



**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, March 26, 2013 – 7:00 P.M.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Vice-Chair Charles called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

2. **ROLL CALL**
Present: Vice-Chair Charles, Commissioners Charlie, Rice, Ostergren & Levin

Absent: Chair Torgan & Commissioner Castro

STAFF PRESENT: Stephanie Reich, HPC Liaison, Andrew Goodrich, Planning Intern & Danny Casillas, Acting Commission Secretary

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**
The Historic Preservation Commission is requested to approve the Agenda.
Recommendation: Approve the agenda of Tuesday March 26, 2013 as amended. **Moved by Commissioner Levin, seconded by Commissioner Ostergren and unanimously carried noting the absence of Chair Torgan and Commissioner Castro.**

COMMISSIONER LEVIN requested to pull Item 6.A. Consent Calendar to be discussed under Item 7.A. Excluded Consent Calendar.

VICE-CHAIR CHARLES moved to continue Item 9.A - 8801 Sunset Boulevard (Tower Records) to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission. **Motion failed unanimously noting the absence of Chair Torgan and Commissioner Castro.**

Approve the agenda of March 26, 2013 as amended to pull Item 6.A. Consent Calendar to be discussed under Item 7.A. Excluded Consent Calendar, **Moved by Commissioner Levin, seconded by Commissioner Ostergren and unanimously carried noting the absence of Chair Torgan and Commissioner Castro.**

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
The Historic Preservation Commission is requested to approve the minutes of prior Historic Preservation Commission meetings.
Recommendation: Approve the meeting minutes of, February 25, 2013 as amended. **Moved by Commissioner, Levin seconded by Commissioner Rice and unanimously carried noting the absence of Chair Torgan and Commissioner Castro.**

VICE-CHAIR CHARLES requested the following correction:

- **Pg. 7 of 9:** VICE-CHAIR CHARLES commented on the question of Dr. Vayner's property becoming eligible for designation as a cultural resource. He said it was not the decision of the Commission **^to look at any subsequent use of his properties** but that the Commission must review what is brought before them and take action based on a set criterion.

5. Public Comment:

LYNN RUSSELL RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD commented about the loss of Commissioner Kaye and his diligence, enthusiasm and passion for preservation. She suggested that West Hollywood look into obtaining a system that triggers an automatic review by the HPC for demolition permits pulled on properties older than forty to fifty years.

STEPHANIE HARKAR RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD expressed concerns regarding the Plummer Park Project, and said Great Hall/ Long Hall will be considered for designation to the National Registry of historic places May 1st in Anaheim, CA and said the City Council will be announcing the designation at its April 1st meeting.

KRISTY GOSNEY RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD commented on Item 4.A. - February Meeting Minutes, she requested the following corrections:

- **page 5 of 9 should be:** JORDON MOSS TENANT ~~923~~ **^931 PALM AVENUE**
- **page 5 of 9 should be:** She commented on a previous analysis contracted by Staff and HRG and said the report in 1999 was the last neutral one completed on 927 & 931 **^which said the stated reason for denying the San Vicente and Larrabee properties was the same reason used to deny the Palm avenue properties despite there being no evidence of disqualifying alterations presented in the Myra L. Frank report.**

Item 5.A. Public Comments closed.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR:

- A. 927 AND 931 N. PALM AVENUE** pulled to be heard under Item 7. A. Excluded Consent Calendar.

7. EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR:

- A. 927 AND 931 N. PALM AVENUE:** On February 25, 2013 the Historic Preservation Commission voted to recommend that the City Council deny the exterior of the building at 923 Palm Avenue as a Cultural Resource and designate the exterior of the buildings at 927 and 931 Palm Avenue as Cultural Resources as part of the Old Sherman Thematic Grouping.

The Commission determined that the buildings at 927 and 931 Palm Avenue were eligible for designation under Criterion A: Special Elements of the City. At that time, the commission directed staff to return with a revised resolution.

COMMISSIONER LEVIN formerly withdrew his objections to Criterion A-2.A at the February 25, 2013 HPC meeting recommended by Commissioner Ostergren and recommended the following changes be made to Draft Resolution No. HPC 13-105 Section D:

A. Exemplifies Special Elements of the City. It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the city's aesthetic, architectural, cultural, economic, engineering, political, natural, or social history and possesses integrity of design, location, materials, setting, workmanship feeling, and association in the following manner:

2. It contributes to the significance of a historic area by being:
 - a. A geographically definable area possessing a concentration of historic or scenic properties; or
 - b. A thematically related grouping of properties which contribute to each other and are unified aesthetically by plan or physical development; or
3. It reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of growth and settlement, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of community or park planning; or

Action: Amend Resolution No. HPC 13-105 to deny designation of 923 Palm and recommendation to include 927 and 931 Palm Avenue under Criterion A-2.A, A-2.B and A-3, **Moved by Commissioner Levin, seconded by Commissioner Ostergren and unanimously carried; noting the absence of Chair Torgan and Commissioner Castro.**

Item 7.A. Public Comment Heard Out of Order

VICTOR OMELCZENKO RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD commented in favor of Resolution HPC 013-105 and also welcomed newly appointed Commissioner Yawar Charlie to the HPC.

KATE EGGERT RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD commented briefly in favor of the correction to add Criteria A-2.A. to Resolution No. HPC 13-105 which was suggested by Commissioner Levin.

Item 7.A. Public Comment Closed

8. COMMISSION CONSIDERATION: None.

9. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. 8801 SUNSET BOULEVARD (TOWER RECORDS): The HPC shall consider the nomination of the property at 8801 Sunset Boulevard for designation as a local Cultural Resource.

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission adopt Draft Resolution No. HPC 13-107 recommending that the City Council deny the building as a Local Cultural Resource:

STAFF ANDREW GOODRICH provided a PowerPoint presentation detailing information AS listed in the Staff Report. He gave a brief history of the origin, name and location of the property as well as individuals such as Earl Muntz and J.D. Bruffey who were previously associated with the property.

He said the development permit application to demolish the former Tower Records store and redevelop the site with a multistory commercial complex was submitted in 2007, and said a Cultural Resource nomination was also submitted in 2007. He said that since the development permit application was deemed complete prior to the nomination application, the nomination was put on hold until the development permit was completed.

He said the vacant site was currently occupied by the former Tower Records and is currently leasing its adjacent parking lot as a commercial parking space.

He said Staff acknowledges the role that Tower Records played in the history of the Sunset Strip, but does not believe the property, in its present state is individually eligible for designation under any of the proposed criterion; therefore Staff recommends that the Commission adopt Resolution No. HPC 13-107, recommending that the City Council deny designation of the property as a Local Cultural Resource.

Item 9.A. Commission Questions To Staff

COMMISSIONER OSTERGREN expressed concerns regarding the type of resource presented before the HPC. She said it's a nomination based on social and/or cultural history rather than its aesthetic criteria however, Criteria A of the City's ordinance appears to suggest that it should be an

aesthetic consideration. She also commented on the issue of integrity seeing that the missing features of the building, paint and signage, were ephemeral.

STAFF ANDREW GOODRICH said Staff selected information from the National Register Bulletin to determine how to evaluate the integrity of a property.

Item 9.A. Commissioner Questions to Staff Closed

Item 9.A. Public Comments

DOMENIC PRIORE/APPLICANT RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF TUJUNGA spoke against Staff's recommendation to deny the building as a Local Cultural Resource.

He spoke about support of the nomination by both social and news media, its 36 year history as Tower Records and said it became the music industries marketing logo when it opened its flagship store on the Sunset Strip.

He said it became the international, primary debut point for major album releases as well as played a major role in numerous publicity for music as art projects. He said John Lennon, Sir Elton John and Michael Jackson both shopped, and promoted their music there.

He spoke about refurbishing work to the building by the popular rock group, The White Stripes in 2007 and said their upgrades and nationwide concert conveyed the continuity of the Tower location as an internationally recognized icon and also negates the argument by development company listed in the report prepared by EDAW Inc. that, "removal of signage and painting scheme has damaged the integrity of the sight to the point where it no longer has the capacity to communicate or represent its former identity as a music store".

He asked that the Historic Preservation Commission waive the post tower adaptation of Tower Records image over the obviously non-brick and mortar issue of paint.

He said Tower records should also be considered as a historic entity because its history is presently being made into a documentary film in the City of Sacramento, he said Sacramento's Museum of History received some of Tower Records artifacts when it closed and said there's discussion that Tower Records could become the Sunset Strip Museum.

He concluded his comments by stating that both The Final Doggy Diner in San Francisco and The Venice West Cafe in Venice, CA were designated based on their cultural history not architectural merit and Tower Records merits the same designation.

Item 9.A. Commission Questions To Applicant

COMMISSIONER LEVIN asked if the proposed designation was to the site or the building which would help determine the Commissions analysis.

DOMENIC PRIORE/APPLICANT said both the site and the building but primarily the building.

Item 9.A. Public Comment

NICKI CARLSEN LAW OFFICES OF ALSTON & BIRD/OWNER REPRESENTATIVE RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES spoke in favor of Staff's recommendation to deny the building as a Local Cultural Resource.

She said she submitted a letter in support of Staff's recommendation and said Staff's report was a good, comprehensive evaluation of all the elements of criteria.

She explained the context of how the property was brought before the Commission as well as the previous denial stating that the CRA found that the property was ineligible for listing under the California Register of Historic Resources and the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance.

She said the letter also provided the Topical Response to the EIR (Environmental Impact Report) where it states the property is ineligible for listing on the National and, California Register as well as the City's Ordinance. She said it also addressed the social and cultural issue rose earlier which is noted in Exhibit A. 7-30.

She said based on the staff report the property is in ineligible under Federal, State or Local designation and ended her comments.

SARAH WISE RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES expressed concerns regarding Staff's recommendation to deny the building as a Local Cultural Resource. She said she'd like to see Tower Records as an adaptive reuse possibly as a museum and that there should be more resources such as this preserved for future visitors to the City of West Hollywood.

TODD MEEHAN RESIDENT OF SUN VALLEY spoke in favor Staff's recommendation to deny the building as a Local Cultural Resource. He said he was a former employee of Tower Records and agreed that it would be a great museum for the Sunset Strip.

He spoke about numerous autographs from famous music artists that visited the Tower Records and performances by famous music artist of each music genre dating back as far back as the 70's to the site and said

the City should consider bringing back the social and cultural look that once enhanced the Sunset Strip.

CATHY BLAIVAS RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke against Staff's recommendation to deny the building as a Local Cultural Resource. She said Tower Records precludes the establishment of the City of West Hollywood and said the people of the City want to embrace its history.

She said although she could not present argument to support designation under a specific criterion, perhaps there could be a Historic Music District within the Sunset Strip established that the building could be designated within or possibly set a precedent for a new criterion.

JEROME CLEARY RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke against Staff's recommendation to deny the building as a Local Cultural Resource. He asked that the item be continued because he was a member of the applicants committee and was notified five days prior to the hearing which did not give him time prepare a response and was not able to have expert representation there as well.

He said he spoke at previous Planning Commission and City Council meetings to argue the historic nature of the property and said the building, does bring a greater understanding of the City's past, it does preserve the City's cultural historical heritage, and it does encourage and facilitate public appreciation and knowledge and understanding of the City's history past and unique since of place.

He said it's a common site for tour busses and that the paint and signage are replaceable. He said the building should be designated and the site as well due to the history and era of previous business owner Earl "Madman" Muntz.

He said its history dates back over 20 years and expressed concerns about Vice-Chair Charles previously speaking in support of the development agreement and is now sitting as Acting Chair of tonight's meeting.

VICE-CHAIR CHARLES responded to Jerome Cleary's concerns and said he spoke to the City's Attorney regarding his involvement with the development agreement and was told that there were no conflicts because the designation was not an issue at that time.

ELYSE EISENBERG RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke against Staff's recommendation to deny the building as a Local Cultural Resource.

She spoke on previous comments by Commissioner Ostergren regarding the signage at the Tower Records building and said the City has approved

other buildings, such as the Sunset Lanai and a Fickett building that changed the paint which did not change or alter the integrity of the building and said the changes can be restored. She agreed with previous comments by Jerome Cleary regarding tour busses and famous individuals visiting the building and that a Historic Music District would be a benefit to the City. She said although the building does not maintain its original look it still merits designation and that Tower Records is iconic and important location to the Sunset Strip.

ALFREDO FLORES RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF PASADENA spoke against Staff's recommendation to deny the building as a Local Cultural Resource.

He said he was a former resident of Los Angeles and said Tower Records attracted people of all ages and that he has been a patron of the store from his high school years until it closed. He said music is an important part of history and Tower Records is associated with the entertainment capital and should be preserved.

JEN DUNBAR RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD/PRESIDENT OF THE WEST HOLLYWOOD PRESERVATION ALLIANCE (WHPA) spoke against Staff's recommendation to deny the building as a Local Cultural Resource.

She commented on the Cultural Resources Assessment prepared by EDAW, Inc. in 2009. She said Tower Records has major cultural significance for West Hollywood as part of the music industries footprint on the iconic Sunset Strip.

She said the report states that the location was not haphazardly selected and has symbolic association and reflects a significant geographical pattern of growth within the City of West Hollywood.

She said although the building does not maintain its original integrity and does not merit individual listing on the City's register of local resources, the WHPA feels that its location can become an entry point for a potential historic music district on the Strip.

She said it has the opportunity to draw attention to the remaining, intact cultural resources and functioning within the boundaries of a potential historic district. She said Tower Records was highly visible cornerstone that can help provide and define a highly lucrative gateway. She said the WHPA offers its full support to recognize and protect this unique and vibrant resource.

BECKY EDENKAMP RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF TUJUNGA spoke against Staff's recommendation to deny the building as a Local Cultural Resource.

She said Tower Records meets the criteria for designation locally, State and Nationally. She agreed that it does not merit designation based on its architectural issues but does merit under Criteria C and said it appears that there was not a study on the history of important/famous individuals that visited the building.

GEORGE CREDLE RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke against Staff's recommendation to deny the building as a Local Cultural Resource. He said the designation should be granted specifically based on the site and on its iconic history which would greatly benefit the City of West Hollywood.

LYNN RUSSELL RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke against Staff's recommendation to deny the building as a Local Cultural Resource.

She said it would be useful to the City of West to broaden the scope of the Tower Records issue and consider it in a much larger context of it being a historic district and embracing it and other icons as site based significant otherwise this area would lose its originality and other contributing sites.

She commented about the possibility of West Hollywood losing significant revenue if businesses such as this and other music venues are no longer on or near the Sunset Strip.

APPLICANT DOMENIC PRIORE commented regarding entertainment history and musical eras associated with the Sunset Strip and east of Tower Records and said there is no physical history of that to date but should be looked at in a broader view as previously stated by Lynn Russell.

Item 9.A. Commissioner Questions to Applicant

VICE-CHAIR CHARLES asked if the Applicant included information in his book, "Riot on the Sunset Strip" about Tower Records.

APPLICANT DOMENIC PRIORE said yes, briefly because his book primarily covers information during June 1966.

NICKI CARLSEN/OWNER REPRESENTATIVE addressed previous comments regarding the suggestion of considering the property for another use such as a museum; she said that was not the purpose for tonight's meeting and asked that the Commission deny designation of the building as a local cultural resource.

Item 9.A. Public Comment Closed.

Item 9.A. Commissioner Comments:

COMMISSIONER OSTERGREN readdressed her previous concerns regarding Section A of the Municipal Code she questioned how to consider the building for cultural and social significance without addressing aesthetics.

COMMISSIONER LEVIN said it is possible to designate things based on cultural rather than architectural fabric but also said it can cause very serious problems in terms of what's being designated which is why he earlier asked the question of site or building to the applicant.

He said he felt that the age of the building was more of an issue and the requirements of designating based on the National Register Bulletin No. 22 and said based on it and California standards, the Commission cannot designate the site.

He explained the definition of integrity based California Code of Regulations and said the building has lost significant integrity due to the lack of original signage and paint which were character defining features.

COMMISSIONER OSTERGREN spoke on Commissioner Levin's comments about integrity. She said the structure and parking lot remain intact; she said because the paint and signage which are the primary character defining features were not permanent and are no longer extant, creates difficulties with the nomination and said West Hollywood does not have and any age limit towards designation.

COMMISSIONER CHARLIE commented about the age of the site, he said he had concerns that although it does not have the age of other sites or the historical significance it does have local and cultural significance.

COMMISSIONER RICE suggested that if the building is not designated there be a recommendation or request to the City Council to recognize the site or one of its features that will preserve the idea of the location similar to the 77 Sunset Strip placard.

COMMISSIONER CHARLIE recommended that the item be continued for further research of similar resources that had major cultural impacts on the City.

COMMISSION TOOK A 5 MINUTE BREAK AT 9:01 PM

COMMISSION RESUMED THE MEETING AT 9:06 PM

COMMISSIONER OSTERGREN moved that:

1. Item 9.A. be continued to the next meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission,
2. Directed Staff to consult with the City Attorney and other authorities to provide additional information regarding the interpretation of integrity

as it appears in the City's Zoning Code and California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14, Chapter 11.5, §4852.C,

3. Revise Resolution No. HPC 013-107 to include the said interpretation,
4. Research comparative examples of designations of tenancies or uses of other municipalities seconded by Commissioner Levin.

Action: Continue Item 9.A. 8801 Sunset Boulevard (Tower Records), revise Resolution No. HPC 013-107 to deny designation as a Local Cultural Resource **seconded by Commissioner Levin and passes on roll call vote:**

Ayes: Charlie, Rice, Charles, Ostergren, Levin
Noes: None
Recuse: None
Absent: Chair Torgan and Commissioner Castro

Item 9.A. Closed

10. NEW BUSINESS: None.

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: absolutely

A. ANNUAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION EVENT:

The Historic Preservation Commission and Staff discussed the following options for the 2013 HPC event:

ACTING CHAIR CHARLES spoke with the New Urban Designer, William Crouch of the City of Beverly Hills and said there was also discussion of a joint event in the near future.

LIAISON STEPHANIE REICH spoke about the following ideas from last month's meeting.

- The possibility of an educational discussion regarding designations
- Joint effort with West Hollywood and Beverly Hills Cultural Heritage Commission
- Training session to include the WHPA.

Item 11.A. Public Comment

KRISY GOSNEY RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD suggested that an Esoteric Walking tour for the annual HPC event.

KATE EGGERT RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD suggested a Sherman Walking Tour for this year's annual HPC event.

Item 11.A. Public Comment Closed

12. ITEMS FROM STAFF:

- A. LIAISON STEPHANIE REICH commented regarding the release of the RFP for the Multi-Family Incentive Program.

13. HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

COMMISSIONER CHARLIE commented regarding the HPC Event. He asked that there be some type of outreach targeting a younger demographic during the event.

He also suggested that there be some type of social media campaign or maybe a Facebook page regarding emphasizing the history of Historic Preservation in West Hollywood.

COMMISSIONER OSTERGREN reminded the Commission of the California Preservation Conference held the first week of May 2013.

14. PUBLIC COMMENT:

LYNN RUSSELL RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD commented regarding the history of preservation and said she appreciated the HPC's role with regards to educating the public through advocacy.

CATHY BLAIVAS RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD thanked the Commission regarding their professionalism with the nomination presented tonight and hoped that there will be a member of the HPC at the Great Hall/Long Hall nomination at the May 1, 2013 Historic Resource Commission Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: *The Historic Preservation Commission adjourned at 9:48 pm to a regularly scheduled meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission on **Monday, April 22, 2013, 7:00 P.M.** at Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, California.*

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION ON THIS 22nd DAY OF APRIL, 2013.

CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:

HISTORIC PRESERVATION STAFF LIAISON

Item 11.A. Public Comment Closed

12. ITEMS FROM STAFF:

- A. LIAISON STEPHANIE REICH commented regarding the release of the RFP for the Multi-Family Incentive Program.

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ADJOURNMENT: *The Historic Preservation Commission adjourned at 9:48 pm to a regularly scheduled meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission on **Monday, April 22, 2013, 7:00 P.M.** at Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, California.*

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION ON THIS 22nd DAY OF APRIL, 2013.

ATTEST:



HISTORIC PRESERVATION STAFF LIAISON



CHAIRPERSON