



CITY OF LAS CRUCES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

February 19, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

The following are minutes of the Historic Preservation Commission Meeting held February 19, 2025, in room 2007B, City Hall, 700 N. Main Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Jerry Wallace, Chair
Ernie Campos
Dr. Paul John Deason
John Norman
Jeffrey Shepherd

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Judy A. Berryman
Patricia Williams

STAFF PRESENT: Adam Ochoa, Senior Planner
Chris Faivre, Deputy Director Community Development

OTHERS PRESENT: Deb Dennis
David Chavez
George and Barbi Lopez
Mel Acosta

1. CALL TO ORDER (6:00)

Jerry Wallace called the meeting to order.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES -

2.1 January 15, 2025, HPC Minutes

Paul Deason motioned to approve the January 15th minutes, seconded by Ernie Campos. Motion passed unanimously.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were none.

4. ACTION ITEMS

4.1 Case 25DR0500006: A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a proposed addition to an existing home located at 715 S. Tornillo

1 **Street. The subject property encompasses approximately 0.41 acres,**
2 **is zoned R-2 (Medium Density Residential District) and located within**
3 **the South Mesquite Overlay District. Submitted by Mary Crouch,**
4 **property owner.**
5

6 Adam Ochoa stated 715 S. Tornillo is located on the northeast corner of
7 Texas Avenue and South Tornillo Street. There are three separate dwelling
8 units. The proposed addition is for what is known as 715 S. Tornillo Street,
9 apartment B. This building is not on the state or national registry, and no
10 record of the age of the building. What is proposed is a 400 square foot
11 wood frame addition that will be placed on the front of the property facing
12 Tornillo. It will be a stucco finished exterior that will match existing home.
13 The roof line will also be similar to the exiting home. New vinyl windows
14 and doors. The addition is consistent with the design of the surrounding
15 area. Various pictures of the property were shared via PowerPoint. Staff
16 determined that the new structure will be compatible with the area.
17

18 Paul Deason moved to approve Certificate of Appropriateness, seconded
19 by Ernie Campos.
20

21 Ernie Campos appreciates that the new addition will be compatible with the
22 existing home and surrounding area. Paul Deason stated that the property
23 will be visually compatible with the area. David Chavez, public, stated there
24 is a slider window, and wondered if that is allowed now, as he states they
25 are not appropriate for this district. There is a kit you can buy, stripes, to
26 make it look aesthetically pleasing to fit the area (mullioned windows). Mary
27 Crouch, property owner, stated the other two buildings do not have
28 mullioned windows, and she does not understand why it would be only on
29 this addition. David Chavez, public, stated that this was voted on years ago
30 for the district. Mary Crouch, property owner, stated it is going to look out
31 of place since the remainder of the buildings on the property do not have
32 the mullioned windows nor do other surrounding houses. Mullioned
33 windows are just a recommendation. Staff will work with the applicant for
34 fulfil the needs of the applicant and the board. Mary Crouch stated her
35 grandfather acquired numerous historic items and added to the house.
36 George Lopez, public, stated double pane replacement windows are
37 available.
38

39 Motion passed unanimously.
40

41 **4.2 The creation of sub-committees for: Grants, Buildings Watch List,**
42 **Historic Building Inventory.**
43

44 Jerry Wallace stated there have been many conversations about
45 responsibilities or the board can support the specialist and the community.
46 He would like to have some standing subcommittees on the HPC to assist
47 or have input for ideas about historic preservation. The first committee he
48 would like would be for grants that meet quarterly. Jeff Shepherd will be the

1 point person for the grant subcommittee. Paul Deason will share a previous
2 grant application. Ernie Campos volunteered as well.
3

4 Building watch list. Jerry Wallace wants a list that is between 10 and 20
5 buildings in the community that are in danger. This committee would meet
6 once or twice a year and take suggestions from the community about those
7 particular buildings. Every year in January update the watch list and post
8 to the City website. This way being more preventative than reactionary.
9 George and Barbi Lopez, public, would like to be on the committee. George
10 Pearson asked that the WIA building be on the list. Jerry Wallace would
11 like to have further discussion at the next meeting on this list for what is
12 missing and what could be added. Also a subcategory, so top ten buildings
13 and also watching; courthouse, old house near Tombaugh school.
14

15 Historic building inventory. Jerry Wallace knows there is a working list but
16 need to do for the entire City is come up with an inventory that recognizes
17 historic buildings or ones that are going to qualify soon to become historic.
18 He will volunteer to be on this committee. He would like Paul Deason to
19 take the lead. And then as many community members also. Paul Deason
20 agreed. Ernie Campos also volunteered. The first national bank building
21 (skyscraper) was mentioned. Also recognize historic districts. Also to
22 understand architectural styles within the community. David Chavez,
23 public, also volunteered. This committee will meet once a quarter, and have
24 lots of homework. George Pearson also volunteered. Jerry Wallace
25 mentioned Greg Shervanick as a liaison for Bellamah. Paul Deason will
26 contact Professor Brown at the university with GIS and he has been
27 coordinating with the City and Realize. Paul Deason also asked to have
28 someone on City staff identified as a stand-in temporary for the position of
29 historic specialist for some of the applications and grants. Jerry Wallace
30 asked that that discussion be with staff and committee comments.
31

32 **5. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

33
34 **5.1 A presentation by Dr. Jerry Wallace on the architectural history of the**
35 **Mesquite District.**
36

37 Jerry Wallace stated that Jo Ruprecht requested he present on Mesquite
38 District as he references it at a Mexican Streetscape. He brought an article
39 written by Daniel Arreola from 1988 that has been expanded over the years
40 "Mexican American Housescapes" which is now just called Mexican
41 Streetscapes. Daniel Arreola described the Mesquite District as a prime
42 example of the Mexican Streetscape. He looks at Tucson, Brownsville, and
43 San Antonio. But he has also traveled from LA to Houston and identified
44 many smaller Mexican Streetscapes. The age of most areas is from 1848
45 through the early 21st century. Low bearing fences are a standard
46 throughout the streetscapes. Many of the properties are right to the
47 property lines or very close. The homes naturally evolve over time. Start
48 off as one or two rooms and slowly expand over time. Everything in the

1 homes is asymmetrical; i.e., windows are different sizes, and not on the
2 same plain. Also lots of wrought iron as decorative features. Also bright
3 colors; most prevalent are blue, green, pink, orange. The homes were also
4 built by the original owners. Jerry Wallace stated that the Bellamah area is
5 taking on a lot of the Mexican Streetscape characteristics. Ernie Campos
6 mentioned that his daughter in her 30's and others that age are purchasing
7 these homes in Bellamah.
8

9 **6. STAFF AND COMMISSION COMMENTS**

10
11 Paul Deason recommends that City staff specifically designate a staff person by
12 name, one of the City planners, that will fill in for the historic preservation specialist.
13 This individual should carry the title as acting historic preservation specialist. Chris
14 Faivre stated that the City made that attempt but no one was interested. As the
15 City is in the process of filling the historic preservation specialist position, there will
16 not be an acting position person.
17

18 Paul Deason mentioned a meeting between Chris Faivre and the City Manager
19 regarding 615 N. Mesquite Street. He would like to know the result of that meeting,
20 and the properties that are owned by the City and their possible sale. Chris Faivre
21 stated the meeting was held on 615 N. Mesquite and they are in the process of
22 looking at securing the roof. There is a potential buyer. Paul Deason then also
23 mentioned 414 E. May. Chris Faivre stated there are issues in identifying legal
24 ownership. He will update this board as more information comes.
25

26 Paul Deason asked about the grants department and working with the HPC. Jerry
27 Wallace stated his solution was the grant committee that will be the go between.
28 Chris Faivre will discuss this with the grants director and relay any further
29 information to the HPC. Paul Deason stated there was a request for staff to provide
30 a monthly progress report on the status and upkeep of City owned historic
31 buildings, and where does that stand. Jerry Wallace stated since there is not a
32 specialist in place, that there is probably nothing going on. Once a historic
33 specialist is in place that will be an agenda item. Paul Deason stated that Public
34 Works is connected and there should be a way to track what is being done. He
35 stated the Branigan Historic Center and the destruction that occurred there with no
36 warning. Jerry Wallace stated in April/May there will be an update on the Branson
37 Culture Center. Chris Faivre stated building in the City are responsible of the
38 Facilities department. Public Works gets involved with particular project
39 necessities. He will coordinate with Facilities, but not on a monthly basis.
40

41 Paul Deason asked for status on the Amador Hotel. Jerry Wallace stated he will
42 discuss with Deb Dennis about this. He has asked her to present next month on
43 the Amador. He then asked her to move it to April. Paul Deason also mentioned
44 the status of the Amador to City, state, and national registries.
45

46 Deb Dennis stated the Jo Ruprecht gave a report in January on the May property
47 and she would read the statement for the HPC. There are other issues coming to
48 the forefront as the building deteriorates. Also the neighbor and the person paying

1 the taxes have agreed to have the City fence the property at this time. Paul
2 Deason asked that the deconstruction of 414 E. May be documented on how it
3 was put together and the design, et al.
4

5 Ernie Campos stated George went to the City Clerk to be on the HPC. Chris Faivre
6 will look into it.
7

8 **5. ADJOURNMENT (8:02)**
9

10 Paul Deason moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ernie Campos. Motion
11 passed unanimously.
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16 _____
17 Chairperson

DRAFT