



**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES  
Meeting  
February 26, 2024**

THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD HAS ADOPTED SUMMARY AND ACTION MEETING MINUTES, WHICH PROVIDE A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE ACTIONS TAKEN AND POINTS OF DISCUSSION ONLY. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR INDIVIDUAL DISCUSSIONS REGARDING ANY ITEM SUMMARIZED IN THESE MINUTES MAY BE OBTAINED BY ACCESSING THE ARCHIVED RECORDINGS OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETINGS AT [www.weho.org/city-government/city-clerk](http://www.weho.org/city-government/city-clerk) AND SELECTING ACCESS CITY RECORDS.

Land Acknowledgment: “The West Hollywood Historic Planning Commission acknowledges that the land on which we gather and that is currently known as the City of West Hollywood is the occupied, unceded, seized territory of the Gabrieleño Tongva and Gabrieleño Kizh peoples.”

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Ostergren called the meeting of Historic Preservation Commission to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Doug Vu led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners Present: Davidson, Dubin, King, Sotsky, Zvi, Vice Chair Charlie, Chair Ostergren.

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Doug Vu, Senior Planner/Historic Preservation Commission Staff Liaison; Jennifer Davis, Senior Contract Planner; Brian League, Property Development Manager; and Gabriele Gonzales, Acting Commission Secretary.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Moved by Commissioner Sotsky, seconded by Vice-Chair Charlie and unanimously passes.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

**ACTION:** Approve the draft summary action minutes of Monday, November 27, 2023, as amended. **Moved by Commissioner Dubin, seconded by Vice Chair Charlie and unanimously passes.**

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT.**

KEVIN BURTON, WEST HOLLYWOOD, thanked the Commission and staff for the Plummer Park Annual Historic Preservation event in September 2023 and requested that images of Plummer Park's history be posted on a City webpage.

**7. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**A. CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023**

**8. EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR.** None

**9. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**A. 8433 SUNSET BOULEVARD (THE COMEDY STORE):**

Commissioners Davidson and Zvi announced their disclosures.

Doug Vu, Senior Planner, provided a verbal presentation and background information, as presented in the staff report dated February 26, 2024. He provided background information and stated the proposal is for a new two-sided digital billboard at 8433 Sunset Boulevard, known as the Comedy Store, and that the Commission will provide a recommendation to the Planning Commission and City Council regarding the approval of a certificate of appropriateness to determine that the billboards do not impact this existing eligible resource and no adverse impacts to the adjacent designated resource would occur at 8439 Sunset Boulevard, also known as Piazza Del Sol. Staff concluded by recommending approval of the draft resolution.

The Commission inquired about, and staff responded to, the ownership of the Comedy Store, the space between the line where patrons queue and the sidewalk, and the height and width of the billboard faces.

The Commission requested clarification about, and staff responded to, the purview of the Commission for this item.

The Commission inquired about, and staff responded to, the hours of parking for the metered spaces in front of the Comedy Store. Chair Ostergren then clarified that the loss of street parking spaces is not within the purview of the HPC.

The Commission inquired about, and staff responded to, whether the applicant would be responsible for the maintenance of the billboard project's landscaping and built features within the public realm.

The Commission asked for clarification about, and staff responded to, the number of billboards set aside for designated cultural resources under the Billboard Policy, and whether this project is one of these awarded billboards. Staff confirmed that this billboard is not one of the five that were awarded to designated cultural resources under the Billboard Policy.

AARON GREEN, Afriat Consulting Group, Applicant Representative, presented a brief history of the Comedy Store and the proposed billboard project's three components including the new pole-mounted billboard, the replaced and revitalized letterboard, and the upgraded planter and seating that also expands the sidewalk. He stated that the new billboard was designed and positioned to avoid impacts to the building's character defining features and the adjacent Piazza del Sol. He also described the proposed replacement letterboard that is fixed on top and digitized at the bottom. He then described the proposed improvements to the sidewalk area to accommodate and engage customers and pedestrians and

JOHN LOCASCIO, Historic Resources Group, Consulting Architect, continued the applicant's presentation with the Comedy Store's significance to the Sunset Strip and reiterated that the proposed billboard project would retain all of the subject building's character-defining features and would not impede its ability to convey its significance. He then stated that the proposed billboard is compatible in size and scale with and will not touch the adjacent Hacienda Arms/Piazza del Sol building so that all of its character defining features will remain intact and visible, especially its most prominent south façade where the Renaissance Revival architecture is most detailed and expressive. He concluded that the proposed project conforms with the Secretary's Standards.

Commission, Staff, and Applicant Representatives discussed the Commission's inquiries and request for clarification regarding: why the owner's family is not pursuing the designation of the Comedy Store; the historic significance of the letterboard sign and the proposed design for the replacement; the historic significance of the other signs; the changes to the planter; removal of the palm trees adjacent to the sidewalk; the number of entrances to the building; the height of the proposed trees; and the percentage of display time for City messaging.

**Item 9.A. Public Comments:**

RICHARD BACKER, LOS ANGELES, spoke in favor of the project.

MARY HYNES, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke in favor of the project.

AKELLO STONE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke in favor of the project.

ALEX LEE, LOS ANGELES, spoke in favor of the project.

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about concerns regarding designation of the property on behalf of the West Hollywood Preservation Alliance.

**Item 9.A. Commission Discussion:**

The Commission expressed general support for the placement and scale of the proposed billboard but stated concerns about the visual impacts to Piazza Del Sol.

The Commission discussed the removal of the palm trees, the Art Deco elements

of the billboard's design, the cultural significance of the existing letterboard sign and its ongoing maintenance compared to digital content.

The Commission expressed concerns about the mature height of the landscaping obscuring the letterboard sign and discussed how the digital lettering and content would be displayed.

The Commission and staff discussed the desire to preserve the existing letterboard sign and how its removal would affect the eligibility of the resource to be designated, the addition of the lollipop sign and marquee sign as apparent or potential character-defining features, and the property's period of significance.

The Commission acknowledged that the formal designation of the property is not required to recommend approval of the proposed certificate of appropriateness.

The Commission discussed the importance of maintenance for the planter since a lot of activity would occur in that public area, and to preserve the visibility of the building.

Jennifer Davis, Senior Contract Planner, recommended and read the amendments to the draft resolution that would address the Commission's discussion and consensus regarding the letterboard, lollipop and marquee signs, the second entrance, landscaping palette, and planter maintenance.

**Commissioner Dubin moved to approve staff's recommendation of approval to the Planning Commission and City Council with amendments as read into the record.**

**Seconded by Vice-Chair Charlie.**

**ACTION:** 1) Approve staff's recommendation of approval; 2) **Adopt Resolution No. HPC 24-169 as amended:** "A RESOLUTION OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD RECOMMENDING THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION AND CITY COUNCIL APPROVE A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS IN CONJUNCTION WITH A NEW DIGITAL BILLBOARD AT 8433 SUNSET BOULEVARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA." a) Under Section 5.b.1., add the circular roof-mounted "lollipop" sign containing "The Comedy Store" text in the same font/typeface as the letterboard sign on the primary south façade, rectangular marquee-style sign with interchangeable letters projecting from the plaster bulkhead, and secondary entrance on the east façade at the second-floor level to the list of character-defining features; b) As recommended by staff, delete language throughout the Resolution regarding the removal or replacement of the existing circular letterboard sign; c) Remove Condition: ~~b The Letterboard sign on the front façade of the building shall contain only non-commercial content, must retain the business identification at the top of the sign, and shall be located in the same location as the existing sign with its existing size and shape. The lower three-fourths of the sign may be digital;~~ d) Renumber Conditions c, d, e and f to

Conditions b, c, d, and e; e) Add Condition: f. The extant round letterboard sign on the Sunset Boulevard façade shall not be replaced and remain in place; f) Add Condition: g. The planter along the front façade of the building shall be landscaped with a simple and low-height plant palette, and trash in the planter shall be removed on a regular basis; and g) Add Condition: h. The landscaping in the public seating planter adjacent to the sidewalk and the planter along the front façade of the building shall not obscure the round letterboard. **Moved by Commissioner Dubin, seconded by Vice-Chair Charlie and passes.**

**10. NEW BUSINESS: None.**

**11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.**

**12. ITEMS FROM STAFF:**

**A. Planning Staff Update.**

Doug Vu, Senior Planner/HPC Liaison stated there will not be a March meeting, provided a reminder for the upcoming mandatory California Public Records Act training, and announced a Community Open House to kick off development of the City's next Strategic Plan WEHO 40.

**13. PUBLIC COMMENT**

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, representing the West Hollywood Preservation Alliance, spoke about Item 7.A. Certified Local Government Annual Report and suggested the commissioners attend the future Planning Commission hearing for Item 9.A.

**14. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS:**

Commissioner Sotsky asked for clarification about the public comment for commissioners to attend the Planning Commission.

Vice-Chair Charlie suggested an archival web space for Historic Preservation events, encouraged the public to attend Planning Commission meetings and speak on project topics not under HPC purview, and requested social media announcements for items that come before the HPC.

Commissioner Dubin thanked the Commission, staff and the public.

Chair Ostergren inquired about file names when downloading the packet agenda items, asked staff to double-check the CLG report in response to the public comment, and announced that the upcoming California Preservation Foundation Conference in Los Angeles May 29<sup>th</sup> - June 1<sup>st</sup> will have training opportunities.

The Commission also stated the infeasibility for HPC to attend three to four trainings per year.

**15. ADJOURNMENT:**

The Historic Preservation Commission adjourned at 9:40 P.M. to a regularly scheduled meeting on **Monday, April 22, 2024** beginning at **7:00 P.M.** at **Plummer**

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**Park Rooms 5 & 6, 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood CA.**

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** by the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of West Hollywood at a special meeting held this 25<sup>th</sup> day of June 2024 by the following vote:

AYES:           Commissioner:

NOES:           Commissioner:

ABSENT:       Commissioner:       Sotsky, Vice-Chair Charlie

ABSTAIN:      Commissioner:

DocuSigned by:  
*Gail Ostergren, HPC*  
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GAIL OSTERGREN, CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:  
*Doug Vu*  
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DOUG VU, COMMISSION LIAISON