



HISTORICAL COMMISSION MINUTES

7:00 p.m., June 24, 2002
City Council Meeting Chambers
One North San Antonio Road, Los Altos, California 94022

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Foerster; Vice-Chair Carpenter; Commissioners Hull, Humphries, McChesney McDonald, and Sandoval. Absent: None

MINUTES

Approval of the minutes of the May 29, 2002 meeting, was moved by Vice-Chair Carpenter and seconded by Hull. Passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Members of the audience may bring to the attention of the commission any item that is not on the agenda. Speakers are given up to three (3) minutes. State law prohibits the Commission from acting on items that do not appear on the agenda.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

Chairperson's report: Foerster and all: There was a substantive discussion on the City's and the Commission's history on landmark properties and on the meanings of landmark, historically significant, and historically important as designations or descriptive terms within the Historic Resources Inventory (HRI). Forty-four properties on the HRI rank above 70; there are 52 properties on the HRI that rank above 60 on the rating system. There was also a substantive discussion on the term "contributing" in the HRI and its meanings. Vice Chair Carpenter moved that properties ranking 90 and above (90 to 100 points on the HRI rating system) be identified as potentially of landmark value; that properties ranking 70 and above (70 to 89 points on the HRI rating), and 50 and above are historically significant (50 to 69 points); 49 points and below are architectural contributors to the environment and neighborhood. Seconded by Commissioner McDonald. There was a substantive discussion, with several possible amendments to the motion discussed. Commissioners Sandoval and Hull will be reviewing the State office of Historic Preservation definitions of the terms such as "contributing" in the HRI and its

potential meanings. Vice Chair Carpenter amended the motion so that properties ranking 80 and above (80 to 100 points on the HRI rating system) may be identified as potentially of landmark value; that properties ranking 60 and above (60 to 79 points on the HRI rating), and 40 and above are historically significant (40 to 59 points); 39 points and below are architectural contributors to the environment and neighborhood. Seconded by Commissioner Humphries. Passed.

Some of the points in the discussion: Landmark designated properties may be eligible for the Mills Act, if the owner and the Council reach that agreement. They may also be eligible to use the State Historic Building Code. "Historically Important" properties may be eligible for variances. Owners of those properties should be encouraged to preserve them; those properties are not necessarily protected beyond the codes of the City. Some points to check with the state: Rankings of 60 points and above on the Kalman scale—should the Historical Commission try to avoid demolition of properties with that ranking or above—to be determined through research and further discussion.

b. Commission Vacancy: Chair Foerster and Vice-Chair Carpenter will talk to a number of people about the vacancy on the commission now that Commissioner McChesney has had to resign for personal reasons. For maintaining the Certified Local Government Status; it would be advantageous if the Commission could recruit an architect, an architectural historian, a historic preservation professional, or a designer/developer/contractor with a strong record in historic preservation.

Commissioner Reports:

1. Commissioners Hull and Humphries reported briefly on preservation resources. Hull donated several books, pamphlets, and magazines to the museum's reference collection.
2. Vice-Chair Carpenter and Commissioner McDonald spoke briefly about the progress of the "Los Altos: Celebrating 50 Years of Community," exhibit and the successful discussion with the Museum's Education Committee to tie next year's essay contest to the "50th Anniversary" exhibit. The exhibit ends Jan. 5, 2003 and the traditional time window for the Essay Contest is Jan. – March; however, all agreed that notifying teachers, parents, and students to visit the exhibit between September and January is a valuable goal. Having the students write--after having seen the exhibit—on topics such as "What was it like for you if you were a kid in 1952? How did you get news? What were your games, pastimes and hobbies? Etc." are educational opportunities for both parents and kids.

HISTORY MUSEUM REPORT/STAFF REPORT

No verbal report.

OTHER MATTERS/NEW BUSINESS/WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE:

Copies of a notice from the State Office of Historic Preservation were distributed. Staff will review the guidelines on the listed web site; information

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maybe in the July mailing related to the notice.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Hull moved to adjourn, seconded by Vice-Chair Carpenter. The Commission adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

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