

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

**DATE:** February 9, 2006      **TIME:** 6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT	STAFF PRESENT	OTHERS PRESENT
Chair Vince Anderson Vice Chair Ron Peters Lane Burdick David Dean Nathan Ricks Steve McCance Lillian Wilkinson	Lisha Adela García Shelly Allen Ruth Anne Norris Aimée Letwen Amy Morales Katrina Rogers Ernestine Tesarek	Walt McIver Dave Hatch Lisa Anderson Jerry Howard
<b>MEMBERS ABSENT</b>		

**1. Call to Order.**

The February 9, 2006, Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) was called to order at 6:03 P.M.

**2. Consider Minutes of January 12, 2006 Regular Meeting.**

Mr. Dean moved to approve the January 12, 2006, Minutes, Mr. Burdick seconded the motion.

**Vote: 5\* in favor**  
**0 opposed**

*\*2 HPC members arrived after this vote taken.*

**3. Discuss and consider the demolition request for three contributing properties within the Temple Historic District:**

- a. 51 S. Mesa Drive
- b. 55 S. Mesa Drive (storage shed only)
- c. 59 S. Mesa Drive

Ms. Allen reported that the buildings to be discussed were built in the 1920s, and are owned by Dennis Barney, represented by Mr. Hatch. She continued that all three of the buildings are beyond repair. She stated that the way the Zoning ordinance is written allows her, as the Historic Preservation Officer, to make a determination regarding the demolition of the properties. Recognizing that demolishing three buildings in that historic district would have a significant impact, and because subject buildings are in a high visibility area, Ms. Allen sought the experience and input of the HPC. She stated that she would defer the decision to the HPC.

Mr. Dean inquired about a staff report. Ms. Allen apologized for not providing a report with the packets but stated that staff recommends approving the demolition. She reported that 63% of the properties remaining in the historic district are contributing properties.

Mr. Dean inquired about the buildings being an imminent hazard, as defined by the ordinance, that a determination has been made by the Building Inspector, and that the City Manager and Historic Preservation Officer agree. Ms. Allen responded affirmatively that the buildings are an imminent hazard, and that she has the documentation.

Mr. Peters inquired about historic documentation of the properties. Ms. Allen provided the HPC with Arizona Historic Property Inventory Forms for each property.

Mr. Dean inquired about exploration of offsets to the cost of repairs, such grants from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) or tax credits for rehabilitation work. Ms. Allen and Mr. Hatch both responded that they have not.

Mr. Dean also expressed concerns about losing the context, standard and historic/architectural significance of the district with the demolition of these structures. He cited Mesa City Code 11-12.1-8, that when reviewing clearances for demolition, the HPC must find both conditions to be in place: 1) The buildings or structure is of minimal historic significance because of its location, conditions, modifications or other factors; and 2) Demolition of the building or structure would be inconsequential to the preservation of historic properties in the vicinity. Mr. Dean stated that he did not believe either condition had been met.

Mr. Dean moved to continue the decision on this case for 90-days in order to allow time for an exploration of historic dollars to off-set the cost of renovations, and for the thorough examination and preparation of a staff report to ensure that both criteria of City Code 11-12.1-8 are met. Mr. Peters seconded the motion.

**Vote: 6 in favor**  
**0 opposed**  
**1 abstained**

**4. Escobedo Housing Presentation – Ruth Anne Norris**

Ms. Norris gave a presentation on the status of the Escobedo Housing. Ms. Norris had previously given the presentation to the General Development Committee in December.

Ms. Norris stated that the Escobedo Apartments is Mesa's only public housing and that it is owned and operated by the City of Mesa. Escobedo Apartments are at a crossroads due to the age of the property.

Ms. Norris reported that 101 of the 103 original units are rented as residences, 2 units have been converted to office space for the Housing Services Division. Escobedo Apartments are at 100% occupancy.

Ms. Norris stated that there are no set asides for major repairs and there are immediate needs for re-roofing, painting, upgrades to electrical and plumbing. Another concern is the ageing infrastructure underground; there are old gas, sewer, and water lines. This is also no long-range direction from City Council for the Escobedo Apartments.

Ms. Norris presented three potential options - continue the current approach, renovate the complex, or rebuild a denser, mixed-income project.

Ms. Norris reported that the next steps would be to determine and document the historical significance and condition of buildings. A determination from City Council is needed regarding the City's level of future involvement with the project. Consideration of relocation and replacement responsibilities are also needed.

Ms. García added that the Escobedo Apartments presentation to City Council is anticipated within the next several months.

**5) Discuss the Post World War II Neighborhood Study**

No discussion held.

**6. Historic Preservation Office Project Status Report: January 2006; Committee to discuss the following items:**

**a) Status of Irving School** – Ms. García reported that Mesa Public School and Mesa Community College have met with staff to discuss the status of the grant. Discussions regarding the details of an arrangement for sub-grants or sub-recipient grants are moving forward.

**b) Status of Fraser Fields National Register Nomination Preparation** – Ms. Tesarek reported that the draft reports are currently under staff review then

will go to the neighborhood for review. The presentation to the HPC is anticipated for April or May.

- c) **Status of Westside Clark Street National Register Nomination Preparation** – Ms. Tesarek reported that the draft report has not been received.
- d) **Status on Alston House** – Chair Anderson reported that at the SHPO review session, he learned that there are more Heritage funds available than were requested by the eleven applicants.
- e) **Discuss Escobedo Housing Project/Washington Park** – Covered as Agenda Item 4.
- f) **Discuss Adobes in Nuestro** – No discussion held.
- g) **Update on Grant Opportunities** – No discussion held.
- h) **Update on the Biggs House** – Ms. Tesarek reported that the property owner has concerns regarding the liability of a site visit. He inquired if the City would assume the liability. She reported that staff is checking with the City Attorney's Office on this issue.

Ms. Anderson stated that the Le-Hi Community Group is trying to work with the property owner, Mr. Ruiz, to possibly get the land donated to the Mesa Historical Museum. Ms. Anderson has made it clear that the Museum does not want the house separate from the land. Ideally, Mr. Ruiz would donate the property as well as the house. She continued that he is not very amenable to selling it to the City, but he is talking to the Le-Hi Group.

Ms. García offered that the Mesa Historical Museum may wish to partner with City staff for assistance in the preparation of a Heritage Grant application for funds to acquire the house and property.

- i) **Update on "Alma Ward" (Landmark Restaurant)** – No discussion held.
- j) **Historic Preservation Awards** – Chair Anderson reminded the HPC to submit their nominations. He added that he would like to have nominations prepared for Victor Linoff and John Giles.

## 7. **Report: Mesa Southwest Museum – Jerry Howard**

Mr. Howard reported that the Museum is featuring the exhibit "Crocks – When Crocodiles Ruled". This exhibit will be the last traveling exhibit due to budget cuts. Mr. Howard reported that there are three in-house exhibits.

Mr. Howard reported that the Museum is currently down three staff positions, but will be hiring an assistant soon.

Mr. Howard reported that the Museum's archeological work is continuing and they are restoring the adobe schoolhouse in Verdugo. Mr. Howard reported that the Museum's guild bought them a \$5,000 trailer, which is completely outfitted with their archeology equipment.

Mr. Howard offered to give the Mesa Leadership Training and Development class a tour of the Mesa Grande Ruins.

**8. Report: Mesa Historical Museum – Lisa Anderson**

Ms. Anderson reported that the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Mesa Historic Home Tour was a great success. The event hosted approximately 900 attendees and raised \$13,000 - \$14,000. She stated that plans for next year may include a holiday home tour. Rigatony's has made a commitment to supply all of the food for next year's event. The museum would also like to involve the downtown merchants as well.

Ms. Anderson stated that the Heritage Grant is coming along; the Museum is entering into the last phase of the process. In early June, construction in the 1913 classroom building will be taking place (restoring the ceiling, raising the hall and restoring transom windows).

Ms. Anderson continued that in the fall, three new exhibits will be opening. In partnership with the Mesa Southwest Museum, a joint exhibit is being developed which features the history of Mesa. The exhibit will open in May at the Southwest Museum as a temporary exhibit, then move to the Historical Museum as a permanent exhibit.

Ms. Anderson stated that the Museum's barbeque is scheduled for March 25. They are currently looking for a new sponsor for that event.

Ms. Anderson reported that the lecture series is continuing. On February 16, at 7 PM, Virginia Mitten Berg, will be the guest speaker. Her father was the founder of the Tribune. She will talk about journalism and the newspaper in early Mesa.

Ms. Anderson also reported that the Museum received a grant from Wells Fargo in the amount of \$10,000.

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

Ms. García distributed information about the District Town Meetings.

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

No items from citizens present.

**12. Adjournment**

Adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Shelly Allen, Historic Preservation Officer

*Minutes prepared by Aimée Letwen*

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