

DRAFT

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 6, 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: 2012 / 2013 Excused Absences:
Thomas DeLeeuw, Chair	X	5	
Sheila Grattan, Vice Chair	X	5	
John Gilmer		4	1
Lee Glenn	X	3	2
Patrick McGrew	X	5	
Roxann Ploss	X	5	

Staff Representatives:

Edward Robertson,
Principal Planner
Staff Liaison

Glenn Mlaker, Assistant Planner

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair DeLeeuw called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m.
2. ROLL CALL: Present: Ploss, McGrew, Vice-chair Grattan, Chair DeLeeuw
Absent: Gilmer
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, October 31, 2012.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ron DUBY, 822 Topaz Circle, on behalf of the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, stated that the PSPF supports the latest renovation plans for the Welwood Murray Memorial Library. He also expressed support for restoring the round circulation desk, noting that the PSPF would consider assisting financially with the desk. He also expressed support for restoring the Town & Country Center.

Board member Glenn arrived.

Tracy Conrad, resident, expressed support for the latest Welwood Murray Memorial Library renovation plans and the proposed adaptive re-use of the building. She noted the current plans will allow the library to fulfill its highest and best use in the future.

David Gray, President of the Palm Springs Public Library Board of Trustees, noted that many plans have been brought forward, but the latest plan represents the work of several stakeholders, especially the Palm Springs Historical Society. He stated that the Board of Trustees has voted to support the current plan.

Jeri Vogelsang, Director / Curator of the Palm Springs Historical Society, reported that the Historical Society has voted to support the renovation plans, including making the library the Historical Society's future home. The Historical Society recognizes that the City's designer and staff have been respectful of the Society's functional needs while preserving the interior and exterior of the building. She expressed the Historical Society's hope that they will be open in the Library in the fall of 2013.

5. OTHER BUSINESS:

HSPB #3 (5.1032) Certificate of Approval – Review of Interior Floor Plan. A request by the City of Palm Springs for approval of a proposed interior floor plan in partial fulfillment of the conditions of an approved Certificate of Approval for the Welwood Murray Memorial Library, located at 100 S. Palm Canyon Drive, APN 5413-144-006, Section 15, C-B-D.

Will Kleindienst, project architect, provided a background report and summarized the proposed project, including the allocation of interior space to the proposed uses. He noted that:

- The project should be considered a "remodel" not a "restoration", yet the project attempts to protect and preserve as much of the original building as possible.
- One small interior wall is proposed to be removed to comply with ADA regulations.
- The exterior stairs to the basement are being secured to be interior access only.
- The multi-purpose room can be opened while the library is closed.
- Public restrooms were not included due to cost and the amount of building space required.
- A staff bathroom will be provided.
- Security for staff was a concern so that maintaining interior sightlines was important.
- Multiple stakeholders were actively involved in the design and development of the plan.
- The original circular reference desk has been lost / destroyed, but a similar design with the assistance of the PSPF is possible.
- All plumbing, HVAC and electrical will be completely replaced, but the circular air registers will be retained.
- An art wall will be created above existing book cases; other book cases will be preserved as much as possible.
- Display cases for the Historical Society will be installed.

Principal Planner Edward Robertson summarized the staff report, noting that this presentation meets a condition of a previous HSPB approval. He also noted that furnishings and fixtures remain to be presented to the Board.

The Commission discussed:

- The multi-purpose aspect of the project;

- The absence of public bathrooms, especially considering the use of the multi-purpose room;
- The design and use of the exterior plaza;
- The round circulation desk;
- Preserving access to the adjacent public restrooms;
- Natural lighting from the windows in the staff room;
- The location of the janitor's closet;
- The Board's process of reviewing the proposed project, including a review of the Secretary of Interior's standards;
- The project's design and development history; and
- Proposed changes to the project design:
 - o Retention of original doors and windows;
 - o Design of the interior partitions to allow visibility of the ceilings;
 - o Extending the glass corridor near the staff bathroom;

Mr. Kleindienst noted that:

- The plans were based on space plans, not on field-verified "as-builts";
- The doors in the Historical Society wing is a single door with two sidelights;
- The existing exterior door to the plaza is a single door, with ADA electronic access;
- The staff work / lunch room is currently separated by an accordion door, which is being replaced by an all glass door with sidelights;
- The wall design behind the reception counter is proposed as a display wall to be used by the Bureau of Tourism, but could be redesigned;
- The bathroom reconfiguration and hall alignment was discussed with the stakeholders and represents the consensus of the group;
- The clerestory glass above the reception area and all other clerestories, except in the vault / archive area, are open to natural light;
- Additional interior insulation walls are being added to provide controlled climate in the archive vault;
- The public bathrooms were a continuous challenge to the stakeholders; the adjacent public bathrooms were considered sufficient and helped free up library space for the other uses;
- The round reference desk is important to address and there is a commitment to respect its design.
- The walls in the archive viewing area are low and glass is provided on the north and east sides.
- The ceiling is open to allow air circulation, but there remain security issues to be addressed through some kind of grate or other barrier.
- The wall between the archive and the archive viewing area is a full-height wall, but glass or mirrors could be used in the upper portion and a new detail will be provided; and
- Abatement of hazardous materials remains to be undertaken, but must be done with a new ceiling that respects the original; and
- Interior colors and lighting will complementary to the originals and will be brought back to the Board, as will the landscape plans.

The Board continued its discussion regarding:

- The separations between the lobby and archive rooms;

- The ceiling and its visibility;
- Preserving the view from the main entry through to the courtyard;
- The location and configuration of the staff bathroom and corridor;
- The specific proposed uses and which areas are accessible to the public;
- The design of the lighting fixtures to be complementary to the original;
- Access to the outdoor courtyard and the design of the door with two small sidelights;
- The importance of the public experience in and around the building, while still meeting the needs of the stakeholders; and
- Use of the multi-purpose room for varying activities, possibly including staff meetings.

Motion by McGrew; second by Ploss; vote 5-0-1 (Gilmer absent) To approve the interior plans as conforming to the condition of the previously-approved Certificate of Approval, subject to the following comments:

1. Consider relocating the bathroom;
2. Consider preserving the visibility from the main entry through the building to the courtyard;
3. Allow no exterior changes to the building, except for closing the door near the trash corridor.
4. Use the historic images in determining finishes, details, furnishings and fixtures so that they are sympathetic to the originals.
5. Maintain visibility of the ceiling through the building to the greatest degree possible.
6. Create an ADA-compliant reception desk that resembles the original.

6. ADJOURNMENT: Motion by McGrew; second by Grattan; vote 5-0-1 (Gilmer absent) To adjourn the Historic Site Preservation Board Meeting at 9:20 a.m. to its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, November 13, 2012, at 8:15 a.m., in the City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Craig A. Ewing, AICP
Director of Planning Services