

**AIA Preservation Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
AIA San Diego Conference Room  
233 A Street, Suite 200, San Diego, CA  
June 1, 2017**

**Committee Members Present:**

Sharon Smith- Chair  
Andy Bowen– Secretary  
Sharon Gehl  
Heath Fox  
Amie Hayes  
Ginger Weatherford  
David Marshall

**1. Call to Order: 11:58 AM**

**2. Approval of Minutes:**

Sharon Smith moved that the minutes of the May 4, 2017 meeting minutes be approved as submitted. Sharon Gehl seconded. The motion was carried.

**3. Topic of the Quarter: Preservation and Housing Affordability (Heath Fox, guest).**

Heath Fox is the director of the La Jolla Preservation Society. He is a former marine, having held the rank of lieutenant colonel. He has also worked for the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art and was assistant dean of arts and humanities at San Diego State University. He has drafted a white paper on preservation and housing affordability.

Amie Hayes has also been involved in preparing the white paper, which has been in the works for a few months. Members of the La Jolla Preservation Society had wanted to contribute to the current dialog about housing affordability in San Diego, and the white paper is one means by which the organization has decided to do it..

Heath wished to draw a distinction between housing affordability and affordable housing. The LJPS is focusing their inquiry into housing affordability, which addresses the challenges that young professionals, retired seniors, and working class citizens face in finding affordable housing. This is in contrast to affordable housing, the term used to describe non-profit or government subsidized housing programs for targeted populations such as the homeless.

The white paper attempts to take a holistic approach. The city of San Diego has a climate action. In pursuit of its goals, it may be appropriate in some instances to set aside the usual rules of historic preservation. Policies that preserve and re-use the existing urban environment may dovetail nicely with climate action plan goals. Why not recycle buildings the way we do paper or glass? In "The Last and Future City," author (and National Trust for Historic Preservation President) Stephanie Meeks articulates very well the concept of preserving the urban fabric as a means to combat climate change.

Tom Mayes, legal counsel for the National Trust and an advocate for building reuse ordinances, will be the La Jolla Preservation Society's guest speaker at the Ellen Browning Scripps lecture coming up at the La Jolla Beach and Tennis Club. Any new ordinance needs additional financial analysis. Several Preservation Committee members attended a tour of properties during the California Preservation Foundation's recent conference in Pasadena. Tax grants were used to purchase some of the properties featured on the tour.

The goal of the White Paper is to provide input to the City Council and the mayor on the topic of preservation and housing affordability. Each councilperson has published a paper on housing affordability. This white paper is an answer to those papers. Heath wants to build a coalition behind this. Heath noted that Councilperson Sherman's paper hadn't explored the use of existing building stock to ease housing unaffordability.

Sharon Gehl noted that older buildings present challenges to energy efficiency and that issues such as crumbling foundations present major financial challenges for the reuse of some existing buildings. There is a need to change existing building regulations to make developers consider adaptive reuse as their first option.

The developers of some projects have been awarded density bonuses once they agreed to preserve and/or adaptively reuse historic buildings. The increased density allowed the projects to pencil out financially. Some developers in Pasadena have entered into partnerships with Pasadena Heritage and the city of Pasadena. Some historic easements have been granted. This spirit of cooperation has been beneficial to all involved parties.

Some cities still insist on placing burdens on developers even when they have agreed with city historic board recommendations. For instance, in San Diego, the city required full HABS documentation of the Jones House, even though the developer had already agreed to relocate that house to a new site. Such requirements tend to disincentivize builders from relocating historic resources. It was noted that finding a new site for the building is often the toughest part of relocation.

The white paper has been approved by the La Jolla Preservation Society and will be forwarded to the San Diego City Council for its consideration. On Sunday, October

15, as part of this year's Archtoberfest, there will be a Ted-Talk style presentation about adaptive reuse.

#### **4. Old Business:**

##### **a. Horton Plaza Park Tour**

The new date for the Horton Plaza tour is now July 20 at 5:30 pm.

##### **b. San Ysidro Customs House Tour**

A tour of the facility has been scheduled for the afternoon of June 23. Sharon Smith agreed to reconfirm this with the general contractor the week before.

##### **c. California Theater**

SOHO has filed a lawsuit to halt the building's demolition. The city won't issue a demolition permit until the legal issue is settled.

#### **5. New Business:**

##### **a. Balboa Park Planning Meeting Hosted by Councilperson Chris Ward:**

- Andy and Amie attended.
- There was discussion about the need to add some life to the Palisades area. The building that formerly housed the Hall of Champions will be a new Comic and Popular Culture museum. Several speakers spoke in support of reviving productions at the Starlite Amphitheatre.
- There was continued strong opposition to the Plaza de Panama project.
- There was consensus that a revenue stream needs to be found to support Balboa Park and its massive backlog of deferred maintenance.

##### **b. South Park Old House Fair**

Will be held on June 17. Ginger is planning to attend.

- ##### **c. Sharon Smith attended a meeting of the AIA's Urban Planning Committee.**
- Sharon hopes our committee will support AIA President Philip Bona's housing affordability initiatives.

#### **6. Watch List:**

- No items were discussed this month.

**7. Adjournment:**

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

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Andy Bowen AIA  
Secretary