

2023

Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission
Plans Review Subcommittee (PRS)

LEGAL ACTION REPORT/Minutes

Thursday, August 31, 2023

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.

Note: A recording of the entire meeting (audio/video) can be accessed at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLUfRGd7RxAUv6rMbRNEurjg1iY8N4ZALR>

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 1:00 P.M., and per roll call, a quorum was established.

Commissioners Present: Teresita Majewski (Chair), Joel Ireland, and Savannah McDonald.

Commissioners Absent: Carol Griffith, and Jan Mulder

Applicants/Public Present: Chris Ambrosio (Ambrosio Law, development team member, Case 3a), Martyn Klell (Architect, Pima County), Jennifer Levstik (WestLand Resources), Rick McLain (Repp + McLain Design and Construction), Ian Milliken (Pima County), Scott O'Mack (Pima County), Page Repp (Repp + McLain Design)

Staff Present: Jodie Brown, Maria Gayosso, and Michael Taku (all Planning and Development Services)

2. Approval of the Legal Action Report/Minutes for the Meeting[s] of July 25 and August 10, 2023

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Ireland to approve the Legal Action Report/Minutes for the meetings of July 25 and August 10, 2023, as submitted.

Commissioner McDonald seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote of 3-0. (Commissioners Griffith and Mulder absent)

3. **Urban Overlay District (UOD) Review Cases**

UDC Section 5.13/Revised Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines

3a. **SD-0623-00069, 2545-2637 E Broadway Road**

Replacements of storefronts, construction of shade structures at the front and rear facades, limited demolition, construction of rear parking area.

Full Review/Sunshine Mile National Register Historic District
Contributing Resources/Rehabilitation Standards

Staff Brown introduced Staff Gayosso, who provided background on the project. The project involves developing the site on Broadway Road, which consists of 16 buildings in a strip mall. The buildings are contributors to the Sunshine Mile National Register Historic District. They plan to renovate and make some other changes. Tenants will be a mix of restaurants and personal services providers. There will be some façade changes, and they will open some pedestrian pass throughs using the UOD overlay for the Sunshine Mile as the redevelopment tool. They are proposing a reduction in parking requirements and setbacks as well as landscape modifications. The case will likely be scheduled for the Design Review Board (DRB) meeting of September 15, 2023.

Rick McLain, representing the architectural team, presented. This strip mall, Solot Plaza, is a series of buildings mainly built between 1955 and 1967, covering just under 28,000 square feet in total. Several notable architects were involved when the plaza was built – Bernard Friedman and Nicholas Sakellar. Rio Nuevo acquired the property a few years ago when Broadway Road was expanded. Their project team won the right to develop through a competed RFP process in 2012. Their goal is to honor the historic character of the original buildings and bring in businesses that would provide amenities to the surrounding neighborhoods. They are applying for historic tax credits and started conversations with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the National Park Service (NPS) around the beginning of this year and have designed the project in consultation with them. SHPO reviewed the design and said it followed the Secretary of Interior's (SOI) Standards [for rehabilitation]. They have completed Part 2 of the application [for historic tax credits], which is being reviewed by the NPS now.

They identified two challenges with the project early on: parking and access. Before Broadway Road was widened, parking was on the south side of the plaza. When the road was widened, the south parking area no longer existed. They are proposing a parking lot on the north side of the project, but because there is no access from Broadway, they purchased an easement from the neighboring property owner to be able to construct a new driveway from Broadway that would allow access to a parking area on the north for the plaza. In order to fit the parking lot between the building and the property line, they are proposing to demolish two additions not original to the original buildings and two partial demolitions. They worked with SHPO and NPS regarding these demolitions. In addition to making more space available for parking, much more of the contributing buildings will be visible.

With parking on the north side, many of the doors on the north side will sort of become front doors. So, they are proposing two pedestrian pass throughs from the parking area to the south façade (the south façade is a character-defining feature of the property). They identified two spaces that were a little narrower with lower ceilings and didn't have quite as much interest as the other spaces. These would be changed into pass-through spaces that would allow people to park on the north side and walk through to the newly activated south side. They have also spoken to Staff Brown about all of this. They are also proposing a couple of single openings in the roof spaces of the pass-through spaces where they would put trees in the pocket patios. They originally proposed four spaces in each pass through, but Staff Brown thought two were more appropriate. SHPO asked them to keep the original storefront entrances to the pass-through spaces on the south side (aluminum mullion system and glass).

The rest of the south side will be repaired, cleaned, and refurbished to its original state. Most of the stucco, brick, and block in the buildings is in pretty good shape, but some areas of stucco need to be repaired, and original surfaces will be matched. They will bring the building that housed the store Metaphysics back to its original storefront condition (they have original drawings for the buildings), highlighting the original brick and the parapets above that.

Mr. McLain reviewed the existing and proposed elevations. Since so much is being shifted to the north for access, they want to be sure to activate the south façade and keep it used, maintained, and full of life and energy. They want the buildings to have a lot of draws when people come down Broadway. The key to this working in Tucson is to add outside patio space. They are proposing a very light trellis on the south façade without a waterproof roof. The trellis will not touch the building and will have no effect on the building whatsoever. A trellis/shade structure is also proposed for the north space, which would cover about one-third of the rear area, especially for those buildings with a food/bar function. Some of the businesses will also need enclosed storage space on the exterior.

The development zone and materials were reviewed. The brick, block, and stone are in pretty good shape and will not need much to repair and bring back to full functionality. They want to maintain the original materials, though new steel will be necessary for some of the proposed trellises.

Jennifer Levstik noted that this is a rehabilitation tax credit project. The team has been working with the SOI Standards since the inception of the project. They consulted with SHPO before submitting the proposed plans for review. Their plans had a very successful reception from both SHPO and NPS, and both approved the plans.

Chair Majewski clarified with Staff Gayosso that the UOD overlay they are using is similar to the Infill Incentive District Overlay in that contributing status must be maintained, but that it allows for some modifications and goes through Staff Brown and PRS reviews. Chair Majewski then thanked the applicants for doing such thorough preconsultation.

Commissioner McDonald asked for clarification on the modifications requested regarding setback. Would we include that in a motion? Staff Gayosso said that if we ultimately recommend approval of the design as presented, then the setback would be covered, and we wouldn't have to call it out in a motion. Commissioner McDonald also commented that she appreciated the thorough presentation and the distinctions between old and new. She is interested in the passageways, as they remind her of zaguans. Mr. McLain said the passageways would almost be like zaguans and be placed in buildings that didn't have much character to them, to improve pedestrian flow. Commissioner McDonald asked for clarification on how much of the roof would remain in the passageways, and Mr. McLain reviewed that again. She also asked about paint and whether tenants would be able to customize their spaces. Mr. McLain said they are working on retaining the distinctiveness of each building while maintaining a consistent feel. They are looking at a mid-century orangey yellow look for the stucco with some lighter areas to help some of the spaces "poke" through. Some of the wood elements will have a red color. They will also come up with a cohesive sign program for everything but will allow individual spaces to show some individuality. Commissioner McDonald said she also liked the proposed trellises.

Chair Majewski asked if the storefronts with passageways would maintain the same entrances, i.e., people would go through a door to enter. Mr. McClain said yes, and glass on the storefronts will be retained. Doors might be pinned open during business hours. He also noted that on the back (north) side of the passageways it will likely be more open. Commissioner Ireland also asked about the passageways, particularly the relationship of the back (north) entrance and south frontage on Broadway. Where exactly are the entrances to shops? Mr. McLain said some would be on the north side, and some would be on the south.

Staff Gayosso noted that if the DRB disagrees with PRS' take on the project, Staff Brown would be consulted and/or it could come back to PRS. She also noted that the historic standards supersede other requirements. PRS reviews these types of cases for consistency with the SOI Standards.

Mr. McLain reviewed the elevations again, pointing out how they had worked with SHPO and NPS on different areas and how they would be modified. Ms. Levstik noted how requirements for contributing properties are not the same as for an individually listed property. For the former there is more flexibility. She pointed out that designation of these buildings as part of this historic district was largely based on their primary (south) façade – the Broadway-facing elevation. The back of the property was never meant to be seen historically. The historic integrity of the plaza is largely based on the Broadway-facing elevation. Nothing that happens to the rear or north elevation would negatively impact its eligibility for the National Register.

Commissioner Ireland agreed that the applicants have done a great job with this project, working to make the historic contributing properties useful. He also discussed the concrete blocks used in the original construction with Mr. McLain. Commissioner McDonald asked what the original vision was for the plaza when

first built. Mr. McLain responded that it was for a combination of retail and offices. Now they are looking for tenants to provide community amenities.

Discussion was held. Action was taken.

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner McDonald to recommend approval of the project as presented.

Commissioner Ireland seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote of 3-0. (Commissioners Griffith and Mulder absent)

4. Historic Review Cases

Revised Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines

4a. **TP-PRE-0823-00293, 1010 W. Miracle Mile**

Construction of a new building. Restoration of historic sign.
Courtesy review (County)/Miracle Mile National Register Historic District
Vacant Parcel/Rehabilitation Standards

Staff Brown introduced Scott O'Mack, who provided background on the project. Today is a courtesy review for construction of the new Pima County Northwest Service Center on the former site of Golden Pin Lanes, which was originally a contributor to the Miracle Mile National Register Historic District under Criterion A for community planning and development. After Pima County bought the property, it was determined that the building could not be repurposed. So, it was removed as a contributor and demolished. A new service center has been designed by architect Martyn Klell and his team.

Ian Milliken added that PRS was familiar with the demolition and with the at least two character-defining features that were retained. Mr. Klell will showcase those features, which include a signature curved rock wall that is at the street-facing façade and the historic sign. Demolition also went through SHPO. Now they are bringing the conceptual design for the new building to PRS.

Mr. Klell noted that the architectural team has designed a facility where the county can provide services to this kind of marginalized community. Included will be a health department and a community and workforce department. He oriented PRS to the location and the buildings in the surrounding area. The curved stone wall was salvaged. The design of the rest of the building is very modern with glass, masonry, and very horizontal roof lines. Smaller windows are planned for the bottom level of the building, with large windows above (mostly office space). Most of the service spaces will be on the first floor.

There is a shaded courtyard space in the center with seating. The end walls are masonry glass. A screen wall is proposed on the west side to block sun on the glass. The plan is to restore the bowl sign (with stucco ball and pin) and put it back on the rock wall. They are looking at integrating a county sign on that wall. They

need to communicate to the public that the building is no longer a bowling alley. They decided not to integrate county signage into the marquee sign to let the historic sign remain. There will be small monument signs (between 3 and 5 feet in height) at the driveways to indicate that it is a county facility with the departments and services offered. The marquee sign will remain essentially the same on the top portion with “welcome to the Miracle Mile Historic District” in the lower portion. They are going to work on the lettering size, etc.

Mr. Klell discussed that the concrete roof structure was tied into the (rock) wall, and it didn't have much of a footing and needed to be supported. Suggested was a cast-in-place concrete backdrop to the wall to support it. They also saved a little graphic of a ball and pin smiling with some lines showing motion. They are going to put it in the plaza area behind the stone wall. Some of the original wood lanes were left when the building was sold (others were sold and integrated into other spaces, such as bar tops and tables at a brewery). They are working with a design to use the ones the county still has on the wall of the lobby. They are also looking into integrating some historic photographs from the bowling alley and some of period cars as part of a historical piece on the original building. They wanted to repurpose salvaged elements of the bowling alley to try and communicate the building's history.

Commissioner McDonald asked how the roof interacts with the historic rock wall. Mr. Klell explained that the roof does not go over the stone wall at all. He described the roof and shade element. Commissioner McDonald also asked about the attachment of the county logo to the wall, and Mr. Klell said they would be using curved steel because of the shape of the wall. He also noted that the lighter logo would stand out well on the dark stone. Commissioner McDonald and Mr. Klell discussed the challenges of getting county branding on the marquee sign in front of the building. She noted that she really likes what they are doing in the conceptual plan.

Commissioner Ireland also had questions about the signage, but they have already been covered. He did wonder about where the address of the building would be indicated, and Mr. Klell said the address would be on the monument signs at the entrances. Chair Majewski said she appreciated the thoughtful considerations that went into the design and also noted that it looks like it will be nicely landscaped.

No action was taken.

5. **Task Force on Inclusivity Report Recommendations**

5a. **Discussion on Best Practices for Naming of City- and County-Owned Physical Assets**

No report was given.

6. **Current Issues for Information/Discussion**

6a. **Minor Reviews**

Staff Taku and Commissioner Ireland reported on two recent minor reviews, one at 219 East 2nd Street in West University for solar panels on a corner lot. They asked that they hide one of the panels if possible. The second minor review, at 220 East Speedway, will now come in as a full review for replacing 38 windows. The case will now be heard by the West University Historic Zone Advisory Board and PRS. Staff Taku asked for volunteers for upcoming minor reviews at 260 East Congress for a projecting sign (via Zoom) and at 519 East 4th Street (on-site) in West University for roof shingles. Commissioner Ireland volunteered to assist with both upcoming reviews.

6b. Appeals

Staff Taku noted that there are no current appeals, but there is one that could potentially occur.

6c. Zoning Violations

Staff Taku noted that there are ongoing and pending cases being worked on for compliance and/or in the review process, and that staff are working with their zoning violation code enforcement liaison. There are several zoning violations that are being reactivated (all in Armory Park): one at 119 East 16th Street for a front door; one at 728 East 4th Street where windows were swapped without review; and one at 327 East 13th Street for a wall.

6d. Review Process Issues

No review process issues were raised.

7. Summary of Public Comments (Information Only)

No public comments were received by the posted deadline.

8. Future Agenda Items for Upcoming Meetings

The next scheduled meeting is August 14, 2023. Staff Brown noted that potential cases include 711–713 E. 5th Street [Zoning Violation] in the West University Historic Preservation Zone (HPZ), a fence in the Fort Lowell HPZ (a continued case), and 629 N. 7th Avenue in the West University HPZ.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:26 P.M.