

HISTORIC RESOURCE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Regular Meeting

November 3, 2010

The regular meeting of the Coronado Historic Resource Commission was called to order at 3 p.m., Wednesday, November 3, 2010, at the Coronado City Hall Council Chambers, 1825 Strand Way, Coronado, California, by Chairperson Crenshaw.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Crenshaw, Jones, O'Brien, Ryan, St. Denis

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Tricia Olsen, Associate Planner
Ann McCaull, Senior Planner
Martha L Alvarez, Recording Secretary/Minutes Preparer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of October 20, 2010, were approved as amended.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Olsen reported that, at the City Council meeting of November 2, the item regarding the residence located at 1125 Flora Avenue was continued to allow the property owner and adjacent property owner to investigate issues regarding property lines.

Ms. Olsen also reported that Councilmember Downey, at yesterday's meeting, had a brief discussion item regarding some potential revisions to the Historic Resource Code. Ms. Downey will be working with staff to communicate Council's direction regarding clarification/revisions to the criteria and definitions. Ms. Olsen said that the Historic Resource Commission will be involved in the review and approval of any revisions.

Ms. Olsen reminded the Commission that the Mills Act Agreement approvals for 2010 are scheduled to be heard at the City Council meeting of November 16.

Ms. Olsen mentioned that the Historic Resource Commission meeting will be cancelled on January 5, 2010.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS

Martha Jay expressed her continued concern regarding the historic property located at 721 B Avenue. She said the renovation to the property is almost complete; however, the air conditioning equipment is still visible from the public right-of-way. She asked that the Commission place this item on their agenda for evaluation and discussion on the aesthetic impact the equipment has on the historic structure and the neighborhood.

PUBLIC HEARING

NOI 2010-12 **NICK TOMASELLO** – Notice of Intent to Partially Demolish the Commercial Building addressed as 100-104 Orange Avenue and located in the C (Commercial) Zone. *(continued from the meeting of October 20, 2010)*

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

Tim Aaron, 560 Fifth Avenue, made himself available to answer questions of the Commission.

Chairperson Crenshaw mentioned that, at this point in the proceeding, the Commission has been asked to make a determination regarding whether this is a historic building. The applicants have not requested it but it is part of the review process. Ms. Crenshaw said that the applicants had considered historic designation because of possible code exceptions; however, the Commission is somewhat limited in granting these types of exceptions for commercial buildings. She said this is a new process for the Commission as there are no existing commercial buildings which have been designated historic in Coronado. She clarified there are no parking advantages given to historically designated commercial buildings and therefore understands this is one of the reasons that the applicant has elected not to designate the structure. Ms. Crenshaw said the Commission can still designate the building historic if it deems that the structure meets two of the criteria.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Rita Sarich, Coronado MainStreet, said she attended the City Council meeting yesterday and listened with interest to the recommendations outlined by Councilmember Downey with regard to the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Ms. Sarich said she hopes that in the future incentives can be included for preserving some of the historic commercial buildings.

Karen Finch, Coronado Chamber of Commerce, said the Chamber's Executive Board met and discussed this item. She said that although consideration was given to the contributions made by the Forsyths, the consensus was that this specific building is not historic as it was an investment property. The Board feels that the Forsyths' home or the structure that housed The Mexican Village would have been more appropriate.

Chris Ackerman said he visited the site, studied the facades of the building, and concluded that the structure is historic. He showed photographs of the building, pointing out key architectural elements which support his conclusion, and said he supports the project.

Mike O'Connor, co-owner of Island Sports & Spirits, confirmed that the existing sign was placed on top of the brick. In addition, the blue tiles located below the front façade window were already in place when they purchased the building in 2000.

The applicant, Nick Tomasello, confirmed that, per the permits on record, all of the original windows and panes were replaced, including the windows located on the laundromat. He stated that due to the significant changes that have been made to the original structure, he does not consider the building historic.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked Mr. Tomasello if he wanted to designate this building as historic, and whether it would benefit him in any way.

Mr. Tomasello replied that they do not want to designate the building historic as it will not benefit him financially at this time to do so.

Commissioner St. Denis said that Coronado does not charge fees to applicants who desire to designate their property.

Ms. Olsen said that the City waives building and planning permit fees for commercially designated properties.

Mr. Tomasello said he discussed this matter with his business partners and architect and they have decided that, due to possible future development of the building, it is in their best interest to not designate the structure as historic at this time.

Commissioner Ryan asked staff to provide information to the applicants regarding the process and applicable development fees for non-designated commercial structures that appear before the Design Review Commission.

Ms. Olsen reminded the Commission that they are evaluating the property based on the criteria regardless if it is a voluntary designation.

Commissioner Ryan replied that his vote takes into consideration the applicant's preference for historic designation.

Ms. McCaull clarified that if the structure is deemed non historic, the project would be subject to design review fees of about \$300. The project would also require a parking plan and coastal permit review by the Planning Commission resulting in discretionary fees of about \$1,800. In addition, there would be a significant amount of building permit issuance fees.

Commissioner Jones asked if the building has been structurally retrofitted for earthquakes.

Joe Astorga, Project Designer, replied no. He added that the applicant had considered historic designation because they understood from the Commission that parking exceptions were available for historically designated commercial structures; however, they were subsequently told otherwise and, therefore, decided they were not interested in historic designation. He said that some of the significant changes to the building include the removal of the clerestory windows and panes, which were subsequently covered with plywood. He noted that the single door with the two windows above it, at the rear of the building, previously had a large overhead door which was also covered with plywood. He stated that the applicant does not plan on changing the exterior façade other than replacing the awnings.

Commissioner St. Denis asked if the applicant is planning to remove the plywood which is covering the clerestory windows.

Mr. Astorga said the plywood will remain.

Commissioner St. Denis said that, according to Mr. Tomasello's statement at the previous meeting, the panes would be replaced in the clerestory windows. She said she understood the clerestory windows were intact.

Mr. Astorga clarified that only the clerestory window openings remain. He added that Mr. Tomasello may have been referring to the transom window over the corner door and may not have been aware that the transom windows behind every awning measure about 5 feet in height. He added that the sills were originally at floor level and extended from column to column. He reiterated that a significant amount of work has been done to the front facades. He added that although this building may be unique to Coronado, this type of building is very generic elsewhere. He stated that this building does not meet the criteria to be designated historic.

Audrey Castile said she understands that the Commission must make a determination on the building's historicity, but asked why the Commission is making such a significant effort to convince the applicants to designate the building.

Chairperson Crenshaw replied that the Commission believed there would be benefits to both the City and the applicants if the structure was declared historic. The City would attain an historical commercial site and the applicants would be granted parking exceptions. Unfortunately, it was later learned that parking exceptions are only granted to residential and not commercial structures.

Commissioner Ryan said the applicant has not withdrawn their application. He added that historic designation is a voluntary request made by the applicant.

Commissioner St. Denis respectfully disagreed and said that although there are some applicants who voluntarily request designation, applications such as this one require that the Commission evaluate and make a determination based on whether the structure meets the criteria to be designated.

Mr. Ackerman expressed concern that if the building is deemed non historic, it could potentially be significantly changed or demolished.

Marilyn Field said she does not consider this building to be historic as it does not appear to have distinctive architectural elements and it has been significantly altered. She added that it would be more appropriate for Design Review to evaluate this type of project.

Miles Harvey said this project should be on the regular commercial path. He stated that this building is not historic and considers it to be just another brick building at the corner of First Street and Orange Avenue. He said that the proposed changes and use would be more appropriately addressed at Design Review, Planning Commission, and City Council.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Vice Chair O'Brien said he wanted to give the project architect an opportunity to speak at this time, if he so desired.

Mr. Astorga respectfully requested that the application be withdrawn at this point and stated that

the building would be left exactly as-is with the exception of replacing the awnings.

Mr. Aaron confirmed that the application has been withdrawn because the process has become too difficult.

Commissioner Jones said she considers the structure historic and part of our local history. She added that the Commission's intent is to work with the applicants in order to preserve the building.

Commissioner St. Denis said the process can be challenging when there is a request for a change of use.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated for the record that the item has been withdrawn because the applicant has withdrawn their Notice of Intent to Demolish application request.

Commissioner comments followed after the item was withdrawn; however, no action was taken on this item.

COMMISSION ACTION

THE APPLICANTS WITHDREW THE APPLICATION. THERE WAS NO ACTION TAKEN ON THIS ITEM.

NOI 2010-13 **DON PEREZ** – Notice of Intent to Demolish the Residential Building addressed as 464 C Avenue and located in the R-1B (Single Family Residential) Zone.

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

The applicant, Don Perez, made himself available to answer questions of the Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Martha Jay said she does not agree that the house should be demolished simply because the owner did not maintain the exterior of the property. She said the home is an important part of what our community represents and stated that she would not support the request.

William Arnold noticed that there is a for sale sign on the subject property. He asked for clarification on the applicant's request.

Chairperson Crenshaw explained that the building is over 75 years old; therefore, if a Notice of Intent to Demolish permit is received by the City, it triggers a demolition review process before the Historic Resource Commission.

Kathy Koop, Prudential California Realty, representing Mr. Perez, gave a brief overview of the building's history. She opined that it would be very expensive to attempt to renovate this property to a habitable state.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Chairperson Crenshaw noted that this property is comprised of two legal lots and measures 7,000 sq. ft.

Ms. Olsen confirmed that there are two legal lots which are located side to side. The lot has already been divided and Mr. Perez and his brother each own one lot.

Commissioner Jones said the house was built in 1913 and she has watched the house slowly deteriorate over the past 21 years. She said this is unfortunate because the house was once a wonderful and attractive home. She feels that it could be renovated; however, it would require much love, care and effort.

Commissioner St. Denis asked how the house became so deteriorated.

Mr. Perez said his uncle lived in the house for the last 45 years after he inherited the property from Mr. Perez' grandparents. Unfortunately, during this time, the home was never properly maintained. Mr. Perez said he was informed by the Fire Department that the all-wood structure was a fire hazard because the wood was exposed and dry. He was also told by the County Assessor's Office as well as an appraiser that the house was considered a "tear down."

Chairperson Crenshaw said that two of the criteria must be met in order to designate the home as historic. Based on this information, she does not feel that the house meets the criteria to deem it historic.

COMMISSION ACTION

CHAIRPERSON CRENSHAW MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE REQUEST, AS SUBMITTED.

VICE CHAIR O'BRIEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

AYES: Crenshaw, Jones, O'Brien, Ryan, St. Denis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

There is a 10-day appeal period.

Miscellaneous

Commissioner Ryan asked for clarification on the comment made by Councilmember Downey regarding re-structuring of the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Ms. Olsen replied that Councilmember Downey requested to work with staff to come up with some ways to address certain aspects of the Historic Resource Ordinance such as definitions,

understandability of the criteria, consistency in application, and so on. The Council voted to bring the item back in order to make a determination on the type of proposed modifications.

Commissioner Ryan suggested that the Commission agendaize this item for future discussion.

Discussion regarding screening of mechanical equipment on historic buildings. (No report)

Commissioner Ryan asked that an item be agendaized with regard to potential penalties for applicants who make design changes that result in the failure to shield mechanical equipment from the public right-of-way view.

Commissioner Jones stated that it is important for historic homes to follow the same rules imposed by Design Review for non-historic homes which require the shielding of mechanical equipment.

Ms. Olsen stated that language has been added to Historic Alteration Permit Resolutions which require that all mechanical equipment be shielded and not visible from the public right-of-way. This requirement applies to all historically designated properties regardless if it is a Mills Act home or not. She said that project architects are asked to submit complete drawings with the applications and any conditions must be specified on their plans. If the applicant does not comply with the conditions, then it becomes a code compliance issue as they are constructing outside of the approved plans.

Commissioner Ryan acknowledged that this adequately addressed his concerns.

Martha Jay asked if the Commission could take action on the air conditioning equipment already installed (at 721 B Avenue) and previously approved by the Commission before the language was included in the Resolution.

Ms. Olsen replied that the Commission could bring back this item for discussion; however, she clarified that the project at 721 B Avenue was already approved and issued a permit.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked that the request regarding 721 B Avenue be brought back as an agenda item.

Ms. Olsen noted the request and stated that it would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Discussion of preservation of resources from the modern era. (No report)

COMMISSION ACTION

COMMISSIONER RYAN MADE A MOTION TO CONTINUE THIS ITEM TO THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION.

VICE CHAIR O'BRIEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

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

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT

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

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