

CITY OF MESA
MINUTES OF THE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

DATE: April 12, 2001 **TIME:** 4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chair Victor Linoff
Vince Anderson
David Dean
Pat Mendivil

STAFF PRESENT

Kathy Guthmiller
Greg Marek
Amy Morales
Tony Felice

OTHERS PRESENT

Charles H. Crismon
Chris Miller
Tracy W. Wagner
Ben Watkins

MEMBERS ABSENT

Lori Osiecki
Boyd Thacker
Dan Eccles

1. Call to Order

The April 12, 2001 Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Committee was called to order at 4:03 p.m.

2. Consider Minutes of March 8, 2001 Regular Meeting

**It was moved by Vince Anderson, seconded by David Dean, to
RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE March 8, 2001 Minutes, as amended.**

**Vote: 4 in favor
0 opposed**

3. Items from Citizens Present (no action to be taken)

No items from citizens present.

4. Update on Historic Preservation Plan

Mr. Greg Marek noted that Ms. Debbie Abele is in the process of compiling results of the survey, and the next step would be to schedule focus group meetings.

5. Discuss and Consider Case No. HL01-001TC, Historic Landmark Overlay for the Ramon Mendoza House located at 126 N. Pomeroy Street

Mr. Felice briefed Committee members, noting that the purpose of this case is to consider a request to establish a Local Historic Landmark Overlay for the Ramon Mendoza House located at 126 N. Pomeroy Street. Jon Gentry, who submitted

this application for zoning overlay, currently owns the building. In addition, neighborhood representatives circulated a petition, obtaining signatures of 67 qualified electors in support of the application. According to the Historic Preservation Ordinance, only 50 signatures are required.

Mr. Felice stated that the Mendoza house meets criterion 3(e), which states that it "is identifiable with a person or event significant in local, state or national history." Staff feels that it meets the eligibility for listing on the Local Register, and also for the National Register.

Ramon S. Mendoza acquired title to the property located at 126 North Pomeroy in 1946, where he lived until his death in 1999. Ramon Mendoza was the first and only Hispanic Chief of Police. He was born in Mesa on April 15, 1914, the son of pioneer settler, Ramon S. Mendoza (for which the Mendoza school is named) and graduated from Mesa High School in 1932. In a time when segregation was still practiced in the City, Mendoza became a police officer in 1942 and a coach for the City's Parks and Recreation Department. Later, Medoza was appointed Police Chief in 1969 until his retirement in 1978. He served on the force for a total of 36 years.

During his tenure with the Mesa Police Department, he attended the FBI Academy in Washington, D.C., and under his tenure the department became computerized, installed a closed circuit camera system in the jail, built a new police headquarters, and brought police dogs on the force. As a member of the community, Chief Mendoza coached Little League, girl's softball, and he trained young hopefuls for Golden Glove boxing competitions. (One of his players included former Mesa Unified School District Superintendent Jim Zaharis.) Chief Mendoza was an active volunteer, supporting the Cubs Spring Training, the Mesa City Chamber of Commerce, and the Sister Cities program.

Mr. Felice noted that the establishment of a Local Historic Landmark Zoning Overlay for the Mendoza House will not compromise development plans for the new Fire Station No. 201, which is scheduled to be constructed adjacent to this property. Nor will the development of the Fire Station compromise the eligibility of the Mendoza House for this local historic overlay. The property owner has worked closely with the architect for the Fire Station project, and the site plan for the Fire Station has taken the proximity of this house in mind with respect to location, landscape buffer, noise attenuation and other good neighbor issues.

Mr. Felice emphasized that the Mendoza House is significant because of the person who lived there and his contributions to the community, not because of the structure itself.

Mr. Felice stated that Staff recommends approval of the proposed Local Historic Landmark Overlay for the Ramon Mendoza House.

Ms. Chris Miller spoke on behalf of Jon Gentry, current owner of the Ramon Mendoza House. She stated that Jon Gentry's father and Mr. Mendoza were good acquaintances, and she referenced newspaper articles and photos showing a connection between the two families. The Mendoza House has personal significance to Jon Gentry, as well as to the community.

Ms. Miller commented on the architectural style of the house, that Mr. Mendoza modified the house to look more like a ranch home. Ms. Miller stated that when looking at older photographs of the house, one can see it was unique. Mr. Gentry is interested in getting estimates to have the house restored to its original façade. Ms. Miller acknowledged that the Mendoza House has been consistently maintained.

Ms. Miller said that the Wilbur Historic District members are in the process of amending both the Local and National District boundaries to include the Mendoza House because of its significance. They support the owner's intent to restore the house's façade, and hope to have the Mendoza House included as a part of their Historic District.

Chair Linoff asked a question about the eligibility of the contributor.

Mr. Felice explained qualities that make a contributor eligible for a historic district, stressing that a contributor must have maintained integrity. When a property is associated with an individual, the architectural integrity becomes a secondary criterion. In order for the house (as a structure alone) to be included as a contributor to the district, some of the façade elements would have to be removed, and possibly some other work would need to be done to it. An argument could be made that it's possible to bring the house into the district as an individually eligible property without having modifications made. Staff would need to discuss this with an historic architect.

Mr. Marek noted that Wilbur is a historic district because of the architectural styles representing that period of time in Mesa's history. In order for the Mendoza House to be considered a contributing property, it may need to be consistent in architectural style with the rest of the district.

Chair Linoff commented that on the other hand, the Mendoza House is being recognized for being associated with a significant individual, who created the character of the house.

Ms. Miller stated that Ryden Architects did a drive-by and noted several minor features that have been altered, which include: the porch posts and the past existence of an adobe wing wall. The interior has not been altered.

Mr. Dean asked if it would still be necessary for the Mendoza House to be included in the Wilbur Historic District if the Local Historic Landmark Zoning Overlay were added.

Ms. Miller responded that maps would have to be changed so the District abuts the property; also, the Wilbur Neighborhood prefers to be more cohesive.

Mr. Dean expressed that the contexts of significance are different between the Wilbur Historic District (which is recognized because of architectural significance) and the Mendoza House (which is significant because of association to an individual). Mr. Dean suggested that the Mendoza House could stay outside the Wilbur Historic District boundaries, still having the Historic Landmark Overlay, but not pressured to conform to the criteria of a Historic District.

Ms. Miller commented that as a neighborhood, the Wilbur Historic District would like to include the home as part of their District, whether it becomes a contributor or not.

Mr. Felice noted that the Mendoza House could be brought into the Wilbur Historic District as an individually eligible property, as opposed to a contributing property which would have to meet all the contextual requirements of a district.

Mr. Dean stated that he wants to ensure that the Mendoza House retains its individual identity and significance, and that this won't be affected by numerous overlays.

Mr. Vince Anderson asked if the Historic Landmark Overlay designation would impose any limitations on Mr. Gentry if he wants to restore the property.

Ms. Miller answered that Mr. Gentry's intent is to undertake restoration only if it would enhance the home's historic significance.

It was moved by Vince Anderson, seconded by Pat Mendivil, to approve the proposed Local Historic Landmark Overlay for the Ramon Mendoza House, located at 126 N. Pomeroy.

**Vote: 4 in favor
0 opposed**

6. Discuss and Consider Case No. HL01-002, Historic Landmark Overlay for the Crismon Farm located at 2222 E. Lehi Road

Ms. Amy Morales informed Committee members that seventy-four (74) valid signatures have been obtained for the Crismon Farm Historic Landmark Overlay petition. This exceeded the minimum of fifty (50) qualified electors of the City of Mesa required to be considered for a local landmark designation.

The purpose of the Local Historic Landmark designation is to recognize and preserve Mesa's cultural, historic, and architectural heritage. The City's intent is to stabilize neighborhoods through preservation of historic and cultural heritage, and to encourage increased public knowledge and appreciation of the past.

Additional goals are to protect and enhance the City's attraction of tourists and visitors, and to stimulate preservation of cultural and historic resources, as well as alternative land uses. By placing a zoning overlay on this property, the City believes that all of these goals can be facilitated.

The Crismon farmhouse is significant because it is one of the few remaining farmhouses incorporating the classical vernacular elements of the folk architecture of rural Arizona Territory. As a homestead, it is significant to local Mesa history because of its association with a pioneering family prominent in Mesa history. Currently there are no other landmarks or historic properties associated with the Crismon family that has a lineage that includes many prominent family members who made significant contributions to Mesa's community through civic involvement and business.

Ms. Morales stated that Staff's recommendation is for the Historic Preservation Committee to forward a recommendation of approval to the Planning and Zoning Board and the City Council, designating the Crismon Farm Homestead as a Local Historic Landmark.

Mr. Marek added that this item would be forwarded to Planning and Zoning (instead of the Downtown Development Committee) since it is outside of the designated Redevelopment Area.

Mr. Marek pointed out that Staff believes this proposed historic landmark satisfies criteria set forth in the City of Mesa's Zoning Ordinance, specifically criteria numbers 3(a) and 3(b):

3(a) Exemplifies or reflects special elements of Mesa's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering or architectural past.

3(b) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of a style, period, method of construction or development in Mesa or serves as a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.

Chair Victor Linoff asked for clarification on the difference in criteria between a Local Historic Landmark Overlay and a listing to the National Register of Historic Places.

Mr. Marek explained that, generally speaking, the criteria for eligibility as a local Mesa landmark would be less restrictive than the criteria for listing to the National Register of Historic Places. The Gerald A. Doyle & Associates report did reflect the belief that the Crismon Farmhouse would be eligible for the National Register. Staff feels it is definitely representative of a local landmark, but would take further study before being deemed a candidate for National Register status.

Chair Linoff suggested that if the Crismon Farm Homestead becomes a local historic landmark, listing it on the National Register should be investigated.

Mr. Tony Felice briefly discussed criteria that would be required by the National Register.

Mr. David Dean agreed that more research and work would need to be done before attempting to list with the National Register.

It was moved by David Dean, seconded by Vince Anderson, to forward a recommendation of approval to the Planning and Zoning Board to establishing a Historic Landmark Overlay for the Crismon Farm Homestead, located at 2222 E. Lehi Road.

**Vote: 4 in favor
0 opposed**

7. Review and Comment on Fire Station 201 Conceptual Design Concept

Mr. Greg Marek updated Historic Preservation Committee members on the process that the conceptual design has gone through. The next step will be to make a formal submittal of what is actually going to be built. Staff is working with the Fire Department and the design team to make a formal submittal.

The Downtown Development Committee (DDC) will serve as the design review board since the Fire Station is within the downtown area. Although the Historic Preservation Committee has no official regulatory role in design review, it will be included as part of the review process so comments can be obtained to integrate in the staff report to the DDC.

Chair Linoff expressed concern that the Fire Station should relate to the Wilbur Historic District.

Mr. Marek referred to architect Don Ryden's letter of appropriateness, and said Staff feels the conceptual flat roof design reflects the architectural era of the Wilbur Historic District.

Chair Linoff questioned how the Fire Station would relate in proportion visually with the Wilbur Neighborhood.

Mr. Marek went over some of the dimensions and explained how the Fire Station structure would fit into the neighborhood.

Mr. Felice added that the formal submittal would include line of sight drawings.

Mr. Dean noted that Don Ryden's letter helped him understand several issues, and what was being looked at in regards to historic architecture.

Chair Linoff commented on how well the whole project has gone and that all parties involved did a commendable job of working together and taking everyone's suggestions into consideration.

Mr. Anderson mentioned that he attended a meeting that the Wilbur Neighborhood had with the architect and Fire Department, and noted that the Neighborhood seemed very supportive of the concept presented.

8. Discuss and Consider 2001 Historic Preservation Award Program Nominations

Mr. Felice presented the nominations received for the 2001 Historic Preservation Award Program, and explained the ranking system.

Historic Preservation Committee members reviewed and considered the nominations. After a lengthy discussion, a motion was made by David Dean, seconded by Pat Mendivil, to award the following nominees:

<i>Nominee</i>	<i>Project/Program</i>	<i>Category</i>
1. Michael & Peggy Wright	The Wright House	Adaptive Reuse/Tourism
2. Reta Reed Otis Kellis	Written Works "Mesa, Desert to Oasis," and "Mesa at War."	General Preservation
3. Kathryn Butler & Jaime Klein	Survey and Archival work for the Mesa Southwest Museum	Education

9. Director's Report

a.) Update on Historic Preservation Program Issues

Mr. Marek briefed Committee members on the progress of the Historic District sign installation. The first set of blank signs has been ordered to replace the signs in the Wilbur and West Second Street Historic Districts. Depending on when the signs arrive, they may be installed by the week of April 23rd. The signs for the other two Historic Districts were ordered at a later date, and will tentatively be installed by Historic Preservation Week (week of May 13th). An unveiling is still being planned.

Mr. Marek noted that Ryden should soon be done with a draft of the Wilbur Historic Preservation Plan. The next step will be a Neighborhood Action Plan.

The Committee was also updated on the possibility of the Falcon Field Hangars being listed to the National Register. Ryden is preparing an analysis.

b.) Update on Field Trip to Williams Gateway Airport

Due to scheduling conflicts, Committee members decided to postpone the tour until sometime after the summer months.

10. Committee Member Comments and Questions and Future Agenda Items

Chair Linoff informed Committee members that two nominations had been sent in for "Most Endangered Properties" to the Arizona Preservation Foundation: the Mesa Grande ruins and the Buckhorn Baths. Announcements of selected properties will be made during Preservation Week in May.

11. Adjournment

6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory J. Marek, Historic Preservation Officer
Minutes prepared by Kathy Guthmiller