

**Design and Historic Review Commission Meeting Minutes
April 24, 2024**

A meeting of the City of Yuma Design and Historic Review Commission was held on Wednesday, April 24, 2024 at City Hall Council Chambers, One City Plaza, Yuma, Arizona.

DESIGN AND HISTORIC REVIEW COMMISSION MEMBERS present included Chairman Tom Rushin, Vice Chairman Amanda Coltman, Commissioners Juan Leal-Rubio, William Moody and Chris Hamel. James Sheldahl and Sandra Anthony were absent.

STAFF MEMBERS present included Alyssa Linville, Director of Planning and Neighborhood Services; Jennifer Albers, Assistant Director of Planning; Robert Blevins, Principal Planner; Amelia Domby, Senior Planner; Erika Peterson, Associate Planner; Guillermo Moreno-nunez, Assistant Planner; Zenia Fiveash, Assistant Planner; Meredith Burns, Assistant Planner; John LeSueur, Assistant City Attorney; Alejandro Marquez, Administrative Specialist and Lizbeth Sanchez, Administrative Specialist.

Chairman Tom Rushin called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and noted there was a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 10, 2024

Chairman Tom Rushin noted a correction to the minutes, stating the minutes should reflect that **Commissioner James Sheldahl** was present at the **April 10, 2024** meeting though arrived late.

Motion by Commissioner Chris Hamel, second by Vice-Chairman Amanda Coltman to APPROVE the minutes of April 10, 2024 as amended. Motion carried unanimously, (5-0) with two absent.

ITEMS REQUIRING COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

DHRC-42548-2024: *This is a request by Yuma 16th Street Development LLC, on behalf of Hiline Yuma LLC, for aesthetic review of a new 4-story hotel – Liv Smart Studios, in the General Commercial/Aesthetic Overlay (B-2/AO) District, for the property located at 1863 E. 16th Street, Yuma, AZ.*

Amelia Domby, Senior Planner summarized the staff report and recommended **APPROVAL**.

QUESTIONS FOR STAFF

None

APPLICANT / APPLICANT'S REPRESENTATIVE

Matt Larson, on behalf of Baywood Hotels (via Zoom), was available for questions.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Commissioner Chris Hamel commented that he is happy with the future development of the subject property.

Motion by Commissioner Chris Hamel, second by Vice-Chairman Amanda Coltman, to APPROVE Case Number DHRC-42548-2024 as presented. Motion carried unanimously, (5-0) with two absent.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Robert Blevins, Principal Planner, gave a presentation on "Should there be time limits on DHRC historic cases".

Commissioner William Moody asked for clarification on how long a demolition permit stands after it's been rejected. **Chairman Tom Rushin** answered 120 days and Blevins agreed.

Commissioner Moody then stated that there is a time limit to stop the demolition of a building so that the applicant could possibly come up with an alternative other than demolition. **Blevins** replied that a demolition code automatically gives an applicant 120 days to decide whether to sell or demolish. **Blevins** then stated that the current discussion was about putting a time limit in the conditions for completion of the proposed project and if not completed in the allowed timeframe the applicant would need to come back to the commission for reapproval.

Chairman Tom Rushin stated that there had been a demolition case before the Commission and approved but for some reason that demolition never occurred. **Chairman Tom Rushin** went on to say that he understands that it would be a problem for staff not knowing how long it would take an applicant to complete a project and because of that he was not opposed to setting time limits on cases.

Commissioner William Moody stated that the limits should be flexible because the last thing he wants is that property owners rush to demolish instead of coming up with alternatives to restore these buildings. **Commissioner Moody** referred back to the HACY project and commented that it was frustrating that the new owners of the property were considering demolishing the building instead of restoring it because it was more cost efficient.

Vice-Chairman Amanda Coltman agreed with Commissioner William Moody.

Commissioner Juan Leal-Rubio agreed that every project is different that's why each one needs that flexibility. **Commissioner Leal-Rubio** then stated that he was in favor of the list of proposed conditions that staff presented, and if the Commission would have access to review the Conditions of Approval before making a final decision on a case. **Jennifer Albers, Assistant Director of Planning** replied that staff would include a list of Conditions in the Staff Report for consideration, and if there was a certain condition that needed to be addressed staff would bring it back to the Commission for further discussion. **Albers** went on to say that if an applicant needs to modify a condition that also would be discussed with the Commission before a final decision would be made.

Commissioner Juan Leal-Rubio then asked out of ten cases that are approved, how many are not completed. **Blevins** replied less than one, but staff has knowledge of cases that have not been completed. **Commissioner Leal-Rubio** asked would it be beneficial for staff to find out how many cases were completed then review and reopen each case to see if there are grounds to cancel those cases. **John LeSueur, Assistant City Attorney** replied that if a case was to be reopened proper notification would have to be sent out so that the applicant can review what the Commission was proposing.

Commissioner Juan Leal-Rubio then asked if the Commission would like to consider reopening cases that have not been completed.

Vice-Chairman Amanda Coltman and **Commissioner William Moody** stated yes.

Commissioner Chris Hamel stated that he was in favor of the list of Conditions of Approval that was provided, then asked if a project was not completed by the time that was allotted could the applicant request another hearing and request an extension. **Commissioner Chris Hamel** then asked staff if that could be added to the conditions at a later time. **Blevins** replied that request for time extensions are not common. **Jennifer Albers, Assistant Director of Planning** commented in order to give more time to a proposed project the applicant would have to come before the Commission and asked for a time extension, then stated that most applicants typically know that more or less time is needed and request it before the hearings. **Commissioner Hamel** agrees that a specific set of times should be added to these types of cases.

Jennifer Albers, Assistant Director of Planning noted that **Commissioner Sandra Anthony** was in chambers, and then asked the Commissioner if she wanted to participate in the hearing. **Commissioner Sandra Anthony** commented that she was not able to attend as a Commissioner, because she was currently participating on another meeting in another room.

Blevins asked the Commission to keep in mind that one or two year expiration dates listed in the proposed conditions could be extended longer due to new construction or updated building codes.

Commissioner Juan Leal-Rubio asked for clarification if the proposed conditions were attached to the land not the property owner. **John LeSueur, Assistant City Attorney** replied yes, the conditions are attached to the land. **Commissioner Juan Leal-Rubio** then asked if the property owner sold the property would all approvals and conditions still be attached to the land. **Jennifer Albers, Assistant Director of Planning** answered yes, but if the new owner wanted to make changes they would need come before the Commission with those changes.

Commissioner William Moody asked if the Commission wanted to bring a case back would it need to be on an agenda at an upcoming meeting, if so he would like to revisit the HACY building case and ask for the reason why the building needs to be demolished. **Vice-Chairman Amanda Coltman** agreed. **Commissioner Moody** asked if the Commission decides to rescind the demolition would that need to be added to an agenda also. **John LeSueur, Assistant City Attorney** answered yes, and the property owner would have to be notified as well. **Commissioner Moody** asked if the demolition could be stopped while a new hearing is under consideration. **LeSueur** answered no.

Commissioner Juan Leal-Rubio asked if possible, could staff go back ten years to find cases that were not completed, so that the Commission could try to rescind those particular cases. **Chairman Tom Rushin** agreed, then commented the Commission needs to develop a system to be able to accurately assign time frames on cases.

Commissioner Juan Leal-Rubio commented that the Commission needs to address two different topics, one is the addition of a condition that allows a permit to expire and the other is to discuss if the Commission would like to revisit cases that have not been completed and take action on them. **Commissioner Leal-Rubio** then asked if staff could create a spreadsheet of cases that have not been completed so that the Commission could decide on which cases to bring back before them. **Jennifer Albers, Assistant Director of Planning** asked for clarification on which types of cases should staff prioritize. **Commissioner William Moody** commented he would recommend that demolition cases should be a priority. **Commissioner Leal-Rubio** stated he would like to see cases that would have major construction done to the projects that would have more of a historical impact to the buildings.

Albers asked if the Commission would also like to see Historic or Aesthetic Overlay cases be made a priority. **Commissioner William Moody** stated that he personally would like to concentrate more on the demolition cases. **Chairman Tom Rushin** agreed, and then asked how difficult it would be for staff to gather that information. **Commissioner Moody** expressed concern about the HACY project, and then stated he would like to revisit that particular case in the near future. **Commissioner Juan Leal-Rubio** agreed. **Blevins** stated that the research could be time consuming, and that he would not be able to provide a specific date when it can be done at this time. **Chairman Rushin** commented that the Commission would need to be consistent on timelines for these types of projects. **John LeSueur, Assistant City Attorney** stated that he agrees with being consistent on these types of cases, then stated that if there is a particular case that the Commission wants to review a series of meetings would need to be scheduled and proper notification sent out to the applicant. **Chairman Rushin** thanked LeSueur for his advice, and then stated that a decision on a case could not happen at this time but would like staff to follow the procedures provided to be able to recall a particular case in a timely manner.

Blevins stated that staff will work on creating a list of cases that have not been completed and provide the research to the Commission in the near future.

Commissioner William Moody left the meeting at 4:51 p.m.

Robert Blevins, Principal Planner, gave a presentation on the Southern Pacific Depot – Yuma.

Vice-Chairman Amanda Coltman asked when was the last time the depot was in operation. **Chairman Tom Rushin** replied 50 years ago. **Blevins** answered when the tracks were removed from Madison Avenue was the last time it was in use.

Chairman Tom Rushin stated that the depot was in the care of the Heritage Area during his career and that there had been many attempts to find someone to occupy the building. **Chairman Tom Rushin** went on to say that their biggest fear was that fire would destroy the depot because of the type of materials used to build it, and that there are plans to restore the site.

Commissioner Chris Hamel stated that the Depot had been a backdrop for many family photos over the years and that day was a very sad day for Yuma and its history.

Blevins commented that he will put together a presentation about the depot when it was in use with ariel photos from that time period.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Staff

None

Administrative Approvals

None

National Heritage Area

None

Commission

None

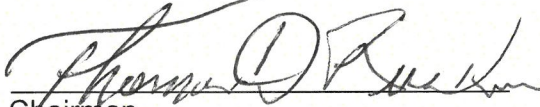
Public Comment

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Minutes approved this 12 day of June, 2024.


Chairman