

HISTORIC RESOURCE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Regular Meeting

May 20, 2009

The regular meeting of the Coronado Historic Resource Commission was called to order at 3 p.m., Wednesday, May 20, 2009, at the Coronado City Hall Council Chambers, 1825 Strand Way, Coronado, California, by Vice Chair Crenshaw.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Crenshaw, Jones, and Ryan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioners O'Brien and St. Denis

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of May 6, 2009, were approved as submitted.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

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. (This item has been continued to the July 1, 2009, meeting at the request of the applicant.)

Director McCaull reported that this item has been continued to the meeting of July 1, 2009, at the request of the applicant.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

None.

COMMISSION ACTION

COMMISSIONER JONES MADE A MOTION TO CONTINUE THIS ITEM TO THE MEETING OF JULY 1, 2009, AT THE REQUEST OF THE APPLICANT.

COMMISSIONER RYAN SECONDED THE MOTION.

AYES: Commissioners Crenshaw, Jones, and Ryan.

NAYS: Commissioners O'Brien and St. Denis.

ABSENT: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

The motion passed with a vote of 3-0.

MISCELLANEOUS

Commission consideration of request to acknowledge Joseph Falkenham and Irving Gill as the architects of 1112 Churchill Place and re-prioritize the subject property on the Mills Act waiting list (John and Lori Elkins HRP 9-07)

Commissioner Ryan asked about the purpose of the application.

Ms. McCaull said the purpose of the application is to bring new information to the Commission about the architect of record. When the Commission analyzed the Mills Act application a few years ago, information regarding the architect/designer was unavailable. As a result, the home received a fairly low ranking. The new owner has completed much research and has found that the architect/designer was important. The owner would like to bring this information forward so that the Commission can re-evaluate the value of the home in terms of its ranking on the Mills Act list.

Commissioner Jones asked if the home would be evaluated at this time or during the end-of-the - year evaluations.

Ms. McCaull said the evaluation would take place at this time because this is a request to modify the total value ranking based upon new information.

Commissioner Ryan suggested that the Commission make a determination today on whether the information presented by the owner regarding the architects is valid, and continue the request to re-prioritize the home on the Mills Act list.

Vice Chair Crenshaw asked the property owner, Mr. Elkins, if he would like to continue the item until a full Commission is present.

John Elkins, 1112 Churchill Place, said he would like to proceed with the item.

Commissioner Jones stated that she would like the item continued until a full Commission is present.

Ms. McCaull said that this is the first time the Commission has received a request for modification to the ranking on the Mills Act list. She suggested a full Commission discussion may be necessary for the review of the potential modification to the ranking.

Mr. Elkins said extensive effort was put forth in the compilation of the findings and a condensed version was provided to the Commission for their review. The research took many months and the findings are comprehensive. He would be happy to meet with the other Commissioners not present today and invited the members to visit his home.

Commissioner Jones said she visited the home when the previous property owners, the Flathers, completed their remodel. She expressed concern about the process in re-prioritizing the home on the Mills Act list. She asked if the change in point value would make a significant difference of the home's ranking on the list.

Mr. Elkins said that based on the home's architectural aspect, they have been given 6 allotted points out of a potential 25. A change in point value would provide for a substantial change in ranking of their home on the list.

Commissioner Ryan asked Mr. Elkins where he felt his ranking may be based on the re-prioritization

Mr. Elkins said it would depend on if the valuation was based on the architects Joseph Falkenham or Irving Gill individually, or a combination of their partnership, which occurred from 1893 to 1895. Based on the classification, his home may be ranked in the second or third slot. He is currently listed 16 on the list, based solely on the low ranking given for architecture.

Vice Chair Crenshaw commented that the Commission is in the process of re-evaluating the criteria. She agreed with Mr. Elkins that he would potentially move from 16 on the list to second or third. She said she would be more comfortable continuing the item until a full Commission is present.

Commission Ryan stated that a full quorum is present and suggested that the item be heard.

Mr. Elkins provided a detailed oral history of his research including information on Joseph Falkenham and Irving Gill, and answered questions.

Commissioner Ryan asked why the two architects were not included in the original determination.

Mr. Elkins suggested possible reasons for the missing architectural information. He stated that Joseph Falkenham began building homes in Coronado in 1888. He lived on the island, was a member of the San Diego Public Works Department, and was very influential. In 1889, there were 14 listed architectural firms in the City of San Diego. By 1893, the architectural firms had depleted to 3 remaining firms in the City of San Diego and Mr. Falkenham had relocated out of San Diego. Because Mr. Falkenham had been the premier Queen Anne Victorian architect in the City, he saw an opportunity in returning to San Diego. At that time, Irving Gill took up residence and began work in San Diego. Mr. Falkenham brought in Irving Gill as a partner. This partnership lasted two years. Mr. Falkenham suddenly disappeared with all of his works and details regarding his architectural work. He became a "man of mystery." This may explain why the bulk of Falkenham, and Falkenham and Gill's architectural records are non-existent, with the exception of a few articles in the San Diego Union Tribune.

Commissioner Ryan said he was pleased with the presentation and packet provided by Mr. Elkins. Mr. Ryan said he has no doubts that this is a very significant historical home. He said that this type of home is what the City of Coronado needs and is what the Mills Act Program is all about.

Commissioner Jones concurred. However, she expressed concern that the documentation is not concrete, although the research by Mr. Elkins does indicate that the home is a Falkenham or Falkenham/Gill home. She agreed that this is the type of home that should be in the Mills Act Program because of its history and uniqueness. She said she was hesitant about moving up the home in its ranking on the list.

Vice Chair Crenshaw thanked the applicant for his presentation. She suggested that there are two issues to consider for approval on this item: 1) Support the research and findings completed by Mr. and Mrs. Elkins confirming the architects for the residence, and 2) Change the point value assigned under the architect/builder criteria for the residence and overall prioritization location on the Mills Act waiting list. She said it was apparent that the Commission supported Item 1; however, she felt Item 2 should be continued until a full Commission is present.

Mr. Elkins acknowledged his approval to have the Commission make a determination on Item 1 and continue Item 2 to a future meeting.

COMMISSION ACTION

COMMISSIONER RYAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE HRP 9-07, JOHN AND LORI ELKINS, REQUEST TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT JOSEPH FALKENHAM AND IRVING GILL ARE THE ARCHITECTS OF 1112 CHURCHILL PLACE.

VICE CHAIR CRENSHAW SECONDED THE MOTION.

AYES: COMMISSIONERS CRENSHAW, JONES, AND RYAN.

NAYS: NONE.
ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS O'BRIEN AND ST. DENIS.
ABSTAIN: NONE.

The motion passed with a vote of 3-0.

VICE CHAIR CRENSHAW MADE A MOTION TO CONTINUE HRPA 9-07, JOHN AND LORI ELKINS, REQUEST TO RE-PRIORITIZE THE SUBJECT PROPERTY ON THE MILLS ACT WAITING LIST, TO THE MEETING OF JUNE 3, 2009.

COMMISSIONER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION.

AYES: COMMISSIONERS CRENSHAW, JONES, AND RYAN.
NAYS: NONE.
ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS O'BRIEN AND ST. DENIS.
ABSTAIN: NONE.

The motion passed with a vote of 3-0.

HRPA 8-08 City of Coronado: Discussion regarding proposed changes to the Mills Act Program and upcoming Public Workshop scheduled for June 23, 2009, at 6 p.m.

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 (and the meeting of June 3) is to finalize the Commission's recommendations in preparation for the public workshop that will be held on Tuesday, June 23, 2009, at 6 p.m., in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Vice Chair Crenshaw asked about the agenda for the workshop.

Ms. McCaull suggested that a handout could be made available to the public at the workshop. The handout would provide the Mission Statement and an overview of existing program.

Commissioner Ryan asked if the workshop will be published in the local newspaper.

Ms. McCaull replied yes.

The Commission reviewed the Draft Changes to Mills Act Program and noted possible changes: (Underline reflects additions and ~~strikethrough~~ reflects deletions.)

1. Mills Act Process: How should ~~are~~ applications be processed? *The Commission reviewed and prefers A & E.*
 - A. Process applications based upon historical significance with ~~some~~ increased 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.

2. Eligibility Requirements: Who is eligible to apply for Mills Act? *The Commission reviewed and agrees with A, B, and C.*
 - 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 or 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.

3. Alterations to Mills Act properties: What types of alterations are allowed?

Overview: Alterations allowable for historically designated structures may be more lenient and flexible (within the Secretary of the Interior's Standards) than those allowable to Mills Act properties. The owner has two choices:

- 1) Preserve and protect a historic house and foster the strong community identity unique to Coronado's rich heritage in exchange for the pride of stewardship and Mills Act tax benefits or
 - 2) "Save" a historic house and add to or alter it as appropriate (subject to HRC approval), adapting a piece of Coronado's history to today's lifestyle. Owner may take advantage of considerable possible zoning exceptions and other benefits, with the understanding that he/she may forego the possibility of Mills Act tax benefits.
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- A. The front façade is sacred. Changes to the front façade or any façade facing a public right-of-way (excluding alleys) should be avoided (moved from other

section). Proposed alterations to a front facade (i.e. replacing windows and with French doors or adding a visible second story to a one-story house), although deemed historically compatible and approved by HRC, may make that house ineligible for the Mills Act. Owners should be made aware of this at the time the proposed alterations are reviewed by HRC. Previous alterations and additions that have occurred to a residence prior to an application for a Mills Act Agreement may also make the house ineligible for a Mills Act Agreement.

- B. Rehabilitation (returning a historic structure to its original condition on elevations visible from public rights-of-way) shall be eligible for Mills Act benefits ~~ONLY~~ if the application is accompanied by historic photographs and/or other reliable documentation of the likely appearance of the original structure.
- C. Alterations and additions proposed for Mills Act Properties shall comply with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/rhb/guide.htm) (Standards were eliminated from below and will be attached to the *Guide for Participating in the City's Historic Preservation Program*). The following are important guidelines considered by the Historic Resource Commission when considering alterations and additions for a Mills Act Property.

GUIDELINES FOR ALTERATIONS TO MILLS ACT PROPERTIES

1. REHABILITATION

- A. Preserve Primary Historic Building Materials whenever feasible
 - 1. Retain and preserve original wall and siding materials.
 - 2. Do not cover or obscure original façade materials.
 - 3. If stucco covers original siding, then its removal is encouraged.
 - 4. The use of vinyl is prohibited (includes windows, fences, downspouts, guard rails, etc.)
- B. Preserve Historic Architectural Features and Details
 - 1. Preserve and maintain significant stylistic and architectural features.
 - 2. Deteriorated architectural features and details should be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible.
 - 3. Avoid adding elements or details that were not part of the original building.
- C. Preserve the size and shape of windows and doors because they significantly affect the character of a structure
 - 1. Preserve the functional and decorative features of original windows and doors.
 - 2. Maintain original windows and door proportions.
 - 3. Maintain the historic window arrangement on a primary façade.

4. Repair a deteriorated window or door instead of replacing it or enclosing the opening altogether whenever possible.
5. Do not add new window or door openings on character-defining facades.
6. When window or door replacement is necessary, match the replacement to the original design as closely as possible.
7. A new opening should be similar in location, size and type to those seen traditionally.
8. Windows and doors should be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. (similar to #4)
9. If replacement of windows or doors is necessary, it should be done ~~with exact replicas of the original~~ in a manner to replicate the original design and detailing as close as possible. (very similar to #6 above)
10. Original hardware should be re-used on replacement if possible.
11. New entrances (including French doors) are not recommended on a ~~primary front~~ façade where none was before. (very similar to #5)
12. Aluminum clad windows are prohibited (where visible from the street right-of-way), as are aluminum awnings *unless material is original to structure house).

D. Preserve a porch in its original condition and form

1. Maintain an original porch, when feasible.
2. Enclosing a porch with opaque materials that destroy the openness and transparency of the porch is inappropriate.
3. Where building codes stipulate that new porch railings lower than 36 inches in height be augmented or corrected to raise their effective height to 36 inches or greater, consider providing a smaller railing above the historic railing to achieve a greater overall railing height.
4. Repair rather than replace those elements of a porch that are deteriorated, whenever possible.
5. Consider restoring an altered porch back to its original design and configuration.
6. When porch replacement is necessary, it should be similar in character, design, scale and materials to those seen traditionally.

2. ADDITIONS

A. Design a new addition to be compatible with the historic building

1. Locate an addition ~~the attached exterior addition~~ at the rear or on an inconspicuous side of a historic building and limit its size and scale in relationship to the historic building. (similar to #3 and #5)
2. Construct a new addition so that there is the least possible loss of historic materials and so that character-defining features are not obscured, damaged or destroyed. (similar to #4)
3. Place an addition at the rear of a building or set it back from the front to minimize

the visual impacts.

4. Do no obscure, damage, destroy or remove original architectural details and materials of the historic building whenever possible.
5. An addition should be compatible in scale with the historic building/structure.
6. An addition should be compatible in character with the historic structure.
7. Use building materials that are compatible with those of the historic structure.
8. Use windows that are similar in character and materials to those of the historic structure.
9. The roof form of a new addition should be in character with and subordinate to that of the historic building.

4. Fiscal Cap of the Mills Act Program: Should the fiscal investment the City has in the Mills Act be changed? Should the cap be changed? The Commission considered A, B, & C. The Commission prefers C with additional discussion at today's meeting on B.

- A. Eliminate the fiscal cap to the program in one fiscal year.

This proposal involves allowing all property owners on the Mills Act waiting list to receive approval in FY 09. This action would involve an annual increased investment in the City's Preservation Program of approximately \$230,000.

This proposal would acknowledge the City's Preservation Program as an extremely high priority for the community given the foregone City and CDA revenues that would occur on an annual basis with the proposal. The action would allow more participation in the program but does not address how future applications would be processed. The new Mills Act eligibility criteria that is being recommended may reduce the number of program participants as well as the decreasing number of historic properties eligible for the Mills Act. The proposal places no fiscal control over the Mills Act program.

~~Issues to consider: (1) fiscal impact or lost property tax revenues to City; (2) more participation in program; (3) new criteria for Mills Act will control the number of program participants.~~

- B. Negotiate a rental value with the property owner (as provided in the Mills Act Legislation Guidelines) to allow the City to control the reduced property tax revenues associated with a Mills Act Agreement. A general policy allowing for a 50% percent reduction in property taxes with a Mills Act Agreement could be established.

Issues to consider: (1) is 50% fair; (2) would a modified formula reduce participation? (3) is the full amount necessary to properly maintain and preserve a residence? (4) should another percentage be used?

The Commission determined the Mills Act Program should be administered in the spirit of the legislation that was established and only in unique circumstances should this methodology be used. The Commission wants to treat past, present, and future owners

the same with respect to reduced property taxes rather than 50% or other arbitrary percentage. Historic properties are costly to preserve and a reduced property tax reduction may deter owners from participating in the program.

- C. Replace the fiscal cap with a NEW FORMULA that would be used to maintain fiscal accountability with the program and regulate the number of participants each year. The general concept is to tie the program to a percentage of the Residential Property Tax revenues the City receives. As property tax revenues increase, the number of participants each year could increase. Alternatively, as revenues decline, the number of new participants in the given year would reduce. Modify the annual fiscal cap to the program based upon the annual fiscal cap to the program based upon the annual increase or decrease of residential property tax the City receives. The general concept is the City would increase the program based upon a percentage of property tax revenues increased or decreased. The concept is more fully described in the attached PowerPoint.

The PowerPoint will address (1) Regular Mills act Application (2) 50% Mills Act Application. Presentation could identify estimated 250 properties eligible or the foregone revenues to date and cumulative foregone revenues.

~~Issues to address: (1) current fiscal cap is \$15,000 and increasing to one time of \$60,000 with year after reductions is fairly significant; (2) assumptions used in presentation are incorrect and the foregone revenues with a Mills Act Agreement are greater. City and CDA receive 58% of the property taxes that are paid. Mills Act Agreements result in a typical 75% savings to a property owner so the example shows a lower impact than what actually would occur; (3) presentation may want to provide an estimate of the total number of Mills Act eligible properties. When the program was established, 250 properties were estimated to enter the program; (4) presentation may want to identify the foregone revenues to date and cumulative foregone revenues.~~

Draft Public Workshop PowerPoint Presentation

Welcome and Introductions (HRC and staff)

Purpose of Meeting (Public Input on Improvements to the Historic Preservation Program)

- (1) Mills Act Process: Current and Proposed
- (2) Eligibility Requirements: Current and Proposed
- (3) Mills Act Alterations and Guidelines: Current and Proposed
- (4) Monetary Investment to Historic Preservation Program: Current and Proposed

Draft Guide for participating in the City's Historic Preservation Program would be distributed at the meeting. Per the Commission's discussion, the Secretary of Interior's Guidelines would be attached to the Guide.

Review and discussion regarding draft booklet prepared to assist homeowners interested in participating in the City's Historic Preservation Program

The Commission reviewed and discussed the draft booklet to be distributed to homeowners interested in the City's Historic Preservation Program. The booklet would serve as a guide to explain the historic designation process, alteration process and criteria, and the Mills Act Program.

Discussion regarding draft design guidelines for Designated Historic Resources and Designated Historic Resources with Mills Act Agreements

The Commission reviewed and discussed the draft design guidelines as a possible supplement to the booklet. It was proposed that the design guidelines could contain the following:

1. Purpose (general statement)
2. Architectural Resources (defines Architectural styles within Community)
3. Rehabilitation of Historic Resources
4. Additions to Historic Resources
5. Rehabilitation and Additions to Mills Act Properties.

The Commission agreed that the guidelines would serve as "user friendly" information to homeowners. A copy of the Secretary of Interior Standards would be attached to the booklet for further reference.

Discussion regarding the Mission of the Historic Preservation Program

The draft Mission Statement reads as follows: "The Historic Resource Commission seeks to encourage community-wide interest and participation in preserving and enhancing our village homes, and will lead with a spirit of encouragement and compromise in working with individual homeowners and the community at large towards retaining and improving the City's historic resources."

The Mission Statement is scheduled for further review at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Rachel A. Hurst, Director of Community Development,
Redevelopment & Housing Services