

Historic Preservation Commission

Who we are; what we do

In the interests of keeping the citizens of our precious little community informed, the members of the Magnolia Springs Historic Preservation Commission have decided to publish a short history of the Commission along with some of our aims and past accomplishments.

When the Town of Magnolia Springs was incorporated in 2006, there was already an Historic District in place in Magnolia Springs. This district closely approximated the current district, but it was established by Baldwin County, and when we incorporated, that district ceased to exist.

So the Magnolia Springs Historic Preservation Commission was established by Town ordinance 2007-13, and revised by Town Ordinance 2008-4 effective April 1, 2008.

The purpose of the Commission is stated in detail on page one of this ordinance, but in general terms it was agreed by the Council that the cultural, historical, and aesthetic heritage of Magnolia Springs is its greatest asset, and preservation of that heritage was essential in protecting property values, stimulating business, and taking advantage of federal and state tax benefits and grants.

Significant studies have been done regarding property values within Historic Districts, and particularly within districts that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Studies of local historic districts in New Jersey, Texas, Indiana, Georgia, Colorado, Maryland, North and South Carolina, Kentucky, and Virginia showed that the economic effect of local designation is typical across the country. Simply put, property values in local historic districts appreciate

significantly faster than the market as a whole in the vast majority of cases.

So in pursuit of this goal the Commission was established in 2007. In the years since, the following things have been accomplished:

Created a new district within the town limits

Commissioned a survey of every structure within the corporate limits of Magnolia Springs, with photographs and a description of each, including the building date if available, or an estimate if not. A binder with this data is available in the Town Clerk's office.

Wrote two manuals: Design Review Guidelines, and Rules of Procedure, setting forth the standards published by the Secretary of the Interior for the repair, restoration, or demolition of historic structures; and the procedures by which these standards are applied within the Magnolia Springs Historic District.

Applied for and received designation of our Historic District within the National Register of Historic Places.

Worked closely with the Magnolia Springs Community Association in restoration of the Community Hall, a five-year project costing over \$200,000.

Designed and erected entrance signs and street signs with a distinct logo and color on all streets within the Historic District.

Reviewed and approved more than 50 Certificates of Appropriateness over seven years, with only one partial denial.

The Commission consists of seven members appointed by the Town Council, with overlapping three-year terms. Members are

required to have some background in architecture, construction, history, public service or related fields. Resumes of individual members are reviewed and filed with the Alabama Historical Commission in Montgomery. Members are also required to attend training sessions each year to increase their professional knowledge of historic preservation.

The present members of the Commission have attended training seminars in Montevallo, Monroeville, Montgomery, Mobile, Eufala, Foley, and our own sponsored event in Magnolia Springs.

Mayor Ken Underwood chairs the Commission as he has since it was created. Rodney Hubble is the vice-chair and Bob Stoddard is the secretary. The remaining four members are John Cobb, Burt Hinson, David Houser, and Ross Houser.

It has been the focus and intent of the Magnolia Springs Historic Preservation Commission from day one to be a source of guidance and help to homeowners. Because of our experience and training in historic preservation we have resources that can add value to your home when you encounter needed repairs. Let us work with you to find the best solution to your repair project so that you will maintain and enhance the historic value of your property.

Sincerely,

The members of MSHPC