



**Historical Resources Management Commission
Hattie Weber Museum – 445 C Street, Davis, California
Corner of 5th and C Streets in Central Park
Monday, May 17, 2010**

Commissioners Present: Rand Herbert (Chair), Richard Rifkin (Vice Chair), Mark Beason, Gale Sosnick, Jonathon Howard, Karen Costanzo, Clifton McFarland

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Ike Njoku and Catherine McCort

1. Call to Order Chairperson Herbert called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

Action: Commissioner Beason moved, seconded by Commissioner Sosnick, to approve the agenda. The motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Herbert, Beason, Rifkin, Sosnick, Howard, Costanzo, McFarland

NOES: None

3. Approval of Minutes

Action: Commissioner Beason moved, seconded by Vice Chairperson Rifkin, to approve the February 22, 2010 minutes. The motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Herbert, Beason, Rifkin, Sosnick, Howard, Costanzo

NOES: None

ABSTENTIONS: McFarland

4. Public Communications. None

5. Written Communications. The Commission decided to put aside written communications until the end of the meeting.

6. Museum Report. Hattie Weber Museum Director Jim Becket reported that there had been very good sales of the Memorial Bricks, which collimated in the May 8, 2010 dedication ceremony and a display of obituaries and picture of the mothers who were honored. He announced the plan to improve a display case by adding wheels and a possible upcoming Native American exhibit.

7. Staff and Commissioner Comments. The Commission moved the Staff and Commissioner comments to the end of the meeting to accommodate 412 C Street hearing.

8. Public Hearing.

412 C Street (Davis Community Church); Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) #2-09 Proposal for Installation of Wheelchair Ramp, New Porch Landing and Steps along the Fourth Street Entrance of the Landmark Property.

Staff Liaison Ike Njoku presented the staff report, including the recommendation to deny the COA as the necessary findings could not be made. He added that staff has proposed a couple of alternatives that might minimize the adverse effects on the Landmark property, but the applicant found them unacceptable.

Project proponents Jay Gerber and Cheryl Essex presented the case for the proposed project, stating that accessibility and inclusiveness are the reasons for the proposed project, which they do not believe would adversely impact the Landmark property as stated in the staff report.

Davis Community Church members Kendra Williams, Rev. Mary Lyn Tobin, Dair Rouche, Carl Rankin, and Gary Jonce all spoke in favor of proposed project. They shared stories of the physical difficulties they, their loved ones, or other church members have accessing the Davis Community Church and the discriminatory nature of making some churchgoers not enter from the main entrance. Some of the comments can be summarized as follows:

- Kendra Williams described her father's increasingly limited mobility and his difficulty accessing the Davis Community Church, and the need for him to use the front entrance because he dislikes having to use the side door.
- Rev. Mary Lyn Tobin reflected that one of the Church's goals was hospitality; she objected to the sentences in the staff report that include the words "adversely" and "significant"; and wondered who the proposed plan would adversely affect and stated that there would be no significant changes. She equated handicap persons being made to use the side entrance with forcing some people to use the back of the bus.
- Dair Rouche discussed the barriers to community participation faced by the mobility impaired elderly and asked the Commission to look at the plan from a compassionate point of view and stated that the plan would not change the historical value of the building.

The Commission made comments and asked questions of staff, the project proponents, and church members, which can be summarized as follows:

- Commissioner Costanzo asked staff to clarify the rationale behind the recommended options, specifically the one calling for scaled back the project.
 - Staff explained that it was being recommended in the spirit of looking for a compromise, and addressing the goals of the church.
- Commissioner Costanzo asked about the size of the proposed landing versus the current landing.

- Both staff and proponents responded that the proposed landing will be similar to the existing.
- Commissioner Beason asked if the C Street parking spaces were accessible.
 - Staff responded by reminding everyone the charge of staff and the Commission with regards to the proposed project. Staff also reported that C Street meets with ADA standards, however, that the C Street parking was inaccessible given the roadway slope. It was noted that right-of-way improvements are outside the purview of the Commission.
- Commissioner Beason stressed that the condition of the concrete was not a historical integrity issue. He explained the historic preservation definitions of “adversely” and “significantly” in response to Rev. Mary Lyn Tobin’s comments.
- Commissioner Beason asked why staff felt that the alternate proposal to scaled back the project would be more acceptable than the one proposed by the church.
 - Staff replied that it was searching for compromises and were simply offering potential suggestions in attempts to address the goals of the church.
- Commissioner Beason noted that the staff suggestion did change preservation issues with the proposal.
- Vice Chairperson Rifkin wondered if the church could use removable ramps.
 - Church members suggested that a large temporary structure would look worse than any of their proposed changes. Carl Ranking, a Sunday morning Sector, suggested any temporary structure would be extremely heavy.
- Vice Chairperson Rifkin asked staff to explain the spatial relationships mentioned in the staff report.
- Commissioner Sosnick stated that the function of the Church is important and that the Church needs a ramp and a better landing.
- Commissioner Beason clarified that the Secretary of the Interior’s guidelines state that additions need to be sympathetic but distinct from the historic appearance.
- Commissioner Sosnick stated that it was an elitist intellectual construction to demand that changes must be distinct from the historic appearance. She further stated that there were issues of safety regarding the stairs, and psychological issue regarding universal access, and then the preservation issue. She suggested that the Commission should balance those issues and decide which were more important.
- Chairperson Herbert pointed out that the fire marshal found no fire hazard with the sanctuary design
- Commissioner Howard asked why the compromise staff offered was rejected by the church.
 - Cheryl Essex responded that the Pastor greeting parishioners of the landing area was as important to the church as the ramp, which she classified as a historic use.
- Commissioner McFarland asked where the primary public entrance to the church building is located.
 - Jay Gerber and Cheryl Essex responded that the 4th Street entrance is the primary entrance and that most of the people who enter through the C Street entrance are mobility impaired.
- Commissioner McFarland asked if staff saw the primary landing as a character defining feature.

- Chairperson Herbert answered that it is.
- Commissioner Sosnick stated that the original design did not account for the mobility impaired.
- Commissioner McFarland asked if the plan was to remove the current landing and pour new concrete to the extent of the existing landing with more concrete.
 - Cheryl Essex responded that the church had not yet determined the best course of action.
- Commissioner McFarland asked if Cheryl Essex felt the landscape and the steps are historic features.
- Commissioner Howard responded that the masonry is historic.
- Commissioner McFarland asked whether the church considered the C Street entrance a “back” entrance or a service entrance, or if it was a secondary entrance.
 - Cheryl Essex answered that it is a secondary entrance.
- Commissioner McFarland asked if anyone used the east side ramp.
 - The Church members answered that almost no one uses that entrance because of the complex locking mechanism protecting the children’s play area and that the room it opens into is now a children’s area. Church member Miriam Rocke stated that she could not use that ramp because she could not open those doors without assistance.
- Chairperson Herbert explained that the Commission’s charge is the consideration of changes to City Landmarks; to see if changes can be made in ways that will not affect the integrity of the building. He asked if the cracks in the stairs and landing significantly affected the integrity of the character defining features.
 - Cheryl Essex responded that the changes that had already occurred and had already affected the character defining features.
- Chairperson Herbert stated that the past changes to the stairs had not significantly affected the character defining feature and that they still had historical integrity. Chairperson Herbert pointed out that there is a second ADA compliant entrance on the east side of the building.
 - Cheryl Essex responded that it is fenced off due to the children’s play area.
- Chairperson Herbert asked if there was any consideration of improving the east ramp.
 - Cheryl Essex responded that the play area makes that ramp difficult to use and that the issue is for all church members to enter through the front entrance.
- Chairperson Herbert referred to staff report’s conclusion that the proposed project conflicted with standards 2, 3, 9, and 10 of the rehabilitation standards and added that it also did not comply with standard 5. He stated that the 4th Street façade is the last façade that maintained its original integrity and the primary façade of the church building. Chairperson Herbert suggested that the internal doors are the actual chokepoint and asked if they interior layout is not the real barrier to access.
 - The Church members responded that it is not and that the problem is the landing.
- Chairperson Herbert asked if the work of the original architects, the Allison brothers, could be considered an argument under criterion C, the work of a master, for maintaining the original façade.
 - Cheryl Essex answered that this was not a signature work.

- Chairperson Herbert asked Cheryl Essex to explain the “cultural landscape” mentioned in her report attached to the staff report. Chairperson Herbert stated that he had wrestled with this issue but felt that since there are already ADA compliant ramps, this was a discretionary action and did not feel it was appropriate.

Action: Commissioner Howard moved to approve staff recommendation. There was no second. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Action: Vice-Chairperson Rifkin moved, seconded by Commissioner Howard, to accept staff findings for denial with some minor edits to the COA Findings For Denial #1. The motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Howard, Beason, Rifkin, Herbert

NOES: McFarland, Costanzo, Sosnick

9. Advisory Items.

233 & 239 J Street Property (Solar Community Coop); Owner: Redevelopment Agency – Relocation two B Street Properties to 3rd & J Streets

In the interest of full disclosure Chairperson Herbert reported that the project proponents have asked him questions through Staff Liaison Njoku about some components of the project design.

Staff Liaison Njoku presented the City Staff report, which concluded that the relocation was appropriate; that 311 B Street property would retain its integrity upon successful relocation; and that City Council should be approached to designate 233 J Street (former 311 B Street) a merit resource upon successful relocation.

Project proponents Ben Pearl and Clay Johnson provided project background and information to the Commission. The Commission and the project proponents discussed certain aspects of the project.

Community member Rhonda Reed reported that the neighbors are happy with the project’s outcome.

Commissioners asked questions of staff and the project proponents and provided advisory input; specifically stating that the relocation project is appropriate and acceptable, but care should be taken during remodeling to repair and avoid replacement of materials.

Action: Commissioner Howard Moved, seconded by Commissioner Beason, that the proposed project is categorically exempt from environmental review, that the relocation of 311 B Street to 233 J Street is appropriate, and to recommend City Council designate 233 J Street as a merit resource upon successful relocation. The motion passed by the following vote.

AYES: Herbert, Beason, Rifkin, Sosnick, Howard, Costanzo, McFarland

NOES: None

Written Communications. Commission acknowledged the written materials already on the dais.

Staff and Commissioner Comments.

Vice Chairperson Rifkin announced that May is Preservation Month, and that he accepted the Proclamation of May 2010 as a Preservation Month from the City Council.

Staff Liaison Njoku reported that there may not be an HRMC meeting in June due a lack of agenda items.

Commissioner Costanzo stated that she will forward her draft DPR523 for 503 Fifth Street to the subcommittee for preliminary review and comments.

Staff Liaison Njoku reported that it is recommended by Community Development Department that Chairperson Herbert should meet with City staff, and the DDBA President to form the agenda for the potential joint meeting between the Commission and DDBA Board.

Staff Liaison Njoku announced that in July the HRMC will appoint a new chairperson.

10. Adjournment. The next meeting will be July 19, 2010 at the Hattie Weber Museum (445 C Street) at 7:00 PM.

Action: Commissioner Sosnick moved, seconded by Commissioner Costanzo, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed by the following vote.

AYES: Herbert, Beason, Rifkin, Sosnick, Howard, Costanzo, McFarland
NOES: None

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 pm.