

# **CARSON CITY HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION**

## **Minutes of the May 8, 2008 Meeting**

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A regular meeting of the Carson City Historic Resources Commission was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 8, 2008 in the Community Center Sierra Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada.

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Michael Drews  
Vice Chairperson Robert Darney  
Gregory Hayes  
Mark Lopiccolo  
Rebecca Ossa

**STAFF:** Jennifer Pruitt, Senior Planner  
Kathleen King, Recording Secretary

**NOTE:** A recording of these proceedings, the commission's agenda materials, and any written comments or documentation provided to the recording secretary during the meeting are public record, on file in the Clerk-Recorder's Office. These materials are available for review during regular business hours.

**A. CALL TO ORDER, DETERMINATION OF QUORUM** (5:32:24) - Chairperson Drews called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Roll was called; a quorum was present. Commissioner Speulda was absent.

**B. ACTION ON APPROVAL OF MINUTES - April 10, 2008** (5:32:47) - Commissioner Hayes moved approval of the minutes. Vice Chairperson Darney seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

**C. MODIFICATION OF AGENDA** (5:33:11) - None.

**D. DISCLOSURES** (5:33:32) - Commissioner Ossa advised of having received a telephone call from a citizen regarding item F-2. Commissioner Lopiccolo advised he would abstain from discussion and action on item F-2.

**E. PUBLIC COMMENTS** (5:33:59) - None.

**F. PUBLIC HEARING MATTERS:**

**F-1. HRC-08-051 ACTION TO CONSIDER AN APPLICATION FROM STEPHEN A. AND CYNTHIA A. BRENNEMAN, TRUSTEES (PROPERTY OWNER: BRENNEMAN REVOCABLE TRUST) FOR HISTORIC TAX DEFERMENT STATUS (BLISS MANSION), ON PROPERTY ZONED SINGLE-FAMILY 6,000 (SF6), LOCATED AT 608 ELIZABETH STREET, APN 003-274-02** (5:34:40) - Chairperson Drews introduced this item. Ms. Pruitt reviewed the staff report, narrated pertinent slides, and noted staff's recommendation of approval. Chairperson Drews called for commissioner questions or comments and for public comments. When none were forthcoming, he entertained a motion. **Vice Chairperson Darney moved to approve HRC-08-051, an application from Stephen Brenneman for historic tax deferment, on property zoned single family 6,000, located at 609 Elizabeth Street, APN 003-274-02, subject to conditions of approval and findings of the staff report. Commissioner Ossa seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.** Chairperson Drews thanked Ms. Pruitt for the significance criteria included in the agenda materials.

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**F-2. HRC-08-052 ACTION TO CONSIDER AN APPLICATION FROM LOPICCOLO CONSTRUCTION (PROPERTY OWNER LOPICCOLO INVESTMENTS) TO ALLOW THE INSTALLATION OF A PARKING LOT, LANDSCAPING, POLES AND LIGHTS, PARK BENCHES, AND PAVER STONES, ON PROPERTY ZONED DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE (DT-MU), LOCATED AT 310 SOUTH CARSON STREET, APN 003-113-09** (5:37:52) - Chairperson Drews introduced this item. Ms. Pruitt reviewed the staff report, noting the information included from the development standards section of the Carson City Municipal Code. She narrated pertinent slides.

(5:40:58) Terry Reinhart, representing Lopiccolo Investments, introduced himself for the record. He reviewed the proposed improvements in conjunction with a displayed drawing, smaller versions of which were included in the agenda materials. In response to a question, he advised that the trash enclosures were approved and permitted prior to the current project phase.

Chairperson Drews called for commissioner questions or comments, and for public comment. (5:43:22) Thomas McGovern read a prepared statement into the record, expressing concern over parking being restricted for the restaurant's "exclusive use."

Chairperson Drews called for additional public comment; however, none was forthcoming. In response to a question, Ms. Pruitt expressed the understanding that the hotel is within the historic district and the parking lot, located on a separate parcel, is not. She reminded the commission of its purview to review the proposed improvements in light of the historic district standards. She suggested that designing the parking lot in a different configuration could be done at staff level. She advised that both the Building and Engineering Divisions had reviewed the proposed parking design. She explained that the Planning Division is concerned over the appropriate number of parking spaces based on property use. The Building Division is concerned over ADA accessibility, and the Engineering Division is concerned over parking lot design. Ms. Pruitt acknowledged the possibility that the applicant could present a parking lot redesign solution, but pointed out that parking design, not the number of parking spaces, was agendized for review by this commission.

Chairperson Drews thanked Ms. Pruitt for her clarification. Vice Chairperson Darney agreed with Ms. Pruitt's comments, and expressed support for paving the parking lot as "an improvement to the district." Mr. Reinhart acknowledged that the sidewalk is standard according to the municipal code.

With regard to parking in general, Ms. Pruitt advised there are many instances of unpaved, unstriped parking lots which don't meet current code requirements. She further advised that an applicant does not have a choice with regard to meeting City standards once they decide to design a parking lot. She acknowledged the possibility of changes to parking configuration, and offered to work with the applicant. Mr. Reinhart acknowledged a willingness to work with City representatives and the neighboring tenants on parking issues.

In response to a question, Mr. Reinhart advised that the tree located closest to the main entrance of the restaurant had been removed. Chairperson Drews called for additional questions or comments and, when none were forthcoming, entertained a motion. **Vice Chairperson Darney moved to approve HRC-08-052, a request from Lopiccolo Construction, property owner Lopiccolo Investments, LLC, to allow the excavation and installation of a new parking lot on the western portion of the subject site, including City lights, grey paving stones, and park benches, on property zoned downtown mixed use,**

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located at 310 South Carson Street, subject to the conditions of approval contained in the staff report, with the understanding that final design of the parking, striping, layout, and count is subject to Planning and Engineering Division approval. Commissioner Ossa seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0-1, Commissioner Lopiccolo abstaining. Commissioner Lopiccolo left the meeting at 5:53 p.m. A quorum was present.

**F-3. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING PUBLIC EDUCATION OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT STANDARDS, SPECIFICALLY FENCING STANDARDS** (5:53:41) - Chairperson Drews introduced this item. Ms. Pruitt provided background information and reviewed revisions to the Limitations for Fences, Walls, and Hedges in Carson City, copies of which were included in the agenda materials. She advised that Planning Division staff is awaiting commissioner comments to be incorporated into the draft. She further advised that Carson City had received a \$20,000 grant to complete three tasks: (1) the proposed World War II survey; (2) an historic context for Carson City; and (3) training. Ms. Pruitt suggested scheduling training for fences and window replacement.

Chairperson Drews entertained questions or comments of the commissioners. Commissioner Hayes commended Planning Division staff on the revisions. He suggested adding language "that gives a sense of why it needs to be reviewed ..." He suggested, "Fences must be of appropriate design and utilize materials in keeping with the age of the structure(s) they surround." Vice Chairperson Darney agreed, and suggested the language regarding new fences is not worded strongly enough. He suggested adding language to indicate the requirement for fences to be in context of the neighborhood character "as far as style, material, color ..." He further suggested adding language that the commission has final authority on "what is deemed appropriate." Commissioner Ossa suggested language to "ensure compatibility with existing design guidelines." Commissioners Hayes and Ossa acknowledged they would provide their proposed verbiage to Planning Division staff. Discussion took place regarding the suggested revisions, and Ms. Pruitt acknowledged an understanding of the commission's direction. She advised that the draft would be revised and re-agendized for the June commission meeting. She expressed the hope that the final version would be posted on the Planning Division website and available for distribution in the near future. Commissioner Hayes suggested considering the *Nevada Appeal* and the *Carson-Times* as other venues for getting the word out. Discussion followed.

**F-4. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CLG) GRANT 32-07-21632(1), HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORTS FOR ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF CARSON CITY AND THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF CARSON CITY** (6:01:41) - Chairperson Drews introduced this item. Ms. Pruitt advised that the consultants had provided a draft report, copies of which were provided to Planning Division staff, Chairperson Drews, and Commissioner Ossa. She advised that the report deadline is May 30<sup>th</sup>. She requested commissioner comments on the draft within the next week in order to provide the consultants sufficient time to make revisions. Once the reports are completed, copies will be provided to each commissioner. Ms. Pruitt commended the consultants' work. Chairperson Drews agreed. He called for public comment; however, none was forthcoming.

**F-5. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE DRAFT CARSON CITY HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL AND HRC MEMBERSHIP** (6:03:14) - Chairperson Drews introduced this item. Ms. Pruitt reviewed comments provided by Vice Chairperson Darney and former Commissioner Richard Baker which had not yet been

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added to the draft included in the agenda materials. Vice Chairperson Darney expressed hesitation for reducing “the [membership] requirement to non-licensed individuals” or “to someone that doesn’t necessarily have a design background.” In light of the commission seat which had been vacant for several months, he suggested discussing the possibility of “having the option to lower those standards” for one of the architect positions. Ms. Pruitt suggested adding language to provide for the commission designating an alternative to an architectural design professional in situations where a commission seat remains vacant for a long period of time. Vice Chairperson Darney emphasized the importance of limiting the option to one of the architectural design professional seats. Ms. Pruitt acknowledged the requirement to advertise the vacant position with the new criteria. Chairperson Drews suggested considering one position as a licensed architect and the second a design professional with historic preservation experience. Vice Chairperson Darney agreed, and noted the commission would still have the ability to make a recommendation based on qualifications. Chairperson Drews called for public comment; however, none was forthcoming. No formal action was taken.

**F-6. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE DRAFT CARSON CITY HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL, AND THE DEMOLITION OF AN HISTORIC PLACE OR CULTURAL RESOURCE IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT (6:08:19)** - Chairperson Drews introduced this item. Ms. Pruitt referred to the proposed new language, included in the agenda materials, and requested input of the commissioners. Chairperson Drews discussed the issue of economic feasibility, and suggested striking the corresponding language. In reference to Section 18(1)(a), Commissioner Hayes discussed the importance of a second opinion or checks and balances. Vice Chairperson Darney agreed, but expressed the opinion that “feasibility cannot be ignored. There are some structures that are simply deteriorated to the point where” rehabilitation actually means replacement. Vice Chairperson Darney advised of having spoken with an historic rehabilitation professional in Arizona, who advised of the “general rule of thumb” that “if you can’t save the doors or the windows or the floor, then it’s economically infeasible and should be replaced.” Vice Chairperson Darney agreed there should be language providing for exceptions to the provisions of Section 18(1). “There is a gaping hole right there.” Commissioner Hayes reiterated the possibility of requiring two opinions. Vice Chairperson Darney advised this would be dependent upon the source of the two opinions. He noted that the commission would have to hire someone to provide a second opinion. The applicant could simply hire two professionals to agree with his point of view. Vice Chairperson Darney expressed the opinion there should be a guideline for the commission to determine the meaning of “economically feasible.” In response to a comment, he discussed the problem of demolition by neglect. Commissioner Hayes suggested the commission should have the option of hiring a review professional.

Ms. Pruitt referred to the language, on page 14, requiring an historic structures report. She advised that the reports, which were the subject of item F-4, cost approximately \$45,000. She further advised that the proposed historic structures report language was included to provide the commission the necessary information and authority upon which to base decisions. In light of the cost, Vice Chairperson Darney expressed concern over requiring historic structures reports of private property owners “who may be retired with fixed or limited income and simply want to tear down their garage.” He suggested the possibility of segregating commercial from residential, and requiring residential property owners to provide a licensed professional’s recommendation. He further suggested that a more thorough structural review should be required of commercial property owners “because of the fact that we’re putting the public in there.” Chairperson Drews noted the difference between an architectural or engineering evaluation and the National Register significance evaluation. He expressed agreement with the possibility of “scaling it

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according to the project,” but a preference for having an architectural historian or preservation specialist evaluate a structure for significance. Vice Chairperson Darney suggested that if a structure can’t be retrofitted, modified, or repaired to meet the minimum legal requirements for occupancy, “that’s where ... the infeasibility issue comes up.” Ms. Pruitt suggested a pre-demolition process which would require an applicant to submit their proposal to the commission. The commission could then decide whether an historic structures report was required or an architectural evaluation would be sufficient. Vice Chairperson Darney expressed a preference for the commission to be required to demonstrate why a property owner shouldn’t be allowed to demolish a structure. “... they can show us everything from deterioration to rot to termites to water damage to mold, but if the commission decides it’s a cute little structure and they want to keep it, that ... doesn’t have teeth.”

Chairperson Drews suggested the possibility of a “modified major project review” prior to an applicant submitting any demolition proposal to the commission. One or two commissioners could participate with Planning Division staff and the applicant. Ms. Pruitt expressed support for the suggestion, and reviewed the situations for which a major project review is required. Vice Chairperson Darney agreed with the suggestion, and Ms. Pruitt advised that staff would add appropriate language to the draft. Commissioner Ossa suggested considering application of the historic structures report criteria for proposed demolition or replacement of a property’s main structure. She noted the significance of an historic structures report in that history and existing conditions are documented by an historic preservation professional.

Chairperson Drews called for public comment. (6:23:04) Jed Block discussed a property on the southeast corner of Mountain and Washington Streets in consideration of demolition by neglect. Vice Chairperson Darney discussed differences in certain structures based on historic significance.

In response to a question, Ms. Pruitt referred to that section of the draft Policy and Procedure Manual pertinent to avoiding demolition by neglect. She advised that some applicants need additional direction, and reiterated support for Chairperson Drews’ idea of a modified major project review process. She advised that staff would incorporate the commission’s comments into the draft. She expressed the hope that action could be taken to adopt the Policy and Procedure Manual at the June commission meeting. She acknowledged current code language that a demolition proposal has to be accompanied by the proposed replacement project. In response to a question, she explained the procedures associated with enforcing the prohibition against demolition by neglect.

**G. FUTURE COMMISSION ITEMS** (6:29:14) - Chairperson Drews and Ms. Pruitt reviewed the tentative June commission agenda.

**H. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS** (6:30:32) - Chairperson Drews thanked Planning Division staff for inviting him and Commissioner Ossa to participate in the recent APA national conference. Ms. Pruitt estimated 5,000 people had participated in the conference. Chairperson Drews commended Planning Division staff in their support of every participant. He reminded the commissioners that Historic Preservation Awards would be presented at the May 15<sup>th</sup> Board of Supervisors meeting.

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**I. ACTION ON ADJOURNMENT** (6:32:30) - Commissioner Ossa moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Commissioner Hayes seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

The Minutes of the May 8, 2008 Carson City Historic Resources Commission meeting are so approved this 12<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2008.

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MICHAEL DREWS, Chair