

MINUTES
ALAMEDA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION AND HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

Thursday, April 2, 2009
East Bay Regional Park District,
2950 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland, CA
(Approved May 7, 2009)

I. Call to Order – Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 3:45 p.m. by Commissioner Sadoff, Vice Chair.

Commissioners Present:

MaryAnn McMillan
Dennis Waespi
James Loughran
David Sadoff
Al Minard
Harry Francis
Ellen Wyrick-Parkinson

Commissioners Excused:

David Tam
Stephen Sanger
Marie Cronin
Annalee Allen

Staff Present:

Liz McElligott
Angela Robinson-Pinõn
Nilma Singh

Guests:

Brian Washington, County Counsel
Larry Lepore, HARD
Jay Claiborne
Tom Lantry
Alan English, Architect
Kevin Liebig
Howard Beckman

CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL

- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Commissioner McMillan made the motion to approve the March 5th Minutes as submitted and Commissioner Loughran seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The Chair arrived.

- III. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM** - Any member of the public may address the Commission on a matter not on the regular agenda. No discussion or action may be taken on these items. *None*

- IV. CHAIR and STAFF REPORT(S):** *These items include information and discussion by the Commission:*

A. CHAIR REPORT – *None.*

B. STAFF REPORT – Staff announced that in response to questions regarding the Ethics Training and the numerous issues/questions in the past, Brian Washington, County Counsel’s office, is here to discuss the Brown Act; and per Commissioner Allen, perhaps a field trip can be scheduled to the Fox Theater for the May meeting.

Mr. Washington distributed copies, explained the Ralph M. Brown Act and answered questions from the Commissioners.

V. **OLD BUSINESS** – *All old business will include information, discussion and/or action by the Commission.*

A. **694 Bartlett Avenue** - The Commission will discuss a proposed demolition.

Ms. Robinson-Piñon presented the staff report.

Alan English, project architect, introduced Jay Claiborne. Mr. Claiborne, in response to the Commission's request for comparables at the last meeting, explained that the building is a craftsman bungalow which is not unusual as there are other similar craftsman bungalows in the area. He presented photographs to illustrate his report. Another issue was the characteristics of properties not only in Hayward Acres but in Cheryland, Ashland and Castro Valley where prior to WWII, property lines were created to allow them to be used as farms, i.e. narrow deep lots, followed by multi unit residential development similar to this block which is surrounded by Sunset, Bartlett and Royal. Archeology is not relevant at this site; no other criteria exist to qualify for the Register or require CEQA review. He further described the history of the property and pointed out the following: location of the subject property on the 1957 Assessor's Map, location after the 1950 subdivision, location of similar bungalows on the same block--there is a similar bungalow located across the street which has been altered; some institutional type residential care facilities on the north side of Bartlett; the surrounding areas in the rear; none of the past owners have any historical significance to the area; it was built around early 1920s and has vertical wood sidings and stucco which is bungalow style but is not unique and will not justify eligibility; and the site does not have any unique features but has deteriorated and is boarded up. The proposal is to replace the existing structure with four units. The Chair expressed concern on the loss of historical resource through long term planning to develop the rear awaiting the deterioration of the front. Commissioner McMillan pointed out that she had driven by and did not think it was deteriorated but perhaps could be renovated. Mr. Claiborne acknowledged that the deterioration is possibly reversible and Mr. English pointed out that the project has now been reduced from four to two houses, replicating the same craftsman bungalow style features with a driveway in the middle. The Chair indicated that he would prefer moving and preserving the house and asked if it would be possible to relocate in the rear and build a new house in the front. Mr. English replied that restoration would be costly and there are safety issues involved--plumbing, wiring, etc. The Chair noted that older buildings can abide by historical building codes which also lowers the cost; and the cost of re-locating an older house is similar to the cost of building a new one. In response to Commissioner Loughran, Mr. English said that it is a three bedroom, 1,700 square feet house. Commissioner McMillan noted that this is the biggest craftsman home. Commissioner Loughran pointed out that if the inside walls are plastered, they will be destroyed during relocation.

Public testimony was closed. *Commissioner Waespi made the motion to allow the demolition and Commissioner Loughran seconded. Motion failed 2/5 with Commissioners McMillan, Minard, Sadoff, Francis and Parkinson dissenting.*

Commissioner McMillan made a substitute motion against the demolition and recommended that the building be retained and incorporated into the new design. Commissioner Wyrick-Parkinson seconded. Motion carried 4/2 with Commissioners Waespi and Loughran dissenting.

B. Nomination of a Potentially Historic Resource – The Commission will consider whether or not to support the nomination of 1923 Pullman Railroad car for the California Register.

Ms. Robinson-Piñon presented the staff report.

Tom Lantry, in response to the Chair's questions, described the original use of Pullman cars: Sante Fe business cars were purchased from Pullman; all public cars were leased; all major repair work was done in Kansas, described the different Amtrak ratings, inspections and certifications and the steps taken to-date. He has not received any response from SHPO staff, Jay Correia, and Mr. Lantry further outlined the three reasons why the car should be placed on the register: the function, the engineering and the integrity of the car. He also proposes to contact the Newberry Museum in Chicago for additional information. The Chair confirmed that Mr. Correia had informed him that a letter addressed to Mr. Lantry was in the process. Commissioner Loughran requested that a copy be sent to this Commission and recommended that the matter be tabled until receipt of this letter. The Chair said he will contact Mr. Correia and recommended that the documentation edits be completed. *The matter was continued to the next meeting.*

C. San Lorenzo Pioneer Cemetery – The Commission will discuss the progress to date regarding the preservation of the cemetery.

Staff announced that this item was informational only. There was a meeting on April 1st and the conservation and maintenance plan work is in progress.

D. Sutter Medical Center Replacement Hospital Project – The Commission will discuss and make comments on the Final EIR.

Staff introduced Mr. Jesus Armas, Sutter Medical Center consultant. The Commission has received copies of the comment letter submitted by the Chair on behalf of the Commission, copies of the responses from the consultant, as well as copies of DPR 523.

Mr. Armas stated that, in response to the Commission comments, a specific condition has been included that provides and requires displays and exhibits to be incorporated into the facility; and that they are to work with Planning staff to identify the appropriate locations for such.

VI. NEW BUSINESS – *All new business will include information, discussion and/or action by the Commission.*

A. Meek Estate – The Commission will discuss a proposed wedding pavilion.

Ms. Robinson-Piñon presented the staff report. Commissioner McMillan had requested that the matter be agendaized and a member of the public, Howard Beckman, had also expressed an interest.

Larry Lepore, representing HARD, noted that the Commission had submitted a letter of support and with the passing of Measure WW, funding is now available for construction. Although it is not sure when the money will be available, an application has been submitted for specific funding for this project. Mr. Lepore displayed and explained the plans submitted with this application. There have not been any major project changes since his last presentation to this Commission. The project has also been submitted to the State Historical Commission but no comments received to-date. Commissioner McMillan asked if any organization has approved this within the confines of a historic building. This project has been part of the Master Plan approved over 10 years ago and the County did complete a

check list for a preliminary EIR which was submitted to the State. HARD has also filed for a categorical exemption.

Howard Beckman expressed concerns that the proposed wedding pavilion/West Terrace has adverse impacts on the historical visual character of Meek Estate. He hoped that this Commission would consider the preservation of the visual character. The Meek Estate is the last preserved example of a large manor. Secondly is the policy question -- when does public interest trump historic preservation. Mr. Beckman also expressed concerns regarding the lack of public discussion within HARD regarding possible impact on historical value. He further submitted HARD's worksheet, required by federal government, in approval of a community development block grant and expressed concern with the entry under the Historic Preservation Section which read: "The undertaking has no adverse effect". He requested expert evaluation of the potential impact on the historic property and pointed out that he has not received a copy of the Commission's letter of support from HARD. Commissioner Wyrick-Parkinson recommended staff look at prior Commission Minutes.

Mr. Lepore, in rebuttal, stated the following: it will be more than just a wedding pavilion; public comments were taken when the Master Plan was adopted; funding has not been available until now; no major changes are proposed but reconstruction of the existing restroom in the same location, connecting to the same utilities/services...etc; HARD has a contract with Hayward Historical Society who has been reconstructing the entire interior to historical standards and has installed a new roof; and in future, will open the building to the public. Cherryland Home Association will also be holding their meetings here. In response to the Chair, Mr. Lepore re-stated that the plans have not been modified but only up-dated with details such as mechanical, civil drawings, drainage...etc.

Mr. Beckman read the response from the State Historic Preservation Office regarding the block grant process which indicated that they did not agree with the submission finding of 'no effect' but there will be an effect on the historic property and additional information would be needed to proceed with this review.

Commissioner McMillan requested that the matter be continued and re-agendized.

VII. COMMISSIONER REPORTS – *Commissioners will report on areas of concern and/or informational items concerning parks, recreation and historical preservation issues within the supervisory districts they serve.*

- A. District 1: Haggerty** - Commissioner Minard announced that on April 18th the Union City Library he will be giving a talk on Flight 615, the fifth worst plane disaster in California, which is free; and on Sunday, the 19th he will be at the Trans Continental meeting at Niles Museum between 3-5 pm talking about Charles Howard Shinn, which has a \$5 donation fee.
- B. District 2: Steele** - *None*
- C. District 3: Lai-Bitker** - *None*
- D. District 4: Miley** - *None*
- E. District 5: Carson** - *None*

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE

A. Agenda Items for future meetings

X. ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business, Commissioner McMillan made the motion to adjourn and Commissioner Waespi seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 5:45 pm.