

DRAFT

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 8, 2012
Large Conference Room, City Hall
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, California 92262

BOARD MEMBERS:	Present This Meeting:	Present FY Year-to-Date:	FY: 2011/2012 Excused
Absences:			
John Gilmer, Chair	X	7	4
Brian Strahl, Vice Chair	X	9	2
Thomas DeLeeuw	X	10	1
Sheila Grattan	X	11	
Roxann Ploss	X	11	
Leo Cohen	X	8	3

Staff Representatives:

Edward Robertson, Senior Planner
Staff Liaison

Ken Lyon, Associate Planner
Glenn Mlaker, Assistant Planner

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Gilmer called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Present: Ploss, Grattan, DeLeeuw, Vice-chair Strahl and Chair Gilmer.
Absent: Cohen.
3. **POSTING OF AGENDA:** The 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. on Wednesday, May 2, 2012.
4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**
Ron Marshall, Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, reported on Desert Spanish Weekend, March 23-25, 2012, which included lectures, reception, a tour, and book-signing. He provided a copy of a new book by Patrick McGrew on desert Spanish architecture to each Board member and staff.

Chris Menrad, Palm Springs Modern Committee offered a letter from PS ModCom in opposition to a proposed mixed use project in the Uptown area / Las Palmas

Business Historic District.

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: Minutes from the April 10, 2012 meeting.

Motion by DeLeeuw; second by Ploss; vote 4-1-1 (Cohen absent; Strahl abstain), to approve the minutes of April 10, 2012, subject to deleting the sentence, "Motion died for lack of a second" on a vote related to Item 8B.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

6.A Case Pre-App 12-001 – A pre-application by Pacifica Colony Palms, LLC proposing a five-story, mixed use development comprised of a 61 unit hotel, 6,000 gross square feet of retail uses, and a 2,000 square foot restaurant with off-street parking, landscaping and related features on a 1.13 acre site at 750 North Palm Canyon Drive, Zone C-1/R-3, PD 104, Resort Overlay, a non-contributing site within the Las Palmas Historic District (HD-1)

Associate Planner Ken Lyon presented the staff report.

Board member Cohen arrived at 8:25 a.m.

The Board asked the following questions:

- To resolve the actual date of construction of the building (1972 or ?)

Chair Gilmer opened the public hearing and invited the applicant to make a presentation. Hugh Gaspar, architect, spoke on behalf of the project applicant, noting the project's relationship to sustainability principles, use experiences and density. He noted that the project would be a 'backdrop' to the neighborhood. Ron Marshall, Palm Springs Preservation Foundation noted that the project appears to be out of scale and out of context with the surrounding historic district. Frank Tysen spoke against the project and supported the concerns raised by the Architectural Advisory Committee.

The Chair closed the public comment section.

Board members noted the following:

- The project needs to conform to the guidelines of the historic district, especially related to scale.
- The project would appear to have a shadowing effect on surrounding properties, especially during winter.
- The project as a 'backdrop' seems out of scale
- The AAC's concerns were valuable and well-expressed
- The building architecture is attractive, but perhaps not suited for the site
- The building's height, relationship to other buildings, and 45-degree orientation do not fit with the surroundings.

7. CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL REQUESTS

- 7.A HSPB # 5 (*Cornelia White House Village Green*) - To replace fencing, hinges and hardware, repair exterior building walls and windows including frames, repaint exterior to match existing color palette, fill and seal holes along the existing foundation railroad ties, and replace portion of existing grassed areas with native desert plantings, located at 223 South Palm Canyon Drive, Zone CBD.

Diana Shay, City Department of Economic and Community Development, presented the staff report.

The Board asked about:

- The new desert landscaping vs. remaining lawn in the Village Green, and
- The sidewalk and flatwork surrounding the building.

Patrick McGrew commented on the project's conformance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards.

Motion by Grattan; second by Ploss; vote 6-0, to approve a Certificate of Approval to rehabilitate the Cornelia White House and surrounding landscape, as presented.

- 7B. HSPB 27 / SP 09-001 Amend - A request for an amendment to a previously approved sign program for the El Paseo Building located at 800 North Palm Canyon Drive, a Class 1 Historic Site, Zone C-1.

Assistant Planner Glenn Mlaker presented the staff report.

The Board clarified the elements of the proposed sign program amendment.

The applicant described the proposed changes.

Chair Gilmer confirmed that the new sign is four flat pieces that will 'float', or be set off from the wall. Board members noted some concern with pinning the sign on the wall, but recognized an overall improved look, as proposed

Motion by Ploss; second by Cohen; vote 6-0, to approve a Certificate of Approval to amend the El Paseo Building sign program, as presented.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.A Review of Las Palmas Business Historic District – Initiation of Investigation Reclassification of “Non-contributing Properties” to “Contributing” Status

Board members DeLeeuw and Ploss presented a report on the potential for reclassifying the following properties as “contributing” to the historic district.

- 867 N. Palm Canyon, *The Dollard Building (1948, Clark & Frey) – International Style*
- 707 & 747 N. Palm Canyon (1953-63, Clark & Frey)
- 749 – 779 N. Palm Canyon (
- 849 N. Palm Canyon (USPS
- 861 – 867 N. Palm Canyon (
- 875 – 879 N. Palm Canyon (1947, Clark & Frey)
- 891 – 899 N. Palm Canyon (1945, Clark & Frey)
- 850 N. Palm Canyon (
- 756 – 760 N. Palm Canyon (Samson Insurance)
- 662 – 668 N. Palm Canyon
- 664 N. Palm Canyon
- 622 N. Palm Canyon
- 275 Tamarisk Road (1946)

The Board asked that staff add and notify the owners of the following properties: Lapham, Tschotskes, JAKES.

The Board recognized Patrick McGrew who noted that his book on Desert Spanish Architecture includes additional analysis on “contributing” structures. He recommended that additional work be undertaken to clarify the underlying purpose of the district and the significance of its constituent parts.

The Board discussed next steps to amending and expanding the list of contributing structures, as well as developing a more comprehensive context statement for the district.

Motion by Strahl; second by Grattan; vote 6-0, to continue to the next meeting, to further refine the list of candidate properties to six or eight properties and provide notice to the owners any new properties included on the list.

8.B Initiation of Procedure for Designation of Historic Sites:

- Charles Farrell House, 630 E. Tachevah
- C. Farrell Guest House, 1120 Via Miraleste
- Charles Farrell House at the Racquet Club

Senior Planner Robertson summarized the staff memo.

The Board discussed:

- Elimination of 177 Santa Catalina from consideration,
- The condition of the Farrell house within the Racquet Club development
- Possible designation of the Racquet Club house as Class Two
- Remodel efforts on the Tachevah house.

Motion by Grattan; second by Ploss; vote 6-0, to initiate investigation for possible designation of the Farrell house at the Racquet Club, 630 E. Tachevah and 1120 Via Miraleste.

- 8.C Initiation of Procedure for Designation of Historic Site:
- Casa Palmeras, 783 N. Indian Canyon Drive

Senior Planner Edward Robertson summarized the staff memo.

The Chair invited Patrick McGrew to clarify the name of the property, which he indicated has changed over the years as noted in his book. He opposed holding the Kocher-Samson building nomination until the Casa Palmeras nomination is ready, and objected to the Board initiating nominations without preliminary investigations into the property. He offered to complete a historic documentation on the Casa Palmeras property.

The Board discussed the procedure for initiating investigation and Board member Ploss offered to prepare the historic documentation.

Motion by Ploss; second by DeLeeuw; vote 6-0, to initiate investigation for possible designation of Casa Palmeras, 783 N. Indian Canyon Drive.

- 8.D Historic Markers (Plaques) – Stephens House, Sinatra House, Del Marcos Hotel

Chair Gilmer asked Board member Grattan to prepare draft language for the three markers, and she agreed.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

No report.

10. STAFF & OTHER REPORTS

Senior Planner Robertson requested Board member DeLeeuw to e-mail to him the list of properties in the Las Palmas Business Historic District so that Mr. Robertson could be forwarded to the entire Board.

11. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board member Ploss distributed a list of film and other media programming that included a reference to Palm Springs.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Grattan; second by Ploss; vote 6-0, to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 a.m. to the Board's regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, June 12, 2012, at 8:15 a.m., in the Large Conference Room at City Hall.

Craig A. Ewing, AICP
Director of Planning Services