



CITY OF LAS CRUCES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

August 19, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

The following are minutes of the Historic Preservation Committee Meeting held June 17, 2026, at Council Chambers, City Hall, 700 N. Main Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Jerry Wallace, Chair
Jeffrey Shepherd, PhD
Ernie Campos
Fernando Baeza
Rosanna Torres
Tanner Keaton Guskey

MEMBERS ABSENT: Norma Chairez-Hartell, Vice-Chair

STAFF PRESENT: Caitlin Beesley, Historic Preservation Specialist
Henry Becker, Deputy City Attorney

OTHERS PRESENT: Carlos Alvarez
Paul Deason
Phoebe Guskey
George Pearson
Greg Shervanick

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wallace called the meeting to order at 6:05.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST INQUIRY

There was no conflict of interest. Ernie Campos stated he is the historian for Las Esperanzas.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

George Pearson stated this is not historic related but it is related to the neighborhood. The city is working on their Transportation Safety Action Plan. The plan itself covers all modes of transportation, but there is a lot of emphasis on bicyclists and pedestrians. The historic districts are heavily pedestrian oriented. If the board knows of places there are problems with pedestrian access, missing sidewalks, light pole in the middle of a sidewalk, etc., visit that. Go to

1 lascruces.gov/tsap there is a survey. And also some popup events for public input
2 into the process.

3 4 **4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

5
6 Member Tanner Guskey motioned to modify the agenda No. 7 to state "proposed
7 changes to section 106" instead of just "changes to."

8
9 Motion to approve the corrections to the agenda by Member Rosanna Torres;
10 seconded by Member Jeff Shepherd. Motion passed unanimously.

11
12 Motion to approve the agenda by Member Ernie Campos; seconded by Member
13 Guskey. Motion pass unanimously.

14 15 **4.1 Approval of the Minutes - July 15, 2026**

16
17 Motion to approve the minutes by Member Shepherd; seconded by Member
18 Guskey. Motion passed unanimously.

19 20 **5. HPC MEMBER APPOINTMENT**

21
22 Tanner Guskey is an archeologist for the United States Department of Agriculture.
23 He is looking forward to assisting on this. Glad to be here.

24 25 **6. DESIGN REVIEW AND CASE RECOMMENDATIONS**

26 27 **6.1 Nos. 26RB2004618 and 26OC1504639 - Certificate of Appropriateness** 28 **application for window replacement, rear addition, and roof alteration,** 29 **located at 425 E. Mountain Avenue, zoned R-3**

30
31 Historic Preservation Specialist Caitlin Beesley stated this is another
32 retroactive approval. This is an opportunity for us to reiterate the need to
33 go through the design review process and to acquire proper permitting. The
34 property owner was not responsible for the changes to this building. He
35 bought the building after the changes were made. He is seeking to
36 complete some of the work. This building is in the South Mesquite Overlay.
37 It is captured by the State Register Listed Historic District for Mesquite
38 Street Original Townsite Historic District. It is not contributing. When the
39 historic district was first established it was listed as an "intrusive structure"
40 which is not a designation option; this was later corrected to a designation
41 of noncontributing. The items for approval today are the replacement of all
42 the windows, removal of some of the windows, the rear addition to the
43 building, and some minor changes to the roof. The building is not
44 contributing because it was built outside of the period of significance for the
45 historic district. The roof was applied for permitting but because of an error
46 it was not reviewed by the Historic Preservationist Program. The property

1 owner did work with an architect to document the window replacement and
2 the addition.

3
4 The addition keeps with the roofline. It has not been altered but extended.
5 The addition is small and meets the minimum standard for appropriateness.
6 It is to the rear of the property. If the addition has been brought for
7 permitting she would have preferred it be offset, so the addition would be a
8 separate entity from the main part of the building. Right now it looks like it
9 an extension of the main part of the original building.

10
11 The windows are the main issue for this application. The property was
12 documented in 2011 through Google Street View and it shows the original
13 steel casement windows. The altered windows were shown. There were
14 two windows on the east side and three windows on the west side originally.
15 The west side now only has one window. All operable windows are now
16 sliders, not casement windows, and are constructed out of simple white
17 vinyl. The three larger picture windows that were originally casements are
18 all sliders, including two on the front façade of the house. On the east side
19 there is one dominant slider window towards the front of the house that
20 would be visible from the street. One of the larger windows that was
21 originally in the bathroom has been changed to an inoperable window. And
22 another slider was installed in what is now the bathroom; this change
23 involved replacing a door. The secondary door has been moved to the rear
24 of the new addition. There are also clerestory windows in the addition which
25 is used as a utility room. Beesley is not recommending the applicant
26 change any of the windows. The property does meet all the lien code
27 standards, provides egress in the bedrooms which is required by code.

28
29 There was an asphalt shingle roof prior to the installation of the standing
30 seam roof. Metal roofs are not out of place for the historic district. Typically
31 see the corrugated metal. The other change was the addition of the fascia,
32 which is a little bit deeper than what was there prior to the project starting.
33 However, there is no evidence of what was there originally. The fascia is
34 the blue vertical element. And this then makes the building look similar to
35 the neighboring building on the same block.

36
37 She has discussed with several people in the neighborhood about metal
38 windows. They retain heat and make it harder to cool the building.
39 Buildings with metal windows on the front she recommends to retain the
40 metal windows and explore awnings as a cooling option. The general rule
41 of thumb for historic districts is that historic windows be retained on the front
42 of buildings, while windows on secondary facades altered if need be.

43
44 Beesley elaborated on why there is interest in replacing windows. One
45 reason is owners believe that new windows will be more energy efficient.
46 She presented two images from the National Park Services' preservation

1 brief on restoring steel windows and stressed why this is a fallacy. There is
2 a lot of embodied carbon that people do not take into consideration when
3 replacing the windows. Embodied carbon is a term used to describe the
4 carbon inherent in materials that are already manufactured; new materials
5 or features, such as windows, produce additional carbon output as they are
6 manufactured new. Vinyl windows cannot be repaired, so they are cyclical
7 and will require replacement, meaning they will go into a landfill and then
8 and then new windows will be manufactured, creating a cycle of material
9 extraction and carbon production. Historic windows can generally be
10 repaired.

11
12 Chair Wallace asked that if there was a new survey of the historic district,
13 would this property then contribute to the Mesquite Historic District. Caitlin
14 Beesley stated her recommendation would be instead of changing or
15 expanding the period of significance for the district to accommodate later
16 buildings, they would expand it geographically. Probably go further north
17 on Mesquite, also some areas off to the east. How could the large addition
18 and changes not have been flagged upon selling the home? Is there a
19 better mechanism of process about preventing/catching this? Caitlin
20 Beesley stated yes this has been discussed within the Community
21 Development department over the last couple of months particularly, but
22 probably longer. It was noticed in January that the windows had been
23 replaced. And codes was sent to speak with the property owner about
24 pulling permits. Nothing was heard until the current property owner came
25 and said he bought the house. The current property owner has paid the
26 previous property owners' fees for doing work without a permit.

27
28 Motion to approve by Member Shepherd; seconded by Member Torres.
29 Motion passed unanimously.
30

31 **7. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

32 33 **7.1 Federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (proposed)** 34 **changes to Section 106 on National Historic Preservation Act** 35

36 Caitlin Beesley stated this item was requested by Vice-Chair Norma
37 Chairez-Hartell. The proposed changes were discussed when she and
38 Chairez-Hartell, along with the city legal department, were at the National
39 Alliance of Preservation Commissions Conference in Minneapolis last
40 month. The advisory council chose to vote to accept the proposed changes
41 and there is now a process of getting final approval following a period of
42 public comment. The Section 106 process is one that is required of all
43 federal funding and sometimes involves projects at City Hall where there
44 are historic resources; Beesley would be asked to comment on proposed
45 changes to projects around the community that impact historic resources
46 and use federal money. There is a likely chance that sometime in the future

1 Section 106 may come up before HPC again and the committee should be
2 aware of the changes that may happen. This is a complicated process.

3
4 The Advisory Council for Historic Preservation is a federal agency
5 established as part of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966
6 specifically to deal with the compliance process when it comes to federal
7 projects and federal funding. Urban renewal is reason for the National
8 Historic Preservation Act, for the language in Section 106, and some the
9 requirements in using federal money, and how it is used in demolition,
10 alteration, or other impacts to historic or eligible properties. Section 106
11 requires projects that use federal funds to consider their impact on historic
12 resources.

13
14 The changes proposed are currently regulatory versus statutory. There is
15 a discussion within preservation law experts whether the changes can be
16 made at all if they are accepted. There will likely be legal fights if the
17 changes are accepted, specifically because regulatory changes are not
18 meant to take the place of statutory laws. Statutory means that it has been
19 passed by a governing body. Regulatory is how we interpret those laws.
20 Regulatory changes are changing the way that the federal government is
21 interpreting Section 106.

22
23 Section 106 is purely procedural process. It involves consultation and
24 compliance. It is a process and does not require a specific outcome.
25 Section 106 ensures historic resources are considered when projects are
26 proposed. The process involves local governments and tribal communities,
27 as well as state and federal governments when making determinations
28 about resources and the impacts of projects. There is no consistent
29 outcome. The process was written to be flexible because projects and
30 resources are never the same. A project to build a bridge over a tribal
31 fishing ground will be treated very differently from a proposal to build mobile
32 integrated health station by demolishing of a historic fire station in a
33 community. All communities are different as well and have different
34 perspectives on how to manage their historic resources. Not every loss is
35 a true loss. Section 106 involves identifying the impact of projects on
36 historic properties and then mitigating effects, if demolition or destruction is
37 the only outcome.

38
39 Section 106 is included in all projects using federal funds as part of
40 environmental review. Consultation on the project happens federal entity
41 and whoever is appropriate for the project. This includes federal recognized
42 tribal organizations. And always includes the state and sometimes local
43 governments as well. CLGs are also required to undergo this process as
44 well following the 1980 amendments to the National Historic Preservation
45 Act. The project produces an area of potential effect which determining how
46 the project is going to impact the surrounding area. Properties listed in the

1 National Register or those eligible for listing are identified through the area
2 of potential effect of APE. The project goes through a period of assessment
3 which includes no effect on designated or historic or eligible properties, no
4 adverse effect on historic or eligible properties, or adverse effect on the
5 designated or eligible property. Adverse effect is usually the least identified
6 when it comes to assessing a project and a projects' APE. Generally it is
7 either no effect or no adverse effect. Beesley occasionally comments on
8 projects that are undergoing the 106 process with the city, these are
9 generally projects brought forward by companies using federal money to
10 alter cell towers. None of these projects that Beesley has commented on
11 are in any of the historic districts or within 500 feet of a historic district;
12 projects are generally minor alterations to a cell tower that is already in
13 place. Usually they are lowering cell tower heights. Adverse effects when
14 discovered are resolved by developing solutions for the project between
15 consultants that avoid or minimize effects, or mitigate for the effects if the
16 project cannot be altered to avoid or minimize the threat.

17
18 Beesley reiterated from a meeting earlier this year that there is a
19 Memorandum of Agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office for
20 fire station #3. This is because the City did not alter the project to avoid or
21 minimize demolishing fire station #3. So the mitigation measures to make
22 up for demolition include documentation, celebration of service, etcetera.

23
24 The proposed changes will neuter that process. Companies or
25 governments undertaking projects are no longer required to notify local
26 communities or tribes; these groups are no longer given an opportunity to
27 review and comment on federal projects or projects using federal funds.
28 Public comment is optional and at the discretion of the federal agency or
29 the responsible entity. Federal agencies can determine which resources
30 are or are not historic or eligible for designation when determining impacts.
31 Only direct physical impacts are considered, not visual or auditory. Federal
32 agencies no longer must go through the consultation process to avoid,
33 minimize, or mitigate for the impact of projects on historic properties. The
34 federal government will no longer be required to consult with federally
35 recognized tribes regarding tribal cultural resources. And properties that
36 are considered historic properties under Section 106 they much have
37 tangible human improvements. This means no more cultural landscapes,
38 Mt. Taylor in northern New Mexico is on the National Register of Historic
39 Places, it would not be considered when going through Section 106.

40
41 Chair Wallace stated it is hard not to draw a straight line with what is
42 happening with the White House and those proposed changes. Beesley
43 stated that the White House is exempt from Section 106 by Section 107 of
44 the NHPA. Section 107 excludes the white house, the capital building, and
45 the supreme court from Section 106. Another thing is the proposed mining
46 in Chaco Canyon. There is legitimate concern about Section 106 being

1 used to stall projects; the process can occasionally take years. Some
2 projects have been held in "development hell" over this. However, again,
3 the Section 106 process is procedural and does not have to last for many
4 years. It is not intended to penalize anyone for wanting to do development
5 projects, only that they consider the impact of their project and whether
6 alternatives might not be found to destruction of historic resources. The
7 current perspective among preservationists is that Section 106 lacks teeth
8 and is relatively tame. Some say the law could be a bit more aggressive
9 when it comes to preventing projects from moving forward. Beesley
10 reiterated that there will be another public comment period after there is a
11 secondary vote.
12

13 Chair Wallace asked, after the open comment, does it go back to a
14 committee or does it actually go to one of the floors for a vote. Caitlin
15 Beesley stated it is not going to be voted on by Congress. This is being
16 done by the federal agency that oversees Section 106, the Advisory Council
17 on Historic Preservation. The ACHP is a board of 24 people, 20 of whom
18 are appointed by the president. It is very similar to the capital planning
19 commission for which a majority are appointed by the president. Congress
20 can act to strengthen the National Historic Preservation Act. They cannot
21 specifically speak to the regulatory changes that have been proposed by
22 the advisory council. There will likely be lawsuits. Which will probably be
23 tying up this process. This is going to make more work for people who work
24 in compliance fields, not less.
25

26 Member Gustkey stated having watched the ACHP have a meeting about
27 this leading up to the proposed changes, they had approved to have staff
28 compile the changes within 60 or 90 days. The changes showed up without
29 that comment period from the members within 30 days. That will also be
30 another course of litigation. Caitlin Beesley stated the National Trust is a
31 voting member on the advisory council. They were kept out of deliberations.
32 They were allowed to make their vote but not allowed to make comments
33 or deliberate at part of the meeting that happened. She printed the opening
34 to the National Historic Preservation Act so the board all has copies. It
35 addresses urban renewal, the need to have more considerate development
36 conversations to projects that involve historic sites or impacting historic
37 sites.
38

39 Member Campos appreciated the presentation. He would like to take some
40 time to do some research. Maybe do a report on this at the next meeting to
41 try to stipulate the information. Beesley will keep the board apprised.
42

43 Member Shepherd stated he taught a graduate course and spent about four
44 weeks on these issues, particularly as they related to native people and
45 Section 106. He will acquire some of that information to share. Beesley
46 stated there is a great instance of addressing the failings that come with the

1 National Register involving tribal resources. Again the cultural landscape
2 designation is part of trying to identify and protect properties that do not fit
3 into the categories of buildings, structures, sites. They are spaces that are
4 sacred to native peoples. There have been a lot instances in the past 10
5 years that illuminate the barriers that exist for tribal resources to be
6 designated. Tribal people are required to disclose location of
7 historic/sacred sites to them as part of the National Register process. For
8 some tribes that is not palatable. They do not want people knowing where
9 to go find graves/burial site of their ancestors. Not everybody at SHPO
10 agreed with the fire station being eligible for the National Register, but
11 settled on it being eligible to have the City go through this process. Tribal
12 organizations have been fighting for a long time to get a lot of their resources
13 cultural, natural, or both recognized, and this kind of removes them from the
14 map.

15
16 Member Guskey stated his whole job is doing Section 106. He asked for
17 any recommendation now or at a future meeting about what they can do
18 since these proposed changes will effectively remove us from the process.
19 Chair Wallace would include also as a CLG. Beesley she will ask at
20 Community Development if there are things that she can do. She believes
21 it would be useful to read Senator Heinrich's statement on the proposed
22 changes.

23
24 Paul Deason stated a week from Thursday, 11:00, there will be a free
25 national webinar on this topic conducted by the National Association of
26 Preservation Commissioners. His concern is not only locally but also what
27 is going to happen to the tribal lands, particularly Chaco and the Organ
28 Mountain Desert Peaks.

30 **7.2 Ideas for citywide preservation campaign**

31
32 Beesley and Chair Wallace have been discussing with various people at city
33 hall what they can do moving forward to make preservation more positive
34 public facing entity within the city. She is looking for brainstorming. There
35 are no committed plans right now, and also no budget. There needs to be
36 more information online. What would the board like to see more discussed
37 in the community? What information would the board like to share with the
38 community more widely? She and the chair have talked about sourcing
39 applications or trying to get people excited about establishing new historic
40 districts or designating individual properties. She did speak with the
41 national coordinator at state and he said the local register is the least
42 popular, so put that at the end. All the incentives are for the national or
43 state registers, not local. The communications office had an idea of having
44 preservation month sometime other than May as May is very busy. Maybe
45 more movies, but with more promotion. She enjoyed being at the Farmers
46 Market in May. She is open to any other ideas.

1
2 Chair Wallace stated he thought the adobe presentation was well attended.
3 He is the vice-chair of the Doña Ana County Historical Society and at the
4 end of the year for the awards banquet in January they nominate six or
5 seven buildings that they bring recognition to that goes into the journal. This
6 may be a way to collaborate with the historical society about bringing
7 attention. The Bulletin seems to be interested in historic articles and that
8 kind of work. Storytelling might be helpful. Videos are a good idea. Also
9 maybe do something on campus.

10
11 Member Campos stated that maybe streaming the HPC meetings online.
12 They wanted to be involved in Las Cruces Day, set up a booth and pass
13 brochures, and also do the anniversary of New Mexico. They were told as
14 a committee not to get involved, something legal. Beesley will do a check
15 on that.

16
17 Member Guskey stated he does a lot of genealogy and a favorite is to look
18 at the Sanborn Fire Maps. Maybe some kind of activity of "here is your
19 neighborhood."

20
21 Chair Wallace stated there has been a lot of success with tours on NMSU
22 and with the historical society. Maybe a tour during the Farmers Market.
23 Partner with historic sites.

24 25 **8. STAFF AND COMMITTEE INPUT**

26
27 Beesley stated that Chair Wallace requested an update on the design guidelines.
28 She has a couple of deadlines for this, October is when the program it was built
29 into expires. Have to get it into design by October. She has a few things to do
30 before then. She has been working on edits when she has spare time. They need
31 to also work on the maps which is being done GIS department. She needs another
32 meeting with Fernando for doing some design items. Also need to update photos.
33 Member Torres stated she has some basic like real estate photos to share.

34
35 Member Campos asked about Church's Chicken. Beesley stated no updates on
36 that or the meat market. There will be a project next year with the Branigan Culture
37 Center.

38
39 Important dates,

40 National Trust Webinar on the proposed Section 106 changes specifically
41 for preservation advocates. There will be a specific day for advocacy at the
42 National Trust's Preservation Conference next month.

43
44 National Alliance of Preservation Commissions are having their webinar on
45 the proposed changes and how it will impact local historic preservation

1 commissions, design review boards, historic preservation committees. Put
2 on by the NAPC but it is free.

3
4 Doña Ana County Historical Society lecture series in September. Which will
5 be at the Branigan Cultural Center in the back room. Chair Wallace stated
6 they are building up the spring semester so if anyone knows someone that
7 would like to give a lecture on regional history let him know.
8

9 Beesley stated they got a grant to attend the National Alliance of Preservation
10 Commission conference in Minneapolis this year. It is a bi-annual conference.
11 Chairez-Hartell attended with Beesley. They visited an indigenous peoples visitors
12 center on the river that is gorgeous. Minneapolis was a big railroad town. Chairez-
13 Hartell would like to incorporate more youth participation. Beesley talked to the
14 Community Development department about having a student advisory seat,
15 maybe junior high or middle school through college undergrad. Also bringing
16 college students into the meetings. Beesley mentioned that she listened to a
17 presenter from elsewhere in the country talk about having a college class present
18 some of the projects to her HPC to try and bring in the college dynamic. Also
19 having some sort of annual committee retreat as an opportunity to coalesce and
20 do some trainings, learn different things. This would have to be public. And would
21 have to be fairly local. There were two presenters from Ft. Wayne, Indiana, who
22 talked extensively about incorporating new residents in historic districts and how
23 to kind of educate people on requirements of owning a historic home, living in a
24 historic district. The one she wants to work on and has gotten a green light from
25 the department is to send out yearly postcards or biannual postcards to residents
26 in the historic districts or overlay to say, "you are in a historic district. These are in
27 the requirements. If you need help with permitting or information on your house
28 here is who to contact." Minneapolis's downtown has created a skyway, a series
29 of interconnected corridors that are on the second and third floors of buildings.
30 Businesses has popped up on the second and third floor to specifically cater to
31 people who are on the skyway. She will work on getting grant money in advance
32 so if board members want to attend conferences there is plenty of time to plan.
33 Maybe no making it specific to one conference, making some conference funding
34 optional.
35

36 Her grad program also does a preservation field school in September; today is the
37 last day to apply for the preservation field school. They bring in people who are
38 National Park Service experts in their field/craft. Please let her know of any other
39 conferences they would like to attend.
40

41 **9. ADJOURNMENT**

42
43 Motion to adjourn by Member Guskey; seconded by Member Campos. Motion
44 passed unanimously.
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46

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Chairperson