

HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA



MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, JULY 08, 2014 LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM, CITY HALL

CALL TO ORDER: Vice-Chair Johns called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL: Vice-Chair Johns, Board members Burkett, Dixon, Hays, La Voie, Ploss, Williamson.

ALSO PRESENT: Director Wheeler, Associate Planner Lyon.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA: M/S/C (Hays/Ploss, 7-0)

PUBLIC COMMENT:

RON MARSHALL, Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, spoke to item 4.C. He stated he felt that it was a "hard sell" to get approval to use Measure J funds for historic preservation surveys. PSPF made a request three years ago for Measure J funds. PSPF would host the survey on the PSPF website at no cost to the City. He estimated it would take PSPF a year to complete the survey.

DONNA CHABON spoke in support of the Charlie Farrell Class 1 nomination.

TRACY CONRAD spoke about the historic resources survey update. She reinforced Ron Marshall's comments and mentioned that several local residents have been contacted by outside firms to be part of their proposed survey team. She then commented on the Cornelia White House, noting that there was a previous plan that included replacement of some 80 exterior boards and several railroad ties. Her recollection was that the cost was estimated at \$25,000 with an additional \$20,000 in donated landscaping. She stated concern that wrapping may not be the right.

JERI VOGELSANG, Palm Springs Historical Society, spoke about the Cornelia White House project and asked if the building wrap approach would change the appearance of the exterior of the building.

1. CONSENT CALENDAR:

1.A. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: JUNE 10, 2014 MEETING.

Approve as amended M/S/C Williamson/Hays (4-1-2) Ploss opposed, Dixon and La Voie abstained.

- 1.B. REQUEST BY BILL LEWALLEN (OWNER) FOR EXECUTION OF A MILLS ACT HISTORIC PROPERTY PRESERVATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF PALM SPRING, THE ROYAL HAWAIIAN ESTATES HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATE AND BILL LEWALLEN FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 283 EAST TWIN PALMS DRIVE, A CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE ELIGIBLE FOR CLASS 1 HISTORIC STATUS WITHIN THE ROYAL HAWAIIAN HISTORIC DISTRICT (HSPB 73 / HD-2).**

M/S/C Ploss/Dixon Approve staff's recommendation (7-0).

- 1.C. REQUEST BY RICHARD COOK AND CHRISTOPHER MACALUSO, OWNERS FOR EXECUTION OF A MILLS ACT HISTORIC PROPERTY PRESERVATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, THE RACQUET CLUB GARDEN VILLAS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION AND RICHARD COOK AND CHRISTOPHER MACALUSO, FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 360 CABRILLO ROAD UNIT 118, A CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE ELIGIBLE FOR CLASS 1 HISTORIC STATUS WITHIN THE RACQUET CLUB COTTAGES WEST HISTORIC DISTRICT, (HSPB 88 / HD-3).**

M/S/C Ploss/Dixon Approve staff's recommendation (6-0-1) La Voie recused.

- 1.D. REQUEST BY MICHAEL FLEMING AND LUIS A. LAVIN, OWNERS FOR EXECUTION OF A MILLS ACT HISTORIC PROPERTY PRESERVATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS AND MICHAEL FLEMING AND LUIS A. LAVIN FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1860 VISTA DRIVE, A CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE (HSPB 89).**

M/S/C Approve staff's recommendation (7-0).

2. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 2.A APPLICATION BY THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS FOR CONSIDERATION OF CLASS 1 HISTORIC DESIGNATION OF 630 EAST TACHEVAH DRIVE KNOWN AS "THE CHARLIE FARRELL ESTATE" (HSPB-80) AND 1120 NORTH VIA MIRALESTE KNOWN AS "THE GUEST HOUSE" (HSPB-81) ZONE R-1-B.**

STAFF MEMBER LYON summarized the staff report.

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMSON questioned the guest house status as a non-compliant property. Asked if not designating it would leave it vulnerable to future unsympathetic renovations or tear down that would potentially detract from the historic nature of the site on which the main house is sited.

BOARD MEMBER BURKETT questioned whether a house needs to be considered “grand” to qualify for historic designation. He complimented the staff report.

ASSOCIATE PLANNER LYON noted that staff believes that neither persons nor events associated with the guest house warrant Class 1 designation.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS noted that when Ernst Off built the house, it was one property. When she visited the site, the guest house felt like it is part of the larger estate, not separate. She noted several report corrections including concern about content of the attachments authored by Craig Ewing.

DIRECTOR WHEELER suggested deleting the attachments authored by Craig Ewing.

BOARD MEMBER LA VOIE suggested including Board Member Ploss’ comments as an addendum. Page 7 of 10, bullet 8 should say “extended sill” not “molding”.

BOARD MEMBER LA VOIE noted that on page 7 of the report, the first 5 items are not original to the house; and on page 9, bullet number two, suggested “Classic and exemplary example...” is better language.

BOARD MEMBER HAYS supports including 1120 Via Miraleste in the Class 1 designation and suggested the two parcels should be merged.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS moved to recommend Class 1 designation for both sites. Second by Board Member La Voie, motion withdrawn.

M/S/C Hays/Dixon Approve staff recommendation (6-1) Ploss opposed.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

3.A. CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL REQUEST BY THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS FOR REHABILITATION OF THE EXTERIOR OF THE CORNELIA WHITE HOUSE, A CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE LOCATED AT THE VILLAGE GREEN PARK, 225 SOUTH PALM CANYON DRIVE, ZONE CBD AND A CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION PURSUANT TO CEQA (HSPB 4).

STAFF MEMBER LYON summarized the staff report.

REUEL YOUNG, applicant, summarized the revised scope of work for the rehabilitation of the subject building.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS questioned if techniques are available to save the existing wood.

MR. YOUNG said that various types of epoxy can be used to stabilize the existing wood of the railroad ties, but it is likely not possible for the extremely decayed board and batten.

BOARD MEMBER LA VOIE asked if it was known whether the ties are redwood or eucalyptus.

MR. YOUNG said he believes they were eucalyptus, but cannot ascertain if they were creosote treated.

BOARD MEMBER DIXON asked what will be the material of the proposed vapor barrier wrap.

MR. YOUNG said that it was not yet specified, but will be a material similar to the vapor wrap with the brand name "Tyvek".

VICE-CHAIR JOHNS asked Mr. Young to describe the new siding.

MR. YOUNG said that it will match what is there, with a rough sawn finish.

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMSON expressed concern that to build a shell around the building would limit one's ability to see the actual exterior of the Cornelia White House.

MR. YOUNG said other than in one area by the front porch that will be true.

BOARD MEMBER LA VOIE said he is familiar with cases in Santa Barbara to encapsulate and waterproof historic adobe structures and in those cases the approach did not work. He believes that wrapping and encapsulating the existing structure would not be compatible with Department of Interior Standards.

BOARD MEMBER DIXON is concerned with this procedure, as it may be detrimental to the building's integrity. She asked if one section should be done first.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS said she thinks there must be a better way, albeit more expensive.

BOARD MEMBER HAYS felt the city needs to conduct the forensic investigation and report first before making a decision on the right approach to preserve the building.

VICE-CHAIR JOHNS asked if there are funds to continue work. He agrees there should be exploratory work. Maybe a subcommittee with a member of PSHS to work with Reuel to gather more information might work.

BOARD MEMBER DIXON asked if landscape watering was still occurring.

DIRECTOR WHEELER contacted the City's maintenance manager who indicated sprinklers had been adjusted to spray away from the building.

VICE-CHAIR JOHNS suggested continuing the existing forensic investigation and do remediation to add vapor barrier and replace deteriorated material on one elevation to learn best way to proceed and bring back recommendations and findings to the HSPB for further consideration.

MR. YOUNG said that due to the extent of rot, existing boards removed from the house would not be salvageable and would need to be replaced with new material.

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMSON was concerned that in following the proposed approach, the City would only learn about the structure and assembly for that one elevation. Before moving forward with a project on the entire house, the City needs full forensic findings on the entire building.

M/S/C Williamson/Hays Approve staff recommendation number 2 only to initiate forensic investigation of the entire Cornelia White house in order to determine the best approach to stabilization and rehabilitation (6-1) Burkett opposed.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

4.A. CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL REQUEST BY BRENT SWIFT, OWNER, PROPOSING TO ADD A SKYLIGHT, AND 3 WINDOWS TO 360 CABRILLO ROAD UNIT 120, A CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE IN THE RACQUET CLUB COTTAGES WEST HISTORIC DISTRICT, ZONE RGA-6 (HD-3 / HSPB 88, CASE 3.0839 MAA).

BOARD MEMBER LA VOIE recused himself due to a conflict.

ASSOCIATE PLANNER LYON presented the staff report.

DON VANDYKE, applicant representative, was available for questions.

VICE-CHAIR JOHNS asked questions regarding roofs.

MR. VANDYKE explained the roof is the responsibility of the association.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS suggested the Board consider its recent action on denying the Certificate of Approval request on one of the steel houses to add

windows and questioned whether the Board should be consistent in its approach to such requests.

VICE-CHAIR JOHNS indicated that in the case of the Board's recent action denying adding a window in one of the Wexler steel houses, there was no previous precedent, here there is precedent because many windows such as those proposed have been added in other units in this district.

M/S/C Ploss/Dixon Approved staff recommendation (6-0-1) La Voie recused.

M/S/C Ploss/Dixon Approved staff recommendation to allow same modification for other units in the district (6-0-1) La Voie recused.

BOARD MEMBER LA VOIE returned to the meeting.

4.B. A REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE BY SAPPHOS ENVIRONMENTAL ON BEHALF OF THE AGUA CALIENTE BAND OF CAHUILLA INDIANS OFFICE OF TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN COMPILING INFORMATION REGARDING THE SPA HOTEL LOCATED AT 100 NORTH INDIAN CANYON DRIVE.

ASSOCIATE PLANNER LYON presented the staff report.

BOARD MEMBER DIXON asked how the Board or City can ensure all the information gets to the Tribe's consultant.

BOARD MEMBER BURKETT suggested that PSPF probably has a great deal of material on the Spa Hotel.

BOARD MEMBER LA VOIE suggested one strategy might be to flood the Tribe with information and encourage them to not demolish the hotel.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS requested for August's agenda an item to discuss the future of the Spa Hotel. Board members concurred.

4.C. SELECTED FIRM'S PROPOSAL THAT WILL BE RECOMMENDED FOR CONTRACT AWARD BY THE CITY COUNCIL TO CONDUCT A CITY-WIDE HISTORICAL RESOURCES SURVEY & UPDATE.

DIRECTOR WHEELER summarized the status of the contract.

BOARD MEMBER LA VOIE noted he is familiar with surveys and feels that past survey efforts that only include a photo taken from the street fail to sufficiently provide a visual record of historic sites.

VICE-CHAIR JOHNS identified an error on page 16 of the professional consultant's proposal document.

CHRISTINE LAZARETTO, HRG, the prospective survey consultant, explained their proposal and expressed her regret over the error in the proposal. She noted that the fee for their services is approximately \$144,000. She explained their services will include creation of a historic content statement, very similar to work they have been doing in Beverly Hills. It includes field survey that is not drive by only. She says they have done projects that resulted in on line public access of the survey information. "Survey LA", a project on which they worked includes a website called "Historypin.com" that helps inform the public about the survey and would be open to such a tool for the Palm Springs project.

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMSON approved of the proposed timeline. He asked, what can be put in place to ensure adherence to the schedule, also, what would be the final product of the consultant's effort and how can it be kept up to date over time.

CHRISTINE LAZARETTO stated that their firm has never missed a deadline and deliverables are tied to invoices. The final product includes a database of all eligible properties. Future updating can be done by City staff.

BOARD MEMBER DIXON questioned if a website is part of the fee.

CHRISTINE LAZARETTO says that it can be done as part of outreach. History pin website can be done.

BOARD MEMBER DIXON asked how much time is available for public outreach.

CHRISTINE LAZARETTO says the local groups will not do that work, but rather, meetings will be held to work with them. Three outreach meetings are in the contract, another could be scheduled if needed.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS suggested they have an alternative to outreach meetings. The Board should be advised periodically of the progress on the project.

ASSOCIATE PLANNER LYON stated that the City's current historic resource database now has over 700 properties listed.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS stated that the PSPF survey proposal from 2013 should not be dismissed.

RON MARSHALL, PSPF representative, said PSPF chose not to submit an RFP. Rather than compete with outside experts; PSPF would create a database to be added to over time. PSPF proposed a year to create their version of a historic resource database.

BOARD MEMBER HAYS stated his concern that if PSPF did the survey, the City should own the data.

RON MARSHALL stated that PSPF wants to own and handle updates to the survey. He stated PSPF's historic preservation interest covers the whole Coachella Valley. The PSPF intent would be to make the survey information publicly accessible.

BOARD MEMBER HAYS asked if the city could get the data and if it were possible.

RON MARSHALL stated that the city would have access like any other member of the public.

DIRECTOR WHEELER asked if the city would own the data.

RON MARSHALL said he does not know if PSPF or the City would own the survey data.

DIRECTOR WHEELER stated the City would want to own the data.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS stated her preference that the City not expend money on outside consultants when there is expertise within the city.

BOARD MEMBER BURKETT asked if there is public input in the PSPF proposal.

RON MARSHALL stated that PSPF could do the survey for free if necessary. He prefers that the board not endorse an outside contractor.

BOARD MEMBER LA VOIE stated that he has found PSPF's advocacy useful.

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMSON stated that timeline and deliverables must be very tightly tied; he recommended that the contract commit to future maintenance for 5 or more years and that public access be guaranteed.

BOARD MEMBER DIXON stated that the City should work with PSPF and consider their application and suggested the City have PSPF create an outline and schedule for deliverables.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS asked if PSPF has a timeline.

BOARD MEMBER BURKETT said that a timeline and public input are important.

BOARD MEMBER HAYS indicated that he believed that the City Council should look at both PSPF and HRG's proposals.

VICE-CHAIRMAN JOHNS summarized and moved on to the next agenda item.

4.D. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014 – 2015.

VICE-CHAIR JOHNS asked for nominations for chair.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS nominated Vice-Chair Johns, second by Board Member Burkett. There were no further nominations.

VICE-CHAIR JOHNS accepted the Chairmanship.

CHAIR JOHNS asked for nominations for Vice-Chair.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS nominated herself.

BOARD MEMBER DIXON seconded.

There were no more nominations.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS accepted the Vice-Chairmanship.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

VICE-CHAIR JOHNS discussed conduct of meetings and urged Board members to come prepared to all meetings.

BOARD MEMBER PLOSS asked Board Members to look at 796 Via Miraleste and then report if there is interest in pursuing designation.

BOARD MEMBER DIXON noted that she appreciated her appointment by City Council to the HSPB.

BOARD MEMBER LA VOIE introduced himself as requested.

STAFF COMMENTS:

DIRECTOR WHEELER asked for volunteers to participate in a City Council subcommittee for review and possible update recommendations of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (PSMC 8.05.)

CHAIR JOHNS asked Board Members La Voie and Ploss to serve.

DIRECTOR WHEELER noted the Study session on July 17 for HSPB procedures, processes, and general discussion.

ADJOURNMENT: The Historic Site Preservation Board adjourned at 12:15pm to the study session on July 17, 2014 at 9:00 a.m., in the Large Conference Room at City Hall.