

**CITY OF SONOMA
DESIGN REVIEW AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
December 15, 2015
Community Meeting Room, 177 First Street West, Sonoma, CA
MINUTES**

Chair Barnett called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present:	Chair Barnett, Comms. Randolph, Tippell, Johnson, Essert (Alternate)
Absent:	Comm. Anderson
Others	Associate Planner Atkins, Planning Director Goodison, Administrative
Present:	Assistant Morris

Chair Barnett stated that no new items would be heard after 10:30 p.m. unless the Design Review and Historic Preservation Commission so decides. Any decisions made tonight can be appealed within 15 days to the City Council. He reminded everyone to turn off cell phones and pagers.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: Mary Martinez, complimented the DRHPC on the approval of the new awning for Sweet Scoops Ice Cream that she felt complimented exterior façade of the building in the Plaza Historic District.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None

CHANGES TO AGENDA: Chair Barnett made a motion to move Items #2, #3 & #4 up before Item # 1 but after Item # 1A. Comm. Tippell seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE: Late mail was received on Items #1 and #4.

Item #1A - Consent Calendar - These items will be acted upon in one motion unless removed from the Consent Calendar for discussion by Commissioners or any interested party. (Proposal to install banners on the Plaza light standards for the Sonoma Valley Hospital from May 1, 2016 to May 31, 2016)

Comm. Tippell made a motion to approve the consent calendar as recommended. Comm. Johnson seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Item #1 - Sign Review-Consideration of a new monument sign for a mobile home park (Sonoma Oaks) at 19275 Sonoma Highway.

Applicant: Thomsen Properties

Associate Planner Atkins presented the staff report.

Chair Barnett opened the public comment period.

Robert Sanders, Robert Sanders & Company, described the new signage as more visually appealing.

Chair Barnett closed the public comment period.

Comms. Tippell and Johnson said the new monument sign for the mobile home park is an improvement.

Comm. Randolph agreed with her colleague's comments and supported the new signage.

Comms. Essert and Chair Barnett viewed the new monument sign as more visible and easier to read.

Chair Barnett is pleased with the new design and agreed with his fellow Commissioners that it is a vast improvement.

Comm. Essert made a motion to approve the sign proposal as submitted. Comm. Johnson seconded. The motion was unanimously adopted.

Item # 2- Consideration of a new monument sign and a window sign for a mixed use building at 545 West Napa Street

Applicant: Lucy Moreno

Associate Planner Atkins presented the staff report.

Chair Barnett opened the public comment period.

Lucy Moreno, business owner, requested the new signage to advertise her business. She removed the non-compliant signs as requested by the City.

Comm. Tippell is not fond of the green paint color chosen but thought it could be acceptable if all the signs were coordinated on site. She recommended a maroon/burgundy color for the background with white lettering to complement the peach tone of the building.

Comm. Essert liked the suggestions made and deferred to his fellow Commissioners for making a recommendation to the applicant.

Chair Barnett closed the public comment period.

Comm. Johnson is pleased with the design and font size for the new signage.

Comm. Essert thanked the applicant for being flexible about the suggestions made for the new signage which he found helpful in his review.

Chair Barnett agreed with Comm. Essert that the applicant's open mindedness to the recommendations from the Commissioners was very important.

Comm. Tippell made a motion to approve the monument sign and a window sign for the mixed use building as follows: 1) the monument sign shall include a burgundy background with either black or gold lettering; and, 2) the window sign shall not include a border. Comm. Randolph seconded. The motion was unanimously adopted.

Item #4- Design Review- Consideration of new paint colors for a hotel (El Dorado Hotel) at 405 First Street West.

Applicant: El Dorado Hotel

Associate Planner Atkins presented the staff report.

Comm. Tippell confirmed with staff that brush outs are in the back entrance near the stairwell.

Chair Barnett opened the public comment period.

Julie Workman, Moana Restaurant Group, Project Manager for EDI, said the goal is to refresh the hotel's façade with a darker color palette.

Comm. Randolph inquired if changes were proposed for the doors. The applicant responded that a change in door color is being considered.

Mary Martinez, resident, is disappointed that the color palette chosen is too dark. She urged the Commission to postpone the review until more information was submitted.

Planning Director Goodison noted that many of the original elements of the Adobe have been removed over time.

Chair Barnett closed the public comment period.

Comm. Tippell favored "trendy" charcoal grays but thought the proposed colors might be too extreme for this prominent corner in the Historic District. She recommended softer gray tones with a mustard color as an accent color.

Comm. Randolph agreed with Comm. Tippell's comments that the entryway is too dark.

Comm. Essert agreed with Comm. Randolph's comments with nothing further to add.

Comm. Johnson agreed with his fellow Commissioners that a mustard color is a good choice.

Chair Barnett suggested lighter color options.

Comm. Tippell made a motion to continue the item with the suggestions made for lighter color choices and a mock up to better illustrate the proposal. Comm. Randolph seconded. The motion was unanimously adopted.

Item #1 (taken out of agenda order) - Continued Design Review - Site design and architectural review of proposed alterations and an addition to a residence at 227 East Spain Street.

Applicant: Robert Baumann & Associates

Associate Planner Atkins presented the staff report.

Chair Barnett clarified that the residence was a contributing resource under CEQA and the Secretary of Interior's standards should be followed. He noted that it might be possible to de-list the building, if it is truly not a historic resource, in which case the Secretary of Interior's standards would no longer apply.

Chair Barnett opened the public comment period.

Robert Baumann, Robert Baumann & Associates, project Architect, stated that the proposal is in full compliance with all the zoning regulations and the Development Code and revisions were made based on recommendations from the previous meeting. For example, retaining the salt shape box, bringing the side yard into compliance, more lighting in the east elevation of the plan, and a reduction of 18 inches in the roof height. He followed the Secretary of Interior (SOI) standards. The eave break is a delineation of the old portion of the home to the new section. The project is sympathetic to the characteristics of Sonoma.

Alice P. Duffee, Historic Preservation Planner APD Preservation LLC, the consultant retained by the applicant to review the historic aspects of the project, summarized her findings.

Amy Alper, local Architect, submitted late mail directly to Chair Barnett at 5: 35 p.m. that indicated full support of the project. Chair Barnett read the letter into the public record.

Chair Barnett inquired about the roof level.

Robert Baumann responded that the roof level is subordinated and the eave break is a delineation of the old portion of the home and the new section.

Comm. Tippell inquired about the design changes made to the home.

George McKale, representing the League for Historic Preservation, agreed with Alice Duffee's analysis of the proposal and the importance of retaining certain features of the structure.

Comm. Essert questioned the fenestration and door issues addressed by Alice Duffee in her report. He does not see a significant distinction between the old and new windows and his impression is that the new windows look similar. Comm. Essert said differentiating the old from the new is an important element of the proposal as discussed by Chair Barnett.

Robert Baumann noted that the windows are not scaled and the only change is 3 over 1. The original 20th century windows were replaced.

Chair Barnett is concerned with all 82 buildings in Sonoma that are contributing historic resources to the District, including this one, as they are a unique and irreplaceable resource. He noted that some of the interpretations are subjective in nature but disagreed with the opinions expressed that the integrity of historic residence should not be fully preserved. He referred to the seven elements and findings that must be applied under the Secretary of Interior Standards and Guidelines.

Mark Parry, Architectural Historian, is concerned with the deterioration of valuable cultural resources in cities. He described the historic home as a typical Queen Anne from the 1918 Era. He opposed the changes being proposed by the applicant since he is of the opinion they do not adhere to the Secretary of Interior standards as applied in other jurisdictions.

Comm. Randolph asked Mr. Parry if changing the fence was material. He responded that the additions should normally be placed in the rear so the streetscape remained the same, regardless of whether or not a fence is removed.

Robert Demler, resident/President for the League of Historic Preservation, confirmed that George McKale spoke on behalf of the League at the Board level. He appreciated all the parties input and the fair amount of negotiation and compromise made.

George McKale, stated that the League's opinion has changed after the revision made to the east elevation and in his view the standards are met.

Cathy Sperring, neighbor (442 Second St. East), asked that a letter written by Karla Noyes, not received by Staff or DRHPC members, be read into the public record. Planning Director Goodison was handed the correspondence and read the letter, expressing Karla Noyes' opposition to the application.

Bill Wisialowski, the property owner, expressed his desire to be flexible and integrate into the neighborhood. He intended to live in the home long-term and planned to leave the residence to his family. He was encouraged by his neighbors to make exterior/interior changes because of disrepair, safety concerns, and deferred maintenance issues. He hired local experts for his plan of action to repair the historic residence and felt he has been entirely responsive to the DRHPC suggestions

Victor Conforti, local architect, expressed confidence in Mr. Baumann's abilities as an experienced architect. He is of the opinion that the new roofline and the east addition detract from the historic qualities of the original residence. The Secretary of Interior guidelines advise against changing defining features, which is clearly being done with the changed massing of the building and new roof design. He is surprised by the reports that indicated the structure is not of historical significance according to State and Federal guidelines and in light of the Certified Local Government status for the City.

Mark Parry, felt that delisting the property from the National Registry is not the solution and the impact on the Historic District must be retained with proper treatment to the existing elements.

Chair Barnett closed the public comment period.

Comm. Essert appreciated the efforts made so far and wanted to preserve the historic integrity of the home as much as possible, He agreed with Mr. Parry about the significance of the small home and visibility form the street and preferred that it be built backward.

Comm. Randolph thanked the applicants and appreciated their flexibility and hoped a decision could be met so the owner could move forward. Her primary concern is the fence location in relation to the home.

Comm. Tippell thanked the applicants and expressed her desire to make a decision one way or another so the home would not deteriorate further. She interpreted the data as subjective and felt that the required findings could be made for the revised project.

Comm. Johnson thanked the applicant and is encouraged that members of the League supported the proposal. He felt they met the design parameters.

Comm. Randolph clarified that her previous comments are not intended to represent a decision and she hoped that with further discussion, clear direction for the applicant could be provided.

Chair Barnett asked about the circumstances, from staff's perspective of the original approach that was taken in the design of the additions. He also raised the question of whether a peer review should be undertaken of the Cultural Resources Evaluation.

Planning Director Goodison reviewed the staff contacts and meetings that were held with the architect and the other consultants to the project. He recommended against a peer review, noting that it is the job of the Commission to make independent findings. Having yet another study would not change that requirement.

Chair Barnett's concurred that a peer review might not be useful, but reiterated that the main issue from his perspective is that he does not agree that the project, even as revised, complies with the applicable Secretary of Interior standards. That said, he respected the right of the property owners and the architect's project goals and he believes that these could be fulfilled through an alternative design approach.

Chair Barnett re-opened the item for public comment.

Mr. Parry felt the remodel is not appropriate for Sonoma and the standards of care need to be followed.

Victor Conforti critiqued the project in terms of loss of integrity to the original building and said more improvements could be made.

Chair Barnett confirmed with Mr. Baumann that the roof extends back 2 feet and the fascia of the porch is continuous,

Comm. Essert said respect for the resource is key and the main focus should be on the salt box and then build back from that point to compromise the space in the back to respect the historic structure.

Comm. Randolph asked Mr. Conforti if doing certain items might retain the integrity of the historic integrity of the addition/remodel and whether the roof line should be lowered.

Robert Baumann said the determination could be considered subjective in nature but ultimately compliance with the standards should determine the property owner's ability to use the property as he/she determines is the best use. In his view, the Commission should respect the work that has been done by the historic resources consultant and the concurrence of the League for Historic Preservation. Applicants are advised to hire experts to guide them and to consult with the League. If the findings of these experts are brushed aside, why require them in the first place?

Bill Wisialowski, homeowner, said that he and his team had worked in good faith to address all the concerns raised by the Commission.

Chair Barnett asked the applicant if enough feedback was provided to move forward.

The Commission took a five-minute recess.

Robert Baumann requested that the Commission continue the item so that they could take some time to assess the feedback from the Commission and determine whether there is a way forward.

Comm. Essert made a motion to continue the project to the next meeting on January 19, 2015, with a recommendation for revised plans to be submitted, 3 D renderings, and further review of the Secretary of Interior Standards. Comm. Randolph seconded. The motion was unanimously adopted. (Comm. Anderson absent)

Item # 5 Discussion Item- Discussion and review of sign regulations related to commercial real estate signs.

Comm. Tippell made a motion to continue the Item #5 to the next meeting on January 19, 2016. Comm. Johnson seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Issues Update: Associate Planner Atkins reported the following;

The Downtown Design Guidelines will be reviewed at a special study session at 6:30 p.m. January 25, 2016, at the Sonoma Community Center.

Comments from the Audience: None

Election of Officers: Chair Barnett nominated Comm. Micaelia Randolph for Chair, Comm. Tippell seconded. The nomination was unanimously approved. Chair Barnett nominated Christopher Johnson as Vice Chair. Comm. Randolph second. The nomination was unanimously approved.

Planning Director Goodison thanked Chair Barnett for his great service and appreciated all the efforts of the Commissioners and congratulated the new Commissioners on their appointment.

Adjournment: Chair Barnett made a motion to adjourn at 10:15 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 19, 2016. The motion was unanimously approved.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were duly and regularly adopted at a regular meeting of the Design Review and Historic Preservation Commission on the 19th day of January 2016.

Approved:

Cristina Morris, Administrative Assistant