

MINUTES
ALAMEDA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION AND HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

Thursday, December 6, 2007: 6:00 -7:30 P.M.
Alameda County Historic Survey and Preservation Ordinance Project
(Approved January 3, 2008)

I. Call to Order – Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Commissioner Sanger, Chair.

Commissioners Present:

Stephen Sanger
Harry Francis
James Loughran
David Sadoff
MaryAnn McMillan
Dennis Waespi
Al Minard

Commissioners Excused:

Annalee Allen
Marie Cronin
Julie Machado
Ellen Wyrick-Parkinson

Guests:

Matt Davis, Carey & Company

Staff Present:

Cindy Horvath
Angela Robinson-Pinõn
Nilma Singh

1. **Welcome and Introductions of PRHC, staff, consultants, officials present.** (*PRHC Chair*) – The Chair welcomed all and introduced staff and the Consultant, Matt Davis.
2. **Review of Project purpose** (*PRHC Chair*) – The Chair noted that this has been a lengthy two-year project. Comments will be taken tonight and the final approval will be by the Board of Supervisors.
3. **Review of project structure, components and timeline to completion, including review of the Draft Historic Preservation Ordinance** (*consultant*) - Matt Davis with a PowerPoint presentation discussed and explained the following: Survey and Ordinance - which properties are historic; work completed to-date (survey, draft historic context statement; short list of potentially historic properties; 50 especially important properties; work remaining (documenting properties on State DPR forms); Historic Preservation 101 – the bases of historic significance; satisfying one criteria to be historically significant; Integrity – seven components; Codification of the Ordinance - definition and maintenance of the County Register of Historic Resources; addition and removal of properties; which alterations are subject to review, County Landmarks; Structures of Merit; Secretary of the Interior’s Standards; and Incentives. In conclusion, Mr. Davis described the work remaining to be completed which included Ordinance revisions based on this public meeting and finalization of the Ordinance (January 2008); completion of field work and archival research (January 2008); submission of final DPRs and historic context statement (March-April 2008); followed by Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors hearings. In response to the Commission, Mr. Davis further explained that he will be starting on the archive research, draft context statements have been submitted and he was unaware of any work on Mills Act.

4. **Question and answer/public comment** (*PRHC chair facilitates*) – Larry Lepore, HARD, requested clarification on the process and the ‘number’ 50. He pointed out that the Adobe Art Center does not have a DPR nor is it on the List, and the McConaghy House is not on the List either. He confirmed that McConaghy House is in the unincorporated County. Mr. Davis explained the 50 DPRs pointing out that this workshop is solely for the Ordinance and urged Mr. Lepore to contact staff or him on any DPR issues/questions.

Alan Frank, Curator, Pacific Locomotive Association, thanked the Commission for the inclusion of Sunol Depot on the List and recommended that the entire Niles Canyon Railway should be on the List. Niles Canyon is a piece of the original transcontinental railroad and recognized by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) as being eligible for listing on the National Register. He also submitted a letter from SHPO in support. Commissioner Waespi pointed out that Niles Canyon has already been designated as State Scenic Highway. Mr. Frank replied that it was not completely included--a complete inclusion and a complete historical designation will be extremely valuable and helpful in raising funds for the restoration and preservation and historical features. The most historical region extends from Niles district of Fremont through the City of Pleasanton line. Ms. Horvath further explained the State Scenic Highway designation noting that any railroad alterations will be reviewed by the County. Mr. Davis pointed out that several portions of the railway were noted on the East County survey as County landmarks.

Ralph Watkins, 991 St. James Court, stressed the lack of notification as he only became aware of this meeting through the newspaper. He felt that the property owners were unaware of the restrictions and have concerns, especially regarding window treatments and the cost involved. Mr. Davis explained that the window treatment issue is one of the biggest issue details will be worked out. Commissioner Sadoff added that each case will be considered on its basis and all circumstances will be taken into consideration, all decisions will be appealable to the Board of Supervisors and the reason for this workshop is to allow property owners a chance to discuss their concerns. Commissioner McMillan explained why properties on St. James were considered for the List and Commissioner Minard hoped that there would be some incentive/financial help and/or encouragement to preserve the historical integrity. Mr. Watkins also requested clarification on the CEQA review and asked for the next step. Mr. Davis pointed out that Chapter 6 of the Ordinance is on CEQA and staff stated there will be additional public hearings and property owners will be notified.

Lucia Suarez, property owner at 22319 Meekland Avenue, said she had bought her property about a year ago and is used as a construction yard. She complained that no one had informed her initially about the List. Although the house is not livable, homeless people have been living there with no gas, heat and there is nothing historical. Ms. Suarez asked what her next step could be to stop this process and proceed with her plan to demolish the existing house and build a new one. She also requested clarification regarding the ‘Y’ and the ‘+’ signs in the List. The Chair re-iterated that this has been a lengthy process, the Consultants had compiled the List and Commissioner McMillan explained the two ‘+’ signs and that the property has an adobe residence. Ms. Suarez disagreed. Commissioner Sadoff said that there is no mechanism to remove a property at this time, but there is in the future if agendized. Ms. Suarez suggested that she could attend future meetings and also meet with staff.

John Langon, 19350 Langon Place, stated that his property on 20026 San Miguel, which is on the List, has been approved for a demolition to build six condominiums in April 2007. He asked what would be his next step. The Chair requested that the matter be agendized for the next meeting noting that one of the San Miguel properties have been recommended for

removal from the List. Staff indicated that a check could be made with the project planner, Ms. Beth Greene.

Doug Kreiss, 943 St. James Court, indicated that the lots on this Court are very small lots and are not historically significant. He has owned his property for over fifteen years and complained that he was not contacted at all.

Sandra Kremer, also a St. James Court property owner, pointed out the following: initially she was informed that notifications would be sent out; she has not received any notification; none of the other property owners are aware and, as such, are not available tonight; and a 6 pm meeting is not convenient for most owners.

Public testimony was closed.

5. **Next steps and anticipated meetings** (*PRHC chair*) - Staff announced that the next regular Commission meeting is scheduled for January 3rd, 2008. A similar ordinance workshop could be scheduled or could be integrated with a regular meeting. All property owners will be contacted in advance of the meeting. Commissioner Waespi said he preferred integrating with the regular meeting in response to all the concerns raised. In response to Ms. Kremer, Commissioner Sadoff suggested a 7pm meeting at this location with two weeks notice to property owners. Commissioner Minard recommended bright-colored postcards to both mailing and physical addresses.

X. ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business, meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.