

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION
CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA, CALIFORNIA
CONVENED THIS 16TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2017
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 1424 MISSION STREET**

ROLL CALL

The Meeting convened at: 6:50 PM

Commissioners Present: Deborah Howell-Ardila (Chair), Mark Gallatin (Vice-Chair), and Rebecca Thompson

Commissioners Absent: Steven Friedman

Council Liaison Present: Robert S. Joe, Councilmember

Staff Liaison Present: John Mayer, Senior Planner

NON-AGENDA
PUBLIC COMMENT
PERIOD

1. Councilman Dr. Schneider said that there are discrepancies about demolition permits which are being issued inappropriately. He said that the Cultural Heritage Commission should review all demolition permits.
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Administration of Oath of Office to newly appointed Commissioner

Chief Deputy City Clerk, Anthony Mejia administered the Oath of Office to newly appointed Commissioner, Rebecca Thompson.

CONTINUED
APPLICATIONS

2. None.
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NEW ITEMS

3. **709 Hermosa Street**
Applicant: Patrick Szurpicki, Architect
Project No.: COA-1982
Historic Status Code: 5S1

Project Description:

A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a 585 sq. ft. single story addition to an existing 1,565 sq. ft. single story Dutch Revival Farmhouse on a 15,542 sq. ft. lot. The single story addition will consist of a new master bedroom, a new master bathroom, and interior remodeling. The exterior materials for the addition will match the existing and will consist of; wood windows, wood shingle siding, and composition asphalt shingles or a standing seam metal roof for the entire house.

Presentation:

Patrick Szurpicki presented his project and responded to questions about the site plan and distance between structures, window glazing, and why the preference for the standing seam metal roof. Mr. Szurpicki said the metal roof was chosen to add interest. He also noted that the new roof line could be lower than the original roof pitch.

Public Comment:

None

Commission Discussion/Decision:

Commissioners agreed that the metal roof would conflict with the City's Design Guidelines and the Secretary of the Interior Standards. The house has a distinctive roof line and the standing seam metal roof would complete with the home's unique features. The commission also agreed that the standing seam metal roof for the addition was not appropriate because it would distract and not be visually subordinate to the original character of the home. The addition should also be lowered to help further that subordination.

Motion/Second (Gallatin/Howell-Ardila) to **APPROVE** the project with the following **CONDITIONS**: Prior to submitting plans to the Building Division for plan check, the applicant shall 1) lower the roof line of the addition six inches or more, subject to Chairperson Review; 2) match the profiles of the new windows to the existing windows; 3) use composition roof shingles for the entire house.

The motion carried 3-0, Friedman Absent.

Upon consideration of the criteria identified in Section 2.64(b)(2) of the South Pasadena Municipal Code, Section 36.410.040 (required findings to approve the design review application, consideration of the application, and all written and oral testimony submitted, including the evaluation of the property by a qualified architectural historian and categorization of the property as set forth in the City's Cultural Heritage Inventory, the Cultural Heritage Commission found and determined that 709 Hermosa Street as it exists, and as it is proposed to be altered, would reasonably meet national, state or local criteria for designation as a landmark or part of an historic district, and is exempt from CEQA under Class 31.

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4. **1740 Virginia Place**
Applicant: Tom Nott, Architect
Project No.: COA-1985
Historic Status Code: 5D3

Project Description:

A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the removal of the existing stucco siding and replacing it with clapboard siding on a Craftsman house. Some of the original clapboard was discovered underneath the stucco. The attic vents will be repaired and restored to match the existing. The windows will be replaced with wood windows.

Presentation:

Gary McKee (representing Tom Nott) presented his project and responded to questions about the proposed windows and the divided lites.

Public Comment:

None

Commission Discussion/Decision:

Commissioners were concerned about the proposed “simulated” divided lites. The Commission has consistently not allowed them. Additional information about the original windows would be helpful.

Motion/Second (Thompson/Gallatin) to **APPROVE** the project with the following **CONDITION:** Prior to submitting plans to the Building Division for plan check, the applicant shall provide photos of the original wood-framed windows to the Chairperson and obtain Chair Review approval for the proposed windows. If any of the original wood-framed windows will be removed, the applicant shall photo document the level of deterioration and explain why it will need to be removed.

The motion carried 3-0, Friedman absent.

Upon consideration of the criteria identified in Section 2.64(b)(2) of the South Pasadena Municipal Code, Section 36.410.040 (required findings to approve the design review application, consideration of the application, and all written and oral testimony submitted, including the evaluation of the property by a qualified architectural historian and categorization of the property as set forth in the City’s Cultural Heritage Inventory, the Cultural Heritage Commission found and determined that 1740 Virginia Place as it exists, and as it is proposed to be altered, would reasonably meet national, state or local criteria for designation as a landmark or part of an historic district, and is exempt from CEQA under Class 31.

NEW BUSINESS

5. **1746 and 1750 Hanscom Drive**

Description:

This is a review of a Historic Resource Assessment and public testimony regarding a proposal to demolish a 316 square foot, Spanish Colonial style house constructed in 1930 at 1746 Hanscom Drive and a proposal to demolish a 760 square foot, Craftsman style house constructed circa 1934.

Irene Acosta (Project Applicant) introduced her client’s consultant from Historic Resources Group who prepared the assessment report.

Presentation by Applicant:

John LoCascio (Principal at Historic Resources Group) prepared the Historic Assessments for 1746 and 1750 Hanscom Drive and reviewed the appeal documents that including several claims about their historic significance. Mr. LoCascio noted that neither property was identified in previous surveys because they don’t qualify under any criterion for designation as historic resources.

He presented a PowerPoint slide show and made the following remarks: neither house existed before 1930 based on Sanborn Maps; the National Park Service provides guidance on identifying historic resources and associations with persons who had a significant contribution to the city, state, or nation; Ann Marie Buhler lived at 1946 Hanscom Drive from 1965

to 2015 and founded Time Labs – an aroma therapy company in 1973; there is no documentation that Time Labs or aroma therapy is a business that had an impact on the history or culture of the city, state, or nation; there is no record that the Buhlers or any occupants had any participation in city government, social events, city functions, or charitable organizations; the Buhlers acquired 1750 Hanscom around 1984, after the founding of that company and no record Buhlers lived there; there is no documentation that resident of 1750 Hanscom Drive (Carmen C. Newman) was associated with a spiritual movement called the “I AM” movement and that she was the wife of its founder under an assumed name; the National Park Service provides guidance for identifying historic resources that exemplifies a particular architectural style and best remaining example of an architectural type; the wood shingles, siding, and gabled roof of 1950 Hanscom Drive are not enough to make it an exemplary example of a Craftsman architecture and these features are common to many other architectural types; 1946 Hanscom Drive was originally a Spanish Colonial cottage (not Swiss Chalet) and the Buhlers built additions reflecting the needs and tastes of the owners without a particular architectural style; there is no documentation that links architect Julia Morgan to either house and used photos to compare Morgan’s work to the look of 1746 and 1750 Hanscom Drive; there is no documentation that 1750 Hanscom was a Sears Kit house, or used as a schoolhouse; the knotted pine paneling inside the homes Interiors are the same and likely installed by the Buhlers; the front and back porch of 1750 Hanscom Drive were enclosed (muntins were applied to the front windows).

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Gallatin disclosed that he visited the sites and inspected the exterior and interiors of both 1746 and 1750 Hanscom on February 8, 2017. Mr. LoCascio responded to Commissioner Gallatin’s questions about the sources HRG consulted regarding the research of LA County Assessors records. He also explained the relationship between the National Park Service guidance and the local criteria and how they work together. Mr. LoCascio said he obtained information from the Time Laboratories company in Alhambra as part of the research on Ann Marie Buhler. Mr. LoCascio responded to questions about the report regarding 1750 Hanscom Drive and the residential vernacular subtheme in the Citywide Historic Context Statement and questions about reversing inappropriate alterations.

Commissioner Howell-Ardila noted that HRG’s report did not contain any information about Aromatherapy or Annemarie Buhler’s life. She noted that people in the preservation community found books at the Los Angeles Public Library and books on the history of aroma therapy. Mr. LoCascio responded to her questions about the research. Commissioner Howell-Ardila clarified the LA Conservancy’s comments about 1746 Hanscom Drive and agrees that the house is not Swiss Chalet architecture. She also expressed concerns that the report refers to Annemarie Buhler as an aromatherapy pioneer, yet there is nothing on record to support that significance. Commissioner Howell-Ardila also noted that there could be significance related to a female entrepreneur of the 1960’s, or a female pioneer in the aromatherapy field. There’s more information out there

that is not in the report. Commissioner Howell-Ardila also noted that the City is tied to the CEQA Guidelines and referred to the definition of substantial evidence.

Commissioner Howell-Ardila read a letter from Larry McGrail of the South Pasadena Preservation Foundation. Mr. McGrail said the homes represent Great Depression growth in the city. Although they are simple vernacular buildings, Mr. McGrail writes there is no analysis as to whether they are the best remaining structures in the old Monterey Hills neighborhood. Early 20th Century Development in this neighborhood was limited, especially during the 1930s and so much of the area was lost to demolition.

Commissioner Thompson spoke about her research of aromatherapy on-line, that it is considered a pseudo science, it has been used since the 11th century, and explained how it would be difficult to document when it was invented.

Commissioner Howell-Ardila said the message wasn't clear to HRG. The CHC does not need a refutation of Janet Fergusson's points, but more about the potential association of Annemarie Buhler and the property. She said the CHC needs evidence to understand the association.

Presentation by Appellant

Janet Ferguson introduced herself as the appellant.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Howell-Ardila said that Janet Ferguson contacted her about a possible connection to Julia Morgan. The LA Conservancy called her and said one of their associates found a potential interesting association and that it was worth looking into. She spoke about the article in the South Pasadena Review by Janet Fergusson and the South Pasadena Preservation Foundation which was an editorial noting that there may be an association.

Commissioner Howell-Ardila said the homes should not be demolished without knowing what we have. She called for a more thorough historic resources report containing more data, setting up the story, and getting into the evaluation, and not a refutation of the appellants testimony. She agrees that the building has been altered and it is debatable as to whether it retains integrity; however, a different qualified architectural historian should focus on the potential significance of Annemarie Buhler who lived there for 50 years and the aromatherapy to see if there is anything there. Commissioner Howell-Ardila said that there is additional information out there that is not on the record yet. And, that the presentation of the new information should be objective and no argumentation.

Commissioner Gallatin said that out of fairness to the applicant and property owner, the CHC needs to be precise in the direction provided so that they know what information to submit for review. Commissioners Gallatin and Howell-Ardila discussed the applicant's need for another consultant for this precise scope of work.

Mr. Mayer clarified the Commission's role in the process noting that the applicant has a pending approval with the Planning Commission and the public hearing on this matter will re-open on February 27, 2017 for a decision on Janet Ferguson's appeal.

Recommendation

The CHC recommended that the applicant hire a third party architectural historian to do the additional research on Annemarie Buhler, her company Time Labs, and aromatherapy to determine if there is an association with the property at 1746 Hanscom Drive.

6. Item 6 was combined with item 5.
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7. Procedures for Review: Demolition of Un-Listed Structures Over 50 Years Old

Description:

The Commission will discuss the options for an ordinance that would require review for any proposal that involves demolition of a structure that is over 50 years old and not listed on the Inventory of Historic Resources.

Discussion:

Mr. Mayer introduced this item and provided background regarding demolition of structures that are not on the Inventory. He distributed an outline that Commissioner Howell-Ardila provided which is a Historic Resources Evaluation Report to ensure that the City has a thorough report about a property before a decision is made to demolish. Mr. Mayer solicited comments from the Commission as to whether the City should require such a report prior to demolition or impose a review period.

Commissioner Howell-Ardila cited San Gabriel's preservation ordinance which requires an evaluation update for properties that are of age and have not been surveyed in the past five years. For example a demolition permit may be issued if a property was evaluated through a due diligence historic resources evaluation in the past five years and it was found to be ineligible. If a property is eligible, a time period could be established in which alternatives to demolition could be explored.

Councilman Joe suggested that the staff research other cities to identify their policies regarding demolition; this would help the City Council make an informed decision on this matter.

**8. 1036 Adelaine Ave (Conceptual Review)
Prospective Applicant: Jim Fenske**

Presentation:

Jim Fenske (project architect) solicited comments from the Commission regarding a project involving the rehabilitation of the existing historic

house and the rear ground floor addition of 219 square feet with an additional 260 square feet added to the rear of the existing second floor.

Discussion:

The Commission recommended that the architect lower the roofline of the second floor addition to reduce an adverse impact, carefully review the drawings for drafting errors to ensure the floor plans match the elevations, and caution not to add conjectural embellishments that were not original to the house as this would not be consistent with the National Secretary of the Interior Standards.

COMMUNICATIONS

9. **Comments from Council Liaison:**

Councilman Bob Joe said that this is his first appointment as liaison to the Commission. He spoke about recent City Council actions including a letter of support for AB287 involving the study of alternatives to the 710 freeway tunnel. There was an urgency ordinance dealing with property maintenance and nuisances; it imposes a penalty to absentee property owners. Mr. Joe said that he will need a second commissioner from the CHC to be on the Rialto Theater Ad-Hoc committee.

10. **Comments from Commission**

Commissioner Howell-Ardila complimented staff on the new design and layout of the information sheet that is attached with each project. She requested that the code 5D3 be revised by striking any language that says it is a historic district that is unlikely to be designated and is of local interest which is not the case. The code 6L is of interest to local planning which is different in terms of CEQA.

11. **Comments from Staff**

Mr. Mayer spoke about the General Plan and Mission Street Specific Plan updates. He requested that Commissioners fill out the survey which is interested in residents' opinions and feedback about the community. Mr. Mayer also announced the community forum regarding the updated historic resources survey which will be held on Monday March 6, 2017 at the Library Community Room.

MINUTES

12. **Minutes of the regular meeting of January 19, 2017**

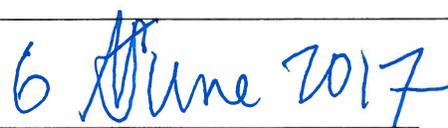
Motion/Second (Gallatin/Howell-Ardila) to **APPROVE** the minutes.

ADJOURNMENT

13. **Meeting Adjourned at 9:35 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled for March 16, 2017.**



Deborah Howell-Ardila, Chair



Date