

HISTORIC RESOURCE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Regular Meeting

May 6, 2009

The regular meeting of the Coronado Historic Resource Commission was called to order at 3:02 p.m., Wednesday, May 6, 2009, at the Coronado City Hall Council Chambers, 1825 Strand Way, Coronado, California, by Chairperson O'Brien.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Crenshaw, Jones, O'Brien, and Ryan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner St. Denis

STAFF PRESENT: Ann McCaull, Associate Planner
Martha L Alvarez, Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of April 15, 2009, were approved as submitted.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Determination regarding proposed changes to 116 Orange Avenue as it pertains to the Notice of Intent to Demolish permit process (NOI 5-09)

Director McCaull reported that the applicants are proposing modifications to the front façade. She stated that the NOI process applies not only to residential but commercial properties. Staff has made the determination that the applicants are not removing any key architectural features of the building as it has already been substantially altered. Therefore, the property is not subject to the NOI process. However, it will go before the Design Review Commission for any exterior changes.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

HR 2-09 **TOM AND MOLLY COUMES** – Request for Historic Designation of the single family residence addressed as 160 G Avenue and located in the R-1A (Single Family Residential) Zone.

Ms. McCaull introduced the staff report as outlined in the agenda. The site contains a single story dwelling with an attached garage and a detached accessory building off the alley. The property is 75' wide x 140' deep totaling 10,500 square feet. The owners have applied for

historic designation to preserve the residence for the future and if designated, will apply for a Mills Act Agreement.

City records indicate a permit was issued in 1938 for the construction of the residence. The residence is 71 years old. In order for a structure to be designated as a Coronado Historic Resource, the structure must be at least 75-years of age or have reached historical significance within the last 75 years. Since the structure is not 75-years of age, the Commission must determine whether the structure has reached historical significance within the last 75 years. If the Commission determines the structure has reached significance, then at least two additional criteria shall be met to deem the structure as a Coronado Historic Resource.

There are three homes remaining within the community that were designed and built by Cliff May. All three of these homes have been designated as Historic Resources. There are three additional homes that are believed to be designed by Cliff May but built by Walter Vestal. A site visit and review of photographs of all these properties illustrates very similar architectural styles and architectural detailing and it would seem logical to surmise all properties were indeed designed by noted architect Cliff May.

Ms. McCaull commented that this home was featured in the Coronado Historical Association's tour this past week.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The applicant, Molly Coumes, 160 G Avenue, gave a brief overview of the request and answered questions.

Susan Keith, 801 Tolita Avenue, confirmed that this home was on the Coronado Historical Tour this past Sunday and it received numerous favorable comments. She stated that based on the research the applicants have done, there is no doubt that this home is a Cliff May house. She thanked the Coumes for their interest in designating the home and stated that she supports the request.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioner Jones asked if the applicants plan to build any additions.

Tom Coumes, 160 G Avenue, replied that they do not have plans for any additions or second stories.

Commissioner Jones said she would support the request.

Commissioner Ryan said he was prepared to make a motion in favor of the request.

Vice Chair Crenshaw commented there are many homes in Coronado that have been built by Walter Vestal, including her own home. She added that the home is gorgeous.

Chairperson O'Brien said he was a participant in the tour and shares the Coumes' enthusiasm for their home. The applicants have done a fantastic job in preserving the Cliff May home.

COMMISSION ACTION

COMMISSIONER RYAN MADE A MOTION THAT THE HISTORIC RESOURCE COMMISSION WOULD CONSIDER 160 G AVENUE TO BE AN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT PROPERTY AND WOULD APPROVE A REQUEST FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION IF REQUESTED, WITH THE ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION STATING THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

ALTHOUGH THE HOME IS NOT 75 YEARS OF AGE, IT HAS REACHED HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE WITHIN THE LAST 75 YEARS BECAUSE IT IS ONE OF ONLY SIX HOMES REMAINING IN CORONADO THAT WAS DESIGNED BY CLIFF MAY AND BECAUSE IT DOES MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- A. IT DOES EXEMPLIFY OR REFLECT SPECIAL ELEMENTS OF THE CITY'S AESTHETIC AND ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY; AND
- B. IT IS IDENTIFIED WITH PERSONS SIGNIFICANT IN LOCAL HISTORY IN THAT THE BUILDER, WALTER VESTAL, CONSTRUCTED SEVERAL NOTEWORTHY PROPERTIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AND HE WAS ALSO INVOLVED POLITICALLY SERVING AS MAYOR, CITY COUNCILMEMBER AND UNIFIED PORT DISTRICT COMMISSIONER. THE ORIGINAL OWNER, FRED HYDE, WAS ALSO SIGNIFICANT LOCALLY AS THE BUILDER WHO CONSTRUCTED THE NOTEWORTHY SINGLE-STORY BUNGALOW SUBDIVISION COMPRISING THE 400 BLOCK OF G AVENUE AND THE COMMUNITY'S VILLAGE THEATRE. THE ARCHITECT, CLIFF MAY, WAS SIGNIFICANT BOTH LOCALLY AND REGIONALLY AS AN ARCHITECT DESIGNING SPANISH COLONIAL AND RANCHERIA STYLED HOMES;
- C. IT IS ONE OF SIX REMAINING EXAMPLES IN THE CITY DESIGNED BY CLIFF MAY POSSESSING DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS SPANISH ARCHITECTURAL STYLE, AND IS VALUABLE FOR THE STUDY OF A TYPE, PERIOD OR METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION AND HAS NOT BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY ALTERED;
- D. IT IS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NOTABLE WORK OF WALTER, VESTAL, AND ARCHITECT, CLIFF MAY;
- E. IT DOES MEET THE STATE PROGRAM OF LANDMARKS AND POINTS OF HISTORICAL INTEREST AS SET FORTH IN ARTICLE 2 (COMMENCING WITH SECTION 50280) OF CHAPTER 1 OF PART 1 OF DIVISION 1 OF THE CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE AND ARTICLE 1.9 (COMMENCING WITH SECTION 439) OF CHAPTER 3 OF PART 2 OF DIVISION 1 OF THE CALIFORNIA REVENUE AND TAXATION CODE (AS AMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME).

VICE CHAIR CRENSHAW SECONDED THE MOTION.

AYES: Commissioners Crenshaw, Jones, O'Brien, and Ryan.
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: Commissioner St. Denis.
ABSTAIN: None.

The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

HRPA 5-09 **ARLENE LUND** – Request for Historic Preservation Mills Act Agreement for the historically designated residence addressed as 465 G Avenue and located in the R-3 (Multiple Family Residential) Zone.

Ms. McCaull introduced the staff report as outlined in the agenda. On April 1, 2009, the Historic Resource Commission designated 465 G Avenue as a Coronado Historic Resource.

One of the benefits of having the property designated as a Historic Resource is that the property owner is then eligible to apply to the City of Coronado for a Historic Resource Preservation (Mills Act) Agreement. On April 10, 2009, Arlene Lund filed an application to enter into a Historic Resource Preservation (Mills Act) Agreement with the City.

A Historic Resource Preservation Agreement is a contract between the property owner and the City, wherein the property owner agrees to preserve, and when necessary, restore and rehabilitate a designated historic resource throughout the term of the ten (10) year agreement. In exchange, the property owner receives a reduction in property taxes. If restoration or rehabilitation work is planned or needed for the property, it is identified on a "list of improvements" attached to the Historic Resource Agreement.

During the ten-year period of the agreement, the property owner is planning to add wood-framed screens to the windows. Additionally, the property owner discussed with staff the paint color of the residence. The applicant is open to any suggestions the Commission may have regarding necessary improvements to qualify for a Mills Act Agreement.

Lee Potter of the County Tax Assessor's office has completed an estimate of the restricted value of 465 G Avenue with the Historic Resource Preservation (Mills Act) Agreements in place. With the current estimate, the owner will see an estimated \$6,990 reduction in property tax. The City of Coronado and the Community Development Agency will see an estimated annual property tax revenue decrease of \$4,054.

Chairperson O'Brien asked if the estimated \$6,990 reduction in property tax assumes a full Mills Act or the recommended 50 percent Mills Act.

Ms. McCaull replied that it assumes a full Mills Act.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairperson O'Brien acknowledged the applicant, Arlene Lund, 465 G Avenue, was present in the audience.

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

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Chairperson O'Brien asked about the original paint color in 1926, and when the home was painted the dark color.

The applicant indicated that she did not know.

Chairperson O'Brien asked how long the applicant has owned the property.

The applicant indicated she has owned the property for three years.

Commissioner Jones said this is the type of home that she would like saved in Coronado.

Vice Chair Crenshaw said that it is not the original color because it is not the era. She asked if there were photographs of other homes they could reference.

Ms. McCaull said the sister home located next door was also built by Hakes and is an off-white color. This was a very standard color in the mid 1920's.

Ms. Lund said she was happy with the color; however, she is open to ideas. She said staff suggested a paint store, Sherman Williams, which carries historical colors.

Commissioner Ryan asked if it is in the Commission's charter to determine or request the applicant to change the color of her home.

Chairperson O'Brien replied that it may or may not be part of the Commission's charter as they have not addressed this type of request previously.

Commissioner Ryan said that he does not feel that they should be in the "color business."

Vice Chair Crenshaw asked the applicant if she wanted suggestions on the paint color.

Ms. Lund said she is fine with leaving the color as is; however, staff had voiced a concern that perhaps the Commission would require that the color be changed.

Vice Chair Crenshaw said the Commission has previously approved an applicant's request to change the paint color.

Commissioner Ryan said this is an historical structure which has met the historicity guidelines and questioned whether it is in the Commission's purview to approve a home's paint color.

Ms. McCaull replied that she has taken into consideration the recent trend that the Commission is taking with regard to Mills Act homes. It appears that the Commission would like to require that Mills Act properties be as pristine and historically accurate as possible. She suggested to the applicant that the paint color may be a point of discussion by the Commission because if the home does receive a Mills Act Agreement, it should be an historically accurate color. Ms. McCaull understands that this point is entirely at the discretion of the Commission.

Commissioner Jones said that this is an historical neighborhood and noticed that the surrounding properties are an off-white color. She guessed that this structure was initially an off-white or cream color. She stated that the dark green color is more of a Victorian or Craftsman color. She does not find the color offensive; however, she does not feel that it is in keeping with the original appearance of the house.

Ms. Lund said that the homes across the street are an off-white color with brown trim, and the sister home located next door is an off-white color with green trim.

Chairperson O'Brien suggested that the request be approved as-is, with the condition that if the paint color is changed within the 10-year agreement period, the original color would be acceptable. If the applicant desires to use another color, it would require Commission approval.

Ms. McCaull said this condition would be more appropriate if applied to the designation rather than the Mills Act Agreement.

Commissioner Ryan said that he considered the selection of the paint color to be at the property owner's discretion.

Chairperson O'Brien disagreed as a home could "take off" in a direction that is inappropriate.

Commissioner Jones said authenticity should be a factor.

Vice Chair Crenshaw stated that it is reasonable to request the applicant to choose an alternative color as the Commission is striving for authenticity.

Commissioner Jones agreed. She added that the applicant must return before the Commission for approval on the additions of the screens and any other additions or enhancements to the house. She stated that authenticity is becoming more of a factor when reviewing Mills Act homes.

Ms. Lund said she would like to add the wood screens over the summer.

Chairperson O'Brien suggested that the Commission approve the request to add the wood screens so that the applicant can move forward.

COMMISSION ACTION

VICE CHAIR CRENSHAW MADE A MOTION TO FORWARD THE HISTORIC RESOURCE PRESERVATION AGREEMENT APPLICATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL WITH THE APPROVED LIST OF IMPROVEMENTS FOR 465 G AVENUE (HRPA 5-09) AS FOLLOWS:

1. ADD WOOD-FRAMED SCREENS TO THE WINDOWS THAT MATCH THE EXISTING TRIM COLOR.

A RECOMMENDATION WAS ADDED THAT THE PROPERTY OWNER CONSIDER AN ALTERNATIVE PAINT COLOR THAT IS MORE HISTORICALLY ACCURATE.

COMMISSIONER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION.

AYES: Commissioners Crenshaw, Jones, O'Brien, and Ryan.
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: Commissioner St. Denis.
ABSTAIN: None.

The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

NOI 4-09 **JOHN AND MICHELLE OVAL** – Notice of Intent to Demolish the single family residence addressed as 810 Glorietta Boulevard and located in the R-1A (CC-1) (Single Family Residential) Zone.

Director McCaull introduced the staff report as outlined in the agenda. City records indicate the dwelling was constructed in 1913 so the residence is 96 years old. The owners are planning on demolishing the existing home to construct a new residence. Since the dwelling is over 75 years of age, a Notice of Intent (NOI) to Demolish Permit Application has been filed with the City.

The original owner was A. Merrick. The contractor and architect were not identified. Some alterations have occurred to the residence since its original construction. It is important to note that over the last several years, the residence has undergone major restoration by the present property owners. It is unfortunate that the home is now being proposed to be demolished.

The home has a Craftsman Bungalow architectural style. The Historic Resource Inventory completed in the 1980's identified this building as having a historical ranking of 3H. A 3 indicated the structure was built before 1942; was in good physical condition; has had minor modifications to original exterior appearance; was representative of a recognized style or local vernacular style; and would qualify as a contributing structure to a potential historic district. The "H" designation was applied to structures listed on the Coronado Historical Association (CHA) Register. The home was also identified on the final Coronado Property Review (CPR) List completed by the Historic Resource Commission in 2008.

Public notices were distributed to all property owners within 300 feet of the subject property. The City has not received any correspondence objecting to the demolition of the residence.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The applicants, John and Michelle Oval, 810 Glorietta Boulevard, made themselves available to answer questions.

Susan Keith, 801 Tolita Avenue, spoke about the previous residents who were close family friends. She recalls that Edward Burroughs was one of Coronado's early Navy aviators, Class of 1924, Naval Academy graduate. He was part of the Seahawks, the original stunt team for the Navy that preceded the Blue Angels. Ms. Keith also remembers that Kay Burroughs moved to Coronado in 1911 and was considered a socialite in those days.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Vice Chair Crenshaw said this is a gorgeous, pristine home. She stated that after reading the applicant's letter, she empathizes with them; however, she cannot imagine supporting the request for demolition.

Commissioner O'Brien said this is an attractive home; however, it is a small house located towards the front of a very large lot. The home's attractiveness is a testament on how well the applicants have restored the home since they have owned it. Because of the size of the lot, it would have been a good resolution to move the small home to the rear of the property and possibly use it as a pool house and build another home at the front of the property. However, this is not a realistic option. Another option would be to add a large second story addition towards the rear of the property; however, it would detract from the existing structure at the front. Mr. O'Brien said this is a great home but it is underutilized for the lot size. He would not like to see the structure demolished; however, he supports the request.

Commissioner Jones said she likes the appearance of the home and the changes that have been made to it over the last several years. She said this is the type of home that she would like to save and cherish. She suggested that the applicants could build another structure at the rear of the property and retain the original home at the front in order to best utilize the lot. She will not support the request for demolition.

Commission Ryan commented that this is not an easy decision to make as it means balancing the historical aspect of the home with the property owners' rights. He is unsure of his position at this time.

Chairperson O'Brien suggested that it may be appropriate to continue the item because of the mixed comments from the Commission and the absence of one of its members.

Mr. Oval suggested that they could show photographs of the home from about three years ago. He stated that because of his wife's remodeling efforts, the house looks very nice. However, the

changes that were made are not considered a restoration as the house does not reflect its original appearance.

Chairperson O'Brien asked if the applicants had photographs of the home before its remodel.

Ms. Oval said the remodel was her design and the fence, beams and columns at the front of the home were built within the last couple of years. She intends to keep the same type of design for the new home.

COMMISSION ACTION

CHAIRPERSON O'BRIEN MADE A MOTION TO CONTINUE THE ITEM TO ITS NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 20, 2009, WHEN A FULL COMMISSION IS PRESENT.

VICE CHAIR CRENSHAW SECONDED THE MOTION.

Chairperson O'Brien said he would suggest that the applicants return before the Commission with documentary evidence of the home before they remodeled it.

Vice Chair Crenshaw commented that in approving the request, the Commission would need to determine that the home is not historic. She feels that the Commission will have a difficult time in doing so as the home is 96 years of age and there have been important persons who have resided there.

AYES: Commissioners Crenshaw, Jones, O'Brien, and Ryan.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner St. Denis.

ABSTAIN: None.

The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

Ms. Oval said she has some photographs of the house in 2002, when they first purchased it.

Chairperson O'Brien said that Commission Crenshaw's comments are very good. In order for the Commission to approve the request, the applicant will need to demonstrate that the house is not historic.

MISCELLANEOUS

HRPA 8-08 City of Coronado: Discussion regarding changes to the Mills Act Program and future Mills Act Workshops.

Ms. McCaull introduced the staff report as outlined in the agenda. At the February 18, 2009, Historic Resource Commission meeting, the Commission began preliminary discussions regarding the upcoming Mills Act workshops. Subcommittees of the Commission were formed

to develop preliminary recommendations regarding the items to be discussed at the workshops. The areas the Commission would like to focus on include 1) eligibility requirements, e.g. what properties are eligible to apply; 2) process e.g., how are properties treated/evaluated on the waiting list; 3) funding levels, e.g. how should the fiscal cap be handled annually; and 4) alterations, e.g. extent of alterations allowed for Mills Act properties.

Ms. McCaull stated that the purpose of today's meeting is to review the final alternative recommendations for changes to the Mills Act Program and make deletions and/or changes as deemed appropriate.

Commissioner Ryan provided a brief update on Funding Levels.

Chairperson O'Brien agreed with staff's suggestion in presenting the categories as followings: Begin with the Funding Levels slide, followed by the Mission Statement slide, then present the Process, Eligibility and Alterations slides, and finally return to the Funding Levels slides.

Tom Coumes, 160 G Avenue, encouraged the Commission to create a plan that reduces the backlog expeditiously. He does not feel that the City should designate a home as historic and expect the property owners to maintain it in a certain status without receiving any type of compensation.

Commissioner O'Brien provided a brief update on Process.

The Commission discussed the following options in processing applications:

- A. Process applications based upon historical significance with some weight given to application date. (Eliminate existing criteria of in-danger because it is difficult to measure.)
- B. Process applications based upon application date.
- C. Process a maximum of 5 or 6 applications each calendar year.
- D. Process one home from each of the 5 categories of development before a second home in any particular category is selected.
- E. Retain Mills Act Exemptions for special circumstances approved by the City Council.

The Commission agreed to forward Options A and E as their recommendation to City Council.

Tom Coumes, 160 G Avenue, suggested that the Commission should recommend to City Council that they accept all 34 homes on the Mills Act waiting list and divide up the funds the City is willing to forego, which is \$15,000.

Chairperson O'Brien replied that State law which would not allow such an option.

The Commission reviewed the following options under Eligibility:

- A. Only property owners with historically designated residential structures may apply for a Mills Act Agreement.
- B. In most cases, only the historic structure itself shall receive tax relief. No tax reduction for non-historic additions for accessory buildings except in special circumstances.
- C. A historically designated property that already has inappropriate or illegal additions or changes, in particular to the front façade, may not be eligible for MA benefits.

Vice Chair Crenshaw asked about Option B, and what is considered an exception to “most cases.”

Commissioner Jones said the wording is meant to soften the language, as per previous Commission discussions.

The Commission agreed to remove the words “In most cases” in Option B.

Vice Chair Crenshaw asked if Option C applies to homes that have already been approved in 2009.

The Commission determined that Option C would apply to all future properties that are designated.

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

The Commission agreed to discuss Alterations at the next meeting when a full Commission is present.

Discussion regarding the Mission of the Historic Preservation Program

The Commission agreed that Chairperson O’Brien would incorporate the suggested statements into one draft Mission Statement and present it at the next meeting.

Vice Chair Crenshaw asked about the wording in one of the statements, “...spirit of compromise...” as she feels the Commission is becoming more rigid in their new adaptations.

Chairperson O’Brien responded that the Commission’s role in preservation is primarily voluntary and it is through a spirit of compromise and encouragement that many of its goals are accomplished.

Commissioner Ryan suggested giving future Commissioners flexibility with regard to the rules.

Discussion regarding the Joint City Council and Historic Resource Commission meeting

Ms. McCaull made available possible dates for the meetings and suggested the Commission select a preferred date and time.

The Commission suggested a public workshop meeting date of Tuesday, June 23, at 6 p.m., at the City Council Chambers.

The Commission then suggested a joint City Council and Historic Resource Commission meeting date of 1) Thursday, August 27, 2) Monday, August 24; or 3) Monday, August 31 (in order of preference).

Discussion regarding Draft Design Guidelines for Designated Historic Resources and Designated Historic Resources with Mills Act Agreements

Ms. McCaull reported that she attended the California Preservation Foundation Workshop in Palm Desert about two weeks ago. One of the sessions discussed design guidelines which provides useful information for Commissions and/or current or potential owners of historic homes. Ms. McCaull felt that it would be helpful to incorporate this information into a booklet for property owners who are interested in designation, alterations, or additions to their properties. She suggested that the Commission may want to place this item on a future agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

Lauren Wasserman
Interim Director of Community Development