

CITY OF VENTURA

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

Vacant, Chair
Rachel Perzel, Vice-Chair
Ann Huston, Member
Dena Mercer, Member
Paul Muller, Member

Peter Gilli, Community Development Director
Neda Zayer, Assistant Community Development Director
Andy Heglund, Senior Assistant City Attorney
Tracy Oehler, Assistant City Clerk

REGULAR MEETING THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2021 – 6:00 P.M. WEBEXT EVENT

Vice-Chair Perzel called the meeting to order at 6:12 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Members Huston, Mercer, Muller, Vice-Chair Perzel

Staff: Neda Zayer, Assistant Community Development Director
Andy Heglund, Senior Assistant City Attorney
Jared Rosengren, Principal Planner
Courtney Deppen, Recording Clerk

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS – None.

CONSENT ITEM

1. Approval of the Historic Preservation Committee February 18, 2021, Meeting Minutes.

Recommended Action: Approve, as presented.

Vice-Chair Perzel and Committee member Huston had corrections on page 5 of the January 21, 2021, minutes related to the HPC's comments to PROJ-14889.

- The applicant team should be careful in selecting building materials that remain true to the era that each building represents, i.e., trellis and the vines that are defining features of the main building should be like its original look and material.

Committee member Muller made a motion to approve the February 18, 2021, Historic Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes as amended.

Vice-Chair Perzel seconded the motion.

Upon call of the roll, the vote was as follows:

AYES: Members Huston, Mercer, Muller, and Vice-Chair Perzel
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
RECUSE: None
ABSENT: None

Recording Clerk Deppen declared the motion carried 4 – 0.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

2. **Citywide Historic Context Statement.**

Receive a presentation on and review the draft Historic Context Statement prepared by Historic Resources Group (HRG).

Recommendation: That the Historic Preservation Committee provide feedback and comments on the draft Historic Context Statement

Case Planer: Jared Rosengren, Principal Planner

SPEAKERS:

Staff: Jared Rosengren, Principal Planner

Historic Resources Group: Christine Lazzaretto, Managing Principal; Kari Fowler, Senior Preservation Planner; Sian Winship, Historic Researcher

Member of the Public: Stephen Schafer and Trevor Gotsman

Documents: PowerPoint by staff

Ex Parte Communication: None

The Committee provided the following feedback and comments related to the draft Historic Context Statement:

- The information on the archeological period related to the Chumash is outdated.
- Include maps as visual references when discussing tracts and annexed areas like Montalvo and Saticoy.
- Add photo(s) for each Ventura resource in the Architectural Description Section of the document.
- Update the Eligibility Standards to include the name of developers/builders, important person, or entity in terms of historic significance.

- There is a very short reference about Native Americans (Chumash tribe) inhabitants in the historic survey document. As we update our historical preservation document, we need to ensure and include the Native American part of our history.
- Consider reaching out and involving other members or groups in the community like San Buenaventura Conservancy, Museum of Ventura County staff, Charles Johnson, Judi Triem, etc.
- Work with City staff to access the onsite library archives.
- Incorporate Rural Landscape into the document since Ventura has several landmark trees/areas.

3. **General Plan Update.**

Receive a presentation on and on and discuss the General Plan Update effort prepared by Raimi and Associates.

Recommendation: That the Historic Preservation Committee provide feedback and comments on the General Plan Update effort.

Case Planer: Neda Zayer, Assistant Community Development Director

SPEAKERS:

Staff: Neda Zayar, Assistant Community Development Director

Raimi and Associates: Simran Malhotra

Member of the Public: Stephen Schafer and Trevor Gotsman

Documents: PowerPoint by staff

Ex Parte Communication: None

The Committee provided the following feedback and comments on the General Plan Update effort:

- The General Plan Update should continue promoting historic preservation in general. Promote adaptive reuse of building versus demolition of buildings as there are lots of opportunity for adaptive reuse.
- Integrate “Green Concept” idea in the General Plan that historic preservation is environmentally friendly as it does not create more waste in the landfill because it is not demolishing structures nor requires new materials to be produced since it reuses existing structure.
- Historic preservation is a good tool and should not be an argument against in-fill construction and building as we have a housing crisis that we need to address. The issue of scale and density needs to be weighed in on through the process.
- Historic Preservation can be intertwined with other elements of the General Plan, but it can also be stand alone and be better defined. As we look at the historic

district(s) and infill, we must consider design, size, and everything else when new structures are built close to them so it will be cohesive not a copy.

- Provide a strong cohesive statement about the importance of Historic Preservation as an asset to the community. Ventura has desirable assets: good weather, beach, and historic communities which rates high on the list of desirable places to live. We want to remain as community predispose with historic preservation.
- Revise the City ordinance related to Historic Preservation, adopting both the previous and on-going Historic Context and survey.
- Creating some sort of Main Street program particularly for Midtown. Upgrade how the properties look, make them attractive sort of business improvement to get people to come as there are some historic retail properties in Midtown along Main Street.
- Maintain the Mills Act Program and try to incorporate other incentives for historic preservation.
- Potentially add a Historic Preservation planner to the City Planning staff.
- Agree about historic preservation and sustainability. Sustainability is a good argument for preserving historic resources.
- Historic Preservation needs to have a section in General Plan but cannot be separated from Design Review and from reuse of materials, places, and buildings.

Feedback related to whether there are missing from the General Plan's list of assets:

- No mentioned of Ventura Harbor as asset. It is a strong area with recreational facilities.
- Biking and hiking opportunities as Ventura is becoming more of a bike friendly neighborhood.
- List of educational opportunities/institutions.

Feedback on Challenges and Threats

- The State mandate to build more housing, especially higher-density development. Residents perceive that as a threat in changing the character of the city.
- Transportation - commuting now a days is getting worse as the county grows congestion increases too. Highway 101 is the only main way of getting in and out of the county. Emphasis on mass transit as a long-term solution. Solution may include increase of train services and maybe add light rail transit especially on Ventura Avenue.
- Limited parking in commercial and residential areas.
- Limited higher educational opportunities compared to neighboring cities like Santa Barbara and Los Angeles.

- Impact on historic resources due to climate change.

Feedback on how you define a successful update process and successful General Plan.

- That the community is engaged - it is very important as the plan is for the people that live in the community.
- Adoption of the Historic Survey and the Historic Preservation Ordinance Update. Aspects of the ordinance that need to be updated are the Integrity Requirement and Point of Interest Criteria. Bringing the criteria more into alignment with the State and National Register Criteria.
- Defining the duties of the Historic Preservation Committee better.
- Incorporate the recommendation report of the Historical Survey on Eligibility and Integrity Requirements in the Preservation Element of the General Plan's Goals and Policies.
- Look into the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone where it is appropriate to be used.

STAFF & COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS

Assistant Community Development Director Zayer thanked the Committee for their participation tonight. She also extended invitation to HPC members in case they are interested in joining the General Plan community workshop on Thursday, April 29, and the educational forum on May 19.

Vice-Chair Perzel also reminded everyone to spread the word about vacancy in the HPC in case someone is interested to apply and join the HPC.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 8:40 P.M.