



**Historical Resources Management Commission  
Special Meeting Minutes  
Hattie Weber Museum – 445 C Street, Davis, California  
Corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and C Streets in Central Park  
Monday, November 24, 2008**

Commissioners Present: Rand Herbert (Chair), Richard Rifkin (Vice Chair), Gale Sosnick, Keren Costanzo and Mark Beason

Staff Present: Ken Hiatt, Anne Brunette, Ike Njoku and Nancy Stephenson

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**1. Call to Order.** Chair Herbert called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Approval of Agenda.**

**Action:** Vice Chair Rifkin moved, seconded by Commissioner Sosnick, to approve the agenda. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

**NOES:** None

**3. Approval of Minutes.**

**Action:** Commissioner Costanzo moved, seconded by Commissioner Beason, to approve the October 20, 2008 minutes. The motion passed by the following vote:

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

**NOES:** None

**4. Public Communications.** None.

**5. Written Communications.** Commissioner Costanzo presented a review of written materials previously circulated by Staff Liaison Ike Njoku. She drew attention to the latest issue of *The Alliance Review*, which features articles providing background information on post-World War II resources. Costanzo also noted a two-day seminar on “Identification and Evaluation of Mid-20<sup>th</sup>-Century Buildings” sponsored by the National Preservation Institute that will take place in Sacramento in April of 2009.

**6. Museum Report.** None.

**7. Staff and Commissioner Comments.** Njoku stated that an ethics class will be presented on December 1, 2008 at the Davis Police Department. He also noted that the Certified Local Government (CLG) annual report is due Dec 31, 2008, and that updated resumes from all commissioners are required to complete the report.

Vice Chair Rifkin requested an update on the status of the proposed window replacement at the old Davis Lumber building (238 G Street). Chair Herbert stated that the applicant is requesting replacement of the existing storefront windows with operable windows that would not change the size of the window opening. He noted that, since the most recent survey of historical resources does not make clear the status of 238 G Street, the Historical Resources Management Commission (HRMC) is not empowered to provide input regarding the proposed window replacement. Njoku confirmed that, based on the existing ordinance, the building needs to be designated as a resource before any issue relating to it can come before the HRMC.

## **8. Business Items.**

### **A. Downtown Building Reuse Report; Dresbach-Hunt-Boyer Mansion.**

Property Management Coordinator Anne Brunette presented the draft staff report (to be completed and presented to the City Council incorporating input from the HRMC), indicating that the City Council had directed staff to provide information on the reuse of the Dresbach-Hunt-Boyer Mansion (hereafter referred to as the "Mansion") as a restaurant, and that staff had requested that the feasibility study also include a reuse as a visitor information center. Brunette stated that the building could be adapted to reuse as a restaurant, but staff does not recommend this option due to the substantial modifications to the historic features of the building that would be required and the significant financial investment/risk that would be involved in such an endeavor. She said that reuse of the Mansion as a community events and information center, which would not require much in the way of modifications to the building, is the recommendation of staff.

The commissioners had the following questions for staff:

- What kind of community events would be handled at the Mansion and would they actually take place in the Mansion?

Deputy City Manager Ken Hiatt stated that the City Promotions Manager would be located there, along with various materials and equipment for staging events in the community. He said the Davis Downtown Business Association (DDBA), the Yolo County Visitors Bureau, the Davis Farmers Market and UC Davis staff would be located in the Mansion. Hiatt said that UC Davis will be consolidating its ticketing for sporting events, the Mondavi Center, and performing arts and is working with the City to get a community kiosk at the Mansion. He added that no events will take place in the Mansion itself, and use of meeting space within the Mansion will be used as community flex meeting space.

- What use is proposed for the Tankhouse?

Hiatt responded that the Tankhouse is being considered as a ticket and information kiosk. He stated that if this is not possible, it will be used as a promotional space for the selling of Yolo County produce and/or products, and will possibly be managed by the Davis Farmers Market.

- Will the Chamber of Commerce join the other groups in the Mansion?

Hiatt responded that the Davis Chamber of Commerce is a for-profit entity and is not entirely compatible with the other organizations being considered and there are no plans to integrate them into the Mansion space.

- Will rent be charged?

Brunette responded that consolidating the groups into one location will generate closer-to-market-rate rent than is currently generated with the groups in separate locations. She said that discussions are underway regarding the rent for the groups.

- Will the City be able to obtain competitive matching grants for renovation costs by bringing non-profit tenants into the building?

Hiatt responded that grant programs would probably look more favorably on funding the renovations if the reuse is a non-profit reuse.

- Did the feasibility study take into account that Mishka's Café will be built next to the Mansion?

Brunette responded that the consultants had been told that a restaurant would be built next door.

The commissioners had the following comments:

Chair Herbert and Commissioners Sosnick and Beason agreed in preferring a visitor information center over a restaurant use for the Mansion. Herbert stated that converting the building into a restaurant would result in undesirable and expensive changes to the resource. He added that using the Tankhouse as a ticket venue is a sensible idea. Herbert noted that the issue in the staff report relating to the front porch and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access ramp needs to be clarified.

Vice Chair Rifkin reluctantly agreed with the argument made in the staff report in favor of the visitor information center, in spite of his personal preference for a restaurant in the building. His concern with the visitor center is that he believes the use will not be much different from what it is now and will not draw many people to the building other than those who work in the building. In addition, Rifkin said the use will not complement the other businesses on the street.

Commissioner Sosnick stated that as many tenants as possible should be brought in, including the Chamber of Commerce. She added that she is doubtful as to the usefulness of the Tankhouse in view of its size and lack of structural soundness.

Hiatt stated that San Francisco preservation architect Arnie Lerner suggests shoring up the Tankhouse in place, structurally reframing and relocating it, and removing the unusable materials and reapplying the usable materials. Hiatt said that he would elaborate on the plans at the next HRMC meeting.

**Action:** Vice Chair Rifkin moved, seconded by Commissioner Sosnick, to support staff's recommendation to work with the DDBA, Yolo County Visitors Bureau, Davis Farmers Market and UC Davis to develop a plan for creating a community events and information center to be located at the Dresbach-Hunt-Boyer Mansion. The motion passed by the following vote:

**AYES:** Beason, Costanzo, Herbert, Rifkin, Sosnick  
**NOES:** None

## B. Updates on Commission Projects

- Signage / Identification for City-owned Landmarks
- Windshield Survey of Historical Resources

### Signage

Njoku opened the discussion, stating that the City will soon be able to provide signs for six City Landmarks.

Chair Herbert revealed the subcommittee has a different recommendation than that which was previously discussed by the Commission. He stated that the recommendations for sign locations are as follows:

- Boy Scout Cabin (Merit Resource, 616 1<sup>st</sup> Street): One sign mounted on a post on the east side of the cabin between the parking lot and the cabin.
- Richards Boulevard Underpass (Landmark): Two signs total, with one sign on a lamppost at the northwest end of the underpass, and the other mounted on the volunteer medallion board at the southeast end of the underpass.
- Southern Pacific Railroad Depot (Landmark, 840 2<sup>nd</sup> Street): One sign on a post on the track side of the Depot across the walkway from the sign with the train schedules.
- Historic City Hall/Bistro 33 (Landmark, 226 F Street): One sign on a post in the planter on the F Street side of the building, south of *The Juggers* sculpture and north of the old formal entrance.
- Varsity Theatre (Landmark, 616 2<sup>nd</sup> Street): One double-sided sign on a post in the sidewalk, in an existing signpost hole.
- Dresbach-Hunt-Boyer Mansion (Landmark, 604 2<sup>nd</sup> Street): One double-sided sign on a post on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street near the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> and E Streets.

- Old Davis High School/City Hall (Landmark, 23 Russell Boulevard): Two signs total, with one sign on a post on the north side of the building by the parking lot and the other sign on the south side on a post near the bus shelter, perpendicular to the building. Hiatt suggested one double-sided sign at the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and B Streets and the commissioners agreed with his suggestion.
- The Avenue of Trees (Landmark, Russell Boulevard west of Arthur Street): Two double-sided signs total, with one sign at each end of the line of trees.

As far as the format and materials for the signs, the following characteristics were the consensus choice of the commissioners:

- Aluminum signs with an astragal profile like the Old North Davis neighborhood street signs.
- Brown background with white vinyl lettering.
- White metal frames.
- Metal sign poles 7 feet in height, powder-coated brown to match the signs.

Still to be decided:

- Dimensions: 18" by 18" *or* 18" by 20" *or* 20" by 20".
- Text format: City of Davis logo and type of resource (e.g., City Landmark) at the top, descriptive text in the middle (20-25 words on architectural type, historical figures related to resource, history of resource, etc.), and the name of the resource and date of construction at the bottom.
- Have the *signs* themselves stamped in the desired shape or insert square signs into *frames* that are the desired shape.

The commissioners acknowledged that, although they had originally leaned toward bronze, they now have decided on the metal signs because of lower cost (aluminum is less expensive than bronze, and the vinyl can be applied by the Public Works Department), better readability, consistency with regional historic signage, and replaceability. They added that the taller height would discourage vandals, and stated that the goal of the signs is to educate public, and they believe that the metal sign format will achieve that better than bronze can. The commissioners requested feedback regarding any problems with proposed locations of signage, and they asked to contract with a local fabricator, if possible.

Njoku summarized the next steps, including determining the number of signs to be made and the cost for fabrication. He suggested meeting with Rifkin and Hiatt to determine the content of the signs and when and how they can be installed.

#### Windshield Survey

Chair Herbert provided an update on plans for the windshield survey of historical resources, the first phase of which is set to begin in December 2008. He outlined the procedure for conducting

the survey, and noted that the first phase will be essentially an architectural merit survey of older subdivisions to get an idea of how many possible resources exist therein. The next phase will involve fanning out into newer subdivisions to find possible “survivors” from earlier eras around which newer subdivisions have been built.

Njoku noted that the deadline for the funding cycle for next year is at the end of March. He stated that even if a request for a grant were submitted, it would be difficult to obtain one without matching funds or City Council approval. Njoku suggested arranging a joint meeting with the City Council early next year to broach the concept of providing the matching funds to pay for the historical consultant’s survey in 2010. (The scope of the survey will have been narrowed down by that time as a result of the windshield survey).

- 9. Adjournment.** The next meeting will be **Monday, December 15, 2008** at the Hattie Weber Museum (445 C Street) at 7:00 p.m.

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

**AYES:** Beason, Costanzo, Herbert, Rifkin, Sosnick  
**NOES:** None

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.