



Historic Preservation Commission Executive Minutes

April 23, 2018

MONDAY

6:00 p.m.

2600 FRESNO STREET
CONFERENCE ROOM A
2nd Floor, City Hall

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

*The meeting was called to order by **Chair Patrick Boyd** at 6:03 PM.*

Commissioners Present: Patrick Boyd, Robin Goldbeck [arrived late], Paul Halajian, Jason Hatwig, Kristina Roper, Don Simmons

Staff Present: Laura Groves van Onna, Dan Zack, John Hastrup (CAO) and Amber Piona.

II. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

A. Approve Minutes for March 26, 2018.

The meeting minutes were approved 5-0, with a motion by Commissioner Hatwig and a second by Commissioner Roper.

III. APPROVE AGENDA

Staff requests that the Commission review V. Continued Matters after VI. Commission items.

The amended agenda with was approved 5-0 with a motion by Commissioner Roper and a second by Commissioner Hatwig.

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

None

V. CONTINUED MATTERS

Per agenda amendment, Continued Matters were heard after Commission Items

A. CONSIDERATION, REVIEW, AND DIRECTION RELATED TO STATUS OF POTENTIAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND HISTORIC SURVEYS

Historic Preservation Specialist Laura Groves van Onna presented staff report on this item. Proposed districts are (in no particular order): Brick warehouse and office building district, Yosemite Avenue Local Historic District, Fresno Hitching Posts Thematic Historic District, Thematic Survey of Blackstone Ave, Thematic Survey of Shaw Avenue, Terrace Gardens, Saint Johns Cathedral district, and Historic Warehouse District . Survey Year, Contiguous/Thematic, if District Record and DPR Survey forms completed, Comparison of contributors to total properties, number of listed properties included, degree of development pressure, need for intensive survey and need for reconnaissance survey. Staff is seeking direction from the Commission on this topic.

Commissioner Kristina Roper: I appreciate the three that you've identified, Brick and warehouse district, Yosemite Avenue and Historic warehouses.

Commissioner James Hatwig: Chinatown district, we have forms because of the High Speed Rail project, can we put that on the quick list. What do we do with the other five? Is there a timing thing we need to consider for surveys?

Assistant Director Dan Zack: I would say that the high priority proposed districts that come out of this workshop haven't been subject to an intensive survey, then there will be a resource management that has to happen. Sometimes we can do these in house, sometimes we need consultants. We've been successful in the past going after CLG grants. The more of the work that's been done upfront then that's less of an issue.

Roper: Well the Brick Warehouse and Office and Yosemite have less development pressure; I would suggest we prioritize based on development pressure

Commissioner Don Simmons: I would agree with that. Yosemite has so many individual properties listed; therefore it's not a priority.

Historic Preservation Specialist Laura Groves van Onna: Within the boundaries of Yosemite Avenue from the Park Survey there are only two listed. Is it possible more of them are Heritage Properties?

Roper: Chinatown and the Historic Warehouse district as the top two?

Simmons: I am pretty big on Yosemite.

Roper: Can we make that number three?

Commissioner Paul Halajian: I would like to put a plug in for one on Blackstone. Fresno Metro Ministry is launching the Blackstone Design Challenge in a year. It would be really helpful to have a survey of all the mid-century modern buildings of note. Those buildings aren't in jeopardy, but it

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would be nice to have a resource for that effort.

Chair Patrick Boyd: The city is working pretty diligently on BRT and things, yes?

Zack: Yes with focusing on infill and putting the BRT line there the effort has been towards revitalizing that corridor and create development pressure. It's kind of underutilized, on most sites there is room for plenty of new things, but there is stuff out there that does have value and identifying it ahead of the pressure would be a good idea.

Halajian: There are a number of great Bob Stevens buildings on Blackstone that aren't on this list.

Zack: Yes, this is an area that needs an intensive survey conducted.

Commissioner Robin Goldbeck arrives 6:53 p.m.

Halajian: Stevens isn't the only architect included in this potential district. [Louis] Armet and [Eldon] Davis did roadside motels in California and there are a few in Fresno.

Roper: Is our goal to put on a numbered order?

Zack: We have no preconceived notion. If you want to give us your top 4 that would be enough to keep staff working for the next few years, you want to rank all 9, you can do that. We wanted to supply information to have a good discussion.

Simmons: I say top four.

Halajian: If we don't categorize all nine is there a chance that all nine fall by the wayside?

Hatwig: Can we keep them as a continued item?

Boyd: Can we look at this annually?

Halajian: Should we discuss criteria we're using to categorize them, it should be more than 'oh, I like the buildings over there.'

Roper: We have a few criteria, developmental pressure and things that are close to be done. Chinatown would be a good start because it doesn't have a lot.

Simmons: thinking about public requests. Kathy Omachi and her group have sought some sort of relief and designation for some time now. I would like to move them up the list, if not the first.

Roper: Chinatown followed by Historic Warehouse, Yosemite and then Blackstone.

Hatwig: We're not doing this to make way for development, but to protect things that are at-risk.

Zack: Working on historic preservation and downtown revitalization, they don't have to conflict. The lack of any economic use of these buildings is the

most dangerous thing for these structures.

Boyd: If there's a scenario if the first three districts can be done in house, we don't have to wait four years to start looking for funding for the .

Simmons: I would like to put a plug in for the Hitching Post Thematic District as the most in danger. It's easy to miss them, they're small and spread out, if they're not in priority list, we should add it. It also might be the hardest to explain to the Council. I was recently in New Orleans and they have many hitching posts and they are all protected. If not in the top four, I'll make a bid for number 5.

Zack: A lot of them are in the public right-of-way, which changes the dynamic a bit. Shall we put it as number 5 or higher up on the list?

Hatwig: Let's put it as the number one of the haven't been surveyed.

Zack: That would make it number 4?

Halajian: [to Phillip Cleaver] Talking about economic viability, if it had been listed would you have still bought it.

Phillip Cleaver (634-640 Van Ness): I am not sure, maybe? I could see how it could scare other people maybe.

Hatwig: Can we read the list as it stands?

Groves van Onna: Top 5 Chinatown, Historic warehouse district, Yosemite Avenue, Fresno Hitching Posts Thematic survey, Mid-century Modernism on Blackstone.

Zack: We'll bring it back to you every year.

Public Comment Open

James Sponsler (330 N Park Ave, HP#33): I wanted to add onto what Paul [Halajian] had said. No one knew that it was a historic property until I brought the information to the realtor and it has made it more enjoyable for my family. We're trying to build a better history of the home, and as well as to keep the historical elements of the home. I think that the districts and the priorities are good priorities. Job well done.

George Hofstedder (730 W Ramon): Could the Commission explain why the Shaw Avenue potential district wasn't picked and why the Blackstone Avenue potential district was. Shaw and Blackstone are unique, and outside of what people think of when they think of preservation, and maybe this is a teachable moment.

Halajian: I agree that there is notable architecture in both of those areas; I might argue that the notable pieces on Blackstone Avenue may be older, Shaw Avenue really came of age in the 1970s, whereas Blackstone has a much longer history and more examples of a broader range of architectural styles. The reason that I pushed for is that there is a non-profit group in Fresno looking at Blackstone, and the outcome of that work will be used as

a guide for people who think that Blackstone is dead and should be forgotten. What we want to do is demonstrate BRT and General Plan can bring about a new urban context. I think that's a daunting but compelling task, had there been similar effort on Shaw then I would say let's look at Shaw. This study will really help our work.

Jeremy Clar (573 E Terrace): I concur, things will go slow until they go fast. In the meantime, what can we do as homeowners in neighborhoods that have the potential to be districts (like Terrace Gardens) to keep our neighborhoods while we wait?

Simmons: Wilson Island, Huntington Island and the Porter Tract became districts because the neighbors pushed for it. If the neighbors want a district, this commission will listen to that. Getting the neighborhood interested in being a district, that is also something that will help the Council (Huntington boulevard is a good example).

Clar: I agree with the priorities as listed.

Roper: If a house is over 50 years old and demolition permit is applied for, it comes here.

Hatwig: Also gives neighborhood time to come to decision, use the time to educate and excited.

Clar: One thing that might help is more information packets.

Public Comment Closed

Item Closed

VI. COMMISSION ITEMS

Per amended agenda, Commission Items were heard before Continued Items

A. STAFF PRESENTATION FOR PRODUCER'S DAIRY

Assistant Director Mike Sanchez presented an update to the Producer's Dairy project. At the late March hearing date the City Council continued the item for 90 days to allow the Mayor's Office to work with the family to find alternative site. As of this date he is not aware of any potential sites, will let the Commission know what next steps are.

Chair Patrick Boyd: Is the property safe from demolition?

Assistant Director Mike Sanchez: Never say never. The Council is adamant about not wanting to move the item forward. I think it's important that all parties keep informed.

Boyd: and the family seems?

Sanchez: I haven't talked to the family directly, but my understanding the administration is working with the family. There is a sense of urgency to

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find alternative sites before it comes back.

Hatwig: I know the mayor has a task force; we'd like to be a part of that if possible.

Sanchez: I can relay that to the administration. If there is an alternative site, then there will be a consideration of what happens to the existing site. We're currently in a holding pattern and I will keep the committee advised as the situation develops.

No Public Comment

Item closed No Action Item

B. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF REQUEST BY THE PROPERTY OWNER TO RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL THE DESIGNATION OF THE FOLLOWING PROPERTY TO THE LOCAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC RESOURCES AND ADOPTION OF FINDINGS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT RECOMMENDATION PURSUANT TO FMC 12-1609

Laura Groves van Onna presented the staff report on the Elia Home (634-640 Van Ness). Associated with Criterion i associated with Armenian Town, and Criterion iii as a live-work property type. Staff recommends that the Commission forward this property to the City Council for adoption.

Commissioner Don Simmons: This is a property that most people would assume it was already on the register. Happy to see another element of Old Armenian town preserved.

Boyd: Love the fact that it was always a duplex, that it was planned that way.

Public Comment Open

Phillip Cleaver (owner 634-640 Van Ness): We fell in love with this property. We have big plans. I would like for more people to know that this property remains.

Boyd: It seems like a lot is going to build up around it.

Cleaver: There are only a few property owners around that area. I think it would be a great area for more residences, condos. It's a walkable neighborhood, near breweries and Bitwise. IF there are more people like us who are

Hatwig: Any forthcoming announcements or is it in the works?

Cleaver: In the works.

Halajian: How's the structure?

Cleaver: It's in excellent condition. I did a little exploratory demolition. We're going to convert it to commercial occupancy.

Halajian: You know you can use the SHBC if you're listed, right?

Cleaver: Yes sir!

Simmons: Tell other people that!

Sally McCoy (1619 N Adoline): I love these old homes they are magical. More recent homes are boxes with 11 windows. Once the old buildings are gone they're gone. Back east there are many older homes that are lived in and loved.

Jeremy Clar (573 E Terrace): It's one of those homes that I could see losing to a fire, so congratulations.

Public Comment Closed

Staff recommendation was approved 5-0 on a motion by Commissioner Simmons and a second by Commissioner Halajian.

C. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF REQUEST BY THE PROPERTY OWNER AS A HERITAGE PROPERTY AND ADOPT FINDINGS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT DESIGNATION PURSUANT TO FMC 12-1612

Laura Groves van Onna presents staff report for the McCoy Residence (1619 N. Adoline Ave). Staff recommends that the Commission approve the request for designation as a Heritage Property as an early example of residential development in the Tower District, and exhibits elements of the French Eclectic, Italian Renaissance and Craftsmen architectural styles.

Simmons: Why Heritage and not Local Register?

Groves van Onna: I could not find enough evidence to show that the property embodied a particular architectural style or property type.

Hatwig: Karana [Hattersley-Drayton] reviewed it last year and came to the same conclusion.

Boyd: The architectural style is indicative of a lot of homes down there where there is a lot of mixture of different elements into a single building.

Halajian: I think it's an indication of architecture without architects. Building was designed by a home builder who knew enough to do something that looked lovely but didn't have the theoretical underpinnings of a well-defined style.

Simmons: Does this fall within the dotted line of the Adoline/Palm potential district?

Groves van Onna: I don't believe so.

Simmons: Are Heritage Properties eligible for Mills Act?

Zack: No, just local register, but they are eligible for the preservation

mitigation fund.

Public Comment Open

Sally McCoy (1619 N. Adoline): I purchased the home in 1996, from a man who said it was falling apart when he bought it and he restored almost all of it. It's about 101 years old now, I love it; it's a happy home. It deserves to be recognized, it was probably one of the earliest homes in the neighborhood. I would hate to see someone to change the charm of the home.

Public Comment Closed

Hatwig: This is what it is really all about. Sally is ready to get a plaque on this thing. It's a gem of the tower district and I hope we can vote to make it a heritage property.

Staff recommendation was approved 5-0 on a motion by Commissioner Hatwig and a second by Commissioner Simmons.

D. REVIEW AND COMMENT ON THE NOMINATION OF HOTEL FRESNO TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES.

Laura Groves van Onna introduces this item. The Hotel Fresno is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, and the Office of Historic Preservation has requested comment from the HPC and the City. City staff has drafted a letter in support for the Commission. OHP has requested written comment 15 days before the meeting on May 17th, 2018. Staff recommends that the Commission review and approve the letter and provide additional comment if needed.

Boyd: Question about the third paragraph. Could you explain what clarifications we are requesting?

Groves van Onna: One discusses the overall division of the building and the other clarifies the structure of the base, saying that it is not only two floors, but a floor and a partial second mezzanine.

Boyd: I would like the letter to say number one and number two, something to make it crystal clear what we are asking. I assume you want me to sign that. With the attachment there's a meeting on May 17th in Palo Alto, is that something we attend?

Groves van Onna: You're not required to attend. It's open to the public so you could attend if you wish.

Simmons: They are very fast. When they have multiple items, by the time it gets there it's stamp and go.

Hastrup: The most important thing is that any comments get there 15 days before the meeting.

Hatwig: One thing I found interesting is the photo on page four. The

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drawing of the opening shows a staircase but the photo showing it actually being opened, there was no staircase. Was this around the time that Fresno was putting in storm drains and lifting things up?

No Public Comment

The draft letter, as amended with no additional comments, was approved 5-0 on a motion by Commissioner Hatwig and a second by Commissioner Roper.

VII. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

None

VIII. UNSCHEDULED ITEMS

A. Members of the Commission

None

B. Staff

None

C. General Public

1. **James Sponsler**- Volunteer with the Boy Scouts. One of our original office locations L and Kern St. We'd like to get in contact with the property owner to place something to note that. Next year is 100 year anniversary of the Sequoia Council.

Halajian: Did they build it?

Sponsler: No, their office is where the Char Burger is. They did built Bullard and Marks. In 1919 the Sequoia Council started at 701 L Street.

Public Comment Closed

IX. NEXT MEETING: May 23, 2018, 6 PM Conference Room A, City Hall.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Boyd adjourned the meeting at 7:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Laura Groves van Onna, Historic

Preservation Specialist

Amber Piona, Recording Secretary