

CORONADO HISTORIC RESOURCE COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

March 5, 2003

A regular meeting of the Coronado Historic Resource Commission was called to order at 3:01 p.m., Wednesday, March 5, 2003, in the Council Chambers, 1825 Strand Way, Coronado, California, by Gerry MacCartee, Vice Chair of the Historic Resource Commission.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Keith, Ryan, MacCartee and Walsh

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Draper

STAFF PRESENT: Ann McCaull, Associate Planner
John Swanson, Assistant Planner
Linda Hascup, Administrative Secretary

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 4, 2002 were continued.

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 15, 2003 were approved as submitted.

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 5, 2003 were approved as submitted.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. McCaull welcomed Commissioner Walsh to the Historic Resource Commission as the Design Review Commission's representative.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS

There was no one wishing to speak at this time.

APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW

HRPA 3-03 SUSAN RING KEITH TRUST - HISTORIC RESOURCE PRESERVATION AGREEMENT LIST OF IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE HISTORIC PROPERTY ADDRESSED AS 801 TOLITA AVENUE, IN THE R-1A (SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) ZONE:

Commissioner Keith recused herself for this application as she is the applicant.

STAFF REPORT

Assistant Planner, John Swanson said that the property at 801 Tolita Avenue was designated as a historic resource on April 3, 2002, by the Historic Resource Commission and is now eligible to apply for a Historic Resource Preservation (Mills Act) Agreement with the City. He explained that the HRC's role is to review the "list of improvements" that will be attached to the Mills Act application going to the City Council. He mentioned that Mrs. Keith does not propose any additional improvements to the property other than routine maintenance over the 10-year contract period.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members of the public wishing to speak at this time.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

There was no further discussion.

COMMISSION ACTION

COMMISSIONER RYAN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE LIST OF IMPROVEMENTS FOR HRPA 3-03 CONSISTING OF THE MAINTENANCE OF THE PROPERTY AND FORWARD IT TO THE CITY COUNCIL.

COMMISSIONER WALSH SECONDED THE MOTION.

AYES: Commissioners MacCartee, Ryan, and Walsh

NAYS:

ABSENT: Commissioners Draper and Keith

ABSTAIN:

The motion passed with a vote of 3-0, with two Commissioners absent.

Commissioner Keith rejoined the panel.

HR 1-03 **KLEBER FAMILY TRUST** - REQUEST FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION OF THE SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE LOCATED AT 1015 ALAMEDA BOULEVARD LOCATED IN THE R-1A (SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) ZONE

STAFF REPORT

Mr. Swanson, Assistant Planner, introduced the item as outlined in the agenda. He said that the home was designed by the well-known architect Richard Requa and his partner Frank Mead and built in 1915. In 1929 Mr. Requa designed an expansion to the home in his new style, adapted from his architectural studies in Spain. The home was again expanded in 1929, this time in the Spanish Eclectic architectural style with the installation of a tile roof, addition of wrought iron grille work, and formal gardens with a traditional Spanish fountain in the courtyard. Mr. Swanson provided additional details of the home's design as mentioned in the staff report.

The original owner was a relative of Mrs. Claus Spreckels a member of a very influential local family. The next owner was John Stambough, founder of Youngstown Steel Company. His daughter, Caroline Stambough Snyder and her husband were notable art collectors. Many of the art works they collected on their world travels are now displayed at the San Diego Museum of Art in Balboa Park. They were also active in local civic affairs. After Mrs. Snyder's death the home was split into three portions. The original, main dwelling, which is the applicant structure, is now addressed at 1015 Alameda Boulevard, and the other two wing additions are located on separate lots on Olive Avenue.

Applicant, Joy Kleber, 1015 Alameda Boulevard, informed the Commission that her family carried out all of the research themselves.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members of the public wishing to speak at this time.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioners MacCartee and Ryan said they were very familiar with the property before and after it was split into three residences and feel they truly are significant. Commissioner MacCartee said that this is an excellent example of what you can do with a historic home that has perhaps outlived its size or other viable options for the community to maintain. This application is exactly what this commission is about.

COMMISSION ACTION

COMMISSIONER KEITH MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE HR 1-03 REQUEST FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION OF 1015 ALAMEDA BOULEVARD, WITH THE ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION STATING THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- A. THE PROPERTY MEETS THE 75-YEAR AGE REQUIREMENT;

- B. IT DOES EXEMPLIFY OR REFLECT SPECIAL ELEMENTS OF THE CITY'S MILITARY, CULTURAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AESTHETIC, ENGINEERING, OR ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY;
- C. IT IS IDENTIFIED WITH PERSONS AND EVENTS SIGNIFICANT IN LOCAL HISTORY;
- D. IT IS ONE OF THE FEW REMAINING EXAMPLES IN THE CITY POSSESSING DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SPANISH ECLECTIC ARCHITECTURAL STYLE, HAS BEEN WELL PRESERVED, AND IS VALUABLE FOR THE STUDY OF A TYPE, PERIOD, OR METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION AND HAS NOT BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY ALTERED; AND,
- E. IT IS THE NOTABLE WORK OF A BUILDER WHO WAS FAMOUS IN CORONADO.

COMMISSIONER WALSH SECONDED THE MOTION.

AYES: Commissioners MacCartee, Keith, Ryan, and Walsh

NAYS:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

There is a 10 day appeal period.

HR 2-03 **TRANT FAMILY TRUST** - REQUEST FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION OF THE MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENCE LOCATED AT 1401 YNEZ PLACE LOCATED IN THE R-3 (MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) ZONE.

STAFF REPORT

Ms. McCaull informed the Commission members that the applicant had requested a continuance of their application to the next meeting. Dr. Ray Brandes, 230 West Laurel Street, Ste. 406, San Diego, said he is the acting agent for the Trant Family. He said that they were prepared to present the application, but after reviewing it he advised them to refine the presentation a little more. He felt that when they Commission receives the application they will be very pleased and surprised.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Caroline Crane, said that she was speaking on behalf of the Sweet Family that owns a rental property next door to the subject property. She read a letter that Mr. Sweet had written to submit for the public record. The letter stated that his family has endured generations of neglect of the property, with associated filth, rats and roaches. In addition the inhabitants of the property have been associated with constant noise, police and fire calls for crimes. He said that the "Coronado lifestyle" for he and his tenants has been damaged. However, his family strongly supports and recommends all measures to preserve this clearly historic building and its military history.

Christopher Probett, 1100 Adella Avenue, Unit 29, said that he is the former head of design engineering at major aerospace company in San Diego, now retired and a private developer of commercial buildings. He asked if the owners had a contract to estimate the cost of renovating the dwelling to bring it up to code and can they show sufficient funds to do so. Also, has the City had an independent contractor evaluate the structural integrity of the dwelling to be sure it can be brought up to code. He suggested that there would be so little left of the original building considering the extent of reconstruction necessary; a new roof, plumbing, heating, electrical, and a complete reframing of the structure; it would have no longer have historic significance. Mr. Probett said that with the history of the current owners as landlords and the numerous code violations that caused the building to be condemned, he wanted to know what assurance there is that the Trant family would now become model.

Ms. McCaull said that the applicant should be ready to respond to these types of complaints when they bring their application forward.

Barbara Sturgeon 1100 Adella, Unit #32, said that she has many of the same concerns as Mr. Probett and wanted to know more details on what will become of the property after being designated. She was concerned that it could become low income housing or rental property that would attract that same kind of unsavory individuals as before. She said she is worried that history would be repeated.

Sandra Capano, 1100 Adella, Unit #21, said it is frightening to see police cars and police with their guns drawn in her own neighborhood. She would like to see the family become good landlords and not have a repeat of the history of the property.

Dr. Brandes responded that he doubts very much the applicants are not the original owner who allowed that to happen. They are members of the same family that have conservatorship who understand how the neighborhood feels about the property. He said that perhaps individuals in the neighborhood would like to come see the interior of the building and how it still retains features of the original building that was built by Irving Gill and his partner William Hebbard

Ms. Sturgeon questioned if the architect was proven to be Irving Gill? Ms. McCaull said that would be brought out during the discussion of the application.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioner Walsh said that he would be out of town for the next HRC meeting and wanted to state his concern regarding this application. He felt that there should be an additional criterion when a property is designated, that of whether or not it would be aesthetically pleasing and compatible with the community as a historic resource. He did not find any evidence that Irving Gill was a designer of the home in the information that was presented in the agenda packet and would like for his fellow Commissioners to consider the property's aesthetics.

Ms. McCaull said that staff would be unable to attend the regular meeting date of April 2 and she had taken a quick poll of the Commission members to see if there would be a quorum on April 16th.

After a brief discussion the date to continue the public hearing was set for April 16th.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Commission Discussion Regarding the Public Outreach Program

Flower Show:

Ms. McCaull indicated that Commissioner Draper found out that the Commission would be allowed to have a booth at the Flower Show. A sign-up sheet was being circulated for the Commission members to choose their times to man the booth.

Library Display:

Commissioner Keith said that she has spoken with Christian Esquiven who is willing to put up a display in May for Historic Preservation Month.

Mainstreet Program: Ms. McCaull said she has spoken with Tony Gaylord of Coronado Mainstreet regarding a resolution Ms. Gaylord would like to present at a City Council meeting to announce Historic Preservation Month. She said it might be nice to have all of the Historic Resource Commissioners and members from Coronado Historical Association to present the resolution.

Ms. Keith asked if Coronado Historical would be hanging their banners in May. Ms. McCaull said she wasn't sure, but could find out from CHA and give an update.

Plaques: Ms. McCaull provided some background information regarding plaques for designated properties. She said that Dr. Brandes referred her to a contact that the San Diego Historical Site Board uses. She spoke with them and found that San Diego's plaques are 12 ½" x 17". They are 3 dimensional, 3 ½ inches thick and made of cast bronze with the raised portions being polished bronze. The plaques weigh about 15 pounds and cost around \$500 each; \$580 installed. The San Diego program requires the property owners to purchase the plaques themselves. Commissioners MacCartee and Ryan agreed to form a subcommittee regarding the plaques and Ms. McCaull said she would share designs that the prior subcommittee came up with. Commissioner MacCartee suggested it would be wonderful to get a design from people within Coronado. She and Commissioner Ryan would get together and report back.

Slide Show: Commissioner MacCartee said that she and Nancy Cobb used to put on slide shows, with scripts and said they would like to do some in May. Some of the slide shows are still intact and some were turned over to Coronado Historical Association. She feels that it's important to get the word out and this would be a great opportunity. Commissioner Keith said the Library Director, Christian Esquiven would be available most of May and she should be able to book a couple of dates. If it were announced at the next HRC meeting there should be time to get some publicity in the paper and do some handouts for the Flower Show. One suggestion was to do one program in the afternoon and another in the evening to reach more participants. Ms. Keith suggested they could present a few slides on the mission of the City's Historic Preservation Program and discuss how it differs from the Coronado Historical Association.

The Commissioners discussed a series of articles for the Eagle regarding the goals of the City's Historic Resource Preservation program. Commissioner Ryan suggested it would be good timing to publish something with Historic Preservation Month coming up. Ms. MacCartee agreed that it is extremely important to get the word out, not just to show about what the commission does, but what the resources are. She would like to see a series of articles, with pictures, of the homes that have been designated and the people who have lived there. Mr. Ryan volunteered to speak with the editor of the Eagle & Journal, Dean Eckenroth.

Commissioner Keith said she remembered the Commission discussing requesting that the owners of designated properties write an article after their home is designated. She still thinks that is a good idea. Ms. Keith wondered if the new City of Coronado newsletter would be an appropriate publication for an article. Ms. McCaull said she would find out some information on that.

Commission Discussion Regarding the Historical Program Preservation "Mills Act" Program and Fiscal Restrictions

Ms. McCaull said the Commission is well aware there is currently a backlog of Mills Act application requests due to the fiscal cap the City Council placed on the Mills Act Program which allows only a certain impact on property tax revenues annually for the program. Currently there are three applications pending that total \$33,838, not including Commissioner Keith's application. There is a balance of only around \$1,700 available for FY 2003. The only way an application can be approved over and above the funding limit is if the City Council finds that the properties are in immediate danger of demolition and the resource would be lost, which isn't the case with the homes currently on the backlog. She said that the Commission might want to discuss whether there would be a method to evaluate applications to recommend to the City Council.

Commissioner Ryan stated his opinion that the Historic Resource Commission should have the duty to do as much homework for the City Council as possible and make recommendations. He said a good topic of discussion at another meeting would be the criteria to be used to prioritize what order eligible properties should benefit from the available funds. He thought a certain amount of promotion needs to be done to reduce the "alarm factor". He felt if the number of homes that are potentially eligible for historic designation could be quantified, and the possible dollar figure for Mills Act contracts was discovered, the City Council and the community would better understand the impact of the program and find it isn't as large as it might seem. The scope wasn't when the historic program was put together. It is certainly a different picture than if there was a historic district which could include hundreds of homes.

Commissioner Keith said that perhaps she should step down for this discussion since she has an application pending at this time. Commissioner MacCartee suggested the Commissioners move on the next item put off the fiscal discussion to a later date. Ms. McCaull said that she could check with the City attorney to see if there would be any conflict with Mrs. Keith being included in the discussion while her application is pending.

Commission Discussion Regarding the 1986 Historic Resource Inventory Prepared by Sourcepoint (No Attachments)

Ms. Keith said that she came across a 4-volume document in her papers called the "Historic Resources Inventory, Coronado, CA that was published by a non-profit group called Sourcepoint in 1986 with money from SANDAG. The age criteria used in this report was that any homes that were built before 1941 could be considered historic. The report also gives many examples of architectural designs, facades, sidewalks, etc. A committee appointed by the City Council including Bunnie MacKenzie, Chris Ackerman, Sharon Sherman, Val Neil, MaryAnne Berta, Avalee Nichols, Al Lange, Edward Campbell, Bruce and Betsy Gill, Jim Montgomery, Joan Gillem, Nancy Cobb, Dr. James Cahill, Wilf and Ruth Seamon, with the help of Dr. Ray Brandes, met over two years to put together the report. They found around 200 structures that met the 45 year age requirement. The structures were rated between 1 (the top, eligible and designated on the national historic register) and 5 (the least significant). Each piece of property has 2 pages written on it; the common name, the historic name, the address, present owners, physical and legal descriptions, age, builder, architect, photograph, condition of the structure, alterations, surroundings, and documentation, etc.

Commissioner Keith said this document was a part of the City's library until a citizen complained and lobbied the City Council to take it off the shelves and no longer be a part of the public record. The citizen's concern was that her home was in the book without her permission and she felt her property rights were being taken away. The City Council agreed to take the book off the shelf and no longer refer to them. Commissioner Keith thinks that times have changed and the information is vitally important. She believes the Historic Resource Commission should be able to use it as reference material. She has driven around town and said it is amazing that possibly 90% of the homes are still there, with the majority of them being taken well taken care of. Her recommendation would be for this Commission to recommend to the City Council to put the volumes back on the shelf.

Commissioner Ryan referred to his earlier comments on quantifying the possible impact on tax revenue of the program and said that perhaps a subcommittee could determine how many of the homes listed in the report would be eligible under the current Historic Preservation ordinance. Considering that there are only 200 homes listed that were built prior to 1941, even fewer would be eligible under the current standard of 75 years old (built prior to 1928 as of this year). Commissioner Ryan said the Commission should find a way to present this subject to the Council that doesn't dig back up the old issue. He said he is very familiar with the document and the controversy because he was the owner of a historic property during that time. He said it needs to be explained that the document is purely a resource and has no bearing on what can or can't happen to someone's property. Commissioner MacCartee felt this could be explained to the current Council. She thinks this is such a strong record and well done, and done by local citizens. The Commissioners further discussed their approach to the Council, or whether the document could be used as a source material by the HRC as a starting step to prepare a presentation for the Council.

Ms. McCaull explained that because the City Council basically abolished these volumes, making them no longer a part of the public record, any commission appointed by the City Council may not have access to them because they no longer exist as a public record. The Commission can't review

the inventory or make recommendations using the information until the documents “exist” again. Perhaps a limited approach could be defined for the Council, such as requesting permission to review those documents to assist the Commission with recommendation to the City Council on Mills Act applications or some other future work. Commissioner Ryan said if the document exists, then it should be able to come before this Commission to begin the process to come back into existence again. However, he cautioned that it wouldn’t be a good idea to go before the City Council unless they know the answer will be positive.

Ms. McCaull responded to the comment that there is no significance for a property to be on such a list. She said if an owner of a property listed on an inventory comes in to request a demolition permit, the fact that the property is listed on the inventory and it is rated at some level of significance, or potential significance, case law says that property is automatically subject to CEQA. She mentioned a case in the city of Oakland, “Montgomery Ward v. City of Oakland”, where the city was going to issue a demolition permit and a historical group dug up an inventory from the archives listing the old Montgomery Ward building as significant which caused a long, drawn out battle. Some may view that as a restriction of their property rights.

Ms. McCaull suggested that it may have less impact to point out that of Coronado’s housing stock of 9,145 units, there are probably only 100 properties that meet the criteria as the most pristine home the Commission would want on an inventory, acknowledging that there may be some additional restrictions on those homes that would eventually play out. However, this type of approach is different than the original intent when the current Historic Preservation Program was established, as a voluntary program. Ms. McCaull said that the request to bring back the report could be tied to the other issues before the Commission, the demolition permit process and the Mills Act funds. She said the Council has recently been sensitized to the recent demolition of a property on Tolita.

After further discussion the Commission decided to continue the discussion at the next meeting and requested that staff put together a draft report to the City Council for the Commission members to review. Commissioner Ryan agreed to work with staff on the report.

Commission Discussion Regarding Demolition Permit Process for the City of Coronado and Other Jurisdictions Throughout the State (No Attachments)

Commissioner Keith said she would like to see the demolition processes used by other cities. She said this Commission doesn’t need to reinvent the wheel when there are so many cities that have programs and inventories. Dr. Ray Brandes commented that the San Diego procedure is very simple. If someone applies for demolition a historic and archeological report must be prepared and reviewed by staff. If the structure doesn’t qualify as an historic or architectural resource it is approved. If not approved, it goes to the site board. Every house that comes up for demolition must have a study.

MacCartee said that at some point the City and HRC will have to decide how many teeth are needed and how much pressure to apply, but that time isn’t now. She said it is important for the public and council to be aware of how other cities are protecting what they have. She agrees that it would be helpful to see how other cities handle their demolition processes.

MISCELLANEOUS

Commissioner Keith asked if staff had heard anything from Public Services regarding Star Park. Ms. McCaull said she hadn't, but she knew they did commit to come before the Historic Resource Commission for a recommendation, but she didn't have any other information at this time.

Commissioner Keith asked when the Commission would discuss the List of Potential Public Historic Resources. Ms. McCaull said that it was off the agendas for a period of time at the Commission's request until there was a full commission to discuss the topic. The item may possibly be on the next agenda.

FUTURE ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Tony A. Peña
Director of Community Development