

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

**DATE:** January 10, 2002      **TIME:** 6:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Chair Victor Linoff  
David Dean  
Vince Anderson  
Christi Miller  
Lori Osiecki  
Tracy Wright Wagner

**STAFF PRESENT**

Tony Felice  
Kathy Guthmiller  
Greg Marek  
Amy Morales

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Sandra Apsey  
Ken Brice-Heames  
Michele Hart  
Ray Hart  
Karen LaFrance

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Pat Mendivil

**1. Call to Order**

The January 10, 2002 Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Committee was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

**2. Consider Minutes of December 10, 2001 Retreat**

It was moved by Vince Anderson, seconded by Lori Osiecki, to **RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE December 10, 2001 Minutes, as amended.**

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

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

No items from citizens present.

4. **Presentation by Karen LaFrance, Executive Director of Neighborhood Economic Development Corp. (NEDCO) regarding overview of NEDCO**

Karen LaFrance addressed Historic Preservation Committee members, giving an overview of NEDCO. She noted that over the past couple of years, she has been talking with the Wilbur Historic District about its strategy in historic preservation. In that same 2-year period, NEDCO has pioneered two projects in Mesa:

- 1) **The business development loan program**, where NEDCO partners with a lending organization and with the City of Mesa to induce loans for projects that would not ordinarily qualify for bank financing; and,
- 2) **Individual development accounts**, which are matched savings accounts for families to purchase a home, start a business or further their education.

With the support of the City of Mesa, NEDCO has pioneered public-private partnerships to meet public sector goals for economic development.

Ms. LaFrance stated that their goal is similar with a pilot project in the Wilbur Historic District. The hope is to show that by bringing private sector lenders together with the public sector, tools can be provided to assist property owners to renovate their properties as historic properties.

Ms. LaFrance noted points that support having a partnership in a pilot project include: the strong neighborhood group of the Wilbur Historic District, renovation of properties is part of the strategies list, and Bank One Arizona is an interested bank that is a supporter of NEDCO.

Two parts of the proposed pilot program are:

- 1) Matched funds provided for owners who do not want to borrow funds to do historic renovation, but would like to proceed on the basis of saving. For every dollar the property owner saves, the program would provide two dollars, as long as the work done meets historic standards and is on the façade of the property.
- 2) Potential loan program (purchase rehab.): with a small amount of public sector money, the banks can be induced to provide more money than they would ordinarily for a property (to purchase and renovate it). In return for the financing, the property owner has to rehabilitate the property to the standards of the Historic District.

As part of NEDCO's regular process of applying for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds through the City of Mesa, they have submitted a proposal to carry out this pilot program in the Wilbur Historic District. If accepted by the City, the program's implementation year would be 2002/2003.

Ms. LaFrance asked if Committee members had any questions.

Mr. Vince Anderson noted that the City would be spending approximately \$350,000 to move the Pomeroy House and the Mitten House into the Robson Historic District. Mr. Anderson asked if families could use the City bond expenditure, once they bought one of these houses, as some of the matching funds for the new foundation, and other costs such as hookups.

Ms. LaFrance, said that if there are renovations required after the houses are moved, NEDCO would talk to the purchasers to see how they wanted to do the renovations. The purpose of the individual development accounts is to get the private savings dollar. Although NEDCO has applied for CDBG funds, the City could decide to use other funds as potential matches or guarantees.

Ms. Lori Osiecki asked for clarification on (1) how many properties could be done at one time, (2) why the project was limited to the Wilbur Historic District, and (3) what was the dollar cap.

Ms. La France responded that (1) each project would depend on the volume and level of effort, but they anticipate two projects would be completed over the course of 18 months. (2) This pilot program doesn't just have to be in one Historic District, and (3) as conceptualized, under the individual development accounts, there would be smaller, façade-oriented projects (for example \$1,000 to \$1,500 in savings that would be matched 2 to 1). For the loan portion of the project, an example would be if someone buys a property for \$80,000 and it needs \$20,000 in work.

Ms. Christi Miller added that she spoke to Walt McIver of the Temple District, and he will share the information with his district. Ms. Miller stated that the hope was to encourage other districts to participate, emphasizing that this pilot project was neighborhood initiated and needs to have strong neighborhood participation in both the design and monitoring of the program.

Ms. Osiecki inquired how a committee (for design review standards of the renovations) would be chosen, and if project requirements were based on income or the project itself.

Ms. LaFrance answered that they are not envisioning the program to be based on income, but rather, based on the neighborhood revitalization strategy and the focus on the historic district. Determining who does what is a work in progress. NEDCO will facilitate however neighborhood groups want to run the program. Architectural review/expertise is allowed for in the budget.

Mr. Tony Felice noted that the Historic Preservation Office has regulatory authority for any contributing property having plans for modifications; it is already required to review the plans as a part of the process.

Chair Victor Linoff asked how the pilot project information was being communicated to the other Historic Districts.

Ms. LaFrance noted that Christi Miller has been contacting other districts, and it was also hoped to spread awareness by presenting the information to the Historic Preservation Committee. NEDCO is acting as a responder to needs identified in a district; if similar needs to promote historic renovation are identified in other districts, NEDCO will work with them.

Mr. Marek stated that once the program structure is in place, the Historic Preservation Office could send out informational cards to residents in Historic Districts.

Ms. LaFrance added that a workshop would be held in the Historic District to get the word out.

Mr. Felice asked if all four sides of a house would be eligible for rehabilitation under the program, or if just the façade would be eligible. Mr. Felice also inquired if non-contributing properties would be eligible in the historic district.

Ms. LaFrance replied that non-contributing properties are being considered in addition to contributing properties. The overall purpose of the program is to achieve an outward, visible sign of the renovation, and that the renovation is to the standards that build up the districts. Ms. La France noted that if the district members decide they want landscaping on all four sides of the building to be eligible, that's probably the way it would end up.

Mr. David Dean asked if the program would also consider structural problems, and if the loan program would provide protection (such as an easement or deed restriction) against future property owners altering the renovation.

Ms. LaFrance answered that the program could apply to structural issues. Replying to the second part of Mr. Dean's question, Ms. LaFrance stated that if it looks like a protective clause is a necessary element, then it would be discussed and added.

Chair Linoff asked what the next step would be (in terms of HPC involvement).

Ms. LaFrance replied that it would be helpful for the City to be approached, to emphasize interest in seeing this pilot program go forward. As currently proposed, the pilot program only includes the Wilbur Historic District. More costs would be involved to look at a larger loan volume and work with other districts.

Mr. Marek asked for clarification as to what was meant by the "City's" support.

Ms. LaFrance answered that it would, first of all, include support of the Historic Preservation Office and the Community Revitalization Office. The start of the conversation with Bank One came about as a result of the Community Reinvestment Roundtable meeting, which was on March 15, 2001. At this meeting, the Mayor spoke about the City's interest in revitalizing neighborhoods. The banks took that to mean a wider City support.

Mr. Marek asked what steps the Historic Preservation Office should take; and what specifically would it be advocating.

It was clarified by Ms. LaFrance that the support for the approval of the CDBG application would be a great start.

Mr. Felice asked if the CDBG funds would serve as a loan guarantee, or just be a part of the available funds.

Ms. LaFrance replied that the concept is to do a guarantee, so the actual funds that are part of the loan are private sector bank funds.

Mr. Felice questioned how projects would be prioritized in the future. For example, if there were 40 applications and enough funds for only 20 projects, would selection be based on the applicants' ability to pay off the loan, or based on which properties would have the greatest impact to a neighborhood.

Ms. LaFrance noted that, when working with a bank, the ability to pay off the loan is the most important factor. Other criteria may be established, or qualified applications might be prioritized by the submittal date.

Mr. Dean asked what the scale of the projects would be for the program.

Ms. LaFrance stated that it has not been decided; they must first look at data to determine the average cost of doing comparable rehabilitation work.

Mr. Dean inquired about projects requiring building permits and if the program took such requirements into consideration.

Ms. LaFrance said that if a building permit would be required, the applicant would have to go through that process like anyone else.

Mr. Dean asked if it would be a revolving loan: if the total amount would be frozen until something got paid off, and only the amount available could be leveraged.

Ms. LaFrance replied that the mechanism that the City uses in the Business Development Loan Program is a letter of credit; CDBG dollars are not literally stashed away for a guarantee. As the payback occurs, the guarantee comes off and is available for other projects.

Chair Linoff stated he would draft a letter in support of the program and the CDBG application.

Mr. Anderson suggested including this item on next month's agenda so HPC members could vote on recommending the pilot program.

Ms. LaFrance gave NEDCO's website to HPC members:  
**[www.nedco-mesa.org](http://www.nedco-mesa.org)**

## **5. Discuss 2002 Historic Preservation Awards Program**

Tony Felice briefed Committee members on this year's Historic Preservation Awards Program, and distributed copies of a press release and an advertisement promoting this program. In addition to various publications and postings, awareness will be promoted on Mesa Channel 11 and the City's website.

The deadline to submit nominations is March 8, 2002. Historic Preservation Committee members will consider nominations at their April meeting. The awards will be presented in May, which is Historic Preservation Month.

Nomination forms will be available at the Historic Preservation Office, Mesa Southwest Museum, Mesa Public Library (64 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St.), Mesa City Plaza Building lobby, and also on the website at [www.ci.mesa.az.us](http://www.ci.mesa.az.us) under "What's New."

Mr. Felice stated that a nomination form is not required to nominate someone. A letter could be written nominating a person, as long as the name of the person being nominated, program(s) involved in, and history are included.

Chair Linoff acknowledged that the nomination forms do help to clarify eligibility standards.

Chair Linoff reminded the Committee that anyone can submit nominations, including Historic Preservation Committee members. He also noted that nominations can be resubmitted if they weren't selected from a previous year.

Ms. Tracy Wright Wagner asked if a list of past award winners was available.

Mr. Felice answered that it is available on the City's website under "Past Award Winners" on the Historic Preservation main page.

Chair Linoff noted that there is a binder of past award winners in the Historic Preservation Office and in the Mesa Room of the Library.

## **6. Follow up to the HPC Retreat**

Chair Linoff thanked Committee members for taking the time to attend the HPC Retreat and being productive in establishing a list of priorities and strategies.

Chair Linoff stated that it is important for City Council candidates to be aware of the Historic Preservation Program, and that he'd like to invite them to the next HPC meeting. Chair Linoff said he would write a letter extending the invitation.

Mr. Marek informed the Historic Preservation Committee that Downtown Development Committee members received a copy of the HPC Retreat minutes in the packet for their retreat.

The Redevelopment/Historic Preservation staff will be having a retreat on January 24<sup>th</sup>. Staff plans to review information provided by both boards and determine what can be undertaken with staff resources.

Mr. Dean offered the possibility of Committee members pairing up to be leads on the main issues determined at the HPC Retreat.

Mr. Anderson suggested that HPC members review the list that was established at the retreat, and discuss the idea of workgroups at next month's meeting.

Ms. Osiecki noted that at the DDC Retreat they had decided to bring back the idea of having a designated board member be a direct contact for each councilmember. Ms. Osiecki suggested that HPC members could be paired up with a councilmember and brief him/her on the highlights of each monthly Historic Preservation Committee meeting.

HPC members decided to have a designated councilmember that they would each contact regularly. The pairing (subject to change) was determined as follows:

<b>HPC member</b>	<b>Councilmember</b>
Victor Linoff	Mayor Keno Hawker
Lori Osiecki	Jim Davidson
Pat Mendivil	Bill Jaffa
David Dean	Dennis Kavanaugh
Christi Miller	Pat Pomeroy
Vince Anderson	Claudia Walters
Tracy Wright Wagner	Mike Whalen

**7. Update on the Relocation of the Mitten House and the Pomeroy House**

Mr. Marek told Committee members that the asbestos removal on the Masonic Lodge began yesterday (January 9<sup>th</sup>), and the demolition should begin next week.

The Mitten and Pomeroy Houses should be moved sometime in early February. A photographic documentation will be made.

Ms. Osiecki suggested showing a segment about it on Channel 11.

Mr. Dean agreed and added that it would be an interesting subject for Channel 11 to make a program about.

Chair Linoff stated that it would be a worthy event for press coverage.

**8. Director's Report**

Mr. Felice addressed Committee members, informing them he spoke with Paul Wilson of the Fire Department, and it looks like the Fire Station project is back on track. The City is proceeding with property acquisitions. Ground-breaking is expected to be this summer, and the project should be completed by Fall 2003.

Ms. Christi Miller noted that many people from her neighborhood, and adjacent properties to the Berge Ford site are excited to see improvements made on that corner.

Mr. Felice stated that Habitat for Humanity is interested in purchasing the Dr. Alston property in the Escobedo Neighborhood, renovating it and possibly putting an addition or separate building onto the adjacent lot. The office use is allowable and would be an appropriate use.

Habitat for Humanity is currently working on 10 properties in the Escobedo Neighborhood. Mr. Felice said he has been talking to the organization about dedicating the front portion of the original home to be a museum or interpretive center to discuss prominent African Americans and Mexican Americans in Mesa's history. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the National Trust for Historic Preservation have both expressed interest in funding portions of the project.

Chair Linoff asked about the property's eligibility status.

Mr. Felice responded that the property is eligible on its own merit, but it is not currently listed. Habitat for Humanity intends to support the nomination for listing.

Mr. Marek added that the Escobedo Neighborhood has been surveyed; but, at this point, the neighborhood is not organized to the point of going forward with the designation of it as a whole.

Chair Linoff stated this property could serve as an example and be a motivating factor for other property owners.

Mr. Felice noted that, unfortunately, many of the contributing properties are built at a substandard quality.

Chair Linoff suggested it might be better to judge properties on a case-by-case basis rather than as a district.

Ms. Miller agreed that the case-by-case basis would be better, stating that there are inherent dangers when it comes to evaluating districts with drive-by surveys.

Mr. Dean acknowledged that sometimes the National Register allows districts or properties under *Criterion D*, educational value, which is usually reserved for historical archaeological sites. Districts can be created around such sites, even if structural integrity is very low, because there is educational value.

Mr. Marek added that the district could be qualified for local designation as the first step.

Mr. Dean noted that being designated a local district offers the same benefits as a National Register nomination, except it wouldn't make the properties eligible for the state tax credit program.

Ms. Wright Wagner asked what the boundaries are for the Escobedo neighborhood.

Mr. Felice stated that, roughly, the boundaries are University Drive to 6<sup>th</sup> Street, and Center Street to Surrine.

Mr. Felice noted that he's been having discussions with Arlene McCabe who is considering doing a housing project within the Temple District as well as within the old Temple Court area. Ms. McCabe recently completed another rehabilitation on Kimball; the small house was a contributor and she saved it.

Mr. Felice introduced Ms. Sandra Apsey, the new librarian at the Mesa Room (replacing Sarah Zafra).

Mr. Marek referred to a letter (sent by SHPO to the Planning Director) pertaining to archaeological issues with a zoning case (a proposed industrial development).

A meeting will be held with several City departments to discuss developing policies and procedures for City divisions on handling archaeological resources on private property.

Mr. Marek informed Committee members that the Federal Building, being declared surplus property, must first be offered to homeless shelters. The New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans (Shelter) has submitted an application to use the building. Mr. Marek noted that a lot of rehabilitation would be necessary for the Shelter to bring the building up to code; it would also have to be in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance.

Chair Linoff asked if the City would be eligible to acquire the building if the Shelter's application were denied.

Mr. Marek stated that the City is putting together an application to use the building for the Parks and Recreation Department and the Mesa Southwest Museum. The National Park Service would review the City's application.

Chair Linoff commented about the building's potential eligibility.

Mr. Marek noted that the single story part of the building was built in 1936 (used to be the post office) and the two-story addition was built in 1959.

Ms. Osiecki asked about the time frame allowed for applications for this building.

Mr. Marek responded that the building was first offered to Federal agencies; then there is a 30-day advertising period for homeless shelters to make an application (during which the New England Shelter applied); after a finalized application there is a 25-day comment period. If the building were to be awarded to the New England Shelter, the Shelter would have up to 3 years to carry out their project. If the building does not go to the Shelter, the City would be next in line. The City could obtain the building at no cost if it were to stay within a narrow band of designated uses; or, the City could purchase the building and be able to decide its use.

Existing shelters in the Phoenix metro area are willing to partner with the New England Shelter, which would be a win-win situation if the New England Shelter were to agree.

Mr. Marek stated that he would keep Committee members apprised of the situation.

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

Chair Linoff asked about the status of the Historic Preservation Plan, and also of the Rehabilitation Code.

Mr. Marek noted that the Historic Preservation Plan is being finalized, incorporating suggestions of Committee members. It should be ready to go to a City Council study session in the next few weeks. A draft of the Rehabilitation Code should be completed by late spring.

Mr. Dean inquired about the time frame of the Light Rail Environmental Impact Study as listed on the monthly project status report.

Mr. Marek noted that the time frame given was estimated, but the environmental study is an involved process. Staff will report findings, once completed, to both the HPC and DDC for review and comment.

Ms. Tracy Wright Wagner thanked the Historic Preservation Office for its part in sponsoring the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Historic Home Tour, and invited everyone to the event.

**10. Adjournment**

7:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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