Prince Murat House Rezoning May Require Unanimous Vote

By GERALD MOSES

A unanimous vote may be required on July 28 if the City Council approves rezoning of the Prince Murat House in order to allow construction of an apartment project.

A spokesman for the Baton Rouge Foundation for Historical Louisiana also reported Wednesday Rep. James H. Morrison has nominated the Prince Murat House to the National Trust for Historical Preservation for designation as a national landmark.

Councilman Goode Smith and Arthur Abadie said Wednesday they will be out of the city for the July 28 meeting. If residents of the area on Nicholson Drive near the Prince Murat House oppose the rezoning by petition, approval of the remaining five members of the council will be required in order for the rezoning to be approved.

The Prince Murat house is treasured by architects as an example of colonial construction. It was built in 1790.

Historical groups also treasure it as a residence where Gen. Lafayette, hero of the American Revolution, was entertained on his last visit to the U.S. and as the residence of Prince Murat, nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Out of City

Abadie and Smith, following a meeting of several councilmen with a delegation from the Baton Rouge Foundation for Historical Louisiana, reported they would be attending a convention of the National Municipal Association in Detroit on July 28, when the final public hearing on the rezoning case is scheduled.

With them absent and the petition properly filed, affirmative votes by the remaining five councilmen must be cast for the rezoning to be approved.

One of these five reported he is not in favor of the rezoning.

Faced with this situation, developers of the department project may attempt to delay the final public hearing in order to have the hearing before a full council.

A delegation from the Baton Rouge Foundation met with councilmen John Allphin Jr., Dewey Raborn, Gaston Gerald, Ken Osterberger and Abadie and Smith at 5 p.m. Wednesday to assure them, among other things, that the present owner of the Prince Murat House "will not suffer financially if the application for rezoning is rejected by the council."

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