

HISTORIC RESOURCE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Regular Meeting

June 17, 2009

The regular meeting of the Coronado Historic Resource Commission was called to order at 3 p.m., Wednesday, June 17, 2009, at the Coronado City Hall Council Chambers, 1825 Strand Way, Coronado, California, by Vice Chair Crenshaw.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Crenshaw Jones, Ryan (left at 5:22 p.m.),
and St. Denis

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner O'Brien

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of May 20 2009, were approved as submitted.

The minutes of May 27, 2009, were approved as submitted.

The minutes of June 3, 2009, were approved as submitted.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. McCaull announced that the Commission will be hosting a public workshop on June 23, 2009, from 6 to 8 p.m., at the City Council Chambers, to discuss possible changes to the City's Historic Preservation Program.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

HRPA 6-09 **TOM AND MOLLY COUMES** – Request for Historic Preservation Mills Act Agreement for the historically designated 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. On May 6, 2009, the Historic Resource Commission designated 160 G Avenue as a historic resource. The dwelling was designated as a historic resource for its Spanish Hacienda architectural style and for being representative of the notable work of architect Cliff May and builder Walter Vestal.

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. The Mills Act Agreement is not an automatic entitlement rather it is a benefit the City is providing to historic properties with each agreement evaluated on its own merits. On May 26, 2009, Tom and Molly Coumes 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 10-year period of the agreement, the property owner is not planning to make any improvements to the historic dwelling as the owners recently restored the structure.

Lee Potter of the County Tax Assessor's office has completed an estimate of the restricted value of 160 G Avenue with the Historic Resource Preservation (Mills Act) Agreements in place. With the current estimate, the owner will see an estimated \$19,650 reduction in property tax. The City of Coronado and the Community Development Agency will see an estimated annual property tax revenue decrease of \$11,398.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioner St. Denis said this is definitely a Mills Act home and will support the request.

Commissioner Jones concurred.

Vice Chair Crenshaw asked for clarification on the applicant's improvement list.

Ms. McCaull said that only general maintenance has been identified.

Vice Chair Crenshaw asked if the City will monitor, for the next 10 years, items listed for the non historic building.

Ms. McCaull said it will be monitored if the items are included in the agreement.

Vice Chair Crenshaw asked if the applicant must return before the Commission should they request an Alteration Permit.

Ms. McCaull responded yes. If the improvements are kept in the application for the Mills Act Agreement, it will be recorded as part of the list of improvements to be carried out during the first 10-year period of the agreement.

Mr. Coumes responded that he understands the approval process and prefers that the application contain a full disclosure of prospective improvements.

COMMISSION ACTION

COMMISSIONER ST. DENIS MADE A MOTION TO FORWARD THE HISTORIC RESOURCE PRESERVATION AGREEMENT APPLICATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL AND NOTED THAT THE PROPERTY OWNER IS NOT PLANNING ANY IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PROPERTY (HRPA 6-09) BECAUSE THE OWNERS HAVE RECENTLY RESTORED THE PROPERTY.

COMMISSIONER RYAN SECONDED THE MOTION.

AYES: Commissioners Crenshaw, Jones, Ryan, and St. Denis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner O'Brien.

ABSTAIN: None.

The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

Ms. McCaull stated that applications received at this point will be processed in the fall in terms of their historic ranking. She advised the applicant that there may be changes in the near future to the Mills Act Program and the method in which applications are processed. The applicant will be kept informed via the Mills Act workshop and a joint meeting between the Commission and City Council.

HAP 2-09 **MARK AND SUSAN MULZET** – Request for Historic Alteration Permit for alterations and additions and exceptions to zoning standards for the historically designated property addressed as 1127 F Avenue and located in the R-1A (Single Family Residential) Zone.

Director McCaull introduced the staff report as outlined in the agenda. On October 6, 2004, the Historic Resource Commission designated 1127 F Avenue as a historic resource. The main residence was noted as historically significant due to its California Mission Revival architectural style and for being designed by noted architect Richard Requa. On May 28, 2009, a Historic Resource Alteration Permit application was submitted to the City for proposed alterations, additions, and exceptions to zoning standards for the property. The alteration permit generally

involves the replacement of the accessory building on the site with a new, larger accessory building containing garages and guest quarters. Any decision of the Historic Resource Commission to grant a Historic Resource Alteration permit involving an exception to zoning regulation pertaining to building setbacks, building height, floor area ratio, lot coverage, or density bonuses is a recommendation to the City Council. If the Commission decides to deny the request for a Historic Resource Alteration permit, it would be considered final action at this level unless the decision is appealed by the owner to the City Council.

The proposed alterations will occur at the rear of the site. The existing main house will remain and no alterations will occur to the structure. The rear accessory building containing a three car garage is proposed to be demolished along with a portion of an adjoining guest quarters. A six car garage and game room will replace the structure at the first level and new guest quarters will be constructed at the second level.

The existing accessory building is nonconforming in setbacks and the alteration permit involves exceptions to zoning standards to maintain the existing setbacks. The project would maintain the existing 5' setback for construction at the first and second level along the interior side yard. Application of today's zoning standards would require an interior side yard setback of 3' up to a maximum of 11'. The project would also maintain the existing 0' setback along the alley at the first floor where 5' would typically be required. The second floor along the alley would have a 5' setback as required.

The existing accessory building has a nonconforming building height. The existing building height is 21' and the code allows 14'. The proposed structure would have a building height of 24'. The alteration permit requests an exception to building height standards from 14' to 24' and the ability to have a second floor on an accessory building. When the project is completed the existing home and replacement accessory structure will be compatible in architectural style, materials, and colors for a cohesive site.

Commissioner St. Denis asked if the main residence is the historic resource and the other two buildings are non historic.

Ms. McCall replied that the application for designation was solely for the main residence; however, when a resolution is adopted, it generally applies to the entire site.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The applicant's representative, Kevin Rugee, 1024 Isabella Avenue, gave a brief overview and answered questions.

Commissioner Ryan asked why Mr. Rugee went one percent over the FAR and questioned the side yard setback. Mr. Ryan said that the City worked very hard on RSIP with reference to oversized lots and the need to preserve and increase side yard setback for neighborliness and privacy. He also questioned the need for a six-car garage.

Mr. Rugee replied that the encroachment only applies to the first floor. The second floor along the alley observes the five foot setback. The request by the owner for a six-car garage is intended for the storage of his automobile collection. With reference to the request for a side yard setback, Mr. Rugee stated that this was his solution to keep space between the proposed building and the tower in order that the tower maintains its own identity. With regard to the floor area ratio of 51 percent, the idea is that he will keep the wall line intact so that it looks like it is part of the original design and maintains the size of the gardens. He felt that being over by one percent will not have a substantial impact on the entire design.

Commissioner St. Denis commented that as one leaves the main historical structure and enters the terrace, one views the axial, tiled fountain and the side of the tower facing the house. Requa did an amazing job with the presentation of this area and Ms. St. Denis feels it is very necessary to preserve the wall of the proposed addition as well as the garden area.

Commissioner Jones said she was concerned about the height of the new structures. The request is for 24 feet and the present code requirement is 14 feet. She asked how the proposed height of the structure would have an overall impact on the main structure, the surrounding garden area, and the neighbors' views and privacy.

Mr. Rugee replied that the accessory building has a 14-foot height limitation. However, the R-1A zone allows a carriage house the height of 24 feet. He said he met with neighbors and explained the proposed changes. At that time, the neighbors did not appear to have concerns; however, it seems they may have had a change of heart. Mr. Rugee understands there may be an impact; however, he feels it is more important to preserve the house and gardens.

Commissioner Ryan asked if the owner was considering demolition of the main home should the request for alterations be denied today.

Mr. Rugee replied that this was not the intent of the owner. Additionally, the owners are not planning to add to the historic main structure.

Commissioner Jones asked if the accessory building was an original part of the Requa structure.

Mr. Rugee said it is.

Vice Chair Crenshaw said that many long-time Coronado residents have visited the home and its exquisite gardens. She asked why the owners were proposing the changes to the structure.

Mr. Rugee said the owners desired to add more bedrooms and expand the garage. Their proposed plans would cause minimal disruption to the main and secondary gardens.

Nancye Splinter, 1027 G Avenue, said she has visited the home and its gardens. She understands that the home is for sale and questioned whether this is a "fishing expedition." Ms. Splinter expressed concern about the request for alterations and additions and felt that the new owners should be the ones to decide whether they want the proposed changes to the Requa structure.

Susan Heavilin, 1144 Isabella, stated that this is an incredible property. She stated that the proposed changes would cause a negative impact on the neighboring properties and asked the Commission to deny the request.

Susan Keith, 801 Tolita Avenue, said that the listing for the house reads as follows: "Richard Requa's premier expression of Southern California architecture." and "Owning this property is like collecting a piece of livable art." The property owners and real estate agents appear to be well aware that this is a special historic structure. She asked that the Commission take into consideration that the entire property was designated historic in 2004, not just the main structure. She referred to Preservation Ordinance No. 70.22.180, which states: "The proposed alterations will not adversely affect the historical, architectural, or aesthetic value of the historic resource." She stated that the historic resource refers to the entire piece of property. She further read, "The proposed alteration will retain the essential elements that make the historic resource significant" and "The proposed alteration will not adversely affect the historic resource relationship to its surrounding and neighboring historic resources." She states that with the proposed alterations, this would be difficult to accomplish.

Harry Thate, 1119 F Avenue, thanked the Commission for their review of this issue. He stated that the proposed changes directly impact his property and family with reference to privacy and noise issues. He understands that the proposed additions are not for the benefit of the current owners but instead benefit the home's marketability.

Mr. Rugee said he understands the aforementioned concerns. He stated that the owners felt it would be beneficial to have plans in hand that would show potential buyers an approved expansion for the project.

The Commission recessed at 4:33 p.m.

The Commission reconvened at 4:36 p.m. All Commissioners were present, absent Chairperson O'Brien.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioner Jones stated that the new owners should be the party requesting changes to the property. Ms. Jones said that her priority is the preservation of the historical structure which includes the entire site. She stated that she would not support the request as submitted.

Commissioner Ryan stated he would not support the request as submitted. His main concerns are bulk and mass, the request for the north side yard setback and floor area ratio of 51 percent as it is inconsistent with the RSIP requirements as well as the Historic Preservation principles.

Commissioner St. Denis said that she visited the site and was very excited to see the preserved areas of the garden as well as the original main structure. She was glad that there was no addition cutting into the rear of the property; however, she was unaware at that time of the adjoining property owner's concerns. Ms. St. Denis said she would be willing to work with the new owners should they request an addition; however, this is not the case today.

Vice Chair Crenshaw stated she had issues with the proposed bulk and mass, potential removal of the trees, and the request for the height difference of the tower. She had no issues with the request for the setback or the 51 percent floor ratio. Ms. Crenshaw stated she would not support the request as presented today.

Commissioner Jones added that the request to demolish the Requa structure would affect the authenticity of the entire historical site.

Mr. Rugee requested that the item be continued to allow him an opportunity to speak with the applicants and review comments made by the Commission and public at today's meeting.

COMMISSION ACTION

COMMISSIONER JONES MADE A MOTION TO DENY THE REQUEST AS SUBMITTED.

THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS WERE MADE:

- A. THAT THE PROPOSED ALTERATION IS NOT CONSISTENT WITH THE PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THIS CHAPTER, THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT AND THE GENERAL PLAN.
- B. THE PROPOSED ALTERATION WILL ADVERSELY AFFECT THE HISTORICAL, ARCHITECTURAL OR AESTHETIC VALUE OF THE HISTORIC RESOURCE.
- D. THE PROPOSED ALTERATION WILL ADVERSELY AFFECT THE HISTORIC RESOURCE'S RELATIONSHIP TO ITS SURROUNDINGS AND NEIGHBORING HISTORIC RESOURCES.

COMMISSIONER RYAN SECONDED THE MOTION.

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

The motion passed with a vote of 3-0.

There is a 10-day appeal period.

MISCELLANEOUS

Commission review and discussion of presentation materials for June 23, 2009, Community Workshop on the Mills Act Program. (no report)

Ms. McCaull gave a brief overview of the presentation material for the upcoming workshop. Three documents were provided to the Commission for their review:

1. Final version of the Proposed Changes to the Program.;
2. Draft Guide for the Historic Preservation Program;
3. Comment sheet to be filled out by the public.

The Commission reviewed the Mills Act PowerPoint presentation and provided comments and changes.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

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