

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING

CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA

CONVENED THIS 12TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2017

AMEDEE O. "DICK" RICHARDS, JR. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1424 MISSION STREET

ROLL CALL

The meeting convened at: 6:45 pm

Commissioners Present: Mark Gallatin (Vice Chair), John Lesak (delayed by 10 minutes), Rebecca Thompson, Steven Friedman, Victor Holz

Commissioners Absent: None

Council Liaison Present: Robert S. Joe, Councilmember

Staff Present: David Watkins, Director Planning and Building; Edwar Sissi, Assistant Planner

NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

1. None

CONSENT CALENDAR

2. None

CONTINUED ITEMS

3. No Continued Items

NEW ITEMS

4. **Expansion of the Historic Inventory
Public Forum**

Information:

Properties from the Mid-century era (1935-1972) are now starting to be recognized for their historic significance. A recent survey of the City shows that 183 properties could be considered for inclusion on the South Pasadena Inventory of Cultural Resources (the "Inventory").

The Commission will discuss the Inventory and what that means for properties considered for inclusion. The Commission will allow property owners an opportunity to dispute the findings of the Survey. Property owners may present information to the Commission that supports their position.

The Commission will make its formal recommendation to the City Council at a later time to be determined.

Opening Statements:

Commissioner Gallatin opened the public forum by noting that the sound system was not functioning and asked if the public would speak loud and clear. He also noted that Commissioner Lesak will be arriving momentarily. He also mentioned that a sign in sheet was being passed around for the public to

fill out if they wanted to speak. Commissioner Gallatin mentioned to the audience that this is the public's opportunity to present facts and evidence in forms of drawings, permits, and other historical data to inform the Commission if their property should be included in the inventory.

Commissioner Gallatin introduced David Watkins, the Director of Planning and Building. Director Watkins addressed the public and noted that the inventory update was initiated back in 2015 by the direction of City Council. The Survey was to include the strip of land of the formerly proposed 710 freeway extension, and those properties that lie within, clean up the existing inventory due to inconsistencies and status code changes. The new Survey was to also include mid-century projects.

Commissioner Lesak explained that the City is doing a great service to the community by conducting a survey to protect cultural resources. This action was spurred back in 1989 when the City was designated as one of the most threatened places in America by the National Trust for Historic Preservation due to the planned 710 freeway expansion. As a result, the City conducted a survey of properties to evaluate potential historic resources in the City and identified a number of individual properties as well as historic districts that were eligible for listing in the State and National Register. That survey is part of national environmental law, or Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act obligates the Federal Government to evaluate impacts on historic resources for projects that involve federal spending, which the planned 710 expansion was to be partially funded by the Federal Government. This initiated a collection of surveys and information that became the formation of the City's Inventory, which gets updated over time.

Commissioner Lesak continued to say that the second thing to consider is that South Pasadena has always been very conscious of its physical environment. Notable architects and developers work here and have been very respectful of the City. Even to this day, the City requires a certain amount of review of any project that is built and that is codified in the Zoning Code. Any project with exterior impacts are subject to design review including all single-family, multi-family and commercial properties with some exemptions for minor work. Depending on where the property is located, what the conditions are, a project will go to a different place for review. The City has a Design Review Board for non-historic properties, a Cultural Heritage Commission for historic properties, and a Planning Commission for special projects such as hillside developments or variances. There are not projects in South Pasadena, other than those that do not need permits or are specifically excluded, that are exempt from going through some process of Design Review. That is the second point to make, that everything gets reviewed in South Pasadena. The third point is that historic preservation pertains to environmental law, the California Environmental Quality Act. The Act requires the City to identify historic resources to determine impacts. A lot of cities pass this burden onto the property owners and require them to conduct their own historic survey. South Pasadena does this work for the property owners and provides property owners with a clear path of what processes they need to take for their discretionary review. This is the frame work that exists, and why actually having an inventory is good. There are three things a property needs to be considered historic. First it needs to have a historic context, it needs to fit into history. Secondly, the property needs to be significant within that context and it could be significant for different reasons. It can be associated with patterns of history, development history, how the Los Angeles Region is laid out, where street cars rode, where transportation was. It can be significant for a famous person, for its architecture, or it can be significant for archeological, or pre-history reasons. Lastly, it has to have historic integrity, meaning it has to have enough of its physical characteristics left so that you understand its significance and it tells the story of its historic context.

Public Comments:

Ramona Carl (1313 Mountain View Avenue):

Inquired if property owners need to provide their consent to be placed on the Inventory.

Commissioner Lesak: No consent is needed.

Carl: Explained that they received their certified letter on September 29th and that it was very hard to compile information with less than a two week notice. Also, she mentioned that she feels she is being punished for having maintained the architectural condition of her home and will now be subject to being told what she can and cannot do to her property.

Commissioner Gallatin asked Commission Lesak if listing on the inventory means that a homeowner cannot make changes or additions to their property. Commissioner Lesak responded no, and that all properties in the City have to be reviewed for alterations as part of design review. Properties on the Inventory have more specificity, but they are subject to design review similar to non-historic properties.

Commissioner Freidman: Noted that no CHC projects were denied in the past year.

Commissioner Lesak: Added that the CHC has reviewed 126 projects since 2012, and only 2 projects have been denied.

Carl: Questioned the validity of the windshield survey and requested more explanation of how it was conducted.

Director Watkins: Mentioned that the survey was conducted by professional historians and surveying is a complicated process. There are certain criteria that determines inclusion on the Inventory. A windshield survey usually is one part of the survey to conduct a field assessment of architectural significance. The historians then do a record search and are also able to determine if certain clusters would contribute to a district.

Carl: Asked if this was her only opportunity to present information to the Commission.

Commissioner Friedman: Noted that the CHC will be making their recommendation at the October 19th meeting.

Commissioner Gallatin: Noted that the Commission will meet a week from tonight. As for the public notice, the state requires a 10 day notice. Tonight is an opportunity for everyone to speak regarding the inventory. Next week we will be making a recommendation for Council to adopt the Inventory.

Commissioner Thompson: Inquired what Carl's possible resistance is.

Carl: Mentioned that they bought the property 13 years ago and any changes were always tasteful. She would like to continue to make tasteful changes in the future, but feels she will now be limited by being placed on the Inventory.

Commissioner Lesak: Inquired if the changes made to Carl's property required permits and what review body she went through.

Carl: Mentioned that she went through the DRB for prior changes.

Lesak: Noted that the process is not much different for historic properties

Commissioner Gallatin: Noted that if Carl would like to continue and contest her property being included in the Inventory to come back to the October 19th meeting and pay particular attention to the three criteria of significance, integrity, and context.

Sue Matz (1324 Mountain View Ave):

Noted that she would like her property to be listed on the Inventory. Her home was constructed in 1967 by a well-known Laguna Beach architect, Jay Lamont Leighworthy, and was friends of Julius Schulman, whom also photographed the home. She mentioned that the City has lost many mid-century properties and that her home is downhill and not readily visible from a windshield survey. She would like to see her home be protected by inclusion on the Inventory. She mentioned her house has a hand-chiseled redwood door, brass door knobs and other special design features. Her house is about the landscape and being in the landscape, and all the doors in the house are pocket doors. She mentioned that she has not altered the home, just maintained it.

Commissioner Friedman: Noted that the property is considered for the Inventory, but the descriptors are not included because the surveyors did not have visual information.

Commissioner Gallatin: Recommends that the property owner provide information to staff and they can forward the request to be added to the Commission.

Glen Duncan (2031 Berkshire Ave):

Speaking for Joanne Hillard, 431 Arroyo Drive, and that Joanne is very happy to have her property included in the Inventory and that her house was designed by John Galbraith and that she would eventually like to be Landmarked and apply for the Mills Act.

Christine Sloman (1633 Raymond Hill, Unit 1):

Mentioned that her property to be included on the Inventory is not just her home it is also her business and her income. She has always made small changes every year as improvements. As a business, she is in competition from other apartment buildings for other renters in the area to provide amenities to her tenants. She expressed concerns with the possibility of wanting to tear down the garage and build another unit, and may no longer be able to if her property is deemed historic.

Commissioner Gallatin: Mentioned that Sloman raised some great points and that not in every particular case does a garage warrant historic preservation, and that it again depends on the context, integrity and significance of the property and structure.

Estella Cheng (1646-1650 Amberwood Drive):

Decided not to speak before the Commission.

Richard Riegel (1970 Winding Lane):

He mentioned that he wanted to bring some more historic information to the Commission regarding Winding Lane. He mentioned that there are about 5 houses developed as a tract in the 1960s parallel to the rail road tracks. The houses have 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, and are about 2,000 square feet and are all connected to a septic system.

Richard Freeman (511 Alta Vista Ave):

Noted that even if properties are added, there is still a process for property owners to be removed from the list, so this is not necessarily a final deal. He also asked for clarity on the difference between design review process for historic versus non-historic properties. He noted that the letter he received mentioned that his house meets all 7 aspects of historic integrity.

Commissioner Lesak: Noted that there is an acronym for the 7 aspects, "MADFLAWS." Materials; Design; Feeling; Location; Association; Workmanship; Setting. Materials mean that the they are original

or consistent with what was originally there. Design is self-explanatory. Feeling is a little nebulous, and it is for feeling, such as if the structure was a factory, does it still “feel” like a factory? Most of the properties here are houses and so they all probably still feel like a house. Location references the original location of the buildings. Association frequently applies to architecture with patterns of development, patterns of history, historic individuals, and if that association is still intact, and if it can be shown. Workmanship is similar to craftsmanship and the craft that might have gone into putting the building together. Setting can be explained as a little farmhouse with a city growing up around it that doesn’t have the integrity of setting anymore because it was a farm, but is now in the middle of a city.

Freeman: Noted that his house has abundant t-111 siding with vertical grooves and what would happen if he wants to replace it with horizontal siding.

Commissioner Thompson: Noted that there would be a great discussion about changing the direction of the siding as vertical siding was appropriate for that era. The decisions of the Commission are not arbitrary, they are based on required objective findings, and the Secretary of the Interior Standards.

Richard Reynoso (639 Orange Grove Ave):

Chose not to speak.

Wai-Jen Jefferies and Ray Jefferies (2255 Chaucer Road, San Marino)

Not Present.

Myles Mattenson (Legal Representative for 628 South Orange Grove Avenue):

Does not believe the property belongs on the Inventory. He expressed that one week from today’s meeting to the 19th of October is not sufficient enough time to conduct an historic analysis. He mentioned that he has retained a professor of architecture from USC to research and provide the evidence in support of removal from the Inventory. He expressed he would like an extension of time for 30-45 days. Mattenson also mentioned that there is no plan to demolish the building in the letter he had forwarded to the Commission. 628 is the front unit of a 16-unit building. He noted that the property was not listed for architectural style, but because of it being an example of post-war apartment development history. He also noted that the Planning Division does not have any known architectural plans on file, nor a record of architect. Mattenson pointed out that over 100 properties are being added, but only 20 DPR forms were prepared and there is no DPR form for 628 Orange Grove. Mattenson believes that it is a reasonable request to provide property owners additional time so they can obtain more information and provide reports to the Commission.

Commissioner Friedman: Thanked Mattenson for his comments and noted that the City Council directed the Planning Division and the CHC to provide additional notice to property owners and conduct a special meeting. He also noted that the Commission has held numerous hearings on the Inventory since early of this year and there have been a number of presentations by the Historic Consultant. This meeting is the culmination of this years-long effort. Commissioner Friedman reiterated that the Commission’s next step is only a recommendation, and the City Council will make the final decision and everyone can voice their concerns again at that time.

Kurt Nakagawa (1506 Indiana Ave.):

Mentioned that he was born and raised in the City, and purchased his home in 2013 and opposes its inclusion on the Inventory as a 7R. Nakagawa feels that his home does not have any historic significance within the prescribed context. He respects the preservation efforts of the City however he feels that his home should not be listed as it is on a hillside and not visible from the street. He would also like the Commission to consider the impacts the historic designation will have on his family.

Tien Chiu (Architect representing 390 Pasadena Ave):

Mr. Chiu noted that the property is an apartment complex and that the owners feel that the property is too ordinary to be included on the Inventory. He noted that the property has been identified as Minimal Traditional and that it has stucco walls, asphalt shingles, and should not qualify for historic significance.

Joey Lin (720 – 722 Park Ave):

Noted that this too was an apartment complex, and that he understands the intent of historic preservation. He feels that the property should not be included because Park Avenue has boxy three-story apartments and the street has no cultural feeling of history. There are several different types of apartments of different ages and the historic feeling is not significant. These apartments have no noted architect, and they were most likely constructed by contractors with no significant architectural features. The historic designation will place a restriction on the property and potential development of additional units, along with hampering any future improvements. He provided photographs to the Commission as evidence.

Thomas Thompson (1523 Indiana Ave):

Mr. Thompson noted that his house was constructed in 1959, possibly explaining why it is proposed to be added to the Inventory. He noted that it is proposed as a 7R because it is not visible from the public right-of-way. He mentioned that his house is not great architecturally, and that it is actually ugly with nothing spectacular or unique about it. He added that he loves his house and has no intention to tear it down, but that his house is not exemplary of any criteria including use of natural materials, innovative building technologies, etc. He expressed his appreciation of the survey process, and would like to have the Commission consider having the Historic Consultant contact property owners and ask for a site visit for non-visible properties such as his. He presented photographs of his property to the Commission as evidence.

Brett Furry speaking for Jerry Furry. (1633 Amberwood):

Mr. Furry noted that this property is a 40-unit apartment complex and it has been proposed with a designation of a 3S and if the Commission can explain this significance. He noted that the property is a business, and his family is concerned, but not necessarily opposed to the designation.

Commissioner Gallatin: Noted that each property in the survey is assigned a Resource Status Code, and these are assigned to all historic properties that range from 1 (highest) to 7Rs (usually properties that could not be properly evaluated). A 3S rating means that the property is eligible for National Register Nomination not as a contributor, but as an individual property. Commissioner Gallatin added that the CHC does not review interior improvements. A National Register status is not a paralysis to alterations, and in fact the CHC recently approved an addition to a single-family residence on the National Register.

Commissioner Lesak: Noted that a historic designation is part of the CEQA process and by being designated, the property owners are saving themselves from having to produce environmental reports in the future for evaluations of potential impacts. The Inventory designation process is a benefit to property owners because the City is taking the lead work on evaluating the historic significance and possible future impacts.

Brian Nicoles and Kris Kuromitsu (100 Oak Hill Terrace):

Mr. Nicoles mentioned that he understands why his property is being added to the Inventory, but would like some explanation on the review process for possible alterations and if a designation will make it impossible to alter the property in the future.

Commissioner Gallatin: Noted that historic designation does not prevent future alterations to a property. All alterations are reviewed against the Secretary of the Interior Standards and the Design Guidelines. Commissioner Gallatin also noted that there are two possible review processes: the CHC as a major project, or the Chair for minor projects. All decisions by the Chair or the CHC are made by a set of findings, so the decisions are not arbitrary, or capricious; they are findings of fact. The Mills Act is a tax rebate law provided by the State in exchange for property improvements to a property over 10 years to incentivize the preservation of historic homes, commercial buildings, and rental properties.

Steve and Tracy Mouradian (626 Brent Ave.):

Mr. Mouradian mentioned that they have put a lot of blood, sweat, tears, and money into improving the property (mostly site and interior work). They have invested about \$150,000 into the property but have ran out of money to install central air conditioning and new windows though they would like to provide these amenities in the future to their tenants. He mentioned that the apartment building is old and that it should probably be torn down in the future, especially since his property insurance company recently provided a list of necessary improvements or forfeit insurance coverage. He mentioned that they purchased the property as an investment, and that there is nothing spectacular about the neighborhood as it consists of boxes upon boxes and they are falling apart. He presented photographs to the Commission as evidence.

Yin Ping Chee, President of HOA (1855 Diamond Ave.):

Mr. Chee noted that his property is a 13-unit condominium project and inquired about the Mills Act. He also noted that some units installed vinyl windows without HOA approval. He asked the Commission if the owners will be required to remove the vinyl windows if the property is listed. Mr. Chee also inquired if changes need to be made to the exterior, would it be more expensive to maintain the property as historically appropriate.

Commissioner Lesak: Noted that non-permitted work is tricky for the CHC to review, as it is tricky for any design review body.

Commission Thompson: Noted that historic preservation does not always equate to higher costs.

Mr. Chee: Asked if the Mills Act is approved for the property, does the tax savings go to individual owners, or to the entire building.

Commissioner Lesak: Noted that the Mills Act is applied to the entire property and that the tax savings are spread proportionately to the owners.

Otto Lear (La Canada):

Not Present.

Doreen Siodmak (2050 La Fremontia Street):

Noted that the Commission had answered all her questions.

Joseph Kwok (625 Fair Oaks Ave, #115):

Noted that he is the owner of the apartment building and that the building has undergone some changes and if the designation will mean he has to restore the building back to its original condition, and what the process is for any proposed future changes.

Commissioner Thompson: Noted that the Commission does not apply retroactive restorations unless it was unpermitted work.

Commissioner Gallatin: Noted that there are two levels of historic design review, Major and Minor, and it depends on the proposed scope of work.

Virginia Lee (1867 Virginia Road, San Marino):

Not Present.

Victoria Fuster (1732 Raymond Hill Road):

Not Present.

Tom Guevara (1034 Foothill Street):

Not Present

Jason Lucas (1001 Central Street):

Not Present.

Glenn Taylerson (1210 Pine Street):

Not Present.

Raymond Kim (705 Park Ave):

Noted that this is a four-unit apartment complex and that the Park Avenue listings are for a district. Mr. Kim wanted to know what the difference was for district designation versus singular property designation.

Commissioner Lesak: Noted that a district is more than just one building and when they are evaluating a project, they look at the impacts to a whole district, not just individual properties and that there is no option to opt out of a district; you are either a contributor or a non-contributor. Commissioner Lesak also noted that there is statistical evidence that designated historic properties are higher in value, though there is not a lot of data on properties that are on the Inventory, even though in South Pasadena property values are generally high anyway given the levels of control through design review.

Commissioner Thompson: Noted that people love South Pasadena for the schools, for the property values, but also for the built fabric, and that all the design review boards serve to maintain that built fabric.

Mr. Kim: Expressed concern with the marketability of the property as an investment property and its effects on any future sale.

Commissioner Gallatin: Noted that for income-producing properties, there are Federal tax credits available for historic properties.

Commissioner Lesak: Added that there is a 20% Federal tax credit for income-producing properties that are eligible for National Register status, and that they must be placed on the National Register within 5 years. The tax credit applies to all fees and expenses related to the property including legal, design,

and consultation fees. There is also a preservation easement option where a portion of the building can be donated to a non-profit group to maintain a portion of a building and that is deemed as a tax-deductible donation. Commissioner Lesak also noted that in West Hollywood, housing data reveals that apartment complexes that are designated as historic have significantly higher rental rates than non-historic apartments.

Albert Sowano (1481 Indiana):

Mr. Sowano described his house as a two-story downhill home with only one story visible from the street. He noted that there are issues with the structure including energy efficiency of the post and beam house and its abundant glass. His property also has T-111 siding and he wanted to know what the implications would be for his property if it were included on the Inventory.

Commissioners Thompson and Lesak: Noted that structural retrofits are not usually turned down by the CHC as there are ways to retrofit buildings and preserve its historic defining features.

Commissioner Lesak: Added that being placed on the Inventory allows the property to fall under the Historic Building Code which would also exempt the owner from Title 24 compliance with the exception of lighting.

Gionne Bozzi (1863 Diamond Ave.):

Not present.

Karen Mittlemen (1865 Diamond Ave.):

Not Present.

Randy Hoffman (1230 Milan, speaking for Shakers restaurant):

Mr. Hoffman noted that he owns two businesses in town, Shakers and the Canoe House restaurants. He expressed concern with the Googie Style Shakers and if this is a building the City really wants to see preserved at this corner in the City, a high-profile entry point. He noted that this is a small building that has been added to and altered over the years, and that it sits in a large parking lot and will be majorly impacted by the rerouting of the proposed 110 freeway off ramp. Mr. Hoffman expressed to the Commission that he would like the Commission to provide more time for property owners to gather and produce evidence before recommendation.

Commissioner Gallatin: Noted that there are several options for the CHC to make their recommendation. The CHC can recommend to Council that the property remain on the Inventory for the following reasons. They can recommend to Council that a property should be removed from the Inventory for the following reasons such as newly discovered evidence. Or the Commission and recommend to Council that more time be allowed for several properties so they can provided sufficient evidence for consideration.

Mark Hanes (1746 Las Palmitas):

Mr. Hanes noted that he did not receive a notice of the meeting. He also mentioned that he was on the Pasadena Heritage Board, and believed that today's meeting was by far the best of all the meetings he has been to regarding the Inventory. He added that he is generally supportive of historic preservation and believes that more education needs to be done to educate the City and realtors about the importance and benefits of historic preservation.

Director Watkins: Noted that when the Inventory is adopted by the Council, the Department will add an interactive historic map on the website to allow the public access to information about historic properties in the City.

Meeting Adjourned:

Commissioner Lesak: Made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Freidman. Meeting adjourned at 9:31 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. No Continued Items

COMMUNICATIONS

- 5. **COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL LIASON:**
No comments from the Council Member.
- 6. **COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION:**
No additional comments from the Commission.
- 7. **COMMENTS FROM STAFF:**
No additional comments from Staff.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 8. Minutes for the previous CHC meeting were not reviewed.

ADJOURNMENT

- 9. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:31 pm to the next regularly scheduled meeting on October 19, 2017.

APPROVED,



Mark Gallatin
Vice-Chair, Cultural Heritage Commission

1-18-18

Date