



**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
TELECONFERENCE MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, AUGUST 23, 2021 – 7:00 P.M.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair King called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair King administered the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **ROLL CALL**
PRESENT: Chair Michael King, Vice-Chair Jacob Sotsky, Edward Levin, Gail Ostergren, Matt Dubin, Lola Davidson, and Andrew Campbell.

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Doug Vu, HPC Liaison, Jennifer Davis, Senior Contract Planner (LRP), Rachel Dimond Senior LRP Planner, and Sharita Houston, HPC Secretary.

OTHER STAFF PRESENT: City Consultants Nels Youngborg, Senior Associate and Leslie Huemann Principal Associate of Chattel, Inc
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**
The Historic Preservation Commission is requested to approve the agenda.
Action: Approve the meeting agenda of Monday, August 23, 2021 as amended.
Motion by Commissioner Levin, second by Commissioner Ostergren and motion passed unanimously by acclamation.
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
ACTION: Approve the meeting minutes of June 28, 2021 as amended. **Motion by Commissioner Levin, second by Commissioner Dubin and motion passed unanimously by acclamation.**

ACTION: Approve the meeting minutes of July 26, 2021 as amended. **Motion by Commissioner Levin, second by Commissioner Dubin and motion passed unanimously by acclamation.**
6. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.
7. **CONSENT CALENDAR:** None.
8. **EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR:** None.
9. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:** None.
10. **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - A. **8730 SUNSET BOULEVARD:** Review the impact of a proposed, new two-sided digital billboard, on the face of the Sunset Towers building and

substantial remodel of existing commercial building located at 8730 Sunset Boulevard on designated or potential cultural resources on adjacent properties.

STAFF JENNIFER DAVIS provided a presentation addressing information stated in the August 23, 2021 staff report.

She explained the item was before the Commission to review the proposal and provide comments regarding potential impacts to the historic integrity and setting of adjacent resources, including those located in the Sunset Plaza Historic District.

She said the review was limited to potential impacts to nearby eligible resources only. She said the proposal does not require a certificate of appropriateness, a resolution or action for this review. She said Commissioner comments will be included within the staff reports for the Planning Commission and City Council

She explained, since the writing of the staff report and the preparation of the Cultural Resource Impact Analysis, the billboard was revised to include both faces of the billboard as digital and said the size of both faces will remain the same (1000 sq-ft east/500 sq-ft. west).

She briefly addressed information concerning the Viewshed Analysis, the Cultural Resource Impact Analysis, and guidelines of the Secretary of the Interior Standards.

She said it was concluded that the proposal does not appear to cause indirect impacts to the resources, as it minimally changes the existing conditions of the urban context, the proposed project is in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards and will result in a less than significant, historical resource impact under CEQA.

COMMISSIONER LEVIN disclosed that he met with the applicant representative and they discussed information concerning the staff report only.

Item 10.A. Commissioner Questions to Staff:

COMMISSIONER OSTERGREN, STAFF AND THE APPLICANT REPRESENTATIVE/ARCHITECT discussed information regarding the viewshed analysis, specifically visibility of the billboard within vantage points 2 and 3.

COMMISSIONER LEVIN AND STAFF discussed the recent approval of a billboard at 8752 that extends out to the curb/public right of way by City Council. It was determined that the viewshed analysis should be updated to include the said billboard as well.

Item 10.A. Commissioner Questions to Staff Closed

Item 10.A. Public Comment: None.

Item 10.A. Commissioner Comments:

COMMISSIONER LEVIN complimented the applicant's consultant on the preparation of the historic analysis and said the proposal does not present a direct or indirect effect on the resources under CEQA standards.

He recommended that the City bring forth a nomination for Sunset Plaza as a local cultural resource and reiterated concerns about the previously discussed approval of the billboard at 8752 Sunset Boulevard.

He said his concern is that the 8752 billboard will set a precedent for others to encroach upon the public's right away, dramatically change the historic landscape of Sunset Boulevard and eventually eliminate and/or destroy the vista of Sunset Boulevard.

COMMISSIONER OSTERGREN said she supports Commissioner Levin's comments and expressed concerns about the potential impacts of the digital billboards to the historic setting of the surrounding resources.

VICE-CHAIR SOTSKY also commended the applicant's consultant on the preparation of the Historic Analysis report and said although it's not within the purview of the HPC, expressed concerns with potential distractions to drivers due to the dynamics of proposed two-faced digital billboard.

COMMISSIONER DUBIN supports previous comments of Commissioner Levin regarding 8752 Sunset Blvd. and the need to nominate Sunset Plaza as a local cultural resource.

CHAIR KING recommended that the City regulate signage of buildings to ensure requirements concerning viewing restrictions and the public's right of way are in compliance.

STAFF JENNIFER DAVIS thanked the Commission for their input and reiterated that their comments and feedback will be included in the staff reports to the Planning Commission and City Council.

COMMISSIONER DAVIDSON said she agrees with previous comments by the Commission concerning billboards on Sunset Boulevard. She said although the billboards generate much needed revenue to the City, protecting the iconic views of Sunset Boulevard is relevant as well.

Action: None.

B. HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE: Draft Housing Element Update and Technical Background Report.

STAFF RACHEL DIMOND provided a presentation explaining information stated in the August 23, 2021 staff report pertaining to the Draft Housing Element Update and Technical Background Report.

She said the Housing Element is a state-required chapter in the City of West Hollywood General Plan. This plan provides an indication of the need for housing in the community, particularly the availability, affordability, and adequacy of housing.

She said the planning cycle of updating and preparing the Draft Housing Element includes a review by the Historic Preservation Commission and will be the State's sixth, eight-year planning cycle for the time period of October 2021 to October 2029.

She said state law requires the City to update and submit its Housing Element to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for state certification by February 2022.

She explained the importance of maintaining adequate housing within our community and said current demand for housing dramatically exceeds the existing housing stock in the Los Angeles region and in California as a whole and briefly addressed the following topics within the draft update:

Planning Process: Steps Completed

- RHNA Appeal Hearings and Final RHNA Allocation
- HE Task Force – 3 meetings completed
- 2 Community Surveys
- 3 Community Workshops
- Coordination Interviews with City Departments and Advisory Groups
- Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Notice of Preparation (NOP)
 - Two EIR Scoping Meetings – May 11 & May 25
- Meetings with Planning Commission and City Council

Draft 6th Cycle Housing Element: Chapter Structure

- Statutory Requirements
- Relationship to other General Plan Elements
- Context and Strategies
 - Changing Housing Needs
 - Aging Housing Stock
 - Existing affordable housing
- Goals and Policies
- Housing Programs
- Technical Background Report

Technical Background Report

- Introduction
- Community Outreach
- Needs Assessment (including sites inventory)
- Housing Constraints
- Housing Resources
 - Appendix A: Summary of Public Comments
 - Appendix B: Review of Past Accomplishments
 - Appendix C: Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

Context and Strategies

- **Changing Housing Needs**
 - Providing affordable housing and alternative housing arrangements through new construction and adaptive reuse to create assisted living, residential care, co-housing, and shared homes.
- **Aging Housing Stock**
 - The median year built of the City's housing stock is 1962.
 - Approximately 93% of the City's housing stock is at least 30 years old.
- **Existing Affordable Housing**
 - West Hollywood has approximately 16,581 rent stabilized units and 1,056 publicly assisted rental housing units.
 - 720 households in the City are recipients of Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers.
- **Goals and Policies**
 - Goal H-1: Provide affordable housing.
 - Goal H-2: Maintain and enhance the quality of the housing stock and residential neighborhoods.
 - Goal H-3: Encourage a diverse housing stock to address the needs of all socioeconomic segments of the community.
 - Goal H-4: Provide adequate opportunities for new construction of housing.
 - Goal H-5: Provide for a government environment that facilitates housing development and preservation.
 - Goal H-6: Affirmatively furthering housing for all.
- **Housing Programs**
 - Preservation of Existing Housing
 - Preservation of Affordability
 - Production of Housing
 - Removal of Government Constraints
 - Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing
- **Housing Programs: Historic Preservation (Program 5)**

Incentives:

 - Providing technical assistance to property owners and applicants
 - Planning and Building & Safety permit fee waivers related to periodic maintenance including electrical, plumbing, heating/air conditioning work completed every 2-4 years, as well as larger scale repairs including window replacement, re-roofing and system upgrades that occur every 15-20 years.
 - An alternative required painting schedule for building interiors and exteriors to reduce the destruction of historic materials.
 - Promoting the benefits of the Mills Act program.

- Developing a Historic Apartment Preservation Program that would help rent-stabilized properties not under a Mills Act contract pay for major rehabilitation costs in exchange for a covenant to keep the property rent-stabilized

Timeframe and Objectives:

- Continue to provide technical assistance to owners and applicants regarding the repair and maintenance of historic structures.
 - Conduct outreach regarding the benefits of the Mills Act and other incentives for historic multi-family properties through brochures at public counters and social media.
 - Continue to develop and implement an inspection schedule for properties under a Mills Act contract.
 - Develop and explore funding options to implement a Historic Apartment Preservation Program.
- **Next Steps**
 - Boards and Commission review: TC, HPC, RSB, SAB in August 2021
 - City Council review September 20, 2021
 - Draft Housing Element Preparation Public Review:
 - **Comments due September 1, 2021**
 - HCD Preliminary Review (60 days): late September-November 2021
 - CEQA Review – Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Draft Public Review
 - Public Hearing and Adoption: December 2021
 - **HCD Submittal and Certification by February 2022**

Public Comments on Draft Housing Element

- The Draft Housing Element will be available on the project website (www.weho.org/housingelement)

Item 10.B. Commissioner Questions To Staff:

COMMISSIONER OSTERGREN asked Staff to clarify the difference in numbers of the following information (see Section 5 - Exhibit A):

5. Historic Preservation

The City of West Hollywood is dedicated to both preservation of historic resources and affordable housing. Overall, 83 multi-family properties in the City are designated as local Cultural Resources. Among these, 46 are subject to the City's Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

STAFF RACHEL DIMOND said there were various categories that the 83 resources were in such as older buildings, condominiums, and rental properties.

COMMISSIONER OSTERGREN asked for a status of the Historic Apartment Preservation Program.

STAFF RACHEL DIMOND explained that the program was added to the update as a new extension of preservation and form of assisting individuals with affordability issues.

STAFF DOUG VU said the project was a product of the previous Multi-Family Survey, it's a directive from City Council and is presently on hold until further notice.

COMMISSIONER OSTERGREN asked about the streamlined processing of housing projects component of the update that included the table of underutilized sites.

STAFF RACHEL DIMOND said the properties within the list are not potentially significant or historically designated sites on any level.

COMMISSIONER LEVIN expressed concerns about the emphasis of Incentives being focused on the Mills Act Contract as noted in the Technical Background Report (see page B-5 - Exhibit B).

He said although he supports Mills Act Contracts, there were others initiated by the Commission years ago and should be implemented. He suggested that the regulations be enhanced/updated, and the Housing Element create more than one program that goes beyond the Mills Act.

COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL thanked Staff for the excellent report and the City for their incredible efforts towards improving West Hollywood.

CHAIR KING commented about the challenge of increased maintenance concerning aging buildings within the City as it relates to property owners/tenants.

He requested it be a component within the housing element and also requested that the high-density transit lines allowances be considered within the report to assist local senior citizens, aging in place within West Hollywood.

Item 10.B. Public Comment

STEPHANIE HARKER, WEST HOLLYWOOD said she supported Commissioner Levin's comments regarding incentives such as, but not limited to the Multi-Family incentive program. She recommended that the survey be revisited and possibly included within the Housing Element.

LYNN RUSSELL, WEST HOLLYWOOD commented in support of Stephanie Harker & Commissioner Levin's comments regarding incentives. She said the Housing Element should consider reviewing the potential impact of recent billboard activity on Sunset Boulevard within the update.

CATHY BLAIVAS, WEST HOLLYWOOD said she supported comments by previous public speakers Stephanie Harker and Lynn Russell and emphasized the importance and need of historic preservation within the update and within West Hollywood.

Item 10.B. Public Comment Closed

Item 10.B. Commissioner Comments: None.

ACTION: None

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- A. HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION TRAINING – RESOURCE DESIGNATION:** Nels Youngborg, LEED AP, Senior Associate with Chattel, Inc. provided training on the designation of resources at the local level.

CONSULTANT NELS YOUNGBORG AND LESLIE HEUMANN/CHATTEL, INC, provided training pertaining to the following topics:

HISTORIC PRESERVATION 101: Identification and Designation Part 2

- Part 1 Recap
 - California Historical Resource Status Codes
 - How is Significance Determined?
 - Established Criteria
 - Integrity
 - Historic Contexts

- West Hollywood Preservation
 - Historic Preservation Element of the West Hollywood General Plan
 - Cultural Heritage Preservation Ordinance (WHMC 19.58)
 - Cultural Resources Defined
 - Procedures for designation
 - (Criteria Eligibility)
 - Character-defining features

Item 11.A. Commissioner Questions to Staff

COMMISSIONER LEVIN asked who processes the application if initiated by the Commission as noted in the slide presentation below:

West Hollywood Cultural Resource Determination Process
From WHMC 19.58.070:

1. *Consideration as a Cultural Resource is initiated by either submission of an application or majority vote by City Council or HPC.*

CONSULTANT NELS YOUNGBORG AND LESLIE HEUMANN explained that Staff will prepare and/or process the application with the property owner, advocacy group or historic preservation consultant.

COMMISSIONER OSTERGREN asked about the absence of a mechanism within the code to add properties to a thematic grouping, and if the code could be revised to change that.

CONSULTANT NELS YOUNGBORG said a revision to the code and the ordinance is possible and is a goal of Staff.

HPC LIAISON DOUG VU said Staff has initiated the process and submitted a request to Chattel, Inc. for a proposal.

CHAIR KING asked about *Criteria C Identified with Persons or Events*. *It is identified with persons or events significant in local, state, or national history.*

CONSULTANT NELS YOUNGBORG recommended review of National Register Bulletin 32; guidelines for evaluating and documenting properties associated with significant persons.

Item 11A. Public Comment

STEPHANIE HARKER, WEST HOLLYWOOD commented about training topic, *designating districts*, addressed by Consultant Leslie Huemann. She asked about the viability of the idea, considering that some property owners do not wish to designate their property. She requested that the City initiate a process to contract with a consultant to process applications of public properties.

CATHY BLAIVAS, WEST HOLLYWOOD thanked the Consultants for the training presentation, said she supports previous comments by Stephanie Harker regarding property owners that do not wish to nominate public buildings, recommended nominating the City owned public buildings Great Hall/Long Hall and revisit local designation of Fiesta Hall.

Item 11A. Public Comment Closed

Item 11.A. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

CHAIR KING thanked Consultants Nels Youngborg and Leslie Heumann for the timely and well-organized presentation.

ACTION: None.

12. ITEMS FROM STAFF:

A. UPCOMING PROJECTS: HPC Liaison Doug Vu discussed information concerning the following upcoming projects:

September 2021 meeting:

- 1282 N. Fairfax Avenue returning to the HPC
- HPC Training Session

13. PUBLIC COMMENT:

STEPHANIE HARKER, WESTT HOLLYWOOD briefly commented about Protect Plummer Park project founded in 2011. She spoke about recommending the HPC as final authority of matters relating to the Historic Preservation Commission to City Council.

14. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL reiterated his comments about the successful presentation by Chattel, Inc.

COMMISSIONER LEVIN thanked Chattel, Inc. for the training presentation and recommended for consensus by the HPC to agendize designating the Sunset Plaza as a Local Cultural Resource. The HPC voted unanimously in support of the recommendation.

COMMISSIONER DUBIN thanked Staff, members of the public and the consultants for their participation in the meeting and thanked Chair King for a successful meeting.

15. ADJOURNMENT: The Historic Preservation Commission adjourned at 9:19 pm **to a regular scheduled teleconference meeting on Monday, September 27, 2021 beginning at 7:00 P.M.** until completion. Given the local, state and nation state of emergency, this meeting will be a teleconference meeting (with detailed instructions for participation included on the posted agenda).

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION ON THIS 27th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2021.

DocuSigned by:

 9DC7C2778944A
 CHAIRPERSON, MICHAEL KING

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:

 HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
 SECRETARY, SHARITA HOUSTON

NOTE: A copy of the audio recording of this meeting can be obtained from the City Clerk’s office upon request. (Disclaimer: Staff records the meetings for the sole purpose of composing the official meeting minutes; therefore, the recordings are not of commercial quality.)