

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
**CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION**

CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA

**Thursday, March 18, 2021 at 6:30 P.M.**

VIRTUAL MEETING

**ROLL CALL**

The meeting convened at: 6:36 pm

Commissioners Present: Rebecca Thompson (Chair), Mark Gallatin (Vice-Chair), William Cross and Conrado Lopez

Commissioners Absent: Kristin Morrish

Staff Present: Joanna Hankamer (Planning Director), Kanika Kith (Planning Manager), Aneli Gonzalez (Planner), and Malinda Lim (Associate Planner)

City Council Liaison Absent: Evelyn G. Zneimer

Special Counsel: Todd Litfin

*Please Note: These Minutes are a summary of the meetings and are not a fully transcribed record.*

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Approved 4-0.

**DISCLOSURE OF SITE VISITS AND EX-PARTE CONTACTS**

Commissioner Cross said he drove by several sites and has no conflicts.

Commissioner Lopez said he made site visits and is involved in item number 4 so he will be recusing himself from that item.

Vice-Chair Gallatin had conversations with two residents regarding item number 2 and he is able to participate in all items on the agenda.

Chair Thompson – None.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS**

None.

## PRESENTATION

### 1. Housing Accountability Act:

#### **Staff Presentation:**

Planning Manager Kith introduced the prerecorded presentation which was previously played at the City Council and Planning Commission meetings and will be played for the Design Review Board meeting. It is part of a series of presentations about the new housing laws that have been adopted of which the Commission should be aware. Associate Planner Malinda Lim presented a prerecorded PowerPoint presentation.

#### **Questions for Staff:**

Planning Manager Kith directed all questions to be emailed to staff where they will be forwarded to the City Attorney.

## PUBLIC HEARING

### 2. 1534 Ramona Avenue/Project No. 2349-COA (Continued) – Certificate of Appropriateness for front yard improvements involving removal of the original walkway at 1534 Ramona Avenue:

#### **Recommendation:**

Approve the Certificate of Appropriateness, subject to Conditions of Approval.

#### **Staff Presentation:**

Planning Manager Kith played a prerecorded PowerPoint presentation of this project.

#### **Questions for Staff:**

Commissioner Lopez, Chair Thompson and Planning Manager Kith discussed the pedestals, design of the pergola and protection and preservation of the historic stairs. Chair Thompson inquired regarding stipulation of design approvals of the pergola and the steps. Planning Manager Kith explained the design approval process required by the subcommittee prior to installation.

Vice-Chair Gallatin, Chair Thompson and Planning Manager Kith discussed the Condition that was revised regarding the location of the historic steps and existing Palm tree, the central landscape planting, including the proposed mow strip, and the relocation of several elements included to provide a more substantive lawn. Planning Manager Kith explained that the Condition in question was written to simplify the landscape area to simplify this entry by providing a secondary walkway.

Commissioner Cross pointed out the detail on the extended rafters of the porch and suggested they might want to use that in the pergola.

#### **Public Hearing:**

Planning Manager Kith stated that 18 written comments and 15 verbal public comments were received. The recorded verbal comments were played for the record.

### **Applicant's Presentation:**

None.

Applicant Representatives Shannon Porter, Jaime Garza and Mike Davitt, the Director of Real Estate for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, were introduced. Mr. Davitt spoke on behalf of the Archdiocese.

Applicant Representative Jaime Garza requested that the Commission approve this item without conditions. She purported that many of the conditions do not improve the current proposed design and was very concerned that if approved with conditions, the applicant was still being required to redesign parts of the landscape. The applicant worked with the neighbors. All of the work thus far for the design and implementation was fundraised with donations from Holy Family constituents and South Pasadena City residents, who are the stakeholders in this process.

### **Questions for Applicant:**

Vice-Chair Gallatin asked the Applicant Representatives about the two conditions in the revised Conditions of Approval that the report indicated had yet been agreed to due to some concerns; specifically, the requirement to reinstall or rebuild pedestals on either side of the steps leading to the front porch. He wanted to hear the reason for the objection.

Applicant Representative Garza said they did not necessarily object to that - just believed it to be redundant. It appears to them that they are being asked to redesign.

Commissioner Lopez inquired about the depiction of the side gate appearing in the middle of the walkway in the drawing presented to the Commission. Planning Manager Kith confirmed that this is a typo or error in the drawing and the gate goes to the pergola.

Discussion between Planning Manager Kith and Applicant Representative Garza ensued regarding the plan submitted for approval which is not an actual nor conceptual plan, but identified by Ms. Garza as a planting plan.

Commissioner Cross and Applicant Representative Garza discussed the existing architecture design of the pergola. As noted, they do not have the budget to complete this space yet. As to the timing, which someone asked about earlier – they are hoping to do it within the next two years. But currently, they only have a budget for the fence.

Chair Thompson and Applicant Representative Garza discussed the specifics regarding removal of the pedestals and that the initial design from a few years ago was reviewed by the City and the Planning Department. Once they had funds for the project, they proceeded with construction. Demolition took place last year. They further discussed the project's budget.

### **Commissioner Discussion:**

Commissioner Lopez asserted that he does not have a problem with this plan at all and believes it to be a pretty straightforward landscape plan. He would approve it, but requested corrections to the drawings.

Vice-Chair Gallatin expressed his gratitude of thanks, in equal parts, to Holy Family, the neighborhood, the design professionals and the two subcommittee members – Chair Thompson and Commissioner Cross -

who have made remarkable progress since the last time the Commission saw this and thinks resolution is close. He discussed the process of approval with reasonable conditions or without conditions and commented on the implication, both in the written comments and just recently in a verbal comment, that the Commission risks inviting litigation. He then firmly stated that the Commission is entitled to impose reasonable conditions and by those directives set a precedent.

Vice-Chair Gallatin and Chair Thompson discussed one of the Conditions of Approval's requirements to provide a sample of the concrete for the walkway and considered alternatives to address the concern regarding the concrete finish to reach the goal of ensuring the property is designed to look more like the original property may have looked.

Vice-Chair Gallatin requested to hear from the Applicant's Representative regarding their objection of the Condition regarding the removal of the rocks or boulders on the border of the pathway and whether there are other acceptable options.

Applicant Representative Garza rejoined the meeting with the approval of Chair Thompson and explained their concerns. For example, Condition 11h – they understood to mean that they have to redesign the project. They feel that throughout this whole process they have been treated very, very unfairly.

Vice-Chair Gallatin, Commissioner Lopez and Chair Thompson discussed the landscape plan, rocks, the plantings and the secondary entrance.

Chair Thompson and Planning Manager Kith discussed changes to the language of the Conditions regarding the secondary access to the site.

Special Counsel Todd Litfin proposed new language – 'Simplify the pathway design and landscaping at the rear secondary entrance as appropriate for an accessory entrance.' He stipulated that what is meant is for the design and landscaping to be in the Craftsman style; not to be overbearing; to be fairly simple, but to allow some flexibility in accordance with the plans.

Planning Manager Kith confirmed that the entire Condition for Item 11 is for subcommittee approval. The subcommittee for this project is comprised of Chair Thompson and Commissioner Cross.

Applicant Representative Jaime Garza continued with an acceptance of Condition 12a. They misunderstood it. With regard to Condition 12b, based on other suggestions this week to drastically move the fence line inward on the property, they were very concerned about the word 'location.'

Applicant Representative Garza agreed with the proposed change. For Condition 11h, she confirmed that they were not being asked to redesign the landscape, the planting.

Special Counsel Litfin suggested new language at the end of Condition 11h, after 'Oak Street,' just add 'material shall be changed to DG.'

Applicant Representative Garza confirmed that these conditions were 100% acceptable to them.

Because of the Commissioners' concerns that the rocks not be set in concrete, Applicant Representative Garza added that staff could add 'and DG and rocks are not set in concrete' to Condition 11h.

Commissioner Cross asked about tree removal. Applicant Representative Garza stated that one tree had already been removed with the City's permission. No additional trees would be removed.

Planning Manager Kith concluded that all the conditions (11h, 12a and 12b) that were in opposition have now been resolved. Condition 12a will stay as is. Conditions 11h and 12b will be modified.

**Decision:**

Commissioner Lopez motioned, seconded by Chair Thompson, to approve the project with the Conditions of Approval as they have been edited at today's meeting and that the proposal meets the very specific findings that the project restores original historic features in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

3. **925 Palm Avenue/Project No. 2339-COA/AUP (Continued) – Certificate of Appropriateness for a 1,008 sq. ft. single-story addition and alterations to an existing single-story, 1,145 sq. ft. single-family residence and an Administrative Use Permit to waive the second covered parking requirement located at 925 Palm Avenue:**

**Recommendation:**

Formation of a subcommittee to work with the applicant to refine the proposed addition and continue the project to a date certain.

Planning Manager Kith recused herself from this item as the property is located within vicinity of her own property.

Planning and Community Development Director Joanna Hankamer and Associate Planner Malinda Lim joined the meeting.

**Presentation:**

Associate Planner Malinda Lim presented a prerecorded PowerPoint presentation.

**Questions for Staff:**

Commissioner Lopez and Associate Planner Lim discussed the evolution of the original design in November to its current state.

Chair Thompson asked if there was a narrative on this and Associate Planner Lim responded that there was no narrative.

**Public Comments:**

None.

**Applicant's Presentation:**

None. However, the property owner and architect have joined the meeting.

**Questions for Applicant:**

Chair Thompson asked about the size and scope of the new addition, including the plate heights.

Applicant Derek Vaughn introduced Architect Mitch Sawasy.

Architect Mitch Sawasy disclosed that this is their third approach on this project. Their previous guidance from the City had been through a consulting agency that led them down a couple of different paths whereby they couldn't agree themselves on which way to go. The current approach is using the hyphen approach which is written up in the new additions of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, as well as mentioned elsewhere. He provided details regarding the plate height and the pitch.

Chair Thompson noted that she was not familiar with the concept of the hyphen. Architect Sawasy explained the concept and referred to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Architect Sawasy further discussed the details of the design, including the use of stained-glass, which was rejected by the previous contract planner.

**Commissioner Discussion:**

The Commissioners engaged in a discussion regarding the use of stained glass. All of the Commissioners expressed approval of the use of stained glass in this application which is in a secondary elevation that would not be visible from the street.

Commissioner Lopez commented that he much prefers the original design and believes the applicant was led the wrong way.

Vice-Chair Gallatin reminded the Commission that all they are being asked to do here tonight is to form a subcommittee, but in listening to the architect, one of the issues here has been a lack of consistency in direction that the architect received from contract staff. He hopes that whomever serves on the subcommittee can come to consensus and provide clear and understandable direction to the architect.

Commissioner Cross said the most important aspect to him is – if he's driving down the street, is it going to pop out at him and look out of place. This project has avoided becoming a two-story addition to the rear of a one-story that is just so obvious and out of place.

Chair Thompson requested two Commissioners to constitute the subcommittee. Commissioners Lopez and Cross volunteered.

Architect Sawasy requested an explanation of the procedures and timing for the subcommittee.

Associate Planner Lim provided a detailed explanation of the process.

**Decision:**

Commissioner Lopez motioned, seconded by Commissioner Cross, to form a subcommittee consisting of Commissioner Lopez and Commissioner Cross and to continue this item to the next regular Cultural Heritage Commission meeting.

**Motion carried, 4-0.** The subcommittee members are Commissioner Cross and Commissioner Lopez.

Planning Manager Kanika Kith rejoined the meeting.

4. **1020 Milan Avenue/2371-COA – Certificate of Appropriateness for a two-story, 1,177 square-foot addition and alterations to an existing single-story, 1,660 square-foot single-family residence located at 1020 Milan Avenue:**

**Recommendation:**

Formation of a subcommittee to work with the applicant to refine the proposed addition and continue the project to a date certain.

Commissioner Lopez recused himself from this item.

**Staff Presentation:**

Preservation Planner Alexandra Madsen presented a prerecorded PowerPoint presentation.

**Questions for Staff:**

Planning Manager Kith introduced Alexandra Madsen, the preservation planner who worked on this project. The Commission was reminded that it cannot approve the project as this was just a staff report, so no findings or conditions were presented.

Preservation Planner Alexandra Madsen added that this is the project as they received it. They have not worked with the applicant. The applicant wanted to bring it forward to the CHC directly.

**Applicant's Presentation:**

Planning Manager Kith played a prerecorded PowerPoint presentation by applicant and property owner Michael Haralambos.

**Questions for Applicant:**

None.

**Commissioners' Discussion:**

Chair Thompson asked for two Commissioners to volunteer to be on the subcommittee.

Commissioner Cross and Vice-Chair Gallatin agreed that an architect should be a member of the subcommittee.

Chair Thompson volunteered to be on the subcommittee and Vice-Chair Gallatin volunteered to join her.

**Decision:**

Vice-Chair Gallatin motioned, seconded by Chair Thompson, that a subcommittee be formed consisting of Chair Thompson and Vice-Chair Gallatin.

**Motion carried, 3-0.** The subcommittee members are Chair Thompson and Vice-Chair Gallatin.

Commissioner Lopez rejoined the meeting.

**DISCUSSION**

**5. Historic Preservation Funding Opportunities (Continued):**

**Staff Presentation:**

Planning Manager Kith said this item is continued from the last meeting. The CLG Grant for next year is due at the end of April. Last year the process was not started until the week the grant was due. This year they are starting earlier and asking the Commission to form a subcommittee with staff.

Planning Manager Kith explained that the CLG Grant is one of the grants that we know that we want to proceed with. The staff needs the Committee's assistance to look for additional grants and more funding opportunities.

**Commissioner Discussion:**

Chair Thompson and Planning Manager Kith discussed the responsibilities of the subcommittee.

Vice-Chair Gallatin volunteered to join the subcommittee for this item.

Commissioner Cross volunteered as well; however, he mentioned that in his experience, professional grant writers are much more successful.

Chair Thompson and Planning Manager Kith discussed the lack of available funding to hire professional assistance.

Commissioners joined in an in-depth discussion regarding the number of subcommittees requested of the Commissioners and the number of hours and work required.

Discussion ensued among Planning Manager Kith and the Commissioners regarding the time commitment required for the CLG Grant and the Commission's participation and assistance requested.

For researching other grant opportunities, Vice-Chair Gallatin and Planning Manager Kith discussed Vice-Chair Gallatin's suggestion to recruit a local planning student from one of the universities to take it on as a project. The research is basically searching and finding those funding sources which would be a nice project someone could put on their résumé in addition to assisting us. He reminded the Commission that his alma mater, the University of Southern California, has a program in historic preservation.

To Commissioner Cross's query whether Vice-Chair Gallatin had any connections, Vice-Chair Gallatin responded that his connections are very tenuous ones. He reminded everyone that the City has had



commissioners who were both graduates of that program and who have taught and currently teach in that program. Chair Thompson mentioned Debi Howell-Ardila, a previous Commissioner. Vice-Chair Gallatin concurred and added John Lesak has participated in that program.

Planning Manager Kith said that she will reach out to them and see if they have students, after first reviewing the City policy and consulting with HR about bringing an unpaid student onboard and how to partner with a school to provide the student(s) credits for the work.

#### **6. 917 Palm Avenue – Mills Act Contract Request:**

##### **Recommendation:**

Formation of a subcommittee to review the Mills Act Contract request.

Planning Manager Kith recused herself from this item because it is within her conflict of interest area and turned the meeting over to Associate Planner Lim.

Associate Planner Lim introduced Aneli Gonzalez to provide the staff report for this item.

##### **Staff Presentation:**

Planner Aneli Gonzalez presented a prerecorded PowerPoint presentation.

Planner Gonzalez added that the staff also recommends to have the applicant move forward with processing the Mills Act application, in addition to forming the subcommittee.

##### **Questions for Staff:**

Chair Thompson asked if there was a historical architectural historian onboard yet.

Planner Gonzalez introduced Debi Howell-Ardila to the meeting to answer any questions.

Chair Thompson, Commissioner Lopez and Planner Gonzalez discussed the number of Mills Act applications approved at the last meeting.

Planner Gonzalez clarified that at the last meeting, a Mills Act contract was not approved. The Commission set up a subcommittee – she believes it was for a schoolhouse on Orange Grove. She confirmed the addresses of the properties discussed at the previous meeting - 1016 Orange Grove and 807 Bank Street. She also confirmed that one of those was for a Landmark Designation and was not for a Mills Act contract.

##### **Applicant's Presentation:**

Architectural Historian Debi Howell-Ardila asked if she could refresh the Commission's memory on the letter of intent for 917 Palm and gave a quick overview of the project.

##### **Questions for Applicant:**

None.

##### **Commissioner Discussion:**

Chair Thompson asked for subcommittee volunteers and volunteered herself.

Commissioner Cross volunteered to be part of the subcommittee, as well.

**Decision:**

Chair Thompson motioned, seconded by Vice-Chair Gallatin, to create a subcommittee consisting of Chair Thompson and Commissioner Cross, and to have the applicant start the Mills Act application process.

**Motion carried, 4-0.** The subcommittee members are Chair Thompson and Commissioner Cross.

Planning Manager Kith rejoined the meeting.

**7. 807 Bank Street – Mills Act Contract Request:**

**Recommendation:**

Formation of a subcommittee to review the Mills Act Contract request.

**Staff Presentation:**

None. Staff is asking the Commission to use the same subcommittee that participated on the Landmark Designation Request for 807 Bank Street to work with the applicant on a Mills Act proposal. The subcommittee members are Commissioner Morrish and Commissioner Cross.

**Questions for Staff:**

None.

**Applicant's Presentation:**

None.

**Questions for Applicant:**

None.

**Commissioner Discussion:**

Planning Manager Kith reported that Commissioner Morrish and Commissioner Cross reviewed the Landmark Designation Request and made the recommendation to landmark the site, so they are very familiar with the property.

Chair Thompson proposed the two projects be combined – the Mills Act Contract and the Landmark Designation Request. Commissioner Cross agreed that this was reasonable.

**Decision:**

Chair Thompson moved, seconded by Vice-Chair Gallatin, that the two projects be combined – the Mills Act proposal and the Landmark Designation Request – and be under the purview of the same subcommittee.

**Motion carried, 4-0.** The subcommittee members are Commissioner Morrish and Commissioner Cross.

8. **1601 Marengo Avenue – Historic Landmark Designation Request:**

**Recommendation:**

Formation of a subcommittee to review the Mills Act Contract request.

**Staff Presentation:**

Planner Gonzalez presented a prerecorded PowerPoint presentation.

**Questions for Staff:**

None.

**Applicant's Presentation:**

None.

**Questions for Applicant:**

None.

**Commissioner Discussion:**

Chair Thompson asked for volunteers for a subcommittee.

Commissioner Lopez volunteered to participate on the subcommittee for this project.

Commissioner Cross said he would be glad to join him.

**Decision:**

Chair Thompson motioned, seconded by Commissioner Lopez, to accept Commissioner Lopez and Commissioner Cross as subcommittee members.

**Motion carried, 4-0.** The subcommittee members are Commissioner Lopez and Commissioner Cross.

9. **CLG 2019-2020 Annual Report:**

**Recommendation:**

Review and provide comments and information to finalize the report.

**Staff Presentation:**

Planner Gonzalez presented the CLG 2019-2020 Annual Report and reminded the Commission that they had already reviewed it. However, staff wanted the Commission's feedback, specifically, on the last page under the Section labeled *Section F of the Certified Local Government Program – 2019-2020 Annual Report form – Training Needed or Desired/ Desired*. The staff wanted to know if there was any specific training the Commission would like to see.

**Commissioner Discussion:**

Vice-Chair Gallatin suggested that given the lateness of the hour, and the fact that he had several corrections and additions to this report, perhaps the Commissioners could get this information to staff by Monday.

Planning Manager Kith concurred and further suggested that the Commissioners could email any changes or comments to the report to staff. This item will be continued until April. Planner Gonzalez confirmed that in April the Commission will be presented with the final version for approval for submission to the State.

**10. Rialto Interior Work Subcommittee:**

**Recommendation:**

Formation of a subcommittee.

Chair Thompson recused herself for this item because this project is in her conflict area and Vice-Chair Gallatin chaired this item.

**Staff Presentation:**

Planning Manager Kith stated that this is a request from staff to fill the vacancy for the subcommittee that was formed to oversee the interior work for the Rialto project. The subcommittee on this project is Vice-Chair Gallatin and former Commissioner Friedman. Staff is asking for a volunteer to replace former Commissioner Friedman.

**Questions for Staff:**

None.

**Commissioner Discussion:**

Vice-Chair Gallatin asked if there was a Commissioner that would join him on the subcommittee.

Commissioner Lopez volunteered.

**Decision:**

Commissioner Lopez motioned, seconded by Vice-Chair Gallatin, to be added to the subcommittee.

**Motion carried, 3-0.** The subcommittee members for this item are now Vice-Chair Gallatin and Commissioner Lopez.

Chair Thompson rejoined the meeting.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

**11. January 2020 Meeting Minutes**

**Recommendation:**

Approve the January 2020 Meeting Minutes.

**12. February 2020 Meeting Minutes**

**Recommendation:**

Approve the February 2020 Meeting Minutes.

13. **August 2020 Meeting Minutes**

**Recommendation:**

Approve the August 2020 Meeting Minutes.

14. **September 2020 Meeting Minutes**

**Recommendation:**

Approve the September 2020 Meeting Minutes.

15. **February 2021 Meeting Minutes:**

**Recommendation:**

Approve the February 2021 Meeting Minutes.

Vice-Chair Gallatin stated for the record that earlier this week, he provided staff with numerous corrections to these sets of minutes and if there are no further comments, he would be prepared to make a motion to approve them subject to those corrections.

**Decision:**

Vice-Chair Gallatin motioned, seconded by Commissioner Lopez, to approve the above-referenced sets of minutes, subject to the corrections provided to staff earlier this week.

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

**ADMINISTRATION**

16. **Comments from City Council Liaison:**

None. City Council Liaison was attending another City matter.

17. **Comments from Cultural Heritage Commissioners:**

None.

18. **Comments from Subcommittees:**

None.

19. **Comments from South Pasadena Preservation Foundation (SPPF) Liaison:**

None.

20. **Comments from Staff:**

Planning Manager Kith reported that last night, City Council took the first reading on a draft of the ADU Ordinance. The second reading is going back to the Council next month for adoption. The new ADU Ordinance allows more flexibility to property owners to build ADUs. Also, last night the Council approved the hire of Marina Khrustaleva to fill in for Associate Planner Lim while she is on maternity leave. Malinda

is going on maternity leave in early April. Marina will be joining the staff to help out. This is the last CHC meeting Malinda will be with us.

Chair Thompson thanked Associate Planner Lim and wished her good luck.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:34 pm to the next regular Cultural Heritage Commission meeting scheduled on April 15, 2021.

APPROVED,



Mark Gallatin  
Chair, Cultural Heritage Commission

11-17-22

Date