

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Town Commission
From: Tom Harmer, Town Manager
Report date: October 26, 2020
Meeting date: November 2, 2020
Subject: Update on Historic Whitney Beach Cottage Proposed for Placement on Town Center Property

Recommended Action

Provide direction to Manager

Background

At the October 19, 2020 Town Commission Regular Workshop, the Commission was provided background information regarding an opportunity to relocate one of the Whitney Cottage buildings owned by the Longboat Key Historical Society to the Town Center.

I was contacted by Michael Drake the week of October 12, 2020 to discuss the small cottage that the Historical Society owns. It is currently located on Broadway in Longbeach Village. Michael has indicated that the cottage was built around 1937 as one of the original structures on the Gulf side as part of the Whitney Beach resort. This particular cottage is known as the linen building and reportedly originally served as a support building to the resort.

Michael and I have talked before about the long-term plans for the cottages. At that time, he was considering a couple of options to move them off the current site. He said he has reached a point that he would like to move the smaller cottage onto Town property and wanted to know if the Town would be interested.

He said he is under pressure to move the cottages off the existing site as soon as possible; October or no later than some time in November.

He mentioned Durante Park as a possible site for the small cottage. I suggested the Town Center property as a preferred option. He agreed that the Town Center property would be a great location for the cottage.

Late last week I looked at the small cottage with our Public Works Director and Planning, Zoning & Building Director. We wanted to confirm the size and also look at its current condition. The cottage is approximately 16 x 25' or 400 sq. feet. It is basically 4 walls with no interior dividers or rooms. Overall, the building looked to be in good condition.

We also went to the Town Center property and looked at potential locations. We believe that the cottage could be added to the site in a way that would not restrict future

development. It would be an opportunity to bring the Historical Society into the Town Center area and provide another attraction for the site consistent with the cultural theme that has been discussed with the Commission. We have staked off an area on the Town Center property where we recommend the cottage be located.

At the October 19, 2020 Regular Workshop Meeting the Commission provided consensus to continue negotiations with the Historical Society and to have the Town Attorney prepare a draft agreement for consideration.

At the Regular Workshop Meeting I highlighted the general terms that Michael and I discussed and I sent them to Michael in writing after the Commission discussion.

See below:

Goal: Develop an Agreement (land lease) that would authorize the Historical Society to place their small historic cottage on Town Center property. The cottage is owned by the Historical Society and is approximately 16 x 25' (400sq ft) and is currently located off Broadway in Longbeach Village.

The Town's Responsibilities:

- Identify and provide access to a site within the Town Center
- If necessary, as part of Phase 2 site work, staff would make sure electric service available to the location
- Provide grounds maintenance to the overall Town Center property including the general area around the building
- Approve any signage on the building or the site
- Approve any changes to the finish/exterior of the building including paint colors

The Longboat Key Historical Society Responsibilities:

- Responsible for moving the building to the Town Center property
- Responsible for all permits required as part of the move and set up
- Placing the building on the property at a site designated by the Town
- If necessary, relocate the building to another site on the property in the event at some point in the future, the Town needs that particular site for future development
- Responsible for maintaining the building in a good state of repair
- Setting up, maintaining, and operating the building as a function of the Longboat Key Historical Society by placing historical artifacts and information on display for the public and opening it up periodically for visitors.
- Responsible for all costs associated with operations and maintenance of the building, including utilities, insurance, etc.
- Provide information that demonstrates the financial ability to meet the terms of the agreement

Michael responded with general agreement on the terms above and asked that we proceed with a formal agreement that the Historical Society can review.

Attached is a draft Agreement developed by the Town Attorney that has been provided to the Historical Society for their review. We have also asked the Historical Society to

provide information to the Town satisfying the Commission's request to confirm their financial capacity to move the cottage and meet the terms of the agreement.

We will provide an update at your November 2, 2020 Regular Meeting regarding the status of our due diligence and the Historical Society's response to the proposed agreement.

Staff is proposing a site located on the southwestern portion of the property in close proximity to the back of the bank building. The cottage would be nestled under a cluster of oaks (see Exhibit A of Lease Agreement). While staff considered multiple sites, this location was determined to be the most suitable (temporary) location at this time due to the following:

- Easiest for a contractor to set-up
- In close proximity to electric
- Building would provide a visible barrier to an unsightly electrical panel and electrical boxes currently on the property
- Handicapped parking already exists on this side of the property and would provide accessibility from the parking lot
- The location is quite level and allows space for a handicapped accessible ramp
- Designated parking for the cottage is readily available

If the agreement is acceptable to both the Historical Society and the Town Commission, the next step would be to authorize the Town Manager to execute the agreement on behalf of the Town. The Town Attorney and I will be available to answer questions regarding the proposed lease and relocation of the cottage to the Town Center.

Staff Recommendation

Provide direction to the Manager

Attachments

- A. Proposed Lease with Longboat Key Historical Society (Available in Town Clerk's Office)
- B. Exhibit A (Available in Town Clerk's Office)

End of Agenda Item