



DRAFT MINUTES
CITY OF SANTA MONICA
LANDMARKS COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING

VIA TELECONFERENCE PURSUANT TO
EXECUTIVE ORDER N-29-20 ISSUED BY
GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM

MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 2020

MEETING BEGINS AT 7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION:
Chair Genser called the meeting to order at [7:11 PM](#)

1. ROLL CALL

Present:

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

Absent:

Dolores Sloan

Also Present:

Heidi von Tongeln, Deputy City Attorney
Stephanie Reich, AIA, LEED, AP, Design and Historic Preservation Planner
Regina Szilak, Associate Planner
Melissa Zak, Staff Assistant III

2. REPORT FROM STAFF:

[7:12 PM](#)

Stephanie Reich, AIA, LEED AP, Design and Historic Preservation Planner and Liaison to the Landmarks Commission provided the report from staff including upcoming items for Landmarks Commission review, potential Landmarks Appeal hearing dates, and items of interest on upcoming Council Agendas, and she also

stated that the September meeting of the Landmarks Commission will be cancelled with the next meeting on October 12, 2020.

Ms. Reich also expressed gratitude and appreciation for the 15 years Commissioner Shari has served on the Landmarks Commission and that this may be her last meeting as a Commissioner, since City Council may appoint a new member as soon as September 8th. Ms. Reich noted that Commissioner Shari served with intelligence and commitment and as Commissioner Shari offered, missed only two meetings over that 15 year period. Chair Pro Tempore Rosenbaum also expressed appreciation for Commissioner Shari, that she served with distinction and will be missed. Chair Genser noted that Commissioner Shari began her tenure when he was Chair previously, and expressed deep gratitude for the exceptional way she has served her role as the representative to the real estate profession and to preservation as a whole.

In response to questions from Commissioner Shari and Chair Pro Tem Rosenbaum, Ms. Reich stated that the Information Services Division (ISD) is working to provide a public-facing portal for building permit research, that members of the public can review information on demolition permit applications for properties that are 40 years or older. She also stated that staff is working on a grant application for organizations dedicated solely to preservation to apply for funding as a result of Development agreements, and that it is a staff priority.

3. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Commissioner Green stated there was nothing to report regarding Pier Board meetings, and both Commissioner Shari and Ms. Reich noted that on August 17 there was an ARB meeting in which 1360 3rd Street Promenade was before the Board for Preliminary Review and was a property that may be of interest to the Commission.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

None

5. APPROVAL OF STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL ACTION:

- 5-A. Certificate of Appropriateness 20ENT-0179, 302 Colorado Avenue (former Sears building) approval of a Comprehensive Sign Program. The proposed scope of work consists of a Comprehensive Sign Program in conjunction with an adaptive reuse of the former Sears building, a designated City Landmark.

[7:31 PM](#)

Chair Pro Tempore Rosenbaum stated that the STOA should be clear that he voted NO. 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

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Sloan

- 5-B. Landmark/Structure of Merit Designation Application 19ENT-0435, 445 Georgina Avenue denying the structure and property as a City Landmark and Landmark Parcel, and Structure of Merit.

[7:34 PM](#)

Commissioner Shari noted that the property owner should be noted as 445 Georgina LLC. Commissioner Shari 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

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Sloan

6. **PUBLIC INPUT: (On items not on agenda and within the jurisdiction of the Commission)**

7. **CONSENT CALENDAR: None**

8. **OLD BUSINESS: None**

9. **NEW BUSINESS/PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

- 9-A. Landmark/Structure of Merit Designation 20ENT-0022, 1626 California Avenue to determine whether the residential property should be designated as a Landmark or Structure of Merit. The Landmarks Commission will consider whether, based on written materials and public testimony presented, the residence meets one or more of the required criteria for a Landmark or Structure of Merit designation pursuant to SMMC Sections 9.56.100 and 9.56.080.

[7:36 PM](#)

The Commissioners provided *ex parte* communications:

Commissioners Shari, Chair Pro Tempore Rosenbaum and Chair Genser visited the site.

Ms. Reich presented the staff report stating that the property had been moved from its original location and therefore could not be representative of the neighborhood development and that it is a property type, a modest Craftsman bungalow that is

ubiquitous in Santa Monica and throughout Southern California. She also stated that the GPA Consultants provided a full historic assessment and having reviewed the report and the complete record finds that the property does not appear eligible for designation as a Landmark or Structure of Merit.

Chair Pro Tempore Rosenbaum asked about the Structure of Merit Criteria as it appears to be a "Kit House" was previously prevalent but now rare. Ms. Reich clarified that this may or may not have been a "Kit House", and there are many examples of modest bungalows all over the city. Ms. Reich also stated that the consultant identified that correspondence had indicated that a former property owner when interviewed said it may be a "Kit House", but that since this was not definitive the consultant stated the property "may have been" a "Kit House".

Property Owner, Louis Tal, stated that he agrees with the staff report and consultant historic assessment. He noted that the property is old, that while some maybe want to keep it due to feelings of nostalgia he does not believe it to be worthy of designation.

Melissa Zak, Staff Assistant III, read into the record a public comment in support of the designation that was received after 12 noon.

As a rebuttal, the property owner described the cost and burden of the length of time for the Landmarks Commission review and would like to improve the property for the neighborhood.

While Commissioners generally agreed that the property did not rise to the level of a Landmark property, it was worthy of consideration as a Structure of Merit.

Regarding the distinction as a "Kit House", Commissioner Breisch noted that while it may be fashionable to preserve "Kit Houses", there does not appear to be sufficient evidence that this was a "Kit House." He also noted that there were dozens of companies producing "Kit Houses" or factory-built houses during this time, and that has some bearing on his thinking. Sometimes there is direct evidence that there is a factory-built house. From an architectural history perspective, that's interesting. However, there does not appear to be that kind of evidence in this case.

Ms. Reich explained that a Structure of Merit is a designation, and would enable the property owner to take advantage of the Mills Act and other incentives. She and Heidi Von Tongeln, Deputy City Attorney, noted that the property could be demolished in 180 days (with a possible extension of 180 days) and that property owner would have to file a C of A application for demolition for the 180 day period to be triggered.

Chair Pro Tempore Rosenbaum made a motion to designate the property as a Structure of Merit under b2, substantial evidence in consultant's report, including

integrity, and with information from public correspondence. Commissioner Shari seconded the motion. Commissioners requested the STOA to be brought back at the next meeting. A roll call was held for the motion and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Breisch, Genser, Green, Rosenbaum, Shari

NAYS: Brand

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Sloan

- 9-B. Structure of Merit Designation 20ENT-0015, 124 Hart Avenue to determine whether the residential property should be designated as a Structure of Merit. The Landmarks Commission will consider whether, based on written materials and public testimony presented, the residence meets one or more of the required criteria for Structure of Merit designation pursuant to SMMC Section 9.56.080.

8:25 PM

The Commissioners provided *ex parte* communication disclosures:

Commissioners Green and Shari visited the property, Chair Genser and Chair Pro Tempore Rosenbaum visited the property and both discussed the matter with Nina Fresco regarding who encouraged support for the designation

Ms. Reich presented the staff report, noting that the property was built in 1908, and that it was removed from the Historic Resources Inventory in 2018 due to a loss of integrity, and revisions to the property such as lifting it above a garage, other features that were removed and replaced. She noted it is altered in its Vernacular Craftsman style that there was a full historic assessment performed by Ostashay and Associates Consulting (OAC) and that the consultant concludes that structure does not appear eligible as a Structure of Merit. Ms. Reich stated that upon reviewing all the materials, staff agrees it does not meet the criteria.

David Kaplan, KCK Architects, presented on behalf of the property owner. He showed the context of the South Beach neighborhood, and stated that the changes made to the property in order to make it livable should not remove it from consideration as a Structure of Merit. Kathleen and that the building is connected to its past, present and future. She has participated in events to form a district and considers herself and her family a steward of the property.

Public Comment from Nina Fresco in support of designation as a Structure of Merit is read into the record.

Commissioner Shari commended Melissa Zak for her clear and strong reading of public comment.

Commissioners generally supported the designation of the property as a Structure of Merit, as the neighborhood is cohesive, the property adds to a coherent

streetscape, and that the property is consistent with others that have been similarly altered. Commissioner Breisch stated that since the property has been altered significantly it's not clear what the period of significance would be. Commissioners also noted appreciation for the owner's enthusiasm in preserving the beach cottage landscape.

Chair Genser made a motion to approve the designation of the property at 124 Hart as a Structure of Merit, in that the property is over 50 years old and contributes to a historic district. Commissioner Shari seconded the motion.

Commissioner Rosenbaum requested the motion be amended to include findings b1, b2 and b3 as noted in the applicant's report. Deputy City Attorney Von Tongeln stated that criteria b3 requires the district to be designated within 90 days and if no designation is forthcoming that criteria lapses. All agreed to maintain b1 b2 and b3 in the motion to designate the property as a Structure of Merit.

A roll call was held for the motion and approved by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Sloan

- 9-C. Certificate of Appropriateness 20ENT-0199 for a proposed project located at 1413 Michigan Avenue consisting of a 4-story, 100% affordable housing project with 57 units, 1 manager unit, ground floor amenities, 12 parking spaces, and the rehabilitation of a one-story landmark structure (Santa Monica Nikkei Hall).

[9:05 PM](#)

The Commissioners provided *ex parte* communication disclosures:

Breisch- went by last month,

Barry visited this month

Green by last week

Genser visited the property

SR provided presentation emphasizing the modifications that have been made to the proposal in response to the LC comments, and that GPA, the historic preservation consultant found the project to be in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Sonia Suresh, representing the property owner stated the project provides supportive permanent housing while paying homage to the Landmark structure and that the project requires approval at this meeting to meet funding deadlines. John Arnold, architect with KFA, presented the project stating that it's important that the new addition is separate and distinct from the Landmark while providing a nice backdrop for the Landmark structure. He reviewed the details and materials,

including the honey-colored shingles and roof deck on the top of the Landmark Structure, and how the elements near the Landmark are lifted so the proposal appears floating above the Landmark structure. Mr. Arnold also mentioned that as the architect of the addition to the Quonset Hut site, it was important to him to provide an addition that would be respectful to the Landmark.

The Commissioners were enthusiastically supportive of the project, noting appreciation for the thoughtfulness and holistic quality of the design, the respect for and enhancement of the Landmark property, that the Landmark will be used as a cultural center and public space, honoring its history, and also agreed that efforts to address the Commissions comments during Preliminary Review were much appreciated.

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

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

10. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- 10-A. Mills Act Contracts:
608 San Vicente Boulevard (20ENT-0147)
2546 3rd Street (20ENT-01740)
2518 4TH Street (20ENT-0149)
423 Ocean Avenue (20ENT-0150)

Ms. Reich presented all for Mills Act contracts together, noting that Regina Szilak wrote the staff report, and that David Kaplan of KCK Architects and Robert Chattel were present. Ms. Reich identified benefits of the Mills act Contract program, and that this year there are four (4) Mills Act Applications moving forward, and that three out of four of the applications had identified that most of the rehabilitation work had been completed. Ms. Reich also stated that while Yidan Chen, previously with the Planning Division, formalized the Mills Act monitoring program, it is not possible to say when staffing levels would allow time to be spent on the monitoring program.

Commissioner Shari made a motion to forward a supportive recommendation to the City Council. 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
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Sloan

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

Ms. Reich stated that the Petanque Courts in Palisades Park (just south of Camera Obscura) will be removed and replaced with landscaping to be approved by staff, and that staff has been working with the property owner at 305 Alta to assist with approvals for repair due to fire damage.

- 10-D. Planning Commission Case List (Information Only).

11. **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: (Public and Commission discussion and comment is permitted.) None**
12. **NEXT MEETING DATE AND COMMISSION AGENDA:** Special Meeting of the Landmarks Commission: 7:00 PM Monday, October 12, 2020 Via Teleconference Pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20 Issued by Governor Gavin Newsom
13. **ADJOURNMENT** Commissioner Breisch adjourned the meeting at 10:13 PM on August 24, 2020.