



## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

**Monday, September 27, 2004**

Plummer Park Community Center; Room 5 & 6  
7377 Santa Monica Blvd; West Hollywood; California

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1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Felchlin called the meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission to order at 7:12 P.M.
2. **ROLL CALL:**  
  
Commissioners Present: Credle, Felchlin, Hahn, Joyce, Shivers, Trotoux, Yeber  
  
Commissioners Absent: None  
  
Staff Present: John Keho - Senior Planner, Rachel Heiligman - Intern, Terry Blount – Associate Planner, John Chase – Urban Designer, Brendan Rome – Commission Secretary
3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**  
**ACTION:** Approve the Historic Preservation Commission Agenda of Thursday, September 27, 2004 as presented. **Motion by Commissioner Shivers, seconded by Vice-Chair Yerber and unanimously carried.**
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.** None
6. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**  
Hillary Selvin – Los Angeles, Executive Director of the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce encouraged the Commission to encourage the City Council to do another Historic Survey pointing out a survey has not been done since 1988.  
  
City of West Hollywood Council Member Jeffrey Prang – West Hollywood, agreed with Hillary Selvin's statements and endorses a Historic Survey.
7. **CONSENT CALENDAR.** None.

## 8. PUBLIC HEARINGS.

### A. 1416 HAVENHURST DRIVE; UNIT 5A MILLS ACT CONTRACT (MA0-004-003)

Planning Intern Rachel Heiligman and Senior Planner John Keho presented the staff report.

Vice-Chair Yeber asked for clarification if this site was an apartment building owned by one owner or a condominium complex with several owners. He also asked for clarification regarding the exterior work indicated as needed in the Staff Report.

Planning Intern Rachel Heiligman confirmed "a condominium".

Senior Planner John Keho stated the site's Homeowner's Association had applied 10 years ago. The work program was approved and a large number of home owners joined at that time. Over the years, other home owners have joined. This unit is one of those cases. The work program indicated is already established.

Commissioner Credle asked for confirmation that this lowers the Mills Act participants' property taxes and therefore helps the individual owners meet their joint financial responsibility to maintain the building.

Senior Planner John Keho confirmed and further reminded the commission that the Homeowners Association should be billing each unit's owner equally and non-participants to a Mills Act Program are paying higher property taxes but the same in building maintenance as those that are receiving a property tax "break" by participating in the Mills Act Program.

There were no speakers for this item.

**ACTION:** 1) Approve a Mills Act contract and 2) forward the contracts along with the Historic Preservation Commission's recommendation of approval to the West Hollywood City Council for consideration for the property at for 1416 HAVENHURST DRIVE; UNIT 5A. **Motion by Commissioner Credle, seconded by Commissioner Trotoux and unanimously carried.**

### B. 1236-1246 HARPER AVE CULTURAL RESOURCE DESIGNATION (CRD-004-001) Continued from August 28, 2004 meeting.

City of West Hollywood Associate Planner Terry Blount presented the staff report.

Senior Planner John Keho stated the site planning such as this particular site warrants additional investigation. He read aloud the Zoning Ordinance regarding Historic Preservation Commission nominations for Cultural Resource Designation, showed concern that this site may not fit into existing

groupings and provided direction on how to create a new grouping. He also reminded the Commission of prior denials of Bungalow Courtyard designation.

Lengthy Discussion was held regarding the possibility of creating a new Thematic Grouping and site plan based groupings.

Chair Felchlin stated he would expect this might delay any designation proceedings on this site and clearly there is some research that needs to be done and therefore some extended time frame is needed for this to be resolved.

Chair Felchlin opened Public Hearing Item 8B.

RICHARD JOHNSON, WEST HOLLYWOOD resident of the site for 8 years presented the applicant report and submitted copies of all petitions collected. He explained this site was built in 1923 and is the last remaining of its type in the City. He spoke of concern of the thematic grouping process. He spoke of concern of comparing this site to other sites built later. He stated this site is the "original idea" of similar sites built later, in a time referred to as "the Glamour Years".

MARK LEHMAN on behalf of Fred Shaffer and the principles of GTO Harper Development, (Owners of this site) pointed out the staff report statements "this property is of substandard design and execution... it lacks historic importance and the property fails to satisfy the criteria in the current code." He and those he represents believe the property is totally lacking in detail and architectural merit or integrity. Also, he stated it is lacking a coherent landscape design and is not associated by a notable architect or designer. Therefore, under existing current code, the property is unworthy of designation. He stated GTO appreciates the desire of the tenants of this property to retain their homes and well as the nostalgic connection of the local residents, however this site does not comply with guidelines stated in the current code. He referred to Section 19.58070B3. It states the commission has two alternatives. "The commission SHALL recommend designation or denial". He commented that in the 6 months since the application was filed there has been ample time to do what needs to be done. He stated concern of tying this property up in this decision indefinitely.

LINDA HART, BEVERLY HILLS was consulted on this property. She stated she is opposed to indiscriminant destruction of architecturally or historic buildings, but does not feel there is a comparison and this site should not be designated as a Cultural Resource.

ERIC NORMAN, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of designation. He stated he felt the poor landscaping and cracked tile was just poor maintenance on the owners part.

MARIE MANGINE, WEST HOLLYWOOD read a memo written by Dr. Diane Giardo, a Professor of the History and Theory of Architecture at University of Southern California which states support for the designation.

HARRY LANG, WEST HOLLYWOOD read a letter written by the State of California Office of Historic Preservation and the first part of a letter from James Tice, both in support of designation.

BASIL JOHNSON, ARCADIA continued the James Tice letter supporting designation.

JANELLE HENSLEY, WEST HOLLYWOOD resident of the site spoke in support of the designation and read a letter by James Tice.

SUZANNE DAVIS, STUDIO CITY spoke in support of the designation and spoke of the *Ramona Craze*, a book by Helen Hunt Jackson as well as a play named "The Ramona" and a movie starring Mary Pickford called "The Ramona" and further suggested this building was named after the collaboration of the book, play and movie.

TRAVIS WINN, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of the designation and about "The Ramona Legend".

HEAVENLY WILSON, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of the designation.

ANNE MARIE NESEN, WEST HOLLYWOOD read a letter from Brian Kern, Jr. Historic Building Consultant supporting the designation.

LINDA CAUTHEN, WEST HOLLYWOOD resident of the site spoke in support of the designation and of concern buildings being replaced with non-descriptive box like buildings.

ADRIAN AVILES, WEST HOLLYWOOD resident of the site quoted an article called "Courtyard in Revival" from August 2002 issue of Architectural Week written by Morris Newman. He also quoted a letter from James Tice in support of the designation.

DAVID GREGG, WEST HOLLYWOOD resident of the site spoke in support of designation and of concerns with the Staff Report lacking historic data.

JERRY SNEIDERMAN, LOS ANGELES spoke in support of waiting to make a decision until the State and Federal Government make a decision of designation.

JACK MERRILL, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke of concern of developer consultants and in support of the designation.

DAN KUNZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD resident of the site spoke of support of the designation.

**ACTION:** Recess for 10 minutes. **Motion by Commissioner Trotoux, seconded by Vice-Chair Yeber and unanimously carried.**

Chair Felchlin resumed the meeting and reminded the participants of the hearing that the commission is here to hear comments from everyone and to remain courteous.

ROY OLDENKAMP, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke of an "Endangered Building" walk in which the Ramona is of part. He also offered his landscaping services to restore the landscape to it's 1920's condition if the building stays.

JOHNNY NICOLORO, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of the designation and of personal emotional involvement and inspiration with the site.

BYRON LOHMAN, WEST HOLLYWOOD resident of Norma Triangle reminded the commission of a previous case of "The Desmond" and spoke in support of making a decision quickly.

ED GARREN, WEST HOLLYWOOD resident of Vista Street spoke of the designation and making a decision immediately.

ESTHER BAUM, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of designation.

ELAINE GEALER, SANTA MONICA had concerns regarding this item. She stated concerns of giving the site tenants of this site too much leverage in this decision just because they prefer not to move and possibly pay higher rents elsewhere. She pointed out the tenants do not own their units and tenants can not rightfully expect to have permanent homes, and the developer had no advance warning or reason to expect this designation prior to purchasing the property. She spoke of concern about fairness about changing the rules in the middle of the game and the possibility of discouraging developers from doing business within the city limits.

ROGER O'NEAL, SANTA MONICA a principal of GTO recited several segments of the Staff Report. He sympathizes with the speakers but would like a decision but not a decision in continuance just to create new ways of reviewing Cultural Designation.

FRED SHAFFER, SANTA MONICA a principal of GTO and owner of site spoke of GTO's good intentions and believed this site was an older run down property and were excited to create something new. He stated he felt the new structure was a tremendous asset to the City. Reminded the commission that GTO sent out a letter to the tenants stating GTO's intentions immediately after purchasing the property. He stated GTO is not required but is willing to provide relocation assistance. He stated 8 of 10 units are at market rent.

HILLARY SELVIN, LOS ANGELES Executive Director of the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce stated the Chamber opposes the application for designation due to the current regulations are not met to be designated as a Cultural Resource. She encourages the Commission to adhere to existing codes and deny the designation.

ED AVAKIAN, MARINA DEL REY encourages the commission to keep an open mind.

RICHARD DIAZ, LOS ANGELES spoke in favor of the proposed project and opposed to the designation.

LES STEINBERG, SANTA MONICA spoke in opposition to designation given the current codes in effect on this date.

MICHAEL DUBELKO, LOS ANGELES a West Hollywood property owner commended the City of West Hollywood with it's Cultural Resource Program. He further spoke of opposition to the designation. He spoke of concern that the residents have waited to seek designation until GTO purchased the property for redevelopment and questioned their intentions for seeking designation.

HALLI LORENTZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of designation.

The applicants spoke again explaining they had applied for designation prior to knowledge of the sale of the property and provided statistics as to why they felt this site complies with designation.

MARK LEHMAN of GTO spoke in contest to Mr. Tice's letters and stated this building does not fit or satisfy the existing criteria set forth to be designated as a Cultural Resource.

Chair Felchlin stated the Commission has only been aware of this application for one week.

**ACTION:** Close the public hearing. **Motion made by Commissioner Trotoux, seconded by Vice-Chair Yeber and unanimously carried.**

Vice-Chair Yeber asked staff for confirmation of the Applicant's claim of this site being a precedence for other courtyards in the area.

Urban Designer John Chase stated staff had no confirmation of that statement. He indicated it is fair to say it is one of the older courtyard but not necessarily the progenitor for all others around it.

Commissioner Trotoux reminded the commission of the definition of "integrity of design" doesn't mean the design is "good". It means the condition of the building is accurate to the way it looked during its historical period. The "Historic Feeling" appears to be strong when hearing the residents testimonies. She also stated this site is an excellent example of a typology

and a site doesn't have to be an extraordinary example of a "style" to be significant.

Commissioner Credle asked staff for guidance on choosing a decision further study legally and asked for typology definitions.

Senior Planner John Keho stated staff did discuss with the City Attorney what alternatives staff could present to the commission and presented those possible in the staff report.

Urban Designer John Chase explained staff's recommendations are based on precedence and gave examples and stated the commission can what ever decision the commission feels comfortable with.

Chair Felchlin stated the need for recognizing the values of the community and it isn't always clear. He asked for clarification on "initiating this building into another designation".

Urban Designer John Chase explained if the commission this building is primarily important because of it's presence in a category and that particular category hasn't had a thorough look at all the pieces together at one time, then maybe the importance of this building lies in it's likeness in representation of other buildings. He reminded the commission that if they deny this petition, this property can not be nominated again for 5 years.

Commissioner Shiver asked who would initiate a thematic grouping.

Senior Planner John Keho stated the City would. He stated the commission chooses to instruct staff to prepare a staff report to take to City Council to request funding for a consultant to do this thematic grouping study.

Urban Designer John Chase stated part of the reason to hire a consultant is for an objective decision.

Senior Planner John Keho stated if City Council denies the Historic Preservation Commission's request for funding, the commission would have to reevaluate direction.

Vice-Chair Yeber stated concern for this action being viewed as trying to circumvent the City Council wishes of last summer regarding the Bungalow Courtyard Grouping.

**ACTION:** 1) Continue this item to the next regular Commission meeting of Monday, October 25, 2004 so that a resolution may be prepared to initiate the proceedings for the creation of a thematic grouping of structures with similar building typology and site planning characteristics as the buildings located at 1236-46 Harper Avenue. **Motion by Commissioner Hahn, seconded by Commissioner Credle. AYES: CREDLE, FELCHLIN, HAHN, JOYCE, SHIVERS, TROTOUX; NOES: YEBER; Motion carried.**

Discussion took place on the need for an updated survey.

**9. NEW BUSINESS.**

- A. Meeting Schedule:** Add an additional meeting on Monday, October 4, 2004; Reschedule the Monday, December 27, 2004 to Monday, December 13, 2004.

**ACTION:** Accept the proposed reschedule. **Moved by Vice-Chair Yeber, seconded by Commissioner Shivers and carried unanimously.**

**10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- A. West Hollywood Anthology**

The Historic Preservation Commission continued discussion of the West Hollywood Anthology

**11. ITEMS FROM STAFF:**

- A. UPCOMING PROJECTS.**

Staff updated the Historic Preservation Commission on current projects that have recently been submitted to the Planning Division that may require action by the Commission at a later date.

**12. HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION COMMENTS:**


Commissioner Hahn reminded everyone about the upcoming City Book Fair.

- 13. ADJOURNMENT:** The Historic Preservation Commission adjourned at 10:40 PM to a scheduled Special Meeting Monday, October 4, 2004 followed by a regularly scheduled Historic Preservation Commission meeting on Monday, October 25, 2004. **ACTION:** Adjourn the meeting. **Moved by Commissioner Shivers, seconded by Vice-Chair Yeber and carried unanimously.**

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION ON THIS 25th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2004.

  
CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:

  
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Planning Staff Liaison