

HISTORIC RESOURCE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Regular Meeting

March 16, 2011

The regular meeting of the Coronado Historic Resource Commission was called to order at 3 p.m., Wednesday, March 16, 2011, at the Coronado City Hall Council Chambers, 1825 Strand Way, Coronado, California, by Chairperson Ryan.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Crenshaw, Jones, McGowen, Ryan, St. Denis

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

CITY ATTORNEY: Lisa Foster

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of March 2, 2011, were approved as submitted.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Olsen reported that at the City Council meeting of March 15, staff was directed to proceed forward with the following items regarding Historic Preservation Program improvements: 1) Designation Criteria Guidelines, 2) Historic Alteration Permit revised policy, 3) Reduction of the Mills Act Waiting List, 4) Historic District Ordinances, 5) Mills Act Alteration Guidelines.

Ms. Olsen also reported, in response to Chairperson Ryan's request, that the number of Notice of Intent to Demolish applications reviewed by the Commission will be announced at the commencement of each meeting. Ms. Olsen announced that since 2004, the Commission has reviewed 102 applications, with five applications being designated as part of the process (1117 G Avenue, 936-954 C Avenue, 300 First Street, 721 B Avenue, 826 Tolita Avenue).

Chairperson Ryan clarified that he would like additional information, e.g., the number of homes which were designated, the number of Mills Act applications which were approved, the number of Mills Act applications in force and funded, the number of reviews that were conducted relative to the requests for demolition, and the number of historic homes that were demolished.

Ms. Olsen then provided a brief overview of Commission protocol, followed by a statement that the Mills Act prioritization results will be announced at the next meeting.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS

City Council

Vice Chair St. Denis reported that at the City Council meeting of March 15, she spoke on one of three items, Modernism, that was included in the memo to City Council which requested direction to pursue miscellaneous Historic Preservation Program improvements. Ms. St. Denis suggested that Chairperson Ryan re-draft the memo and that it be resubmitted to City Council.

Ms. Olsen suggested that the revised memo be forwarded to the Mayor and City Manager for review.

Coronado Flower Show

Commissioner Crenshaw said that part of the Commission's Mission Statement is to contribute a booth to the flower show. She said that the Commission has opted not to participate for the last few years. Ms. Crenshaw distributed the schedule for this year's flower show and suggested that the Commission should participate in next year's flower show or opt to remove this section from its Mission Statement.

PUBLIC HEARING

HAP 2011-01 EMERALD ISLE, LLC – Request for Historic Alteration Permit for proposed alterations to the historically designated residence addressed as 1043 Ocean Boulevard and located in the R-1A (Single Family Residential) Zone. The Alteration Permit also requests relief from zoning standards.

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

The applicant's representative, Architect Dale Gardon, read into the record an excerpt from a letter by the applicant, Jonah Shaknai: "...when the application was submitted, I anticipated being present to advocate for the submission. I am unable to attend because I have been called to New York City to accept a significant honor on behalf of the company which I founded and chair. We have been named to receive this honor by Ethisphere, a leading corporate ethics institute..." Mr. Gardon then gave an overview of the request via a PowerPoint presentation, and answered questions of the Commission.

Vice Chair St. Denis asked about the height of the windows on the bridge and if the windows will be operable.

Mr. Gardon said the windows are set at the floor line as one enters the bridge. He said he has not decided if the windows will be operable as the bridge serves as a transition only.

Vice Chair St. Denis asked about the living room in the caretakers' cottage.

Mr. Gardon said he believes the living room was originally an open terrace.

Vice Chair St. Denis asked if it appears that the Requa guest house and caretakers' cottage was built at about the same time.

Mr. Gardon said that, to the best of his knowledge, the garage was built in 1924 and included the laundry room and caretakers' cottage; however, the guesthouse was built in 1928. He does not know when the terrace in the caretaker's cottage was enclosed.

Commissioner Crenshaw commended Mr. Gardon for a beautiful presentation. She asked if the patio will remain and if it will have a singular entrance into the conservatory area.

Mr. Gardon said yes.

Ms. Olsen thanked Mr. Gardon for providing photos of the interior terrace area. She said that based on new information, the Commission should consider staff's revised recommendation that doors are certainly more appropriate in the terrace area.

Vice Chair St. Denis asked about the proposed French doors and balcony at the front façade.

Mr. Gardon said they are proposing clear-paned windows as well as railings that will match adjacent balcony railings.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Reg (Reginald) Finch said he is the neighbor to the south of the subject property. He said the staircase leading up to the terrace above the conservatory will result in a loss of privacy to his property, and questioned the integrity of maintaining the current architectural conditions of properties in Coronado as he feels that preservation of historic properties should not be limited to the front facades only, but also to a building's interior.

Architect Chris Ackerman thanked the applicant for a vastly improved proposal. He noted that the front and rear structures differ significantly in design, character, and scale. He said that the bridge, as proposed, overwhelms the rear house, and suggested that the bridge be stepped so that it is more in scale and sensitive to the rear structure. He stated that the pair of French doors located in the garage structure which faces the street is not appropriate to the design. He suggested that the French doors be removed as previously proposed. He said he appreciates the frameless glass on the extension to the existing balcony balustrade.

Jerry Greenspan said his property is located at the south end of the subject property. He said that the elevation to the guest house, which is adjacent to his property, is not being altered and visibility of his rear yard pool will remain the same. He said that he will support the request.

Dani Grady expressed concern about the significant amount of alterations proposed for this Mills Act home. She stated she does not support the project.

Mr. Gardon noted that the terrace is an existing use and mature vegetation near the stairs area helps to address some of the privacy issues. He stated that the neighbor (to the south) also has a

two-story home with a rear terrace and their ability to view the applicant's yard is equal or greater than the applicant's ability to view the neighbor's yard from the area of the terrace.

Vice Chair St. Denis asked about the height and material of the wall at the stairs.

Mr. Gardon said the wall at the stairs begins at 42 inches and descends immediately thereafter—it is no higher than the existing structure other than the open rail height difference. He said the applicant opted for an open railing rather than a solid wall in order to minimize its impact.

Vice Chair St. Denis suggested that the neighbor may prefer a solid wall rather than an open railing to address privacy issues.

Mr. Gardon said the solid wall would be no higher than handrail height.

Commissioner McGowen asked about the references made by Mr. Gardon regarding egress. She asked if there was concern on the part of local fire safety.

Mr. Gardon said that the applicant has always made personal safety for his family a priority.

Commissioner McGowen asked if the only available egress is through the main staircase in the house.

Mr. Gardon said the only egress to access the terrace is through one set of French doors.

Commissioner McGowen asked if Mr. Gardon had any comments addressing the statement made by Mr. Ackerman regarding the difference in scale between the front and rear buildings, and the fact that the bridge between the two perhaps could be made to be more scale sensitive by stepping it down.

Mr. Gardon said this option was considered but it was not found as aesthetically pleasing to use a stair-stepping design to address a floor-level change. He said the applicant prefers an even line as it seems a more refined option. Mr. Gardon said the difference in scale between the main house and the caretakers' cottage is that the main house is perched about 30 inches. He said that by making all of the windows unified, it conveys a cleaner design.

Commissioner McGowen said the wrought iron grill in front of the French doors proposed above the garage, which is visible from the public right-of-way, appear inconsistent with other areas in the home that use this type of wrought iron railing and which are not visible from the street. She asked if it is necessary to place French doors in this area and suggested the possible placement of casement windows.

Mr. Gardon said the decision is based on a governing match. He said the proposed French doors and grill is very consistent with both the main house, which is Albright, and the rear structure, which is Requa. He said that if a more simplified balcony rail is desired, he would be open to the suggestion; however, there is quite a bit of ornamentation nearby including a gate which leads into the adjacent rear yard. With regard to the question of casement windows to French doors, discussions at previous Commission and City Council meetings resulted in statements which reflected compassion for a pair of opening French doors as opposed to cranking open a window in a compressed area.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioner Crenshaw said she had no issues with any of the proposed exceptions or additions. She feels that the applicant has been very sensitive to the design at the front façade and rear structure, and has kept with the existing footprint.

Chairperson Ryan agreed. He said this is a keystone property in Coronado that has been through multiple changes in its lifetime. He stated that the Mills Act tax benefit does not apply to all of the structures on the property, and the alterations cause minimal impact to the public view and fit within the scope of the Mills Act agreement. He said he would support the request.

Commissioner Jones concurred with the aforementioned comments. She said that the applicant has worked very hard to address concerns by the Commission and the community. Ms. Jones said she had no issues with the addition of French doors above the garage or the proposed balcony railing. She said she visited the site and after looking at the caretakers' cottage, she concluded that it is out of context with the main house because of previous changes that were made to the cottage. She feels that the proposed alterations are much more pleasing and said that she prefers the bridge to display a seamless look; however, she suggested a slight variation in the color of the plaster in order to define it from the main structure and the guest house. Ms. Jones said she would support the request.

Vice Chair St. Denis commended Mr. Gardon for a job well done. She said she liked the originally proposed wood siding on the bridge with the Spreckels gray paint as it created an entirely new 2011 piece of historic structure. She said it appears, from the elevation drawing, that the railing coming down from the terrace has wrought iron material on the side adjacent to the property line, and solid stucco in the interior. She asked if the materials could be reversed to address the privacy issue even though she understands that the height of the railing is low. She commented that although she may not agree to replace the existing Requa windows at the guesthouse with French doors, she would still support the project. Ms. St. Denis said that after looking at interior photographs of the caretakers' cottage, she agreed that portions of it looked added on and it was architecturally and aesthetically displeasing. She suggested placing more

than one pair of French doors across the entire length of the balcony with the wrought iron railing extending the same length as well.

Commissioner McGowen said the concept of placing more than one pair of French doors at the balcony level is interesting and in many ways it may look more consistent. She said this idea would eliminate the feeling of having an unusable, tiny balcony.

Mr. Gardon said he appreciates the comments and introspection, and would offer that the proposed design is what he considers to be the best option. He said the flower pot ledge mimics the details at the front of the house, which is part of the charm; it is low-scale and feels a bit oppressive. He added that being able to open a wall four or five feet makes a difference in the feeling of a room, and that making the balcony into an area that is occupy-able is not the goal. Mr. Gardon said the garage doors and glass material may make a difference in the appearance of this composition, favorably or not. He said the goal is to accomplish an indoor-outdoor connectivity which he feels a single pair of French doors conveys. He does not feel it would be more flattering to have a row of French doors at the expense of the flower pot ledge.

Vice Chair St. Denis asked about the depth of the flower pot ledge.

Mr. Gardon said the balcony is about two to four inches in depth with the flower pot ledge protruding further than the railing about eight inches. He said the railing has a minor return that attaches to the wall, and the goal is to leave the flower pots on the side. Mr. Gardon said it is very charming as proposed.

COMMISSION ACTION

CHAIRPERSON CRENSHAW MADE A MOTION TO RECOMMEND TO CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF AN HISTORIC ALTERATION PERMIT, INCLUDING EXCEPTIONS TO ZONING STANDARDS, FOR THE HISTORICALLY DESIGNATED PROPERTY ADDRESSED AS 1043 OCEAN BOULEVARD, WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITION:

1. THE HAND RAIL OF THE EGRESS STAIR FROM THE ROOF DECK SHALL BE SOLID (STUCCO FINISH) ON THE SIDE ADJACENT TO THE PROPERTY LINE AND WROUGHT IRON ON THE INTERIOR SIDE.

THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS WERE MADE:

- A. THAT THE PROPOSED ALTERATION IS CONSISTENT WITH THE PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THIS CHAPTER, THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT AND THE GENERAL PLAN.
- B. THE PROPOSED ALTERATION WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE HISTORICAL, ARCHITECTURAL OR AESTHETIC VALUE OF THE HISTORIC RESOURCE.

- C. THE PROPOSED ALTERATION WILL RETAIN THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS THAT MAKE THE HISTORIC RESOURCE SIGNIFICANT.
- D. THE PROPOSED ALTERATION WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE HISTORIC RESOURCE'S RELATIONSHIP TO ITS SURROUNDINGS AND NEIGHBORING HISTORIC RESOURCES.

COMMISSIONER ST. DENIS SECONDED THE MOTION.

AYES: Crenshaw, Jones, McGowen, 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.

Total deliberation time: 1 hour, 14 minutes.

The Commission recessed at 3:39 p.m.

The Commission reconvened at 3:44 p.m. All members were present.

HAP 2011-02 SUSANNAH FARAGO – Request for a Historic alteration Permit, including a zoning exception related to floor area ratio for the historically designated property addressed as 550 B Avenue and located in the R-1A(E) (Single Family Residential) Zone. (**This item was withdrawn.**)

No action was taken on this item.

The following item was taken up next on the agenda.

HRPA 2011-02 FERRAR FAMILY TRUST – Request for Historic Preservation Mills Act Agreement for the historically designated residence addressed as 723 A Avenue and located in the R-1A (Single Family Residential) Zone. (*Continued from the meeting of March 2, 2011*)

Vice Chair St. Denis disclosed that she visited the site and met with the applicant, Kathleen Ferrar, and architect Chris Ackerman. Ms. St. Denis said she also met with Pam Spence.

Commissioner McGowen disclosed that she made an onsite visit and met with the applicant, Kathleen Ferrar, and architect Chris Ackerman.

Commissioner Jones disclosed that she visited the site.

Commissioner Crenshaw said she visited the site.

Commissioner Ryan said he also visited the site.

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

The applicant, Robert Ferrar, provided a brief overview of the request and answered questions of the Commission. He asked what options he had regarding placement of a structure once the carport and deck above it were removed.

Ms. Olsen said the applicant is able to make modifications to the structure provided that it is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards. If the Commission conditions the Mills Act on removal of the existing carport and deck above it, it will not preclude the applicant from returning before the Commission at a future date with a proposed design for a carport, garage, or other type of addition.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chris Ackerman said that in 1950, the Hansons purchased the entire property and in 1951, the Spences purchased the garage which was subsequently converted to a house. He said that the balcony over what is now the entry door was much shallower than it is today, and the bay window where the garage door was once located was part of the original conversion from garage to house. Mr. Ackerman said the structure still contains the original steel windows from 1951. He said the house, which was designed by Gill, is worthy of the Mills Act, particularly if the carport is set back and the balcony over the entry way is made to reflect the original design.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioner McGowen said she is delighted that this item was continued because the additional information that was provided was very helpful in terms of “seeing the entire picture.” She said she feels very strongly that this house qualifies for the Mills Act, and understands that the applicants have taken on a significant job that will cost a tremendous amount of money, time, and effort. She said it is precisely this type of request that deserves the Mills Act, especially because of all the energy and effort that goes into putting a house, such as this one, back together. She said she would prefer the carport be removed and the balcony over the front entry way made to look like the original balcony, as depicted in the photograph.

Commissioner Crenshaw said she was fortunate to serve on the Commission when this home was designated historic and is delighted that the applicant is applying for a Mills Act agreement. Ms. Crenshaw noted that when this home was designated historic, the previous alterations were never discussed. She said she is in favor of approving the Mills Act request.

Chairperson Ryan said he concurred with the aforementioned comments.

Commissioner Jones agreed.

Vice Chair St. Denis also agreed. She said the carport does need to be removed and if the applicants wish to make any type of alterations to the property, they would need to return before

the Commission for approval. Ms. St. Denis said she found Commissioner McGowen's suggestion to reduce the depth of the balcony over the entry way and remove the support posts very interesting.

Ms. Olsen reminded the Commission that as part of the recommendation to City Council, the Commission is tasked with reviewing and approving the list of improvements.

Commissioner McGowen noted that one item was not included in the list: Repair of the fence and gates surrounding the yards.

COMMISSION ACTION

VICE CHAIR ST. DENIS MADE A MOTION TO RECOMMEND TO CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE APPLICATION REQUEST AND ASSOCIATED LIST OF IMPROVEMENTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. GENERAL MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR RELATED TO THE HISTORIC PORTIONS OF THE DWELLING, AS SUBMITTED IN THE STAFF REPORT;
2. RESTORATION OF THE BALCONY OVER THE FRONT PORCH AND REMOVAL OF THE SUPPORT POSTS;
3. REMOVAL OF THE CARPORT AND THE DECK ABOVE THE CARPORT.

COMMISSIONER MCGOWEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

AYES: Crenshaw, Jones, McGowen, 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.

Total deliberation time: 27 minutes.

HAP 2011-03 LUKE AND STACI BUSE: Request for Historic Resource Alteration Permit for alterations to the historically designated residence addressed as 1125 Flora Avenue located in the R-1A (Single Family Residential) Zone.

Commissioner McGowen disclosed that she walked by the site.

Chairperson Ryan disclosed that he walked by the site.

Commissioner Jones disclosed that she walked by the site.

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

The applicant's representative, Dorothy Howard, gave a brief overview of the request via a PowerPoint presentation and answered questions of the Commission.

Commissioner Crenshaw asked why the applicant was proposing a change to the window facing the rear yard.

Ms. Howard said the request is based on rearrangement of the interior space. The window, if left as-is, would be in the newly-relocated pantry room, which would be counterproductive.

Ms. Olsen clarified that the first historic alteration permit which was approved by the Commission and City Council included changes to the front and rear of the house. The historic alteration permit is only proposing changes to the rear elevation of the house and the guest house.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioner Jones said she liked the fact that the diamond windows were removed.

Chairperson St. Denis said she likes the proposed modifications.

Vice Chair Crenshaw asked why the doors were changed on the guesthouse.

Ms. Howard said the applicants preferred that the guesthouse resemble the front façade of the main house, which is more reflective of the original architecture.

COMMISSION ACTION

COMMISSIONER CRENSHAW MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE A REQUEST FOR THE ISSUANCE OF AN HISTORIC RESOURCE ALTERATION PERMIT FOR ALTERATIONS TO THE RESIDENCE ADDRESSED AS 1125 FLORA AVENUE.

THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS WERE MADE:

- A. THE PROPOSED ALTERATIONS ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THIS CHAPTER, THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT AND THE GENERAL PLAN.
- B. THE PROPOSED ALTERATIONS WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE HISTORICAL, ARCHITECTURAL OR AESTHETIC VALUE OF THE HISTORIC RESOURCE.
- C. THE PROPOSED ALTERATIONS WILL RETAIN THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS THAT MAKE THE HISTORIC RESOURCE SIGNIFICANT.

- D. THE ALTERATIONS WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE HISTORIC RESOURCE'S RELATIONSHIP TO ITS SURROUNDINGS AND NEIGHBORING HISTORIC RESOURCES.
- E. THE PROPOSED ALTERATIONS WILL COMPLY WITH THE SECRETARY OF INTERIOR'S STANDARDS SET FORTH IN SECTION 106 OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT OF 1966.

VICE CHAIR ST. DENIS SECONDED THE MOTION.

AYES: Crenshaw, Jones, McGowen, 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.

Total deliberation time: 21 minutes.

MISCELLANEOUS

Request by Commissioner Ryan to docket a discussion item on a future agenda.

Ms. Olsen provided a brief overview of the request. She said that Chairperson Ryan had requested the following item be docketed on a future agenda:

Discussion of a Commission policy regarding meetings with applicants outside of the preliminary review process and prior to the noticed public hearing.

City Attorney Foster advised the Commission that they are working with applicants who have property rights at stake and who have constitutional due process rights related to how this process is handled—one of those rights is the right to be fully informed on the record at the hearing of all the evidence that is being considered as a basis for the decision. This is why disclosures are made by the Commissioners for site visits, and so on. Attorney Foster asked that the Commission be aware of this fact as there is the possibility that an applicant who is displeased with the outcome of a decision has a potential legal challenge if there is any indication that information or evidence gathering outside the record of the hearing was considered as part of a decision. She said that an argument could arise related to the potential violation of a person's due process rights. Attorney Foster said there are pros and cons to site visits and meetings with applicants. She stated that from a legal standpoint, it is better to include all information as part of the record; however, verbal conversations are very difficult to capture and activities, such as unescorted site visits, make this task complicated. Attorney Foster suggested that sharing of information can be done so in writing.

Commission discussion ensued on whether this item should be docketed.

COMMISSION ACTION

COMMISSIONER RYAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE REQUEST TO DOCKET THE REQUEST AS A FUTURE DISCUSSION ITEM.

COMMISSIONER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION.

AYES: Jones, Ryan.
NAYS: Crenshaw, McGowen, St. Denis.
ABSENT: None.
ABSTAIN: None.

The motion failed with a vote of 2-3.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:43p.m.

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