



CITY OF LAS CRUCES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION Work Session

November 13, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

The following are minutes of the Historic Preservation Commission Work Session held November 13, 2024, in room 2007B, City Hall, 700 N. Main Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Judy A. Berryman, Chair
Ernie Campos
Dr. Paul John Deason
Dr. Jerry Wallace

MEMBERS ABSENT: David Chavez, Vice-Chair
Jeffrey Shepard
Patricia Williams

STAFF PRESENT: Chris Faivre, Interim Deputy Director CD

OTHERS PRESENT: Cassie McClure, CLC
Corina Miramontes
Greg Shervanick

1. CALL TO ORDER

Called to order at 6:05. An amendment was suggested of the agenda, changing "Historic Preservation Committee" to "Historic Preservation Commission."

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

2.1 CHAPTER 2: REALIZE LAS CRUCES FINAL COMMENTS

Everyone asked if they have had a chance to look at Chapter 2. Have met with various people. Planning and Zoning Commission will meet on the 19th and vote to accept or reject Chapter 2 as written. Paul Deason mentioned the Mesilla Park Historic District and the Rio Grande Historic District are not included. Jerry Wallace asked how could Mesilla Park be included in the City of Las Cruces. Judy Berryman and Paul Deason stated it is. Ernie Campos asked if the Rio Grande had anything to do with the International Boundary Commission. Paul Deason stated it was a part of the Elephant Butte Historic District and that area on Melendres Street was part of the CCC, and so was a historic district from Elephant Butte down to

1 the border. Ernie Campos stated the director of Elephant Butte gave a
2 presentation about the whole history of Elephant Butte, which included
3 things he did not know. This included how the dam was built and how the
4 water would be distributed in this region. Mesilla Park has three boundaries,
5 one that belongs to Mesilla, one that is in the county, and one in the City.
6

7 Judy Berryman stated in Chapter 2 there should be wording that it is Historic
8 Preservation Commission and not Historic Preservation Committee. They
9 were originally established as a Commission. Also inclusion of Historic
10 Preservation Specialist, rather than a general note in Chapter 2, it
11 specifically needs to call out as a Historic Preservation Specialist, of
12 someone with specific talents, requirements, and background, rather than
13 a general term. Paul Deason mentioned that for the community to be
14 considered a Certified Local Government (CLG) need requirements of the
15 State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the National Park Service
16 which connects to a Commission and a Historic Preservation Specialist.
17 Jerry Wallace looked at the SHPO website and could not find in the CLG
18 manual the necessity of an actual certified member. Jerry Wallace read
19 directly from the website clarifying. Paul Deason stated he will get that more
20 detailed information that came from the National Parks Service website.
21 Chris Faivre has the CLG manual and he spoke with Karla last week. On
22 page 19 it states that "the CLG should employ or have regular access by
23 contact or letter of agreement to the equivalent of one professional who
24 works full time as an expert in archeology history, architectural history,
25 history, architecture, historic preservation, planning or closely related field."
26 By the position created by the City, they do fulfill that requirement. But the
27 inclusion in municipal code is not required by the state. The language in
28 Realize is set to reference director level in the municipal code so that in the
29 future is department positions change, the municipal code does not need to
30 be amended.
31

32 Judy Berryman mentioned Section 2-2 C, surveys and inventories, page 63.
33 "The Community Development Director shall conduct surveys and
34 inventories." Her objection is that the Community Development Director
35 does not have the qualifications to conduct a survey. So it should say "the
36 Community Development Director and/or staff who has these following
37 requirements." Which then this would meet the CLG. Chris Faivre stated
38 that the definition of the "Director" of a department used in the municipal
39 code, means the director or designee. Therefore the City does meet the
40 requirements of the CLG in the municipal code. Judy Berryman asks under
41 the definition of community director or staff that Historic Preservation
42 Specialist needs specific requirements, as this would be a safeguard that
43 someone with qualifications would be conducting the studies. Chris Faivre
44 will try and include the definition, but ensure that the historic preservationist
45 is not the only designee.
46

1 Judy Berryman also mentioned again the two historic districts mentioned
2 above, and believes that other historic district requirements were listed in
3 Chapter 3. (Legacy zoning districts.) Rio Grande and Mesilla Park. Chris
4 Faivre will look into this. There will be tweaks after the new year anyways.
5

6 Jerry Wallace mentioned Section 2.2 and looking at the CLG manual, he
7 read from the manual that, "minimum requirements for the actual
8 preservation commission, at least five members all of whom has
9 demonstrated an interest in historic preservation." That wording is not in
10 Chapter 2 and does it need to be included. Paul Deason stated Section 2.2
11 A 2, stated the commission shall consist of seven members appointed by
12 the City, and that each commissioner shall possess a professional
13 background from among several relevant fields including architecture,
14 history, engineering, law, architectural history, historic preservation,
15 landscape architecture, archeology, land use planning, or real estate. Jerry
16 Wallace stated that that is the actual language in the CLG guideline, and
17 does that need to be in Chapter 2. Judy Berryman asked what is in Article
18 4, division 3, subdivision 16, does it list the requirements of the commission.
19 Jerry Wallace asked if historic preservation commission needs their own
20 bylaws, rather than just those of the City. Paul Deason mentioned some
21 from previous, either 2023 or 2024. Chris Faivre stated that the same
22 requirements are referenced in City municipal code for an HPC member.
23 City Clerk did mention that this board should have bylaws. If they adopted
24 the City bylaws at one point, that is fine too.
25

26 Jerry Wallace feels that Alameda district should have been included. Also
27 in the CLG guideline was to enforce appropriate state or local legislation for
28 the designation and the protection of historic properties. If Alameda does
29 not participate and historic buildings are listed on the local register that are
30 in Alameda, could they sidestep that as not part of the commission. Chris
31 Faivre read the Alameda Overlay Ordinance which contains both a state
32 and national historic district "but the neighborhood has not been designated
33 a local historic district, and will be exempt from any future local historic
34 district ordinances should they be adopted by the City." City legal does
35 have some concerns about that language and staff will work with in the
36 coming year. Staff will look into if there are bylaws, and if not getting
37 something for the members to look at.
38

39 Judy Berryman requested another training session as there are some
40 issues. It was mentioned something for on-boarding new members. Also
41 asked for SHPO to come down and do training on CLG. City Clerk does
42 yearly training on Open Meeting Act beginning of the year too. Jerry
43 Wallace mentioned an internship that has been discussed at various times,
44 and that he has a student wanting to do that. Chris Faivre stated he will
45 look into it with HR, but there is currently not a position set up in Community
46 Development.

1
2 Paul Deason recommends deconstruction rather than demolition. He did
3 send information to Sara Gonzales where this would be input in Realize.
4 Also he would prefer referring to this as a commission not a committee.
5

6 Public was asked input on Chapter 2. Corina Miramontes also prefers
7 commission instead of committee. Greg Shervanick comments have to do
8 with separation, specifically Alameda. Judy Berryman asked if in Realize
9 could put in something that negates the Alameda rule that they are not
10 governed by the HPC. Chris Faivre stated a decision was made to not deal
11 with any of the legacy districts through Realize, therefore the answer to the
12 question is no, the HPC cannot govern that. This can be looked at in the
13 future. Question on if SHPO knows about Alameda, and that is unknown.
14 Jerry Wallace stated with the CLG they need file to do a report with SHPO
15 every year, and Alameda could be included.
16

17 **2.2 HPC 2025 GOALS**
18

19 Judy Berryman summarized. She thinks the goal is to bring all the groups
20 together, districts. And believes the problem is the lack of an HP specialist.
21 Need to have meetings with all stakeholders, including the county, what
22 their interest, concerns, etc. and a what would be a master plan. Also
23 working with the City as there is a feeling this board is not working with the
24 City. Need a plan to identify historic districts, add new historic districts, put
25 City owned properties that are historic on a local district. Create a list of the
26 10 most jeopardized or endangered properties in Las Cruces and work with
27 the owner to come up with solutions. Ernie Campos stated he did a list,
28 Elks area, Country Club, Alameda, Mesilla Park, Bellamah, University.
29 Mesquite have several spokespersons. Alameda is Robert Cruise. Mesilla
30 Park is Greg Smith. Other maybe have volunteers too. Asked if when Dr.
31 Ainsworth left if there was a "to do" list left. For which there was not. Judy
32 Berryman encouraged when a specialist is hired that they have multiple
33 work sessions to come up with a plan of action of priorities: a list of
34 endangered buildings, putting City owned historic properties on a local list,
35 defining historic districts.
36

37 Jerry Wallace mentioned the lack of consistency, meetings being cancelled
38 and rescheduled. He would like to propose in 2025 set a specific date every
39 month to meet, and meet consistently even not certificates to approve. Judy
40 Berryman would like to hold meetings outside of City Hall, in various
41 communities as there are people who do not want to go to City Hall.
42 Suggestion of the Amador Hotel, Munson Senior Center, Benavidez Center,
43 Papen Center, etc. Let the public know who they are.
44

1 Ernie Campos asked about Church's Chicken. Staff e-mails them every
2 Wednesday. Staff met with them early in the spring. They want to rebuild.
3 They are working on design options that fit within the neighborhood.
4

5 **3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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7 **4. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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9 **4.1. UPDATE ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION SPECIALIST HIRING**

10
11 Chris Faivre stated they had 26 applicants, only four met the qualifications
12 that would allow retention of CGL. And so interviews are being set up with
13 those four to happen next week and Thanksgiving week. Greg Shervanick
14 asked about a new hire and one month probation. Chris Faivre stated all
15 new hires with the City are on a one year probation. There was an extensive
16 discussion on hiring and retaining personnel and the preservation specialist
17 position. Jerry Wallace has asked staff for what is being worked on for
18 historic presentation. The Kirby motel was mentioned. Judy Berryman
19 mentioned that there was no one from this board helping hiring the
20 preservation specialist and are hoping that now that there is someone that
21 that will be helpful. Chris Faivre stated the intent of that position is to lead
22 the City's historic preservation efforts and have this board behind it to
23 support it. Jerry Wallace would like to see bragging to SHPO about historic
24 preservation in Las Cruces and bringing more properties into the
25 conversation. Paul Deason also wants to tell SHPO how the community
26 has become involved, expanded to the community.
27

28 Judy Berryman summarized that the incoming HP specialist is a liaison as
29 there has been no working relationship with the City. Second is
30 communication, open to the public, to the City, and among themselves.
31 Finally is training in terms of City staff. The architectural guidelines
32 document to be used by planning staff to help state type of style and what
33 that person should be concerned with. They need to have meetings with
34 P&Z, people at the permit counter dealing with the public.
35

36 Question of what happened to the guidelines that were being worked on.
37 Chris Faivre has a copy of it. There are things that need to be realigned
38 when Realize is completed. No review from legal or planning staff. He will
39 make this a priority to get it passed by Council. It is going to require staff's
40 thorough review. Judy Berryman stated March 2024 at HPC meeting it was
41 approved by Dr. Ainsworth, approved by someone in Community
42 Development, there was legal there.
43

44 **5. OTHER ITEMS**
45

1 Judy Berryman had one question, December 2024, if there are no CO, do want a
2 commission regular meeting on the third Wednesday. Paul Deason stated for
3 consistency they have the meeting in December.
4

5 **6. ADJOURNMENT (7:40)**
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10 _____
11 Chairperson