



Fort Lowell Historic Zone Advisory Board  
Tuesday, September 7, 2023, at 5:30 PM  
Hybrid Meeting

**Meeting Minutes/Legal Action Report**

**1. Call to Order/Roll Call**

Members present: Elaine Hill (Co-Chair), Chris Jech (Co-Chair), Michael Bell, Mary Lou Fragomeni-Nuttall, Carol Maywood (by phone), and David Pietz.

City Staff present: Koren Manning (PDSD).

Guests present: Briggs Clinco, Demion Clinco, and Alan Scott.

A quorum was established, and the meeting was called to order at 5:37 PM.

**2. Consideration to Appeal the Director's Decision on HPZ 22-079/T22CM06756, 5259 East Fort Lowell Road**

Construction of a new single-family home and retention of existing ruins of the Fort Lowell School on the site.

Board members were asked to comment on the project.

Fragomeni-Nuttall expressed frustration that the major issues brought up during several meetings were never addressed by the applicant to the Board's satisfaction. The circulation of driveways and hardscape/landscape, parking, the threat to the School House ruins by heavy equipment on the site during construction and preservation afterward, and the parapet heights to conceal mechanical equipment, should be reconsidered. A drainage plan was never presented to the Board, and there is already evidence of flooding on the adjacent historic property (Fort Lowell Teachers' House). It was apparent that other bodies had not conducted reviews before the project was sent to the FLHZAB.

Co-Chair Jech expressed concern that the meetings did not assure that the Board's recommendations would be incorporated into the submitted plans. The applicant did not seem to care to meet the requests of the Board. The project is the largest new construction in the district since 1998.

Bell stated that the applicant and the City did not deal with the site plan problems concerning circulation, a trail easement, the side (west) setback, and other concerns that are part of the Fort Lowell Historic Zone Design Guidelines. The City did not support any requests of the Board. The proposed building also does not reference the Design types in the Historic Zone. The project is much larger than other buildings and is not appropriate according to the Design Guidelines. Bell further stated that the plans showed an inaccurate lot line that muddled the setback question.

Pietz agreed with all of the preceding comments from Board members. He expressed that the “structure does not fit.” Additionally, Pietz was frustrated by the applicant, which became increasingly upsetting at each meeting. The Board expected a conversation or engagement with the development, but it never happened.

Maywood, referring to the Director’s decision letter in comparison to the FLHZAB minutes, was disappointed that only select recommendations of the FLHZAB and TPCHC-PRS were included as conditions. The decision letter ultimately should have listed all the other recommendations presented.

Co-Chair Hill noted that there have been complaints from property owners within the Historic Zone that the proposed height and proportion are far too big as compared to the small adobe homes in this section of the Historic Zone. The TPCHC-PRS had a quorum of only three members at their review; the three members only commented on the FLHZAB recommendations.

### **3. Call to the Audience**

Briggs Clinco is the owner of two homes in the Historic Zone. She witnessed a serious lack of consideration on the part of the applicant about the Historic Zone. A large Santa Fe style home does not visually communicate with the ruins of the School House or the adjacent small Teachers’ House.

Alan Scott, a volunteer architect who attended the reviews, expressed there was disconnect between the requirement to conceal mechanical equipment on the roof and the height of the parapet. He believed the Design Guidelines do not require the applicant to conceal the equipment from view. Scott noted that it is difficult to conceal equipment behind parapets. He also had an issue with the refusal to provide a grading plan, considering there will be 60 feet of front elevation, which is drawn on the plan as level ground. In reality, the ground elevation will vary; therefore, the building heights should also vary. This is ultimately a flaw in the applicant’s presentation.

Demion Clinco, CIO of the Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation, and owner of property in the Historic Zone, said he found it impossible to find the permits online by parcel or address or map. Links are broken on the PDSD website, which prevents the

public from viewing case materials. Development Zones are key to the review when considering height, form, and application of the Design Guidelines. A different Development Zone than the one accepted by the FLHZAB was used by the PDSD Director and staff to justify the proposed building height. The proposed building is entirely out of scale. The average height in the Development Zone accepted by the City and by the Board is 9.3 feet; the residence is proposed to be 15 feet tall and exceeds this limitation by almost six feet. The only other singular instance of a 15-foot parapet is one section of the Post Trader Store, a significant historical building that is a quarter mile away from the project. The proposed residence, which is across the street from the San Pedro Chapel and is adjacent to the Fort Lowell Union Church historic buildings, ultimately diminishes the sense of place. The project undermines the City and County intent and bond investments in the historic properties in the Historic Zone. Concerning the adobe ruins, Clinco stated that the applicant had already disrupted the ruins with a piece of heavy equipment. He showed Board members a photograph of the destruction. The City Historic Preservation Officer was notified on the day the activity started but took no action to stop the work.

Manning questioned whether the Development Zone was changed during the last review. Board members stated that the Development Zone was not changed and was in the application presented as the plan packet. The Development Zone only included properties along Beverly Avenue. Manning emphasized that a Development Zone varies by site.

Jech formed a motion to appeal the Director's decision on HPZ-22-079. The motion was seconded by Fragomeni-Nuttall. Bell requested an amendment to include that any fees required to appeal the Director's decision will be paid by the FLHZAB. A second amendment was made by Bell that the Co-chairs be empowered to draft the appeal. Both Jech (motion maker) and Fragomeni-Nuttall (seconder) accepted the modified motion. The motion passed with a vote of 6-0.

#### **4. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:14 PM.