

CARSON CITY HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION

Minutes of the December 14, 2004 Meeting

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A regular meeting of the Carson City Historic Resources Commission was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 14, 2004 in the City Hall Capitol Conference Room, 201 North Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada.

PRESENT: Chairperson Michael Drews
Richard Baker
Robert Darney
Rebecca Ossa
Peter Smith
Louann Speulda

STAFF: Jennifer Pruitt, Senior Planner
Heidi Eskew-Herrmann, Planning Technician
Kathleen King, Recording Secretary

NOTE: A tape recording of these proceedings is on file in the Clerk-Recorder's Office, and is available for review during regular business hours.

A. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM (1-0007) - Chairperson Drews called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. Vice Chairperson Lopiccolo was absent.

B. ACTION ON APPROVAL OF MINUTES - November 9, 2004 (1-0016) - Commissioner Baker moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0-1, Commissioner Speulda abstaining.

C. MODIFICATION OF AGENDA (1-0018) - None.

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS (1-0025) - None.

E. DISCLOSURES (1-0032) - None.

F. PUBLIC HEARING ACTION ITEMS:

F-1. HRC-04-195 ACTION REGARDING AN APPLICATION FROM JOHN BLOCK TO ALLOW DEMOLITION OF A FIRE DAMAGED STRUCTURE AND REVIEW OF PROPOSED REPLACEMENT GARAGE ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 602 WEST SPEAR STREET, APN 003-243-04 (1-0036) - Ms. Pruitt provided background information on this item, and advised that the applicant had amended his plan from the original proposal. She reviewed the proposed dimensions of the garage. She advised of having received no comment on this item over the past couple weeks, but acknowledged the presence of several citizens in the meeting room.

(1-0061) In response to a question, Mr. Block advised that there will be no upstairs apartment in the garage, the pitch of the roof will be the same as the house, the rear set back has been modified from 12' to 27' feet, and the overall size of the proposed garage has been decreased. In response to a further question, Mr. Block advised that the finished height is proposed to be 21'3", and noted that this is lower than what was originally proposed.

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Ms. Pruitt reviewed the conditions of approval included in the staff report, specifically condition 11, which she read into the record. She acknowledged that condition 11 will be attached to the land in the event it is ever sold. In response to a further question, she explained that if the applicant ever proposes to use the structure as a residential unit, he will be required to go through a separate public hearing process. She advised that City staff has been adamantly opposed to endorsing any increase in density. The existing number of on-site units are acknowledged by staff to be legal; however, the proposed structure would not be a legally conforming residential unit. In response to a question, Ms. Pruitt advised that use of the accessory structure as a residential unit, either by a renter or by the property owner, would be considered an increase in density and, therefore, not endorsed by staff. Commissioner Baker requested staff to remove the word "rental" from condition 11.

In response to a question, Mr. Block advised of his interest in installing a bathroom in the proposed structure. There will be no kitchen. In response to a further question, Mr. Block advised of plans to install solid wood, carriage-style garage doors in keeping with the historic nature of the property and the neighborhood. He agreed to submit proposed garage doors to the Commission at a future meeting. In response to a further question, he advised that the proposed windows will be 3'x5', double hung, single over single, and will match the windows in the house. He acknowledged that the windows will be rectangular in shape, rather than square. He further acknowledged the proposed use of James Hardie Colonial Roughsawn siding, a product description of which was included in the agenda materials. He referred to the product description of the CertainTeed roofing material also included in the agenda materials, and advised that the product has a lifetime guarantee for as long as he owns the property and a 50-year guarantee if he sells it. Ms. Pruitt advised that the reason for including the roofing material documentation was Mr. Block's proposal that both structures will eventually have the same type of roofing material. Mr. Block acknowledged that the size of the proposed structure conforms with the requirements of the Carson City Municipal Code.

(1-0197) Cheryl McLaughlin, of 611 West Robinson Street, advised that a 16' high carriage house structure on her property has "a nice, high ceiling and ... adequate storage above." She inquired as to the reason Mr. Block would need a 21' high structure. Commissioner Ossa advised that the originally proposed structure was 25' in height. Ms. McLaughlin advised that the sun will be blocked from her yard and carriage house windows at 17'. She reiterated her concern regarding the proposed 21' height "if no one's going to be living up there." Discussion took place regarding the proposed height of the building. In response to a question, Ms. McLaughlin advised that the setback modification, from 12' to 27', "will help the lady that lives to the side ... because he won't be up against her property and she's a single story." She indicated that the setback will "put the back windows on [her] carriage house and ... patio area in the dark pretty early."

In response to a question, Mr. Block advised that the height of the existing garage is 14' and it is situated "exactly on the property line." He further advised that the existing setback is 3' off the property line to the west. He proposes to move the setback 27' "off the back line" and 5' from the north property line. In response to a question, Ms. McLaughlin described the location of her property in relation to Mr. Block's property.

In response to a question, Ms. Pruitt advised that the maximum building height in the historic district is 26'. She explained that building height is measured to the center point of the roof, not to the overall peak. Discussion took place with regard to the same.

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Mr. Block responded to questions regarding his intentions for use of the garage and the existing car ports. He discussed future plans to return the property to a single-family dwelling without increasing the number of vehicles parked on the street. In response to a further question, he advised that the time frame for doing so is yet unknown. Ms. McLaughlin expressed a preference that the roof height be reduced by "at least a couple feet." Mr. Block explained the reason for the proposed roof height was to maintain the historic nature of the property.

(1-0394) Mike Spears expressed appreciation for the concessions made by Mr. Block thus far. He expressed the opinion that less than 5% of the carriage houses in town have the same roof pitch "as the house." He pointed out that carriage houses are secondary structures. He stated that what Mr. Block "has done so far has really helped all the neighbors." He inquired as to the reason for gables "in the middle of the roof line," and expressed the opinion that the roof line would not appear as high "if that gable wasn't sticking out sideways." He reiterated appreciation for Mr. Block's attempts to work with the neighbors, and commented "we also want to stay in the sunshine in the end."

Chairperson Drews called for additional public comments; however, none were forthcoming. Commissioner Darney expressed agreement with Mr. Spears' comments regarding the gable on the north side. He expressed the opinion that the gable is somewhat unnecessary and tends to add volume to the overall dynamics of the roof facing the neighbors. He advised of not being concerned with the proposed 21' building height "because it is a concession from previous applications and well within the requirements." Commissioner Smith expressed the opinion that a gable on one side and not the other would look peculiar. Discussion took place with regard to the same and, in response to a question, Mr. Block explained the purpose of the additional gable. He stated that the proposed roof pitch is "basically to match the house," and that "the other dormer in the back is really of no consequence." He expressed the opinion that smaller dormers with no windows would look very peculiar, and Commissioner Darney agreed. Discussion took place regarding the appearance of the proposed structure, the square footage available in the yard, and the gables. In response to a question, Mr. Block indicated a willingness to eliminate the north side gable.

Commissioner Darney moved to approve HRC 04-121, a request from John Block to demolish existing damaged garage and construct a new garage on property at 602 West Spear Street, with the eleven conditions of approval, condition 11 being revised to read "residential unit" as opposed to "residential rental unit," and also a stipulation that the gable on the north side be removed from the main roof and that the owner submit back to the Commission proposed carriage-style garage doors, together with window detail, prior to construction. Ms. Pruitt requested the applicant to agree to the stipulations, for the record, and to agree to submit cut sheets to the Commission prior to submitting his building permit application. Mr. Block agreed. **Commissioner Ossa seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.** Chairperson Drews thanked Mr. Block and the neighbors for working together on a compromise. Ms. Pruitt advised of the appeal process for the record.

F-2. HRC-04-213 ACTION REGARDING AN APPLICATION FROM PALMER & LAUDER ENGINEERS (PROPERTY OWNER: REYES, GARR AND LINDA) TO ALLOW RELOCATION AND REHABILITATION OF THE EXISTING BUILDING TO ITS ORIGINAL COLONIAL REVIVAL STYLE ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 517 WEST SECOND STREET, APN 003-121-01 (1-0648) - Ms. Pruitt suggested that the Commissioners consider this item as discussion only. She provided background information on the proposed project, and advised that the project engineer had been informed the Commission will need elevation drawings and cut sheets in order to take action on this project.

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(1-0669) Ms. Reyes reviewed the abandonment process, and advised that Palmer & Lauder representatives believe the proposed plan now meets all Code requirements for two buildings and application to divide the lot. She commented that remodel of the historic building “will probably be just like building a new building.” She noted that the project would be financially “upside-down” without dividing the lot. She advised that the structures will be used for offices, and referred to the site plan included in the agenda materials.

In response to a question, Ms. Pruitt advised that on-site handicap parking will have to be addressed. She discussed the possible option of reciprocal access and parking agreements. Discussion took place with regard to the same. Ms. Reyes responded to questions regarding the method by which the house will be moved, the rock foundation which surrounds a small basement, and the porch addition. Mr. Reyes advised that the existing garage, which is not attached to the house, will be removed. He noted that the house is situated in the middle of the lot. Commissioner Darney expressed understanding for removing the porch to accommodate the project, but expressed a preference for replacing it in some fashion. Commissioner Ossa expressed an interest in visiting and touring the property, and Ms. Reyes offered to accompany her.

In response to a question, Ms. Pruitt advised that the square footage of the proposed lots does not meet the minimum which will require an additional process from the planning standpoint. Parking is an additional issue to be resolved, as well as possible setback encroachments once the structure is moved. Ms. Pruitt advised that City staff will provide comments to the project engineer. Commissioner Smith expressed support for dividing the lot. Chairperson Drews expressed a preference to wait until full plans are available. Ms. Reyes discussed the benefit of accomplishing the abandonment. Commissioner Darney suggested that abandonment of the right-of-way may provide sufficient square footage. Ms. Reyes acknowledged that she had received no response from the adjacent neighbors with regard to the request for abandonment.

(1-0874) Hardy Mathiesen described the location of his property in relation to the applicants’ property. He described a recent experience moving a house, and advised that it was very expensive. He expressed the opinion that the project will be very difficult. In response to a question, Ms. Reyes advised that a professional contractor will be hired to do the project. In response to a further question, she advised that the structure will not be moved to encroach into the legal setback. [Commissioner Smith left the meeting at 6:22 p.m.; a quorum was still present.]

Discussion took place regarding details of the proposed abandonment and its affect on the adjacent neighbors. Ms. Pruitt acknowledged that an assessment would go along with any addition of square footage to the adjacent properties. She recommended that the affected property owners contact the Assessor’s Office to inquire as to whether additional property taxes would be assessed. She acknowledged that the property owners would still be responsible for maintenance of the sidewalk even if the property line is modified. Commissioner Darney expressed support for the project if the applicants can meet the requirements.

(1-0994) Mr. Mathiesen expressed no opposition to the project.

With regard to the plan included in the agenda materials, Ms. Pruitt advised that if the abandonment is not accomplished and the Commission endorses the lot division, the owners will have to apply for a variance. She requested the Commissioners to indicate any concerns for the record. Commissioner Darney expressed the opinion that the plan won’t work without the abandonment. Ms. Pruitt advised that the Commission’s decision regarding the proposed lot size will guide the Planning and Community Development

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Department's recommendation regarding the variance. Commissioner Darney endorsed the abandonment because it makes the plan more feasible, as opposed to endorsing the project with a variance because of the concern over setting a precedent for allowing undersized lots. Ms. Pruitt noted the Commission's previous recommendations for the owners to consider options other than demolishing the structure.

Chairperson Drews suggested continuing this item and re-agendizing it for the January Commission meeting to take action on the requested abandonment. In response to a comment, Ms. Pruitt advised that before the Commission acts upon the endorsement, they should know whether the abandonment is a possibility. Commissioner Ossa made arrangements to meet with the Reyes to view the property and discuss rehabilitation tax credits. Ms. Pruitt suggested continuing this item to a future meeting in order to allow the applicants time to decide their next step. She advised that Planning and Community Development Department staff would be available to provide assistance. No formal action was taken.

F-3. DISCUSSION REGARDING A PRESENTATION/COMBINED MEETING OF THE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION AND THE PLANNING COMMISSION (1-1184) - Ms. Pruitt advised that Planning and Community Development Department Director Walter Sullivan requested the combined meeting. She suggested scheduling it for February 23rd, and the Commissioners concurred. She discussed the purpose of the meeting, and a proposed agenda.

F-4. ACTION REGARDING ACCEPTANCE OF DATES AND NEW LOCATION FOR HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETINGS IN 2005 (1-1230) - Ms. Pruitt referred to the 2005 meeting schedule included in the agenda materials. She requested the Commissioners to advise of any concerns, and noted that the meetings will be held in the Community Center Sierra Room.

F-5. DISCUSSION REGARDING CLG GRANTS (1-1265) - Ms. Pruitt advised of having received suggested revisions from Commissioner Smith for the Historic District Design Guidelines. She requested the Commissioners to provide written comments. She advised that Planning and Community Development Department staff will continue to work on the revisions and provide periodic drafts to the Commissioners for review. She further advised that every property owner in the historic district will be provided a revised version of the Design Guidelines.

Ms. Pruitt advised that staff submitted the CLG grant application to the State Historic Preservation Office on December 1st. Additional funding for the east side historic survey was requested. Ms. Pruitt advised that the main issue is acquiring match funding.

G. FUTURE COMMISSION ITEMS (1-1312) - Chairperson Drews requested staff to agendize discussion regarding the joint Planning Commission meeting. Ms. Pruitt advised that the joint meeting of this Commission and the Board of Supervisors will be held Thursday, January 6th. Historic Preservation Awards will be presented, and Planning and Community Development Department staff is working on a report to provide to the new mayor.

H. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

H-1. COMMENTS AND STATUS REPORTS FROM STAFF (1-1334) - Ms. Pruitt requested the Commissioners to consider accessory structures in the historic district, and to advise staff with regard to agendizing discussion.

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H-2. COMMENTS AND STATUS REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS (1-1345) - None.

I. ACTION ON ADJOURNMENT (1-1350) - Commissioner Baker moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:44 p.m. Commissioner Ossa seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The Minutes of the December 14, 2004 meeting of the Carson City Historic Resources Commission are so approved this 13th day of January, 2005.

MICHAEL DREWS, Chair