

# City of Fresno

*City Hall  
2600 Fresno Street  
Fresno, CA 93721*



## Meeting Minutes - Final

**Monday, November 26, 2018**

**6:00 PM**

**Regular Meeting**

**Fresno City Hall, Second Floor  
Room 2165N (Conference Room A)**

## **Historic Preservation Commission**

***Chair Patrick Boyd***

***Vice Chair Jason Hatwig, LEED, AP, BD+C***

***Commissioners:***

***Robin Goldbeck; Paul Halajian, AIA; Ron McNary;***

***C. Kristina Roper, M.A.; Don Simmons, Ph.D.***

***Staff:***

***Daniel Zack, AICP Assistant Director; Laura van Onna, Historic  
Preservation Specialist; Amber Piona, Planner II, Recording Secretary;  
John Hastrup, Deputy City Attorney II***

## I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

*The meeting was called to order by Chair Patrick Boyd at 6:02 PM.*

*Commissioners Present: Patrick Boyd, Robin Goldbeck, Paul Halajian, Ron McNary, C. Kristina Roper, Don Simmons (arrived after rollcall).*

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

**Present** 6 - Chair Patrick Boyd, Commissioner Don Simmons, Commissioner Ron McNary, Commissioner Robin Goldbeck, Commissioner Paul Halajian, and Commissioner C. Kristina Roper

**Absent** 1 - Vice Chair Jason Hatwig

## II. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

### A. [ID18-1478](#) Approve Minutes for October 22, 2018.

Attachments: [2.HPC\\_Minutes\\_Oct\\_22\\_2018.pdf](#)

*Deputy City Attorney John Hastrup informed the Commission that the City Attorney's Office has taken an official position that it is okay for a Commissioner to vote to approve the prior meeting minutes even if that Commissioner was not there at that meeting.*

*Chair Patrick Boyd: So, as long as I reviewed the minutes I could vote to approve them?*

*Deputy City Attorney John Hastrup: Whatever standards you think are necessary to allow you to feel good about approving the minutes.*

*Commissioner Simmons arrives at 6:03 PM*

*Commissioner Simmons: I would like to make a correction to last month's meeting minutes. I was in attendance.*

*The minutes for October 22, 2018 were approved as amended 6-0 with a*

*motion by Commissioner Halajian and a second by Commissioner Roper.*

### III. APPROVE AGENDA

*The agenda with was approved 6-0 with a motion by Commissioner Roper and a second by Commissioner Simmons.*

### IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

None.

### V. CONTINUED MATTERS

None.

### VI. COMMISSION ITEMS

#### A. [ID18-1479](#) Adopt 2019 HPC Meeting Schedule.

Attachments: [3.2019 HPC MEETING SCHEDULE.pdf](#)

*Historic Preservation Specialist Laura Groves van Onna presented the proposed 2019 HPC Meeting Schedule. Notes a minor change to the calendar as posted: the dates of Thanksgiving were originally incorrect and are now reflected properly.*

*Boyd: The meeting date is unchanged? It is now the Monday before Thanksgiving?*

*Historic Preservation Specialist Laura Groves van Onna: Yes.*

*Commissioner Ron McNary: So next year the meeting is on the 18th?*

*Assistant Director Dan Zack: No, the meeting is still on the 25th. She had incorrectly marked the 21st and 22nd as the Thanksgiving holiday and it is actually the 28th and 29th. It doesn't affect the meeting date, unless you would like it to.*

*No Public Comment*

*2019 HPC Meeting Schedule was approved 6-0 on a motion by Commissioner Goldbeck and a second by Commissioner Roper.*

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

None.

## **VIII. UNSCHEDULED ITEMS**

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

#### **1. Sample Sanitarium, 311 N Fulton**

*Sample Sanitarium, 311 N Fulton (HP#208) - Commissioner Simmons noted that there were two recent break-ins at the Sample Sanitarium this weekend; this is related to other break-ins that happened at the house that burned. Two years ago there was a Strike Force with HPC members, Fire Department and Code Enforcement. Is there consideration of that being reenacted? I know that the Fire Department is going to put out fires no matter what the structure is. But there are some priority structures, of which Sample Sanitarium might be one. The Sample Sanitarium is having more trouble now with break-ins since the previous structure they were using burned down.*

*Zack: I haven't heard anything about break-ins. Let's look into that. The Strike Force was something that Karana [Hattersley-Drayton] had put together from time to time to deal with these issues. If you would like to request of us that we pull something together, we can look into that. Happy to look into reconvening the same folks and seeing if that's something that needs to be done.*

*Commissioner Don Simmons: We're losing a lot of structures this way; people are breaking in and starting fires.*

*Boyd: The temperature dropping, too. It's a seasonal explosion. We're probably in jeopardy of losing a bunch of new ones.*

*Simmons: We learned at the Strike Force meeting that the Fire Department*

*didn't have a list of Historic Properties. That was part of the issue; they had no idea if something was historic. In some ways it wouldn't matter to them, a structure is a structure, but maybe it does. If the Fire Department knew, would it change anything? What's standard practice for fire departments and historic structures?*

*Zack: I don't know if it does or not. But, there's also the old adage that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. When we're aware of things like this building having break-in problems, then we can do things like make sure the building is secure can maybe prevent a fire from happening.*

*Simmons: When things are reported on the FresGo app, how does Laura get alerted to that? Because Sample Sanitarium has been repeatedly reported and it seems that that should raise some flags somewhere.*

*Zack: Laura is not in the chain for FresGo reporting code for types of problems. Depending on the type of problem identified, it will get routed to one group or another and they are responsible for monitoring it, registering each stage of the process and then eventually closing it out. Laura is not the gatekeeper for any of these types of problems, but Code Enforcement will go to Laura if it does involve a historic property.*

*Groves van Onna: If it is flagged as historic then Code Enforcement does come to me, but I don't get directly contacted through the app.*

*Zack: It's all part of their coordination. If a property is known to be historical, or even if it's just old and it might be, they are pretty good about coming to Laura and asking if it's historic and what they should watch for.*

*Simmons: Isn't there potential that the app could be improved? For minimum maintenance standards, if you know it's a historic property at risk that there's a specific designation on the app? I can determine if it's a private alley or an open alley, it seems like I should be able to mark if a property is historic or not.*

*Zack: The software can pretty much do anything; it's really open book on*

*how we can set up options and what kinds of problems we want people to be able to report on. They try to keep it broad so that you can navigate the app and it doesn't become unwieldy. We should explore that, Laura) to see if the coordinators of FresGo are willing and able to look it; you have to figure out what kinds of problems you can report and how to label them, group it, and who's in charge and how to route it. It takes a while to develop that, but I'd be certainly happy to chat with the people and explore it. You're thinking if you see a historic building with a broken window/empty and then you FresGo that and it goes down a different channel from a regular code enforcement case.*

*Simmons: Well it would go down a different channel right?*

*Zack: If we set it up that way. Right now it would be a regular code enforcement issue; it would be assigned to a code enforcement officer and then if it looks like it could be historic, that officer would talk to Laura. It's potentially doable to set it up on its own track.*

*McNary: Would it help if the property was identified as historic when it comes up?*

*Zack: One of the things that Laura is working on is having a database in our permit tracking system that flags every historic property, potentially historic property, surveyed property, contributor to a district, so that that gets flagged on every inquiry that someone might do, from applying for a building permit on a house or something else. We're also looking into tying that to an online map, so that people can go to a map and see that in this neighborhood, purple means National Register, red means Local Register, orange means eligible, and yellow means Over 50 Years Old, or something similar. One of the challenges is that that system doesn't interact with the FresGo System, although owned by same company. You would think that they could be seamlessly integrated, but they are not, so that would be a tougher lift. Setting up a menu option or creating a category for historic buildings at risk is a much more manageable than in FresGo having it mapped out what's historic and what isn't, unfortunately that would not be possible because of software limitations.*

*Boyd: It seems to me that we would be missing an immediate step. If Don or one of his neighbors has identified that people haven broken into a historic home, first we need to get those people out of the home. So there's an immediate need for the police to remove those people and then it becomes a code issue.*

*Zack: We have a vacant building ordinance. Buildings are supposed to be secured in a certain way and that applies to every property, historic or not. If we find things are not secured then that's enforced, but we don't always know about it until it's too late.*

*Boyd: When Don and his neighbors are saying "somebody's here" on FresGo and keep pushing the button, it's like hitting the crosswalk button 20 times; we need it to happen now. There needs to be a more immediate response, because we have real-time folks who can give us real-time information. Is it possible for a more immediate response?*

*Zack: If it was possible to set up a separate "At Risk Historic Building" menu option then that could be set up so that it would not be assigned to a regular code enforcement person, but would involve Laura right from the beginning and she would coordinate with the relevant parties; sometimes it's a fire department issue, sometimes it's a code enforcement issue, sometimes it's a PD issue. You have to figure out the decision tree that would go into each one of these cases and how much you could automate and how much requires a human presence; it can be fairly complex. We're working with the parking division to overhaul how parking complaints go and it's really slow going to design it, test it, and running the software. It can be frustratingly slow. We can explore that and report back at the next meeting about if it's possible, or unfortunately or no way, or, if it is possible what it could potentially look like and what feedback or direction we would need from you and seek input from you.*

*Simmons: I don't know if any of those recommendations that the Strike Force made worked or not. Because I think we had eight buildings that had burned at that time. And then the Patnaude Building [Rehorn Home, 1050 S*

*S St, H.P.#090] didn't have any response and we went through the process, it was reported to Code Enforcement, PD, Fire, and we lost that one as well. I understand the limitations of the software, but with the Strike Force it didn't seem to work.*

*Zack: Short of armed guards stationed at every historic property, 24/7, nothing is going to be fool-proof. The burning building problem is well beyond Historic Resources, sadly. It's a city-wide problem tied to deep structural issues in our community and sadly historic buildings fall victim to it. It's not unique to historic properties, but adds another level of tragedy to it. You have the human tragedy and the property tragedy and when it's a historic loss, that compounds it.*

*Groves van Onna: I have reached out to the fire department to be aware that some of the buildings might be historic and to get in touch with me if they are concerned about a specific building. I did get a response. I will say that I do get notifications through email and phone directly from people who know to contact me. I agree that it would be better to streamline that process to get those notifications in one place, and the effort to update our historic preservation database that will be extremely helpful to staff and the public. I am hopeful for the future.*

*Boyd: So if someone sees a person inside a vacant home and they know they are not supposed to be there and they call 911, is the response time there, or that it's so far down priority list that it doesn't get responded to?*

*Zack: I couldn't speak with authority to that. We would have to check with the people who actually do the response.*

*Commissioner Kristina Roper: I think we talked about this a few years ago at the SWAT meeting and if the calls were going to a security company not the police.*

*Zack: That was unique to the L Street Property. Don, or other commissioners, remind me, I wasn't directly involved in the Strike Force, Karana managed that. Were there commissioner that were on the group.*



*Simmons: a couple of Commissioners, Code Enforcement and Fire. Police was not involved, but we did say at the meeting that Police should have been there because several of the issues were police issues.*

*Zack: Okay. Two commissioners?*

*Roper: Yes. I was, for a while.*

*Boyd: The whole thing was brought up because calls were going everywhere. There was zero response and buildings were going down once a week; it was nuts for a while.*

*Simmons: Literally on L Street, we were watching it happening in real time. The neighbors were calling every number possible. That was when we found out that they were first going to the security company who were then supposed to relay it to the appropriate authorities. We don't know if that was happening in a timely fashion or not. When you lose three houses on one street in a pretty short amount of time, and you already lost two around the corner and you wonder which ones next. Then Patnaude happens, and pretty much the same thing, the church is calling telling people that there's a problem here. The fact that this might happen at Sample next shouldn't surprise anyone because people are posting, people are calling. How many ways can it be pointed out without a response? It's a fenced, secured area, in a well-traveled area. What else can the Commission do? All the things that are supposed to be in place don't appear to be working.*

*Boyd: It seems like if we have this grass-roots activism by the local community that are calling in and have eyes on the structures in the neighborhood. There are emergency times and there's emergency times when the entire neighborhood is calling you. It should be quicker when you have eyes on this structure as much as these communities downtown.*

*McNary: And PD is not responding?*

*Simmons: No.*

*Commissioner Robin Goldbeck: Is there a way to track what comes in from FresGo, how it gets routed and/or responded to? May we make some points to improve that, all around of course, but specifically for historic structures?*

*Zack: We do have a person dedicated to monitoring that and finding ways to improve response time for all FresGo related reports. But again FresGo won't overcome public safety operators' response time. It's frustrating, we want to do the most we can within our ability to influence things. PD and Fire can get there when they can get there. We have requirements for securing buildings and if those are met, and if people are so persistent that they get through all those hurdles then we are going to have some tragedies. We want to minimize it as much as humanly possible. I just walked down Mariposa Street and was lamenting the Rehorn Home being gone, that corner is still empty. It seems like for an un-agendized item we are getting pretty deep into the conversation. It seems like Laura and I should do some homework over the next month and explore some possibilities and we'll put this on the agenda in December. Any good information we get, we can report back on and at that time maybe the Commission could elect two members to sit on a restored SWAT team if we're able to make that happen and start convening folks to explore every possible tool we have in the tool belt to eliminate or at least minimize these tragedies.*

*Boyd: Yes, that would be great.*

B. Staff

1. Vartanian Home, 362 F St

*Vartanian Home, 362 F St (HP#67) – Historic Preservation Specialist Laura Groves van Onna notified the Commission that a demolition permit application has been filed for the property. As it is a listed resource, staff has conferred and we agree that EIR [Environmental Impact Report] will need to be completed prior to the bringing of it to the Commission.*

*Hastrup: The context is that the Fresno Rescue Mission owns the property. Due to High Speed Rail [HSR] alignment, they are losing everything east of*

*G Street and relocating southwest of G Street and would like to put a dormitory where that house sites. They do not have a final agreement with HSR. This is an FYI. They have represented that they didn't realize it was a historic resource. We will see what progresses.*

*Boyd: They are the owners but they didn't list it?*

*Laura: It was HP #67*

*Zack: It was probably listed in the early 80s; it's been on the register for a long time. Even if it was under Rescue Mission ownership at the time, staff has changed over since then and might not have been aware. Although, looking at it, it's a great house, one might assume it might be a little special.*

*Laura: Property consists of a house, octagonal tank house, outhouse and a barn. It's a nice little composition and it would be a shame to say goodbye to it.*

## **2. California Merci Train Boxcar, 3509 N First St**

*2. California Merci Train Boxcar, 3509 N First St (Historic Resource #25) – Historic Preservation Specialist Laura Groves van Onna updated the Commission on the Merci Boxcar. The boxcar is still in current location. Staff is drafting correspondence with the Grand of California to see how to move forward.*

*Hastrup: Nothing to add, glad that you drove by and it's still there. If it had been moved, it would affect our leverage considerably if it was sitting in the Palm Springs Air Museum.*

## **3. Mills Act**

*Mills Act – Historic Preservation Specialist Laura Groves van Onna updated the Commission on the Mills Act Contracts. Staff is in the execution process and will have it complete by the end of the calendar year, possibly this week.*

## **4. HPC Commissioner Training**

*Training – Historic Preservation Specialist Laura Groves van Onna thanked Commissioners and staff for attending the previous training. Training will continue tomorrow morning at 9:30AM in Room 3078.*

C. General Public

**None.**

**IX. NEXT MEETING: December 17, 2018, 6PM Conference Room A, City Hall.**

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

*Chair Boyd adjourned the meeting at 6:37 PM.*