

HISTORIC RESOURCE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Regular Meeting

July 6, 2011

The regular meeting of the Coronado Historic Resource Commission was called to order at 3:03 p.m., Wednesday, July 6, 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 June 1, 2011, were approved as amended.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Olsen reported that the Commission has processed 110 historic designation applications; designated 134 homes; denied 8 nominations for designation; 10 nominations have been withdrawn; recorded 44 Mills Act agreements with 26 applicants on the waiting list and 2 applications submitted in 2011 (which have not been prioritized or placed on the waiting list); and reviewed 104 non-historic and 4 historic Notice of Intent to Demolish (NOI) applications. Ms. Olsen also reported that of the 50 homes recognized by the Coronado Historical Association as historic, 22 have been designated, and 28 remain non-designated.

Ms. Olsen also reported that the Historic Alteration Permit application for 550 B Avenue (HAP 2011-06 Susannah Farago) is tentatively scheduled to be heard at the City Council meeting of July 19.

Ms. Olsen then reported that Chairperson Ryan will not be available to attend the meeting of July 20; Vice Chair St. Denis will be Acting Chair.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS

Vice Chair St. Denis asked if the July 15 submittal date for the Coronado Currents is a soft or hard deadline, and asked about the maximum word count for articles.

Ms. Olsen said it is a soft deadline, and stated the word count is 175 words.

Commissioner Crenshaw said she would like the Commission to address, at some point, designation (and potential incentives) of commercial properties.

PUBLIC HEARING

HP 2011-02 **CITY OF CORONADO** – Draft Review of City of Coronado Designation Criteria Guidelines.

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

Vice Chair St. Denis asked about the item regarding historic integrity differing from condition. She asked if this is a matter that has been addressed in the City's ordinance, and whether Coronado is different from other cities on how it views homes that are in poor condition.

Ms. Olsen said she would not speak on decisions that the Historic Resource Commission has made in the past as she feels that the intent of ongoing discussions is to proceed forward. She stated that staff was tasked by the City Council to prepare designation criteria guidelines that are largely based on National Register Guidance.

Commission McGowen asked about the proposed language under CMC Section 84.10.020(I), specifically the removal of the word "landmark." She felt that the word "site" does not encompass potential landmarks in Coronado.

Ms. Olsen suggested using the word "object."

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioner Jones asked if the Commission has the authority to request that a property owner return a structure to its original condition in the event the property owner makes unauthorized alterations to a designated property. She specifically referenced the property located at 828 Glorietta Boulevard.

Ms. Olsen said that, in general, the City's policy is that a structure can be historically designated if it is brought before the Commission on a voluntary basis, or if a structure is over 75 years of age. She provided background information to City Attorney Foster regarding the extensive demolition that occurred to the aforementioned property.

City Attorney Foster stated that if a property owner makes alterations to a structure that is over 75 years of age without being properly permitted, the matter would be a code enforcement issue. Code enforcement would most likely seek an injunction to stop the work. It is possible that part of the court order would include a requirement for the property owner to appear before the Historic Resource Commission. At that time, the Commission would make a determination

regarding whether the demolition could be approved after the fact.

Commissioner McGowen asked if the subject property was over 75 years of age at the time it was extensively demolished.

Commissioner Jones said yes.

Vice Chair St. Denis commended Ms. Olsen on an outstanding staff report. Ms. St. Denis commented that in the City of San Diego, it has become more difficult to designate a home because of stricter requirements. She said that if the Commission is directed by City Council to make the language more in sync with the National Historic Register, this would be the perfect opportunity to change the age criteria of a structure from 75 to 50 years.

Ms. Olsen said the Commission is allowed to make this recommendation.

Vice Chair St. Denis confirmed her recommendation to change the age criteria of a structure from 75 to 50 years.

Commissioners McGowen, Crenshaw and Jones agreed with this recommendation.

Chairperson Ryan reminded the Commission that any changes to the guidelines require the consent of three of the five members. He said that the proposed language is in the interpretation phase.

Chairperson Ryan commented that members of the Commission and City Council only serve for a limited time, and it is important to create guidelines that future members can use to preserve Coronado.

Ms. Olsen stated that City Council directed that the designation criteria guidelines be as close to the National Register Guidelines as possible but interpreted to be applicable for Coronado's designation criteria. Two main guidelines which are significantly different from the National Register Guidelines are as follows: (1) The requirement that a structure must meet two of the designation criteria (National Register Guidelines requires only one), (2) The 75-year age requirement (National Register Guidelines requires 50 years).

Vice Chair St. Denis asked for clarification about the following language: "A structure must be 75 years old in order to be designated as a Historic Resource through the Notice of Intent to Demolish review process." She asked if there is language in the National Register Guidance that corresponds to this issue.

Ms. Olsen said no. She noted that the National Register Guidance makes the determination of eligibility, which may be against owner consent, based on a structure having gained significance within the last 50 years, or if it is a nomination.

Commissioner Crenshaw referenced the language which reads, "In addition to meeting two of the designation criteria, and suggested removing the words "In addition." She asked how a

structure which is not 75 years old but meets two of the criteria fits into the designation criteria.

Ms. Olsen said it would depend on whether the property owner is voluntarily designating their home, or requesting it be demolished.

Commissioner Crenshaw replied that this point should be clarified in the language.

Commissioner McGowen said she feels it is the Commission's duty to educate the public about the designation criteria and any exceptions. She said the public has the duty, should they choose, to retain their home's historic value.

Ms. Olsen said this issue would relate to historic integrity.

Chairperson Ryan said the 75-year age requirement and the Notice to Demolish are both significant issues. He mentioned that the reason for the 75-year age requirement may be due in part to the real estate lobby and the fact that four of five City Council members who were serving at the time the age requirement was established were realtors. He said he is not opposed to changing the age requirement to 50; however, he feels this may be a difficult task.

Commissioner Jones agreed.

Vice Chair St. Denis said that the 50-year age requirement is not an arbitrary number—it is what the National Register Guidance has established. She said that Coronado is probably the only city in California that has a 75-year age requirement. She said that the recommendation should be submitted to City Council so that the age requirement is more in sync with other cities in the state as well as the National Register Guidance.

Chairperson Ryan asked for clarification about direction from City Council.

Ms. Olsen said the direction from City Council was for staff to prepare designation criteria guidelines that were specific to Coronado's designation criteria. It was in the course of City Council discussion that all five members said they would like the guidelines to be modeled as closely to the National Register Guidance as possible. Two of the members wanted to change to National Register criteria and use National Register Guidelines. After discussions, City Council voted unanimously to keep the same criteria but directed staff to make the guidelines as closely as possible to the National Register Guidelines.

Chairperson Ryan asked if it was necessary to clarify with City Council on whether they desired to retain Coronado's designation criteria and incorporate some of the National Register criteria, or vice-versa.

Ms. Olsen said City Council discussed this point and they voted to keep Coronado's designation criteria and directed staff to prepare guidelines to apply Coronado's criteria.

Chairperson Ryan said he was hesitant to suggest the 50-year age requirement to City Council as it is such a significant change from Coronado's guidelines.

Ms. Olsen clarified that the 50-year age requirement is the guidance on evaluation of historic resources. She said that the City Council directed staff to retain the existing criteria but use the guidance on historic evaluation that is contained in the National Register bulletins to prepare designation criteria for the City's five criteria.

Commissioner Jones mentioned there are many homes in Coronado that were built in the 1940s that are worth saving but that do not fall under the 75-year age requirement.

Commissioner Crenshaw said that if the age requirement were changed to 50, a significant number of homes would qualify under the new requirement.

Ms. Olsen reminded the Commission that by changing the requirement to 50, it does not mean that a property owner cannot demolish his home. The requirement simply adds an additional level of review. If it is determined that the structure does not meet the criterion to be designated, the structure can be demolished.

Chairperson Ryan noted, for the record, that four of five members agree with changing the age requirement to 50.

Ms. Olsen said that the goal of the guidelines is to make review of historic homes easier for the Commission.

Vice Chair St. Denis referenced Criterion F, Historic Districts, "In the case of Historic Districts, at least 75 percent of the buildings within the proposed district (excluding accessory buildings) shall be contributing resources." She asked if the 75 percent requirement is too strict.

Chairperson Ryan agreed it was too strict and suggested that the number be somewhere between 50 and 65 percent.

Vice Chair St. Denis said that based on prior information provided to the Commission, most cities in California use 51 percent.

Ms. Olsen agreed. She said that the intent of the language is to reserve the criterion for future discussions when she presents to the Commission the Draft Historic District Ordinance, as this is an assigned work task, per the direction of the City Council.

Vice Chair St. Denis confirmed, for the record, that further changes should be made to Criterion F, including the change to the percentage.

Ms. Olsen asked the Commission if the language used for Criterion F, under the San Diego Designation Criteria, was potential wording that could be used by Coronado for Criterion F. It reads as follows: "It is a finite group of resources related to one another in a clearly distinguishable way or is a geographically definable area or neighborhood containing improvements which have a special character, historical interest, or aesthetic value, or which represent one or more architectural periods or styles in the history and development of the City."

Ms. Olsen said the percentage is not written into the criteria but is instead explained as a policy at the time of the adoption of the ordinance.

Chairperson Ryan suggested including the proposed language in the next draft to City Council with the added note that additional information is forthcoming regarding the tasked item.

Ms. Olsen suggested that if there is a proposed change to the language of Criterion F, it should be in the form of an introduction of an ordinance. She further suggested a note to City Council explaining that the Commission has been tasked to explore the options of historic districts and that the Commission has chosen this language but is still working on other portions of the ordinance. It would be at the discretion of the City Council to decide whether they prefer to not change the language of Criterion F until the ordinance is ready.

The Commission agreed with the aforementioned suggestion by staff.

Commissioner Crenshaw referenced Criterion D, "A list of professionals' known works in Coronado." She suggested the words "in Coronado" should be removed.

The Commission agreed.

Commissioner Crenshaw noted there is limited information available for homes built between 1921 to 1997, and asked about possible resources.

Ms. Olsen suggested the Coronado library as a resource.

Commissioner Crenshaw questioned the absence of Criterion D, "The National Register has yielded or may likely yield information important in history or pre-history."

Ms. Olsen said this criterion is used a great deal in the National Register for archeology.

Commissioner Crenshaw asked if there is a state designation.

Ms. Olsen said there is a state designation but she did not include it in the staff report because it is very similar to the National Register.

Chairperson Ryan suggested changes to the introduction portion of the Historic Designation Criteria Guidelines.

Ms. Olsen said that in order to be consistent with the National Register Guidance, the words "landmark, area, or place" should be removed from the definition of Historic Resource on the introduction portion of the guidelines.

The Commission agreed.

Chairperson Ryan asked about the usage of the word "political" in the aforementioned introduction and in Criteria A for designation of an historic structure. He asked for clarification

on the context of the word and how it relates to Coronado. He suggested that the word is unnecessary.

Vice Chair St. Denis suggested the word “political” could be replaced by the word “governmental.”

Commissioner Crenshaw recalls designating a structure historic based partly on Criterion A, which included a historical connection involving politics.

Ms. Olsen clarified that “politics” in this case is meant to be a general term to be used if a person is active in politics.

Ms. Olsen recapped as follows:

1. Change the definition of historic resource to strike the words “landmark, area, and place.” (Requires introduction of new ordinance)
2. Agreed that the language for Criterion E should be changed to read, “It has been listed or formerly determined eligible for the California Register...” rather than read, “It meets the State Program of landmarks...” (Requires introduction of new ordinance)
3. Change the language regarding the age requirement from 75 years to 50 years. For voluntary designation, the language would read, “A house should be 50 years old or have gained significance within the last 50 years.” For a demolition review, the language would read, “A house needs to be 50 years old.”
4. Change the format for Criterion C to include bullets rather than numbers.
5. Change the language for Criterion F to be consistent with language used for Criterion F under the San Diego Designation Criteria for districts.
6. Delete the words “in Coronado” under Criterion D, second bullet.

Commissioner Crenshaw asked if it is necessary to include that the same person, place, or thing could be eligible for more than one criterion.

Ms. Olsen said that the formulation of the guidelines will assist to classify information into appropriate criteria so further clarification is not suggested. Ms. Olsen stated that she would present to the Commission a revised version of the guidelines at their meeting of July 20. At that time, the Commission will have the opportunity to make a formal recommendation to have the guidelines forwarded to City Council.

Chairperson Ryan asked when the guidelines would be reviewed by City Council.

Ms. Olsen said the item would most likely be scheduled for the City Council meeting of late August or early September.

COMMISSION ACTION

No action was taken on this item.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

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