



MINUTES
CITY OF NORCO
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
CONFERENCE ROOM "A" — 2870 CLARK AVENUE
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 12, 2013

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Bacon called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.
2. ROLL CALL: Chair Bacon, Vice Chair Potter, Commissioners Dixon, Overstreet, and Stiller.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Okoro, Preservation Consultant Wilkman, Economic Development Specialist Grody

GUESTS: None

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commissioner Overstreet
4. PUBLIC COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS: None
5. READ BY THE CHAIR: "All discretionary actions before the Historic Preservation Commission are advisory in nature and final actions will be confirmed, modified or deleted by the City Council."
6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner Overstreet moved to approve the Minutes from Regular Meeting of September 3, 2013. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Potter and unanimously approved.
7. UPDATE ON HISTORIC COLLECTIONS STUDY (Consultant Wilkman): Mr. Wilkman reported that tremendous progress has been made in boxing newspapers in the trailer for an anticipated move. He, archivist Chuck Wilson, Commissioner Stiller and two Norco High School students used up all 25 boxes, and Commissioner Stiller explained that future work will proceed even quicker, as the team gets more organized and has more room to navigate. Mr. Wilson has ordered a final installment of newspaper boxes, at a cost of about \$150, and also indicated that the cost of acid-free file folders for documents and photographs will be substantial. It was suggested that a local service club (e.g. Kiwanis) be approached for a donation to cover such costs. The draft Existing Conditions & Issues Report has been accepted by members of the Committee.
8. UPDATE ON COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES (Vice Chair Potter): After the Vice Chair kicked off the discussion, Commissioner Dixon reported that she has been in contact with Parks & Recreation Director Brian Petree about a number of potential sites for an interim or permanent home for the Collection. The most promising site, she believes, is the Community Center, which is itself a highly significant historic resource.

Some dance classes and other activities would have to be relocated, but the building's attributes (e.g. historic relevance, central location, City-ownership, ample parking) make it ideal. Commissioner Dixon reported that Mr. Petree suggested refurbishing the trailer, but she and other Commissioners dismissed that as unfeasible, due to its severely deteriorated condition, risk of damage by weather, and risk of burglary. City Manager Okoro addressed the availability of potential sites, reporting he has been in contact with Mr. Petree on all proposed uses of City-owned properties and has fully evaluated each of them. He clarified with the Commissioners the approximate space requirements, and Consultant Wilkman indicated that Mr. Wilson was in the process of developing a prototypical floor plan. Mr. Okoro was very clear that while the Community Center may appear on its face to be an appropriate prospect, nothing has been authorized, and that there could be substantial costs involved in adapting the Community Center or any other public space to house the Collection. Chair Bacon suggested that the move from the trailer to another space might be phased to make it more feasible but reiterated the urgency of leaving the trailer, due to the risks it presented. Mr. Okoro suggested that a space in City Hall might be arranged, but it would depend on exactly how much space is required, which prompted a discussion as to whether or not the collection maintained by Council Member Bash would be stored with the rest of the Collection. The City Manager said the old fire station has been ruled out due to a history of burglary. Staff and Commissioners agreed to continue researching new locations as the materials in the trailer are boxed for easy transport.

9. CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDED CITY CODE REVISIONS (Vice Chair Potter): The Vice Chair restated his belief that the language in the Norco Municipal Code pertaining to the composition and qualifications of the Historic Preservation Commission should be more consistent with the language from the State of California's Certified Local Government (CLG) program, which his fellow Commissioners agreed is appropriate. First, Vice Chair Potter presented the language from the National Park Service, which originally created the CLG requirements, and then the language from the current State CLG regulations, which is very consistent with the former. The pertinent CLG provisions are as follows (bold added for emphasis):

"To the extent available in the community, the CLG will appoint a minimum of two (2) professional members from the disciplines of architecture, history, architectural history, planning, archeology, or other historic preservation-related disciplines, such as urban planning, American studies, American civilization, cultural geography, or cultural anthropology. Local governments can be certified without this minimum professional qualified membership if they can demonstrate they have made a reasonable effort to fill these positions."

However, the City Code language is much more restrictive, argued the Vice Chair, as it reads as follows (bold added for emphasis):

"Commission members shall be persons who, as a result of their education, training, knowledge, and experience, are qualified to analyze and interpret architectural and site planning information, including but not limited to licensed landscape architects and architects, urban planners, engineers, and licensed general contractors. At least two of the members shall have professional

experience in urban planning, architectural history or historic preservation, archaeology, American studies, cultural geography, cultural anthropology and shall have general knowledge of architectural styles prevalent in the historic old town of Norco.”

Vice Chair Potter suggested that the Commission recommend to the City Council that the Code language be modified to be more consistent with the CLG guidelines. It was noted by Chair Bacon that if new language is adopted, the State Officer of Historic Preservation (SHPO) will want to see some kind of evidence that the City made a good faith effort to promote vacancies to people with the specified professional expertise, and it was agreed a more aggressive outreach effort would be required. A question arised as to whether the Commission could seek professional expertise from non-residents, and the City Manager reminded them that all Commissioners must be Norco residents. A subsequent discussion involved the option of having staff create new language to present to the Commission for review in January, or simply have staff submit the proposed changes directly to Council for consideration, and it was agreed that the Commissioners should see the language first. The Commission therefore instructed staff to return with new proposed language in January for review, then vote on a formal recommendation to City Council.

10. UPDATE ON PRISON CLOSURE (City Manager Okoro): At the last meeting, the City Manager updated the Commission on the recent decision to suspend closure of the prison for an additional three (3) years. There are no new developments on that, but he reported on ongoing efforts to execute a Right of Entry Agreement between the City, Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Lake Norconian Club Foundation (LNCF). The agreement would provide access to the hotel for three consecutive days, four hours each day, to inspect the property for necessary repairs. Mr. Okoro explained some of the details of the agreement, but in essence, it would be an opportunity for historic restoration contractors to evaluate the work required to preclude any further damage to the hotel. A discussion ensued on the merits of this pending agreement, but the Commissioners were uniformly excited about this significant development. The City Manager noted that Norco's California State legislative representatives, Senator Roth and Assemblyman Linder, have been very helpful in pushing this agreement forward.
11. UPDATE ON NAVY ACTIVITIES (Consultant Wilkman): Mr. Wilkman reported on plans released by the Navy regarding proposed modifications to the historic garage (now known as Building 204) on the Norconian site. Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the City of Norco and the Lake Norconian Club Foundation (LNCF) both have an opportunity to comment on the proposed modifications. Mr. Wilkman noted that many of the improvements are positive, in the sense that they preserve the historic fabric of the structure, but that he objects to the inclusion of DPR forms which originally accompanied a study that was never approved by the SHPO. Mr. Wilkman also objects to the very narrow definition of landscaping identified by the Navy, which excludes some of the hills that are essential to the historic context.

- 12. FORMATION OF IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE TO EXECUTE RECOMMENDATIONS OF HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY (Consultant Wilkman):** Consultant Wilkman suggested it was time to create an Implementation Committee dedicated to moving forward with some of the recommendations of the Historic Resources Survey. A priority, he believes, should be the designation of some publicly-owned properties, beginning with the Community Center. He noted that among privately-held properties, the most prominent was a structure or two on the old egg ranch, although there was no time to fully discuss how such a designation might impact the community's future options for the surrounding property. Mr. Wilkman said the Implementation Committee should set goals and establish a timeline for implementation of recommendations. Commissioner Overstreet expressed an interest in serving on this Committee. Before any appointees could be made, however, Vice Chair Potter recommended moving forward with the designation of the Community Center, as there was already a consensus that it was the highest priority. A discussion ensued as to whether or not the City Manager should agendize a notification to the City Council prior to a request for designation actually being brought to Council. As Mr. Okoro had already left the meeting, Economic Development Specialist Grody suggested deferring to the City Manager on whether he wished to proceed in that manner or simply educate the Council on the item through a status report. Commissioner Potter moved to recommend granting local historical status for the Community Center, authorizing the Commission and staff to develop an application for such consideration. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dixon and approved unanimously.
- 13. REPORT ON COMMISSION TRAINING (Consultant Wilkman):** Mr. Wilkman reminded Commissioners to report on what training they had participated in.
- 14. NEXT MEETING:** Regular Meeting, January 14, 2013.
- 15. ADJOURNMENT:** Chair Bacon adjourned the meeting at 5:29 p.m.