

MINUTES: of a special joint meeting of the City Council, Planning Commission, and Historic and Scenic Preservation (H&SP) Commission of the City of Redlands held in the Council Chambers, Civic Center, 35 Cajon Street, on April 29, 2014 at 5:30 P.M.

PRESENT: Pete Aguilar, Mayor
Paul Foster, Mayor Pro Tem
Jon Harrison, Councilmember
Bob Gardner, Councilmember
Pat Gilbreath, Councilmember

John James, Chairman, Planning Commission
Carol Dyer, Commissioner
Steven Frasher, Commissioner
Conrad Guzkowski, Commissioner
Julie Rynerson Rock, Commissioner

David Van Deist, Chairman, H&SP Commission
Nathan Gonzales, Commissioner
Shan McNaughton, Commissioner
Geneil Vines, Commissioner
Donn Grenda, Commissioner

ABSENT: Commissioner Jan Hudson, Commissioner Ken Jeske, Commissioner Matt Millett, Commissioner Paige Peyton

STAFF: Enrique Martinez, City Manager; Dan McHugh, City Attorney; Jeanne Donaldson, Assistant City Clerk; Robert Dawes, City Treasurer; Carl Baker, Public Information Officer; Oscar Orci, Development Services Director

Mayor Aguilar offered everyone present the opportunity to address the assembled bodies on the subject of the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
Presentation of Historic Photographs – Pamela Smyth of Redlands, presented historic items related to Crystal Springs Ranch and Water Company to Nathan Gonzales for use at the Smiley Library Archives. She also presented photographs to the Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission which depict the ongoing vandalism occurring at Crystal Springs Ranch.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION WORKSHOP:
Mayor Aguilar called the City Council workshop to order and deferred to Chairmen James and Van Diest to call their respective commissions to order.

OLD BUSINESS:

Preservation Workshop Introduction – Mayor Pro Tem Foster kicked off the Preservation Workshop explaining this was the third annual of such joint sessions. Held at least once a year, the workshops have provided a forum to determine the City’s direction with regards to historic preservation. Projects have been identified, actual work has been performed, and much of it is because of the City’s strong citizen volunteer base. He thanked Sherli Leonard, Redlands Conservancy and Ron Running, Redlands Area Historical Society, for their time and assistance in preparing tonight’s agenda.

Certified Local Government (CLG) – Ron Running, Redlands Area Historical Society, spoke in place of the absent Commissioner Peyton. Previously, a task force was directed to develop application materials for the City to obtain CLG status. This task force is continuing that process. In particular, they are working on a chronology of the history of development in Redlands. The report is currently about 70% completed. Final completion is expected by early 2015, but possibly even by the end of 2014. For the audience’s sake, Mayor Pro Tem Foster asked Mr. Running to list the benefits of a CLG status. The benefits provide the ease of processing Federal grants and more local control of a historical preservation program. He and Director Orci agreed that grant opportunities exist as a funding source, specifically mentioning ongoing survey work.

Architectural Design Guidelines – Commissioner Carol Dyer and Mr. Running discussed the process of developing general guidelines for property owners and contractors interested in rehabilitation and historic preservation in the downtown area. The committee agreed on one key point: The need to encourage remodels that are respectful of the original character of the building. Work continues, but the goal is to create a simple resource tool for developers interested in remodeling.

Mr. Running then introduced Professor Tom Atchley who gave an overview of the history of design guidelines in Redlands. What Professor Atchley has discovered is that aesthetics is the unifying theme that ties together Redlands’ past and present and he hopes the futures, as well. Mr. Running then displayed a variety of buildings illustrating different styles of architecture and design over time, with the emphasis centered on how to best adaptively reuse a building. Their main recommendations to both Commissions and the Council include:

- Encourage the use of the Secretary of the Interior Standards
- Encourage the use of design guidelines for rehabilitation of all local historic structures
- Develop a map of local historic structures in downtown area
- Suggest consultation with Historic Commission prior to design process
- Encourage use of photographic resources

Lastly, Mr. Running suggested developing a web based archive which would allow owners to find original photographs of buildings. Nathan Gonzales of Smiley Library stated that currently everything is digitized but not geo-coded, although that is the ultimate goal.

Mills Act – Mr. Running said that the City is currently working on three applications for the Mills Act, which provides the incentive of property tax relief to owners of historical buildings interested in restoration. Two of the applications are residential and one is a commercial structure.

Redlands Conservancy Programs – Sherli Leonard, of the Redlands Conservancy, and Kathie Thurston, of the Redlands Chamber of Commerce, provided a quick look at their collaborative efforts to attract businesses to downtown Redlands to utilize the old buildings. They created a simple picture book showing potential owners what they could get if they purchased one of these old buildings. Kathie Thurston has already had the opportunity to use the brochures and finds them to be a very useful tool. No City funds were used on this project.

NEW BUSINESS:

Designation Form – Sherli Leonard introduced Don Fisher of the Historic Preservation Council, who has the most recent experience completing Nomination Forms used to nominate a property for historic designation and he described ways to simplify the nomination process.

Future Designations – Ron Running asked the Council and the Commissions for feedback relating to carving out Historic Districts. The discussion centered on the National Historic District designation and the advantages of that. Mayor Pro Tem Foster, Councilmembers Harrison and Gilbreath and Commissioner Grenda continued the dialogue, pointing out the benefits of the National designation. Councilmember Harrison and Commissioner Guzkowski brought up the potential for overlay districts and thought it was a worthy idea. Mayor Pro Tem Foster recapped by saying that it appears the National Registry provides us the flexibility that will not be a hindrance with attracting businesses. He also pointed out that it even gives the City a certain level of status. This has a lot of advantages and can be worked on outside of City staff time. This may be an opportunity for collaboration between our business community and historic preservation community to make sure we are working towards the same goal. He and Mayor Aguilar pointed out they were seeing positive attitudes from Council and Commissioners to move forward with this work. Staff time could be minimal allowing volunteer groups to handle the background research necessary and even begin discussions with property owners.

Mayor Aguilar excused himself and left the Council Chambers at 6:50 P.M., turning the meeting over to Mayor Pro Tem Foster.

Bed & Breakfast Ordinance – Sherli Leonard offered the suggestion to revisit the City’s Bed and Breakfast Ordinance. She admitted there are not any owners seeking that designated status at this time. However, the goal would be to make it an easier process to complete which may encourage potential business owners to consider it. She pointed out three areas of concern in the current Ordinance: Expiration of CUP, on-site parking requirements, and sewer and water rates. Councilmember Harrison and Commissioner Dyer raised a few concerns of their own about these items, while Commissioner Frasher applauded the notion of being proactive and reviewing the Ordinance ahead of time. Mayor Pro Tem Foster put forward the notion of our volunteer groups making recommendations for the Council and Commissions to review.

Mayor Pro Tem Foster thanked everyone for coming and mentioned that these workshops continue to be very valuable. The workshops allow the City to remain at the cutting edge of preservation. He personally thanked Sherli Leonard, Ron Running and Tom Atchley for all of their efforts.

Mayor Pro Tem Foster deferred to Chairmen James and Van Diest to close their respective commission.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, this meeting was adjourned at 7:00 P.M. The Council will reconvene at their regular meeting, on May 6, 2014, at 5:00 P.M.

Jeanne Donaldson, Deputy City Clerk