

2600 Fresno Street, Third Floor

Historic Preservation Commission Agenda Executive Minutes

August 24, 2015

MONDAY

6:00 p.m.

CONFERENCE ROOM A
2nd Floor, City Hall

2600 FRESNO STREET

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL- 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Patrick Boyd at 6:01 PM.

Commissioners Present: Patrick Boyd, Paul Halajian AIA, Kristina Roper M.A. and Don Simmons Ph.D.

Commissioners Absent: Robin Goldbeck and Jason Hatwig.

Staff (and Consultants) Present: Karana Hattersley-Drayton, Casey Lauderdale and Dan Zack. Bridget Maley also present from Architecture+History, San Francisco.

Kristina Roper, as newly seated Commissioner, was asked by Chair Boyd to introduce herself and speak briefly about her background as an archaeologist.

II. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

A. Approve Minutes for June 22, 2015 and July 27, 2015.

There was not a sufficient quorum that had been present for either of these meetings and no action was taken on the minutes.

III. APPROVE AGENDA

The agenda was approved 4-0 on a motion by Don Simmons and a second by Paul Halajian.

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

V. CONTINUED MATTERS

None

V. COMMISSION ITEMS

Chair Boyd explained the protocol for the public for speaking and providing comments.

- A. Review and Provide Recommendations on the South Van Ness Industrial District Historic Survey Pursuant to FMC 12-1606 (a)(1)(b)(1) and 1606(b)(7).
(Action Item)

Staff Recommendation: Review and provide comments. Adopt a resolution accepting final survey with a recommendation to the City Council to adopt the survey prior to submittal to the California Office of Historic Preservation.

Karana Hattersley-Drayton gave an overview of the project through Power Point, including the initial impetus for the survey (*Business Friendly Fresno*), the area covered by the survey and the funding source(s) through a Certified Local Government grant and matching City funds. She also talked about the components of a historic survey which includes a historic context, survey forms for each property and the usefulness of a historic survey. She noted that the historic context for the South Van Ness Industrial District is posted on the City's website (*historic preservation page*). The context included several historic themes: Railroad development and expansion, City expansion and the development of residential subdivisions, fruit packing and processing, Armenian Town, the Fresno Traction Company and late 19th and 20th century commercial development.

Ms. Drayton reviewed the findings and recommendations (see staff report) including individual eligible properties and potential historic districts.

The staff recommendation is to review the final survey, provide comments and adopt a resolution to accept the final survey pursuant to the Fresno Municipal Code, with the addition of the Peck and Hills Furniture Company eligibility for either the Local Register or as a Heritage Property.

Chair Boyd asked for comments from the Commission.

Commission Simmons mentioned that the additions of more eligible resources since the last meeting are significant and important. He concurs with Commissioner Hatwig on the Berg Furniture Company building (2006 S. Mary) being considered at the Local Register level.

Commissioner Halajian: Asks Ms., Maley whether she was swayed at all by the engineering in the buildings, regarding their eligibility?

Bridget Maley (Architecture+History) The eligibility for the warehouse buildings was mostly based on the architectural character but we could see that there was a commonality with the roof systems, which was probably a complex construction at the time. It would be interesting to know more about the building [414 P Street] that was cut in half by State Route 41.

Halajian: Especially for buildings with a concrete frame; that was innovative engineering at the time. Not sure that an architectural survey would take that into account.

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Maley: Notes that it is difficult to assess structure from looking at a building from the street.

Hattersley-Drayton: It is important to remember that historic surveys create a baseline, so more investigation is possible in the future.

Commissioner Roper: Did you look at the potential for historic archaeological significance?

Maley: There is definitely potential within the older residential districts.

Commission Simmons: In some old railroad town warehouse districts, tracks went into the buildings. Is there any evidence of that here?

Maley: Buildings had side loading docks (next to rail spurs). The buildings aren't large enough for tracks to go inside.

Hattersley-Drayton: Mentions that a former PGE Warehouse had this feature but the building was demolished in 2002.

Chair Boyd: Is the concrete bond beam part of the buildings' aesthetic?

Maley: It was often difficult to tell whether the concrete bond beam still exists.

Chair Boyd opens the issue to the public.

Mr. L. Barnes: He has involvement or interest in several properties including 100 M (Fresno Brewing Company), 152 M Street, 45 and 12 L Street. He mentions that 12 L Street was a pumping station for the City but has since burned. He asks whether zoning in the area will change.

Dan Zack: The zoning has not been changed but is being reviewed. Part of the survey area will remain manufacturing but another area near SR 41 will include other uses. He is happy to meet with Mr. Barnes to discuss further.

Halajian: But the historic survey itself has no impact on land use?

Zack: Yes, the rezoning is separate from this historic survey.

Alex Orosco (303 L Street): Asks about the benefits of having a house on the Local Register, the process for putting it on the Register and how does it work when one goes to sell the property.

Hattersley-Drayton: Reviews the process and notes that if designated the house is recorded with the County. Interior modifications are fine but the exterior historic quality of the home should be maintained.

Halajian: Asks if the owner sells the property in say ten years, is there an advantage?

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Hattersley-Drayton: *It depends on what you plan to do with the property. Historic designation is a disadvantage only if someone wants to demolish the property. However, if designated you can market it for its heritage appeal and potentially get a better sale return.*

Simmons: *Mentions that he owns a historic home and recently saved a lot of money by using the California Historical Building Code for a new roof for his barn.*

Orosco: *Asks how he can find out if his house is eligible and about the benefits.*

Hattersley-Drayton: *Please call me (she gives him a business card).*

Orosco: *He mentions that the original beveled siding is still there on the façade but is covered up... will it be helpful to have this removed for designation?*

Hattersley-Drayton: *If a property is found eligible in its current state you are NOT required to return it to a former state although revealing original siding would be nice. You would be required to preserve the windows (fix or replace in kind).*

Orosco: *Also asks about 311 L Street, which has been stuccoed on the exterior. Would that property be eligible?*

Hattersley-Drayton: *Asks if it was found eligible in the survey? [No, apparently not]. Then no, it probably would not be considered for designation.*

Maley: *When we look at the [Armenian Town] district holistically, it could be brought into the District if there was an Armenian family living there in the past.*

Hattersley-Drayton: *A property owner can always ask to have a resource considered for the Register by bringing it up before the Commission for determination.*

Scott Boghosian (320 M Street). *Asks if they choose not to have a property listed on the Register can the City still mandate this anyway?*

Hattersley-Drayton: *Technically, a property can be listed on the Local Register of Historic Resources over the objections of the property owner but this rarely occurs. She cites the examples in the past of the Southern Pacific Station and St. John's Cathedral. It is unlikely that any of the historic districts that have been recommended in this survey will be considered in the near future.*

Boghosian: *But if it is within a proposed district?*

Hattersley-Drayton: *Reiterates that no action is being taken now on the District but if a property owner steps up and wants to have his/her property considered, it could move rather quickly.*

Boghosian: *He wonders why the Armenian Town houses can remain designated properties when they were torn down, moved and rebuilt.*

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Hattersley-Drayton: *The homes were not demolished; they were relocated [the roofs were often removed and rebuilt as they were structurally unsound]. Windows and even siding were removed, stored and then refurbished and replaced. Other materials were recreated from historic photos.*

Don Simmons moves that the Commission adopt a resolution to accept the survey and recommend that the City Council adopt it prior to forwarding the survey to the SHPO. Second by Kristina Roper, approved 4-0.

- B. Review and Provide Comments on the Huntington Boulevard Conservation Plan Pursuant to FMC 1610(f). **(Action Item)**

Staff Recommendation: Review Plan and adopt staff report.

Karana Hattersley-Drayton reviews the process by which the Conservation Plan has been prepared. She prepared a draft plan (actually first prepared several years ago) and a committee of property owners reviewed and revised it. She publicly thanks Dave Herb for his hard work on the District over the past seven years. She notes that the District includes 84 properties of which 80 are contributors. She recommends one change to the draft as submitted regarding a demolition protocol [see staff report].

Chair Boyd asks for Commission comments.

Simmons: Notes that the Plan seems similar to that prepared for the Wilson Island and the Porter Tract Historic Districts.

Hattersley-Drayton: Actually, apparently one was never prepared for the Porter Tract. However, the Historic Preservation Ordinance provides a template that we used in both the Wilson Island and here for Huntington Boulevard.

The agenda item is opened to the public.

Dave Herb (3263 E. Huntington Boulevard). Mr. Herb thanked the Commission and Karana for their support and noted that he supported the staff recommendation. He notes that he hopes the adoption of the Conservation Plan will help answer points of confusion among some property owners which has allowed them to hesitate to join the District. He mentions that 70% of the property owners are now within the Historic District and they are working to bring in more.

Boyd: Wonders if there are any elements of this Plan that are unique to the Boulevard?

Herb: There are some, including the fact that Huntington Boulevard is also a designated scenic drive in City documents. Other points are not prescriptive but serve to inform. He also mentions that there were two community meetings to discuss the Plan; that all property owners were notified via mail and/or hand delivery. The Conservation Plan was unanimously approved by all property owners who attended the final meeting.

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Jeannette Jurkovich (3729 E. Huntington Boulevard). *She is fine with the deletion of the clause regarding demolition as that is redundant but did want to stress that demolition can be a part of a whole project that will need to be evaluated. She is concerned that policies can change.*

Halajian: *Asks Ms. Jurkovich for clarification.*

Jurkovich: *She wants to ensure consistency.*

Halajian: *What is inconsistent?*

Jurkovich: *She is concerned about how properties outside of the District [thus those property owners who chose to “opt out”] and how any projects or work that they have will affect those in the District. She mentions projects on L Street.*

Boyd: *Asks staff if we have protocols for properties adjacent to historic resources.*

Hattersley-Drayton: *We review all demolition permits. If there was one on the boulevard that could affect a historic property it would come to the HPC. Regarding adjacency, technically the Commission does not have the authority to deny or approve permits for properties that are NOT designated, although many times the HPC has been asked to provide comments on projects that are near to historic resources.*

Halajian: *But an adjacent project will not be reviewed under the District Plan?*

Hattersley-Drayton: *That is correct.*

On a motion by Kristina Roper and a second by Paul Halajian, the Commission on a 4-0 vote accepted the Conservation Plan including the staff recommendation to revise the policy about demolition permits.

- C. Workshop on the Draft Citywide Development Code. (Daniel Zack AICP, Assistant Director, DARM).

Staff Recommendation: No action is required.

Dan Zack (Assistant Director, DARM) gives a PowerPoint presentation on the Code including its contents, improvements over the current development code and timeline for adoption.

Paul Halajian: *Asks where parking provisions are located in the code?*

Zack: *Parking regulations are grouped together in one section and are based now on use versus zone.*

Halajian: *Does the form-based code apply to everything?*

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Zack: *Form-based codes will only apply to downtown. The BRT corridors have many form-specific regulations, but overall the City code (versus the separate Downtown Code) is not form-based.*

Halajian: *If someone wanted to do a form-based code outside of downtown, could they?*

Zack: *No, they would need to follow the provisions for that zone. However, if someone wanted to do something very transit-friendly on a major street, they would probably not have any issues.*

Halajian: *How has the development community responded so far?*

Zack: *Responses are all over the map. Those developers who want to do mixed-use are excited. Single-family home builders are not as excited but we have been sensitive to their comments while still trying to maintain the features we feel are most important.*

Boyd: *One planner a while ago did a major study on taxes and density to come to a solution for what would work best in this community. Is this study still a part of the Development Code?*

Zack: *Keith Bergthold (former Assistant Director) was a major architect of the General Plan and the Development Code follows the path of the General Plan. There is a real fiscal awareness with these plans, such as how the City loses money through annexations. There are new offsets for this including Community Facilities Districts and the General Plan policy that half of all new development must be infill. The new Code is heavily geared to support infill.*

Halajian: *What will spur that vision for Blackstone?*

Zack: *1) The rules will not constrict someone who wants to develop along Blackstone; 2) the investment in the BRT will contribute to revitalization and will add more customers to the area; 3) there will be an incentivized fee structure and financing for the first projects and then the market will take off.*

Boyd: *We have had some concerns about the preservation of the Garden office buildings along Shaw.*

Karana Hattersley-Drayton: *The problem is that some of these are in the County [specifically those on the south side of Shaw at the north end of Old Fig.]*

Simmons: *Other Mid-Century Modern resources would be in the City.*

Hattersley-Drayton: *The City hired consultants to do a minimal historic survey along Blackstone which included several MCM resources. The General Plan also notes that we pay attention to the Shaw [BRT] corridors.*

[Unidentified question from audience member]: *Is the Code the result of the community meetings held a few years ago?*

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Zack: *Yes, that was the start of the General Plan process and now we are taking that and distilling it into the Development Code.*

Public (Mr. Barnes?): *He doesn't think that the West side got anything and was dismayed at the cost of the survey done for the General Plan. It disappeared and nothing happened. They [staff/consultants/] were asking about the problems from the community and this information never made it into the document. It's getting hard to do business due to the excessive regulations. But like Blackstone, it sounds good, but is it going to work? Like with Smart and Final wanting to build and the City wanted to put a parking lot in back. That's not a good idea what with crime in the area. There are a lot of good ideas but they need a lot of thought.*

VI. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

There was no Chair report.

VIII. UNSCHEDULED ITEMS

A. Members of the Commission

B. Staff

1. Archaeological survey work and late discoveries, High Speed Rail, Merced to Fresno.
- 2.

Due to the late hour it was agreed that the PowerPoint on archaeology and HSR will be saved for another meeting.

C. General Public

There were no additional comments or issues from the public.

IX. NEXT MEETING: September 28, 2015 6 PM Conference Room A, City Hall.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Patrick Boyd at 8:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Karana Hattersley-Drayton, M.A. (Secretary/Historic Preservation Project Manager)

Casey Lauderdale, (Recording Secretary/Planner II)

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September 28, 2015

MONDAY

6:00 p.m.

**CONFERENCE ROOM A
2nd Floor, City Hall**

2600 FRESNO STREET

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL- 6:00 p.m.

*The meeting was called to order at 6:07 PM by **Chair Patrick Boyd**.*

Commissioners Present: Boyd, Hatwig, Goldbeck, Halajian, Roper and Simmons.

Staff Present: Hattersley-Drayton, Lauderdale, Koluri (CAO) and Zack.

II. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

A. Approve Minutes for June 22, 2015 and July 27, 2015.

Karana Hattersley-Drayton mentioned the issue of commissioners missing at these two meetings and thus who tonight can vote, or not.

The June minutes were approved as presented 3-0-2 on a motion by **Jason Hatwig** and a second by **Paul Halajian**.

The July minutes were approved on a vote of 3-0-2 with a motion by **Jason Hatwig** and a second by **Robin Goldbeck**.

III. APPROVE AGENDA

The agenda was approved 5-0 with a motion by **Kristina Roper** and a second by **Paul Halajian**. [**Don Simmons** arrived late and is thus included in subsequent votes].

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

There were no consent items.

V. CONTINUED MATTERS
None

VI. COMMISSION ITEMS

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- A. Consideration of Approval of Request by the Property Owner to Designate the Azteca Theater Located at 836-840 F Street as a Heritage Property Pursuant to FMC 12-1612 **(ACTION ITEM)**.

Staff Recommendation: Approve.

Karana Hattersley-Drayton gave a Power Point presentation which outlined the process for designating a Heritage Property and how this differs from the Local Register. The intent for the Azteca is to ask the Commission to designate the Azteca first as a Heritage Property so that the tenants may immediately use the California Historical Building Code. The Azteca will also be considered tonight for the Local Register of Historic Resources, which must be presented to and approved by the City Council. The City has been retained to prepare a National Register nomination for the Azteca. Ms. Drayton presented the architecture and social history of the Azteca.

Paul Halajian: Asks what is the intended use of the Azteca, to remain a theater?

Hattersley-Drayton: Yes, the tenants want to have live theatrical performances and events, which may include food, thus they are going through a Conditional Use Permit process.

Jason Hatwig: So it is being considered under Criteria i, ii and iii?

Hattersley-Drayton: At this moment you are considering the Azteca only as a Heritage Property [which does not include the significance requirements as in the Local Register].

Chair Boyd opens the agenda item to the public for comment. There being no public comments the item was returned to the Commission for action.

Kristina Roper moved and **Jason Hatwig** seconded the motion to designate the Azteca Theater as a Heritage Property, approved 6-0.

- B. Consideration of Approval of Request by the Property Owner(s) to Recommend to the City Council the Designation of the Following Properties to the Local Register of Historic Resources, with Adoption of Findings Necessary to Support Recommendation Pursuant to FMC 12-1609 **(ACTION ITEM)**:

1. The Azteca Theater Located at 836-840 F Street.
2. The Dudley and Elsie Bates Home Located at 718 E. Carmen Avenue.
3. The Judy Tobacco Building Located at 155 Van Ness Avenue.
4. The Squirt Bottling Company Building Located at 152 M Street.
5. The Alice and John Williams Home Located at 1525 N. Wishon Avenue.
6. The United Grocers Inc. Wholesale Grocery Building Located at 414 P Street.

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**7. White Truck Company/Electric Motor Shop Building Located at 253
Fulton Street.**

Staff Recommendation: Approve and Forward to City Council for Adoption.

Hattersley-Drayton gave a Power Point presentation which included a review of the criteria for listing resources on the Local Register, the benefits of listing and the history and significance of each of the seven properties being considered tonight.

Robin Goldbeck: Asked is the side entrance to the Bates Home is original?

Hattersley-Drayton: Believes so, but the property owner is here tonight and can help answer that question.

Halajian: When State Route 41 cut through the United Grocer's Building was it cut open and a new wall put up?

Hattersley-Drayton: Yes, I believe so.

Halajian: But that façade is not original?

Hattersley-Drayton: Yes the street elevation façade is original but this northern side/façade cannot be easily seen. The consultants found the building eligible for the Register based on the integrity of the portion of the building that remains. The property owners are here tonight as well.

Boyd: When we spoke of this building at an earlier meeting there was a discussion of it being built in two phases, or was that another building from the survey?

Hattersley-Drayton: Believes it was another building. United Grocers was a very large building originally; there is no original building permit for it, only evidence from Sanborn maps [as included in the Power Point].

Chair Boyd opens the agenda items to the public for discussion.

Bruce Owdom [718 E. Carmen Avenue]: He has lived in the house for 33 years, appreciates the designation process and that the historic preservation program is valuable for the revitalization of Fresno.

Goldbeck: Was the side entrance original?

Owdom: Yes, as far as he knows, Everything on the street elevation is original but we may replace the awning on the north.

Halajian: Is the color scheme original?

Owdom: He is not sure. He has found a photo of the house from the 1920s but it's in black and white. [Mr. Owdom has since submitted a copy of the photo for the property file.]

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Pete Romero [owner of 1525 N. Wishon]: Mentions that when he first moved into the home it was in poor condition, but he has repaired and maintained it since. He suggests that it is a Sears-Roebuck house as it is similar to others from the catalogue that have been documented. He thinks this property is of value to the community.

Public comment concludes and Chair Boyd returns the agenda items to the Commission for action.

Simmons: Asks about the Squirt Building... what is the date of the façade versus the date of the Quonset hut?

Hattersley-Drayton: She is unsure, but it is the Quonset hut that makes the building significant.

Simmons: Asks if the false front façade is concrete?

Hattersley-Drayton: The false front is wood... I can try to pull the building permit.

[Owner from audience: We could not find the building permit.]

Hatwig: Thanks all the property owners for bringing their buildings forward for designation.

Chair Boyd takes a vote on each property:

The Azteca Theater is recommended for designation on the Local Register 6-0 on a motion by Don Simmons with a second by Robin Goldbeck.

The Bates Home is recommended for designation on the Local Register 6-0 by a motion by Jason Hatwig and a second by Kristina Roper.

The Judy Tobacco Building is recommended for designation on the Local Register 6-0 by a motion by Kristina Roper and a second by Jason Hatwig.

The Squirt Bottling Company Building is recommended for designation on the Local Register of Historic Resources 6-0 with a motion by Don Simmons and a second by Robin Goldbeck.

The Williams Home is recommended for designation on the Local Register of Historic Resources 6-0 with a motion by Robin Goldbeck and a second by Jason Hatwig.

The United Grocers Building is recommended for designation on the Local Register of Historic Resources 6-0 with a motion by Don Simmons and a second by Kristina Roper.

The White Truck Company/Electric Motor Shop is recommended for designation on the Local Register of Historic Resources with a motion by Jason Hatwig and a second by Don Simmons.

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- C. Consider and Make Findings on the Application by the Property Owners to Delist the Craycroft Home (HP#182) Located at 6545 N. Palm Avenue from the Local Register of Historic Resources Pursuant to FMC 12-1614 (**ACTION ITEM**).

Staff Recommendation: Deny Application and Forward to the City Council.

Karana Hattersley-Drayton gives a Power Point presentation on the Craycroft Home, with an overview of the architectural features, history, planning entitlements and conditions of approval for past projects, etc.

Goldbeck: Asks why the area was rezoned?

Hattersley-Drayton: The entire 80 acres was rezoned as part of a project.

Goldbeck: Wonders whether there has been a creative effort for public/private partnerships or grants to restore the home?

Hattersley-Drayton: The Fresno Historical Society looked at using the home in 1987 for their headquarters. A few years back the Commission itself formed a sub-committee to look at potential grants and restoration plans. Staff worked with the representative of the property owner to create a flyer for the sale of the property which we circulated last year [per the staff report there was also an article by Janice Stevens with a new watercolor of the home by Pat Hunter in a local magazine as part of the 2015 Historic Preservation Week activities.] So there have been efforts to market and find grants but nothing has come to fruition. However, the issue today is not about economic feasibility but whether the property still meets the definition of a historic resource with significance and integrity.

Halajian: Wonders whether there has been a formal seismic review? Is the home safe?

Hattersley-Drayton: Commissioner Hatwig may know more, but there are differences of opinion on this issue.

Hatwig: There have been visual inspections. He speaks more to the review process.

Halajian: But was a test done?

Hatwig: A seismic test was done but he is not sure how recently this was performed. It would be useful to have a new test. He and the team from FSU concluded that the building was sound.

Halajian: Talks about the ice house and how that was a clear life-safety issue. If this house is similar...

Hatwig: Notes that he felt safe inside the Craycroft.

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Hattersley-Drayton: Clarifies that Commissioner Hatwig reviewed the Craycroft Home in his capacity as a commissioner and not as an engineer on the project.

Simmons: Asks if there is a precedent to delist a property that has not been severely damaged?

Hattersley-Drayton: No, not in her experience here with the City (since 2002).

Chair Boyd invites the applicant to address the Commission.

Bill Robinson [representing the property owners, Linda East and Doug Johnson]: He has been involved with the property since 2006. If a buyer would materialize, he and the owners would be very happy but that has not happened. The property has been on the market since 2007. The property is worth about \$400,000. It has been advertised with information sent out to the preservation community. They have received hundreds of calls but no bonafide offers. The house has no systems; most everything has been stripped out or is out of date. So there is no plumbing, no mechanical, electrical, no insulation. There is a cavity between the walls which served its purpose but for a different time. The grounds are in bad shape and the property has been vandalized 200 times. The roof is not tied to the walls. It is a gravity fit. The actual rooms are quite small and are not useful for many contemporary needs. The idea of putting a building behind the building was examined but the plans don't pencil out financially.

He talked to Tom Richards at Penstar who wanted to put his office there, but he determined that it would not work. The retrofitting of the building would be near impossible. There is no foundation. The owner has spent about \$50,000 on plans and reviews. Some have suggested donating the building but that is not economically feasible for the owners.

Paul Halajian: He is reminded of the struggle over the preservation of the Old Administration Building at Fresno City College. Look what happened [the OAB was fully restored and is now back in use for classrooms, offices and a theater]. I am not here to say 'pour money into it' but that Fresno made a bold move to save that building.

Bill Robinson: Notes that he wishes there was public funding for the Craycroft; but reminds Commissioner Halajian of the cost for the OAB rehabilitation.

Paul Halajian: But it's the integrity that is under consideration.

Hattersley-Drayton: Reminds folks that the issue before the Commission is about whether the Craycroft is still historically significant. [Condition and integrity are not one and the same and economic feasibility is not on the table tonight for discussion.] Another iconic building that was fully restored is the Helm Home. But at issue is the question, How long can you wait? The Craycroft Home is not posing a danger and still looks as it did when it was built in the 1920s.

Chair Boyd opens the agenda item to the public for discussion. There is no public comment and the item is closed.

Hatwig: Notes that this is personally a tough one for him; he still views the home as a gem. He reviewed the Historic Preservation Ordinance recently and the Minimum Maintenance standards

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which require property owners to keep their building intact. He bases his decision on this question on the Code.

Simmons: *He sees delisting the building as removing another barrier of protection for this home. There is history embedded in this house. There is no precedent for delisting. I plan to support staff's recommendation to deny the application.*

Boyd: *Asks Dr. Simmons if he is making a motion.*

Simmons: *Answers affirmatively.*

The Commission on a 6-0 vote approves the staff recommendation to deny the request to delist the Craycroft Home from the Local Register, motion by Dr. Don Simmons and second by Kristina Roper.

- D. Consider and Make Findings on the Application by the Property Owner to Demolish the Collins Home (HR# 005) Located at 1752 L Street Pursuant to FMC 12-1619(a) **(ACTION ITEM).**

Staff Recommendation: Approve.

Karana Hattersley-Drayton *gives an overview of the Collin's Home, its history, the political background of its designation as a Heritage Property with images as well of other historic (and non-designated) older buildings that have burned in the area. She mentions the potential for a Preservation Mitigation Fund and how it may be used to help owners. She notes that both fire and code staff are also looking at solutions.*

Commissioner Simmons: *Notes that when folks call the Police Department about homeless/intruders in vacant buildings they undoubtedly assume that this information is passed along to staff that are responsible for property enforcement. But this is clearly not the case. Neighbors called on the Collins Home "over and over again" and have also reported activities at other buildings in the area. This fire did not need to happen. It was pure negligence. And it will happen again because of a lack of communication. We need to have a better process, and better communication between police and code.*

Hattersley-Drayton: *Agrees that we need to have a better process. She reiterates that code staff had NEVER been notified about vagrants in the Collins Home.*

Boyd: *Asks if the police department is part of the Historic Preservation Swat Team?*

Hattersley-Drayton: *Not currently, but this is a good idea. The POP officer in the Lowell may be a good addition.*

Simmons: *For the record, the Collins Home was featured in a KSEE 24 series on blight in Fresno. It would seem that this kind of footage would get the recognition required for additional protection. Every person in this city should be angry that this house burned because it is indicative of the systemic failures that are occurring.*

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Chair Boyd opens this issue up to public testimony.

Warren Barnes (Owner of Fresno Brewing Company Building and the Squirt Bottling Company Building): Mentions problems that property owners have faced in the South Van Ness Industrial District due to vagrants breaking in and causing damage. There is a liaison person at the Police Department for homeless.

Karana Hattersley-Drayton: Reiterates her strong feeling that this is everybody's problem, we need a community solution. And one huge problem is poverty. She recounts the story of how three homes on San Joaquin, one the Burks Home, burned when tenants set an accidental fire from an oil burner that exploded, after their electricity was turned off. How do you combat poverty?

Simmons: Observes that it is ironic that some of these buildings previously served as centers to help folks find jobs and resources. And fires occur when there is not an investment to fight poverty.

On a motion by Kristina Roper and a second by Halajian, the application to approve the demolition of the Collins Home was approved, 5-1, with Simmons in opposition.

VII. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

VIII. UNSCHEDULED ITEMS

A. Members of the Commission

Kristina Roper asks when we will discuss archaeology [the Power Point on archaeology and High Speed Rail was postponed from last meeting.]

Hattersley-Drayton: Agenda was full tonight, will look to schedule it again.

B. Staff

1. Bike Through History, Saturday October 10, 9-noon (Historic Theaters).

Hattersley-Drayton mentions this [by now] annual free event will focus this year on Fresno's historic theaters. The actual route is shorter than usual, just about 4 miles. What is useful about the event is that most participants are bike riders, not necessarily history buffs, and the event helps to educate them.

Halajian: Suggests that perhaps Bike Through History could move to April as part of Architecture Week activities.

Hattersley-Drayton: Mentions the forum that we sponsored on Cal architects and the San Joaquin Valley that was part of the AIA event a few years back. Having another Bike Through

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History in April might be too soon.

C. General Public

There were no additional topics from the public.

IX. NEXT MEETING: October 26, 2015 6 PM Conference Room A, City Hall.

Workshop with the City's Historic Preservation Swat Team: Policies and Protocols for Protecting Historic Resources.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Boyd adjourned the meeting at 7:54.

Respectfully submitted:

Karana Hattersley-Drayton, M.A.
Historic Preservation Project Manager
Secretary

Casey Lauderdale
Planner II
Recording Secretary

2600 Fresno Street, Third Floor

Historic Preservation Commission Executive Minutes

October 26, 2015

MONDAY

6:00 p.m.

CONFERENCE ROOM A
2nd Floor, City Hall

2600 FRESNO STREET

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL- 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Patrick Boyd at 6:01 PM.

Commissioners Present: Patrick Boyd, Jason Hatwig, Robin Goldbeck, Paul Halajian.

Commissioners Absent: Don Simmons, C. Kristina Roper

Staff Present: Karana Hattersley-Drayton, Casey Lauderdale, Dan Zack, Kevin Watkins, Lupe Perez, Will Tackett and Talia Koluri, Esq.

II. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

A. Approve Minutes for August 24th and September 28th.

No quorum was available from the August 24th meeting and the minutes for September 28th were not yet ready. Both items were tabled until the next meeting.

III. APPROVE AGENDA

The agenda was approved 4-0 on a motion by Paul Halajian and a second by Robin Goldbeck.

Karana Hattersley-Drayton remarked that the agenda template has changed to match that used by the City Council.

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

V. CONTINUED MATTERS
None

VI. COMMISSION ITEMS

A. Workshop with the City's "Historic Preservation Swat Team": Policies and Protocols for Protecting Historic Resources.

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Staff Recommendation: No action is required.

Karana Hattersley-Drayton gave a Power Point presentation that outlined issues with the City's vacant and vandalized historic buildings, including tools available to staff and the HPC as well as some potential new ideas. She quotes a section from the General Plan regarding inclusion of the community in problem solving.

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Paul Halajian: Asked if the statement is from the current or soon-to-be-adopted General Plan.

Hattersley-Drayton: Explained that the new General Plan was adopted in December 2014. Dan Zack clarifies that what is still in motion is the new Development Code and that the Code defers to the Historic Preservation Ordinance [thus does not replace it].

Hattersley-Drayton: Noted that while the HPO allows for penalties for poor maintenance or demolition by neglect it lacks a mechanism to implement these penalties. She also stressed that Code enforcement and enforcement of the Historic Preservation minimum maintenance standards overlap but are not one and the same. She showed images of historic homes that have been lost through fire. New potential tools include demolition permit fees and a Preservation Mitigation Fund, as called for in the General Plan. Other ideas that have surfaced or have been presented include: a vacant building hotline, better communication with police and neighborhood groups, historic home sitters, adopt a resource program, alarm company partnerships, a City program modeled after Rhode Island's EveryHome, a program similar to the California Archaeological Site Stewardship Program, etc.

She recommends that the Commission solicit input from the public and appoint a subcommittee to work with staff on this very complex issue.

Jason Hatwig: He mentions the strategies that his sister has taken to protect a vacant home, with good neighbor relations, having a car parked in the driveway to make it appear that the home is occupied. Houses that are boarded are a big sign that they are vacant. Perhaps they can be boarded from the inside and covered with curtains? There should be training for owners on how best to keep their buildings secure.

Boyd: He notes that it is too bad that Dr. Simmons cannot be at the meeting tonight, due to his experience. It may not be insurance fraud, but if you know that you have a historic home and you board it and only provide the minimum standards, someone will get through and it is only a matter of time before it will burn down. Perhaps we need a different starting place than just minimum maintenance standards.

Hattersley-Drayton: She introduces and thanks the members of the "Swat Team" that are present tonight: Kevin Watkins and Will Tackett (with advisory from Talia Koluri). They can address their ideas and perspective.

Halajian: Does an owner of a historic property always intentionally go after the designation.

Hattersley-Drayton: Not always. Although the Commission can recommend and the Council can designate a resource over the objection of the property owner, it happens very rarely. However, if a building is a designated historic resource and it is sold, that designation stays with the building and has been recorded as such with the County.

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Halajian: It is his opinion that property owners know that they have a historic resource and that they cannot neglect it, that's the problem. If that building burns, they should be responsible for paying for it. That would be a huge incentive to keep the property in shape.

Hatwig: There are minimum maintenance standards applied to all homes, so he is not sure why the issue comes up more often for historic homes.

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Hattersley-Drayton: Most of the City's designated historic properties are in neighborhoods that are challenged economically and have other problems.

Robin Goldbeck: Wonders if buildings are in disrepair due to a lack of funding or are they owned by developers waiting to do something with the property?

Kevin Watkins: He cites some examples of vacant buildings and their circumstances [not all vacant buildings, historic or not, are fit for habitation.]

Will Tackett: If we adopt new fees and mitigation funds, the fund can help owners. We can make a list of priorities to allocate these funds. Maybe all properties are not designated historic resources, but they are at or near that threshold and beginning to fall into disrepair.

Hatwig: Likes the idea of a demolition permit fee. It is somewhat similar to farmland preservation funds.

Goldbeck: Likes the concept of tying fees to scope of the project and that it would be manageable.

Tackett: We do not want to create high fees but currently we charge nothing for staff review of demolition permits and any fee could make a huge difference. Could tie this funding to installing alarms.

Watkins (Code Enforcement Supervisor): Vacant houses are a problem everywhere. One owner has come up with a good idea. He has a portable wireless alarm system that alerts security to go to the unit when it is activated.

Daniel Zack: Asks if these have motion sensors?

Watkins: Yes, apparently so. And the property owner takes it and moves it to the next unit when someone moves in.

Zack: If this was a portable unit this would be useful in those cases where the electrical system has been vandalized.

Boyd: Neighbors could also have alarm systems that help monitor the home with a cost-sharing, co-benefit arrangement.

Hattersley-Drayton: Wants to distinguish between two potential programs and fee structures: demolition permit fees would be small, say for example, tied to the demolition of a burned garage, whereas a Preservation Mitigation fee would apply to a larger project.

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Hatwig: With a commercial development the net cost of the mitigation compared to building new could play into the decision to use existing resources.

Boyd: We see this issue in discussions on how things always need to pencil out.

Halajian: We need to define the problem. Why are people not repairing these artifacts? How can we make it more economically attractive? Maybe there are no permit fees; maybe some standards are negotiated. Achieving 80% of historic standards is better than a fire.

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Tackett: We have something like that now (referring to exemptions and variances).

Halajian: Is it working?

Tackett: It's not commonly used, but that's where something like fees can come in.

Halajian: Perhaps this is part of the role of education to let developers know they can take advantage of this.

Hattersley-Drayton: Mentions that Casey Lauderdale previously, off-record, mentioned some ideas.

Lauderdale: When discussing this issue earlier, a coworker in DARM brought up the idea about boarding from the inside. Also, home security technology costs are coming down and can alert owners directly when motion is sensed. It helps.

Watkins: He mentions the new City measures regarding the use of special plexi-glass, but also notes that people should be held to a higher standard for historic resources.

Boyd: We should enforce fees for services: such as PD being called out and make the cost of neglect painful.

Watkins: We also have the Management of Real Property Ordinance that assesses higher fees for properties that have frequent calls. The problem is that the fees roll over and make it more difficult to invest, so another agreement was reached to set aside fees to encourage investment.

Boyd: We have some great solutions, but it doesn't matter if there's no education. Communication is also an issue. The Swat Team could have PD added to it. And if the main issue is homelessness, can the Povarelo House help?

Chair Boyd opens the discussion to the public.

Greg Trazakis (Granville Homes): He notes that they have had problems with properties in transition. They have purchased properties which later are deemed to have historic value so this creates issues. The home on San Joaquin Street is an example. He explains the situation with the acquisition and problems they have had with the house. Notes that the condition is poor and a rehab could not pencil out. So they want to have the ability to move forward and demolish it and put in an infill project that helps move the process along, and not have the building vacant too long. It is a challenge to keep the property secure.

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Halajian: Did you purchase the property and were unaware that it was a historic resource?

Trazakis: He defers to staff to answer the question.

Hattersley-Drayton: The San Joaquin cottage was evaluated as a contributor to a potential L Street Historic District in the 2006 Arts Culture District Survey. Granville staff knew of this. Page 5

Halajian: That was the crux of his earlier questions. That usually when someone purchases a historic property, they know what they are getting but if someone purchases a property and finds out later....

Hattersley-Drayton: That doesn't happen. And, Granville staff ALWAYS calls me before investing in a property.

Trazakis: He gives examples of the security measures that they take, makes a note on the status of the home's value and that Granville doesn't desire to demolish historic resources, but sometimes has reasons to do so.

Hattersley-Drayton: It is important to note that there are values beyond just the bottom line and whether a project pencils out or not. The Santa Fe Depot restoration is a great example of a project that may or may not have cost more than building a new station but the cache and pride in local history are priceless. Ditto, Granville's restoration of the Montague Bungalow Court which garnered them a Mayoral award and was featured on their calendar for that year.

Trazakis: Observes that some people restore these homes as a hobby; but we [Granville] are a business.

Halajian: What would you like to do with the San Joaquin home?

Trazakis: We'd like to demolish it.

Halajian: Purely on a bottom-line basis?

Trazakis: Largely yes. If someone wanted to move it we'd be interested, but we're not sure it has structural merit.

Hattersley-Drayton: Asks for clarification from the City attorney regarding the direction of this conversation.

Talia Kolluri: The direction of this discussion is for the broader context, not specific projects.

Julie Linxweiler [Urban planner and former HP Commissioner]: She is interested to know what other cities are doing. Suggests that we look around and "not reinvent the wheel."

Brad Wheldon [?] [298 W. Fallbrook]: Notes that all he is hearing about is money, but it doesn't seem to solve the problem which is fixing properties and getting people into them. He suggests that there could be a partnership with trade schools or even volunteers to do the labor to fix buildings. Maybe it could be a nonprofit foundation that Home Depot (or whatever) can donate to and owners could apply for a grant to have their properties worked on. At least with

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this we would be getting the job done. Especially when no one has money and fees wouldn't help with people who can't pay already.

Boyd: *Do you know any trade schools? Historic home restoration would be very different than normal trade work.*

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Lupe Perez (Downtown Manager): *Notes that this kind of work has been done by a program at City College [students restored one or two Lowell neighborhood homes]. She suggests that perhaps we could reach out to Fresno State as well.*

Goldbeck: *Habitat for Humanity has used these resources before. This would be a long-term effort.*

Boyd: *And as Will mentioned, this would not just have to benefit historic homes.*

Hatwig: *Hope for Youth volunteered with the deconstruction of Cedar Lanes. It would be great if there was a non-profit to set this up.*

Whelden: *And if it's citywide, that's a better funding potential.*

Goldbeck: *Your idea has a lot of merit. It could start with the existing neighborhood groups to identify properties.*

Whelden: *Mentions similar programs at Fresno High School.*

Goldbeck: *There is a challenge with minors doing the work.*

Halajian: *We could also suggest that labor unions use this as a learning tool, for specialty work.*

Jay Schaeffer [Owns the Long-Black Home, HP#113, 1727 L Street]. *He and his wife purchased the home as an investment; they like the preservation efforts in the City. The home was in a sad state of repair but they continue to invest in it. He sees many issues. He was on the scene when the Collins Home burned. Everything was boarded up except the basement. He was told "this is what happens when no one wants to rent the house." People had indeed made a lot of calls about the home; the boards needed to be checked.*

One issue is why are these buildings empty? Property owners have different thresholds for rental income. Usually businesses have a higher threshold, but folks like him have a lower threshold and take less profit. This is where the community can come in.

It would be nice to get low-end loans to help with repairs. It is also a shame that the historic districts have not been implemented in some of these areas, like L Street. It may be easier to mitigate losses within a historic district. We also see infill projects that come in that don't look like the historical homes. What is the vision of this area and how can the community come into this discussion. The infill projects on L Street do not support the historical density of that neighborhood. What I would push is to get historical districts to better manage and apply some of the ideas discussed.

Goldbeck: *Notes that some communities have a mothballing procedure.*

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Hattersley-Drayton: *That is actually a national protocol which we used as well for the Armenian Town Houses.*

Boyd: *We'd love for the rents to go up, but we have high poverty and low education and this doesn't help us fill historic homes. Yet Fresno is highly desirable, geographically speaking. But we don't have the worker base for companies. So we may have the most amazing historic preservation policies but we'll keep running against the issues until the larger ones are solved.* Page 7

Halajian: *What's lacking is a desirable downtown. If we had one, people would be more amenable to investing.*

Hattersley-Drayton: *And vision. Having vision and belief to get in on the ground floor.*

Boyd: *Discusses forming a sub-committee. City attorney recommends that this be held until it can be on the printed agenda.*

Discussion about the Fres-yes App that folks can use to notify city staff about various issues, including code.

VII. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chair Boyd *did not have a report.*

VIII. UNSCHEDULED ITEMS

A. Members of the Commission

B. Staff

1. After Action Report, Bike Through History, Saturday October 10.

Karana Hattersley-Drayton *reported on Bike Through History, which drew about 70 participants this year with a very enthusiastic response to the theater tours. Commissioner Goldbeck served as a last minute docent (thanks to Robin and all the volunteers and co-sponsors.).*

2. Report on the Status of Implementing Policies, Historic and Cultural Resources Element, Fresno General Plan.

Karana *gave a quick overview of the Historic and Cultural Resources Element and status of work to date implementing many of the policies. There were no questions from the Commission.*

C. General Public

Greg Trazakis (Granville Homes). *Asks about more details regarding the vision and historic resources on Blackstone Avenue.*

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Hattersley-Drayton responded that the City hired consultants (HRG who also did the Fulton Corridor Survey) to prepare a historic context as part of the environmental review. Although their contract did not include preparation of a parcel by parcel survey along the BRT corridors they did prepare 10 or so survey forms for mostly Mid-Century modern buildings of particular interest, a couple of which were designed by Robert Stevens.

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Zack: Mentions that Blackstone Avenue is a corridor we want to intensify and shift-away from auto-only to multi-modal. He mentions upcoming rezone efforts along Blackstone. If there is a historic building we will follow those protocols, otherwise the new code will be applied.

Hattersley-Drayton: One General Plan policy to highlight is that if a project area has NOT had a historic survey, the developer is responsible for preparing this.

Trazakis: Mentions that Granville feels that vinyl windows are better especially as regards energy costs.

Boyd and Drayton: Counter that vinyl windows are not necessarily more energy efficient than wood, which is a great insulator. And heavy drapes, insulation can significantly cut energy loss.

IX. NEXT MEETING: November 16th, 2015 6 PM Conference Room A, City Hall.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Karana Hattersley-Drayton, M.A.
(Historic Preservation Project Manager/Commission Secretary)

Casey Lauderdale, Planner II
(Recording Secretary).