

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA  
HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD  
June 8, 2010 Meeting Minutes

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Large Conference Room, City Hall  
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, California 92262

<b>BOARD MEMBERS:</b>	<b>Present This Meeting:</b>	<b>Present FY Year-to-Date:</b>	<b>FY: 2009/2010 Excused Absences:</b>
John Gilmer, Chair	X	12	0
Barbara Marshall, Vice Chair	X	11	1
Thomas DeLeeuw	X	11	1
Sheila Grattan	X	11	1
Roxann Ploss	X	11	0
Brian Strahl	X	11	1
Sidney Williams	X	10	2

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Staff Representatives:  
Craig A. Ewing, AICP  
Director of Planning Services  
Staff Liaison

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1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Gilmer called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m.
2. ROLL CALL: Present: Chair Gilmer, Vice Chair Marshall, T. DeLeeuw, S. Grattan, R. Ploss, B. Strahl and S. Williams.
3. POSTING OF AGENDA: This Agenda was available for public access at the City Hall exterior bulletin board (west side of Council Chamber), City Clerk's office and Planning Services' counter on or before 4:00 p.m. Wednesday June 2, 2010. A revised agenda was posted on Thursday June 3, 2010.
4. PUBLIC COMMENTS: JJ O'Brien, Weintraub Financial Services, offered comments about the Orchid Tree Inn. Chair Gilmer asked Mr. O'Brien to provide his comments during the public hearing on the item later on this agenda.
5. CONSENT CALENDAR:  
  
M/S/C (DeLeeuw / Grattan, 7-0) To approve minutes of the May 11, 2010 meeting, including a correction to delete the last sentence of the first paragraph on page 2.  
  
Board member Strahl noted that all Board members must use the microphones to be adequately heard on the video recording.
6. PUBLIC HEARINGS:
  - 6A. HSPB 72 (*Orchid Tree Inn*) – CONTINUED HEARING. An application by the City of Palm Springs Historic Site Preservation Board for the historic designation of 261 South Belardo Road, Zone R-3, Section 15.

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Director Ewing summarized the staff report. The Board discussed the request including a later addition to one of the bungalows and that the bungalows have casement, not double-hung windows, as reported. The Board also noted that the Frey apartment building was moved to the site from across the street in 1972.

The Board disclosed that Chair Gilmer and Board member Grattan toured the site with the property owner's representative on Thursday June 3, 2010 at 10:30 a.m. Board members Ploss, DeLeeuw and Strahl toured the site with the property owner's representative on the same day at 10 a.m.

Chair Gilmer opened the public hearing. JJ O'Brien, Weintraub Financial Services, spoke on behalf of the property owner and expressed the owner's support for the staff recommendation. He noted that the addition to the one bungalow, the swimming pool, the landscape and perimeter wall on the bungalow site are not part of the historic fabric and should not be preserved.

Board member Ploss asked if the remainder of the property would be demolished in a new development. Mr. O'Brien replied that future development plans for the property are still unknown.

Sheryl Hamlin, 565 W. Santa Rosa Dr., asked that the stone arch on the "Craftsman" property be designated as Class 1.

Helen Alexander, 1833 S. Araby Dr., supported historic designation for the property.

Roxanne Mishler, 58449 Starlight, Yucca Valley, supported historic designation for the property.

Chair Gilmer closed the public hearing.

Board member Ploss expressed support for recycling older materials from the site. Vice Chair Marshall asked about existing archives on the site, and Board member Ploss offered to prepare an archival file on the property. The property owner offered to photograph the site as it is today. Ms. Marshall also proposed that the stone archway be included as a Class 1 designation. Board member Grattan noted that a list of prominent guests at the property has not been found, but should be sought. Chair Gilmer noted that much of the bungalows' original details remain.

M/S/C (Grattan / Strahl, 7-0) To adopt the recommended resolution presented in the staff report, with the following clarifications: The Class One designation on the Bungalow Court Motel site only applies to the cottage buildings, a Class One designation on the Craftsman cottage site applies only to the stone archway, the remainder of the Craftsman cottage site is Class Two, and the site of the Frey apartment building is Class Two, subject to the recommended conditions.

The Board discussed which name should be used to describe the historic features and it was the consensus of the Board to refer to the site as the Orchid Tree Inn.

6B. HSPB 75 (*Cary Grant Estate*) – An application by Dr. Jane Cowles Smith for the historic designation of 928 Avenida Palmas, Zone R-1-C, Section 13.

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Board member Ploss noted that she had a close association with both the property owner and the application, and would recuse herself from this item. Ms. Ploss left the chambers.

Director Ewing presented the staff report. Chair Gilmer noted that the records are unclear on the original owner's name (John Jacob, or Jacob John Kocher).

Chair Gilmer opened the hearing. Steve Sobota, Fomotor Engineering representing the owner, stated his belief that the second story garage addition was designed by Wallace Neff, noted that the building's iron entry gates are not based on the original (wooden) gates and asked for the Board's support of a Class One designation. Board member Williams noted that the recent improvements do not rise to the level of a restoration. Additional discussions addressed the replaced chimney caps, the shutters on the upper level, the source of the tiles, whether or not Dr. Kocher was the community's first physician, and how close the architecture is to an Andalusian farm-house.

Patrick McGrew, 674 S. Grenfall, supported historic designation for the property, but noted that certain improvements could be made to the nomination. He referenced a report he prepared for the property owner and provided Chair Gilmer.

Chair Gilmer closed the public hearing.

Vice Chair Marshall did not believe that the property was a "replica" of an Andalusian farmhouse, but was influenced by the style, and noted certain other concerns with the nomination. Board member Strahl asked Chair Gilmer about Mr. McGrew's report and whether a continuance would be appropriate to allow for additional review.

Chair Gilmer declared the public hearing continued.

M/S/C (Williams / Strahl, 7-0) To continue the hearing to the meeting of July 13, 2010 to allow the Board an opportunity to review and evaluate additional information about the nomination.

7. CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL REQUEST(S):

7A. HPSB 33 (*Palm Springs City Hall*) – An application by the City of Palm Springs for a Certificate of Approval to construct a screen wall on the north side of the existing City Hall building, located at 3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way, Zone C-C, Section 13

Director Ewing presented the staff report, including photo-simulations of the proposed screen wall. The Board discussed relocation of existing palm trees, the height of wall to screen the new generator, the need for a gate in the wall opening,

M/S/C (DeLeeuw / Ploss, 7-0) To approve as presented, subject to:

1. The leg of the wall not touch the existing building, providing a 2 to 3 inch gap,
2. The coursing and pattern of the new wall to align with the existing coursing and patterns of the existing walls, and
3. Consideration be given to installing a gate in the opening.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS:

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8A. Las Palmas Business Historic District Committee

No report.

8B. Public Outreach / Chamber-PSEDC Sub-committee – Update

Chair Gilmer reported that a follow-up meeting of the Board's sub-committee (Gilmer and DeLeeuw) with representatives of the Palm Springs Chamber of Commerce and the Palm Springs Economic Development Committee met June 7, 2010 to review the draft language offered by the private sector representatives. Additional meetings will be scheduled.

8C. Stephens House (Morongo Road) Sub-committee – Update

Director Ewing reported that we received an owner-initiated application for historic designation, and that it will be set for hearing in July. Vice Chair Marshall reported that the owners are working to arrange for site visit opportunities. Director Ewing also advised that the Board must observe the City Attorney's advice to avoid ex parte communications and that all communications with the property owner should be conducted through staff.

9. STAFF & OTHER REPORTS:

9A. Status of Plaques

Director Ewing noted that the Santa Fe Savings Bank, Casablanca Adobe and Airport Façade plaques have been installed. The existing El Paseo building plaque and an update plaque (to be ordered) will be installed upon receipt of the second plaque.

In response to questions from the Board, Mr. Ewing noted:

- The Santa Fe Savings Bank plaque is level, but the line of the wall and of the ground are not level. Attempting to realign the plaque could cause damage to the plaque and / or the wall.
- HSPB funds for the fiscal year will cover payment for the El Paseo Building update plaque, but little more.
- The City Council secretary would be asked to schedule an unveiling event for the three new plaques.
- The City Council will interview candidates HSPB members based on their availability as a group. Board members may be asked to stay on, if early interviews are not possible.
- Consideration of the interior of the Welwood Murray Memorial Library is not available to the Board following its action to approve the project.

10. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Board member Grattan noted that perhaps the Board did not provide good direction on the pizza parlor in La Plaza as the awnings appear short compared to other awnings on the building.

Board member Williams noted that Garrett Eckbo, a prominent modernist landscape architect, may have designed the landscape plan at City Hall, but she will continue to search for confirming information. Ms. Williams also noted that the California Preservation Foundation is hosting a workshop in Riverside City Hall on Wednesday, June 30, 2010 on

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“Sustainability, Energy Efficiency and Historic Preservation”. Ms. Williams also noted that this will be her last meeting as she will be on vacation through August.

Chair Gilmer noted Board member Williams service to the City for her six years as HSPB member, including three years as Chair.

Board member Ploss noted that Dr. Florela White was an early doctor in the community.

Vice Chair Marshall congratulated Ms. Williams for her six years of service and her advice on the Board. Ms. Marshall also expressed her concern with the research, deliberations and decisions associated with the Welwood Murray Memorial Library.

Ms. Ploss concurred with Ms. Marshall’s comments. Ms. Grattan and Mr. Strahl offered additional comments on the matter.

11. ADJOURNMENT:

M/S/C (Gilmer / Grattan 7-0) To adjourn.

The Historic Site Preservation Board adjourned at 10:15 a.m. to its next regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, July 13, 2010, at 8:15 a.m., in the Large Conference Room at City Hall.

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Craig A. Ewing, AICP  
Director of Planning Services