



## EL PASO HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION MINUTES SECOND FLOOR CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

December 3, 2007  
4:00 P.M.

The El Paso Historic Landmark Commission held a public hearing in City Council Chambers, second floor of the City Hall Building on Monday, December 3, 2007, at 4:00 p.m. with the following members present:

### **Commission Members Present:**

John Karr  
Daphne Hamilton  
Nicholas Markovich  
Geoffrey Wright  
Russell Sackett  
Ray Minjares  
Hugo Gardea

### **Others Present:**

Christina Valles, Lead Planner  
Josette Flores, Assistant City Attorney  
Armida Martinez, Recording Secretary  
Troy Ainsworth, Historic Preservation Officer  
Trenda Rocha, Senior Office Assistant  
Bill Stern, Building Permits and Inspections

### **Agenda**

Chair Daphne Hamilton called the Historic Landmark Commission meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

### **I. CALL TO THE PUBLIC – PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chair Hamilton asked if there were any members of the public who would like to address the Historic Landmark Commission. There was no response.

Chair Hamilton asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Dr. Ainsworth, Historic Preservation Officer, asked to have agenda item number 5b deleted from the agenda as it was incomplete. The agenda was amended.

### **II. REGULAR AGENDA – DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

#### **Certificate of Appropriateness**

- |    |                          |   |
|----|--------------------------|---|
| 1. | <b>HP07021</b>           | Lot 5 and 6, Block 93, Government Hill Addition       |
|    | Location:                | 4409 Clifton Avenue                                   |
|    | Historic District:       | Austin Terrace  |
|    | Property Owner:          | Maria Socorro Ramirez                                 |
|    | Representative:          | Triple D Construction                                 |
|    | Existing Zoning:         | R-5/H (Housing/Historic)                              |
|    | Representative District: | #2  |
|    | Year Built:              | 1947  |
|    | Contributing Status:     | Non-contributing                                      |
|    | Request:                 | Modify existing enclosed porch to update the interior |
|    | Application Filed:       | 10/31/07  |
|    | 45-Day Expiration:       | 12/15/07  |

Dr. Ainsworth, Historic Preservation Officer, gave a presentation on the construction of the enclosed porch. The new enclosed porch will have electricity, plumbing, and more usable space instead of storage. All the trees and vegetation will remain. He mentioned that the existing enclosed porch has been demolished and advised owners not to proceed until the Certificate of Appropriateness is issued. The existing porch had been removed because it was unstable and in poor condition. Dr. Ainsworth recommended approval based on the drawings and the condition of the existing porch and based the recommendation on the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The Commission and Dr. Ainsworth discuss how the new porch will be aligned with the house, the type of bricks to be used and the height of the new brick work in relation to the eaves.

Commissioner Gardea wanted to know more about the hipped roof in the back. Mr. David Sigala, contractor, addressed Commissioner Gardea's question. He proposed to bind the two roofs together to prevent leakage.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Karr and seconded by Commissioner Sackett to approve Certification of Appropriateness. The motion passed.**

**AYES:** Commissioners Karr, Sackett, Markovich, Gardea, Minjares, Wright

**NAYS:** none

**ABSTAINED:** none

#### **Chair's Comments**

2. The deadline of November 30, 2007 for HLC members to request for agenda items to be scheduled for the December 17, 2007, meeting has passed.
3. Feedback from HLC members and general public on compliance in the designated historic districts and independent historic structures.
  - A. Commissioner Wright wanted to know the status of the shade trees on Elm Street. Dr. Ainsworth reiterated it is a matter of code compliance and that it is being followed up.
  - B. Commissioner Karr wanted to know the status of the wall at 1509 Upson. Assistant City Attorney Josette Flores said that this is not the appropriate time to discuss this matter as it is not on the agenda. She requested that it be put on the agenda for December 17 meeting.
  - C. Commissioner Gardea asked about the status of 19 Cumberland Circle. Dr. Ainsworth reported that the application for a Certificate of Demolition was not complete; therefore, the item was removed from the agenda. Once the appropriate paperwork has been completely submitted, the item will be placed on the agenda.

#### **Museums and Cultural Affairs Department Report**

4.
  - A. Dr. Ainsworth reported on the status of the Bank of America office space in the Cortez building. Bank of America entered a lease agreement with the owner for office space with the intention to make alterations on the first floor. Drastic and irreversible alterations had been proposed, including repainting the entire, which would have covered the chevrons; installing a drop-down ceiling in the Lady's Tea room, which would have covered the decoratively painted ceiling; and the demolition of a decorative door surround that was installed in 1926. The building contractor alerted Dr. Ainsworth to these proposed changes prior to their undertaking. Dr. Ainsworth coordinating with the architect and the building contractor to ensure the historic integrity of the former hotel's lobby interior.

Commissioner Karr asked if the interior is protected. Dr. Ainsworth assured him that it is one of the six protected and designated historic interiors in El Paso. Commissioner Wright wanted to know what was the response of Bank of America's obtrusive and destructive

measures on the previous plans. Dr. Ainsworth believes the architect when he said that there was lack of information on the interior and he is willing to make the changes. The building plans need to be re-approved.

- B. Dr. Ainsworth reported on the house at 801 E. Rio Grande, which is owned by First Baptist Church. The Church originally acquired the property with the intent to demolish it for a surface parking lot. The house is located within the Rio Grande Avenue Historic District, which provides some protection to the property but a historic overlay would strengthen that protection. Commissioner Sackett asked whether the entire district, rather than only one house, be reviewed for a historic overlay. Dr. Ainsworth stated that the condition of and circumstances surrounding the house at 801 E. Rio Grande merit urgent attention beyond that of the district but that the entire district will be evaluated.

Commissioner Wright addressed the sequence of events over the past five years when First Baptist Church acquired the property with the intent to demolish it.

Ms. Jeanette Lewis from the El Paso Preservation Alliance gave information on the background of the house and its architecture. Mr. Matt Carroll, who has lived on the block for over thirty years, reported that the Church has not done any maintenance on the property for ten years. He also mentioned that he had heard that the Church wanted to sell the property about four years ago, but has never seen any sign of them trying to sell it.

Dr. Ainsworth reported that the Church does want to sell the property, and he proposed to continue the talks with First Baptist Church officials. The Church does not want to pay for the overlay. They are not opposed to the historic overlay but to the cost of the rezoning application. Dr. Ainsworth wants to come up with other proposals and continue the conversation with them.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Wright and seconded by Commissioner Markovich to approve that Dr. Ainsworth continue negotiations with the officials at First Baptist Church and amend the motion that the HLC approach City Council with the suggestion for a historic overlay. The motion passed.**

**AYES:** Commissioners Karr, Sackett, Markovich, Gardea, Minjares, Wright

**NAYS:** none

**ABSTAINED:** none

- C. Dr. Ainsworth reported on the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Heritage Tourism Plan. Mr. Flynn will be returning to El Paso next week for two days to gather more information. The planners have received a set of aerial views along the Camino Real, and they will soon deliver a written plan. Dr. Ainsworth asking the Commissioners if they have any concerns to let him know and he would relay them to Mr. Flynn.

#### **Building Permits & Inspections Division Report**

- 5. Building Permits and Inspections had no report to present.

#### **Other Business**

- 6.
  - A. The meeting minutes for October 1, 2007, were approved as written.
  - B. The meeting minutes for November 5, 2007, were postponed due to Commissioner Gardea wanting the minutes to reflect that there were specifications on the windows and the soldier course on the proposed town houses at 1509 Upson.
- 7. Dr. Ainsworth reported on the programmatic agreement with Fort Bliss. The HLC may participate as an interested body and is invited to make comments on undertakings at Fort Bliss that pertain

to historic preservation, and cultural resource management. An opportunity as a public entity to make a comment on an undertaking is not a legally binding arrangement, an opportunity to foster a relationship as a Certified Local Government with Fort Bliss to jointly work to preserve the communities historic architecture, archeological sites, and cultural integrity. Commissioner Sackett agreed with Dr. Ainsworth. He also believes that Fort Bliss is an integral part of El Paso's history.

Chair Daphne Hamilton announced that Commissioner Russell Sackett has provided his thirty-day notice to resign from the HLC.

Meeting adjourned at 5:38 pm.

The Historic Landmark Commission may retire into Executive Session pursuant to Section 3.5 of the El Paso City Charter and the Texas Government Code, Sections 551.071-551.076 to discuss an item on this Agenda.

***Maria Aragon***  
***Administrative Assistant***