



City of Arts & Innovation

CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD MINUTES

THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2021, 3:30 A.M.
VIRTUAL MEETING
PUBLIC COMMENT VIA TELEPHONE
3900 MAIN STREET

COMMISSIONERS

PRESENT: M. Carter, J. Cuevas, N. Ferguson, J. Gamble, S. Lech, N. Parrish, C. Tobin
ABSENT: J. Brown (Ill)

STAFF: M. Kopaskie-Brown, S. Watson, A. Beaumon, F. Andrade

Mr. Watson called the meeting to order.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Watson asked for nominations for Cultural Heritage Board Chair.

Board Member Carter nominated Board Member Lech for Chair.

There were no more nominations, the nominations for Chair were closed.

MOTION by Board Member Carter to elect Board Member Lech as Chair of the Cultural Heritage Board, Seconded by Board Member Ferguson.

Motion Carried: 6 Ayes, 0 Noes, 1 Absent, 0 Abstention

AYES: Carter, Cuevas, Ferguson, Gamble, Lech, Tobin

NOES: None

ABSENT: Brown

ABSTENTION: None

Chair Lech asked for nominations for Vice-Chair.

Board Member Ferguson nominated Board Member Gamble for Vice-Chair.

There were no more nominations, the nominations for Vice-Chair were closed.

MOTION by Board Member Ferguson to elect Board Member Gamble as Vice-Chair of the Cultural Heritage Board, Seconded by Board Member Carter



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Motion Carried: 6 Ayes, 0 Noes, 1 Absent, 0 Abstention

AYES: Carter, Cuevas, Ferguson, Gamble, Lech, Tobin

NOES: None

ABSENT: Brown

ABSTENTION: None

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Mike Gentile, President of the Old Riverside Foundation, stated that the Cultural Heritage Board has not been operating under its current By-laws. The meetings are being run by the City Planning Division. The Old Riverside Foundation has wanted to place items on this board's agendas, which is their right as citizens of the City of Riverside, based on the By-laws. It is their understanding that the agenda is being set by the Planning Division based on projects which is not how the Board is supposed to operate. He hoped that the new officers will take a look at the By-laws and reclaim the authority to run the Cultural Heritage Board as it should be and he can get some of their items addressed and put on the agenda for future meetings.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The Consent Calendar was unanimously approved as presented below affirming the actions appropriate to each item.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of January 20, 2021, were approved as presented.

ATTENDANCE

The Board excused the absence of Board Member Cuevas from the January 20, 2021 meeting due to business and excused Board Member Brown from leaving early at the January 20, 2021 meeting due to technical issues.

Board Member Cuevas stated he would like to abstain on the approval of the board attendance for January 20, 2021.

A MOTION was made by Board Carter to approve the Consent Calendar, Seconded by Board Member Gamble.



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AYES: Carter, Ferguson, Gamble, Lech, Tobin

NOES: None

ABSENT: Brown

ABSTENTION: Cuevas

DISCUSSION CALENDAR

Citywide GIS System and Historic Viewer Update – Innovation and Technology Department

George Khalil, Chief Innovation Officer, updated the Board on the GIS project, which began January 2019. The Historic Property Viewer was one of riskiest components because it was internet facing. This led to removing the database from the system infrastructure. The data is available and has been exported and provided to some of the community organizations that requested it. They are trying to adopt a standard off the shelf platform, within 6-12 months, to try to import this data on a standard map rather than a custom path. As previously discussed, a custom path, essentially gives you a good product at the moment, but is not sustainable nor is it going to scale up or adapt as technology continues to advance and offers new features. He explained the staff and the projects they are currently working on and noted that the due to COVID, the COVID related projects are taking precedence.

Mr. Khalil answered the board members questions

There was no public comment on this item.

Following discussion, the Board took no formal action. Chair Lech thanked staff for the update.

Board Member Ferguson asked that the Board receive updates on this in the future.

Ms. Kopaskie-Brown stated that planning staff will work with IT to provide the Board updates on the progress.



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Certified Local Government Annual Report - October 1, 2019 thru September 30, 2020

Mr. Watson presented the Certified Local Government Annual Report for review and comment by the Cultural Heritage Board.

There was no public comment for this item.

A MOTION was made by Board Member Cuevas to receive, file and support the Certified Local Government Annual Report and Seconded by Board Member Carter.

Motion Carried: 6 Ayes, 0 Noes, 1 Absent, 0 Abstention

AYES: Carter, Cuevas, Ferguson, Gamble, Lech, Tobin

NOES: None

ABSENT: Brown

ABSTENTION: None

Discussion regarding the use of artificial turf within historic districts

Mr. Watson presented this item. He stated that on June 25, 2020 staff approved a landscape plan indicating artificial turf to be installed within the front and side yard of 2470 Mission Inn Avenue, a non-contributor to the Seventh Street East Historic District. The landscape plan was submitted in compliance with the conditions of approval for a previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness. Staff reviewed the proposal and found it consistent with Title 20, the Citywide Residential Historic District Design Guidelines and the Secretary Of The Interior Standards as follows: 1) the proposal maintained a visual character of front and side lawn ; and 2) the use of artificial turf was reversible.

At the December 16, 2020 Cultural Heritage Board meeting, a public comment was received regarding staff approval of the use of artificial turf at the property. On January 20, 2021, the Cultural Heritage Board held a discussion on the use of artificial turf and the discussion was continued to a future agenda. He noted that in 2015, Governor Brown issued a statewide mandate which limited the amount of grass in the front, rear, and side yard to 25% of the combined landscaping square footage for new construction. Also, Assembly Bill (AB) 1164 was passed by the State Legislature on September 11, 2015 and signed into law on October 9, 2015. This prohibits municipalities from enacting or enforcing any ordinance or regulation that prohibits the installation of drought tolerant landscaping, synthetic grass, or artificial turf on residential properties. The bill does allow



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municipalities to impose reasonable restrictions that do not effectively prohibit the use of artificial turf. He stated that per Section 20.25.030 of the RMC, all landscaping improvements within historic district, including contributors and non-contributors are reviewed administratively by staff in accordance with the "Principles and Standards of Site Development and Design Review" specified in Section 20.25.050. Landscaping within historic district are covered in Chapter 10 of the Guidelines.

He pointed out that in 2008, the Historic Preservation Officer, at that time, issued an over-the-counter approval for artificial turf at 5036 Brockton Avenue as part of a relandscaping project. Staff found that the use of artificial turf is consistent with the Guidelines as follows: 1) It maintains the visual character of the residential front yard, as viewed from the public right-of-way; 2) It is a porous ground covering, as encouraged by the Guidelines; and 3) Its use respects the structure's setback from the street and its relationship to the surrounding neighborhood. This same determination was made for the property at 2470 Mission Inn Avenue.

Public Comment: Nancy Parrish and Alan Curl spoke regarding the use of artificial turf. They expressed their concerns: Information from other cities and other states agree to preserve the areas character and prohibit artificial turf; environmental concerns such as carbon footprint, petroleum based product, rainwater runoff and leeching hazardous chemicals into the soil and gassing of volatile organic compost. That the Board consider preserving the traditional residential character of the front and side yards. A recommendation was made that the Historic District Guidelines that were last written in 2002 be updated with the continued help of the Cultural Heritage Board. The approval of artificial turf was a mistake and is not a treatment that the Historic District deserves. It is not consistent with the intent of the Design Guidelines.

Board Member Gamble stated this is an important topic to consider, most important is how these decisions affect the neighborhood. She noted that another issue to consider are property values. What happens in the front of your house affects your neighbors and affects their property values along with your own. Everyone should be held accountable so that our Historic Districts are sought after and seen as a prize possession. It is a big topic that should be agendized so that the Board can ensure this does not happen again.

Board Member Tobin noted that staff has indicated the Title 20 and Design Guidelines review is being worked on. He asked when the update would be presented to the Board.



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Ms. Kopaskie-Brown stated that she and Mr. Watson have been working on this. This would be an opportunity for the Board to address issues such as this. She stated that she was confident that they would complete this and bring it to the Board for their review by the end of the year. She asked that the members have any items they would like to have addressed, to submit those to Mr. Watson for inclusion in the update.

A MOTION was made by Board Member Cuevas to receive and file this report, seconded by Board Member Carter

Motion Carried: 6 Ayes, 0 Noes, 1 Absent, 0 Abstention

AYES: Carter, Cuevas, Ferguson, Gamble, Lech, Tobin

NOES: None

ABSENT: Brown

ABSTENTION: None

Cultural Heritage Board appointments to the Historic Preservation Fund Committee

Chair Lech asked for volunteers and opened the nominations for the appointments to the Historic Preservation Fund Committee.

Board Member Tobin volunteered to serve on the Historic Preservation Fund Committee.

Board Member Cuevas nominated Board Member Ferguson to serve on the Committee.

A MOTION by Board Member Cuevas to elect Board Members Tobin and Ferguson, to serve on the Historic Preservation Fund Committee, Seconded by Board Member Carter.

Motion Carried: 6 Ayes, 0 Noes, 1 Absent, 0 Abstention

AYES: Carter, Cuevas, Ferguson, Gamble, Lech, Tobin

NOES: None

ABSENT: Brown

ABSTENTION: None



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COMMUNICATIONS

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS AND UPDATE FROM CITY PLANNER AND BOARD MEMBERS

Board Member Tobin inquired what the procedure for members of the public to bring an agenda item to CHB was. Is there is a formal procedure for that?

Mr. Beaumon stated that this issue would be appropriate to set for a future agenda. He did state that it appeared the By-laws available on-line were outdated.

Ms. Kopaskie-Brown stated that for April agenda was currently full. Staff has been working with Jennifer Mermilliod to set up a training for Cultural Heritage Board. It is probably a good idea to include the By-laws as part of the training. Staff is tentatively looking at the May meeting for this training.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:38 p.m. to the meeting of April 21, 2021 at 3:30 p.m.

Minutes approved as presented at the April 21, 2021 meeting.