



HISTORICAL COMMISSION MINUTES

7:00 p.m., Monday, March 24, 2008
Los Altos Community Meeting Chambers
One North San Antonio Road, Los Altos, California 94022

CALL TO ORDER

Chair BAKER called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair BAKER, Vice-Chair MARFATIA, Commissioners DREWES, K. GIRDLEY, H. GIRDLEY and HAMBLIN
Absent: Commissioner LONEY
Staff: Staff Liaison DAHL

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

MINUTES

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER DREWES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER K. GIRDLEY, to approve the February 28, 2008 meeting minutes as amended and the March 18, 2008 special study session minutes. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

DISCUSSION AND PUBLIC INTEREST ITEMS

1. 233 West Edith Avenue

Historic consultant Anthony Kirk presented an evaluation of the historic residence, noting that the architecture was good, but that the newer additions to the structure, including the newer garage in the front yard, mimicked the architectural style of the main house and created false history that took away from the historic value of the residence. Based on the evaluation, and on the City's Historic Resources Inventory scoring criteria, the structure should have its rating lowered from 54 points to 46 points.

The property owner noted that there was never any special historic event or special circumstance that took place on the property and that the house setting and surrounding landscaping was not historic since it had been done in the 1970s.

Two members of the public, a former historical commissioner and a current planning commissioner, spoke in opposition to the evaluation and the proposed lower rating, noting that the property was part of the original 1915 West Edith subdivision, that there are few remaining historic houses in this area of Los Altos and that the property should receive points for its setting/context.

The Commission discussed the project, noting that this was the third attempt by the owner to get the HRI rating lowered, that re-evaluations of an HRI rating shouldn't be done ad-hoc, and that any re-evaluation of the property's HRI rating should be done as part of a larger re-evaluation of the City's entire HRI. It was also noted that the Commission has passed a motion at a previous meeting recommending that a process for HRI re-evaluation be pursued in order to address situations such

as this. A Commissioner noted that the evaluation proposed increasing the score for the landmark category and lowering the score for the event and design categories and that the City should provide incentives for preservation.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HAMBLIN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER H. GIRDLEY, to uphold the Historical Commission's previous recommendation to preserve the structure and maintain the existing HRI rating of 54 points.
THE MOTION CARRIED 5-1 WITH COMMISSIONER MARFATIA OPPOSED.

2. Historic Resources Inventory Update

The Commission discussed the finalized list of potential historic properties and how the City's historic consultant would evaluate and rate the properties to determine if they were eligible to be added to the Historic Resources Inventory.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER K. GIRDLEY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DREWES, to accept the list of potential historic properties and forward that list to the City's historic consultant for consideration as additions to the Historic Resources Inventory.
THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Historic Preservation Awards

Chair BAKER discussed the need to establishing criteria for a historic preservation award and appointed Commissioners DREWES and H. GIRDLEY to a sub-committee for the purpose of drafting award criteria for consideration by the Commission at a future meeting.

COMMISSION REPORTS

4. Certified Local Government Grants

Commissioner MARFATIA reported that the deadline to submit a grant application for the 2008-2009 year was the end of April. However, even if the application does not get submitted by the deadline, the Commission should still proceed forward and use the framework for a grant application in future years.

5. Historical Essay Contest and Ice Cream Social

Chair BAKER read an email with an update on the essay contest from Commissioner LONEY.

DIRECTION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Chair BAKER requested that the following items be added to the April agenda of the Historical Commission:

1. Certified Local Government Grants;
2. Historic Resources Inventory Update;
3. Los Altos Styles Guidebook; and
4. The Secretary of the Interior Standards.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair BAKER adjourned the meeting at 9:00 PM.

Zachary Dahl, AICP
Staff Liaison to the Historical Commission