

Summary of the Community Visioning Phase for 1343 North Laurel Avenue

Introduction

The City of West Hollywood hosted a community workshop for the project on October 12, 2013, between 10:00 AM and 12:00 PM at the Plummer Park Community Center in West Hollywood. Participants were invited to walk the grounds of the property at 1343 North Laurel Avenue prior to the workshop and ask questions of the project team. Approximately 45 people attended the workshop.



An online activity was available on the project's website between October 12, 2013, and April 14, 2014. The purpose of the online activity was to provide an opportunity for community members who could not attend the workshop on October 12 to participate in the community visioning process. The online activity reflected the workshop activities. Approximately 23 people completed the online activity.



This document provides a brief summary of the community visioning workshop and online activity for 1343 North Laurel Avenue. A photo documentation of the workshop can be found on the project website at <http://1343nlaurelave.org/>.



Purpose

Purpose of the Workshop and Online Activity

The open house provided an opportunity for participants to:

- Provide input on issues and opportunities on the property
- Identify desired potential future uses
- Engage in the planning process for the future of 1343 North Laurel Avenue



Community Workshop

Presentations

The workshop kicked off at 10:00 AM at the community center, where Mayor Abbe Land welcomed participants, introduced the project team, and gave a brief project overview. Mayor pro tem John D'Amico

also welcomed participants and thanked them for their participation. The consultant team highlighted goals for the visioning workshop.

The consultant team guided participants through a virtual tour of 1343 North Laurel Avenue using current and historic photos. This was followed by a brief overview of the history of the property, preliminary historic significance research, and key findings of the opportunities and constraints assessment of 1343 North Laurel Avenue.



Live Polling Activity

The consultant team facilitated a live polling exercise to gain an understanding of participants' views on the 1343 North Laurel Avenue property and its future use. The participants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a number of key findings based on the preliminary opportunities and constraints research conducted to date. Key ideas identified during this activity include:

1. Top 3 Responses to Importance of Preserving Historic Context
 - 60% of the participants want to preserve all historic elements of the property, including the exterior and interior of the main building, the accessory structures, and the landscape
 - 18% of the participants want to preserve the exterior of the primary building
 - 10% of the participants did not want to preserve any of the features
2. Current Use of the Park
 - Nearly 90% of participants visit the park
3. Top 3 Reasons Participants Visit the Park
 - Social gathering
 - The property is a cultural resource
 - Personal or group exercise
 - "Other" which may include such activities as reading
4. Top 3 Considerations for Future Use of the Property
 - Community needs and vision
 - Accessibility for the community
 - Impacts on historic content
5. Top 3 Supported Potential Future Uses for the Property
 - Park/open space use

- Cultural use
- Community/social service use

6. Top 3 Unsupported Potential Future Uses for the Property

- Residential use
- Private use
- Parking



Vision Wall Activity

Participants brainstormed three vision words that represent how they view the future of 1343 North Laurel Avenue. Participants wrote down vision words on a sticky note and placed it on the vision wall. These were then sorted and grouped by the following common themes (the numbers in parentheses represent the number of sticky notes placed on the vision wall with a word relating to that particular theme):



- Historic Resources (26)
- Community Gathering/Events (24)
- Arts and Culture (19)
- Green/Nature (16)
- Park (15)
- Oasis/Place of Tranquility (15)
- Senior Housing/Artists live-work space (6)



Creative Brainstorm of Potential Future Uses

In small groups, participants were given a piece of colored construction paper that served as an abstract base map of the 1343 North Laurel Avenue property. A large table at the back of the room was filled with a number of materials for participants to select from and construct and/or convey their 3-D vision diagram of how the 1343 North Laurel Avenue property should be used. Emphasis was placed on thinking about future “uses” and “users” rather than specific property design attributes. Each person shared their future vision with their small group. The table facilitator led a discussion during which participants discussed the elements of each vision. The facilitator recorded key discussion topics, points of agreement, and points of disagreement on a worksheet. After the small group discussions, each table facilitator reported back to the larger group the key themes from their small table’s discussion.



Common elements of the diagrams that were generally supported include:



- Arts and cultural uses (e.g., gallery, weddings, arts and cultural center, concerts, performance, artist work space)
- Passive park uses (e.g., greenery, nature, oasis, reading)
- Community gathering places (e.g., community center, afternoon tea, community meetings)
- Historic resources (e.g., preserve house)



Less common elements of the diagrams that garnered less agreement by the larger group include:

- Active park uses (e.g., dog park, exercise, recreation)
- Senior housing (e.g., assisted living for seniors)



The consultant team briefly discussed next steps, encouraged participants to complete their comment cards before leaving, and invited participants to continue to stay involved online and at future meetings.

Children's Activity

Coloring books, construction paper, glue sticks, crayons, and markers were available for children to play with during the presentation portion of the meeting. Children were welcome to participate in all other visioning activities described above.

Online Activity

The community visioning online activity questions reflected the workshop live polling, vision wall, and creative brainstorm of potential uses exercises. Key ideas identified during this activity reflect the workshop results and include:

1. Top 3 Responses to Importance of Preserving Historic Context
 - 65% of the participants want to preserve all historic elements of the property, including the exterior and interior of the main building, the accessory structures, and the landscape
 - 22% of the participants want to preserve the exterior of the primary building
 - 13% of the participants want to preserve the landscape
2. Current Use of the Park
 - Nearly 96% of participants visit the park
3. Top 3 Reasons Participants Visit the Park

- The property is a cultural resource
- Social gathering
- Personal or group exercise
- Pet exercise
- Picnic
- “Other” which may include such activities as reading, taking photographs, and to experience the property

4. Top 3 Considerations for Future Use of the Property

- Community needs and vision
- Impacts on historic content
- Accessibility for the community

Vision for the Property

Online participants brainstormed three vision words that represent how they view the future of 1343 North Laurel Avenue. Responses were grouped by the following common themes (the numbers in parentheses represent the number of participants who shared a word relating to that particular theme):

- Oasis/Place of Tranquility (14)
- Historic Resources (8)
- Community Gathering/Events (7)
- Arts and Culture (7)
- Green/Nature (3)
- Park (7)

Creative Brainstorm of Potential Future Uses

Online participants were asked to share their future ideas for the property. Common elements of the responses that were generally supported include:

- Arts and cultural uses (e.g., gallery, weddings, arts and cultural center, concerts, performance, artist work space, authors and speakers, yoga classes)
- Community gathering places (e.g., community center, community meetings, reading rooms)
- Active park uses (e.g., dog park, community garden)
- Passive park uses (e.g., greenery, nature, oasis)