



MINUTES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DECEMBER 11, 2024

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 6:01 PM

Present:

Staff:

Kyle Woodson	Jeff Tamulevich, Comm Development Director
Dave Fackler	Ryan Levesque, Deputy Director, Comm Development
Erin Davis	Zachary Lechner, Historic Preservation Officer
Kristie Melcher	Ambika Adhikari, Principal Planner, Comm Dev
Reylynn Williams	Brenda Abney, Tempe Museum Manager, Comm Ser
Kiyomi Kurooka	Jennifer Daniels, Administrative Assist II, Comm Dev
Kathleen Lamp	

Native Land Acknowledgement Statement: We wish to acknowledge that Tempe is the homeland of the Native people who have inhabited this landscape since time immemorial. These ancestral lands of the O’odham (known as the Pima), Piipaash (known as the Maricopa), and their ancestors extend far beyond our city. This land continues to be spiritually connected to the O’odham of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community and Gila River Indian Community. We accept the responsibility of stewarding those places and solemnly pledge to consider this commitment in every action.

- 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.

Mr. Robert Moore, Tempe, Arizona. Mr. Moore spoke about the Danelle Plaza redevelopment efforts and ongoing discussion regarding demolition of a mid-century structure there. This structure is owned by the City of Tempe. Mr. Moore would like the Historic Preservation Commission to join the discussion on Danelle Plaza’s redevelopment.

Chair Woodson asked Dr. Lechner if this item will be on a future agenda Dr. Lechner stated that he will look into putting the item on a future agenda.

- 2) Voting of the Meeting Minutes for September 11, 2024**

Commissioner Williams stated the following section needs correction: on page 2, 4th paragraph, there is a repeated “from”. In the second sentence of the last paragraph on page 2, “Phoenix” is misspelled. Page 4, 4th paragraph, 9th line: the word “principal” is repeated. On Page 7, last paragraph: “Elias-Rodriguez” and “Eisendrath” are spelled incorrectly.

Motion by Vice Chair Fackler to approve Meeting Minutes with stated corrections for September 11, 2024; second by Commissioner Williams. Motion passed on **7-0** vote.

Ayes: Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Fackler, Commissioners Davis, Melcher, Williams, Kurooka and Lamp

Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioners Robinson and Justice

3) **Approval of Agenda**

Vice Chair Fackler requested to move this item to agenda item #4 due to #5 and #6 possibly being lengthy discussions.

Motion by Vice Chair Fackler to move agenda item #6 to item #4 tonight: second by Commissioner Kurooka. Motion passed on 7-0 vote.

Ayes: Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Fackler, Commissioners Davis, Melcher, Williams, Kurooka and Lamp

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioners Robinson and Justice

4) Presentation on City of Tempe's Public Art Plan. The presenter is Rebecca Rothman, City of Tempe Community Services Manager.

This item was moved from #6 to #4 tonight.

Ms. Rebecca Rothman, Community Services Manager, gave a presentation on the City of Tempe's Public Art Plan. Tempe's Public Art is part of the Tempe Arts and Culture Division. It is one of four entities within the division. The others are the Tempe History Museum, Tempe Center for the Arts, and Tempe Community Arts. Tempe Public Art has an active map that shows the art in Tempe. Staff has an active plan that they refer to on a yearly basis. The public art outreach will continue throughout January and beyond.

Chair Woodson asked, what is your projection for completion of the comprehensive plan? Ms. Rothman stated that staff expects to have a draft plan by late spring or early summer and a complete plan by this time next year.

Commissioner Kurooka said an Arts and Culture 2015 plan previously recommended increasing the public art to 2% from 1% and recommended including art in multi-residential projects in private developments. Is this an opportunity to move forward with those recommended items? Ms. Rothman stated that it is an opportunity to revisit that. The consulting team was given the 2015 plan, and staff has mentioned these items for the consulting team to consider with stakeholders and the public. Commissioner Kurooka said she would like to see art in the multi-residential projects because there are so many not being included.

Ms. Brenda Abney stated she would pass around the Tempe Public Art Plan flyer with a QR code to scan and share feedback on the plan.

Chair Woodson asked if something was sent out in the newsletter with the utility bill to the public. Ms. Rothman stated the survey is among the winter registration opportunities for Community Services. Chair Woodson asked if there was a historic presentation component in the 2015 plan. Ms. Rothman stated that the 2015 is an Arts and Culture Plan. It is not specific to public arts, but it does mention historic preservation. The upcoming plan will only focus on public art moving.

Commissioner Williams asked, have you shared this survey with the Native Americans art organizations? She said she'd like to see more Native American artists become part of the City's public art projects. Ms. Rothman stated that the consulting team met with the Native group Hekiui prior to launching the survey and are actively working with some of the artists. There is a lot of ongoing conversation going and we have shared the survey with Native communities.

- 5) Update on pending redevelopment of First Congregational Church site, located at 101 East 6th Street. The Church is a Tempe Historic Property Register-designated property. The presenter is Darin Sender of Sender Associates.

This item was moved from #4 to #5 tonight.

Ms. Darin Sender, Sender Associates, gave an updated presentation on the redevelopment plan for the First Congregational Church. Ms. Sender introduced Mr. Doug Tichenor, Core Spaces' Vice President of Development. Mr. Tichenor stated he came onto the project earlier this year. Ms. Sender stated that since she last met with the HPC, they have taken on a co-developer for the project. This is now a Wexford Development and Core Spaces project. Ms. Sender introduced Mr. Mike Duffy, associate principal with RSP Architects. Mr. Duffy is responsible for the design of the project. Ms. Sender also introduced Ms. Jennifer Boblick of Sender Associates. Wexford Developments purchased the First Congregational Church property in 2016. At one point, Wexford Development proposed demolishing all buildings on site, which would include the Blue Fish office building and the church buildings. By the time this most recent iteration of the project went before the HPC, Wexford had also purchased the House of Tricks site in 2021. There has been a lot of discussion with the City regarding preserving the church sanctuary and transferring the title to the City for preservation. The Harry Walker House is classified as Historic Eligible and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The project design has changed from what was brought before the HPC last year. Wexford/Core Spaces kept the main massing of the project. The developer will be requesting a PAD overlay. This will set the building standards, setbacks and building height. They will also request a DPR review concerning the materials, colors, and elevations. Per City Code and the Zoning Development Code, if the applicant submits an entitlement application, the HPC will receive a request for review and recommendation. Ms. Sender said they are also requesting an alley abandonment on the site. They will be preserving and building over the pedestrian easement. She would like to discuss public art that the developer is proposing in that area. They will also need a plat to be processed. Part of the Historic Preservation Commission's role will also be to review a request to remove part of the historic overlay on the site. The developer will retain the historic overlay on the sanctuary and will be asking for HPC review of the proposed development, including a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the alteration of the existing sanctuary.

Mr. Duffy gave a presentation on the project's status. The main entrance will be off of 7th Street for pedestrians only. The vehicular entrance will be off of 6th Street.

Vice Chair Fackler asked what the status of the Walker House is. Ms. Sender stated they have had a consultant on board for 1.5 years trying to determine if the house is structurally sound to move, where to move it to, and how to get it there. It has been determined that it can be moved. The City has decided the developer should look at moving it to Jaycee Park. The developer is trying to figure out with the consultant how we can get it there. The consultant will be flying in to look at the route in January. Vice Chair Fackler stated it is nice to know it has a home but is not sure about the appropriateness of Jaycee Park. Ms. Sender stated that there are a lot of places the home could have been moved to, but it had to be somewhere close enough to get it to. Vice Chair Fackler asked if they looked at Mitchell Park. Ms. Sender stated that the City looked everywhere. Vice Chair Fackler stated that Jaycee Park is a nice place for it to rest, but it is out of context as far as the residential period and architecture. Chair Woodson asked how the decision was made to move the house to that location and what the location is. Ms. Sender stated it was a decision made by the City. It will be moved to Jaycee Park on 5th Street within the Hardy Yard. Mr. Ryan Levesque, Deputy Director—Community Development, stated that the City has not made a final decision on the location yet. Ultimately, there must be a public hearing on a development agreement. Vice Chair Fackler stated that Mitchell Park is surrounded by similar buildings.

Chair Woodson said he is very pleased with everyone's efforts to save the house. That was a big question at the HPC meeting last year. He asked, now that the entire church parcel is in your possession now, are you going to turn over the entire parcel to the City? Ms. Sender stated that currently Wexford and Core Spaces owns the church property, Blue Fish property, and House of Tricks property. In the development agreement, there will be a stipulation for the developer to transfer the title of the sanctuary portion to the

City. Chair Woodson asked what was behind the decision making on this agreement with the title transfer. Ms. Sender stated that it was a request from the City. Chair Woodson asked if that was part of the proposal the HPC saw last year. Ms. Sender stated it was. Chair Woodson stated that something was mentioned about a restaurant. Is that something that may or may not happen in the future? What is being talked about for this space in the future? Dr. Lechner stated there is nothing set in stone. Those are just ideas that have been discussed. Mr. Duffy stated that they did not want to set up a situation where the boundary makes it unusable for a different use. It should be able to function on its own.

Vice Chair Fackler asked if there will be any parking rights associated with the transfer of title. Ms. Sender stated that is being discussed. There is a lot of meter parking on 6th Street. The Center City (CC) Zoning District does not require any parking for a building of that size. Vice Chair Fackler stated that perhaps there could be some parking for key individuals in the building.

Chair Woodson asked, what are the future steps with this project and what do you expect the HPC's involvement to be? Ms. Sender stated that the future steps are moving forward with the entitlements with Planning and keeping Dr. Lechner involved. She anticipates coming back for another Study Session prior to the hearing. She and her team will be back in front of the HPC for a formal hearing prior to going to the Development Review Commission or City Council. If there is time in the schedule, she would like to come back and show the HPC the final project plans. The neighborhood meeting will be held on January 7. Chair Woodson asked if both properties are listed in the National Register? Dr. Lechner stated just the Walker House is listed on the National Register. The church is locally designated. Chair Woodson asked, will any involvement with the National Park Service's Keeper of the Register be handled in due course? Dr. Lechner stated that moving a National Register-listed building is usually grounds for delisting. He said he will seek consult the State Historic Preservation Office to determine whether they would recommend delisting the Walker House.

- 6) Update on Request for Proposals (RFP) for redevelopment of City-owned land, consisting of approximately 0.34 acres located at 401-405 South Maple Avenue, directly east of the Tempe Historic Property Register-designated Hackett House and Tempe (Hilge) Bakery building. The presenters are Meg Zemlicka, City of Tempe Economic Development Program Manager, and April Kroner, City of Tempe Deputy Economic Development Director.

This item was moved from #5 to #6 tonight.

Ms. April Kroner, City of Tempe Deputy Economic Development Director, and Ms. Meg Zemlicka, City of Tempe Economic Development Program Manager, gave a presentation on 401-405 South Maple Avenue.

Ms. Zemlicka stated the original RFP was issued on June 25, 2024, for a high-rise mixed-use project. The RFP closed on September 6, 2024, with no submittals. The team received feedback from entities that showed interest but did not respond to the RFP. They stated that the following were prohibiting factors: the hotel component, the cost of the first-floor event space, requirements for utility relocations. City Council's direction on September 19, 2024, was to reissue the RFP for a smaller scale mid-rise development, residential units, 30% workforce units, event space and commercial kitchen for Tempe Sister Cities.

Vice Chair Fackler asked, what is pushing this? City Council or Tempe Sister Cities? Ms. Kroner stated that a lot of decisions were made prior to her coming onboard in January 2024. She said her understanding is that Tempe Sister Cities is in need of event space. They are very limited with their current outdoor area. They need a year-around facility. The current commercial kitchen is outdated. In addition, the City is looking for housing projects within the downtown that will provide increased density and affordable and/or workforce housing. This is an opportunity to meet both Tempe Sister Cities' and the City's needs. Vice Chair Fackler said he understands the needs, but there are other solutions elsewhere. He was glad there were no proposals in September. The City has spent the

last 2 years putting together General Plan 2050. Within the Historic Preservation component of that plan is a proposal to establish a downtown historic core. There is currently no building from 3rd Street to 6th Street over four stories. Throwing in a 25-story building around two-story buildings will dwarf all surrounding buildings. Vice Chair Fackler said that if he could make a recommendation to the City Council, it would be to put this redevelopment on pause. Let's see what the community comes up with to build out and protect this core area. He will reject anything less than a 15-foot of separation. The Hackett House is the oldest brick commercial building in Maricopa County. It needs to be protected.

Commissioner Kurooka stated she has the same questions as Vice Chair Fackler regarding what is driving this. This site is very small for what you are trying to do. A high-rise will need some space all around. I can't see this project enhancing the downtown core, he said. The City can figure out funding for the kitchen for Tempe Sister Cities. He said he's not sure about asking a developer to give something in exchange for doing this project. The arts center expansion did not happen. The Farmer Arts District was supposed to have a library, and there is no art in the district. I would like this to be reviewed more carefully, he said.

Chair Woodson stated that when the HPC saw the original proposal, he was surprised to see the height of the project. It is absurd to think about putting a building of that height right in the middle of the historic core. This site is a very poor place to do this for all of the reasons the other Commissioners mentioned. If you walk down Mill Avenue through the whole historic core between 3rd Street and 6th Street, with some exceptions, you don't see any high rises. He said, I don't feel like the City should be pushing a proposal like this just for Tempe Sister Cities. He said he supports their need, but it does not need to be done in a proposal like this. He stated that he agrees with the other Commissioners. One recent case where the City was behind the project was the TCAA building on the Watson's Flowers property, yet the entire proposal went out the door. You cannot count on a developer to come in and meet these needs. He asked that Economic Development put a pause on this.

Vice Chair Fackler held up a study conducted by the architectural firm Par 3, which he said was accepted by City Council in 1973. In this document, he said, you can find the Hackett House and what became the Mill Avenue Shops. Look at what the Par 3 study showed in between those two locations. What you will see are one-story restaurants and retail space along 4th Street, with 4th Street becoming a plaza. This approach is what we and the community are looking for.

Chair Woodson said he'd like to hear more if and when the RFP is reissued.

Chair Woodson read a comment online from Commissioner Melcher. She said, "I whole heartedly agree with the Commissioners who have already spoken regarding the Hackett House project. I echo that the developers will take this as an open door for development."

7) Chair/Staff Updates and Announcements

Chair Woodson had no updates.

Mr. Amika Adhikari thanked the Commission for its feedback on Character Area 6 Plan. It was unanimously adopted by City Council in October. The Planning Division is planning to prepare two more Character Area Plans. The final remaining Character Area Plan is Character Area 2. Staff will be beginning preparations in January 2025. The plan should be completed by August. Planning is also looking to update Character Area 4. Mr. Adhikari said, on a personal note, I have been with the City for the last eight years, and I will be retiring on January 6, 2025.

Dr. Lechner stated the Hayden Flour Mill was listed in the National Register of Historical Places in September. The developer will now be able to apply for federal historic tax credits. The HPC Yearly Report is due very soon. Five Commissioners have emailed their approval; some have commented, too. The November bond election was successful. More than \$12 million in historic preservation funding was

approved by Tempe voters. A couple of upcoming CIP projects are the Downtown Historic Core Plan and a study of historic neighborhoods from 1961 to 1980. Dr. Lechner next spoke on the Spear House, located at 1015 South Farmer. It is significant due to its association with Tempe's 1887 Farmer's Addition. The home is Historic Eligible only. In 2023, the current owners received a use permit to build a 2nd story addition and demolish a historic deck. Dr. Lechner said that, at the time, he contacted the SHPO because of the house's possible eligibility for the National Register. Due to rising construction costs, the owners decided not to build a 2nd story addition. Then they ultimately decided to demolish the entire house and build a new home on the property. With the owner's permission Dr. Lechner photographed the house, which is in poor condition. The demolition permit request has not yet been approved; it is pending additional documents.

Ms. Brenda Abney, Tempe Museum Manager, reminded everyone that the Petersen House is decorated for the holidays and open on weekends for viewings. Per the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the museum manger sits on the HPC. She has been promoted to Deputy Director of Arts and Culture starting December 30. There will be a new designee that will sit on this Commission. It will likely be Ms. Jen Sweeney, the City's new historic house coordinator.

Meeting Adjourned by Chair Woodson.

Hearing adjourned at 7:44 PM.

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