The public hearing was called to order at 2:01 p.m., a quorum was present.

I. OPENING REMARKS OF CHAIR

II. ROLL CALL

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. MINUTES

The minutes from the November 10, 2020 meetings were approved unanimously
V. POSTPONED

The following items have been postponed until January 12, 2020

1. City File FLUM 60
2. City File 20-90200098 & 20-54000060

VI. QUASI-JUDICIAL HEARING

A. City File 20-90200096 Contact Person: Laura Duvekot, 892-5451

Request: Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a vinyl privacy fence at 2905 8th Ave. N., a contributing property located within a local historic district.

Staff Presentation
Laura Duvekot gave a PowerPoint presentation based on the Staff Report.

Applicant Presentation
Jonathan J. Gardner, owner, spoke in support of the project and was available for questions.

Registered Opponent
None.

Public Hearing
None.

Cross Examination:
Waived by City Staff and Applicant

Rebuttal/Closing Remarks
Waived by City Staff and Applicant.

Executive Session
Commissioner Burke: We will move into executive session, are there any commissioners that would like to speak up or ask a question?

Commissioner Wolf: In the report it indicated that fences in general in the Kenwood area were not generally present. I certainly understand the issue with vinyl is not a historic material. I was wondering if Staff had any position on wood fences or are there any other fences that would be considered more acceptable or acceptable at all in the Kenwood neighborhood.

Commissioner Burke: Ms. Duvekot can you address that question? Are there other materials, other sizes, other
styles that would be acceptable?

Laura Duvekot: Sure, we do approve wooden privacy fences, ideally along a street side yard a lower fence would be preferable. Usually we recommend, in historic districts, the material is more organic, the wood or metal, I think in Kenwood, wooden fences are most appropriate.

Commissioner Wolf: Thank you.

Commissioner Burke: Ms. Duvekot, so if he were to bring back an application that was identical to this, however the material was a six foot wood fence do you think that would meet the required criteria?

Laura Duvekot: Yes, generally when there is an application for wood privacy fences within historic districts.

Commissioner Burke: So, on the street side, you think wood would be okay. Any other questions or comments?

Commissioner Wannemacher: I have a comment, just, you know in the downtown core in the way that the taller the building is, the farther it needs to be setback from the property line. It seems like for fences, at least in a historic district, and maybe everywhere, is there anything that says the less transparent or more opaque a fence is and the taller it is, the further it has to be setback from the property line? It seems that the two foot setback is really close to the sidewalk. You showed that photograph of the wood fence that was setback maybe six feet or further and it was a bit less obtrusive so, the applicant also offered up the installation of some shrubbery and I am not sure if that two feet really allows for sufficient space to put shrubbery in. Maybe if it was setback further, or shorter, or you know, it is just a thought that there should be some kind of standard for setbacks. That is just a separate comment.

Laura Duvekot: I appreciate that comment, my understanding is that by the zoning requirements up to a four-foot fence could be at the sidewalk line, but because it is higher than four feet is why two feet is required. I agree that a greater, especially in historic districts, where the pedestrian experience is so valuable.

Commissioner Wannemacher: And especially since it is completely opaque, if it was transparent or partially transparent might make it less obtrusive. I am just thinking of another material that we have talked about, quite a bit as being acceptable in historic districts is the hardie board plank and they do make wood grained hardie board, which we have allowed on residential additions and renovations because it is harder it is stronger, longer lasting, it is more durable. I do not know what the cost differential is for hardie board fence versus a wood grain vinyl plank fence but, I do not even know if the fence companies utilize the hardie board.

Commissioner Wolf: I am not sure hardie would be approved, because of its brittle nature it would prove unsupported in a vertical fashion as on a fence.

Commissioner Wannemacher: That is a good point.

Commissioner Burke: We have kind of established that a six foot wood privacy fence would likely be acceptable. Is there any vinyl fences that would be acceptable, a four foot vinyl fence be acceptable or a four foot, transparent, a four foot vinyl with slats, would any of those fly through on an application? Is it strictly the vinyl that is causing the problem?

Laura Duvekot: I think the vinyl and the fact that it is on the street side yard is really what triggered this
Commission review. We haven’t seen that many applications for vinyl privacy fences in the historic districts.

Commissioner Wannemacher: I would add a flat nontextured shiny vinyl, I would not approve anything like that. I think that is absolutely not compatible. There is wood grained vinyl that do provide texture. There is a bit of reveal that might make this more palatable.

Commissioner Whiteman: Laura, the particular part of the fence that is in question, I think, is it 30 feet along 29th St.? Is that what it is? The two little pieces across the front?

Laura Duvekot: The zoning code states that a fence has to be, there has to be one material you would not be able to install a fence that…

Commissioner Whiteman: Right, I am talking about where the problem is.

Laura Duvekot: The street side is definitely the highest visibility from the perspective of preserving the historic district and the pedestrian experience and the streetscape where I think that, that can have a very large impact. It is definitely that street side yard, yes.

Commissioner Whiteman: One more question, so the wooden fences that are up, the ones that are deteriorated and look bad, is there any City ordinance on those, that people maintain them?

Laura Duvekot: I believe that would fall under a codes issue. I don’t know how badly a wood fence has to be deteriorated in order for a codes violation to be triggered.

Commissioner Winters: I kind of this the question is really about the material rather than maintenance, that we really can’t get into here. I really have a problem with the vinyl for the reasons stated by the Staff. It just isn’t compatible with the property with the district and I think it really is inappropriate material to have right along the sidewalk given the concern about the pedestrian experience. I am struck by the language that the fencing is really less common in this district and typically is going to have 50% transparency. The proposal just doesn’t work in a lot of ways from my perspective and I can’t support this.

Commissioner Gerdes: I know I am the rookie, the amateur, especially when it comes to building stuff, but with fences already being in the neighborhood, and I understand they are not prevalent, and it being matte and it being wood grained it just doesn’t seem unreasonable to me that… Especially if you were to take it and make it wood he would be able to do it. Then he would have to redo it every few years because they fall apart as we are seeing in these pictures. To me it doesn’t seem all that unreasonable, I agree with the Commission the vinyl, the straight vinyl, which I have at my house would not be in line with this. I don’t think it would be unreasonable with the matte wood grain, especially if he is allowed to have a wood fence there, in the same place, it does not seem unreasonable to me. But, again, I know I am the rookie.

Commissioner Burke: Rookie or not we appreciate your opinion. That is an issue that makes a lot of sense. I think we are required here to follow what the letter of the law is. Where would someone go if they would like to get that changed in the Kenwood community? Where vinyl would become an acceptable product, how would they approach that? Not this particular case, but the bigger picture, how would they approach that or is that possible?

Derek Kilborn: There were a few points I wanted to address in that discussion and the first one deals directly with what you just mentioned. According to the COA matrix, fences are typically reviewed and approved at an
administrative level. That is why the commission does not normally see these. The question of vinyl fences is one that is increasingly coming into our office that we have to deal with. One of the reasons this application is before the commission today, is to have this discussion and try and get some guidance from the commission about how this particular issue should be dealt with going forward. The discussion today will help inform the Staff when future applications come in with this question of materials and I do not know there necessarily needs to be a text change for something like this. I think it is something we can consider when improving the code, how can we make it more clear, and that is something that could be written into a future amendment. I think the discussion today, by itself would help inform how we handle these when they come into our office.

There was another question about the openness of the fence, so I want to point out in the fence section, there is some discussion about the open design of a fence but it is specific only to waterfront yards and not necessarily to front side or rear yards when dealing with different setbacks or height.

Finally, because I know you want to come back to the original question about materials. But, I did want to read this from the code, in the fence section there is a line item about consistency in style and design. What it says is, fences and walls shall be consistent in style and design within any property, for example the same design of the front yard or the same design in the rear yard and for yards abutting street ways. For example, same or compatible design and style for both the front and street side yards for corner lots. It then goes on to say fences and walls and side rear and waterfront yards maybe comprised of a different material than those used in the front yard. We have a historic preservation question, what is appropriate in the district, but we also have some language in the fence ordinance that says three should be consistency in design and materials for the front and street side yard but there could be some accommodation for interior and rear yards, different for the front and side yards. Again, that is the language in the fence section and then you have this enhanced review for the local historic district itself.

That is why this question came to you today because this is an important one that is very common and we are starting to see it more and the guidance we get from this commission will help Staff.

Commissioner Burke: Alright, and Ms. Duvekot you did mention that in your opening comments, and I think I just kind of glossed right over that, that this is a bigger picture issue. We heard from Commissioner Gerdes that he thinks that allowing these vinyl fences in some form or fashion should be allowed, is there anyone else on the commission, I am sorry and then we heard the exact opposite from Commissioner Winters who is really adamantly against having the vinyl in the historic district. Anyone else like to comment on this material is appropriate, yes Commissioner Wolf.

Commissioner Wolf: Well a couple of parts of that, one I think the vinyl is, white vinyl is just glare in the face, very obvious material and I do not think it is appropriate, certainly in the Kenwood District. I think that is the kind of thing that is going to have to be looked at in relation to the specific historic district. As far as white vinyl I don’t think that is going be a good choice for Kenwood at any time. The vinyl’s are beginning to look more like wood. To the extent that technology improves and the appearance of a fence can be more compatible with a traditional material it may be time to start looking at that as an acceptable material in certain finishes. The other thing we should probably be considering in the historic neighborhoods is the issue of placement, where we may come to a guideline that a fence in a rear yard or a side yard where it is setback from the street and doesn’t have a public street side might have more leeway than a fence that is entirely on a public right of way. I am bringing all of that up because we are talking about this in more of a general context. For this application, I can understand the issue of how a wood fence would eventually deteriorate and can become somewhat of an eyesore but I still think it would be more appropriate here, especially because of the street side yard then a vinyl fence would be. The only other thing I would consider is again for general items we should
for very visible exposon we should more of a relaxation for a four foot as opposed to a six foot fence. Then if it is not required and with an animal or something like that, I don’t know that it would be a lot less in your face. So those comments are more to the general discussion as to how we want to treat these down the road. Main one as vinyl becomes more and more resembling wood that may become a more acceptable choice. Secondly, we need to ok at height and third we look at placement and relaxation on placement and major visibility. For this specific application I have a hard time with even a wood grain on the sidewalk side and if we are trying to be consistent within areas of the fence it kind of limits us to wood or one of the other historical choices. I know there are vinyl fences that have been approved before the neighborhood was declared historic, became under review for historic, but I think having a substantial amount of fence in that neighborhood is going to change the character. I am having a hard time trying to approve vinyl here.

Commissioner Burke: I appreciate those comments, Commissioner Whiteman or Wannemacher where are you on this, considering allowing some vinyl product in the future?

Commissioner Whiteman: Actually, when I asked Ms. Duvekot if she would be more agreeable if it was a matted wood grain vinyl in a color that would blend more with the natural surroundings of the neighborhood, would you be more agreeable to something like that or would it fit better into the code, we can put it that way.

Laura Duvekot: Well the material, the material change is usually what we bring here, so, just the introduction of the vinyl at a street side is still something I have a concern about, but like Commissioner Wolf, I think there are more appropriate alternatives that I have seen that are becoming available. In this case I do still have concerns about that expansive…

Commissioner Whiteman: Okay you said, alternatives, what other alternatives?

Laura Duvekot: Alternatives, different types of vinyl fences that have more of a wood grain aesthetic and less glossy finish.

Commissioner Whiteman: So then, that would be a better fit.

Laura Duvekot: Yes, I think that would be less visible, less inappropriate than the white vinyl gloss. Maybe not at a street side yard but it is definitely less noticeable than the glossy white vinyl.

Commissioner Whiteman: Okay, thank you. I think that I would go with the vinyl.

Commissioner Burke: You think we should go with the vinyl?

Commissioner Whiteman: If it was wood grained, to match the natural surroundings if we could put a condition on, if the applicant would be willing to agree with it.

Commissioner Gerdes: I’m sorry I don’t have it in front of me, isn’t the color purposed matte, white wood grain? Isn’t it matte not gloss?

Laura Duvekot: That is correct.

Commissioner Gerdes: We are not even talking about the gloss at this point. Again, I go back to, I don’t think the gloss is appropriate but when it is matted down, and it is wood grained. I just wanted to make clarification in my head what it is we are talking about that it is matte not gloss, thank you.
Commissioner Burke: Commissioner Wannemacher you mentioned that you didn’t see fit to approving the vinyl, do you still stand by that?

Commissioner Wannemacher: Personally, I am more opposed to the, even if it was wood, I am generally opposed to six foot solid wood fences or whatever material it is right up against the streetscape or the pedestrian walkway. That is not what we are hearing today, that is allowed by the zoning ordinance that is fine. I am actually leaning towards approving the vinyl, provided it has a rich textured wood grain and I understand the applicants want for privacy and to install a fence and for it to be durable and for it to be of a material that will be long-term and I think that we do need to start looking newer technology and allowing materials that are readily available and used extensively in other parts of the city. I do appreciate that the fence is set back further on the front yard so that most of the residence is exposed. I am just looking back at the site plan, if there is any way to reduce the linear footage at all. I do understand that the wood grain texture is more expensive than the flat material which the applicant originally wanted to use maybe there is a way on that street façade to push that back behind the bay windows so it actually comes off of the rear façade of the house, just shortening that length a little bit along 29th Street. I guess maybe it is a question for the applicant, if there is any, Mr. Gardner, is the footprint of the fence really what you are hoping to achieve or is there some wiggle room to make that a little bit shorter on the 29th Street façade?

Jonathan J. Gardner: Thank you Commissioner Wannemacher, the fence is intended for, to have a dog, the dog is quite active and the six foot height is kind of needed. I would be agreeable to some sort of additional set back not just the two feet. Perhaps we could agree on maybe four feet from the sidewalk, that would be agreeable maybe more back towards the house. I know I had chosen where the proposed fence line be between the kitchen and my dingy room or maybe the back corner of the house. I would be able to have, maybe a four foot setback from the sidewalk if that would be agreeable to the commission and he wood grain finish that is easily cleanable and the maintenance, I pressure wash my house every year during the spring time and the vinyl siding on my house presents a clean appropriate nice finish to the house. I do prefer the local historic district with a new garage as you can see from the photos that matches the house. I like to be historic in nature but in this case I ask for a little leniency and some new age technologies and create some time expectancy, length of time and durability.

Commissioner Wannemacher: Thank you very much, so I guess what I am hearing, if you can look at the site plan, and you can imagine that you have the lower right hand corner actually coming off the rear façade (clerk pulling up site plan) Here in this image on the lower part of the plan. Probably mid-way on the southern façade, on the home, where you see that bay window jut out, that blue line that is perpendicular to the window if you shift that over to the right, so it aligns with the rear of the house it actually shortens up that length of fence along 29th Street. Mr. Gardner, I also purpose that he would be amenable to setting it back an additional two feet so it is not only two feet off of the sidewalk. Personally, I think that is an acceptable compromise and I appreciate you accepting that. If needed I am ready to make a motion.

Commissioner Burke: Certainly, you can present a motion at any time, I would turn to my right and say, Commissioners Wolf and Winters is there any way you might change your opinion on the vinyl?

Commissioner Wolf: I like the idea of, again, we have to be careful because we are talking about this, not just for this specific property. We are also talking about generic applications to historic districts. I can understand and again, I think the wood grain fences that are less immediately, less impact on the eye than the solid white, and that white, whether it is wood or not is still very prominent architectural feature. Again whatever we did in historic neighborhoods if it has with fences then a white fence would be appropriate but in this neighborhood
we are looking at entirely open and I do think if we are going to lean towards some allowance of vinyl it would need to be in the wood grain or a muted tone and I really think if we are going for six foot fences, the largest setback is certainly helpful in eliminating the visual impact. I think we need to be careful about saying, okay everyone in Kenwood can have a six foot vinyl fence, they have to be set back 4 feet from the sidewalks. What we do here kind of sets the pattern how things are going to go, going forward. In general, we are doing a historic interpretation, I could see leaning towards wood grain. I can see, if I was going to guidance to Staff I have, things they say to us, it is in a rear yard set back in an area that is not highly visible that we should be fairly flexible but if it is on a main street we need to be more careful. So if I was trying to construct a case to allow this fence, I would say, it is on a street so it is highly visible so we are willing to allow it to pass with a larger setback and we are willing to allow it only if it is in a muted tone. That would be the direction I would say to go with for interpreting this going forward.

Commissioner Burke: Anything to add Commissioner Winters?

Commissioner Winters: Yes, there has been some interesting conversation, I, without seeing what this looks like, I still struggle with wood grain vinyl. It is introducing vinyl fencing and there is more fencing going up all the time in out historic districts and all over the City. I have a real concern about the long term implications of the commission weighing in to support vinyl at this point. Maybe we need to step back and look at some of the issues that have been raised. I am also concerned that this meets only on of the five criteria for granting the COA, so I struggle with approving it on those grounds, but I think the larger issue is that these buildings were originally constructed with sustainable materials, stone and wood and even thought we are not trying to embalm things in amber here I think we need to be sensitive to that reality and the case it is right up o the sidewalk and I think the harsh white, I have never seen a vinyl in a blonde, not to say it is not there, but I have trouble, and I know we probably can’t talk about color, but it is really very prominent and it is vinyl, I just struggle with that material in the context of a historic district and what would have been originally in place.

Commissioner Burke: I think we have served your purpose Mr. Kilborn we have had everyone weigh in and have some thought, but we do have an issue before us. I think that, help me out Mr. Dema, I think we owe it to the applicant to, before we start redesigning his house, to at least see if someone wants to put up a motion to approve the application as written, is that correct? Then we can ask for a motion amended?

Attorney Dema: I would do the amendment first, thank you Commissioner Winters, let me start over. Chair I think once you rule on the motion on the main one before you that would end the discussion on the item. But to the extent that you want to explore some other alternatives either through amending this to include a different material, heights, other conditions I would do that first before making a final motion on the main.

Commissioner Burke: Okay, thank you, Mr. Gardner if we happen to have a motion that recommended approving this if the fence is moved to the back corner of the house, if it has a four foot setback off the sidewalk and if it has a muted wood grain tone that is not white, would you like us to bring that motion forward?

Jonathan J. Gardner: Chairman, did you say white or not white?

Commissioner Burke: I think the white is really bothering people so I think, and I am not going to make a motion, but I think they are going to make a motion with a muted wood grain tone, not white, would something like that interest you at all? Or are you stuck on white?

Jonathan J. Gardner: I am kind of stuck on white, but I am a little confused because if I were to install a six foot high wood fence and I painted it white that would technically be allowed, isn’t it?
Commissioner Burke: Yes it would. Wood, the material wood, and stone is consistent with the neighborhood and it is consistent with the construction materials used at the time the neighborhood was built, so really it is the vinyl causing concern here. There is nothing, my opinion, nothing uglier than a white vinyl fence. I know the product you are using it only really has the one white and that is a white select cedar which, I am going to look stupid here, I do not believe is a Florida native plant. There are a number of others, darker cedar blends, amber cedar blends. We can put it through, if you do not want us to change from white I am sure one of the commissioners will put a motion through to approve this is white, I just do not want to approve something that you do not want. If you want white, I do not want to voted on a muted wood grain color.

Jonathan J. Gardner: Would grey be appropriate, a light grey?

Commissioner Burke: I can’t I don’t want to speak for that, I am just Commissioner Wolf, do you think light grey is a muted wood grain tone?

Commissioner Wolf: I do not have my laptop in front of me, but from what I recall, from the color samples they have it was substantially more muted than white. All the other colors because, I believe they have a blend of colors in them. So rather than one uniform shade the wood tones were a blend of color.

Commissioner Burke: It appears the wood grain on the other colors is a multi-colored finish as opposed to

Commissioner Wolf: I just have one more comment, one of the reasons I would even consider vinyl, understanding the historic nature, wood as historic material used. I think the quality of fences built when the neighborhood was built were substantially different than the 3/8th low grade wood material that is available in wood panels today that last about five years before it starts to really deteriorate. What I think about what a big box store or any fence companies really. If you are comparing something like what s on the screen now here, which would probably look similar in five years, you compare that to a five year old 3/8th panel thickness cypress fence this is going to end up looking a lot better in the neighborhood, than the cypress fence and that is the reason I would say the technology is coming along where we can start using colors that resemble weathered wood. It might end up being a better choice for a neighborhood than the inexpensive cypress fence is.

Commissioner Burke: Thank you, Mr. Gardner, I hope I am not doing you or this commission a disservice, I am not in a position to negotiate with you, as to what is allowed and what is not allowed. I think I am just trying to make everyone happy and I can’t do that but from what I heard I do not think a white fence is going to, you are going to walk out of here with a smile on your face if you insist on white. Is there a motion?

**MOTION:** Commissioner Wannemacher made a motion approving the Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a vinyl privacy fence at 2905 8th Ave. N., subject to Staff and additional conditions:

1. Proposed fence will be setback 2 feet from the subject property line facing 29th Street North.
2. Proposed fence must be muted in color with CertaGrain (wood) texture.
3. Proposed fence must align with the back corner of the house facing 29th Street North.
4. All other necessary permits shall be obtained. Any additional work shall be presented to staff for determination of the necessity of additional COA approval.
5. This approval will be valid for 24 months beginning on the date of revocation of the local Emergency Declaration.
Commissioner Whiteman Seconded.

VOTE: YES – 4 – Gerdes, Whiteman, Wolf, Wannemacher
NO – 2 – Burke, Winters

Motion passed by a vote of 4.

B. City File 20-90200106 Contact Person: Kelly Perkins, 892-5470

Request: Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a residential addition at 2651 3rd Ave N, a property proposed for inclusion as a contributing property to a local historic district currently pending public hearing.

Staff Presentation:
Kelly Perkins gave a PowerPoint presentation based on the Staff Report

Applicant\Owner Presentation
John Cox and Richard Gibson, owners, spoke in support of the application and were available for questions

Registered Opponent
None.

Public Hearing
None.

Cross Examination:
Waived by City Staff and Applicant

Rebuttal/Closing Remarks
Waived by City Staff and Applicant.

Executive Session

MOTION: Commissioner Wolf made a motion approving the Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a residential addition at 2651 3rd Ave N, subject to staff conditions.

1. Windows will be installed to be setback within the wall plane and feature a reveal of at approximately two to three inches to provide consistency with the historic windows at subject property.
2. Proposed windows will feature contoured, three-dimensional external muntins that replicate traditional muntin design.
3. All other necessary permits shall be obtained. Any additional work shall be presented to staff for determination of the necessity of additional COA approval.
4. This approval will be valid for 24 months beginning on the date of revocation of the local Emergency Declaration.

Commissioner Winters seconded

VOTE: YES – 6 – Burke, Gerdes, Michaels, Whiteman, Wolf, Wannemacher

NO – 0

Motion passed unanimously.

VII. LEGISLATIVE

A. City File 20-90600003

Contact Person: Laura Duvekot, 892-5451

Request: Review of a Non-Standard Marker Application for a historic marker at the St. Petersburg Shuffleboard Club, a local historic landmark

Staff Presentation

Laura Duvekot gave a PowerPoint presentation based on the Staff Report.

Executive Session

MOTION: Commissioner Wolf made a motion approving a historic marker at the St. Petersburg Shuffleboard Club.

1. The CPPC is recommending approval of the proposed content thereby certifying its importance to St. Petersburg’s local architectural history. The final design shall be coordinated for approval through Historic Preservation Staff, prior to manufacturing and implementation.

2. Relocation or removal, if required, shall be conducted in accordance with the City’s Markers and Monuments Policy.

3. Markers located within a local historic landmark shall require COA approval before installation. The Certificates of Appropriateness can be processed administratively.

4. This approval will be valid for 24 months beginning on the date of revocation of the local Emergency Declaration.

Commissioner Gerdes Seconded.

VOTE: YES – 6 – Burke, Gerdes, Whiteman, Winters, Wolf, Wannemacher

NO – 0

Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Derek Kilborn gave the Commission updates.
VIII. ADJOURN

Commissioner Wolf made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Whiteman seconded.

With no further items to come before the Commission, the public hearing was adjourned at 3:30 P.M.