



Historic Preservation Board

Date: May 2, 2017

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: Lower Level Council Chambers – 57 E. First Street

Members Present	Members Absent	Staff Present	Guests
Laura Schaffer-Metcalf, Ed.D., Chair* Janice Gennevois, Vice-Chair Greg Marek Louise Swann Milagros Zingoni Brandon Benzing**	Annalisa Alvrus, Ph.D.	John Wesley Lauren Allsopp	Kathrine Leonard Vic Linoff Residents of Flying Acres Others

* Chair Schaffer-Metcalf had another commitment and had to leave the meeting at 7:15

**Board member Benzing arrived after the approval of the minutes

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Schaffer-Metcalf called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Approval of the April 4, 2017 regular meeting minutes

First Motion made by Board member Zingoni to approve the April 4, 2017 meeting minutes and seconded by Vice-chair Gennevois.

Motion carried 5-0 (Board member Benzing arrived after the vote on this item; Board member Alvrus, absent)

3. Miscellaneous Items from the Audience

None

4. Review and approve nominations for Historic Preservation Awards

The Board members reviewed the three nominations for this year's awards. They agreed that all three met the requirements and should be given awards.

First Motion made by Board member Zingoni seconded by Vice-chair Gennevois.

Motion carried 6-0 (Board member Alvrus, absent)

5. Discuss and give direction on priorities for grant applications

Staff member John Wesley provides some background on this item. Board members discussed various needs and options. It was decided that the top priority would be an inventory of the neon signs and that a second priority would be for supporting the survey work for a historic district. It was noted that it would be important to determine there is sufficient support from the neighborhood to follow through on a historic district if we are going to apply for a grant for a survey.

6. Review and discuss the Heritage Neighborhood designation and consider possible modifications

Staff member Wesley reviewed the background and goal for this program. It is aimed at those neighborhoods that have a significant history in Mesa, but may not have the integrity of the built environment to become a historic district. This brings the neighborhood together to document their history and gives them some recognition, but does not place the same regulatory requirements on them as a historic district does.

Board member Marek suggested maybe we could have two types of heritage neighborhoods, one for the types of neighborhoods currently covered and one for neighborhoods that could become historic districts when they get a little older. This designation could help protect them and help them get ready for historic district designation.

There was general Board discussion about the benefits and possible options for the use of this program. It was pointed out Phoenix has a similar program. This will be on the next agenda for further discussion.

7. Review and discuss historic sign ordinance

Staff member Wesley reviewed the draft ordinance for historic signs. Based on previous Board discussion, the draft states the signs must be at least 50 years old, but there had been some discussion about setting a specific date for how old the signs had to be. The Board was asked which approach was preferred. The Board supported the 50-year-old standard.

Board member Zingoni questioned whether or not the ordinance really protected the signs if the property owner wanted to get rid of them. Staff member Wesley explained that the goal of this ordinance is to allow property owners to retain non-conforming signs when redeveloping a property. Board member Zingoni stated that was fine, but questioned what can be done to actually protect these signs from being destroyed. Board member Marek stated this would be difficult through City zoning regulations given private property rights and suggested this might be better addressed through the Mesa Preservation Foundation and options they may have to educate property owners and help preserve signs. Creating a sign park or alleyway would also be something to be worked on that is different than this code.

The Board discussed the example of the Sunland Motel sign that was recently removed. Vic Linoff suggested that when the ordinance is adopted that we send a letter to property owners letting them know about their sign as a piece of history and encourage them to maintain and protect their sign. The Mesa Preservation Foundation has a method in place where they can accept a sign if it cannot be maintained on the property where it has been.

Board member Marek acknowledged working with property owners to try and protect and maintain the signs is important. They need to be inventoried with their address. Property owners should be made aware of the value of the signs and City staff should be aware of them also to encourage the property owner to retain and maintain them if redevelopment is being proposed. The Board discussed the need to educate property owners and be more aggressive about this.

Staff member Wesley stated that in the draft ordinance we have not included any provisions for a stay of demolition for a designated sign similar to what we have for landmark properties, but this could be added if the Board thought it would be helpful. Board agreed we should add this to the ordinance.

Board member Zingoni asked Staff member Allsopp to research to see if there are other examples of how cities have preserved historic signs. The Board continued to discuss options for informing educating property owners about the significance of their historic signs and how a

grant might be used to facilitate this effort. It was suggested we could invite owners to come to a future Board meeting.

Board member Zingoni asked for clarification on the benefit of the ordinance. Staff member Wesley explained that under current codes it is difficult to build signs like these today. They cannot be as large and as tall as many of these are. If you redevelop your property the signs have to be brought into conformance with current code. If a property owner would use this code to get their sign designated historic, it could remain when the property is redeveloped.

Board member Marek questioned the portion of the draft ordinance that states the signage would count toward the sign allowance on the property. He felt this was not in keeping with the direction of the Board and would discourage use of the ordinance. Staff member Wesley stated this was a challenging issue and one that we can continue to work on. In some cases it might not be too much of a challenge to modify the sign to advertise the new business and if we allow them to do and add all the other signage allowed by the code, they could have too much signage. Board member Marek noted that the cost of modifying a neon is so expensive so it is not likely they will change.

Staff member Wesley explained the process being used to finish the sign code update, there are still opportunities review and provide comment on the ordinance.

Board member Marek asked about the proposed process for review and clarified that the Historic Preservation Board would review these requests. He also suggested that the language regarding damaged signs needs to be further reviewed and clarified to allow signs that do become damage, like the Diving Lady, to be restored.

8. Updates on ongoing items:

a. Westside Clark local historic district designation progress

Staff member Allsopp informed the Board the application has been submitted and we are starting to work through the process.

b. Certificates of Appropriateness

None.

c. Involvement of older students in historic preservation activity

Board member Zingoni said the group is working to develop an idea to have middle and/or high school aged students prepare a three-minute video on why historic preservation matters. Chair Shaffer-Metcalf stated that getting the word out to the curriculum committee and to division chairs would be the best way to draw attention to the program. Staff member Wesley will get the information out to the Board prior to their next meeting for further discussion.

d. Endangered properties list

Staff member Allsopp informed the Board that the endangered properties inventory is now live on the website. There was some further discussion about other properties that could be included. It was suggested that the Alhambra building be added as an example of a saved building.

e. Webpage update

Staff member Allsopp stated the revised webpage is now live. There was a review of the pages and suggestions were made for additional improvement.

f. Serrine House reuse

Vice-chair Gennevois provided some background on this item. Staff member Wesley provided an update from his discussion with Tom Wilson. There does not seem to be any immediate plans for this building at this time.

g. Parking lot at the northwest corner of 1st St. and Macdonald

Staff member Wesley reported that he had done some limited research and found that it was initially planned as a temporary lot when the MAC was completed, but has since also been programed to help address parking requirements for the Mesa Center for Higher Education.

9. Updates on Museums, Exhibits, Committees and Events related to Historic Preservation

None.

10. Board Member comments, questions, and future agenda items

Staff member Allsopp provided an update on activity involving documenting the age of homes in the Robson District to make those homes contributing, work with Flying Acres and Golden Grove.

11. Adjournment

Vice-chair Gennevois adjourned the meeting at 7:34 pm.

First Motion made by Board member Zingoni seconded by Board member Benzing.
Motion carried 5-0 (Chair Schffer-Metcalf left prior to the vote on this item; Boardmember Alvrus, absent)

Supporting data is available for public review in the Planning Division,
Municipal Building, 55 N. Center St., Mesa, Arizona 85201

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