

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL JOINT MEETING  
OF THE  
MONROVIA CITY COUNCIL, PLANNING COMMISSION,  
AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
HELD WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2003, 5:30 P.M.**

**CONVENE.** Mayor Rob Hammond convened the Special Joint Meeting of the Monrovia City Council, Monrovia Planning Commission and Monrovia Historic Preservation Commission of Wednesday, October 22, 2003 at 6 20 P M in the Monroe Room, Monrovia Community Center, 119 West Palm Avenue, Monrovia, California Staff in attendance was City Manager Donald R Hopper, City Attorney Carol Lynch, and City Clerk Linda B Proctor, Assistant City Manager Scott Ochoa, Planning Division Manager Steve Sizemore, Community Development Director Alice Griselle, Senior Planner Craig Jimenez, Associate Planner Barbara Lynch, Assistant Planner Ili Lobaco, and Public Information Officer Dick Singer

**ROLL CALL:** In attendance were Councilmembers Tom Adams, Dan Kirby, Mary Ann Lutz, Mayor Pro Tem Joe Garcia, and Mayor Rob Hammond, Planning Commissioners Bill Beebe, Eric Faith, Hany Malak (arriving at 6 28 P M ), Mimi Mency, Don Theall, and Vice Chairman Eric Abe, and Historic Preservation Commissioners Donna Baker, Steve Baker, Peter Fisk, Anne McIntosh (arriving at 6 35 P M ), Tim Shea, and Chairman James Hendrix

**DISCUSSION:** City Manager presented an overview of the basis for the joint special meeting He reported that at the October 21<sup>st</sup> City Council, Mayor Pro Tem Garcia had asked for consideration of a 45-day moratorium on development relating to multiple zoned residential properties while a study was being conducted of these properties throughout the City

Community Development Director Alice Griselle introduced the Planning Division staff She then presented issues involved in retention of historic neighborhoods She noted that a resident had complained that if down-zoning were to occur, it would affect the sales price of his home She defined the study area and presented a map designating the area She explained the history of density within the City

She reported that the options spectrum was from saving all pre-1940 structures to no change to some middle of the road options such as

- 1 Tighten review of single family and multiple family to insure preserving character of neighborhoods
- 2 Demolition of pre-1940 homes – Have a 60-day hold while securing HPC advice, no demolition without approved plans
- 3 Incentives for retention of older homes
- 4 Study rezoning of specific areas and/or overlay zones

Mayor Hammond reported that the City Council had asked for a moratorium of the demolition of older homes at the City Council meeting last night and asked Mayor Pro Tem Garcia to share his report with the Commissioners

Mayor Pro Tem Garcia stated that he has questioned whether the process could be slowed down, and a moratorium would be stepping back to take a look to find if the City needed to preserve the character of neighborhoods. He presented a list that he and Commissioner McIntosh had worked on (see attached) which was a menu of ideas and alternatives to traditional down-zoning. He stated that the objective was to determine ways to preserve existing housing stock, ensure compatible new development, protect existing neighborhood character, and prohibit demolitions that resulted in vacant lots.

Mayor Hammond then opened the discussion to all Commissioners and asked that each state his/her ideas. They were as follows:

Donna Baker – Not all structures should be saved. She found it acceptable that, if demolished, it needed to be replaced by like homes.

Steve Baker – His desire was to save all pre-1940's, bearing in mind that you have to compromise. He wanted all pre-1940's to be evaluated, with the thought that there may be others like the 1600 that Monrovia Old House Preservation Group (MOHPG) had identified. There was a need to address each on a case by case basis by independent reviewers and come to a consensus. (Ms. Griselle interjected that even if a site was on the list of 1600, it still could be demolished.) He would agree to replace like with like, if massing and scaling were the same.

Peter Fisk – He did not agree that all pre-1940's should be saved, and was on middle ground. He preferred replacing like with like.

Jimmy Hendrix – It was a great start and that there were excellent points on Mayor Pro Tem Garcia's list. He believed time was of the essence and didn't think that all old buildings should be saved, but rather that all should be reviewed.

Anne McIntosh – Really important to decide objectives as it is easy to stray. Voluntary preservation ordinance is important. Didn't think they should start with saving all, but should start in the middle. Massing needs to be looked at. Contemporary architecture was fine, and like did not need to be replaced with like, rather massing should be used. The historic character was important. Her theory was that if you can save 85%, that was a pretty good ratio. There was a need to step up to the plate for the preservation of neighborhoods.

Tim Shea – Agreed with middle ground. Incentives work for people, i.e., the Mills Act. It was a good idea to replace like with like, but it was tough to legislate design quality. Massing, portions, scale needs a vehicle to review, perhaps, with an architectural Review Board. Overlay zones work pretty well in the City of Los Angeles. (City Manager Hopper interjected the question, "Are look-alikes good or bad?") Developers rely on projects they have done before and don't always have money for an architect.

Bill Beebe - The more successful it becomes, the more difficult it is to manage. He would go the middle of the road. He didn't like a moratorium but if it were called a "limited" moratorium that would work.

Eric Faith – He went through the last down-zoning war and it angered those who had held their property for 50 years and had plans for it. It was very uncomfortable with talk of controls over building. He did not feel he was qualified to decide what color paint one should paint their home. Overlay zones and incentives were good. A very cautious approach was best.

Hany Malak – Architectural speaking, everything in the City did not have to look the same. Need design overlay, whether DRC, PC or HPC does it. Must be able to speak about massing. If garages are in the back in a neighborhood, then all garages need to be in the back. Need ability to speak mind, shape and mold, and have a cohesive environment. If you build, you need to be compatible. Need to study homes before they are demolished. Keep objective at forefront.

Mimi Mency – Compatibility is key word With 1600 cites to be reviewed with the survey, it gives one enough time to decide If they chose not to, has the right to do what they want with their own property DRC and staff do an excellent job in directing developers Some pre-1940's are good, some are not You can't force people, and you need alternatives

Don Theall – "Require that a noticed neighborhood meeting be held by the applicant prior to any project that is approved by the Planning Commission" from Mayor Pro Tem Garcia's list should be included in the ordinance Preserve pre-1940's and have a moratorium on all development at this time Overlay zones was the easiest and fastest He asked about building codes for pre1940 homes which would be different than homes built today

Dan Kirby – Character of neighborhoods was absolutely essential Educating the public of the importance of preservation was essential to the quality of life in Monrovia It needs to be worked out so that you don't come across as iron-fisted Need to market these new ideas so it is acceptable to the citizens Make plans clear as possible People need to know before they start spending money what the rules are Find goal first—to him it is preserving

Mary Ann Lutz – Most all had been said and reinforced Didn't want to be wishy-washy but nevertheless she takes the middle ground If what is built has historical character, that is good Need to start education process now Needs to go from Planning Department on up Compatibility and overlays are good CEQA's can be costly

Tom Adams – Take "historic" out and preserve all our neighborhoods It needs to be comfortable and compatible Are we preserving buildings but making people uncomfortable? Need to up-zone in places where there are all apartments, etc , and conversely those places with homes Go block-by-block for character of unique neighborhoods even though that will take longer

At 7 31 P M , Mayor Hammond excused the Historic Preservation Commission as it had its regular monthly meeting at City Hall, 7 30 P M

Mayor Hammond presented the general conclusions of the Commissioners as follows

- 1 Needs to be a volunteer program
- 2 Set definition so to not lose sight
- 3 Massing vs architectural style
- 4 Incentives
- 5 Rules must be easily understood
- 6 Overlays
- 7 Neighborhood compatibility, character and charm
- 8 Add neighbor meetings to requirements
- 9 Education
- 10 Delicate balance of retaining property owners' rights and preserving

Eric Faith noted that there was a need to make smaller bulk angle requirements on smaller lots

Hany Malak noted there were other mechanisms to save homes, i e , moving them somewhere else in the City

City Manager Hopper stated that double fronting lots will be addressed in the study and staff will come up with standards

Tom Adams stated that it would seem that we can say if it blends with everything around you, you can do it He reminded everyone of the enforcement of a 75' lot width that was required for a lot one lot on Norumbega that resulted in a large 100' lot among 50' lots Alice Griselle noted that the ordinance was amended to allow the predominant width of

the block to be used with appropriate approvals, and that it had already been done on Eighth or Tenth Street

In response to Joe Garcia's question, City Attorney Lynch stated that there was no state law that would prohibit the direction that the Council and Commissions were taking

Alice Griselle noted that currently any home on the potential historic landmark list that was being considered for demolition would need to go to the HPC for review, but that it could ultimately be demolished

Mimi Mency suggested that a list of homes for sale and in danger of being demolished by a developer could be provided to realtors in Southern California

**PUBLIC INPUT REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA:**

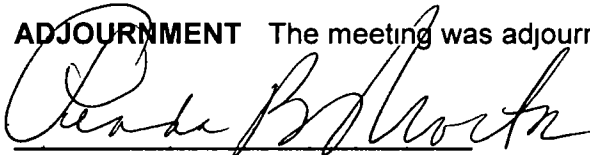
1 Dorothy Kelty, agreed with the suggestions regarding scale, and believed that set backs were necessary Overlays were good

2 Cleve Crudginton, representing MOHPG, stated that another 800 homes were on the original list but had been lost due to a hard drive crash They would be provided to the City to add to the list of 1600 as soon as the list had been regenerated He stated that conformity may be hard in that materials of that era may be expensive or not available He agreed with educating the community He offered the services of MOHPG and asked that a member of the MOHPG Board be included in further discussions

Mayor Hammond thanked all for attending He stated that this was important to the community and how it would shape He agreed with Mr Crudginton that this was just the first step

City Manager Hopper stated that the suggestions will be refined and brought back to the individual Commissions and the City Council in proposal form by staff

**ADJOURNMENT** The meeting was adjourned at 7 57 P M



Linda B Proctor, CMC, City Clerk