

HISTORIC RESOURCE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Regular Meeting

December 2, 2009

The regular meeting of the Coronado Historic Resource Commission was called to order at 3 p.m., Wednesday, December 2, 2009, at the Coronado City Hall Council Chambers, 1825 Strand Way, Coronado, California, by Chairperson O'Brien.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Crenshaw, Jones (arrived at 3:03 p.m.),
O'Brien, Ryan, St. Denis

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Ann McCaull, Senior Planner
Martha L Alvarez, Recording Secretary, Minutes Preparer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of October 21 2009, were approved as submitted.

The minutes of November 4, 2009, were approved as amended.

The minutes of November 18, 2009, were approved as submitted.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

There was no separate Director's report.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS

Ms. McCaull reported that there are no items scheduled to be heard for the meeting of December 16. The Commission agreed to cancel the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

HRPA 10-09 **CHARLES AND VIRGINIA NELSON** – Request for Historic Preservation Mills Act Agreement for the historically designated residence addressed as 1807 Monterey Avenue and located in the R-1A (Single Family Residential) Zone.

Ms. McCaull introduced the staff report as outlined in the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The applicant, Charles Nelson, gave a brief overview of the request and answered questions.

Commissioner St. Denis said she was very concerned about the letter submitted by the applicant's builder, John Gillem. Mr. Gillem stated that he installed "all new clay tile roofing, all new windows, all new ornamental iron railings to replace existing, new cabinetry throughout, completely re-stuccoed whole exterior of house and garage..." Ms. St. Denis acknowledged that it is a beautiful historic renovation; however, she stated that historical material is the key to a Mills Act house. She also noted that there is a new French door in the upper balcony, and the wood railings in the balcony were removed and replaced with iron railings. She asked if everything was new.

Mr. Nelson pointed out a new window with period glass and original grill work at the second story level; the original front door; an original window and ironwork at the first story level; original windows with new ironwork at the second story level; a restored master bath window at the second level; one new and one original set of French doors at the second story level; and new iron balcony railings.

Commissioner St. Denis asked about the roof tiles.

Mr. Nelson responded that the Spanish tiles were removed, damaged wood was replaced, and new tar was placed. He estimated that 85 to 95 percent of the original tiles were re-used.

Commissioner St. Denis said she was misled by the letter from Mr. Gillem.

Mr. Nelson commented that he would ask Mr. Gillem to clarify the information in his letter.

Commissioner St. Denis asked why the applicant chose to replace the wood railing with iron at the front balcony.

Mr. Nelson said he felt the wood railing did not match the character of the house and gave it an inferior look.

Commissioner St. Denis asked if all of the shutters were replaced.

Mr. Nelson replied that they were.

Commissioner St. Denis asked why the applicant chose to re-stucco the exterior of the house.

Mr. Nelson said there were areas where the stucco was cracked. He chose to spray these areas and add a new layer of plaster to the exterior of the house.

Commissioner Ryan said that the applicant has done a fantastic job. He stated that the applicant did not replace the roof, and clarified that the applicant repaired/patched the cracked stucco and then added one thin coat of paint over the surface. He does not consider this process a "re-stucco." Mr. Ryan said he does not have an issue with the use of wrought iron.

Commissioner Jones stated that she is not fond of the balcony railing and feels that the wood railing may have anchored that side of the house. The wrought iron looks light in comparison to the other side of the house.

Commissioner Ryan asked why a second set of balcony French doors was added at the second story level.

Mr. Nelson said he obtained the original blueprints which showed only one set of French doors. However, he stated that oftentimes field engineering designs are not consistent with the after-product.

Commissioner St. Denis asked if the original blueprints contained the wood railings.

Mr. Nelson confirmed that it did.

Commissioner St. Denis stated that many times this type of balcony left room for a simple wooden bench that would balance the space.

Vice Chair Crenshaw asked about the irrigation system used in the area where the pergola and trellis is located. She also asked if the vines would be retained.

Mr. Nelson said he placed a couple of Mandebella's in the porte cache; however, one has passed on and the other is holding on. The irrigation system is in place and it has been six weeks, so it's just a matter of time for the plant to take hold.

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

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Chairperson O'Brien said the applicant's efforts have been absolutely laudable. The restoration has been done, and repair and renovation where appropriate is also done. Mr. O'Brien said he considers this a poster project.

Commissioner Ryan said it is great that the applicant saved the home.

Commissioner Jones asked if historic homes that are restored must be brought up to code.

Chairperson O'Brien said that only new construction must comply with current codes.

Mr. Nelson said he was advised by his State Farm agent that the most prudent action to take for earthquake safety was to go underneath the home and do strategic tie-downs.

Chairperson O'Brien said he shares his fellow Commissioners' concern that there was a wooden railing system; however, one of the Secretary of Interior's Standards is that if an addition is removable, it is acceptable. He does not see this as an issue.

Commissioner St. Denis said that the issue is not necessarily what one likes or considers an improvement. It is about what is historic. There are wood railings on Spanish Revival houses on Ocean Boulevard. She feels that the Standards are very clear. If the material is so badly deteriorated that it cannot be repaired, then it should be replaced in kind. The driving force behind these Standards is “repair rather than replace, and have limited replacement in kind.” In addition, from a preservation point of view, the house should not have been re-stuccoed. It should have been patched and repaired with the same type of stucco as the original. She added that there are two tiers of preservation, and the Commission had agreed that the Mills Act properties would be held to a higher standard. One of those Standards pertains to the use of materials, especially to the front façade. She stated that the heaviness and balance of the wooden railing was lost as was the beauty of the design of the house. She stated that she applauds the applicant’s efforts in renovating an historic home and bringing it up to today’s lifestyle standards; but is unable to support the request for Mills Act.

Vice Chair Crenshaw requested that the builder, John Gillem, clarify the information in the letter.

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 1807 MONTEREY AVENUE (HRPA 10-09) AS FOLLOWS: GENERAL MAINTENANCE.

COMMISSIONER RYAN SECONDED THE MOTION.

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

The motion passed with a vote of 3-2.

HRPA 13-09 CROWN HILL RANCHES INC – Request for Historic Preservation Mills Act Agreement for the historically designated residence addressed as 941 J Avenue and located in the R-1AE (Single Family Residential) Zone.

Ms. McCaull introduced the staff report as outlined in the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The applicant’s representative (and owner), John Powell, Jr., 85810 Peter Rabbit Lane, Coachella, gave a brief overview of the request and answered questions. He said that everything in the front façade is original with the exception of the concrete walkway.

Commissioner St. Denis asked if the shutters are new.

Mr. Powell said yes.

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

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Vice Chair Crenshaw asked if the applicant lives in the home.

Mr. Powell said he lives in the home only during the summer.

Commissioner Ryan asked if changes were made to either side of the house.

Ms. McCaull said no changes were made in terms of bulk and mass that would be visible from the public right-of-way. There was only a room extension along the south property line.

Chairperson O'Brien said he was pleased that the front house returned before the Commission for Mills Act consideration.

Commissioner St. Denis asked if the addition to the front house will be included in the Mills Act benefits.

Ms. McCaull said that because it is such a small addition (a 3 foot room extension), she recommends that the entire home be included with the restricted value.

Vice Chair Crenshaw asked if there is a driveway located at the side of the house.

Mr. Powell replied that there is a 3-car garage facing the alley which complies with parking requirements.

Commissioner St. Denis added that the driveway was replaced with a curb along J Avenue.

Commissioner Ryan asked how the Mills Act benefit is valued if the garage for the historic front property is located at the rear of the property.

Ms. McCaull said the Mills Act only deals with the historic component of the property. The Mills assessment and restricted value will only apply to the front home. The parking requirements for the front home are located at the rear of the property; however, this is not a subdivided property. While there is a second home on the property, both homes are on one tax parcel.

Commissioner Ryan asked if the second home is a rental owned by the property owners of the front home.

Ms. McCaull said yes.

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 941 J AVENUE (HRPA 13-09) AS FOLLOWS: GENERAL MAINTENANCE, INCLUDING SANDING AND PAINTING TO MAINTAIN THE CURRENT EXTERIOR APPEARANCE. THE MILLS ACT BENEFIT WILL APPLY TO THE FRONT HOUSE ONLY.

CHAIRPERSON O'BRIEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

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

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

DISCUSSION

Discussion regarding the Historic Preservation Newsletter (no report).

The Commission reviewed items for inclusion in the January 2010 Historic Preservation newsletter that will be distributed in the Coronado Currents. The deadline for submission to the City Manager's office is December 14, 2009.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

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