

**AIA Preservation Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
AIA San Diego Conference Room  
233 A Street, Suite 200, San Diego, CA  
March 2, 2017**

**Committee Members Present:**

Andy Bowen– Secretary  
Sharon Gehl  
Miriam Martinez  
Amie Hayes (SOHO)

**1. Call to Order:** 12:17 PM

**2. Approval of Minutes:**

Miriam moved that the minutes of the February 2, 2016 meeting minutes be approved as submitted. Sharon seconded. The motion was carried.

**3. Old Business:**

**a. Joint Meeting**

No news.

**b. Nomination of Irving Gill for the AIA Gold Medal and/or FAIA Status**

No news.

**c. Horton Plaza Park Tour**

No news regarding scheduling; Miriam noted it would be interesting to tour some of the park's support spaces.

**d. San Ysidro Customs House Tour**

According to Miriam, now that the general contractor (G.C.) is custodian of the project site, the site is more accessible for escorted tours. She will find out from the G.C. the maximum number of people that would be allowed for a tour. The project is still in the construction documents stage; ground-breaking will probably take place in May. Miriam suggested two separate trips- the first one to be held once the 1960's-era additions have

been demolished (probably during the summer), and the second to be held once the project, including a new wing, is at or near completion.

#### 4. **New Business:**

##### a. **Topic of the Month: The Mills Act**

There was general discussion about the Mills Act. Locally, on properties with a Mills Act contract, property taxes are calculated based on comparable rents in the area. Unlike some communities which look for property tax savings to be spent on maintenance and restoration of the historic resource, The City of San Diego typically looks for the resources to already be restored prior to acceptance in the Mills Act program. In 2008-2009, some revisions were made to the Mills Act. These days the historic resource itself is designated (the designation need not include every structure on the subject property). The city charges a fee for reviewing the designated property every five years to make sure the terms of the Mills Act are being met. The fees collected fund the Historic Resources Board. Andrew Norwall has done research on the effect of the Mills Act on property values in Mission Hills. The effect has been positive for the homes under Mills Act contract as well as neighboring homes.

##### b. **Future Topics of the Month**

It was suggested that we begin meetings with the Topic of the Month. Andy pointed out that this may detract from the quality of the discussion if committee members knowledgeable about the topic arrive late to meetings. If we wish for the Topic of the Month to draw more attendees, we could announce the upcoming month's topic right away in a short email to the Committee members. Miriam committed to do some research with the intent of increasing participation in our committee. She would like to five minutes to present the draft of a survey to the committee.

The following **possible topics for the future** were discussed:

- **Preservation Practices in Other Countries**, such as Italy, France, and Australia, comparing what other countries do and why.
- **Historic Preservation and Environmental Sustainability**
- **Historic Preservation and Housing Affordability** (Amie noted the City Council has been looking into this question).

We could also look at the **California Preservation Foundation's web site** for more topics.

c. **April's Topic of the Month: Goals of the Preservation Committee**

Attendees discussed ways to increase attendance at our monthly meetings. There was interest in making the meetings more educational and social/networking.

5. **Other News:**

- Amie noted that restorations of the **gatehouses west of the Cabrillo Bridge in Balboa Park** are complete. A ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held March 29.
- Restoration of a Civil War-era cannon has been completed. The **Begole cannon** will be kept at the Whaley House in Old Town.
- The **wood shake roof of the Marston House** is being replaced next month.

6. **Adjournment:**

**Meeting adjourned:** 1:03 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be April 6, 2017.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andy Bowen AIA  
Secretary