



Historic Preservation Commission Executive Minutes

August 28, 2017

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: Don Simmons, Robin Goldbeck, Paul Halajian, Patrick Boyd, Jason Hatwig, Ron McNary, Kristina Roper.

Staff Present: Dan Zack, Seth Mehrten (CAO), Amber Piona, and Drew Wilson.

II. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

A. Approve Minutes for July 24nd, 2017.

The minutes of July 24th were approved 5-0-1 with a motion by Jason Hatwig and a second by Ron McNary with Kristina Roper abstaining.

III. APPROVE AGENDA

The agenda was approved 6-0 with a motion by Robin Goldbeck and a second by Kristina Roper.

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

None

V. CONTINUED MATTERS

None

VI. COMMISSION ITEMS

A. Craycroft Home Workshop.

Paul Halajian recused himself from the item due to his role as architect of the potential project.

Dan Zack explained that the item was brought to the commission due to a potential developer having a few questions on a concept, and would like to talk to the commission prior to moving forward.

The Potential property owner Reza Assemi spoke about his desire to redevelop the house and informed the commission that he would like to keep the house from being demolished, but would need to demolish the carriage house. The primary residence building is structurally sound and is a viable structure for rebuilding. In order to have the proposed project pencil out he would need to add multifamily in the back, and this would be built in the location of the carriage house. He would utilize the tiles of the carriage house in the remodel. The new housing would not mimic the primary residence house, but he would ensure that the design would be period appropriate.

McNary: What is the proposed use?

Assemi: The only project to pencil out would need to have a commercial element. The interior of the primary residence has been vandalized beyond repair, most of which was done to the design elements. It would still be intact if it was boarded up, and now all that's left are the floors and molding. Plans are to look for a restaurant or Wine Bar to go into the primary residence house, which has the potential to be a special project. He is currently in talks with the owner and in escrow on the property, but has a condition that he will not close on the property unless he is able to demolish the carriage house.

Zack: There would be six two story town houses correct?

Assemi: Correct and there would not be a change to the parking layout and no carports would be added as it would diminish the character.

McNeary: Was it going to be demolished?

Zack: The current owner was exploring the necessary steps for demolition.

Assemi: She had a potential buyer who wanted to tear it down and build an office complex.

Goldbeck: What is the condition of the carriage house?

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Assemi: It is visibly failing and would come down on its own in a matter of time.

Hatwig: I would be willing to see it go to keep the main house.

Seth Mehrten: Any decision tonight would not be binding.

McNary: Would the feature have to be delisted?

Mehrten: Believes that the carriage would not be delisted, but it would be addressed as not taking away from the listing.

Public Comment:

Janet Jurkovich – CEQA has an element of historic resources, and if there is a demolition it would need to be addressed for potential mitigations. An element of the house would be demolished and it would need to be environmental addressed. There may be a mitigation measure that may change the project.

No other public comments.

Hatwig: It is the only historic resource in my district and have watched it wasting away over the last 10 years. I would love to see it stay and rebirthed into something new.

McNary: There will be no decision made tonight, correct?

Zack: This is just a workshop to let the potential developer know if the proposed plan would be feasible.

Roper: It's a win-win situation.

Goldbeck: I like the idea and want to keep an open mind until I see a final concept design.

Roper: So does the commission not see the demolition as a deal breaker?

Boyd: As of now, but it will be dependent on the concept and what comes from the need process.

Assemi: I'm not willing to close escrow until I know I can demolish the carriage house. I need to know the process of getting a demolition permit. I was under the assumption that the carriage house was not listed, but do not want to move forward until I know the structure can be demolished.

Zack: I can give you a step by step process on how to get the permit offline

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tomorrow.

Assemi: I don't know if I can get her to wait 6 months, and there is another interested buyer. I will need a walkthrough of the process.

B. Huntington Boulevard Historic District Opt-In.

Item was requested to be added to the agenda by Commissioner Simmons by way of Chair Boyd. Dan Zack gave a recap of the history of property owners and their decision to opt out of the Historic District. With property owners changing Seth Mehrten researched if new property owners in the district had the ability to opt in and become a historic resource. In his research Seth found that if nothing about the property has not changed that would make it no longer eligible; they would have the ability to opt into the district as a contributing property.

Simmons: The odd element of the district is that people could opt out, but there was nothing discussed about opting in during the process of creating the district. It sounds like there is no policy that needs to be created to add them, and would it need to go to council?

Seth: The original item brought to the council had all of the properties listed and a subsequent amendment was passed that opted out some of the properties. In order to place back on the contributors list an amendment to the amendment would need to be approved by city council, which would be to remove requested properties from the opt out list. They will remain on the contributors list.

Simmons: I worry about the precedent this creates to potential future districts, allowing people to opt out.

Zack: This process didn't change what is required to create a historic district. This was a unique onetime amendment that did nothing to change the process.

Goldbeck: By allowing them to opt out does it change the boundaries of the district?

Zack: I'm not completely sure. There are structures that do not contribute to the Huntington district, but the district is still continuous.

Seth: I don't believe that the boundaries will need to be redrawn.

Zack: I know that the all properties were included in the boundaries of the district.

Goldbeck: The Armenian town has a non-contiguous. Will properties be able to opt in and out?

Zack: It's much harder to delist a property and there has to be evidence provided that the property no longer is a historic property. The findings are clear and don't allow for

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the property owners to go back and forth.

Public Comment:

Janet Jurkovich - A historic district is a land use zoning and it cannot be changed with other forms of zoning. It is intended to be an economic generator. This is a good example of a neighborhood that stood the test of time. There were only 5 noncontributory properties listed. The district was defined to make all of the houses but 5 in the districts historic resources, and it stunned the neighborhood that properties wanted to opt out. As a property owner I think there should be a policy that allows property owners to opt in. It would be great to put together a broacher on the values of having a historic property for real estate agents. The district has restrictions that don't allow people to build unwanted structures in the neighborhood.

Tony Terzian: I would like to see a process that would allow for property owners to opt into the district.

Zack: The process is in place to get it started to have it added to the contributing list.

C. Mills Act Update.

Dan Zack gave a recap of the potential Mills Act process that was discussed at the last meeting. He asked Seth to research the Brown Act policies on having a reoccurring committee with defined duties that goes on for a long period of time could create some potential issues, and found that it would be best to have a staff member lead the tours with one commissioner. The staff would draft a list that would be presented to the commission and then moved to City Council.

Seth: If there was a continuous subcommittee it would become a Brown Act Violation. There would have to be revolving members who work with staff to ensure lack of Brow Act violations.

Paul: This would just be the committee members joining on as interested parties? I was under the impression commissioners would be picked ad hoc.

Goldbeck: What is the role of the commissioner and what information can be transferred to the full committee?

Seth: An ad hoc committee would not be able to make any decisions.

Zack: The commissioner's expertise will be needed throughout this process. Plan is to bring seven to the commission in September and have them done by the end of the year and sent to the county.

Paul: Who will be the author of the contract?

Zack: Goal is to have property owners submit their ten year improvement plan with

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their application. That will be reviewed by staff and the commission, and when agreed upon by the property owner, staff, and the commission it will be sent to city council for approval.

Seth: All contracts would be reviewed by the City's Attorney's Office to ensure that there is continuity in the process and appearance.

Don: What is the process to notifying the public?

Zack: I want to push this out to all property owners and the process will be developed internally on how it will be administered. The program will moved forward more formally with the hiring of the Historic Preservation Specialist.

Don: Should the property owner who wants to apply start to draft up their list now, and how many items should they include as improvements each year.

Dan: I will be sending people who are interested examples of what other cities contracts look like. There contracts vary on their extensiveness due to the condition of the properties.

Boyd: When you speak to formalizing it you are talking about developing an online process. Would like to make sure all the applications are the same.

Zack: Yes, but this will develop over time and have a plan in place

Goldbeck: Would be nice to see it set up by tip of issues, like a punch list.

Paul Halajian: Do all items have to have a character defying feature of the house. For instance does an electrical update count?

Zack: It's intended to enhance the architectural features of the property.

Public Comment:

Janet Jurkovich: The Mills Act has been a long standing discussion, and how many cities have adopted this and can we get examples from them?

Boyd: We started this a year ago and we asked for the staff to not reinvent the wheel and to follow best practice of other cities.

D. Historic Preservation Specialist Recruitment Update.

Dan Zack informed the commission that the process has been long, but it is starting to move along. The biggest hurdle was the way the position was classified, and it needed to be reclassified. This required working directly with the union and personnel. There is now a new job description created and official title of Historic Preservation Specialist. This will be reviewed and approved by the labor groups and then

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published. Plan is for it to be posted in early September and it will be an open until filled posting, which would allow for a quick hire once a qualified applicant is found.

Paul: What is the ideal background of a successful candidate?

Zack: It requires a degree in the Architectural History or a History degree. This is required by the Secretary of the interior. If you know of any professional associations please let me know.

Roper: What about an archeology degree and what does the programmatic agreement exclude?

Amber Piona: Must meet the standards of a Architectural History or a History degree, and this would include a Cultural Resource Management degree.

No Public comments

VII. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

None

VIII. UNSCHEDULED ITEMS

A. Members of the Commission

Roper: I have 40 students who need to volunteer 24 hours towards historic resources for this semester.

Boyd: Would helping with Maintenance qualify?

Roper: Sure.

Don: Students helped with the Lowell survey.

B. Staff

Don: Any reports on old Armenian Town?

Zack: It is still supported and are working on getting it passed.

Don: It doesn't seem like it should go unnoticed.

C. General Public

There was no additional Public comment.

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IX. NEXT MEETING: September 25, 2017, 6 PM Conference Room A, City Hall.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Boyd adjourned the meeting at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Dan Zack, Assistant Director

Drew Wilson, Recording Secretary