



**EL PASO HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**APRIL 19, 2010**  
**4:00 P.M.**

The El Paso Historic Landmark Commission held a public hearing in the Mayor's Board Room, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, City Hall Building, April 19, 2010, 4:00 p.m., with the following members present:

**Commission Members Present:**

Hugo Gardea, Vice-Chair  
Rick Suarez  
Joel Guzman  
Randy Brock  
Ricardo D. Gonzalez (4:34 p.m.)

**Others Present:**

Tony De La Cruz, Planner  
Cynthia Osborn, Assistant City Attorney

Vice-Chair Gardea called the meeting to order at 4:22

**AGENDA**

**I. CALL TO THE PUBLIC – PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

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Vice-Chair Gardea asked Staff if there were any changes to the agenda.

Mr. De La Cruz responded the April 5, 2010 Minutes were under review and requested they be postponed to the next HLC meeting.

**MOTION:**

Motion made by Commissioner Suarez, seconded by Commissioner Guzman and unanimously carried **TO POSTPONE THE APRIL 5, 2010 MINUTES.**

No further discussion from the Commissioners. The vote was taken.

**AYES:** Commissioners Suarez, Guzman and Brock

**NAYS:** N/A

Motion passed. (3-0)

**MOTION:**

Motion made by Commissioner Suarez, seconded by Commissioner Guzman and unanimously carried **TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS CORRECTED.**

No further discussion from the Commissioners. The vote was taken.

**AYES:** Commissioners Suarez, Guzman and Brock

**NAYS:** N/A

Motion passed. (3-0)

## II. REGULAR AGENDA – DISCUSSION AND ACTION

### Certificate of Appropriateness

1. **HPC10-00054** Block 9, Lot 3 and East 5 ft of 2 & W 15 ft of 4, Manhattan Heights Addition, City of El Paso, El Paso County, Texas
- Location: 2902 Aurora  
Historic District: Manhattan Heights  
Property Owner: Refugio Contreras  
Representative: Daniel Medina  
Representative District: #2  
Existing Zoning: R-3/H (Residential/Historic)  
Year Built: 1918  
Historic Status: Contributing  
Request: Applicant is requesting an exception to the administrative review guidelines.  
Application Filed: 3/15/2010  
45 Day Expiration: 4/29/2010

Mr. De La Cruz gave a PowerPoint presentation and explained the applicant was requesting an exception to the Administrative Review Guidelines to retain a concrete driveway path that exceeds 50% of the green space requirement set forth in the Administrative Review Guidelines. Staff recommends DENIAL of the retention of the existing concrete driveway and APPROVAL of a reduced driveway based on the Administrative Review Guidelines recommendation that the grass and sod may be removed from front yards, side yards on a corner and parkways provided that not more than 50% of the area is covered with gravel or other masonry. Due to the lack of Design Guidelines for the Manhattan Heights Historic District, Staff based the recommendations on the Magoffin Historic District Design guidelines which recommend that paved areas for driveways should be kept to a minimum.

Per the backup information provided to Commissioners, Mr. De La Cruz briefly discussed the Chronology of Events and presented the following options:

1. Staff is recommending approval of a modified driveway pad that would retain the driveway and pad; however, the driveway would have to meet the requirements set forth by Traffic Engineering. The actual approach would be retained and would meet the 50% open space requirement.
2. Per the PowerPoint presentation slide, "Field Measurements by Staff", Mr. De La Cruz explained this option would meet all requirements including the 50% open space, 20 feet between driveways and historic district requirements. The driveway would be retained and provide access for the applicant's wife via the three foot sidewalk. Additionally, portions of the sidewalk could be cut out or the applicant could provide landscape areas i.e., rock wall landscape area, planting beds, etc.

Vice-Chair Gardea reiterated Commissioners will be making a recommendation regarding the area from the property line back to the house. Commissioners will not be making a recommendation regarding the curb cut nor the parkway.

Mr. De La Cruz concurred and clarified, per the code, Commissioners can grant an exception to the Administrative Review Guidelines.

Per the code, Ms. Osborn read the following into the record, "Commissioners may rule on requested exceptions to the guidelines based upon the overall visual effects of the proposed exceptions."

At this time, Commissioner Gonzalez arrived.

Per the PowerPoint presentation slides, Commissioners commented on surrounding homes that exceed the 50% open space requirement.

Mr. De La Cruz responded Staff has forwarded properties in violation of the 50% open space requirement to Code Enforcement Staff.

Mr. Daniel Medina, applicant, showed photos of both his and neighboring properties and made comments.

Ms. Osborn reminded Commissioners to limit their discussion to the case before the Commission.

Mr. Armando Salcido, contractor, gave background information regarding the applicant's property and the property next door.

Vice-Chair Gardea asked if there was anyone in the audience who wished to speak either in favor of or opposition to the request. There were none.

Mr. De La Cruz had suggested Mr. Medina could place planters on the existing sidewalk or construct a raised planter of some type that would meet the 50% open space requirement.

Mr. Medina responded he was not opposed to the planters in the rectangular areas (as shown in the PowerPoint presentation) or removing a portion of the concrete.

Mr. De La Cruz clarified the misunderstanding between Staff and the contractor.

Commissioner Guzman felt Staff's recommendation met the aesthetics and visual effects and moved to accept Staff recommendations where the owner will address the landscaping requirements with some kind of green planters enough to cover the 50% front yard area.

**MOTION:**

Motion made by Commissioner Guzman, seconded by Commissioner Brock **TO ACCEPT STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS WHERE THE OWNER WILL ADDRESS THE LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENTS WITH SOME KIND OF GREEN PLANTERS ENOUGH TO COVER THE 50% FRONT YARD AREA.**

Vice-Chair Gardea clarified the applicant could put planters on top of the concrete to get him to the 50% of the two rectangular areas.

Prior to the vote, Commissioners discussed issues regarding vehicles parking up against houses, 50% hardscape/50% green (open) space and xeriscaped properties in historic areas.

**AYES:** Commissioners Suarez, Guzman and Brock

**NAY:** Commissioner Gonzalez

Motion passed. (3-1)

After the vote, Ms. Osborn wanted to ensure Mr. Medina understood the Commissioners had ruled on the 50% landscape requirement; however, Commissioners have no authority to rule on the issue regarding the distance between the two driveways.

**2. HPC10-00080**

Block 9, the W 11 Ft. of 11 and N 150 Ft of W 18.5 Ft. of 10 and N 150 Ft. of E 14 Ft of 11, Sunset Heights Addition, City of El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

Location: 624 W. Yandell  
Historic District: Sunset Heights  
Property Owner: Andres Ruvalcaba  
Representative: Andres Ruvalcaba  
Representative District: #8  
Existing Zoning: R-4/H (Residential/Historic)  
Year Built: 1904  
Historic Status: Contributing  
Request: Applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of vinyl siding at front and rear patio, stucco a non-contributing rear addition, construction of a deck, 3 - 8' x 8' pergolas and a 2.5' x 5' arbor at the rear of the home.

Application Filed: 3/26/2010  
45 Day Expiration: 5/10/2010

Mr. De La Cruz gave a PowerPoint presentation and explained the applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the placement of vinyl siding at the front and rear patio, stucco the rear addition to match the existing home, construction of a wood deck, three 8' x 8' pergolas and one 5' x 2.5' arbor at the rear of the property. Staff recommends approval of the proposed scope of work; while vinyl siding is not an historic material Staff does feel the proposed vinyl siding is in keeping with the adjacent homes with corbel detailing. Due to a lack of Design Guidelines for the Manhattan Heights Historic District and based on Magoffin Historic District Design Guidelines which recommend:

- Metal, vinyl, asbestos and other synthetic materials are inappropriate although some of these may be considered on an individual basis. Metal, vinyl, and other synthetic materials may be used when;
  - a) Proposed materials match existing material  
*(Vertical siding is not original to the front patio)*
  - b) Original detailing is not altered  
*(There is no original detailing on the balcony)*
  - c) Window and door trim is properly detailed  
*(Not applicable)*
  - d) Unique finishes are not covered or damaged  
*(Not applicable)*
- New additions should be planned so that they are constructed to the rear of the property or on non-character defining elevations.

Vice-Chair Gardea he had concerns regarding the use of vinyl siding and added approving vinyl siding on individual cases was setting the wrong example.

Mr. Andres Ruvalcaba, applicant, explained he is constantly sweeping away water that collects on the balcony which is why he would rather have the vinyl siding than wood. Samples of the proposed vinyl siding were presented to Commissioners.

Vice-Chair Gardea asked if the sample provided is exactly what will be installed, how deep is the soffit and what material would be used for the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor deck.

Mr. Ruvalcaba responded yes, the depth of the soffit is 1½ feet and deck would be made of cement.

Mr. De La Cruz explained the vinyl siding is capped at the corner and edges, the cap will conceal fitted or any edge portions.

Vice-Chair Gardea asked if Commissioners had additional questions and/or comments for Staff or the applicant.

**MOTION:**

Motion made by Commissioner Guzman, seconded by Commissioner Suarez **TO APPROVE AS PRESENTED.**

Prior to the vote, Vice-Chair Gardea stated there were other options beside vinyl siding; the preferred material being wood. He noted there were other houses in the neighborhood with nicely detailed and maintained porches.

Commissioner Suarez considered the applicant's request an improvement compared to the present.

Commissioner Guzman added the house has come a long way within the neighborhood.

**AYES:** Commissioners Suarez, Guzman and Brock

**ABSTAIN:** Commissioner Gonzalez

Motion passed. (3-1)

Vice-Chair Gardea read the following agenda item into the record:

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. April 19, 2010 deadline for HLC members to request for agenda items to be scheduled for the May 3, 2010 meeting. May 3, 2010 deadline for HLC members to request for agenda items to be scheduled for the May 17, 2010 meeting.

- A. Magoffin Villas at 915, 917, 1001 Magoffin Avenue and 1000, 1008 and 1010 Myrtle Avenue

No new information

- B. 1701 North Stanton Street

Ms. Osborn stated at the March 31, 2010 Building and Standards Commission meeting, the applicant was given 30 days to get engineer plans, 60 days to make repairs.

- C. 906 North Mesa Street

Staff will prepare a letter to the property owner whether or not he would like to designate the property historic and take advantage of the tax exemption.

Via the El Paso Public Library website, Commissioner Guzman mentioned he had found a 1920 photo of the property. He would forward the website address to Staff.

### **HLC Staff Reports**

#### **4. A. Design Guidelines regarding Manhattan Heights and Old San Francisco Historic Districts**

Mr. De La Cruz stated he will be attending the April 29<sup>th</sup> Manhattan Heights Neighborhood Association meeting at the Garden Center to present and discuss the proposed Manhattan Heights Design Guidelines. The proposed design guidelines have been posted to the Historic Preservation website, Staff has received positive input and concerns from the public. He would begin modifying the proposed guidelines in June and asked Commissioners if they would submit their redlined copies to him, if they haven't already done so.

Commissioner Guzman asked if the 50% softscape/hardscape and parkway would be addressed in the proposed design guidelines. Commissioner Guzman suggested Staff put them all together.

Mr. De La Cruz responded those issues are addressed in the Administrative Review Guidelines.

Vice-Chair Gardea asked once the guidelines reach a "Final Draft" what is the next step.

Mr. De La Cruz responded Design Guidelines are approved by City Council via resolution. The resolution will be presented to the Historic Landmark Commission, City Plan Commission and City Council for approval.

#### **B. Update on Administrative Review Cases since last HLC meeting for the properties listed on the attachment posted with this agenda. (See Attachment "A")**

Mr. De La Cruz explained since the last HLC meeting, approximately 15 applications were submitted for Administrative Review. Per the attachment, applications were broken down by Historic District. The majority of the requests are re-roofing and minor maintenance.

Staff and Commissioners briefly discussed HPC10-00079, 2831 Louisville, regarding the removal of canopies that collapse over the front door and window. Via photos the applicant had brought with him, Staff felt this was a safety issue and approved the request. The applicant indicated he would hire a contractor to rebuild the canopies.

### **Development Services Department Report**

#### **5. None**

### **Visionaries in Preservation Report**

#### **6. VIP Manager Presentation**

No new information.

#### **7. Discussion and action regarding VIP issues**

No new information.

### **Other Business**

#### **8. A. Discussion and action regarding Alamo Elementary School located at 500 South Hills Street**

Mr. De La Cruz the necessary paperwork has been prepared and will be presented at the May 6<sup>th</sup> City Plan Commission meeting.

Ms. Osborn explained the code is unclear whether or not Staff is required, internally, to go to the City Plan Commission. However, Staff has established the practice of going to City Plan

Commission as policy and due to the contentiousness of the case; it would not be wise to vary from the established policy.

Commissioner Suarez asked if a representative from the Historic Landmark Commission should be present at the City Plan Commission; additionally, how will Staff notify the members of the public.

Mr. De La Cruz explained the item before the City Plan Commission is not a public hearing; Staff will not be sending notification letters. If City Council allows Staff to proceed with the city initiated zoning, Staff will be mailing 300 foot notification letters for Historic Landmark Commission, City Plan Commission and City Council meetings.

Commissioner Suarez suggested Mr. De La Cruz send an invitation to Commissioners reminding them of the May 6<sup>th</sup> CPC meeting.

Commissioner Gonzalez stated more importantly members of the public who have come before this Commission need to be notified.

Mr. De La Cruz responded Staff has their information and will notify them of meetings.

**B. Discussion and action regarding "Pictures for Preservation" photography project.**

No new information from Staff.

Ms. Osborn noted Commissioners Leal and Gonzalez and Chair Riccillo are the sub-committee members.

**C. Approval of Historic Landmark Commission Meeting Minutes  
April 5, 2010**

**MOTION:**

Motion made by Commissioner Suarez, seconded by Commissioner Guzman and unanimously carried **TO POSTPONE THE APRIL 5, 2010 MINUTES.**

No further discussion from the Commissioners. The vote was taken.

**AYES:** Commissioners Suarez, Guzman and Brock

**NAYS:** N/A

Motion passed. (4-0)

No other discussion.

**MOTION:**

Motion made by Commissioner Guzman, seconded by Commissioner Suarez and unanimously carried **TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 5:34 P.M.**

**AYES:** Commissioners Suarez, Guzman, Brock and Gonzalez

**NAYS:** N/A

Motion passed. (4-0)