



# Historic Preservation Commission Executive Minutes

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December 17, 2018

MONDAY

6:00 p.m.

2600 FRESNO STREET  
CONFERENCE ROOM A  
2<sup>nd</sup> 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 6:00 PM.*

**Commissioners Present:** Patrick Boyd, Robin Goldbeck, Jason Hatwig, C. Kristina Roper

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

**II. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES**

A. Approve Minutes for November 26, 2018.

*The minutes for November 26, 2018 were approved 4-0 with a motion by Commissioner Hatwig and a second by Commissioner Roper.*

**III. APPROVE AGENDA**

*The agenda with was approved 4-0 with a motion by Commissioner Goldbeck and a second by Commissioner Roper.*

**IV. CONSENT CALENDAR**

None

**V. CONTINUED MATTERS**

None

**VI. COMMISSION ITEMS**

A. CONSIDER AND MAKE FINDINGS ON THE APPLICATION BY THE PROPERTY OWNERS TO INSTALL FRONT YARD FENCING AT THE

WHARTON HOME (CONTRIBUTOR TO PORTER TRACT HISTORIC DISTRICT) LOCATED AT 1021 E WELDON AVE PURSUANT TO FMC 12-1606(a)(2) AND 12-1618(h)(1).

Historic Preservation Specialist Laura Groves van Onna presented the staff report on the application by the property owners to install front yard fencing the Wharton Home, 1021 E Weldon Ave, a contributor to the Porter Tract Historic District. Staff noted that although the subject request does not normally require a permit, because the project proposal is or could be a substantial alteration to a historic resource, it requires review by the Commission. The applicant is proposing a redwood picket fence, 3 ft. fence on three sides of the property set back three feet from the front property line. Primary concerns for staff are the main elevation and its relationship to neighboring contributing resources in the district, as they are the most prominent character defining issue of the historic resource. The fence as proposed meets the Development Code; the primary concern is the historic compatibility. Two properties in the Porter Tract Historic District have fences. The Porter Tract Historic District does not have a conservation plan and front yard fencing projects are reviewed on a discretionary basis. In accordance with standards the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Properties, staff finds the project would not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships or cause irreparable harm if removed in the future and proposed new work differentiated from old and compatible with the historic materials, features, size and scape, therefore staff recommends approval with conditions.

**Commissioner Robin Goldbeck:** Did they consider any other fence design?

**Historic Preservation Specialist Laura Groves van Onna:** Yes, the initial proposal from the applicant included a chicken wire fencing framed by wood was originally proposed, but this fencing type is not permitted by the Development Code.

**Commissioner Patrick Boyd:** Will they be doing any landscaping in and around the fencing?

**Groves van Onna:** Between the fencing and the sidewalk. If I recall with discussion with them they had talked about it, we can add that as a stipulation if you would like.

**Commissioner Jason Hatwig:** Sure, at least shrubbery up to 18 inches.

**Boyd:** They are going to have to. Whenever you do a landscape project like this you're going down a slippery slope. So there are irrigation heads spraying to the inside of the turf and another set spraying to the outside of the turf which is how you get coverage. If you put a fence down the middle of it, you're going to block the irrigation spraying from top to bottom.

**Groves van Onna:** I recall hearing of landscaping, but not included in official proposal. It can be a stipulation.

**Boyd:** We want these people's project to succeed; it may not be condition-worthy, but if they want their fence to succeed, they are going to need landscaping.

**Deputy City Attorney John Hastrup:** 3 foot set-back.

**Boyd:** I love that they're doing a setback.

**Groves van Onna:** I think that that was their intention and they failed to include in their project submittal.

**Boyd:** It will be set back from the driveway, correct?

**Groves van Onna:** This driveway belongs to the neighbors and I believe it is just inside the property lines.

**Goldbeck:** The fence is going to butt in to the corner of the house.

**Groves van Onna:** I imagine that it's not going to be so close to the line that they can't park their car.

**Boyd:** I used to live down the street. The driveways here are so tiny; with a Model A they work just fine, but modern cars, not so much. A decent setback on either side will allow their neighbors and their vehicles to get in their driveways. They'll be good neighbors, essentially. And they will be park and get in and out of their cars without their doors hitting the fence. The traditional landscaping for these homes is turf on the front yard with a bit of foundation planting, and it allows for varied use when it comes to car parking. Fences put up a barrier. The logistics will get complicated.

**Hatwig:** I see on the neighbor's driveway they are going to have a two-foot offset.

**Groves van Onna:** The two foot offset is off of their driveway, but there is no offset on the neighboring. We could recommend a two foot setback on the east property line.

**Hatwig:** Just for that first fence area? It looks like they are doing a taller, six foot fence beyond that.

**Goldbeck:** I wonder if that's actually a gate area. Can we see the street view? I couldn't tell.

**Boyd:** This is their neighbor's driveway. So, their neighbor drives a full sized pickup and if they put a fence on that, they are never going to be able to get in or out. I realize it's their property. I don't believe it was intended that fences are going up with small lots and little driveways.

**Hastrup:** I would worry that the neighbors would be mad at us, if we didn't recommend a setback. I am not going to say it's a property right, but they've probably been stepping over a little bit.

**Boyd:** There's no way the neighbor can get out of their truck without stepping on their neighbor's lawn.

**Goldbeck:** Think of their own standpoint, they aren't going to want to have someone keep busting the fence down and having to repair it.

**Boyd:** With a picket fence tie it in offset from the house. Tie it on both corners of the house, set it three foot back or two feet on one side six feet on the right hand side. It would work well with the architecture of the home.

**Grove van Onna:** Adjust side fence setback to align with the building façade, and include landscaping. You mentioned a height of 18 feet?

**Hatwig:** 18 inches of vegetation would help hide the fence. We'd recommend that uniformly throughout many projects, even with the church on the corner.

**Boyd:** It makes a big difference. I don't know if we want to make it a condition but it's a wood fence and although it could be viewed as something temporary, fencing is such an opportunity to accentuate the architecture. A couple blocks down on Vassar there's a Tudor home, where more recently they have put up the quintessential white picket fence, and it's set back nicely and the fence is all tipped and peaked and accentuates the architecture of the Tudor architecture. They removed the turf and did the English country garden there. With a craftsman home that has the Craftsman body but is lacking ornamentation. I would love to see something that matches the architecture of the home. If you google Craftsmen fences, window detailing you will see one wide picket and three narrow pickets and then one wide picket, a rhythm to it. On a house that little detailing on it, adding a fence with a craftsmen flair, it would push the architecture of this home. The amount of lumber is about the same or possibly less. If you were to put six inch dog-eared board versus same six inch and another six inch and rip it three times and you gap it by a half an inch or an inch you'll get a cool architectural flair and it might be a cost savings.

**Hatwig:** You could also put a cap on the posts as well.

**Boyd:** It would be a quintessential Craftsman detailing that would make such a difference.

**Hastrup:** Is that proposed as a recommendation?

**Boyd:** Yes.

**Roper:** Should the fence be painted?

**Boyd:** No.

**Groves van Onna:** Thank you for the feedback. Would the Commission like to approve this with all of those conditions?

**Boyd:** Would these be conditions or recommendations?

**Goldbeck:** I think recommendations.

**Hatwig:** What about the recommendation regarding the setback? We might want to condition that one, or require that their neighbor gives them written consent or something because the driveway is going to be so narrow. Not that a neighbor has rights to your property boundary.

**Hastrup:** Well the neighbor might have a little rights, if for years they have been stepping out on to the lawn.

**Boyd:** All those driveways work with the configuration of the landscaping, but we're changing the configuration of the front yard by adding a fence.

**Hastrup:** If we have a recommendation we may have protection. But the safest thing for liability sake is to have that be a condition. Everyone is better off with that being a condition.

**Groves van Onna:** Side setback as a condition, then landscaping, irrigation and fencing style as a recommendation?

**Hatwig:** Fence design might save money; if they plan on doing it themselves, the fence design Patrick proposed would save them money on materials.

**Boyd:** So if they go down to 729 [E Weldon], I built a gate with that same detailing.

**Groves van Onna:** Let's take a look [attempted to pull up 729 E Weldon on Google Maps]

**Hatwig:** It's great that they knew to come to the City to ask.

**Boyd:** The permit was for the walkway, too? Are they going to redo the entry walkway?

**Groves van Onna:** It's not the entry walkway, it's a path adjacent to the driveway.

**Hastrup:** The walkway was already approved; it was considered a non-substantial alteration within [Laura's] discretion.

*No Public Comment*

**Boyd:** I am willing to provide an architectural sketch regarding the recommendation for the fence.

**Groves van Onna:** Yes please.

***The application by the property owners to install front yard fencing was approved, with a condition and several recommendations, 4-0 on a motion by Commissioner Roper and a second by Commissioner Hatwig.***

**B. REVIEW AND ADOPT CITY'S CLG 2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT**

## Historic Preservation Commission, December 17, 2018

PURSUANT TO FMC 12-1606(b)(16).

Historic Preservation Specialist Laura Groves van Onna presented the staff report the City of Fresno's 2017-2018 Certified Local Government (CLG) Annual Report.

**Commissioner Boyd:** Busier than I thought we were. I wonder how these reports stack up against other cities' reports.

**Groves van Onna:** I don't think they are posted for the public, except at individual HPC meetings.

**Hastrup:** Is it a public record? Could we submit PRA's to other cities?

**Groves van Onna:** There is one minor change I am going to make before we submit it; there is accidentally another resume page under Amber's resume in there that needs to be removed.

**Recording Secretary Amber Piona:** I didn't attend UC Berkeley; UC Davis, CSU Sacramento and University of Washington Seattle, but not Berkeley.

*No Public Comment*

***The City of Fresno's CLG 2017-2018 Annual Report was adopted 4-0 on a motion by Commissioner Hatwig and a second by Commissioner Goldbeck.***

### C. STAFF PRESENTATION FOR MAINTENANCE MONITORING STRATEGIES.

Historic Preservation Specialist Laura Groves van Onna presented the action plan for Maintenance Monitoring Strategies. Karana Hattersley-Drayton had most recently updated the Historic Property Watch List in January of 2016, and this list will be updated. Next steps include meeting with inter-divisionary staff to confer on how we want to move forward on historic maintenance monitoring, including organize for a reboot of the advisory committee, formerly known as SWAT team, and then reach out to HPC members. Also looking at how to use the FresGo app for historic properties. Currently finalizing the historic preservation database, goal to get that done by the end of 2018. Have had initial conversation with GIS Specialist Michael Andrade to see if it's feasible to connect the database to FresGo, so that the Historic Preservation Specialist is cc'd or copied on projects involving historic properties or in proximity to historic properties. Neither the user or the other staff will have to know whether or not a property is historic, the Historic Preservation Specialist shall be copied. According to ISD this is feasible.

**Commissioner Boyd:** Fire and Police will be included, too?

**Groves van Onna:** I reached out previous participants, and to other staff that had been recommended which included people from: Fire, Neighborhood Revitalization Team, Code, Current Planning, and our Downtown Revitalization Manager.

**Boyd:** If FresGo list is overwhelming then we can pare it back. Maybe we think it's bad, and people start using it, and it's worse than we perceived it to be. But then we would have a body of proof to show whomever needs to see that.

**Groves van Onna:** Right now I am depending on people come to me and telling me. I wanted to show you the 2016 watch list and I know that some of these properties can be taken off the list. This includes the Cowdrey Home [330 N. Park Ave, H.P.# 33], which was approved as a Mills Act property. There was one on 1225 Divisadero [Ohannesian Home, H.P. #178] that has been rehabilitated. The Craycroft Home (6545 N Palm Ave, H.P. #182] is on route to being restored.

**Hastrup:** Hotel Fresno [1257 Broadway, H.P.#166] has until the end of the year to demonstrate financing so we should know pretty soon.

**Groves van Onna:** The Fresno Trolley Cars [1731 S Cherry Ave, H.P #99] are in the process of being taken by the City Attorney's Office. There may be others that are not on this list, as well. We will be discussing this watch list tomorrow with City staff so if there are immediate properties that pop out to that need special attention let me know and I will bring them up tomorrow.

**Boyd:** We should consider a process for how properties get on the list. How do you know if people aren't living in a home?

**Groves van Onna:** Doesn't the city have a vacancy map? [Assistant Director Dan Zack] would know.

**Boyd:** I am sure there is a proper way to go through the City; there's a permit for boarding up a home.

**Groves van Onna:** 274 N Glenn [Thompson Home, H.P. #35] is being put into receivership. [Commissioner Don Simmons] had mentioned the Sample Sanitarium [311 N Fulton St, H.P. #208]; I will add it to the list. In any case I will keep you in the loop. This is what our draft historic preservation database looks like. This is meant to include designated resources, those are the priority, and potential historic resources as well.

**Goldbeck:** As they come of age?

**Groves van Onna:** Also from the surveys that have been done.

**Boyd:** Is this GIS based?

**Groves van Onna:** Yes.

**Boyd:** With all of that information in there, you can look at potential districts.

**Groves van Onna:** Looking on the right image, some of areas in the light red are potential historic districts taken from data we already have.

**Hastrup:** Chinatown is a potential district.

**Boyd:** Awesome, nice job.

*No Public Comment*

*Item Closed*

## **VII. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

None.

## **VIII. UNSCHEDULED ITEMS**

### **A. Members of the Commission**

None.

### **B. Staff**

1. **Vartanian Home (362 F St, H.P. #67)** – Staff has met further about the demolition permit application put forth by the Fresno Rescue Mission. The environmental review is still being scoped, but will be reaching out the Commission soon.
2. **California Merci Train Boxcar (3509 N First St, Heritage Property #25)** – Meeting scheduled between City Staff and Grand Voiture du California for February 15, 2019.
3. **Mills Act** – Staff has received the executed contracts from the City Clerk's office today and will go to the County Recorder tomorrow.

**Boyd:** Do we get to see the information from that? Do we get to see dollars spent and taxes saved, or is it private data? I would be curious to tabulate on the success of the program; these are



the amount of improvements that owners have done, and this is the amount of savings.

**Groves van Onna:** I agree that information will be valuable to know and to share for promoting the program; I will follow up with Dan. This year as part of the application packet, I did request their most recent property tax bill to facilitate the review process, but if you would like, it we could consider monitor that.

**Boyd:** It could be good as a historic preservation marketing campaign: X amount of money was spent to rehabilitate historic buildings and X amount of property tax money was saved by the people doing the work; lump them together to make the number seem really big.

**Groves van Onna:** It's a good idea. On that note, we didn't have brochures this year; I am currently working with our Services Aide on economic incentives brochures.

4. **Historic Preservation Week** – The Fresno Historical Society centennial gala will be occurring Saturday April 6, 2019. Wilson Island is having a centennial event one of the last two weekends in May, probably Saturday May 18, 2019. Chris Rocha will be doing the Lowell Home tour in May. Staff will advertise other events going for Historic Preservation week. Currently looking for ideas for an activity. The Fresno Historical Society hosts a trivia night once a month at a local brewery.

5. **Mandatory Ethics Training** – Reminder to the Commission to complete the mandatory ethics training. Staff has received three completed ethics training.

**Hatwig:** Don't speed through the test, you need two hours! It was really good training I enjoyed it.

**C. General Public**

None.

- IX. **NEXT MEETING:** January 28, 2019, 6 PM Conference Room A, City Hall.

- X. **ADJOURNMENT**

*Chair Boyd adjourned the meeting at 6:51 PM.*

**Respectfully submitted:**

**Laura Groves van Onna, Historic**

**Preservation Specialist**

**Amber Piona, Recording Secretary**