitors.

Thank you for taking the time to read our requests and we most definitely look forward to hearing back from you at your earliest convenience, regarding your participation in our requests and your upcoming actions.

Please help us save Our Historic Blanco!

Sincerely,
Wendy Cambridge
Blanco Historic Preservation Commissioner



Cc: Troy Olney, Environmental Program Manager, TxDOT – Troy.Olney@txdot.gov
Ellen Troxclair, Texas House of Representative, District 19 – ellen@troxclair.com
Donna Campbell, Texas Senate, District 25 – donna.campbell@senate.texas.gov
Chip Roy, U.S. Representative, District 21 – 5900 Southwest Parkway, Bldg 5, Ste 520, Austin, TX 78735
John Cornyn, U.S. Senate – Chase Tower, 221 West Sixth Street, Ste 1530, Austin, TX 78701
Ted Cruz, U.S. Senate – central_texas@cruz.senate.gov
Tommy Weir, Blanco County Commissioner – tweir@co.blanco.tx.us
Emil Ray Uecker, Blanco County Commissioner – blcomm2@co.blanco.tx.us
Chris Liesmann, Blanco County Commissioner – blcomm3@co.blanco.tx.us
Charles Riley, Blanco County Commissioner – blcomm4@co.blanco.tx.us
Brett Bray, Blanco County Judge – cojudge@co.blanco.tx.us
Jo Nell Haas, Blanco County Historical Commissioner – jonellskids@yahoo.com
Ryan Moses, City of Blanco City Councilman – ryanmo36@gmail.com

April 24, 2023

LETTER OF THANKS

TO: My Fellow Commissioners, the City of Blanco and Friends:

What an honor it has been to serve as your Commissioner on the Blanco Historic Preservation Commission. As my term is expiring, I will be leaving the commission but not its purpose.

Over the last 3 years I have grown in my knowledge of Blanco's colorful and deep history, and with every story my appreciation for the pioneers who invested their lives into this City has grown as well as the people and families of our Town.

I hope you will allow me to continue my involvement in specific projects, in an effort of support for your extremely important mission. To Protect and Preserve our Historic Blanco.

Thank you for allowing me the amazing opportunity to work alongside you all.

Sincerely,

Wendy Cambridge