

2600 Fresno Street, Third Floor

Historic Preservation Commission Agenda

August 22, 2016

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 6:14 PM by Chair Patrick Boyd.

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

Commissioners Absent: Simmons

Staff Present: Jennifer Clark, Karana Hattersley-Drayton, Seth Mehrten (CAO), Dan Zack and Drew Wilson.

II. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

A. Approve Minutes for July 25th, 2016.

The Minutes for July 25th were approved 5-0 on a motion by Robin Goldbeck and a second by Kristina Roper.

III. APPROVE AGENDA

The agenda was approved 5-0 on a motion by Jason Hatwig and second by Paul Halajian.

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Remove Heritage Property Designation for the Azteca Theater Located at 836-840 F Street (HR#024) Due to its Designation to the Local Register of Historic Resources (HP#293) December 2015 by the City Council.

The consent calendar was adopted 5-0 on a motion by Paul Halajian and a second by Robin Goldbeck.

V. CONTINUED MATTERS
None

VI. COMMISSION ITEMS

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- A. Review and Provide Comments to Staff and the City Council on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan (DNCP), the Fulton Corridor Specific Plan (FCSP) and the Downtown

Development Code (DDC) Pursuant to FMC 12-1606(b)(5)(6) (**ACTION ITEM**).

Staff Recommendation: Provide comments.

Assistant Director Dan Zack gave a Power Point presentation noting that the process to adopt the new plans and downtown code was initiated in 2010. The plans and Downtown Development Code were put on hold while staff, public and Council worked to develop and adopt the new General Plan (December 2014). These are the missing pieces. The Fresno Corridor Specific Plan addressed mixed use in the heart of the city, the core of Downtown whereas the Downtown Neighborhood Community Plan focuses on the surrounding neighborhoods. These documents will guide future development and infrastructure projects. The Downtown Development Code tags onto the already adopted citywide development code and provides additional direction for projects specifically in the downtown area. It is a form based code. Staff worked to have all terminology standardized with the city-wide code. Avoided when possible new zoning districts. Where design standards were needed overlay zones were created for neighborhoods like the Lowell and the Jefferson. Some distinct zone districts were created particularly around the Fulton Mall/Street area to ensure there is a dense urban environment that merges with surrounding residential neighborhoods. Fresno needs a balance of retail to support consistent and stable development.

We want to ensure that that we have a vital downtown environment and that we learn from the best practices of other cities. "Eyes on the street" is one important facet of building design. The downtown code also addresses materials and window configurations.

The Chair opens the agenda item to questions from the Commission.

Paul Halajian AIA: Notes his concern that the Downtown Development Code may limit new design as it appears to be based on the neoclassical form of buildings with a cornice, shaft and base [Ed note: this is stated implicitly, although he does not articulate "neoclassicism" per se].

Dan Zack: Feels that the code is style neutral and new buildings can have a modern feeling.

Halajian: Recalls that in Fresno in the 1980s we had post-Modernism which led to some bad buildings, in his view. It would seem if we follow the code we could end up with badly designed buildings, how do we avoid this?

Zack: His prior experience with a form based code is that it led to a variety of good buildings.

Halajian: Wonders if that City had a design review committee for these projects?

Zack: There was a set of guidelines; about 25% of the submitted buildings were reviewed.

Halajian: He suggests that there needs to be a design review committee for this code.

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Zack: Notes that there has been a great deal of outreach prior to developing the draft Downtown (and City-wide) codes. We will continue to solicit comments and suggestions through the public review process. Key dates for all these plans/code: Planning Commission October 19th and the City Council on October 20th.

Hattersley-Drayton: And the purpose of this agenda item tonight is to solicit comments from the Historic Preservation Commission. She mentions a mitigation measure that was added by staff in consultation with the consultants, to ensure that properties not previously surveyed would be surveyed in a new development and that they should be assessed for their eligibility for the Local Register as well as the California and National Registers. Commissioners can submit comments tonight and/or submit them personally through e-mail or formal letters.

Jason Hatwig: He is satisfied that the draft EIR includes protections for historic resources.

Zack: The plan is to have all the documents adopted at one time, as well as minor General Plan amendments to allow these to work effectively.

Hattersley-Drayton: Reminds everyone that we still have the Fulton Corridor Specific Plan Historic Survey that needs to also go to Council.

Halajian: Asks how the Mills Act plays into this?

Zack: We are required [Ed note: through the Fulton Mall Reconstruction mitigations] to send a proposal for the Mills Act to the City Council 18 months after construction.

Halajian: He is happy to see an Armenian Town component in the Downtown Plan.

Kristina Roper: Requests additional language that requires timely reviews IF any archaeological sites are encapsulated. Also construction workers need to have proper training as part of any development as well as archaeological monitoring. [Karana notes that she and Will Tackett gave training such as this to the construction crew on the Chafee Zoo Expansion.]

There is no formal resolution or action by the Commission. Comments by the Commission were included in a letter prepared by Karana Hattersley-Drayton to Planning staff [see attached].

- B. Update on Status of High Speed Rail Projects Since Special Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission, September 19, 2011.

Staff Recommendation: Informational, no action required.

Karana Hattersley-Drayton gave a Power Point Presentation to update the Commission on progress of HSR and the various documents prepared as part of required mitigation for historic buildings. She noted that the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), upon review of the HSR survey that included Roeding Park, directed HSR staff to add both Storyland and Playland to the period of significance for the proposed Roeding Park Historic District, thus making these

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historic resources pursuant to California law. Good news is that this allows use of the California Historical Building Code for work at these sites. As a reminder, the Van Ness Gateway is slated to be relocated due to the fact that the rail corridor will create a cul-de-sac at this location, thus affecting its function as a "welcome" sign. [Please see the staff report for additional information.]

Karana introduced Robert Ramirez, archaeologist and staff for HSR.

Ramirez: *He has been working on HSR projects for the past year and a half. He works directly with the contractor to make sure that there is compliance and that procedures are followed as required in the various environmental documents.*

Halajian: *Asks how far along is the design for the new HSR station and are buildings going to be demolished for it?*

Ramirez: *The Station design is not part of the construction package, only work on the actual tracks/corridor.*

Halajian: *Asks if the Historic Preservation Commission will be able to review the station design, when available?*

Hattersley-Drayton: *Answers in the affirmative (see also the website for the Fresno High Speed Rail Station for more information.) [Ed note: Both the Southern Pacific Railroad Station and the Pullman Shed are historic resources and are thus protected...the Greyhound Depot is slated for demolition.]*

- C. Review and Provide Comments on Design Proposal and Salvage Plans for Architectural Elements for the Belmont Avenue Subway and Traffic Circle, California High -Speed Rail Authority Pursuant to FMC 12-1606(b)(6) (**ACTION ITEM**).

Staff Recommendation: Provide comments.

Karana Hattersley-Drayton gave a brief Power Point overview of the HSR plans and prior reviews of the Belmont Circle, Belmont Undercrossing and two bridges at this location, adjacent to Roeding Park. [See staff report for further information.]

Hatwig: *Asks if there are any mock-ups that show the future location of the Belmont Undercrossing Plaque, which the City will retain and install in a wayside exhibit.*

Ramirez: *The plans for the interpretive display are still a work in progress.*

Patrick Boyd: *Asks if there will be a Class 1 Bicycle lane on the new overcrossing; also how far along is the bridge design?*

Ramirez: *The design is mostly finalized but can still receive comments.*

Boyd: *On the rendering (as presented in the staff report packet) there are several design items*

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that have not been incorporated into the new bridge and which, if incorporated, would better capture the feeling of the bridge which will be demolished.

Hatwig: *References new bridges in Modesto that incorporate historic design elements.*

Halajian: *The Belmont Bridge is important in Fresno's history.... Feels a better job on the design of the new bridge is called for in order to be respectful. What can we [the Commission] do to ensure that this happens?*

Boyd: *Asks if there are a full set of plans that the Commission can review?*

Ramirez: *Yes, in the memorandum included in the Commission packet you can get a scale but no specific design details.*

Boyd: *Wonders if it would be appropriate to draft a specific document to ensure the message is clear?*

Ramirez: *Agrees it would be helpful to have comments in a document form to take to the engineering staff.*

Hattersley-Drayton: *The Chair may appoint a sub-committee for this purpose.*

Ramirez: *There is a 15-day comment period, and today is Day 1. The document is with the SHPO now for review.*

Hattersley-Drayton: *Notes her surprise that the document is already with the SHPO, as Fresno is a consulting party. How would the Commission's comments be incorporated and addressed?*

Ramirez: *They will put all comments together, once they are received.*

Halajian: *Asks if the Commission may receive all the construction documents.*

Hattersley-Drayton: *Yes, but will need to verify that they can be released.*

[A sub-committee including Patrick Boyd and Paul Halajian is appointed to prepare ideas for a more historic appearance to the new Belmont Overcrossing. See attached.]

VII. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

A. Discuss FY2016 Commission Report.

Patrick Boyd: *He has not had an opportunity to work on this but plans to have a draft by the next meeting.*

VIII. UNSCHEDULED ITEMS

A. Members of the Commission

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1. Update on the Armenian Town Historic District.

Dan Zack reported that he had met internally on the issue of the District and that 1) staff fully supports a historic district; 2) a District nomination will be one of the first actions implemented following the adoption of the downtown plan and code; 3) there was simple miscommunication on the boundaries and actual parcels with RDA plans.

Boyd: Asks what is the authority or protocol for removing an item from a HPC agenda.

Zack: We can make sure that the Chair [who sets the agenda with the Secretary] will be better aware of any potential changes.

Goldbeck: Wondered how the City Manager's office could have been confused about the proposed boundaries.

Zack: There was a discussion that needed to be resolved prior to bringing the District's last formal review to the Commission.

Goldbeck: Shouldn't there be a written response from the City Manager's office?

Halajian: Dan's comments, being on record, should suffice.

Zack: And the Armenian Town Historic District should move forward in November.

C. Staff

1. Update on Minimum Maintenance Actions, Fresno Trolley Cars (Diner) (HP#099) Located at 1731 S. Cherry Avenue and Response to General Code Policy and Program Questions.

Karana Hattersley-Drayton gave an update, noted that a letter had been sent to the property owner as requested by the Commission, with no response as of this date.

Boyd: Can the City use "eminent domain"?

Hattersley-Drayton: Eminent domain only can be used for the public good, as in construction of a highway or new school. We are looking at the potential for the receivership program and fee waivers, but only for soft not hard costs. There are already tax liens on the parcel. The property owner appears to be out of the country and perhaps is unaware of what she/he purchased. Karana notes that at the last meeting there was a question as to whether historic properties get first priority from code staff. Officially the answer is no, due to health and safety particularly in multi-family units. However, Code staff has been immensely supportive to preservation staff, as we saw, for example, with their heroic help in saving documents at the Rehorn Home.

Goldbeck: What is the process on receiverships?

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Hattersley-Drayton: *This is a new program for the City and one project only is in the works as a trial. She notes that the trolley cars are apparently for sale but she does not know the asking price.*

D. General Public

There were no additional comments from the Public.

IX. NEXT MEETING: September 26th 2016, 6 PM Conference Room A, City Hall.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 PM by the Chair, Patrick Boyd.

Respectfully submitted:

*Karana Hattersley-Drayton, M.A.
Secretary, HPC*

*Drew Wilson, Planner I
Recording Secretary*