



**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
1st FLOOR, CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
CITY HALL BUILDING, 300 N. CAMPBELL
NOVEMBER 4, 2013
4:00 P.M.**

The El Paso Historic Landmark Commission held a public hearing in the City Council Chambers, 1st Floor, City Hall Building, November 4, 2013, 4:00 p.m.

The following commissioners were present:

Chairman David Berchelmann
Commissioner Beatriz Lucero
Commissioner Randy Brock
Commissioner Ricardo Fernandez
Commissioner John L. Moses

The following commissioners were not present:

Vice-Chairman Edgar Lopez
Commissioner Cesar Gomez
Commissioner William C. Helm II

The following City staff members were present:

Ms. Providencia Velázquez, Historic Preservation Officer, City Development Department, Planning Division
Ms. Kristen Hamilton, Assistant City Attorney, City Attorney's Office

Chairman Berchelmann called the meeting to order at 4:47 p.m., quorum present.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

None.

I. CALL TO THE PUBLIC – PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

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II. REGULAR AGENDA – DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Certificate of Appropriateness

1. **PHAP13-00030:** 36 Manhattan Heights 20 To 24, City of El Paso, El Paso County, Texas
- Location: 1315 Elm Street
- Historic District: Manhattan Heights
- Property Owner: Don Luciano
- Representative: Guillermo Barajas
- Representative District: 2
- Existing Zoning: R-3/H (Residential/Historic)
- Year Built: 1913
- Historic Status: Contributing
- Request: Certificate of Appropriateness for the rehabilitation of the subject property, construction of a garage structure, construction of a concrete wall and metal picket fence, installation of walkways, cementing portions of the parkway, construction of concrete pads, and landscaping.
- Application Filed: 10/21/13
- 45 Day Expiration: 12/5/13

Ms. Velázquez gave a presentation and noted the property owner sought approval for Certificate of Appropriateness for the rehabilitation of the subject property, construction of a garage structure, construction of a concrete wall and metal picket fence, installation of walkways, cementing portions of the parkway, construction of concrete pads, and landscaping. The property is located at the corner of Elm Street and San Diego Avenue. This structure is very significant as it was designed by Otto Thorman. Otto Thorman and Mabel Welch, well-known architects at the time, are the reason Manhattan Heights is a designated historic district.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The case is before commissioners today due to Code Enforcement staff restricting further construction. On numerous occasions, Code Enforcement staff has investigated this property for construction without proper permits, both the former and current property owners.

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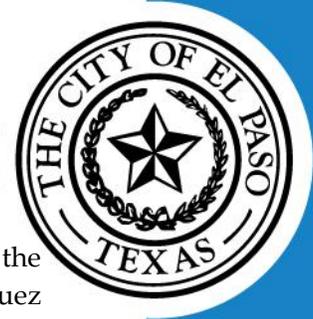
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The architect representing the property owner, Guillermo Barajas, researched the property and found a historic photo, dated 1915, of the structure. Ms. Velázquez highlighted the structure’s exterior features as shown in the 1915 photo, numerous exterior modifications as shown in the 1935 photo, and the structure as it exists today.

THE PROPERTY OWNER IS PROPOSING THE FOLLOWING:

FRONT ELEVATION

1. Place grass and landscaping in the parkways;
2. Keep the current metal picket fence;
3. Install a walkway around the house;
4. Install cement flooring at the carport;
5. Keep the concrete path and install a garage at the rear of the property;
6. Keep the concrete path in front of the former garage;
7. Utilize existing garage as a storage shed;
8. 1st Floor - Reinstall previously removed brick;
9. 1st Floor - Keep it open, do not install windows on the façade;
10. 1st Floor – Keep bay area (*first floor on the south side*) open and keep the metal picket rail;
11. 2nd Floor – Install wood, tripartite window;
12. 2nd Floor – Repair the central portion, adjacent portions will be operable;
13. 2nd Floor – Directly underneath windows:
 - a. Remove siding on top of wood shingles;
 - b. Restore and paint original wood shingles;
 - c. Repeat pattern throughout 2nd floor

REAR ELEVATION

1. 1st Floor – Leave open, except for the bay closest to the carport to be enclosed;
2. 2nd Floor – To be partially enclosed

EXISTING PROPERTY PHOTOS PROPOSALS

1. 1st Floor – Existing wood, leaded windows - *original to the property, will not be removed*;
2. 1st Floor – Enclosed area with door;
3. 1st Floor and Rear Façade – Brick infill;
4. 1st Floor – Photo of metal picket railings;
5. Photo of concrete wall (*constructed without permits*);
6. Photo of existing garage (*to be used as a storage shed*)

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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Office recommends **APPROVAL WITH MODIFICATIONS*** of the proposed scope of work based on the following recommendations:

The Design Guidelines for El Paso's Historic Districts, Sites, and Properties recommend the following:

- *Select appropriate paving materials for new walkways, including concrete, brick, and stone.*
- *Introduce new driveways and walkways (when there are none) that are compatible with existing driveways and walkways in terms of width (maximum 12' wide), location, materials, and design.*
- *Construct new driveways and walkways in locations that require a minimum of alteration to historic site features such as landscaping, retaining walls, curbs, and sidewalks.*
- *New parking areas should be designed to have a minimal effect on the neighborhood environment.*
- *Properly designed landscaping can set the tone for immediate and surrounding areas.*
- *Grass and sod may be removed from front yards, side yards on a corner provided not more than 50% of the area is covered with gravel or other masonry. Grass and sod may be removed from parkways provided not more than 50% of the areas is covered with gravel or other masonry that is made of impervious materials (brick pavers, gravel, and masonry pavers). The remaining 50% must be covered with trees and/or living plants that provide ground cover. Any hardscape must be pervious and laid directly on the soil or on pervious fabric to allow water penetration.*
- *Cinder block and chain link fencing are relatively recent developments and are therefore not appropriate fencing materials.*
- *Solid walls are appropriate for the side property lines while an open fencing material is more appropriate for the front portion of the property.*
- *Place non-traditional site features such as swimming pools, playground equipment, concrete pads and basketball goals, tree houses, dumpsters, and trash receptacles only in areas such as rear yards, where they are not visible from the street.*
- *Introduce new fences and walls compatible in materials, design, scale, location, and size with original fences and walls in the historic district.*
- *Any proposed fence higher than 6 ft., between buildings on an interior property line or across the rear property line, shall be reviewed by the HLC.*
- *If it is necessary to replace masonry, always use materials that match the color, size and texture of the masonry being replaced.*

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- *Preserve the shape, size, materials, and details of character-defining chimneys and foundations and other masonry/stone features.*
- *If areas are deteriorated beyond repair they should be replaced in kind to match the original historic material compounds.*
- *Replacement windows on the main façade shall be comprised of the operable portions of the window and match the type, style, operation, configuration and finish of the original windows.*
- *Windows in secondary facades shall be reviewed on a case by case basis.*
- *Retain and preserve the pattern, arrangement, and dimensions of door and window openings on principal elevations.*
- *Design new garages and outbuildings to be compatible with the main structure on the lot in material and design, using existing historic outbuildings in the districts as an example.*
- *Limit the size and scale of garages and accessory structures so that the integrity of the original structure, or the size of the existing lots, is not compromised or significantly diminished.*
- *New garages and accessory buildings should be located in the rear yards.*

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend the following:

- *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*
- *The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize the property will be avoided.*
- *Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.*
- *Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*
- *Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive features, the new feature will match the old in design, color, textures, and where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*
- *New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

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**THE MODIFICATIONS ARE THAT THE SIZE OF THE CONCRETE PAD/DRIVEWAY LEADING TO THE PROPOSED GARAGE ON THE NORTH PORTION OF THE PROPERTY BE REDUCED TO A MAXIMUM OF TWELVE FEET IN WIDTH; THAT THE BASEMENT WINDOWS BE REPLACED WITH FIXED WINDOWS AND NOT MASONRY; THAT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER ON THE SECOND STORY BE INFILLED WITH WINDOWS AND WALLS WITH WOOD SHINGLES TO MATCH THE PROPOSED INFILL ON THE MAIN AND SECONDARY FACADES; THAT THE NEW BRICK AND MORTAR MATCH THE ORIGINAL BRICK AND MORTAR IN COLOR, TEXTURE, SIZE, DIMENSIONS, AND PATTERN; THAT THE BRICK INFILL ON THE FIRST FLOOR BE TOPPED WITH A COPING AS SEEN IN THE HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS; THAT THE CONCRETE SLAB IN FRONT OF THE REAR STRUCTURE BE REPLACED WITH GRASS; AND THAT THE CONCRETE WALL CONSTRUCTED ON THE SOUTH PROPERTY LINE BE COVERED WITH A ROCK VENEER TO MATCH THE EXISTING ROCK WALL AT THE REAR OF THE PROPERTY ON THE WEST PROPERTY LINE.*

Regarding landscaping, Chairman Berchelmann asked Ms. Velázquez if the grass parkways would have sprinklers.

Per Mr. Guillermo Barajas, architect, responded yes, that could be done.

Chairman Berchelmann asked commissioners if they had any questions or comments for Ms. Velázquez.

Commissioner Moses asked Ms. Velázquez if the facing could be stucco rather than stone.

Ms. Velázquez responded yes; however, due to the volume of existing stone she would recommend stone.

Mr. Guillermo Barajas, architect, representing the property owner, commented on the 1915 and 1935 photographs of the structure. He understood the original home to be Texas vernacular, with balconies and porches deeply recessed. He explained that by 1935, the property was bought and sold three times, notably; property owner number three converted the structure into a music conservatory. To create classroom space, property owner number three enclosed the open porches.

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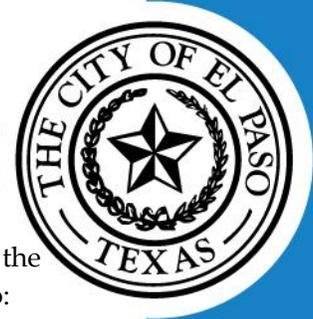
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Mr. Barajas explained the property owner would like to restore the look of the home per the 1915 photograph. Therefore, the property owner is proposing to:

1. Maintain the open porches;
2. 1st Floor - Maintain wrought iron fence;
 Ms. Velázquez recommends removal of the wrought iron fence, replace with brick (*per 1915 photograph*). Mr. Barajas was successful in locating brick that very closely, *not an exact match*, resembles the original.
3. 2nd Floor – Maintain open balcony, southeast corner;
4. 2nd Floor - In consideration of the elevations, maintain the open porch located at the southeast corner
5. Maintain existing concrete slabs; current locations and size

Ms. Velázquez clarified the structure’s original design has been significantly altered. As a result of this rehabilitation project, the façade will most likely resemble a combination of both the 1915 and 1935 photographs. Furthermore, wrought iron metal picket railings were not part of the original design. As part of the modification recommendation, Ms. Velázquez proposed the 1st floor porches will remain open; however, the 2nd floor porches would be enclosed. Thus creating a balance of both the 1915 and 1935 photographs.

While researching the property, Mr. Barajas located information, written in 1994, by the City of El Paso Department of Planning, Research and Development Department staff. Mr. Barajas read into the record the following:

“The district is relatively young, houses exhibit a stylistic influence rather than a pure style.”

Mr. Barajas interpreted the sentence to mean a great deal of liberties were taken by the various owners. Considering lifestyle and security issues today, the 1994 quote allows changes, not a pure style but a design intent.

Chairman Berchelmann asked Mr. Barajas if matching and replacing the brick would be an issue.

Mr. Barajas responded believed he would be able to do that.

DISCUSSION AMONGST COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Berchelmann clarified Mr. Barajas’ proposal that the 2nd floor balcony remain open, not enclosed, as shown in 1915 photo.

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Ms. Velázquez restated that by 1935 changes to the structure were made. As noted in the Design Guidelines and the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, changes can acquire significance of their own. Therefore, she suggested the new modifications match the modifications as shown in the 1935 photo.

Chairman Berchelmann proposed wooden railing rather than the wrought iron metal picket fence, or perhaps a light material of some type.

Ms. Velázquez was unsure if Fire Department inspectors would approve wooden railings. Perhaps Mr. Barajas could locate a wood railing that matched the 1915 railing.

Mr. Barajas explained that due to lack of or low maintenance, the property owner selected wrought iron for the railing. Notably, Mr. Barajas tried to match the wrought iron railing profile to the 1915 photograph.

Ms. Velázquez clarified wrought iron railing was not present at the time the current property owner purchased the home.

Mr. Barajas agreed and noted that, at the time of purchase, the street side railing was present. To conclude, enclosing the 2nd floor balcony would give the home a top-heavy appearance, he would prefer having open balconies.

MOTION:

Motion made by Chairman Berchelmann, seconded by Commissioner Brock AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE WITH THE MODIFICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK, AS LAID OUT, IN ITS ENTIRETY.

- 2. PHAP13-00031:** 109 Government Hill 5 & 6 & W ½ of 7 (7500 sq. ft.),
City of El Paso, El Paso County, Texas
- Location: 4607 Hastings Drive
- Historic District: Austin Terrace
- Property Owner: Maureen Murphy
- Representative: Julio Gonzalez
- Representative District: 2
- Existing Zoning: R-4/H (Residential/Historic)
- Year Built: 1948
- Historic Status: Non-contributing
- Request: Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of
a circular driveway

City Development Department – Economic Development Division
P.O. Box 1890 | El Paso, Texas 79950-1890 | (915) 541-4027

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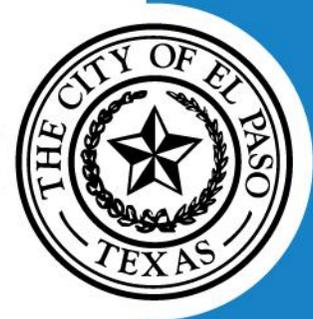
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Application Filed: 10/21/13
45 Day Expiration: 12/5/13

Ms. Velázquez gave a presentation and noted the property owner sought approval for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a circular driveway. The property is located in the center of the block. Per the aerial map, Ms. Velázquez noted several circular driveways in the district. Per the presentation, Ms. Velázquez shows the existing ribbon driveway and notes ribbon driveways are original to historic districts; however, fewer and fewer exist due to modifications.

THE PROPERTY OWNER IS PROPOSING THE FOLLOWING:

Circular driveway with a curb cut, substantial front yard paving

Per the presentation, Ms. Velázquez pointed out a number of properties with ribbon driveways in the district. She also pointed out a number of corner lots with circular driveways and noted that the corner lots are substantially larger. Ms. Velázquez explained that the circular driveways on corner lots were in place at the time of designation, as circular driveways are not original in these historic districts.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Office recommends **DENIAL** of the proposed scope of work based on the following recommendations:

The Design Guidelines for El Paso’s Historic Districts, Sites, and Properties recommend the following:

- *Retain historic driveways and walkways, including steps and sidewalks, in their original locations.*
- *Introduce new driveways and walkways (when there are none) that are compatible with existing driveways and walkways in terms of width (maximum 12’ wide), location, materials, and design. Double width and circular driveways are not appropriate and require approval from the Historic Landmark Commission.*
- *Construct new driveways and walkways in locations that require a minimum of alteration to historic site features such as landscaping, retaining walls, curbs, and sidewalks. Usually driveways should lead directly to the rear of buildings and walkways should lead directly to the front steps of the house.*

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- *Parking areas in front yards are not appropriate. New parking areas should be designed to have a minimal effect on the neighborhood environment.*

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend the following:

- *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property.*

Chairman Berchelmann asked Ms. Velázquez what the width and depth of the lot was.

Ms. Velázquez was unsure what the depth of the lot was, she approximated the width of the lot was 50 feet.

Ms. Maureen Murphy, property owner, stated she purchased her property five years ago; however, she was not informed her property was located in a historic district.

Ms. Murphy cited the following reasons for the circular driveway request:

- a. Safety issues – lack of stop signs on Hastings, 60 mph speeding on Hastings; speed bump was denied
- b. Backing out of driveway – must yield to oncoming traffic;
- c. All hours of the day and night – both Ms. Murphy and her brother work various shifts/various hours, vehicles about neighbor's window, annoyance for neighbors;
- d. On-street parking – vehicles parked in the street have been hit;
- e. On-street parking – stepping into traffic, very dangerous;
- f. Hastings becomes very slick in winter – vehicles slip and slide into driveways and curbs;
- g. Garage - front access via Hastings – garage has been modified, bricked up on sides, access to the garage is from Hastings;
- h. Garage - rear access from alley - would have to remove rock wall and greenery (*original oleander bushes*).

Ms. Murphy stated she brought a list of 15 or 16 addresses, within walking distance of her home, with circular driveways; on lots are no bigger than her own. She noted her home is one of the smallest on Hastings. Ms. Murphy

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commented on the adjacent property with the filled in driveway and lack of landscaping.

Chairman Berchelmann thanked Ms. Murphy for following the guidelines, requesting the Certificate of Appropriateness first, rather than after the fact. He briefly mentioned notifying Code Enforcement staff and circumstances related thereto. Chairman Berchelmann explained that, per the Guidelines for El Paso Historic Districts, circular driveways are prohibited. It was unclear how property owners within the Austin Terrace Historic District were authorized to construct the circular driveways.

Ms. Murphy informed commissioners of property on her block, a corner lot, whereby the property owner completely remodeled the home and installed a circular driveway, less than two years ago.

Ms. Velázquez notified commissioners she would have Code Enforcement investigate.

As an alternative, Ms. Murphy proposed installing gravel or concrete pad, adjacent the existing driveway, so as not to annoy the neighbors.

Ms. Velázquez commented on the 50% landscape rule; furthermore, as a separate request, the Certificate of Appropriateness regarding the installation of gravel or concrete pad must also be presented to commissioners.

Commissioner Moses asked Ms. Murphy if the existing garage was being used.

Ms. Murphy responded the existing garage needs a new roof, leaks terribly.

Chairman Berchelmann asked Ms. Velázquez if creating an exit, from the rear of the garage to the alley, was permitted.

Commissioner Lucero concurred with Chairman Berchelmann in that the property did not support a circular driveway.

Chairman Berchelmann suggested postponing this case to the next scheduled HLC meeting.

Ms. Velázquez explained that the middle strip on the existing driveway could be filled in with gravel but not concrete. She would meet with the property owner

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to discuss various options including creating an exit from the rear of the garage to the alley.

MOTION:

Motion made by Chairman Berchelmann, seconded by Commissioner Fernandez AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO POSTPONE ITEM PHAP13-00031 TO THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING ON NOVEMBER 18TH.

3. Addresses of property HLC commissioners have requested that HLC staff review or investigate and provide a report to the HLC. If no addresses are submitted in advance and listed under this agenda item, commissioners may announce such addresses under this agenda item. Discussion on property announced at this meeting will take place during the next regularly scheduled meeting. November 4, 2013 deadline for HLC members to request for agenda items to be scheduled for the November 18, 2013 meeting. November 18, 2013 deadline for HLC members to request for agenda items to be scheduled for the December 2, 2013 meeting.

Chairman Berchelmann asked commissioners if they had addresses they would like staff to review or investigate.

Commissioner Moses requested staff review, investigate and provide a report to the HLC regarding the property, with the circular driveway, located in the Austin Terrace Historic District as mentioned by the property owner for PHAP13-00031.

HLC Staff Report

4. Update on Administrative Review Cases since the last HLC meeting for the properties listed on the attachment posted with this agenda.

Chairman Berchelmann asked commissioners if they had any comments and/or questions for staff. *There were none.*

MOTION:

Motion made by Chairman Berchelmann, seconded by Commissioner Moses AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW STAFF REPORT.

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Other Business

5. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for October 21, 2013.

Chairman Berchelmann asked commissioners if they had any additions/corrections/revisions. *There were none.*

MOTION:

Motion made by Commissioner Lucero, seconded by Chairman Berchelmann AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 21, 2013.

ABSTAIN: *Commissioners Brock and Moses*

PRIOR TO ADJOURNING

1. *Property located at 112 Mills Avenue*

Ms. Velázquez informed commissioners that she will speak with a city inspector about this project and that the project does not comply with the plans, as administratively approved. Additionally, she will notify Code Enforcement staff of the situation.

2. *Congratulations – Commissioners Edgar Lopez and William C. Helm II*

Ms. Velázquez congratulated Commissioners Lopez and Helm on receiving the 2013 El Paso Chapter of the American Institute of Architects awards. Ms. Velázquez attended the awards ceremony where the jurors stated that they were unaware that the selected two projects were from the same architectural firm. She added the Historic Landmark Commission is very lucky to have Commissioners Lopez and Helm serve as commissioners.

Commissioner Lopez was recognized for the design of his home “*Casa Wheeling*” located on Wheeling Avenue.

Commissioner Helm accepted the award for his firm, In Situ Architecture, for the new marquee at the Mills Building.

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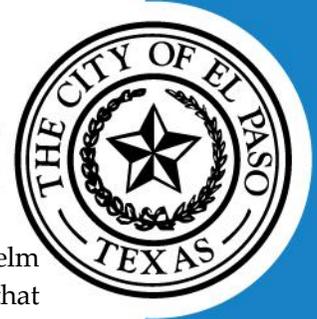
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Chairman Berchermann congratulated Commissioners Lopez and Helm on their exceptional talents and well deserved awards. He added that their expertise was second-to-none.

MOTION:

Motion made by Chairman Berchermann, seconded by Commissioner Brock AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 5:34 P.M.

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