

City of Fresno

*City Hall
2600 Fresno Street
Fresno, CA 93721*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Monday, April 22, 2024

6:00 PM

Regular Meeting

**In Person and/or Electronic
City Hall, Council Chambers**

Historic Preservation Commission

Chair - James Sponsler

Vice Chair - Jason Hatwig

Commissioner - Paul Halajian

Commissioner - Don Simmons

Commissioner - Julie Federico

Commissioner - Elizabeth Laval

Commissioner - Sarah E. Johnston

Staff:

Jennifer Clark, Director; Lisha Chen, Historic Preservation Specialist;

Janice Monroe, M.A. II; Myrna Rivas, Administrative Clerk

THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION WELCOMES YOU TO COUNCIL CHAMBERS, LOCATED IN CITY HALL, 2ND FLOOR, 2600 FRESNO STREET, FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93721.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – 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. Public participation during Fresno City Historic Preservation Commission meetings is always encouraged and can occur in one of the two following ways:

1. Participate In Person: Council Chambers, City Hall, 2nd Floor, 2600 Fresno Street, Fresno, CA 93721

a. To speak during a Commission meeting in person: You may approach the speaker podium upon the Chair’s call for public comment.

2. Participate Remotely via Zoom using the following link:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_cAUGIBe2SYygn3isiCuy4w

a. The above link will allow you to register in advance for remote participation in the meeting via the Zoom platform. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing additional details about joining the meeting.

b. To speak during a Commission meeting while attending remotely in the Zoom application, click on the icon labeled “Participants” at the bottom of the screen. Then select “Raise Hand” at the bottom of the Participants window. Your digital hand will now be raised. You will be asked to “unmute” when your name is called to speak. You will not be visible via video and there will be no opportunity to share your screen.

All public speakers will have up to 3 minutes to address the Commission pursuant to Rule No. 13 of the Historic Preservation Commission Bylaws of the City of Fresno (available in the City Clerk’s Office).

VIEWING HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETINGS (non-participatory) – For your convenience, there are ways to view Historic Preservation Commission meetings live:

1. Community Media Access Collaborative website: <https://cmac.tv/>

2. Cable Television: Comcast Channel 96 and AT&T Channel 99

Should any of these viewing methods listed above experience technical difficulties, the Commission meeting will continue uninterrupted. Commission meetings will only be paused to address verifiable technical difficulties for all users participating via Zoom or in the Chambers.

The City of Fresno’s goal is to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Anyone requiring reasonable ADA accommodations, including sign language

interpreters, or other reasonable accommodations such as language translation, should contact the office of the City Clerk at (559) 621-7650 or clerk@fresno.gov. To help ensure availability of these services, you are advised to make your request a minimum of 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Sponsler called meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Also present were Jennifer Clark, Dr Lisha Chen, Janice Monroe and Myrna Rivas

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

II. PROCEDURES - PROCEDIMIENTOS - KEV SAB LAJ

6:01 PM

Sponsler read procedures aloud.

III. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

6:02 PM

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

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

III - A [ID 24-422](#) March 25, 2024 Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

IV. APPROVE AGENDA

6:02 PM

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

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

V. CONSENT CALENDAR

6:04 PM

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

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

V-A [ID 24-120](#) Review and Adopt City's CLG 2022-2023 Annual Report pursuant to FMC 12-1606(b)(16).

VI. CONTINUED MATTERS

VII. COMMISSION ITEMS

VII - A [ID 24-558](#) REVIEW & COMMENT on the Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Fresno Air Traffic Control Tower Relocation Project

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission review and comment on the Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Fresno Air Traffic Control Tower Relocation Project.

6:05 PM

Dr. Chen shared a presentation showing the locations of the air tower and proposed air tower. Chen shared the historic status, environmental findings, the Fresno Municipal Code 12.1406 and Staff recommendations. Fresno is the lead agency on this proposed project. The Commission has the duty to review and comment for the preparation for the Environment Impact Report.

Francisco Partida, Assistant Director, Aviation for Fresno Airports Department, explained that the air tower is no longer providing safe working conditions. It is leaking, not heating nor cooling properly.

Karen Bouler, (Consultant), reported that the environmental process just started and requested the Commissions comments regarding what should

be included in the Environmental Impact Report.

The Commissioners had many questions and comments.

Simmons reported feeling strongly that demolition should not be a forgone conclusion. Sponsler agreed and explained that some ADA requirements can be waived in some instances of historic buildings.

Halajian asked about Mitigation measures proposed.

Johnston is concerned the area of impact and should include the other buildings and archeological survey

Hatwig explained that it is clear that for Fresno to grow, our international airport needs to be at a serviceable level, a new air tower may be necessary. Mitigation measures will probably come back as a historic monument. Federico agreed.

Halajian believed that adaptive reuse of the existing tower is positive for the image and reputation of our City. He suggested to include case studies on adaptively reused aviation structures and cost studies.

Partida expressed that Fresno needs a safe control tower as this tower literally can not and does not meet the technological requirements of today. He also voiced timing concerns with regard to funding cycles and a possible line of site obstruction with the current tower.

Partida with Dr. Chen, will plan a tour of the existing tower for the Commissioners.

Clark reiterated the condition and safety concerns of the existing tower. There will be 3 alternatives for the Environmental Impact Report, leave it intact, build a new safe control tower, and adaptive reuse.

Clark suggested a public review be available late this summer. Bouler will conduct a presentation so the Commission can comment on the project at

that time.

- VII - B** [ID 24-563](#) Monthly update on the Jose Garcia Brewer Adobe Building (HP #227 located at 5901 W. Shaw (APN 51004038).

6:41 PM

Chen visited the site on April 10th and found no progress has been made because the property owner is out of the country.

Commissioners discussed repercussions they can pursue. Sponsler suggested the 2008 a full restoration as alternative mitigation

Clark suggested working with Code Enforcement to enforce the conditions of the approval of the Entitlement.

- VII - C** [ID 24-565](#) Discussion on upcoming events for Historic Preservation Month (May).

6:51 PM

Chair Sponsler presented a flier of events planned for Historic Preservation Month.

Laval invited the Commission to the kickoff event at The Archive on Kern on May 2nd. There will be several open houses as property owners have graciously agreed to be open and available for tours. There will be several archived exhibits featuring Pop Laval photos, showcasing the Tower District Specific Plan, oral history project installation, Chinese artifacts, and Mclatchy Archives.

Halajian will conduct an informative presentation on adaptive reuse for historic buildings at the Sun Stereo Warehouse. There will be a Time Travelers Event at the Kearney Mansion, a Mother's Day Tea, two pub quizzes, a BikeThrough History event, and Vice Chair Hatwig and his brewing company made a clone of the Fresno Brewing Bohemian Lager. Hatwig explained this was a collaboration with other brewers.

Laval requested to use the City's resources to promote these events, Clark asked the Commission to provide small snippets of event information for

disbursement on social media.

VII - D [ID 24-562](#)

UPDATE on Regular Monthly Topics:

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

6:59 PM

Chen briefed the Commission on recent mailings conducted to get local historic property owners interested in the Economic Incentives like the Mills Act and Mitigation Program. Property owners can take advantage of these programs for assistance in the upkeep and maintenance of historic resources.

Halajian told the Commission that they have been conducting 5-year Mills Act site visits. Chen thanked the Commission for making time for these visits.

Clark explained that Chen and our Community Outreach Specialist worked hard to put the flyer together for mailing. Staff is working to make sure the Historic Resources is up to date with the County Assessors office.

Chen shared that the National Farm Workers Association historic marker has moved forward and are now in the final steps

The Commission asked Staff to provide residents resources that are available to property owners.

Clark reported that the Fresno Realtors Association is open to provide disclosures to new historic property owners. Sponsler requested a follow-up with the organization.

VIII. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

7:07 PM

Chair Sponsler noted and thanked Laval for all of her help with planning the Historic Preservation Month Events. He thanked all those that provided assistance.

IX. UNSCHEDULED ITEMS

N/A

IX. - A. Members of the Commission

7:19 PM

Simmons discussed concerns from property residents not seeing any property tax credits on our yearly tax bill. Clark suggested having sample calculations done so that they are not as angry or surprised by the tax credits they are receiving.

Simmons reported that The Founding of Fresno Plaque has been moved or damaged because it is no longer visible. Sponsler reported that it is located on the Northwest corner of Mariposa and Fulton, but it is covered.

State requirement has guidance of how it must be calculated. Staff will meet with the Assessors office to see if there is an error. Chen assured the Commission that she is investigating all sources and will report back to the Commission.

IX. - B. Staff

7:20 PM

Clark encouraged the Commissioners to attend City Council on May 2 at 9 am . A proclamation will be made "May is Historic Preservation Month", with the theme as "People Preserving Places."

IX. - C. General Public

7:22 PM

A member of the public announced that artist, Pat Hunter, will not be available to attend the Kick-Off event for Historic Preservation Month,

because she will be at The Grand instead (Art Hop). She also suggested the Commission conduct a walking tour of Chinatown.

X. NEXT MEETING

Chair Sponsler announced the next meeting will be May 20th, 2024

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Sponsler adjourned the meeting at 7:25 pm