

**CITY OF SAN DIEGO
HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF MAY 18, 2012
202 C STREET, CITY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS HEARING ROOM, 12th FLOOR
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101**

CHRONOLOGY OF THE MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lemmo at 1:13PM

Chairperson	John Lemmo	Present
Vice Chairperson	Gail Garbini	Present
2 nd Vice Chairperson	Linda Marrone	Absent
Boardmember	Michael Baksh	Absent
Boardmember	Priscilla Berge	Present
Boardmember	Alex Bethke	Present
Boardmember	Maria Curry	Present <i>arrived at 1:30PM</i>
Boardmember	Tom Larimer	Present
Boardmember	Evelya Rivera	Present
Boardmember	Abel Silvas	Present <i>left at 2:30PM</i>
Boardmember	Ann Woods	Present

Staff to the Board in Attendance Shannon Anthony, Board Secretary
 Cathy Winterrowd, Principal Planner
 Kelley Stanco, Senior Planner

Legal Counsel in Attendance: Keith Bauerle, Deputy City Attorney

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

A. BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

• **ABSENCES**

Boardmembers Baksh and Marrone notified staff they would not be in attendance. Boardmembers Woods and Curry may be a few minutes late due to their work schedule.

• **OTHER GENERAL INFORMATION**

- ✓ Correspondence from the State Office of Historic Preservation
- ✓ Correspondence both in support and opposed to the project

B. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

• **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

None

• **EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS**

Boardmember Rivera spoke with Gerry Braun; from the Mayor's Office, he gave her an unbiased verbal synopsis of the project.

ACTION ITEM

ITEM 1 – BALBOA PARK PLAZA DE PANAMA PROJECT

Applicant: City of San Diego, owner and the Plaza de Panama Committee, permittee

Location: Balboa Park, Council District 3

Description: Review and make a recommendation to the appropriate decision-making authority on those aspects of the Site Development Permit pertaining to designated historical resources.

Today's Action: Recommend to the Planning Commission approval of the Site Development Permit and associated findings related to designated historical resources, as presented; recommend inclusion of additional permit conditions related to designated historical resources; or do not recommend approval of the Site Development Permit and associated findings related to designated historical resources.

Staff Recommendation: The Historical Resources Board recommend to the Planning Commission approval of the Site Development Permit and associated findings related to designated historical resources, as presented.

Report Number: HRB-12-036

Staff Report by Cathy Winterrowd and Charlie Daniels

Testimony Received:

In Favor: David Marshall (*Chris Verplanck*), Susan Schiffer, Sharon Gehl, Tom Fox, Mark Da Cunha, Elizabeth Castillo, Susan Loveall, Micah Parzen, Charlene Broane, Steve Hutter, Reed Vickerman, Jim Kidrick, Chris Duggan

In Opposition: Ron Buckley (*Linda Henry, Tom Henry*), Dan Soderberg (*Gregory May, Sandē Lollis*), Joan Dahlin (*Mary Jean Word, Beryl Flom*), John Eisenhart (*Eva Thorn*), Dionné Carlson (*Erik Hanson, Jerry Schuldies*), Bruce Coons (*Dean Glass, John Oldenkamp, Carin Howard, Ashley Christensen, Paul Johnson, Jean Samuels, Jessica McGee, Ron Sinnen*), Michael Kelly, Peter Hill, Jarvis Ross, David Goldberg, Ruben Seju, Sari Reznick, Vonn Marie May, Steven Greenwald, Alana Coons, Ann Garwood, Nancy Moors, Anne Cooper, Jaye MacAskill

Board Discussion:

Chair Lemmo clarified that the HRB is not the decision maker; they are there to make a recommendation to the ultimate decision maker, in this case the City Council. The HRB is there to look at the historical resources issues only. We are here to talk about the substantial alterations of a historic resource designated in the City, which happens to be HRB #1. Based on the Land Development Code, he is not sure it is possible to make the finding that there is “no reasonable beneficial use of the property”. He can’t get past the bypass bridge; the bypass bridge at the iconic connection to the park is drastic and seems to drive the rest of the project. There are aspects of the project that he thinks he can support, such as the reflecting pools and some sort of a parking structure. He is not in favor of a recommendation that would include the bypass bridge.

Boardmember Bethke agrees with Chair Lemmo. The goals overall are good for the park, as well as, some of the restoration aspects, needs balance to achieve goals and maintain integrity. Acknowledged the National Park Service letter; and that the west access is important. Getting cars off Cabrillo bridge would make it more accessible. There are alterations that meet the standards and get cars out of the park.

Boardmember Curry thinks that the project is looking at cars more than history. She is not in favor of this project, thinks there are other alternatives and is concerned about the danger in losing the National

Historic Landmark status. Should look at closing Cabrillo Bridge and connecting preservation with mass transportation. Project does not comply with the standards.

Boardmember Woods agrees with the goal of removing vehicle traffic, but the new bridge is a problem. This is the iconic view from downtown that we have of the park, as an art historian we know from the architects drawings that this their important view, it was used in publicity and souvenirs. It was the view that the public took home with them in their memories. The bypass bridge cuts across the face of buildings, she doesn't believe that it can be hidden completely by landscaping. She does not support that aspect of the project

Boardmember Rivera is still on the fence, there are so many aspects that come into play. She is an advocate for the community and voice for what they to see happen. The project does not meet the standards and the view will be obstructed by the bridge, but if we don't have a bypass bridge we would not have access to the other side. The park has gone through several changes over time. Some of the changes are good, but she has problems with the pools and other changes, as well.

Boardmember Berge does not support Staff's recommendation or the project and she recommends denial of the project. This project does not meet the Secretary of Interior Standards; the bridge is a major problem. Boardmembers need to take into consideration the letters from the State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service when voting. She supports the goals without the bypass bridge; need to consider alternative plans without the bypass bridge.

Boardmember Larimer finds it very difficult to consider approval of the bypass bridge alone, but they need to look at the merits of each component on its own, i.e. new parking garage provides rooftop park space and includes parking. The National Park Service letter states that certain elements of the plan have the potential to create a false sense of history, specifically the reflecting pools. It may be a better approach to try and restore the original pools. Rehabilitation standards may not fit. Another concern is increasing the foot traffic through the Alcazar Gardens, and therefore changing the character of the gardens.

Vice-Chair Garbini is concerned that there is no accounting or inventory of what historic elements would be removed. They need to identify what elements are there before they start the design. Plazas are closed off to traffic during events and could be closed off to vehicular traffic during the Centennial Event. She agrees with the question from the National Park Service letter on need to remove traffic. Possibility of moving the parking to Inspiration Point is a good idea. The reflecting pools as a permanent feature is a problem, may create a false sense of history but may also look funny and out of place. They need to look at what was there during the period of significance 1912-1936, does not recommend approval of the Site Development Permit.

BOARD ACTION:

MOTION BY CHAIR LEMMO TO NOT RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AS PROPOSED TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Seconded by Boardmember Curry

Vote: 8-0-0

Motion Passes

REMINDER: NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE: Thursday, May 24, 2012

LOCATION:

City Administration Building
12th Floor, Council Committee Room

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:28PM