

Action Minutes
City of Sedona
Historic Preservation Commission Meeting
City Council Chambers, 102 Roadrunner Drive, Sedona, Arizona
Monday, August 12, 2024 – 4:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, & ROLL CALL

Vice Chair Meyers called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m., led the Pledge of Allegiance and requested roll call.

Roll Call:

Commission Members present: Vice Chair Nate Meyers and Commissioners Jack Fiene and Bob Huggins. Commissioner Steve Segner was excused.

Staff present: Steve Mertes, Donna Puckett and Laura Stewart

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS & SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS BY COMMISSIONERS & STAFF

Steve Mertes announced that the permit has been issued for the toilets at the Ranger Station Park and Public Works has to go through the bid and procurement process for a contractor, but they still hope to have installation of the toilets completed by next Spring.

Commissioner Huggins stated that he took the all-purpose trail at the Ranger Station, and it is really beautiful. He found some places where it holds water and gets muddy. His wheelchair got bogged down and he got some pictures of it but isn't sure who he should go to. Steve Mertes indicated it could be referred to Sandy Phillips.

Steve Mertes reported that the plaques for the landmark properties -- Tlaquepaque Chapel and the 56 Lynx property have been completed and the Lynx owners have picked up their plaque. He will be delivering the Tlaquepaque plaque tomorrow and hopes to get pictures for the survey book. Both property owners did not want a ceremony; they just wanted to hang their plaques. The owners of 56 Lynx didn't want any advertisement, because of their neighbors' concerns that landmarking the property would attract too many people and tourists.

Vice Chair Meyers stated that putting on his Sedona Historical Society hat, the Society intends to send a letter to the City Council and City Manager's Office next month to reiterate what has been said here in meetings by him and others to see consideration for HVAC and climate control in the barn at the Ranger Station Park moving forward.

3. APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:

a. July 8, 2024

Vice Chair Meyers asked if there was a motion; however, Donna Puckett advised the Chair a motion was not necessary, just a request for any corrections and if there are none, the minutes would be considered approved. Vice Chair Meyers then asked for corrections and no corrections were identified, so the Vice Chair indicated the minutes were approved.

4. PUBLIC FORUM: (This is the time for the public to comment on matters not listed on the agenda. The Commission may not discuss items that are not specifically identified on the agenda. Therefore, pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.01(H), action taken as a result of public comment will be limited to directing staff to study the matter, responding to any criticism, or scheduling the matter for further consideration and decision at a later date.)

Opened the public forum at 4:06 p.m. and having no requests to speak, closed the public forum at 4:07p.m.

5. REGULAR BUSINESS

a. Discussion of the focus of the Commission and the next steps regarding Landmarking and Surveys.

Steve Mertes explained the purpose of this agenda item is for the Commissioners to look at the future as it relates to landmarking, the surveys that need to be updated, and how to proceed on landmarking in the future.

Vice Chair Meyers added that we need to make sure we don't go 11 more years without landmarking by ensuring that we are sticking to our mandate to landmark buildings or address Certificates of Appropriateness as those issues come before us. Part of that is ensuring that the City gets a new historic survey done; the last one was done in 2013 or 2014, which is a decade and means the most recent building construction dates would be 1964, so we have a decade worth of mid-century buildings that would not hit the 50-year threshold, not to mention surveying the condition of those already in the survey. He would love to figure out a way to have a survey funded perhaps in the next fiscal year.

Steve Mertes agreed and noted that is part of the reason for this discussion, because we will be starting our budgeting process in the next month and a half, so this is so staff knows how to appropriate funds in the budgeting process. Vice Chair Meyers noted that it may not be through city funds; we have our CLG and there should be some grant funds to support it. Commissioner Fiene added that we could request up to \$10,000.

Vice Chair Meyers indicated that he was glad the Commission landmarked two properties this year, but we need to figure out what's next. He has also urged the Commissioners to think about how we can set ourselves up for success – perhaps having a pipeline so we know we did the Tlaquepaque Chapel and Kiva House this year, and for next year we are working on X and Y, and for the year after that, we have our eyes on A and B. It shouldn't be so inflexible that it couldn't change if a property owner brings forward a property to nominate, but it would behoove us to have a system in place to know what the work of the Commission is for the next one to three years.

Commissioner Fiene stated that the Commission needs to do short-term and long-term planning and a decade, or 10-year plan is a good number. He is thinking about the House of the Seven Arches, which has a nice history behind it, and they might be amenable to doing a landmark. It would be further out, because he thinks it was completed in 1978 or 1979, but we could get it in that pipeline. Vice Chair Meyers agreed and added that a pipeline would give the Commission a sense of purpose and something to work on and give staff direction. Part of it needs to be a consensus on how to prioritize what needs to be landmarked, and that could shift from Commission to Commission as Commissioners come and go. Some of the really important ones are done, but how do we prioritize them moving forward. Do we prioritize commercial over residential for the reasons cited by the concerns of the residents of the Kiva House?

Commissioner Fiene pointed out that some of the buildings in the current survey cannot be landmarked, and we need to go through the current survey and those that can't be landmarked could perhaps be considered for an Historic Recognition Award later on, but to not count on that current survey as being something we can use for landmarking at this time. Vice Chair Meyers stated that we might want to veer away -- it's landmark or nothing from the Historic Preservation Commission, because the Historic Recognition Award is a bit of a gray area since it technically is not in the code, and that might be where the Historical Society comes in as a stronger partner.

Commissioner Fiene agreed but indicated that it is amazing that when they were at the CLG meeting, they stressed telling stories, which is history and some of these properties would qualify

for a landmark, except for one or two things, but we don't want their history to be lost and the partnership with the Historic Society makes sense in that regard, but if we can find another way to recognize them, we should.

Vice Chair Meyers agreed and noted that we aren't suggesting anything that needs to be in the code, but asked staff if it is okay for this Commission to adopt a working document that suggests the process to get something into the pipeline plus the near-term and long-term goals. Steve Mertes explained that crafting a procedural document that stays within the scope of the responsibilities of the Commission would be fine; that would be helping the Commission in your duties. A procedural document would fine, but he would caution as long as it is within the allowed scope of HPC.

Commissioner Fiene expressed concern about how that fits in the Land Development Code and asked where the best place would be for the procedural document, and Steve Mertes explained that the procedural document would not be within the Land Development Code unless it was posed to the City Council and the Council approved making that a change to the Land Development Code, but he can check with legal counsel. To him, it would be like a roadmap on how you would like for the Commission to move forward in a non-binding procedural document. The Commissioner then asked if the Commission could create an addendum to the Land Development Code, and Steve Mertes indicated he could check with Legal, but anything that would change the Land Development Code would have to go through the City Council process.

Vice Chair Meyers noted that if the Commission was just adopting operating procedures to be used by the Commissioners; it wouldn't necessarily have to go through Council. Steve Mertes stated that he would find out for the Commission. The Vice Chair then indicated that it is imperative that the Commission take its mission seriously and not go 11 years before landmarking again, and the best way to do that is to create some system that says we are going to landmark two buildings next year and set us up for success.

Steve Mertes noted that he understands the question of where that document should sit and what weight it would have. Commissioner Huggins asked if it would be appropriate to be in the Commission Handbook and Commissioner Fiene noted that the Commission should study the Handbook.

Vice Chair Meyers asked about the ongoing budget for HPC and if it is the intention that the budget remains at budgeting for two landmarks. Steve Mertes indicated that is part of this discussion and once you have a procedure, it would allow you meet your goals easier. Also, in reference to some of the changes needed as part of the survey, half of the survey was updated many years past the current state form and many in the book have not been updated, so that would be part of the next update as well.

Commissioner Fiene stated that SHPO has been working on providing not only forms but also guidance material, so it might be possible to lean on SHPO a little to get us up to date, and we need something in the budget to handle Historic Preservation Month in May; however, Vice Chair Meyers pointed out that is something that we can lean on the Historical Society about and work with them to make it what we want. Commissioner Fiene added that for publicity that is an appropriate time to recognize the people that have helped us with landmarking

Vice Chair Meyers then asked if two landmarks in a year is the right number, and Commissioner Fiene stated that once the roadmap is done, we would have a better idea about our ability to landmark more than two properties. The Commission has discussed landmarking one commercial and one residential, but primarily we need to determine what is out there.

Commissioner Huggins suggested setting a number like three every 5 years to give the Commission time to overlap and not have to do two at a time. Vice Chair Meyers indicated that possibly in the pipeline there would be a way to do one in the first half of the year and the second

one in the second half; however, Commissioner Fiene suggested it might be better to do two at a time if Nancy Burgess is the one who will finalize the survey on each landmark.

Donna Puckett indicated that one thing to keep in mind is that when the Commission was created in 1998, there was a parameter placed on what percentage of time staff could spend on HPC, and it was created as a working Commission, so the last major survey that was done, and it is unfortunate Commissioner Segner is not here, because he was one of the individuals going out and looking at all of the 1950s properties, and it was the Commissioners doing it and coming back with information, so in your planning, you need to keep in mind that it was not intended for staff to be doing all of the work. Nancy Burgess has been brought in to look specifically at whether something qualifies for a landmark, but basic surveying of everything in the City would have been done by the Commission in the past. Vice Chair Meyers commented that the Commission does need to ensure that they are not asking too much of staff and finding that balance is something to keep in mind.

Commissioner Fiene stated that we also need to look at how we are going to archive, because some things like the interior photos of the Nininger House are missing and it had period furnishings.

Steve Mertes explained that looking at Nancy Burgess's invoices, it would be nice for her to survey two properties at once, but monetarily, it is not a true concern. If it makes more sense to do one for each half of the year that should only be a minor consideration, not a major consideration.

Vice Chair Meyers then asked if there is an ability for this group to have sub-committees, and Donna Puckett explained that according to the Open Meeting Laws, if the Chair or Commission appoints a committee of two or more, it would require public notices, agendas and minutes like the Commission meetings; however, staff can create a working team/committee to assist staff without those requirements. When asked about individual assignments, she indicated she would defer to Legal because there may be a difference between assignment versus volunteering.

Vice Chair Meyers commented that he would take volunteers on how to proceed or staff direction on creating a working group.

b. Discussion of future meeting dates.

Vice Chair Meyers indicated his next question is how to proceed in getting the procedural document done. Steve Mertes indicated that what needs to come first is his discussion with legal counsel on what that document would be, where it would be placed and what the procedure is for that, then he can discuss that next step and how we get that done.

Vice Chair Meyers stated that there are two things – we need to look at which properties we are looking at next, and there are two paths, one is how we set ourselves up for how to move forward in general and, in the meantime where are we looking next, recognizing we don't have the most up-to-date information.

Commissioner Fiene then asked how much work was done on the CFA in Uptown, and Steve Mertes explained a good deal was done several years ago but never approved. The Commissioner mentioned that a mid-century property was being considered and what would qualify, but he doesn't know if the archives say what was done. Then, Steve Mertes confirmed that the Commissioner is wanting to know if anything in the CFA identified direction on historic properties in Uptown, and the Commissioner explained that he doesn't want to recreate something that could already be used.

6. FUTURE MEETING DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS

a. Monday, September 9, 2024; 4:00 pm

Vice Chair Meyers stated that he would like to keep September 9th on the books for the next meeting. We will have some direction from legal counsel, and it is important to keep the discussion going because the City will be going into the budget cycle.

Donna Puckett indicated that for the last budget cycle, she provided the Commission with a worksheet that showed the HPC budget, and if you don't still have that she can send out another copy, but it would be good for you to be able to provide feedback as to what you see for the next fiscal year, so staff is not delayed and you're not trying to do it at the last minute.

Vice Chair Meyers requested that be an agenda item for the next meeting, and Donna indicated she will send out another copy.

Vice Chair Meyers also requested that the Commission receive quarterly updates on the Ranger Station Park rather than monthly.

Steve Mertes summarized that the future agenda items will be the continuation of this discussion, so he can present what he learned from Legal and the discussion of next fiscal year's budget. Vice Chair Meyers asked how the budget works if the Commission plans to get grants, and Steve Mertes explained that in this case if we don't know of the grants, we would put the money in the budget, then if we get grant money to supersede that, great, but at least the money is there if we can't procure that grant.

Donna Puckett asked about the expiration date in the agreement between the City and the Sedona Historical Society and Vice Chair Meyers stated it was a three-year agreement going through next year.

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. **If an Executive Session is necessary, it will be held in the Vultee Conference Room at 106 Roadrunner Drive. Upon a public majority vote of the members constituting a quorum, the Commission may hold an Executive Session that is not open to the public for the following purposes:**
 - i. **To consult with legal counsel for advice on matters listed on this agenda per A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3).**
 - ii. **Return to open session. Discussion/possible action on executive session items.**

No Executive Session was held.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Meyers adjourned the meeting at 4:49 p.m.

I certify that the above is a true and correct summary of the actions of the Historic Preservation Commission in the meeting held on August 12, 2024.

Donna A. S. Puckett, Administrative Assistant

Date