

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
CITY OF PEORIA, ARIZONA
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBER
MARCH 25, 2009**

A **Regular Meeting** of the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Peoria, Arizona, convened at 8401 W. Monroe St., Peoria, AZ in open and public session at 6:02 p.m.

Members Present: Vice Chairman Priscilla Cook, Commissioners Shelby Duplessis, Harold McKisson, Gary Nelson and Karen Garbe.

Members Absent: Chair Steve Poe and Commissioner Mark Hackbarth,

Others Present: Ellen Van Riper, Assistant City Attorney, Glen Van Nimwegen, Community Development Director, Chris Jacques, Planning Manager, Rob Gubser, Senior Planner, Melissa Sigmund, Planning Technician, and Cathy Griffin, Executive Assistant.

Opening Statement: read by Chris Jacques.

Final call for speaker request forms.

Audience: 4

Note: The order in which items appear in the minutes is not necessarily the order in which they were discussed in the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

All items listed with a “**C**” are considered to be routine by the Historic Preservation Commission, and were enacted by one motion

1C DISPOSITION OF ABSENCE: Discussion and possible action to approve the absences of Commissioner Gary Nelson and Karen Garbe from the January 21, 2009 meeting

2C MINUTES: Discussion and possible action to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held January 21, 2009.

Commission Action: Commissioner Duplessis moved to approve the Consent Agenda items. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nelson and upon vote, carried unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

NEW BUSINESS, PUBLIC HEARINGS and/or ACTION:

3R CENTRAL PEORIA REVITALIZATION PLAN UPDATE:

Rob Gubser, Senior Planner, presented an overview and update of the status of the Central Peoria Revitalization Plan project and Historic Preservation elements embedded in the Plan.

Mr. Gubser stated the project objectives for the Central Peoria Revitalization Plan are to:

1. Establish a strategy for revitalizing the historic old town as well as the surrounding areas
2. Capture the community vision through public workshops and public advisory committee meetings that have been identified.
3. Establish and enhance the identity of the central Peoria area.
4. Provide a policy framework to realize the vision that has been captured through community outreach.

Mr. Gubser explained that there are 10 primary elements that are contained within this plan. He stated that he will discuss the circulation, the land use and the historic preservation plans.

Mr. Gubser stated that at the first workshop, the majority of those in attendance wanted to change the project name from "Central Peoria Revitalization Plan" to the "Old Town Peoria Revitalization Plan".

Mr. Gubser provided an overview of the circulation plan and based on the circulation plan, the land use plan has been created. Discussion ensued regarding Grand Avenue and the memorial location. The memorial will remain in its current location.

Mark Brodeur, PMC Downtown and Revitalization Consultant, stated that for a revitalization plan to be complete, it must have a historic preservation element. Any great downtown maintains and embraces its past as part of its future. The historic element presentation outlines the following goals: protect Peoria's historic resources, enhance the character of Old Town, identify five catalytic projects and community outreach and education.

Mr. Brodeur stated that a series of key action items have been developed:

1. Update the historic resources survey to provide recommendations for local, state and national listing.
2. Update applicable City ordinances to identify the local register and define historic resources to include properties eligible for listing.

3. Clearly outline the processes for design review, permitting, demolition and relocation.
4. Create an Urban Conservation District for Old Town. There are not enough contributing buildings to create a Historic District.
5. Identify funding, prepare a master plan and implementation plan for preservation of the five catalytic projects.

Further discussion ensued regarding properties and resources that have been identified through two previous surveys and the recommendation to re-survey the area.

The five catalytic projects that have been identified are: the high school, the City jail, the Hood building, the fire station, and the Edwards Hotel. These are the buildings that would probably be most eligible for National or State register designation.

Other suggested key action items would be to:

- Investigate the City joining the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Program. Being a member of this organization provides the ability to apply for various grants that are very attractive and can enable resources for those catalytic projects that other types of grants can not.
- Identify funding for preservation of City owned historic resources.
- Provide location incentives to incur preservation of privately owned historic resources, such as grants, loans, relaxation of zoning regulations, historic conservation easements, priority building permit processing, reduced development application fees. The goal is to make owning and maintaining a historic resource as easy as possible to the private property owner.
- Partner with the Arizona Historical Society in developing a brochure, events and educational materials providing connections with Peoria's history that will target youth.
- Establish an information kiosk in Old Town for the public to view the City's historic resources. This could be the starting point for a self-guided tour. It could have picta-graphs of the buildings in the area and the history of those buildings. It may be the architecture, but many times it's the culture of the community.
- Establish a self-guided historic program in Old Town to inform residents and visitors of Peoria's landmarks and locations of historic significance. Use plaques or pita-graphs of buildings that are gone. Many communities use this for buildings that have been lost to fire or storms.

- Develop a historic monument signage program which is also directional; identify buildings and historic sites. Have “gateways” to let people know when they actually enter downtown and when they leave it by using archways and pillars in the streetscape. Use artistic element as part of the streetscape.
- Educating the community on the history that is prevalent here.

Rob Gubser informed the committee of the following upcoming meetings:

- The Planning and Zoning Commission briefing on April 16, 2009, at 6:30 p.m., in the Council Chamber.
- City Council Study Session on April 21, 2009, 4:00 p.m. in the Pine Room.
- Open House to display the project, question and answer session, May 14, 2009, 6:00 p.m., in the Development and Community Services Building, Point of View room.

Mark Brodeur said that he would highly recommend creating a video of Ms. Cook giving a tour of Old Town. This type of “institution knowledge” is very valuable and perhaps, no one else has.

Vice Chair Cook stated that she would also like to see that at least one tamarack tree is saved.

Commissioner McKisson questioned the action and funding available for maintaining privately owned historic sites. Mr. Brodeur discussed that funding could possibly be obtained through grants. There are tax advantages to having a designated historic site and it raises the value of the property by approximately 10 to 15 per cent if it is on the National Register.

The downside to accepting a grant for a private property owner is once they accept federal or state funding, what they can do to that property becomes restricted. That is one of the reasons why many historic resources are lost.

The advantages of the program for private owners has to be spelled out. It is important to do the best you can with what you have.

Commissioner McKisson asked staff if a private individual wants to place a historical marker in front of their building, what signage ordinances would apply? Mr. Gubser stated that through the project, there will be an opportunity to identify areas of the zoning ordinance that may need to be revised.

Mr. Van Nimwegen, Community Development Director, said that one of the agenda items is to discuss the opportunity to designate an official seal for properties on the Local, State or Federal Historic Register. If someone wants to

create their own plaque, there are things that are exempt from the sign code. We would like to have an official designation for properties that are on a register.

Further discussion ensued regarding private citizens placing plaques on their property that have not been placed on an official register. Mr. Van Nimwegen stated that it would be preferred that only properties on an official register place historic reference signage on the property, whether that be a Local, State or Federal register.

Mr. Brodeur explained that nothing prevents a private property owner from nominating their own property to the State or National Register. Once it is placed on National Register it automatically goes on the State Register. The State and Local Registers will then automatically accept. If a property is placed on either a Local, State or National Register, many cities will then make plaques available to those properties at no cost. The plaque would tell the history of the building and that plaque would be exempt from any signage regulations.

Commissioner McKisson asked who would be responsible to place a plaque on a property where the historic building no longer existed. Mr. Brodeur stated that a vacant site would be the responsibility of the City, through the Historic Preservation Commission, to implement a program district wide, to maintain consistency.

Commissioner McKisson asked if someone applied for a National Registry, would it go to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)? And, if SHPO would send the application back to the City, because we are a Certified Local Government? Mr. Brodeur stated that if it is individually nominated, yes it will go to the SHPO's office and they would send a copy to the National Register. SHPO will also send it to the Local Certified Government to make sure they are included in the process.

Mr. Van Nimwegen stated that designation of Madison Street, perhaps a special district could be created. The special signage would be in the form of street signage or traffic signage to designate it as an overall special place.

Vice Chair Cook stated that she has explained to private property owners that it is an advantage to have their property on a historic register because they can get a grant to do improvements on the outside. Mr. Brodeur explained that a lot of people that own historic properties don't have a lot of money.

Mr. Brodeur also explained that, while National historic designation increases property value, the property owner should be made aware that if they accept any State or Federal grant monies, and, if they ever want to tear down the building or make any modifications that does not follow the Secretary of Interiors design guidelines, they would have a very difficult time.

Commissioner Nelson asked why Peoria High School is considered one of the catalytic projects. Mr. Brodeur explained that it is publicly owned and even though it is outside of the walking part of the district, it is a significant resource.

4R WOMAN'S CLUB HISTORIC LANDMARK PLAQUE DESIGN:

Presentation by Melissa Sigmund, Planning Technician, of the potential language for the Woman's Club Historic Landmark plaque, as presented in the packet.

Commission Action: Commissioner Nelson made a motion to approve the language for the Woman's Club plaque. Commissioner Garbe seconded the motion and upon vote, carried unanimously.

5R PEORIA LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK MARKER DESIGN:

Presentation by Melissa Sigmund, Planning Technician, of potential draft design for an official unified City of Peoria Local Historic Landmark Marker.

Commissioner McKisson commented that, anticipating the properties that this marker would be on, there will be a need for an explanation of the history of the property. Therefore, rather than a circle, it should be a half circle so that a flat sign could fit underneath it.

Ms. Sigmund explained a round or oval design for the landmark marker seemed to be fairly common, allowing it to be placed independent of the informational marker. Ms. Sigmund stated that perhaps the Commission would like to see more options and bring those back for the Commission's review.

The Commissioners agreed that they would like to review additional designs. No vote was taken.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

Kathy Montoya-Moore stated the High School is in the process of being nominated for the National Registry. Ms. Montoya-Moore also stated that in her lifetime she has seen the following landmarks lost from downtown Peoria: the Wagner home, the gas station, the bank, the train depot and the Woman's Club (from its original location).

REPORT FROM STAFF:

Ms. Sigmund discussed future Historic Preservation Education & Awareness Opportunities. She stated that she would appreciate input from the Commissioners. She also mentioned the Arizona State Conference for Historic Preservation scheduled in June 18, 2009 in Phoenix.

Mr. Van Nimwegen stated that he will verify if the City has funds for the Commissioners to attend. Commissioner Deplessis requested more information on the conference location and dates.

REPORT FROM THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION:

Commissioner McKisson stated that in 1997 a clipping from a newspaper regarding new road construction in Peoria had a picture of the sidewalks that had been dated when they were installed. Recently, at the Peoria Historical Society, new sidewalks have been installed, and at the Woman's Club. Commissioner McKisson is not aware of any of these sidewalks being stamped with dates. He stated that this is something that should be incorporated into the redevelopment plan. He also stated that stamping the date into sidewalks in Historic Districts is required in the City of Phoenix.

Mr. Van Nimwegen said this is something that will be investigated.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Historic Preservation Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Steve Poe, Chairman

Date Signed