



BENICIA HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW COMMISSION

CITY HALL COMMISSION ROOM

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**Thursday, May 22, 2008
6:30 P.M.**

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call of Commissioners

Present: Commissioners Crompton, McKee, Taagepera, White and Chair Mang
Absent: Commissioners Haughey and Donaghue (both excused)

Staff Present:

Mike Marcus, Assistant Planner
Gina Eleccion, Management Analyst

C. Reference to Fundamental Rights of Public - A plaque stating the Fundamental Rights of each member of the public is posted at the entrance to this meeting room per Section 4.04.030 of the City of Benicia's Open Government Ordinance.

II. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

A. WRITTEN

None.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR

On motion of Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Crompton, the Consent Calendar was approved, with minutes to be amended by Commissioner Taagepera and Gina Eleccion, by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Crompton, McKee, Taagepera, White and Chair Mang
Noes: None
Absent: Commissioners Donaghue and Haughey
Abstain: None

A. Approval of Agenda

B. Approval of Minutes of April 24, 2008

Commissioner Taagepera requested a change to comments she made regarding the Tannery building. Staff advised that the tape would be reviewed, and minutes could be amended with Commissioner Taagepera's approval.

In addition, Commissioner Taagepera requested clarification on the resolution recommending design review for non-historic residences in the historic overlay district. Staff advised that there is an exhibit to the resolution that clarifies the requirements and fees. This will be included in the staff report that goes before the City Council on June 17th.

IV. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

A. SOUTHERN PACIFIC DEPOT ADA ACCESSIBILITY AND SCHEMATIC SITE PLAN – Continued per Benicia Main Street Board of Directors

90 First Street; APN: 80-20-007

PROPOSAL:

Design Review for a schematic site plan, including a parking lot and accompanying site features, and ADA accessibility. ADA accessibility upgrades include an ADA ramp on the East side of the building, new hardware for the historic sliding baggage door, and hardscape features.

Recommendation: Adopt a resolution (1) approving Design Review for site design and ADA, and (2), recommend that the City Council approve the SP Depot schematic site plan.

Mike Marcus, Assistant Planner, stated that Benicia Main Street requested this item be continued for additional review and discussion. He advised the Commission to take public testimony, if any, and the item will be brought back in June or July.

The public hearing was opened.

Nancy Martinez, Director of Benicia Main Street, noted that the item was pulled per their request. She stated her displeasure that the item is on the agenda. Staff advised that the item was formally noticed and therefore must be agendaized and continued.

Jon Van Landschoot, 175 West H Street – Questioned when the item would come back to the Commission. Mike Marcus stated that staff hopes to bring this item back in June, however, it could be July.

The public hearing was closed.

B. DESIGN REVIEW FEES FOR HISTORIC HOMES IN THE DOWNTOWN HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT – Commission Discussion

PROPOSAL:

At the April 24, 2008 regular meeting, the Historic Preservation Review Commission requested a discussion of design review fees for historic property owners.

Commissioner Taagepera recused herself due to property ownership. Gina Eleccion advised the Commission that the issues regarding appointment of Commissioners Haughey and Taagepera as historic property owners is being addressed by the City Council. Once resolved, Commissioners Haughey and Taagepera could participate in these types of discussions.

The public hearing was opened.

Leann Taagepera, historic property owner – She commented that many people would like to see the fees equitable among all property owners within the district. She would like to see how other cities structure their fees within historic district.

The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Crompton suggested continuing this item until the appt. issue could be resolved.

Commissioner McKee commented on cost based on time and materials. He believes this is a complicated issue. He would like to look at lowering fees, and have the shortfall made up by other fees.

Commissioner White commented that the City Council did not ask this to be reviewed. He is not inclined to change the fees. There are incentives for historic property owners (i.e. Mills Act).

Chair Mang commented that the fees are fair. He works on other jurisdictions that charge time and material. Often, this costs more money. He believes the existing fee schedule is equitable.

Commissioner Crompton stated fees should be based on concrete information. He is comfortable with the fees until the next fee study is done.

Commissioner White commented that the public has stated the fees are unfair to historic property owners. He feels the historic homeowners gained when a recommendation was made to have design review for non-historic property owners.

On motion of Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Crompton, a recommendation was made for the fees to remain as adopted, until the City Council directs staff to conduct another fee study. The motion was carried by the following vote:

Aye: Commissioner Crompton, White and Chair Mang
Noes: Commissioner McKee
Absent: Commissioners Donaghue and Haughey
Abstain: Commissioner Taagepera

C. **DESIGN REVIEW AUTHORITY OUTSIDE THE DOWNTOWN HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT** – Commission Discussion

PROPOSAL:

At a special meeting on January 29, 2008, the City Council directed staff to process amendments to the zoning ordinance necessary to transfer authority for commission-level design review outside historic districts from HPRC to the Planning Commission. At its February 14, 2008 regular meeting, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the amendments.

Gina Eleccion noted that this is a discussion item placed on the agenda by the Commission.

Chair Mang stated that information was in the paper regarding this item and the Commission has some concerns.

Commissioners discussed this item and potential changes. Comments were made about the qualifications of the Planning Commission. Commissioners believe this should remain with HPRC. There is concern with denigrating the design review function.

Commissioners discussed the combining of the Design Review and Historic Preservation Commission. There is the consensus that HPRC has more design experience than the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Crompton commented that there would need to be design professionals on whatever Commission has that authority to make non-historic design review decisions. Typically, in other jurisdictions, this would be handled by the Planning Commission.

The Commission previously discussed this, and did not agree with this recommendation.

On motion of Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner McKee, the consensus of the Commission was to retain all design review responsibilities.

Commissioner Crompton stated he would vote no, simply because he believes the right place for non-historic design review should be with the Planning Commission. However, he would recommend that qualified professionals be appointed to the Planning Commission prior to any change being made.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners McKee, Taagepera, White and Chair Mang
Noes: Commissioner Crompton
Absent: Commissioners Donaghue and Haughey
Abstain: None

V. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Taagepera commented on her attendance at the CPF Conference. She stated that it was extremely interesting and encouraged other Commissioners to attend. She commented on infill development in historic districts. She commented that the Secretary of Interior Standards are used as guidance for non-historic construction.

Commissioner Taagepera asked staff what is going on with the facades at Randy's and Sala Thai. Mike Marcus noted that Sala Thai is repairing dry rot, in-kind. Regarding Randy's, there are retrofit issues that are being handled. Staff can prepare a memo with a status.

Chair Mang questioned if we could review the Secretary of the Interior Standards. He requested a workshop on this item to clarify Benicia's interpretation of the Standards.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF

A. REPLACEMENT DOORS AT 700 FIRST STREET

Mike Marcus, Assistant Planner, gave an overview of the project. He noted that a replacement was made, and was approved by the Community Development Director.

Commissioner Taagepera commented on the replacement of the door, as it was not originally an historic door. She is concerned with replacement in-kind, and noted that the materials should be appropriate. Mike Marcus noted that the property owner researched more historic doors, and the replacement door will be more historically accurate than the previous door.

B. UPDATE ON HISTORIC SURVEY PROCESS

Staff to give a verbal report.

Gina Eleccion gave a review of the status. The committee has spent a significant amount of time reviewing the dpr forms, as well as providing a list of additional forms needed to Carol Roland. Gina Eleccion noted that Commissioner Taagepera prepared a comprehensive list of questions for Carol Roland to better understand her recommendations and insure consistency in the recommendations.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Mang adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.