

# MINUTES

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

### October 12, 2022

Minutes of the regular hearing of the Historic Preservation commission, of the City of Tempe, which was held in hybrid format in person at City Council Chambers, 31 East 5th Street, Tempe, AZ, and virtually through WebEx.

#### Regular Meeting 6:00 PM

**Present:**

**Staff:**

Kyle Woodson	Zachary Lechner, Historic Preservation Officer
Dave Fackler	Ambika Adhikari, Principal Planner, Com Dev
Gregory Larson	Jennifer Daniels, Administrative Assistant II, Com Dev
Elizabeth Gilbert	Jeff Tamulevich, Com Dev Director
Laurene Montero	Ryan Levesque, Deputy Director, Com Dev
Kiyomi Kurooka	

- 1) **Call to Audience:** Persons wishing to address the Commission on any matter may do so at the discretion of the Chair. However, Arizona Open Meeting Law limits Commission discussion to matters listed on the posted agenda. Other topics may be placed on a future agenda for discussion.

- 2) **Voting of the Meeting Minutes**

**Motion** by Vice Chair Fackler to approve the amended Meeting Minutes of September 14, 2022; second by Commissioner Montero. Motion passed on **6-0** vote.

**Ayes:** Kyle Woodson, Dave Fackler, Elizabeth Gilbert, Kiyomi Kurooka, Laurene Montero, and Gregory Larson

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** Jim Garrison, Chris Garraty, and Reyllynne Williams

- 3) **Approval of Agenda**

Approval of Agenda by Chair Woodson.

- 4) **Request for Certificate of Appropriateness**

Request for Certificate of Appropriateness to build a new driveway and new backyard detached casita and garage at the Robert's Residence, located at 25 W. Palmcroft Drive, a contributing property in the Tempe Historic Property Register-designated Date Palm Manor Historic District. The applicant is J. Moffatt + Associates, Inc. The presenter is James W. Moffatt (**PL220273/HPO220010**)

Mr. James Moffatt gave a presentation on the Robert's Residence located at 25 W. Palmcroft Drive. The original home was built in 1958. The owners are the 2<sup>nd</sup> owners of the home. The original owner was Ken Clark. This home was one of the first homes built in the development in Tempe. The home is lacking in garage space. The new garage will be adjacent to the old garage. The materials used on the new building would be natural-looking wood siding. The trim colors will be a similar color as the original home. Utilities will all be underground. The homeowners were not required to do any grading or drainage.

Dr. Zachary Lechner stated that the plans are solid from a historic preservation perspective. The new casita will be located behind the original home. Due to the location, the casita it will be seen from Palmcroft Drive. The casita was unable to be placed directly behind the original home due to the location of sewer lines. The addition's cedar siding tastefully references the original home. The orange being used for the trim is similar to the current color of the trim and garage of the original home. Dr. Lechner suggested using a color that was compatible with the original home but not the exact color to help in clarifying the non-historic nature of the new garage and casita. The height of the proposed garage's roof is 11 feet which is shorter than the current garage. The applicant is proposing to use asphalt shingles, which is compatible. Mr. Moffatt clarified that the red cedar siding that is being used is intended to be natural color and not stained.

Vice Chair Fackler asked if the proposed color for the trim and garage door for the new casita matches what is currently on the existing home, or if the color would be brighter than what it currently is. Mr. Moffatt stated that the new door will be brighter, and it is a different color. The existing home has a pale-yellow color around the front door and garage door. There are other colors used in the back of the existing home. The homeowners wanted to use one of the secondary colors on the new casita to distinguish it from the existing home. Commissioner Montero asked if the original garage was converted to a living space already. Mr. Moffatt stated that it is being used as a garage and does not have A/C, and it is not livable. Commissioner Kurooka stated that the presentation and materials used for the project were nice to see. Chair Woodson agreed with Commissioner Kurooka. Chair Woodson asked if there were any other properties in Date Palm Manor that have had a new garage addition. Mr. Moffatt was not aware of any other houses.

**Motion** to approve Request for Certificate of Appropriateness with conditions for approval on PL220273 by Vice Chair Fackler; second by Commissioner Gilbert.

Motion passed on **6-0** vote.

**Ayes:** Kyle Woodson, Dave Fackler, Elizabeth Gilbert, Kiyomi Kurooka, Gregory Larson, and Laurene Montero

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** Jim Garrison, Chris Garraty, and Reyllynne Williams

**5) Update on development plans for the Watson's Flowers site, located at 2425 East Apache Boulevard, and implications for the Historic Eligible building. The presenters are Larry Schmalz and Zachary Lechner, City of Tempe staff.**

Mr. Larry Schmalz gave a presentation on Watson's Flowers, located at 2425 East Apache Boulevard, as it relates to the City's Apache Boulevard affordable housing development project. Mr. Schmalz is representing the City of Tempe's Housing Division. The Tempe Coalition for Affordable Housing, known as "the Affiliate," is currently the owner of the Watson's Flowers site. Mr. Schmalz stated that he was there to ask the commission for recommendations on how to deal with the Watson's Flowers building. There are currently four projects going on in the area of 2425 East Apache Boulevard. The Affiliate is a non-profit created by the City of Tempe Housing Authority in 2018. It was formed to support the development and redevelopment of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income persons living in Tempe. Recently the nonprofit Tempe Community Action Agency (TCAA) has expressed interest in purchasing the Watson's Flowers site. The plan for the site includes TCAA administrative offices, City offices, a food pantry, and transitional housing. The City is looking to the HPC for recommendations on how to commemorate the demolished Watson's Flowers building and its history.

Chair Woodson asked Mr. Schmalz to go into more detail about the proposal for the actual Historic Eligible

building.

Dr. Lechner asked that questions be held until the end for Mr. Schmalz.

Dr. Lechner gave a presentation on the Watson's Flowers site. Back in May, Dr. Lechner stated, he informed the Commission that there was a City Council Executive Session but was unable to discuss the details due to the proceedings being confidential. It is only recently that the City decided to incorporate the Watson's Flowers site into the Apache Boulevard Project. The property is eligible for the National Register, although it has not been officially determined eligible by the State Historic Preservation Office. The building was classified as Historic Eligible by the Historic Preservation Commission in 2001. The building is an example of a relatively rare adobe commercial construction. Additions were added in the 1930s and 1950s. There are three outbuildings on the site. The outbuildings are not considered historic. The original adobe structure was constructed as a residence c. 1920. The building was purchased by the Watson family in 1934. The building has maintained its 1950s appearance. One notable absence is the iconic neon Watson's Flower sign. The sign is currently with Mesa Historic Preservation Foundation. The sign is in very poor condition, and it would take around \$100,000 to restore it. There are issues with the Watson's Flowers building. The building sits below the sidewalk grade, which has led to the current tenants having to use sandbags to prevent flooding during storms. The building also suffers from drainage problems and likely has other structural deficiencies. Mr. Thomas Jones and Mr. Mark Vinson (former Tempe HPO) surveyed the property in 2021 but did not have full access at the time. Mr. Vinson recently stated he is not advocating for demolition of the Watson's Flowers building but is concerned about its preservation potential and diminished integrity. The City has looked into partial preservation of just the adobe section of the building. Only one or two original adobe walls apparently remain, which would make just preserving the abode portion of the building difficult. There are four proposed post-demolition commemoration options that the HPO came up with: installing a plaque on the site, keeping portions of the building for display, collaborating with artists to document the history, and working with Tempe History Museum to conduct oral histories with locals associated with Watson's Flowers.

Chair Woodson state that he has very serious concerns about the project.

Vice Chair Fackler stated that he is concerned that they are jumping to demolition. He asked if the owners and proposed users have looked at the main building and how it could be used if not demolished. Without the building being surveyed by an engineer, Vice Chair Fackler said he does not believe he has enough information to make a comment on. Mr. Schmalz stated that he has looked at using the buildings, but due the drainage and grading issues, it did not look like the buildings could be saved. No final decision has been made. The former owner is supporting demolition of the building due to the current state of it. Vice Chair Fackler stated that there are many other buildings below grade. The drainage around the building could be confined or raised. There has not been a report showing that anyone from an engineering or an architectural standpoint has looked at the building. Vice Chair Fackler stated that he is very hesitant to jump in and call an end to the building because of drainage. Mark Vinson was never inside the building and did not see two sides of the building. Vice Chair Fackler would like to see other options. Chair Woodson echoed the same concerns as Vice Chair Fackler.

Commissioner Montero stated that she echoes the same concerns as Vice Chair Fackler. Commissioner Montero has significant concerns about demolishing the building with not enough convincing information that anyone has looked at and tried to incorporate it into the plan. The front of the building at least should be preserved and incorporated somehow. Commissioner Montero would like to see that alternatives are at least being looked at. Chair Woodson stated that he agrees with Commissioner Montero's sentiment.

Commissioner Kurooka stated that she agrees with Vice Chair Fackler. She would like to see some type of study done before a decision is made to demolish the building. Demolishing the building is too easy of a decision.

Chair Woodson stated that he found the staff report (memo) to be very disappointing. The City has made some good strides over the last few years in developing the Historic Preservation Program and Plan. Chair

Woodson stated that he was surprised to get a proposal that wanted to demolish the building and without asking for the Commission's input. Chair Woodson stated that he was disappointed that this was the first formal presentation on this matter. The justification for demolishing the building is based on some drainage issues, which is not a convincing argument. He would like to see buildings and properties with this type of significance treated as an opportunity instead of an obstacle. For example, the Hayden House, he noted. Chair Woodson stated that Mr. Vinson's recommendation was for adaptive reuse last year and not demolition. Dr. Lechner stated that Mr. Vinson's comment about the demolition was based on new comments received from the former owner of the building. Chair Woodson stated that the City, Commission, and Planning Division should be looking at this as an opportunity for the parcel to be centered around the new property. Chair Woodson stated that he is not going to recommend in any way that the Commission proceed with considering post-demolition commemoration. Chair Woodson asked for clarification on the Affiliate. He asked, "Is this a partial City-owned parcel?" Dr. Lechner stated the City does not own any of the parcel. Chair Woodson asked how this ties in with a City development for low-income housing. Mr. Schmalz explained that the Affiliate owns the property. They have their own separate board, not controlled by the City. They are a private nonprofit group. A second nonprofit group, TCAA, has approached the Affiliate to purchase the property and to do a joint development, so they are able to do a full range of services. Chair Woodson asked what the City's involvement is in this project and why the commission is hearing this item if it involves a private entity. Mr. Schmalz stated the City wanted to make the Commission aware of what was going on and get their recommendation on what they would like to see happen to the building as far as commemoration. Chair Woodson asked if the City is just advising on the project. Mr. Schmalz stated that the Commission is just advising on the commemoration due to possibly having City offices in the development. There is no funding from the City. Dr. Lechner stated that even if the parcel was owned by the City or this was a City project, due to the building being only Historic Eligible, according to the Historic Preservation code, the process does not have to go through the Historic Preservation Commission. This item is being brought to the HPC for insight and advice.

Vice Chair Fackler suggested the coalition of groups have the section of building (1920s-1950s) looked at by the engineers and architects and consider how the building could be protected and how can it be reused in the new development. If it cannot be reused, that should be explained. Chair Woodson echoed Vice Chair Fackler's suggestions.

**6) Update from the Tempe Historic Preservation Foundation. The presenter is Hugh Hallman.**

Mr. Hugh Hallman gave a presentation on the Tempe Historic Preservation Foundation. The foundation was founded in April 2005 by Darlene Justus and Evelyn Hallman. The first project was the Eisendrath House. The foundation is a nonprofit. Its job is to serve as an advocate for historic preservation. The foundation averages \$50,000 or less in revenue. The mission is to "provide community members with a means directly to participate in Tempe Historic Preservation." It does that through advocacy. The president of the foundation is Dawn Hart. Joe Nucci is Vice President and Co-Chair. Dr. Amy Douglas is Secretary, and Todd Skinner is Treasurer. Their activities are to advocate for preservation of Tempe's historic assets. This foundation has actively participated in or advocated for preservation of the Eisendrath House, relocation of the Valley National Bank dome, as well as the rehabilitation of the Hayden Flour Mill and Silos, Gonzales-Martinez House, Hayden House, and Double Buttes Cemetery. The foundation also actively participated in the Mill Avenue HPC ordinance rewrite, City General Plan processes, and engagement of the Hayden House and Streetcar. When the Streetcar was being pushed forward there was a chance it would take land from the Double Butte Cemetery on the south side of Rio Salado. The Foundation jumped in and advocated that the Valley Metro Rail was not going to take any more land from the Double Butte Cemetery, and that the Streetcar would go down the middle of the road at that location. The Foundation partners with the Rio Salado Foundation and other charities to assist in fundraising. Mr. Hallman said he'd just received a potential donation of \$50,000 to fund an engineer and/or architect to examine the Watson's Flowers site and provide a needs and building assessment. Chair Woodson thanked Mr. Hallman for getting the money together for the Watson's Flowers building assessment.

**7) Request for approval of a motion in support of rehabilitating the Historic Eligible and National Register-listed Gonzales-Martinez House, located at 321 West 1<sup>st</sup> Street.**

Dr. Lechner stated he is in the process of applying for a Heritage Fund Historic Preservation Grant through Arizona State Parks and Trails. The maximum award from the Heritage Fund grant is \$150,000. November 1, 2022 is the first deadline to apply. The people that review the application would like to see public support for projects.

**Motion** to approve request for approval of a motion in support of rehabilitating the Historic Eligible and National Register listed Gonzales-Martinez House, located at 321 West 1<sup>st</sup> Street, by Vice Chair Fackler; second by Commissioner Montero.

Motion passed on **6-0** vote.

**Ayes:** Kyle Woodson, Dave Fackler, Elizabeth Gilbert, Kiyomi Kurooka, Laurene Montero, and Gregory Larson

**Nays:**

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** Jim Garrison, Chris Garraty, and Reyllynne Williams

**8) Chair / Staff Updates**

Chair Woodson stated that the Arizona Historic Preservation Conference is taking place in Yuma next week.

Dr. Lechner updated the Commission on the Date Palm Manor property that was discussed at the last HPC Meeting: 137 West Palmcroft Drive. The homeowner was proposing a prefab metal addition in the backyard. The owner mentioned that a neighbor had installed a similar large metal garage and was not aware of that neighbor having had to get a permit. Dr. Lechner learned the property in question is 32 West Palmdale Drive. The owner of that property did get a permit, although the application it did not pass through the Historic Preservation as it should have. This was because the project was not marked properly in the City's permit tracking system as a historic property for the planner to see. The Historic Preservation Office will be looking into what other contributing properties may have been missed. New data entry will be done to prevent that same error from happening again in the future.

Dr. Lechner followed up on Vice Chair Fackler's question from the September HPC meeting relating to 137 West Palmcroft Drive. Vice Chair Fackler's question was, "Would this permit being requested require a variance?" Dr. Lechner said he communicated a planner in the Planning Division. The Planner stated, per the zoning code, when adjacent to a dedicated public alley, the side yard setback for an accessory building shall be measured from the midpoint of the alley. As a result, the project would not need a variance.

Dr. Lechner stated that another demolition application for 606 South Roosevelt Street, Marriott House, has been received. This is a Historic Eligible property built in 1935. There was a previous demolition application in November 2021. The house is now under new ownership. Due to that new ownership, a new demolition application had to be submitted. This has started the 30-day stay of demolition process over again. The 30-day stay expires on November 4, 2022. Dr. Lechner emailed the applicant to explain the stay and to suggest adjusting plans to potentially save the structure. The applicant is the owner of a demolition company. Dr. Lechner will follow up with the property owner/developer. He explained that since the home is Historic Eligible, when the application comes through the Planning Division, before being approved it goes to the Historic Preservation Office for a 30- day stay of demolition. During that time, the HPO has the opportunity to reach out the applicant and/or people involved in the project to see if there is a non-demolition solution that can be approved. If no solution is reached, the applicant can demolish at the end of the 30 days.

Mr. Ambika Adhikari updated the Commission on General Plan 2050. There will be a City-wide meeting on October 26, 2022, from 6:00pm-7:30pm at Legoland at the Arizona Mills Mall. Mr. Adhikari said the City would like to receive feedback from the public.

Dr. Lechner updated the Commission on Commissioner Williams being selected to serve on the Tempe City Council Parks and Streets Renaming Ad Hoc Committee. This committee was established to rename streets and parks in the city that were named after individuals who had membership in the Ku Klux Klan. Chair Woodson asked if there was any hook with the HPC and the effort going on with the ad hoc committee, since they are naming parks and schools. Dr. Lechner said he has not received any invitations for him personally or the Commission but said that previous HPO John Southard may have been consulted. Dr. Lechner did receive an email from City staff to reach out to Commissioner Williams to see if she was interested in serving on the Committee. She agreed to do so.

**9) Current Events / Announcements / Future Agenda Items**

- **Member Announcements**
- **Staff Announcements**

Dr. Lechner updated the Commission on the November agenda. The Commission will need to approve the 2022 Annual HPC Report that must be sent to City Council. This report presents attendance and accomplishments for the year by the HPC.

Meeting Adjourned by Chair Woodson at 7:56 pm.

Prepared by: Jennifer Daniels, Administrative Assistant  
Reviewed by: Zachary Lechner, Historic Preservation Officer

jd:zl