

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

**DATE:** March 11, 2004

**TIME:** 6:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Chair Victor Linoff  
David Dean  
Vince Anderson  
Pat Mendivil  
Lori Osiecki  
Tracy Wright Wagner

**STAFF PRESENT**

Sandra Apsey  
Kathy Guthmiller  
Greg Marek

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Gary Apsey

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Ron Peters

**1. Call to Order.**

The March 11, 2004 Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Committee was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

**2. Consider Minutes of February 12, 2004 Regular Meeting.**

**It was moved by David Dean, seconded by Tracy Wright Wagner, to RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF the February 12, 2004 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. **Discuss February 24<sup>th</sup> East Valley Historic Preservation Coalition Meeting.**

Chair Linoff noted that the minutes to the East Valley Historic Preservation Coalition (EVHPC) meeting were included in the packets, and asked if Committee members had any comments regarding that meeting.

Committee members that attended the EVHPC meeting commented that they really enjoyed the tour of Monti's La Casa Vieja, and appreciated Mr. Michael Monti's hospitality.

Ms. Tracy Wright Wagner said she liked the educational presentations, but felt they should be more limited (maybe to one) in the future to allow more time for networking.

Mr. David Dean agreed with Ms. Wright Wagner, adding that it would also be a good idea for Coalition participants to break up into groups to focus on a particular issue and then take turns presenting what each group comes up with.

Mr. Vince Anderson noted that he liked the idea of conservation districts that Mr. Jim Garrison addressed at the East Valley Historic Preservation Coalition meeting.

Mr. Dean added that conservation districts could serve to not only help preserve historic homes and streetscapes, but also prevent encroachment of development.

Mr. Marek stated that it would have been nice to have time to discuss how other cities felt about the idea of conservation districts.

Ms. Lori Osiecki pointed out that guidelines/criteria for designating conservation districts would need to be defined.

Ms. Wright Wagner said that designation of conservation districts might be something that could fall under the Neighborhood Services Department function.

Mr. Anderson agreed that conservation district designations should be processed through the Neighborhood Services Department, and the Historic Preservation Office could refer neighborhoods to them.

Ms. Osiecki suggested that, at future meetings, the various cities comprising the Coalition could give brief presentations about their accomplishments and concerns regarding historic preservation.

Mr. Marek noted that a possible topic for discussion at the next EVHPC meeting would be Mesa's Post World War II study, which should be completed by then.

Mr. Marek and HPC members thanked Ms. Kathy Guthmiller for taking the minutes of the East Valley Historic Preservation Coalition meeting.

**5. Discuss and Receive an Update on the Post World War II Study.**

Mr. Marek informed Committee members that he met with consultants Debbie Abele and Liz Wilson about the progress of Mesa's Post World War II study, which is at the point of being in a final draft report. Mr. Marek stated he would like to have them give a presentation at the April HPC meeting.

Mr. Marek showed HPC members a map of Mesa's subdivision developments, noting that Ms. Abele and Ms. Wilson went through a classification process and ended up with the following three categories for developments platted before 1956:

1. Economy Developments (24 developments)
2. Typical Developments (24 developments)
3. Upscale Developments (15 developments)

Mr. Marek pointed out an interesting fact discussed by the consultants: in Mesa, between 1946-1973, it took an average of 25 years for a subdivision to be built out, while it took other cities about 5-10 years.

Mr. Marek noted that the consultants would be putting together a proposed work program for the City of Mesa. The consultants are recommending that Historic Preservation Committee members and specialized subcommittee members pair up to form teams to drive through assigned developments, evaluating them for overall character and integrity. Mr. Marek noted that before that step can be taken, the Historic Preservation Committee would need to determine evaluation criteria.

Chair Linoff stated that after Ms. Abele and Ms. Wilson make their presentation, the Committee could start outlining a work program of how to proceed. Chair Linoff added that training should be provided to Committee members (or other individuals who will be evaluating the subdivisions) to ensure the same set of standards is being utilized.

Committee members commented that they're excited to see this study being completed.

**6. Discuss and Consider Historic Preservation Graphic Element.**

Chair Linoff informed Committee members that the graphic element still needs some fine-tuning in order to be compatible for embroidery purposes, and he will continue to work with the stitching company to come up with something suitable.

**7. Discuss Nominations for the 2004 Historic Preservation Awards Program.**

Committee members recognized that eight nominations have been received for this year's Historic Preservation Awards.

Chair Linoff stated that the award winners would be determined at next month's meeting, and asked the Committee to review the submitted nomination materials before then, ranking their choices and relaying that information to staff by March 31<sup>st</sup>, so results could be tabulated by the April HPC meeting for discussion at that time.

**8. Retreat Follow-up.**

Mr. David Dean presented the Committee with examples and information on conservation districts and related zoning ordinances.

In addition to other potential benefits, Mr. Dean noted that conservation districts use the methods of neighborhood organization to prevent a neighborhood from deteriorating and take a proactive approach against threats such as encroachment development, street widening, increased traffic, crime, etc.

Chair Linoff inquired if a conservation district would be considered a zoning overlay like the historic districts.

Mr. Marek responded that it would depend on the process established; it could be a designation like a registered neighborhood, not requiring an ordinance. Mr. Marek noted that going through a Zoning Overlay process would be a big discouragement to most applicants because of the amount of work and money it takes. Mr. Marek added that a conservation district could more easily be created by Council Resolution.

Chair Linoff noted that hearing an update from Debbie Abele and Liz Wilson will give the HPC a better idea on how to proceed with the possibility of creating a conservation district designation.

Mr. Dean pointed out that a key item to consider about a conservation district, in relation to planning and zoning, is that it allows the neighborhood to create a planning document detailing stipulations for developers, builders, the City or anyone undertaking activities in their neighborhood. Mr. Dean said that he's not sure that a Council designation or registration at Neighborhood Services sets off the triggers that are necessary to actually implement a conservation-type plan.

Ms. Lori Osiecki noted that if the HPC wanted to designate conservation districts, they would need to be approved by City Council in order to have legitimacy.

Chair Linoff agreed that since the Historic Preservation Committee acts in an advisory capacity, it would be up to the City Council to approve conservation districts.

Ms. Osiecki pointed out that even a Historic District doesn't have protection against encroachment in the surrounding area outside of the boundaries.

Chair Linoff stated that designated Historic Districts have an elevated status, making it easier for them to fight potential encroachment issues than it would be for neighborhoods with no designations.

Mr. Marek said that there are two main encroachment issues: one related to use, and the other related to design. Mr. Marek used the example of the Fire Station next to the Wilbur Historic District. Mr. Marek noted that the building was designed to be complementary and sensitive to the Historic District, even though it was just outside of the boundary. The term "edgefill" development was used by Mr. Don Ryden and Mr. Marek to define development occurring just outside of a Historic District, and some guidelines were established for such cases.

Chair Linoff suggested forming a workgroup to review the materials gathered by Mr. Dean and summarize how various cities interpret conservation districts. Chair Linoff noted that the term "conservation district" would need to be defined, and a determination made as to whether it should be designated as a zoning overlay

Mr. Dean suggested that he and Mr. Vince Anderson could form a workgroup concerning conservation districts, and come up with a brief summary of their research to present to HPC members.

Chair Linoff and other HPC members thanked Mr. Dean for doing such a great job on his research.

Mr. Marek noted that the Committee might have to decide whether they want to focus on conservation districts or the Post World War II study, due to the time intensive nature of these projects.

Chair Linoff commented that understanding the basic concepts of conservation districts may be relevant in helping the Committee to move forward with the Post World War II study.

Regarding using National Register documentation requirements as a checklist for Local Historic Districts, Mr. Dean stated that he had a list of the National Register bulletins available online. Mr. Dean suggested that each Committee member should have a copy of the guidelines for local surveys. Mr. Dean also showed an example of what materials the City of Phoenix used to hand out for local designation information. Mr. Dean noted that due to incomplete submissions and the demand on staff, the City of Phoenix abandoned that process and turned to giving applicants the information and forms pertinent to National Register requirements. Then the City of Phoenix hired consultants to conduct studies of neighborhoods and added twelve local historic districts last year.

Ms. Pat Mendivil asked if the City of Phoenix holds meeting for citizens to give them instructions on how to designate their homes/neighborhoods.

Mr. Dean stated that they hold quarterly workshops on exterior rehab/lawns, and have had other general rehab workshops, but noted that they had no formal workshops for residents wanting to do historic designations. Mr. Dean stated this type of formal workshop providing instruction on how to go about applying for local or national designation is the key to making the process less intimidating.

(Please see attachment, March 6, 2004 HPC Retreat Minutes.)

## **9. Director's Report.**

Mr. Marek reminded Committee members that the Archaeology Expo would be held on March 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, where a booth would be set up displaying information on historic preservation.

HPC members determined a schedule for when they would be able to help staff the booth.

Mr. Marek informed Committee members about the issue of trees being removed from the West Second Street Historic District. Mr. Marek stated that the City's street maintenance crew removed some citrus trees that were dying in the median at Robson and Macdonald Street. Without consulting the

Historic Preservation Office, the City's landscape architect, water conservation personnel or a neighborhood representative, they plan to replace the trees with Sissoo trees, which are native to India. Some healthy citrus trees were also transplanted to areas where dying ones had been removed. The street maintenance department will be holding meetings to get the neighborhood and appropriate City divisions involved.

Mr. Marek noted that, for the May HPC meeting, Larry Christensen will be speaking about the Irving School, and Dave Harding will be giving a presentation on the Rehab Code.

Mr. Marek told the Committee that staff is working on the Heritage Fund Grant applications for Fraser Fields/West Side Clark Addition National Register nominations, and for the Irving School's building condition assessment report.

Chair Linoff agreed to submit a letter of support on behalf of the Committee for these projects.

Ms. Wright Wagner added she would also submit a letter of support from the Mesa Historical Museum.

Mr. Marek noted that Mr. John Giles would need to be contacted to determine if he is still interested in finishing the Mitten house as his law office, because the City Courts are going to be moving. If Mr. Giles decides not to go forward with the project, the Request for Proposals process would need to take place again.

**10. Update from Sandra Apsey, Mesa Room.**

Ms. Sandra Apsey informed Committee members that the Arizona Book Festival would take place on April 3<sup>rd</sup> in downtown Phoenix, and Nancy Norton would be there for book signing.

Ms. Apsey noted that the Mesa Room has been making progress cataloging archival materials. The library catalog of what is currently entered may now be searched by words in title and words in subject.

Ms. Apsey said that, regarding the Washington Park Oral History project, an interview has been completed with Mr. Ernie Alvarez, who lived in the Verde Vista area and also in the Escobedo projects.

Ms. Apsey stated that Nancy Norton lectured at the Mesa Historical Museum about her grandmother, Helen Millet-Dana who was a midwife and owner of the Dana Maternity Home from 1907 to 1953.

Ms. Apsey noted that Mesa Room volunteers have helped out creating indexes (to articles, photographs, advertisements) to several Mesa magazines.

Mr. Marek asked if Ms. Apsey could provide the Historic Preservation Office with an inventory list showing which historic surveys are on file at the Mesa Room to make sure all of them are available.

**11. Update from Southwest Museum.**

No update was given at this month's meeting.

**12. Update Regarding Mesa Historical Museum from Tracy Wright Wagner.**

Ms. Wright Wagner reminded HPC members about the Mesa Historical Museum's fundraising Barbecue on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Wright Wagner noted that at the Museum's March 18<sup>th</sup> lecture series, Tom Nesbitt would be discussing the history of the construction industry in Mesa.

Ms. Wright Wagner updated the Committee about the Mesa Historical Museum's application for a Heritage Grant, which would be used to further the rehabilitation of the school buildings.

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

Chair Linoff thanked Ms. Wright Wagner for writing a press release concerning the Endangered Properties List.

Mr. Marek asked Ms. Wright Wagner to e-mail the press release to staff to put it in the proper format and distribute it to the press.

**14. Adjournment**

7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Attachment: March 6, 2004 HPC Retreat Minutes