



**EL PASO HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION MINUTES
DECEMBER 21, 2009
4:00 P.M.**

The El Paso Historic Landmark Commission held a public hearing in the City Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, City Hall Building, December 21, 2009, 4:00 p.m., with the following members present:

Commission Members Present:

Joseph Riccillo, Chair
Hugo Gardea, Commissioner (4:02)
Rick Suarez
Joel G. Guzman
Melissa C. Brandrup
Ricardo D. Gonzalez
Elizabeth Leal

Others Present:

Tony De La Cruz, Planner
Kristen Choi, Assistant City Attorney

Deleted: Dr. Troy Ainsworth, Historic Preservation Officer

Chair Riccillo called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

AGENDA

I. CALL TO THE PUBLIC – PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Ben Leal explained he is a native El Pasoan currently living in Dallas, Texas and donates regularly to the El Paso Preservation Alliance. Mr. Leal commented on the El Paso Times' recently published book entitled "Capture El Paso" and thought of a project. He suggested Commissioners solicit public photographers to volunteer their time to take photos of all historic properties, preserving the properties as they are currently, adding historic comments for each of those properties then organizing it in a book. This project will generate funds and awareness of what the Historic Landmark Commission is trying to accomplish; furthermore, future books would show improvements to the previously photographed properties, based on work the Commission has done. He referred to another prominent book entitled, "Help Portrait", where photographers donated their time and materials to take pictures of less fortunate individuals who would not have had the opportunity to have a family portrait taken.

Chair Riccillo asked if Commissioners had any questions for Mr. Leal.

Ms. Choi stated Commissioners could not ask questions of Mr. Leal; the proposed project was not posted on the agenda.

Commissioner Leal explained Mr. Leal, her son, works for MicroSoft and through the Corporation's matching fund program has contributed \$10,000 to Keystone Heritage Park over the past five years. Now that the endowment fund for Keystone has finished, his allotment will go to the El Paso Preservation Alliance. Commissioner Leal added her son has experience in self-publishing; he has done one himself, and would be a valuable asset. She thought this was a workable idea and requested Staff place an item on the next Historic Landmark Commission agenda.

Chair Riccillo asked Staff if there were any changes to the agenda.

There being no changes, the agenda stands as presented.

MOTION:

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

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

AYES: Commissioners Suarez, Guzman, Brandrup, Gonzalez, Gardea, and Leal

NAYS: N/A

Motion passed. (6-0)

II. REGULAR AGENDA – DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Certificate of Appropriateness

1. **HPC09-00197** Tract 5-A, Block 48, Ysleta Grant, City of El Paso,
El Paso County, Texas
Location: 9135 Alameda Avenue
Historic District: Ysleta
Property Owner: Robert Ayoub
Representative: Dimensions Architects
Representative District: 6
Existing Zoning: C-1/H (Commercial/Historic)
Year Built: N/A
Historic Status: N/A
Request: Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of new medical offices.
Application Filed: 12/07/2009
45 Day Expiration: 1/21/2010

Mr. De La Cruz gave a PowerPoint presentation and explained Dr. Ainsworth, Planning Division Zoning Staff and himself met to discuss signage for this project. From that meeting, Staff requested there be as little clutter on the building as possible. Additionally, due to the site configuration, it was difficult to place the requested parking at the rear of the property. Therefore, Staff requested a 36 inch stucco wall be placed at the front for signage, consisting of lettering recessed into the wall. Additionally, the wall will provide cover for the parking and the proposed xeriscape landscaping. Mr. De La Cruz explained signage can be approved administratively.

Chair Riccillo and Commissioners Suarez, Leal, Guzman, Gonzalez, and Brandrup asked questions of Mr. De La Cruz and/or commented.

Mr. Al Loya, Dimensions Architects, representing the applicant, explained the wall was originally designed to screen the parking; however, through discussions with Staff we came up with the idea to recess the 1.5" metal numbers and lettering into the wall.

Chair Riccillo asked if Commissioners had any further questions of Staff or the representative. There being none.

1ST MOTION:

Motion made by Commissioner Gardea, seconded by Commissioner Leal **TO APPROVE HPC09-00197 WITH THE STIPULATION THAT A FUTURE MONUMENT SIGN GO THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW FOR ARCHITECTURAL COMPATIBILITY WITH THE BUILDING.**

Prior to the vote, Commissioner Suarez stated the representative was not constructing a monument sign.

1ST MOTION CORRECTED:

Motion made by Commissioner Gardea, seconded by Commissioner Leal **AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE HPC09-00197 WITH THE STIPULATION THAT THE SIGN ON THE WALL GO THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW FOR ARCHITECTURAL COMPATIBILITY WITH THE BUILDING.**

There was no further discussion.

AYES: Commissioners Suarez, Guzman, Brandrup, Gonzalez, Gardea, and Leal

NAYS: N/A

Motion passed. (6-0)

2. 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. December 21, 2009 deadline for HLC members to request for agenda items to be scheduled for the January 6, 2010 meeting. January 6, 2010 deadline for HLC members to request for agenda items to be scheduled for the January 21, 2010 meeting.

Chair Riccillo read the following into the record: "Discussion on property announced at this meeting will take place during the next regularly scheduled meeting. December 21, 2009 deadline for HLC members to request for agenda items to be scheduled for the January 6, 2010 meeting. January 6, 2010 deadline for HLC members to request for agenda items to be scheduled for the January 21, 2010 meeting".

A. 2731 Portland Avenue

Mr. De La Cruz gave a PowerPoint presentation and noted very little has changed since the last time he presented this property before Commissioners. He had tried contacting Mr. Ray Rutledge, El Paso Preservation Alliance; to discuss the restoration progress; however, there was no response. There was no evidence of vandalism or graffiti; additionally, the debris in the backyard has been removed and the site has been cleared off. The property will be posted on the January 6th HLC agenda.

B. Alamo Elementary School

Mr. De La Cruz explained he and Dr. Ainsworth met with EPISD officials to discuss Alamo Elementary School; however, the response from EPISD official was not positive. Mr. De La Cruz noted the December 8, 2009 EPISD agenda item regarding the "*Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Reconstruction/Renovation of Alamo Elementary School*" had been withdrawn. He stated the item has not been posted on any agendas since then; however, he will

continue monitoring the website. Mr. De La Cruz defined reconstruction as, "building something back in kind that is missing" and explained Alamo Elementary currently exists; therefore, this is not a reconstruction of a missing building or element, it is a teardown of a century old school and a rebuild of a modern facility.

Chair Riccillo stated Historic Landmark Commissioners have gotten their (EPISD officials) attention now and are willing to listen to suggestions. He wondered if Mr. De La Cruz and/or Dr. Ainsworth would contact EPISD and take a site visit to see what condition the school is in. He has heard mixed reports regarding the actual condition of the school.

Commissioner Brandrup remembered Dr. Ainsworth stating he would be meeting with two individuals and asked if Mr. De La Cruz knew the outcome of that meeting or what the meeting was about.

Mr. De La Cruz responded no, Dr. Ainsworth met with Ms. Carmen Rodriguez, attorney, and former Judge Alicia Chacon to brief them regarding Alamo Elementary School; however, Dr. Ainsworth had not informed him what of the results of that meeting. Mr. De La Cruz explained Ms. Rodriguez has submitted a request to EPISD, via the Freedom of Information Act, for a copy of how the funding source for the Alamito Project was acquired and if that project tied in with the demolition of Alamo School. If so, was it required to go through any type of review through the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). As far as Mr. De La Cruz knew, Staff has not received any feedback whether or not Ms. Rodriguez has/has not received that information.

Commissioner Brandrup requested Alamo Elementary School be posted on the next HLC agenda.

C. Houston Elementary School

Mr. De La Cruz noted at that same meeting with EPISD officials, Dr. Ainsworth had mentioned other schools that are currently underutilized and are being selected for closure. Mr. De La Cruz explained Houston Elementary School did not appear to be under imminent threat of demolition. Dr. Lorenzo Garcia, EPISD Superintendent, explained if Houston was selected for closure the school would then be used as EPISD auxiliary offices.

D. Magoffin Villas at 915, 917 and 1001 Magoffin and 1000, 1008 and 1010 Myrtle

Mr. De La Cruz explained the project plans have been sitting in the Building Permits & Inspections Division – Ready to Issue bin for some time. He was unsure if Staff had issues or if the project was in the midst of the bidding process and selecting a contractor. Mr. De La Cruz concluded the project is basically ready to go to construction stage.

E. 200 N. Clark Street

A visit to the site revealed the building is now the Texas Parks & Wildlife field offices for El Paso. Mr. De La Cruz looked the building over to try and locate a historic dedication plaque; however, there was none. Mr. De La Cruz met with the director of the building, Mr. John Moses, who explained TxDOT (Texas Department of Transportation) is leasing the building to Texas Parks & Wildlife. The proposal is that Texas Parks & Wildlife would swap the building for land with TxDOT; however, although the building has not been historically designated, it would qualify for the National Register. The only other information he was able to gather was the building was built between 1937 and 1939 and more than likely designed by TxDOT staff architect. In closing,

Texas Parks & Wildlife and TxDOT would have to grant us their permission before Commissioners can begin the H-Overlay designation process.

Commissioner Leal stated Representative Joe Pickett was Chairman of the House Committee on Transportation; Commissioners may be able to obtain any needed information from him. She asked Mr. De La Cruz if this was a building worth protecting and what Commissioners needed to do to protect it.

Mr. De La Cruz responded yes, the building was worth protecting and explained the next step would be to contact TxDOT to request their permission to authorize the H-Overlay designation and gather information on the property. If TxDOT approves, the request may have to go through the same process as 2630 Richmond Avenue. For the Richmond property, Staff received authorization to prepare the necessary documents and, in conjunction with our registered civil engineer, verify the dimensions and seal the plans. He explained independent properties must adhere to the same requirements as a rezoning, to include a detailed site plan review and other documentations. He added TxDOT may not be willing or able to spend the minimum \$500.00 for the rezoning designation.

Commissioner Leal responded if it pleases everyone, we could do whatever is needed to get the preliminary information and talk to TxDOT. If TxDOT is unwilling we could talk to Representative Pickett to see if there are any sources, then come to the City and to see if they could do for us what they did on Richmond.

Chair Riccillo explained the first step is to collect the proper documentation stating the property is historic, then contact the property owner, TxDOT, to see if they're willing. If so, place an item on the HLC agenda designating the property H-Overlay for Commissioners approval.

Commissioner Gardea felt the property is historically significant; however, he wondered if Commissioners can designate State and/or Federal properties H-overlay. He questioned if the property were designated and the windows needed repair, would TxDOT apply for permits. Commissioner Gardea added State and Federal governments are not required to apply for permits.

1ST MOTION:

Motion made by Commissioner Gardea, seconded by Chair Riccillo **TO REQUEST STAFF RESEARCH THE POSSIBILITY OF DESIGNATING STATE OWNED PROPERTY.**

Prior to the vote, Ms. Choi requested the motion language be address specific.

1ST MOTION REVISED:

Motion made by Commissioner Gardea, seconded by Chair Riccillo and unanimously carried **TO REQUEST STAFF RESEARCH THE POSSIBILITY TO DESIGNATE 200 N. CLARK STREET.**

Chair Riccillo asked if there was any further discussion. No further discussion from the Commissioners. The vote was taken.

Commissioner Leal asked if the purpose of the motion is to determine whether there was any point in proceeding.

Commissioner Gardea responded yes.

There was no further discussion.

AYES: Commissioners Suarez, Guzman, Brandrup, Gonzalez, Gardea, and Leal
NAYS: N/A

Motion passed. (6-0)

HLC Staff Report

- 3. A. Request from the members of Voces del Barrio and Voces del Pueblo for the potential historic designation of the Segundo Barrio.

Mr. De La Cruz explained Voces del Barrio and Voces del Pueblo organizations requested he and Dr. Ainsworth attend a community meeting to provide information to community members regarding the potential designation of the Segundo Barrio Historic District. Due to La Posada there was very little local community participation; however, additional community meetings have been scheduled. Mr. De La Cruz noted to create a new historic district there must be 51% of property owners (political requirement) in favor of the request. The area in question comprises 364 acres, from Santa Fe Drive to Cotton Drive, from Cesar Chavez Highway to Paisano Drive.

Commissioner Leal commented on using volunteers publicizing the proposed historic district designation and going door to door.

Commissioner Guzman wondered if creating an historic district language was in Title 2 of the El Paso Municipal Code.

Mr. De La Cruz responded Staff has been researching this and discovered there are State and Federal procedures; however, no real City process has been established.

- B. Discussion and Training regarding Secretary of Interior Standards.

Per Dr. Ainsworth's request, the item was postponed to the January 6th HLC meeting.

Deleted: ed

- C. Discussion and action regarding EPISD Board of Trustee letters.

Deleted: be

Item was postponed to the January 7th HLC meeting.

Development Services Department Report

- 4. None

Visionaries in Preservation Report

- 5. A. VIP Manager Presentation

Mr. De La Cruz received the ordinance to amend the Comprehensive Plan from the City Attorney's Office approximately one week ago. Dr. Ainsworth and Mr. Victor Torres, Director, Development Services Department are reviewing the document. Upon completion of the review process, Staff will bring the ordinance to Commissioners for review, then to City Plan Commission and finally, City Council for approval.

- B. Discussion and action regarding VIP issues

See above.

Other Business

6. A. Approval of Historic Landmark Commission Meeting Minutes.
December 7, 2009

Chair Riccillo asked if Commissioners had any corrections/revisions. No corrections/revisions were noted.

MOTION:

Motion made by Commissioner Leal, seconded by Commissioner Guzman and unanimously carried **TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 7, 2009.**

AYES: Commissioners Suarez, Guzman, Brandrup, Gonzalez, Gardea and Leal

NAYS: N/A

Motion passed. (6-0)

- B. Discussion and action regarding Historic Landmark Commission issues

Chair Gardea asked Staff to post the photography project on the next HLC agenda under "Other Business".

Commissioner Gardea explained the Texas Historical Commission is creating a new State-wide preservation plan. He will email Dr. Ainsworth and Mr. De La Cruz the agenda language for placement on the next HLC agenda.

MOTION:

Motion made by Commissioner Leal, seconded by Commissioner Gardea and unanimously carried **TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 4:53 P.M.**

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

AYES: Commissioners Suarez, Guzman, Brandrup, Gonzalez, Gardea, and Leal

NAYS: N/A

Motion passed. (6-0)