

M I N U T E S
ORMOND BEACH HISTORIC LANDMARK PRESERVATION BOARD
Workshop for the MacDonald House

January 23, 2017

4:00 PM

Ormond Beach City Hall
Commission Conference Room
22 South Beach Street
Ormond Beach, Florida

I. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Shapiro called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present

Robert Akam
Suzanne Heddy
Shannon Julien
Ellen Needham
Robert Selover
Robert Walsh
Dr. Philip Shapiro
Gordon Currie (excused)

Staff Present

Ann-Margaret Emery, Assistant City Attorney
Lauren Kornel, AICP, Senior Planner
Melanie Nagel, Recording Technician

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING

None.

V. WORKSHOP – 38 E. Granada Blvd. – MacDonald House Draft Historic Structure Summary Assessment – Presentation by Bender & Associates

Dr. Shapiro welcomed everyone to the MacDonald House workshop. He stated that following the presentation by Bender and Associates, he will then open the floor up to board member comments, followed by public comments.

Dr. Shapiro read a statement of introductory remarks, reflecting his opinion on the MacDonald House. He stated that this is not the first time that the City's Landmark Board has discussed the MacDonald House, but it is the first time in recent years that a city-sponsored independent assessment has been undertaken with regard to the history of the structure and to what remediations are needed to bring this historic structure into stable

condition. It has been the continuous position of this Landmarks Board that the MacDonald House be repaired, kept open for public usage and permanently remain in its present location. The MacDonald House is an historical, cultural and architectural icon located in the heart of downtown Ormond Beach, and is located among other historical and cultural structures, all of which are well utilized by the public, including the MacDonald House. The packet provided to us is the most comprehensive document ever produced by an independent source to verify the history, functions and structural status of the MacDonald House.

Dr. Shapiro then introduced Mr. Bert Bender, of Bender and Associates, for presentation of the MacDonald House. Mr. Bender introduced himself and stated that his firm is 41 years old and specializes in historic preservation. The core team includes Jim Miller, who is a PHD and historic preservation planner, and is an archeologist by trade, was the state archeologist for the state of Florida and is the historian who has conducted all of the research along with people in his organization. David Salay is a partner and architect in the firm Bender and Associates, and he has been deeply involved in the entire process.

Mr. Bender stated that the purpose of their report was to do an assessment of the MacDonald House to determine if it is in fact historically significant. Part of the presentation today will advise people of that and will provide evidence of the significance of the structure, to do a structural assessment of the building to determine if it is structurally sound. Mr. Bender stated that they have determined that the building is structurally sound and is in a condition that is recoverable and it has a lot of significance. Jim Miller will focus on the history of the structure, and then the meeting will be turned back over to Dr. Shapiro.

Mr. Jim Miller stated that he is a preservation planner and has been doing this sort of work since the 1960's. He was an archeologist for much of his career, and then went back to school to get his degree in planning, and now refers to himself as a heritage planner. In the MacDonald House report, Mr. Miller contributed the very early history that concerns some of the first land ownership, but the bulk of the report was written by an associate, Jonathan Lammers, who has worked as an architectural historian in San Francisco and has recently moved to Tallahassee. Mr. Lammers grew up in Ormond Beach and is very familiar with the local context, so the benefit of his knowledge is included in the report.

Mr. Miller stated that the architectural section contains a lot of images as historic context as part of the 30% submittal report, but since that time the 60% submittal has been completed. There are two stages of the research – the first 30% being materials that had been gathered very quickly, and the second stage at 60% which represents a very complete story and history of the MacDonald House. There were a lot of surprises that were revealed during research, and comparing to past accounts of the history. Mr. Miller stated that nowadays it is possible to search 100 newspapers in 30 seconds and find every mention of the MacDonald House that might exist. So, the story changes very, very rapidly, and there is a better understanding than we had in the past.

Mr. Miller started with the geography of the area, focusing on the MacDonald House, Billy's Tap Room, and the Casements. The story starts in 1845 and is taken through 1997, and Mr. Miller reviewed the history of the land, the people, the buildings, the

purchase of the MacDonald House by the City, and the restoration that was done in 1997. This house is in one of the most significant locations on the beach side of downtown, the owner of the house played a principle part in the social and economic network that made the hotel work, one of the area's principle architects applied his signature style to the building, and in general it can now be documented that this house is a key piece of Ormond Beach history. It is actually a centerpiece to the history of the City and exemplifies many of the very significant features of the architecture of this area, as well as the principle people and economy.

Mr. Bender stated that it is extremely significant to note that the building is significant based on its location, its association with significant figures from Ormond Beach, its relationship to the Casements and Billy's Tap Room, and its association with a lot of things going on in the community. One of the things that makes it historically significant to architects is that it retains much of its original characteristics. Modifications have been made; windows have been changed out, alterations to the building have been made, the chimney is missing although the fireplace is still visible inside, the porch has been enclosed and enlarged, and there is a basement in the home.

Mr. David Salay stated that the bay on the west side of the house contains the entrance to the 2nd and 3rd floors, which proves the home was used as a boarding house and these probably served as a separate entrance to the upper floors. Mrs. Stout would have had her shop on the first floor, and any boarders could have gone upstairs without disturbing what was happening on the first floor.

Mr. Salay stated that they found a basement with a cistern in the bottom of it, which was a pretty amazing find for being in Florida. The door to the basement was still there. It is about ½ the size of the main floor, and there are some mounts for equipment which could have been a boiler. Some other unique things were found. In the attic there is a gigantic galvanized steel tank, which was a water tank. Prior to the advent of a water system, what would have been done was to catch the water in the cistern, and someone would pump the water up to the tank on the third floor, and then the water was gravity fed down to each of the bathrooms in the building.

Mr. Salay continued that the top two floors are incredibly intact. The doors, windows and baseboard detailing is still there, and the walls are all plaster and lathe. The plaster and lathe is in deteriorating condition, but is quite repairable. The chimney is gone now, but you can clearly see where it was located within closets on both the 2nd and 3rd floors. The hearth for the chimney can be seen in the room where tennis racquets get strung, and it is still all there, which was a really interesting find. A lot of the original doors are still intact on the 2nd and 3rd floors – 4-panel doors and the original hardware – and they are quite restorable as well.

Mr. Salay stated that the roof was probably wood shingle, and the structure of the roof is in fantastic shape. It is probably all long-leaf pine, or old-growth pine, is in very good shape, and the great thing about pine is that it has a lot of resin in it, and the termites could not tolerate eating resin. The pine is very termite resilient and is still there. On the rafter tails there is some termite damage, but that is easily repairable. Our company has restored houses in much worse condition than this. The structure of the house is in fairly good condition, and the 60% report will have a full analysis from a structural engineer.

There is some deterioration in the walls and roof of the tower, so that needs to be addressed.

Mr. Salay continued that the back porch area near the tennis center had a shed roof, and what looks like a screen porch. If restored, this could be put back on the home. Bender & Associates will be doing a series of drawings with a probable look of the building, and probable plans.

Mr. Bender stated that often times people think of historic preservation much like the Casements, as a house museum, something that is frozen in time. But, most preservation activities are about the cultural activity of the community, and saving buildings for use. We don't want buildings to be something that are stagnant and become frozen in time, but we want them to continue to serve the community. What is fortunate about the MacDonald House is that it retains much of its characteristics, it will be easy to restore, and the best use for a historic building is what its historic use was. This was a building which had residential on the 2nd and 3rd floors, and the 1st floor was a combination of commercial and residential. The building will qualify for state preservation grant funding which is available to municipalities and non-profit organizations, which means that the City of Ormond Beach qualifies for that funding. Preservation of the historic environment is the legacy that we leave for future generations. It's up to this community to decide what that legacy is going to be.

Dr. Shapiro stated that in the center of the picture on display, a little to the right of center, there is a tall thin structure and he wondered if that was a pump house. Mr. Salay stated that they think it might have been a water tower. Mr. Bender then noted that there are tennis courts on two sides of what is a park, but it is closed off from the public because of the way the fencing is constructed. If the fence were to be taken down and relocated so that the tennis courts were secured, then there would be a continuous pass-through park, which would link the street and the parking lot to other areas.

Mr. Selover asked if the back part of the house, by the tennis center, was built in 1903, or was that added on along the way. Mr. Bender stated that originally there was a portion of the back section with a porch. The back of the home has been altered and the porch is gone. The roof has been extended and closed for what is currently the tennis center. That particular portion of the tennis center is not original to 1903. Mr. Selover asked if it was known what the original use was of the back of the house. Mr. Bender stated that it was a screened in porch. They can also take an educated guess about the purpose of each room. They do know that when someone walks into the front of the building, there is a central hallway, and a room to the right, which is an office. That wall never used to be there. When you walked in the front door there used to be a large parlor room, or there might have been some kind of column or decorative element that divided the space. There is no evidence that the wall was original. It was added at a later date. Mr. Selover stated that it seemed logical that the front room was where the curio shop was.

Mr. Walsh questioned that on the 2nd and 3rd floor there was no termite damage. Mr. Salay stated that he is not going to say that there is no termite damage, but there is very little damage, and it is absolutely repairable.

Ms. Heddy stated that Bender & Associates summed the project up very well. The introduction was very good, and the only thing that she would add is something that she says all the time. This building is a witness of history. Everything that has gone on in Ormond Beach has gone past those windows, and it has been there and the building has watched all of the entire history of this area, and that's what she calls a Witness to History.

Dr. Shapiro stated that the building behind the house was likely a water tower and the last remnants of the top of it were on New Britain Avenue and about 6 or 8 years ago it disappeared. Nobody knew how it got there, but he recognized the top of the tower.

Ms. Julien stated that from her perspective, the people who sat on this Historic Landmarks Board before, and the people of the City in the '70's decided that this was worth purchasing for obvious reasons. The City made a commitment at that time to adhere to their own rules, follow the code, and make sure that historic buildings didn't fall into derelict situations. Ms. Julien believes that this Board has had this vote before, but just to reiterate they have made a motion before and voted on the fact that they believe that this building should be kept up, as long as the City owns it.

Dr. Shapiro stated that twice since he has been on the Board, it has been voted on to repair the house and keep it open to the public. Mr. Bender stated that part of what their historic structure report will do, is outline priorities for maintenance, preservation and restoration of the building. And it will also identify funding sources. What happens with the report when it is completed, is that it becomes a document that serves as a guide for all of the future activities that occur. But, it also goes to the state division of historical resources which then supports any applications for grant funding. Because the City has invested in a historic structures report, the state will look favorably upon giving grant funds to maintain and restore the building.

Dr. Shapiro stated that if the building is to become a museum, in order to be ADA compliant there would obviously need to be an elevator. Where in the structure would Mr. Bender recommend that it go? Mr. Bender stated that they are still looking at that, so everything he is saying right now is very early in the process. There are a couple of issues involved with an elevator. If the ultimate use is that the first floor becomes commercial activity, the way the building is structured, the 2nd and 3rd floor are accessible from a stair with an exterior door, those could become residential uses, and if the City owns the building, a housing authority could manage the apartments. If the building would be used for residential, then an elevator would not be required. If the 2nd and 3rd floor are used for office space, it would not make a good commercial space. Any kind of commercial activity would require an elevator for ADA compliance. One of the options is to put it at the back of the building with an exterior elevator tower. One problem would be that some valuable interior space would be lost.

Mr. Bender stated that the building is going to need a fire sprinkler system no matter what is done with it. It's a 3-story building, so if it is residential use or commercial activity, the sprinkler system will be required. Options will be outlined in the report, and decisions will have to be made in the future. But, the actual decision will be predicated on what the final decision by the City Commission ends up being.

Mr. Selover thanked Mr. Bender for enlightening the group about the architect and builder. It has been amazing what he has been involved with locally. Mr. Selover did not realize it until today, and he appreciates the information.

Mr. Walsh asked when the final report is expected to be completed. Mr. Bender stated that the Stakeholders workshop will be held on February 8. The input that is received at today's meeting will be inserted into the document, information from the structural engineer, the mechanical, plumbing and electrical engineer's report, lead and asbestos reports and other environmental assessments will all be part of the 60% document.

Ms. Kornel stated that the Stakeholder Workshop will be held on February 8 at 7:00 p.m. at the Casements. There will be a 3rd and final workshop on February 21 at 5:30 p.m. with the City Commissioners in Room 103. Mr. Bender stated that the input gathered at the February 8 workshop will be incorporated into the report for the February 21 meeting. Information obtained at the February 21 workshop will then be incorporated into the final report. Ms. Kornel stated that the City Manager's office is expecting this to be closed out by May 1.

Dr. Shapiro opened the floor for audience comments.

Ms. Patricia Sample stated that she had an opportunity to walk through this building many years ago with Frank MacDonald, and he indicated there was a kitchen on the 1st floor, and Ms. Sample was wondering if Mr. Bender had any idea where the kitchen was located. Mr. Bender stated that they have not determined where the kitchen was, but if Frank MacDonald told Ms. Sample where he thought the kitchen was, Mr. Bender would like to know that. Ms. Sample stated that it looked like it was behind a sunroom. Mr. Bender stated that when you come in the front of the building from the porch, there are two rooms in the front, and then there is the stairway that goes up on the outside, and behind it where the bay is located, there is a room that had the fireplace in it, and they believe this is the dining room or living room. Ms. Sample stated that she had seen the fireplace before it was torn out. She believes it was in the early '80's and the fireplace was green. Mr. Bender stated that behind the room that had the fireplace in it, on the opposite side, that could have been the kitchen. In the 19th century kitchens were typically near the outside or in an out building, to keep the heat out of the house.

Mr. Bender stated that they believe there was one bedroom downstairs, a shop, a kitchen and dining room and a closet. Ms. Sample stated that if there were boarding rooms above, meals were usually served and that would be a use for the dining room. Mr. Bender stated that there was a door that could access the stair from the inside or outside, and so the theory of a boarding house, with access to the dining room is wonderful.

Mr. Miller stated that any advertisements for the rooming house talked about the extensively equipped kitchen, which was available for the people who lived upstairs.

Ms. Sample was concerned about the electrical in the building, and is that an expensive thing to renovate, and also the sprinkler system that would need to be put in. Mr. Bender stated that typically on a building such as this, when a full renovation is done, all the electrical, plumbing and mechanical systems will be upgraded. All of the infrastructure would be new inside the building. It is rare that they would leave the old wiring.

Mr. Tom Massfeller stated that right now the Historical Society uses the house as their office, but also as a community center. A lot of people stop in there to ask about restaurants and hotels. So not only do people stop to see the Historical Society, but a lot of people come as visitors to the Welcome Center. Mr. Massfeller believes that the plans were to keep the structure as a museum, along with the Historical Society and Welcome Center.

Ms. Joyce Benedict asked about the basement and how deep it was. Mr. Salay stated that it is about 7' below grade and you can walk in it. The ceiling is about 8 or 9 feet, since the framing of the 1st floor is a couple of feet above the ground level. There was about 18" of water in the basement. It was made of brick with plaster on it. It could have had a cistern, or could have been a root cellar. There were some mounts which could have been for a boiler or some piece of equipment. There was some electrical wiring with a light fixture on it.

Ms. Sample stated that Mr. MacDonald did mention that there was a cistern in the basement that did pump water up into the kitchen in the house. Mr. Bender stated that the theory of a root cellar in the basement makes perfect sense. There are no steps into the basement, but it should be accessible. Mr. Bender stated that he isn't sure that it was a cistern, but if it were to be used for something besides a cistern, a Lapeyre stair could be put in, and reverse the door swing so that it would swing out, and it now becomes accessible and usable.

Ms. Elysha Petschauer asked if the basement is under the entire first floor. Mr. Salay stated that it is under about ¼ of the first floor. Ms. Petschauer asked when Bender & Associates were doing the assessment of the building, was the area of the floor that had the swale over the basement area. Mr. Salay stated that the structural engineer determined that there was a damaged pier and the beams started sagging. This would be something that needs to be dealt with.

Ms. Petschauer asked that as the process continues on, will Bender and Associates be putting a budget together for the restoration of the building. Mr. Bender stated that they will have cost estimates. It may be a little difficult to get accurate numbers. They do have someone who does historic restoration of plaster, so they will get together with him for plaster numbers. He understands that construction costs in Ormond Beach will be somewhat less than what they are used to in south Florida. But, based on their experience with structures around the state, and tapping into local contractors, they will come up with estimates for what they consider to be the different phases.

Mr. Bender stated that some estimates are based on how far the City wants to take the project. For example, a recommendation will be made to replace the windows with historically appropriate windows. One of the original casement windows is in the attic, so they know what the original windows were. Often times with these types of structures, items are prioritized and sometimes they don't get done. Mr. Bender stated that once a project like this gets started and people find out the historical significance of it, and the first time that work is started and they can see what is coming together, the excitement that spreads through the community is really something to watch. If or when that process

happens, you will see the community come together and support the completion of this project.

Mr. Thomas MacDonald, whose father is Frank MacDonald, thanked the gentlemen for the history surrounding his dad and grand-dad. Mr. Thomas asked about the 18" of water in the basement, and knowing that it has to be removed, is that something that gets pumped out. Mr. Salay stated that it would be very easy to remove the water with a pump, the question is keeping the water out. Normally, up north, they would put in a sump pump. There would be a hole dug at the lowest point of the basement, and a sump pump with a float alarm on it would be installed to keep the water out.

Mr. MacDonald also asked about piping from the cistern, and if the equipment for the sprinkler system could follow that same track. Mr. Salay stated that the equipment could be put in the basement where it wouldn't be quite so visible. Mr. Bender stated that the fire pumps could be put in the basement, to get water up to the 3rd floor.

Ms. Sample stated that she doesn't know the Planning Departments rules and regulations, but she was wondering if private residents were allowed, if the building was to be returned to having a residence on the second floor. Ms. Kornel stated that the City does allow mixed use in that area. It would be a commercial office with residential upstairs.

Mr. Bender stated that these are all possibilities of adapted uses for the property. Ms. Sample stated that the Historical Society would like to see the building as a museum, open to the public. Mr. Bender stated that he definitely sees that as an appropriate use for the building. It is not Bender & Associates job to make a decision for the City. What they are doing is assembling data, creating an assessment and making recommendations of appropriate courses of action, which can include any number of uses. This is your community and your legacy that you are leaving for your future generations. There is always a need for affordable housing for people who would work in the area and not have a car, and would walk or bicycle to work. This is perfect for that use, and historically that is the way it was used. It could be a great fit.

Mr. Akam stated that it may also be helpful to note that in 2009, the Casements had some work done, when the basement was holding water. The walls were redone, and there was an area in the basement which he believes was a root cellar, which would be consistent with what was found at the MacDonald House. More importantly, at the Casements today, there are pumps in the basement that are operational. It takes sump pumps to keep the water out. The area that he believes is the root cellar is raised a little above the rest of the cellar level.

Mr. Bender stated that when they did the Custom House restoration in Key West, there were rumors that there was gold buried in the walls of the Custom House. To this day, people ask if he found any of the gold, and his standard response is, if he had, do you think he would tell you. He can say that there is no gold in the walls.

Dr. Shapiro stated that we have heard from the public, and there will be more meetings to come, but does the Board need to add anything further before a motion is made. Hearing no comments from the Board, Dr. Shapiro asked for a motion regarding the draft as presented.

Ms. Heddy made a motion to accept the report as presented. Mr. Akam seconded the motion. Vote was called and the draft report was unanimously accepted as presented.

Dr. Shapiro stated that this is a work in progress, and he wants to state that the report is outstanding and comprehensive the way it was presented. Dr. Shapiro read the entire packet and there were things in it that he learned that he never knew before. There is one minor item that needs to be corrected. On page 6 of the historic report, it mentions that the ownership of the building at one time was the Woman's Club. At no time did the Woman's Club own that building. Dr. Shapiro thinks it was confused with the Anderson-Price Memorial Building. Ms. Heddy stated that the Woman's Club had been removed from the second version of the report.

VI. MEMBER COMMENTS

None.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Nagel, Recording Secretary

ATTEST:

Dr. Philip J. Shapiro, Chairman

Minutes transcribed by Melanie Nagel