



CITY OF SANTA MONICA

**MINUTES
OF THE
LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

SANTA MONICA INSTITUTE (SMI)
330 OLYMPIC DRIVE, 2nd FLOOR
SANTA MONICA

**MONDAY, MARCH 9, 2020
7:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION

Chair Genser called the meeting to order at [7:09 PM](#)

1. ROLL CALL

Present:

Richard Brand
Kenneth Breisch
Roger Genser, Chair
Amy Green
Ruth Shari
Barry Rosenbaum, Chair Pro Tempore
Dolores Sloan

Also Present:

Heidi von Tongeln, Deputy City Attorney
Stephanie Reich, AIA, LEED, AP, Design and Historic Preservation Planner
Steve Mizokami, Commission Liaison
Wendy Radwan, Staff Assistant III

2. REPORT FROM STAFF:

[7:10 PM](#)

Steve Mizokami, Principal Planner and Landmarks Commission Liaison stated that the applicant for Item 10-A requested a 12-minute presentation. He provided information on upcoming Landmarks Commission Agendas. Mr. Mizokami informed the Commission that the Boards and Commissions Dinner will be held on May 11, and as a result the Landmarks Commission will be rescheduled for May 13, 2020. He also announced that the appeal of the designation at 1531 Georgina will be heard by City Council on March 10, and that the appeal of the denial of 633 21st Street is planned for March 24, 2020.

3. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SANTA MONICA PIER, INCLUDING IMPROVEMENTS TO PACIFIC PARK.

Nathan Smithson, representing Pacific Park, presented updates to Pacific Park that highlight the history of Santa Monica as the end of Route 66, including a new classic car design for the roller coaster cars and redesign of the roller coaster building to correspond with that theme. He noted that the roller coaster will be down for 2 weeks during the renovations. He also mentioned the maintenance/refurbishment to the Pier deck and substructure that are ongoing.

4. **COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

[7:23 PM](#)

Chair Genser announced the Santa Monica History Museum has opened an exhibit focused on the history of the Suffragettes in Santa Monica.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

5-A. February 10, 2020

[7:24 PM](#)

Commissioners offered corrections. Chair Pro Tempore Rosenbaum made a motion to approve as amended. Commissioner Shari seconded the motion. A roll call was held for the motion and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Brand, Breisch, Genser, Green, Rosenbaum, Shari, Sloan

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

6. **APPROVAL OF STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL ACTION:**

6-A. Certificate of Appropriateness 20ENT-0019, 2501 2nd Street, approval of a 3-unit residential condominium development at the subject property. The proposed project includes the relocation, retention, and rehabilitation of the existing City Landmark residence (Turn-of-the-Century Cottage) and the construction of a new two-unit, two-story residential building above a subterranean garage located behind the designated Landmark residence.

[7:30 PM](#)

Commissioner Shari made a motion to approve. Commissioner Green seconded the motion. A roll call was held for the motion and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Brand, Breisch, Genser, Green, Rosenbaum, Shari, Sloan

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

- 6-B. Landmark Designation application 19ENT-0398, 518 Adelaide Drive, approving the residence as a City Landmark and Landmark Parcel.

[7:31 PM](#)

Commissioner Sloan made a motion to approve. Chair Pro Tempore Rosenbaum seconded the motion. A roll call was held for the motion and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Brand, Breisch, Genser, Green, Rosenbaum, Shari, Sloan

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

7. **PUBLIC INPUT: (On items not on agenda and within the jurisdiction of the Commission)** None.

8. **DEMOLITION PERMITS:**

- 8-A. **Historic Resources Preliminary Review Hearing.** Preliminary review and consideration of whether there is credible evidence in the record to proceed with a further public hearing to determine whether buildings or structures meet the criteria for a City Landmark or Structure of Merit in accordance with Interim Zoning Ordinance Number 2626 (CCS). Upon filing an application for demolition of a building or structure that is 40 years of age or older, applicants request a review by the Landmarks Commission to determine whether the building or structure meets one or more of the criteria for Landmark or Structure of Merit. Preliminary review hearings do not result in buildings or structures being designated as City Landmarks or Structures of Merit.

[7:31 PM](#)

Commissioners provided the following *ex parte* disclosures:

Commissioners Green and Shari visited properties one and two. Commissioner Brand visited properties two and three. Commissioners Breisch, Sloan, Chair Genser, and Chair Pro Tempore Rosenbaum visited all the properties.

1. **2410 2nd Street** (20BLD-0332)
(20ENT-0049) Landmark/Structure of Merit Designation Review
OP2– Ocean Park Low Density Residential
Single Family Dwelling
Approximate Date of Construction: 1910
Structure Not Identified in Historic Resources Inventory
End of 75 Day Period: April 24, 2020

Chair Pro Tempore Rosenbaum made a motion that no further hearing is required. Commissioner Sloan seconded the motion. A roll call was held for the motion and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Brand, Breisch, Genser, Green, Rosenbaum, Shari, Sloan
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

2. **2635 4th Street** (20BLD-0466)
(20ENT-0055) Landmark/Structure of Merit Designation Review
OP2– Ocean Park Low Density Residential
Single Family Dwelling & Garage
Approximate Date of Construction: 1914
Structure Identified in Historic Resources Inventory 5S3
End of 75 Day Period: May 5, 2020

Chair Pro Tempore Rosenbaum made a motion that there is credible evidence in the record to proceed to a full evidentiary hearing. Chair Genser seconded the motion. A roll call was held for the motion and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Brand, Breisch, Genser, Green, Rosenbaum, Shari, Sloan
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

3. **1020 Harvard Street** (19BLD-4851)
(20ENT-0057) Landmark/Structure of Merit Designation Review
R1 – Single-Unit Residential
Single Family Dwelling
Approximate Date of Construction: 1931
Structure Not Identified in Historic Resources Inventory
End of 75 Day Period: May 6, 2020

Commissioner Shari made a motion that no further hearing is required. Commissioner Brand seconded the motion. A roll call was held for the motion and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Brand, Breisch, Genser, Green, Rosenbaum, Shari, Sloan
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

California Historic Resource Status Codes:

5S3 Appears to be individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation.

9. **CONSENT CALENDAR:** None.

10. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- 10-A. Certificate of Appropriateness 19ENT-0050, 909-911 Montana Avenue, consideration for design approval of a one-story addition to the existing commercial building, and modifications to the residential portion of the property, including but not limited to window rehabilitation, stucco siding repair and building repaint, landscape, hardscape, and site lighting improvements at the subject residential and commercial courtyard complex, a designated City Landmark. This item is continued from the April 8, 2019 Landmarks Commission meeting.

[7:38 PM](#)

Commissioner Shari made a motion to grant the applicant team 12 minutes to present to the Commission. Commissioner Brand seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by a voice vote.

Commissioners provided the following *ex parte* communication disclosures:

Commissioners Brand, Sloan, Genser, and Rosenbaum all visited the property. Commissioners Shari and Green pass by the property regularly. Commissioner Breisch visited the property last year when it was previously under review. Chair Genser visited a second time and discussed issues included in the staff report with two of the residents.

Mr. Mizokami presented the staff report. He identified the comments provided by the Commission at the April 18, 2019 review and the project revisions in response to the comments. He also noted that the applicant team had met with the residents of the property and modified the project in response. He also identified how the project meets with the Secretary of Interior's Standards.

Howard Laks, Architect, introduced the project team and presented the project. He stated that the height of the project will be maintained, as will the elements at the front of the commercial building. He also noted there will be no changes to the east and west buildings, other than paint, windows, and other in-kind items. He stated that the project team met with the community and building residents. He focused his presentation on the modifications made to the project in response to the Commission's comments (as highlighted in the plans and staff report). Mr. Laks identified an increase to the courtyard by 232 square feet as a result of removing the ADA lift and reducing the retail addition.

Robert Chattel, Historic Preservation Architect, stated that the reduction of the courtyard for 400 square feet was to support a sustainable retail tenant and provide enhancement to the courtyard, and stated that it is consistent within the character of the Landmark property. He also stated that rehabilitation included in the Mills Act would be incorporated into this project, including systems improvements. Michael Tramutola, Landscape Architect, stated that all building surfaces will have planting adjacent. He identified planters along the walls of the commercial building.

Howard Laks identified that the addition will have curved corners to mirror the front of the building. He also presented the new gates which are 4 feet tall and are a series of verticals that will provide significant transparency.

The following members of the public addressed the Commission: Robert Becker, building resident, spoke in support of the modifications and that the project has improved. Jay Johnson, neighbor, spoke in support of the project and expressed enthusiasm for the investment in the property.

Building residents Mary Jean Piesco, Marie Haist, Sean Delgaudio, and Patricia Regan spoke in opposition to the project citing the reduction of the courtyard grass area and inconvenience of construction on the property.

Heidi Von Tongeln, Deputy City Attorney, stated that the Commission does not have purview over the use of the property, and clarified the purview of the Commission.

Discussion that followed noted that the revised project reflected attention to previous Commission concerns and complies with the Secretary of Interior Standards. There was still some concern that the residents' use of the courtyard would be reduced *vis a vis* the owner's need to maintain a viable economic investment. Commissioners also discussed the possibility of adding a second story to the commercial building to prevent the loss of the courtyard, although it was noted that such an approach would likely not comply with the Secretary of Interior Standards.

Commissioner Brand made a motion to approve, including the staff report recommendations. Commissioner Shari seconded the motion. A roll call was held for the motion and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Brand, Breisch, Green, Shari,
NAYS: Genser, Rosenbaum
ABSTAIN: Sloan
ABSENT: None

11. **NEW BUSINESS/PUBLIC HEARINGS:** None.

12. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

12-A. Review and discussion on the budget task force recommendation for full cost recovery on all historic preservation-related application fees.

[9:21 PM](#)

Jing Yeo, Planning Manager, provided a brief presentation including background on the adopted Biennial budget which proposes pay-downs of City's pension-related liabilities. She stated that the adopted budget is balanced, but there is a

recognized unfunded pension liability that has been recommended for an accelerated pay-down. Ms. Yeo explained that the Budget Task Force was asked to identify \$1.5 million dollars in reduction to the City's annual budget. She also explained that the Task Force makes a recommendation to the City Manager who then makes a recommendation to the City Council. In this case, the City Manager forwarded the recommendations of the Task Force without revision.

Ms. Yeo explained that the Budget Task Force investigated many areas for budget reduction, including waived fees in Planning, and Building and Safety. She identified all the areas of Planning fees and Building and Safety fees that are waived. She clarified that Planning updates the application fee resolution every two years including a fee analysis to recover staff costs.

Ms. Yeo also explained that the City Council has chosen in the past to reduce or waive certain fees to provide incentives for certain activities. She further identified specific planning applications for the historic preservation program and the full cost recovery for each, noting that the preservation program is expensive to run, including staff time and consultant fees. She explained that a couple of options were presented including 20% cost recovery, and full cost recovery. Ms. Yeo stated that she made the presentation regarding the preservation fee waivers, and that staff's recommendation was to recover 20% of the cost, rather than full recovery. The Task Force elected to recommend full cost recovery, and the City Manager will be presenting that recommendation. She noted that potential effects of the options were included in the memo provided to the Task Force.

Carol Lemlein, representing the Santa Monica Conservancy, stated that she reviewed the Budget Task Force website. She stated that the proposal would be a serious blow to the preservation program. She explained that when the Commission was advised that it was no longer able to nominate properties for designation, the waiver was provided as an incentive to enable members of the public and non-profit organizations to nominate properties for consideration by the Commission.

Commissioners requested a full discussion item be placed on the April agenda, with an expanded agenda item.

- 12-B. Update from the Landmarks Ordinance Update Subcommittee and Staff on recent activities related to recommendations for the proposed update to the Landmarks Ordinance, Santa Monica Municipal Code Chapter 9.56, including but not limited to, discussions held, recommendations formulated, input received, and upcoming Subcommittee meetings, including an update and discussion on potential concepts for a potential single-tier designation framework and potential concepts for potential review procedures related to demolition permit applications and historic districts.

[9:57 PM](#)

Chair Genser stated that the Landmarks Ordinance Subcommittee has been meeting to review a potential single-tier designation framework.

Steve Mizokami provided a brief presentation with an update on the Landmarks designation criteria. The Structure of Merit (SOM) criteria were discussed, and it was explained that staff and the Subcommittee have been looking at incorporating criteria (B)1 and (B)2 into the Landmark designation criteria to the extent legally possible.

The presentation was primarily focused on issues related to properties that are potential contributors to potential historic districts. He reviewed the current timeline in reviewing a potential contributor to a potential district. He then presented the options included in the presentation.

Chair Pro Tempore Rosenbaum asked if staff is recommending a credible evidence threshold for review. Ms. von Tongeln stated that it may be a different question or concept for consideration.

The initial basis for looking at this approach pertains to the SOM criteria, and Ms. von Tongeln mentioned that the level of recognition should be related to the level of significance.

The following members of the public addressed the Commission: Nina Fresco, representing herself, discussed the options presented, and noted concern that a proactive study of a large district may generate a backlash. She suggested a smaller subset of properties could be considered. She also suggested a district could be studied, or not, without prejudice. She also stated there are challenges to the current system.

Ruthann Lehrer, representing herself, noted unanticipated consequences that may occur if the Landmarks Commission engages in a discussion of a district without public outreach, and that outreach takes time. She is concerned about consideration of the historic district process as tied to the demolition process. She suggested the criteria be broadened to include vernacular buildings, and noted criteria included in the City of Riverside Ordinance as an example.

Chair Genser stated that since we don't have the language of the criteria, we are not really seeing the full picture. Ms. von Tongeln stated that the City Attorney's office is reviewing potential criteria. She clarified that the discussion of reviewing potential historic districts is focused on process. Ms. von Tongeln also clarified that the review and consideration of Structure of Merit criteria (B)(3) is about procedures related to how demolition requests of potential district contributors are to be reviewed and is not criteria that will be folded into the Landmark designation criteria.

The Commissioners acknowledged and expressed appreciation of the subcommittee for draft materials representing a substantial amount of work. Staff will continue to meet monthly with the Subcommittee with the goal of a discussion with the full Commission on a quarterly basis.

- 12-C. Update from the San Vicente Courtyard Apartments Historic District Ordinance Subcommittee and Staff on the draft Ordinance and to discuss next steps, including but not limited to, upcoming Subcommittee meetings.

Nothing to report.

- 12-D. Update from the Public Education and Media Outreach Subcommittee on recent activities related to enhancing the awareness of, and engagement and participation in, the City's historic preservation programs and activities.

Nothing to report.

- 12-E. Report from Landmarks Commission Liaison to the Architectural Review Board (ARB) on recent ARB consideration and action taken on proposed projects involving additions to or modifications of potential historic resources.

Nothing to report.

- 12-F. Report from Landmarks Commission representative to the Santa Monica Pier Corporation (SMPC) on recent SMPC activities and action taken on proposed projects involving the Landmark Santa Monica Pier.

Nothing to report.

- 12-G. Update from Staff on notable activities affecting any designated Landmarks or Structures of Merit.

[10:40 PM](#)

Mr. Mizokami reported on Certificate of Appropriateness staff approval for the properties located at 240 Hill Street and 2634 3rd Street related to exterior painting and foundation repair.

- 12-H. Planning Commission Case List (Information Only).

13. **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: (Public and Commission discussion and comment is permitted.)** None.

14. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:** (Requests from Commissioners to add items to upcoming agendas)

- Discussion and potential recommendation to City Council regarding the budget task force recommendation for full cost recovery on all historic preservation-related application fees, and potential formation of a subcommittee to formalize the recommendation
15. **NEXT MEETING DATE AND COMMISSION AGENDA:** Special Meeting of the Landmarks Commission: 7:00 PM Monday, April 13, 2020 at the Civic Auditorium, East Wing, 1855 Main Street, Santa Monica
 16. **ADJOURNMENT:** Commissioner Green made a motion to adjourn at [10:43 PM](#) on Monday March 9, 2020.