

2022

Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission
Plans Review Subcommittee

LEGAL ACTION REPORT/Minutes

Thursday, May 26, 2022

Pursuant to safe practices during the COVID-19 pandemic, all in-person meetings are cancelled until further notice. This meeting was held virtually to allow for healthy practices and social distancing. The meeting was accessible at provided link to allow for participating virtually and/or calling in.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 1:01 P.M., and per roll call, a quorum was established.

Commissioners Present: Terry Majewski (Chair), Carol Griffith (left the meeting at 2:30 P.M.), Savannah McDonald, Rikki Rojas (left the meeting at 1:47 P.M.), and Jan Mulder

Commissioners Absent/Excused: Joel Ireland

Applicants/Public Present: Stephen Curti, Hector Gomez, Jose Gonzalez, Bob Lanning, Israel Navarette, Roberto Moreno, Christian Sanchez, Arthur Stables, Daniel Tapia, Robert Vint, and Arthur Stables

Staff Present: Jodie Brown and Michael Taku (PDSD); Reba Schaber, Project Manager, Facilities & Communications Maintenance (General Services)

2. Approval of the Legal Action Report (LAR)/[Minutes] from Meeting of May 12, 2022

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Griffith to approve the Legal Action Report/Minutes for the meeting of May 12, 2022, as submitted.

Commissioner Riojas seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote of 5-0. (Commissioner Ireland absent)

3. Historic Preservation Zone Review Cases

UDC Section 5.8/TSM 9-02.0.0/Historic District Design Guidelines/Revised Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines

3a. 165 W. Alameda Street (El Presidio/Clement Fountain)

Restoration of the fountain.

Courtesy Review, Individually Eligible Resource/Rehabilitation Standards

Staff Brown provided a summary of the project and indicated that a Determination of Eligibility (DOE) was submitted to the State Historic

Preservation Office (SHPO) for the fountain [a collaboration between artist Charles Clement and architect Michael Lugo, Jr.] in El Presidio Plaza, and SHPO determined it was eligible [for listing in the National Register of Historic Places]. The city had started on a Historic Landmark Designation (HLD) for the fountain, but who owned the property (City vs. County) and who was going to maintain it were in question. The HLD is on hold, and in the meantime, the city has moved forward on restoration and hired a firm to do a restoration plan. Plans have been reviewed by staff, and PRS is doing a courtesy review of the plan today. There was a previous motion by the Tucson–Pima County Historical Commission [and/or PRS] to support renaming the fountain as the Richard Elias Fountain. But Staff Brown doesn't think that the renaming has been officially completed yet.

Arthur Stables (BWS Architects) presented on the Charles Clement El Presidio Fountain Restoration Project. Presenter will be working with Reba Schaber, Project Manager, Facilities and Communications Maintenance (General Services) as facilitator. The scope of the project is to restore the fountain, make it operational again with all new equipment, and transfer utility services from the County to the City. He then talked about the team that would be doing the different parts of the project. They plan to submit their 90% plans to the City on May 27. Mr. Stables shared images on screen to explain the project.

The fountain is cast-in-place concrete, incised on many surfaces with biomorphic images that represent flora, fauna, people, and things in the desert related to water. The pieces of the fountain were formed with styrofoam forms that were cut out and formed by the artist and his architectural collaborator and then cast into the concrete. The main design features in the fountain are decorative blocks placed on arms that project from the central columns. There is also a basin and an architectural feature called the "flame." There are approximately 10 blocks, also incised with various patterns, colored glass tile, and more biomorphic images/designs. The goal is to restore the fountain so that it doesn't leak, which has been an ongoing problem for many years, and to make it operational. The existing foundation [bottom or interior of pool/basin] has two layers of tile. Someone came in and tiled over the original tile 4x4-inch tile with 6x6-inch tile in a different color than the original. Mr. Stables believes (based on seeing some of the original tile beneath the second layer) that the original tile was blue [more turquoise than blue], and he thinks he has matched it and showed an example. He prefers the larger 6x6-inch tile because it is the size of the second layer of tiles and will have fewer joints with the potential to leak. Colorwise, it seems appropriate, and it is frostproof and waterproof swimming-pool tile. The existing tile will be stripped off the interior of the pool [of the fountain], and then the interior will be waterproofed and the new tile applied. Then new tiles will be set on the walls and floor. He also showed an image of what the original first layer looked like.

The decorative blocks making up the fountain will be removed; many of them are spalling, and damaged concrete chunks are falling off. Once removed, they will be taken to a shop to be restored. That will involve patching, concrete replacement, and repair of tile. The decorative blocks are covered in Italian glass tile in multiple colors and shapes. The nephew of the original artist and his niece have a huge cache of the tile (a garage full). Mr. Stables will determine which of the colored glass tiles will go in the decorative blocks that need to be restored.

BWS is trying to engage a speciality concrete contractor who will help them experiment doing mockups for patching and repair of the existing concrete as well as cleaning the incised patterns, patching of skateboard grinds, and such. Also they are working to find a tile specialist that can help them clean tile that's in place and repair as needed to restore to its original appearance. Much of the tile is so calcinated that you can no longer tell the original color. Mr. Stables notes that it is difficult to find tile specialists, especially those recommended for historic renovation work. He estimates that the documents will be complete in a month, and construction will probably start some time this summer. He noted that he would be happy to take questions.

Chair Majewski started by asking Staff Brown if there is just this courtesy review for the project, and she said yes. Mr. Stables noted that Staff Brown's comments during the planning phase have been very useful. She noted that she has asked questions during planning about the material they were using to put the concrete pieces back together, the concrete finish and materials, the skateboard stops (she felt those originally designed were too large), water spillage, and general rehabilitation. Mr. Stables noted that with their contractor, they've had all existing piping and draining systems tested, and everything seems to be functional. The piping is still intact, and no leaks were apparent. If all goes well, all of the original operating parts will be spewing water again when BWS is finished.

Commissioner Riojas asked if it's currently just the joints in the tile that are leaking? Mr. Stables said they don't know that for sure. The fountain is 50 years old and located over the Pima County parking garage. Also, the fountain has not been maintained well. They will strip it down to raw concrete and clean it really thoroughly. Then he has a positive pool waterproofing and a very strong, waterproof mortar. Waterproofing will also be applied before tiling is accomplished with a very strong grout. They will do everything possible to make sure it does not leak in the future. Commissioner Riojas then asked if BWS had hired the concrete company yet. Mr. Stables said that BWS was in negotiation to hire them before construction begins so that they can help with mockups and early planning to establish process and modes of operation for the work. The firm, Porter Construction out of Phoenix, was recommended by another specialty contractor that BWS has worked with in the past.

Commissioner Mulder was glad to see the fountain being preserved, as that had been in question. She asked Staff Brown about her comfort level with the 6-inch vs. the 4-inch tiles and if she had discussed it yet with Mr. Stables. Ms. Brown said she had not yet discussed it with him but noted that the existing tile, the original tile, is really damaged. The original layer had been scored in order to make the second layer stick. The original tile can not be reused. She understands the reasoning for wanting to use the larger tile, because it's going to reduce leakage problems. The leak was part of the reason this all came up. As she understands it, the fountain wasn't built very well. The fountain and the garage were built independently of one another, not taking each into account. She feels it's more important to have a consistent color. The fact is that it has been a larger tile for quite some time. Use of a 6-inch tile will not change eligibility. We have documentation on the smaller tile, and the larger tile is more practical. Bigger-ticket items are the other portions of the fountain and where the

water comes down, and the glass tile. Mr. Stables commented on the garage. They are having to be very careful of the weight of any equipment they are using on the plaza deck. Weights have to be verified. The “Tucson Meet Yourself” event is no longer held on the plaza because it was determined that the plaza deck should not be supporting all that weight. The county has its own opinion about the weight concerns.

Commissioner McDonald’s commented about the 6-inch tile. It makes more sense to match the original 4x4-inch tile, but if everyone is good with using the larger tile and thinks it’s an improvement, she is too. Mr. Stables notes that the 6x6-inch tile is locally made, which was one of his interests, and it seems that the 4x4 modules are not as prevalent any longer, because he did some looking around. Commissioner McDonald asked about the mosaics – does he have original drawings and can match it all? He noted that it involves him going out with the pile of bags of mosaic tile that he has and seeing if he can match it. He does not have any original drawings except one. That’s why all of the little drawings were made and photographs taken of all of the surfaces that have tile on them. He thinks he is capable of matching. The idea is to minimize having to actually replace tile and be able to clean them and return them. But he is not sure how far that will go. Commissioner McDonald stated that it seems like because there is enough of the tile and design intact, even if it’s in disrepair, that there is a picture of what it is.

Commissioner Griffith didn’t have any additional questions and supports using the larger tiles, having dealt with some fountains herself. Leaking is a real problem, so as long as the color is close, and it looks really close, then she thinks that’s great. Mr. Stables said there is a lot of pressure to have this project complete, so it is going to continue and get built.

Chair Majewski wanted to follow up and asked if commissioners were in agreement that we should ask Staff Brown to follow up on where the renaming stands for the fountain. [Everyone seemed okay with this.] As she understands it, Clement’s name is somewhere on the fountain, correct? Mr. Stables didn’t know that. Staff Brown confirmed that Clement’s name is on the fountain, embossed [incised?] in the concrete. Mr. Stables asked her to show him where the name is at some point. Even if the fountain is renamed in honor of Richard Elias, Clement will still be associated with it. But steps will need to be taken to change the name on the DOE, yes? Perhaps an update to SHPO? Staff Brown said that potentially, yes. You have working names and then historical names. It would probably be an e-mail or acknowledgment to them that the name had been changed officially. But historically, it would still go by the Clement Fountain or the El Presidio Fountain. Chair Majewski said it would be nice if somehow people knew to mention the various names when referring to it. Mr. Stables noted that it was sort of a modern insertion into that plaza in the early 1970s. There were three fountains designed, and this one was built and the one up by the northwest elevator tower – the one with the lily leaves sticking out. The latter is not functional. And then there are all of those circular concrete planters; they were part of the same development. So, I don’t think anyone realizes that anymore, because with the new memorial, a lot of those circular planters are gone now. So it would be interesting if this could be told, as part of that whole story, but that’s another project.

Commissioner Riojas asked another question regarding the mosaic tiles to be matched. Has Mr. Stables seen all of the tile that he referred to earlier? Mr. Stables replied that he has seen pictures, and they have a “scad” [large quantity] of it. Commissioner Riojas said: so running out won’t be an issue? Mr. Stables said there is more than enough. Probably a couple hundred feet of tile are on the fountain, and he thinks they will be just fine. The bags of mosaic tile he already has have 20 or 30 square feet.

Chair Majewski thanked Mr. Stables for the presentation.

- 3b. HPZ 22-009, 414 W. 18th Street**
Barrio Historico Historic Preservation Zone
Master bedroom addition, restucco exterior, replace windows.
Contributing Resource/Rehabilitation Standards

Staff Brown provided background on the project and read into the record the recommendation and action taken by Barrio Historico Historic Zone Advisory Board (BHHZAB) from the meeting of 05/09/2022.

Jose Gonzalez, designer and Roberto Moreno, owner presented the project.

Discussion was held.

Commissioner Riojas left the meeting at 1:47 P.M.

Action was taken.

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner McDonald to recommend approval as presented, making sure the applicant pays close attention to concerns about roof drainage expressed [at today’s meeting] and that the plans are updated to note and clarify items to distinguish between preserved and removed. Also recommended for approval is the replacement of the existing windows with wood, double-hung windows and the new two-panel wood door.

Commissioner Griffith seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote of 4-0. (Commissioners Ireland and Riojas absent)

- 3c. HPZ 22-019, 136 W. Simpson Street**
Barrio Historico Historic Preservation Zone
Remodeling, addition, and shade structure.
Contributing Resource/Rehabilitation Standards

Staff Brown provided background on the project and read into the record the recommendation and action taken by Barrio Historico Historic Zone Advisory Board (BHHZAB) from the meeting of 05/09/2022.

Bob Lanning and Stephen Curti (both Lanning Architecture) presented the project.

Discussion was held. Action was taken.

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Griffith to recommend approval as presented.

Commissioner Mulder seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote of 4-0. (Commissioners Ireland and Riojas absent)

Note: *Commissioner Griffith had to leave the meeting at 2:30 P.M., and without her, the quorum would be lost. The meeting was then adjourned under item 8 at 2:30 P.M.*

Given the loss of a quorum, items 3d through 7 [crossed out] were not heard and will be rescheduled for a future agenda.

- ~~3d. **HPZ 22-022, 522 W. 17th Street**
New single-family residence with attached accessory dwelling unit (ADU).
Renovation of existing adobe structure to be converted as an ADU.
Full Review/Barrio Historico Historic Preservation Zone
Contributing Resource/Rehabilitation Standards~~

~~4. **Task Force on Inclusivity Recommendations**~~

- ~~4a. **Discussion on incorporation of the Task Force on Inclusivity report recommendations.**~~

~~5. **Current Issues for Information/Discussion**~~

- ~~5a. **Minor Reviews**~~

- ~~5b. **Appeals**~~

- ~~5c. **Zoning Violations**~~

- ~~5d. **Review Process Issues**~~

~~6. **Summary of Public Comments (Information Only)**~~

~~7. **Future Agenda Items for Upcoming Meetings**~~

8. **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 P.M. due to loss of a quorum.