

**CITY OF MESA**  
**MINUTES OF THE**  
***HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE***

**DATE:** March 10, 2005      **TIME:** 6:00 p.m.

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	<b>STAFF PRESENT</b>	<b>OTHERS PRESENT</b>
Chair David Dean Vince Anderson Victor Linoff Ron Peters	Amy Morales Patrick Murphy	Sandra Apsey Jared Smith
<b>MEMBERS ABSENT</b>		
Lane Burdick Pat Mendivil		

**1. Call to Order.**

The March 10, 2005 Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Committee was called to order at 6:04 p.m.

**2. Consider Minutes of February 10, 2005 Regular Meeting.**

It was moved by Vic Linoff, seconded by Ron Peters to RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF the February 10, 2005 Minutes, as amended.

Vote: 4 in favor  
0 opposed

**3. Discuss the 2005 Historic Preservation Award, Nominations – Amy Morales**

Ms. Morales gave a brief presentation on the current status of the historic preservation awards program and stated seven (7) historic preservation award nominations were received. Committee members were provided copies of the nomination forms and asked to review the nominations, and rank their choices on the selection matrix form provided. Ms. Morales requested Committee members return their results to the Historic Preservation Office no later than March 31, 2005. Ms. Morales added that the award winners would be determined at next months meeting.

**4. Discuss Post War II Neighborhood Study**

Mr. Murphy provided a brief update on the Post War project as Mr. Greg Marek (former City employee) recently retired and will no longer be the project manager. Mr. Murphy stated that no staff member has been assigned to this project at this time. Mr. Marek synopsised previous surveys and submitted a schedule of additional tasks to be completed to Ms. Allen.

Chair Dean inquired if Mr. Marek had submitted a proposal to provide services to the City as a consultant to work on the Post War II Study.

Mr. Murphy responded that it is his belief that Mr. Marek had submitted a proposal to work as a consultant on this project. Due to the City's current budget situation, staff is unsure whether or not the City will be able to fund any consultants at this time. Mr. Murphy added that Ms. Allen is currently working with the City Manager to address existing staffing needs within the department.

Chair Dean inquired if Mr. Marek had submitted a summary of past work that had been completed prior to his retirement, or if a plan had been provided delineating future tasks that need to be completed.

Mr. Murphy responded that Mr. Marek had submitted a summary of completed work and a list of future tasks. Mr. Murphy added that the report should have included the information flyer, press release, and an information packet for each neighborhood to be surveyed.

Chair Dean acknowledged that the Committee does recognize that the City is currently experiencing a budget crunch, that there is a staffing shortage, and that some City positions cannot be filled at this time.

Chair Dean stated the Committee has made this Post War project a work priority, and that the Committee is currently "hand stringed" by the public notice rules. The public notice rules prohibit the committee members from gathering amongst themselves without first posting their gatherings. Chair Dean then invited committee members to share their ideas or frustrations on the "potential hold" that has been placed on this Post War project due to staffing issues.

Mr. Linoff stated as a new phase of this program is being entered, it is essential that Committee members understand what is going to be expected for the future of this program. The essential work has already been completed such as the Pre World War II historical surveys and the identification of numerous landmarks within the City. Mr. Linoff stated that the Post World War II neighborhoods should be encompassed as Historic Districts. He added that the Post War project is equally as important as any historical work that has previously been completed.

Mr. Linoff stated that the City needs to recognize that this program has been incredibly successful and that this program has been ran with very low operating costs. In terms of staff time, it is estimated that less then 10% of total staff time is spent on preservation. Mr. Linoff stated that the listing of historic districts have assisted with the stabilization of six neighborhoods. Because of these listings the property values in these neighborhoods have increased tremendously. Mr. Linoff provided the example of a home that recently sold in the Evergreen Historic District for the amount of \$399,000.

Mr. Linoff mentioned that Mesa has received a number of accolades and recognitions from SHPO and others in the community for its historic preservation program. This program was built in a very short amount of time, and is the envy of many other Cities within the State of Arizona. Mr. Linoff felt that it is important for this program to continue and hoped that staff will do whatever it takes to make that happen.

Mr. Linoff explained that previous discussions revolved around creating a schedule on how many properties the committee could review and evaluate in a reasonable period of time. Mr. Linoff stated that the neighborhoods identified need to be evaluated and standards need to be developed.

Mr. Peters stated that the City needs to begin recognizing the importance of preservation and step forward as an effort to save Mesa's neighborhoods. It is one of the most important things for this community to do. Mr. Peters also stated that if Mesa's streets can be repaved, Mesa can restore our neighborhoods. Mr. Peters stated that he is tired of the City ignoring the neighborhoods and historic preservation. Mr. Peters added that the City has ignored historic preservation ever since the CLG (Certified Local Government) began operating.

Mr. Peters stated the following:

1. This Committee has worked hard on preservation and so have many of Mesa's citizens.
2. The City needs to recognize that this program is probably one of the most important programs for this community.
3. It is very important to pay attention to preservation now because if it does not continue to move forward, eligible neighborhoods will be lost.

Mr. Peters stated that he dislikes "being caught in a budget crunch," and believes that "there are obviously a lot of areas to cut and believes that Historic Preservation has done more than its fair share in this community."

Mr. Peters stated that he agrees with Mr. Linoff that historic preservation has a return on its investment within this community has been phenomenal. The City Council does not understand that all they need to do is walk through these neighborhoods and look at the values they have added to the community."

Mr. Linoff stated that he plans to take this message to the streets, and that he plans to speak at the Tempe Leadership meeting on the Economics of Preservation. Mr. Linoff stated that he will make a PowerPoint presentation on "Shifting Away the Importance of the History" leaning towards the Economics of Preservation. He explained that the message in the presentation is using leadership information in the community and providing a better understanding that "preservation is not about people hugging old buildings anymore, it's about smart people hugging old buildings for their economic value."

Mr. Peters reported that more people visit historic properties in this country every year than go to Disneyland, which has a phenomenal economic impact to this country.

Chair Dean stated he would argue that every dollar this City spends on Historic Preservation whether it is funding something, or paying for staff time -- every dollar spent is returned to the City at least four-fold: in either savings, or property re-sales/property value, and at least four dollars is returned back for every dollar that is spent. He felt that there is not a single service the City provides that has a return on the investment of this same caliber.

Vice Chair Anderson stated that costs imposed by deteriorating neighborhoods can be very high, even without taking the historical value of homes into consideration. He further explained that these deteriorating neighborhoods would result in the City spending more money for policemen, narcotics prevention, and so forth. Vice Chair Anderson added that the City would be laden with these types of problems particularly in the areas that surround the square mile. Vice Chair Anderson stated that the City might be faced with costs that would be so far beyond any expenses that are incurred now just by policing these neighborhoods. Part of the future of the whole City of Mesa is the quality of life in the City. Vice Chair Anderson stated that the City has a great quality of life sales tax, but will not buy a thing -- if these neighborhoods deteriorate to the point where the City has nothing but a giant slum surrounding the downtown, and that is what he believes that the City is faced with in potentially ten years.

Chair Dean added that he echoed the Committee member's comments and that Historic Preservation is the cheapest way that this City can begin preservation and revitalization efforts in all neighborhoods, whether they are Historic or not. He further stated that the historic preservation process stimulates neighbors to come outside their front doors and start talking to each other, as well as assist them to become organized in a single common issue that is: are we historic, are we valuable, and are we important? These are the kinds of organizing features alone that are extremely cheap for the City to promote.

Chair Dean further expanded that the City would not have to publish any literature for this effort because the State and Federal Governments already do all this, nor do they have to go out and organize and attend the meetings

because the neighborhoods can do this and the neighborhoods can have the support from the committee and SHPO. Chair Dean stated that it is the cheapest way to get neighbors together to start that process of talking and becomes the catalyst for change. Neighborhoods survive when neighbors take pride in their homes and in their neighborhoods. Crime, traffic control, blight, and code enforcement would all be reduced by these efforts.

Chair Dean stated that for a few months he has been advocating for a member of the Neighborhood Preservation (Outreach) Office to attend a Historic Preservation meeting. Chair Dean stated that by having conversations with representatives from this department, it will help the Committee members understand what this office does and maybe even help the Outreach Office do their jobs by helping neighborhoods organize and provide them a point of contact to help them do their things. Chair Dean further explained in turn – the Outreach Office could provide the Historic Preservation Committee access to the same neighborhoods so that neighbors can have conversations about Historic Preservation and begin taking pride in their neighborhoods.

Chair Dean said that for five months he has requested an item be placed on the agenda to have a presentation from the Neighborhood Outreach Division on what they do. Each month he is told that it could not be placed on the agenda.

Chair Dean stated that Mesa's Historic Preservation Committee should be part of a partnered program with Neighborhood Outreach and if they cannot attend meetings, that is a big problem. Fortunately both the Historic Preservation Office and the Neighborhood Outreach Office have a common Manager, and that it would be his hope that an appeal at this level would provide an opportunity to open the door and give us those allocations and resources needed and help to set some work program priorities. Chair Dean stated that he is contemplating having a conversation with the City Manager or start showing up "as citizens" at City Council meetings.

Mr. Linoff stated he believes with the Post War II study will provide Mesa the opportunity to set national standards for Post World War II historic projects. This is an ideal case study as it could be recognized nationally and will be a great thing for the City of Mesa. The homes out east will not last long enough to become historic, as they are old block simple ranch houses and it does not take long to become serviceable properties. Mr. Linoff stated that the message today is "historic preservation is partly the saving old buildings -- but more important it is neighborhood preservation." Mr. Linoff stated that it takes so little to get people enthused and energized about their neighborhoods, and in ways that they never have before this study was conducted, our historic district is exactly the same. As neighbors who don't talk to each other or have block watches suddenly there is one force in the neighborhood who comes forward and coalesces everything and brings people together -- then you have a neighborhood.

Mr. Linoff stated that if West 2nd Street were not a Historic District, the area would be very much at risk today, and that every neighborhood that gets saved means less expenses and burdens incurred by the tax payers or the citizens of Mesa.

Chair Dean summarized that the Post War study is a work major priority for the Historic Preservation Committee and that the Committee's communication expectations are to be made knowledgeable of what can make this project happen. For instance, if it means allocating contracting resources, reprioritizing the workloads, partnering with other departments, or whatever it takes to make this project happen.

Mr. Peters stated it would be a good idea to start taking advantage of Council meetings by making weekly presentations on Historic Preservation and explaining the importance of preservation to this community.

Mr. Linoff stated as Committee members they have volunteered and gone far beyond what their charge is by going out in the field, and completing the majority of the field research. Mr. Linoff stated that the Committee cannot get the basic support they need because they are not able to do everything themselves, and do not have access to all of the information. The Committee needs some staff support and that it would also help if the Committee were to be provided with a vehicle to use for the site surveys. Mr. Linoff felt that the City is saying: "It's nice you're volunteering, but we aren't interested."

Mr. Linoff stated that as Chair Dean had mentioned, the committee's volunteer efforts would become "hamstrung" by the process of public notification, which does add to staff burden.

Mr. Linoff stated that the Committee members do expect a communicative dialogue between the Historic Preservation Officer, the City Managers Office, and the Committee. The Committee would like to know what's going on with preservation projects, rather than being informed of decisions that were made without involving the Committee. Expectations of this communicative process are intended to allow Committee members the opportunities to provide responses.

Mr. Linoff clarified that this discussion was not aimed at the staff sitting in this room and that the success of this program is not only this Committee, it is the partnership that the Committee has with staff and the real commitment that everyone has made.

Mr. Peters asked for a status update on the new Housing Committee formed by the Mayor and Council. He also wanted to know how the Housing Committee will integrate with the HPC on historic preservation issues.

Mr. Murphy responded that the Housing Committee was formed to help implement the Housing Plan. He said he could not recall any discussion on historic preservation or renovation of existing properties, as they seem to deal more with new construction. He said he would be sure to make copies of any information he can gather for all the Committee members.

Mr. Linoff stated the percentage of existing properties is exceedingly high in the City and if anyone is considering a plan to replace them, they should work on a strategy to try and save them. Preservation is no longer about historians sitting around and talking about saving old buildings, it is an economic strategy for the City that needs to be looked at.

Chair Dean stated that these comments discussed should be discussed as a future agenda item.

Mr. Linoff suggested placing an item on a City Council study session agenda to update them about preservation activities in the City.

Chair Dean suggested providing that update at the same meeting that the Historic Preservation Awards are presented.

Mr. Murphy said he would work with the Historic Preservation Officer and City Manager's Office to see if they will allow the agenda item to be added.

## **5. Discuss Demolition Process for Historic Structures and Sites**

Ms. Morales gave a presentation and answered questions regarding the demolition process for historic buildings. Ms. Morales stated that this item was placed on the agenda due to concerns that the Committee had regarding the possible demolition of the Biggs House in Lehi. She explained that the Biggs House is not listed on the local or national historic registers, however it is classified as a Level 1 Historic Structure in the 1984 survey that was completed by Linda Laird.

Ms. Morales provided the Committee with information from sections 12.1 through 12.4 of the City of Mesa Zoning Ordinance, which outlines the process that must be followed before the proposed demolition of historic buildings and structures.

Ms. Morales further explained that the Zoning Ordinance describes a historic structure as a property that has either been designated or nominated for a local or national register listing. Ms. Morales added that even though this property has been classified as a Level 1 Historic Structure, it is not required to go through the formal demolition process outlined in the Zoning Ordinance because it was never nominated for a historic preservation overlay.

Ms. Morales stated that even though this property is not required to abide by the demolition process outlined in the Zoning Ordinance, the Historic Preservation

Office staff and a staff member from Housing Services, at the request of Mr. Ruiz, conducted a site visit/review of the Biggs House. During this site review a preliminary assessment of the condition of the building was made, in which Mr. Ruiz was informed that the home appeared to be in a state of disrepair of more than 50%. Mr. Ruiz was informed that if he would like to further pursue this as a restoration project, that he should hire a professional to further investigate the feasibility of saving and restoring this home.

Ms. Morales stated as an attempt to further assist Mr. Ruiz, staff provided him with information on possible grant funding sources. Ms. Morales stated that Mr. Ruiz has been in contact with members of the Mesa Historical Society regarding the possible re-use of his building and that no information has been received at this time as to what Mr. Ruiz has determined to do with his property.

Mr. Anderson asked if the Biggs House is a brick structure.

Ms. Morales answered that it is believed to be Lehi brick, with a set-stone foundation.

Chair Dean asked if the extra steps taken with the Biggs House were required by the Ordinance or if the work had all been done because the home was identified as a Level 1 Historic Structure.

Ms. Morales responded that the additional steps taken were conducted as part of the Historic Preservation Office's customer service standards and also because the property was identified as a Level 1 Historic Structure.

Chair Dean stated that he was glad that these extra steps had been taken, but that there are many properties in Mesa that are not listed on any register. He asked if there are any protections for those types of properties in the Zoning Ordinance or would they be lost.

Ms. Morales responded that since there are no provisions in the Zoning Ordinance to prevent individuals from obtaining these types of demolition permits, the structures or properties would be lost.

Ms. Morales then explained the way that the ordinance is currently written is to allow the Historic Preservation Office to attempt to discourage the demolition of historic structures and to attempt to find alternate uses for them, besides demolition.

Chair Dean asked what processes a property owner needs to go through for demolition if the property is listed on either the Local or National Register (as required by the Zoning Ordinance).

Ms. Morales responded that as the historic district designation in essence is a zoning overlay, the property would then need to be taken through the same

process set by the Zoning Ordinance to list properties, to have the property delisted in order to remove the historic zoning overlay. Section 18.29 of the Zoning Ordinance outlines the procedure to remove a Historic Preservation Zoning designation.

Chair Dean stated that he appreciated staff going over the demolition process with the Committee.

**6. Historic Preservation Office Project Status Report: March, 2005 – Patrick Murphy**

**- Current Staffing Issues**

Staff recognizes the importance of Historic Preservation Program and spends approximately 40% or more of its current staff time on the Historic Preservation activities. Recently Kathy Guthmiller resigned from her position with the City, causing the workload to increase even more. Ms. Kuwamoto, who has been volunteering to help with the workload over the past several months, recently transferred from the Code Compliance Division as a permanent addition to the staff. Even with this addition, workload is still very heavy.

Due to the hiring freeze, staff is restricted from filling vacant positions at this time. As a result, staff is trying to find ways to facilitate the amount of work that is generated by both the Historic Preservation program and Town Center Development. It is difficult to provide support for two advisory boards with only one administrative position filled. In addition, scheduling conflicts are creating a hardship for administrative staff members to attend evening meetings. As a result, staff will no longer be able to provide detailed minutes of the Historic Preservation Committee meetings. Instead, staff will only provide minutes for action items on the agenda.

**- Activity Based Budgeting**

A new form of budgeting has been implemented Citywide called Activity Based Budgeting. It requires each division to identify their programs and track expenses associated with operating each program. Staff time is included in the costs to operate these programs.

The implementation of this new budget process revealed that more dollars and staff time are spent on Historic Preservation than on economic development in the Town Center Redevelopment area.

**- Redevelopment Ad Hoc Committee**

The Redevelopment Ad Hoc Committee report indicates that redevelopment is not only needed in downtown, but Citywide. They feel that infill development and neighborhood preservation are needed throughout the City.

**- Section 106 Reviews/ Zoning Impact Reviews**

The number of Section 106 Reviews processed has almost doubled. In 2002-2003 staff processed 25 Section 106 reviews and in 2003-2004 staff processed 52. Likewise, in 2002-2003 staff processed 11 Zoning Impact Reviews and in 2003-2004 staff processed 15.

**- Irving School**

The review team has selected an architectural firm for the building conditions assessment for the Irving School. Mr. Murphy said he could not remember the name of the firm at this time.

**- Fraser Fields/ Westside Clark Addition National Register Nominations**

The Request for Proposals was sent out. To date no one has called in with questions, and the proposals are due in April. Patrick Murphy will be the project manager and Ernestine Tesarek will assist with the grant implementation.

**- Neighborhood Outreach Division Director**

The Neighborhood Outreach Division is currently without a full time Director. Ruth Anne Norris has been the Acting Director. Interviews were held a few weeks ago. Once an individual has been hired, and will be invited to attend a Preservation Committee meeting.

**- W 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Historic District Tree Replacement**

The Street maintenance team is working on the replacement of the trees in the West Second Street Historic District.

**- Section 106 Programmatic Agreements**

The agreement is still being reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.

**7. Report: Mesa Public Library, Mesa Room – Sandra Apsey**

Ms. Apsey provided an update to the committee on the Mesa Room and their most recent activities. Ms. Apsey also mentioned recent donations have been obtained in the Mesa Room's collection. Ms. Apsey stated that the City Diversity Office Archivist, Anna Aronovich, provided a presentation to the Diversity Dialogue on Mesa Civil Rights History. It was a very well attended event. Their Library Associate, Nancy, and several volunteers have recently completed encapsulating the Mesa Junior High scrapbooks and the Mesa Union High Babbit cheerleader scrapbooks. They have also been working on photo preservation of the paper.

**8. Report: Mesa Southwest Museum – Jerry Howard**

Jerry Howard was absent from the meeting, therefore no report was given.

**9. Report: Mesa Historical Museum – Lisa Anderson or Jared Smith**

Mr. Smith provided information on the new book titled, Making Water Flow Uphill: The History of Agriculture in Mesa, AZ. The price per book is \$18 and 200 books were printed. The book is only available at this time at the museum gift shop. The Museums Director is working on getting them out to other museums and locations for their gift shops as well. He also provided a flyer on the museums annual barbeque, March 26th, as well as provided recent information on activities held at the museum.

**10. Committee Member Comments and Questions and Future Agenda Items**

The National Preservation conference in September/October is in Portland and the instate conference in Tucson will be held in June. Registration is available on the Web.

Ms. Morales informed the Committee that a grant was applied for and obtained from the SHPO Office to send six individuals to the conference, depending on the City's ability to provide matching funding for the grant received. Ideally, the six individuals would be comprised of three staff members and three Committee members. The grant will cover hotel, mileage, conference registration fee, and per-diem.

Two committee members, Ron Peters and Victor Linoff stated they would pay for themselves; two other committee members, David Dean and Vince Anderson will be unable to attend. Staff will contact Lane Burdick and Pat Mendivil to see if they are interested in attending the conference.

Mr. Anderson requested an agenda item for May's meeting to discuss whether or not the City should continue holding Historic Preservation Committee meetings until they can be adequately staffed.

Chair Dean asked that an additional agenda item be added to the meetings to discuss what staff has been working on. The following items should be included on next month's agenda:

1. Historic Preservation Awards
2. Post WWII Study-questions on staffing and tour plan
3. Presentation from the Neighborhood Outreach Division on what they do and discuss ways to collaborate to further preservation efforts.
4. Presentation regarding the Housing Committee Plan.
5. Irving School consultant
6. Committee updates-conferences, etc.
7. What staff's been working on.
8. Discuss and consider the continuation of the Historic Preservation program.

**11. Items from Citizens Present (no action can be taken)**

No items from citizens present.

**12. Adjournment**

Adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Shelly Allen, Historic Preservation Officer  
*Minutes prepared by Liz Kuwamoto*