City of Fresno

City Hall
2600 Fresno Street
Fresno, CA 93721

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, January 23, 2023

6:00 PM

Regular Meeting

In Person and/or Electronic
Room 2165N (Conference Room A)

Historic Preservation Commission

Chair - Jason Hatwig, LEED, AP, BD
Vice Chair - James Sponsler
Commissioner - Christopher Rocha
Commissioner - Paul Halajian, AIA
Commissioner - Don Simmons, PhD. M.A.
Commissioner - Julie Federico M.A.
Commissioners - Elizabeth Laval
Staff:
Jennifer Clark, Director; Janice Monroe, M.A. II
Myrna Rivas, Administrative Clerk

+ THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION WELCOMES YOU TO ROOM 2165A, LOCATED IN CITY HALL, 2ND FLOOR, 2600 FRESNO STREET, FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93721.

The meeting can also be viewed live at 6:00 P.M. on Comcast Channel 96 and AT&T channel 99.
Chambers, located in City Hall Room 2165A, are open for public participation.

Pursuant to the Executive Order, and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in the Commission meeting, please contact the General Planning Department, 559-621-8277 within 48 hours of the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT
The following options are available for members of the public who want to attend and /or address the Historic Preservation Commission:

1. You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

a) If you would like to speak on an agenda item, you can access the meeting remotely from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone, or Android device.

Please use URL: https://zoom.us/j/95457849931

b) Those addressing the Commission must state their name and address for the record.

OR

2. Join by Phone

a) Dial:

US: 1 669 900 9128
Enter Webinar ID: 954 5784 9931

b) Those addressing the Commission must state their name and address for the record.

OR

3. Email

a) Attendees may also email comments to Historic.Preservation@fresno.gov to be read during the meeting. Please include the agenda date and item number you wish to speak on in the subject line of your email (e.g., January 25, 2023 - Item A). And, please include your name and address for the record at the top of the body of your email.

b) Emails are not to exceed 150 words.

c) All comments received will be distributed to the Commission prior and during the meeting and will be a part of the official record.

Any interested person may appear at the public hearing and present written testimony, or speak in favor or against the matters scheduled on the agenda.

If you challenge these matters in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised in oral or written testimony at or before the close of the hearing.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Hatwig called meeting to order at 6:06 P.M.

Also present from Planning were Director Clark, Janice Monroe and Myrna Rivas.

Present 7 - Chair Jason Hatwig, Vice Chair James W Sponsler, Commissioner Christopher Rocha, Commissioner Paul Halajian, Commissioner Don Simmons, Commissioner Elizabeth Laval, and Commissioner Julie Federico

II. PROCEDURES - PROCEDIMIENTOS - KEV SAB LAJ

6:07 P.M.

Procedures were read aloud by Chair Hatwig

III. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

III-A ID 23-139 December 19, 2022, Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes.

6:09 P.M.

On motion of Commissioner Halajian, seconded by Commissioner Simmons,the above MINUTES were APPROVED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Hatwig, Vice Chair Sponsler, Commissioner Rocha, Commissioner Halajian, Commissioner Simmons, Commissioner Laval and Commissioner Federico

IV. APPROVE AGENDA

6:10 P.M.

On motion of Commissioner Rocha, seconded by Vice Chair Sponsler, that the above be APPROVED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Hatwig, Vice Chair Sponsler, Commissioner Rocha, Commissioner Halajian, Commissioner Simmons, Commissioner Laval and Commissioner Federico

V. CONSENT CALENDAR

N/A

VI. CONTINUED MATTERS

N/A

VII. COMMISSION ITEMS

VII-A ID 23-125 UPDATE regarding ADA upgrades to the exterior of the Fresno Water Tower (HP#1), located at 2444 Fresno St.

6:09 P.M.

Debbie Bernard (General Services) introduced Michael Osborn (Provost & Prichard) and began showing the site plan. Osborn spoke about reducing amount of concrete and explained how they were going to meet the Commission's requests from a previous meeting. Osborn answered questions on the concrete scoring.

Brian Barr (Director of General Services) explained the limited scope of work.

VII-B ID 23-166 WORKSHOP regarding APA's California Chapter Conference in September held in Fresno, celebrating the 75th anniversary of the California Chapter.

6:20 P.M.

Director Clark announced that the upcoming 75th Anniversary of American Planning Association's (APA) California Chapter takes place in Fresno on September 16 through 19, 2023. Steve Preston (City of Pasadena) voiced the importance for the HPC to be involved. Preston talked about the history of the APA and he expressed that it is an important opportunity to look at how planning has changed.

Mark Staples (City of Taft), suggested walking tours, mobile workshop sessions, and a Pop Laval photo exhibit as opportunities to highlight the City of Fresno. When mentioning the Laval exhibit, Director Clark and Commissioner Laval confirmed their support. Staples stated the benefits of Historic Preservation prospective and asked HPC to participate as much as they can. Clark and Preston explained how to submit topics while Clark offered to help any Commissioner with suggestions. Preston answered Laval's questions on expected attendance.

VII-C ID 23-163 Code Enforcement update on Fires

1. 1024 Klette Ave (12/28/22 & Demolition)
2. 1107 R St. (HP#41 The Collins Home)
3. 455 N Glenn (Potential North Park District)

6:38 P.M.

Director Clark reported on recent fires in the city.

1024 Klette Ave.
Clark said this site is being discussed due to its proximity to a potential District. Our latest Proposed Historic Designation focuses on the Klette Medical Center and Dr. Earl Randolph Meyer. The property may be relevant to the designation and was approved for demolition in late December. The reported unsafe levels of hazardous materials and imminent risk of collapse lead to Clark's approval of demolition.

1107 R St.
Clark reported the original home was unharmed, but the carriage house is a total loss according to the reports from Code Enforcement. Clark said the property owner has reported issues with his insurance company. They do not want to cover the cost of replacing the carriage house. Clark said the property owner is unable to reconstruct the carriage house.

Clark said the HPC will more than likely have to remove the carriage house from the DPR. Vice Chair Sponsler reported that the front window of the historic home has been boarded up and Clark agreed to look into it.

455 N Glenn
Clark reported this property is not on the register nor in a Historic District. The Commission discussed the limited authority of HPC regarding the home and that the Commission can only offer guidance to the property owner if they choose to rebuild.

Code Enforcement stated there was no imminent risk of collapse, but the fireplace was removed due to the risk of collapse.

VII-D ID 23-164 UPDATE on work being done at the Thomas R. Meux Home (HP #002) located at 1007 R Street.

6:50 P.M.

Edward Chinevere (PARC'S Assistant Director) described the scope of work at the Meux Home, adding that it is a City of Fresno asset. Chair Hatwig confirmed that the repairs were "in kind". Chinevere explained the expected timeline after questions from the Commission.

VII-E ID 23-165

UPDATE on Regular Monthly Topics:

1. Staff Updates
2. Architectural Subcommittee Updates
3. Economic Incentive Subcommittee Update
4. Plaque Design Subcommittee Update

6:53 P.M.

Director Clark thanked Commissioner Simmons for volunteering to sit on an interview panel for the Historic Preservation Specialist and that the need will rise again when the City releases an RFP for a consultant to conduct much of the work from the pending position (as well as the Proposed Blackstone Historic District Survey.) Clark added that she is hoping to find someone that can be here on a day-to-day basis working on applications, information requests, and demolition by neglect. Clark asked for help selecting a consultant adding that it would be appreciated if any of them are able to volunteer to sit in on the selection panel. Clark said unfortunately, the City has had fires recently that could not wait for HPC because of the impending danger, forcing staff to approve demolition administratively.

Monroe reported the upcoming Kearney Park site visit is tomorrow. The Subcommittee was invited to attend the opening of the structure.

Monroe reported the Architectural, Economic Incentive, nor Plaque Design Subcommittees met in December due to the holidays. She updated the Commission that the necessary Mills Act contracts were filed prior to end of year, meeting the deadline for property owners to benefit from tax incentives.

Sponsler added that the Plaque Design Subcommittee will meet in February to finalize the new design.

Director Clark asked the Commission for an approximate dollar amount needed for expenses expected to be incurred in 2023 by mid-February.

VIII. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

N/A

IX. UNSCHEDULED ITEMS

7:03 P.M.

IX. - A. Members of the Commission

Commissioner Simmons asked if HPC has plans for History Preservation Week (the first week of May 2023). The Commission asked about a budget available, suggesting a subcommittee help plan activities. Hatwig agreed and appointed volunteers Simmons, Laval, Rocha, and Sponsler to the new Historic Preservation Week Planning Committee. Commissioner Laval mentioned that the Historical Society has keys to the presentation windows in City Hall, suggesting HPC plan an exhibit . She added that the cost would be minimal. Chair Hatwig suggested a collaboration with Fresno State if they would like to get involved with Laval's suggested project.

Linda Scambray, from the public, informed the Commission that Roger Taylor will be speaking at the Woodward Park Library during Historic Preservation Week. Scambray suggested the new Fresno Fire Chief inspect historic buildings to make sure that no one is living in the abandoned properties and their status of water supply in case of fire. She added that the Fresno Memorial Auditorium has no handicapped access in the building, asking for money to install ADA access and more frequent inspections. Scambray also asked if historic designation provides protection to abandoned properties, and thanked the HPC for their work. Hatwig reminded Scambray this time is dedicated to Commissioners and that the public will have time later to speak

No additional comments from HPC

IX. - B. Staff

6:57 P.M.

Director Clark stated there are funds available to the HPC for expenses that may be incurred for Historic Preservation Week in May.

IX. - C. General Public

7:12 P.M.

Scambray spoke again about the event at the Woodward Park Library on May 25. She also suggested on utilizing Fresno's Memorial Auditorium and Hotel Fresno for special events during the APA's convention in September.

Nicholas Reyes, owner of the Collin's Home, asked for assistance from the Commission with the fire at his carriage house, and also referencing the burglaries and arson in the last three years. He reported no immediate plans to rebuild and apologized for the area being an eyesore.

X. NEXT MEETING

February 27, 2023.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Hatwig adjourned the meeting at 7:16 P.M.