



CITY OF LAS CRUCES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

April 16, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

The following are summary minutes of the Historic Preservation Commission Meeting held April 16, 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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeffrey Shepherd

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Anna P. Diaz
Arturo Diaz
David Austin
George Pearson
Christopher Schurtz
Cassie McClure, Councilor
Deb Dennis
Michael Corado
Corrina Miramontes

1. CALL TO ORDER (6:01)

Meeting called to order at 6:01.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES -

2.1 March 19, 2025 HPC Minutes

Motion to approve by Paul Deason; seconded by Ernie Campos. Motion passed unanimously.

3. ACTION ITEMS

3.1 Case 25DR0500023: A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a proposed addition to an existing home located at 650 S. Manzanita Street.

1 The subject property encompasses approximately 0.46 acres, is zoned R-2
2 (Medium Density Residential District) and located within the South Mesquite
3 Overlay District. Submitted by Arturo Diaz, property owner.
4

5 Motion to approve by Paul Deason; seconded by Ernie Campos.
6

7 Adam Ochoa introduced the property, location, and acreage. This property
8 is outside of what is the South Mesquite Overlay District. The home was
9 built circa 2006. It is not on the state or national registry. The property is
10 R-2 zoning and single-family and multifamily homes. It is a 678 square foot
11 wood framed addition to the north side of the home and facing Manzanita.
12 It will have a stuccoed exterior finish to match the exiting home. The new
13 roofline is consistent with the parapet roofline that continues along the
14 home. New windows will be similar to the existing home. The addition is
15 consistent with the appearance of the existing home and homes in the
16 surrounding area. Houses within the neighborhood were shown for
17 comparison. Staff did not receive any public input for the proposed addition.
18 Staff recommends approval.
19

20 Paul Deason commended the presentation and design as it looks to be a
21 good addition to the neighborhood.
22

23 Motion passed unanimously.
24

25 **3.2 Case 25DR0500024:** A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a
26 proposed addition to an existing home and a proposed new residential
27 structure to be located on the same property located at 306 N. Almendra
28 Street. The subject property encompasses approximately 0.138 acres, is
29 zoned R-2 (Medium Density Residential District) and located within the
30 South Mesquite Overlay District. Submitted by Alphonzo Marquez, property
31 owner.
32

33 Motion to approve by Paul Deason; seconded by Ernie Campos.
34

35 Adam Ochoa introduced the property, location, and acreage. The existing
36 home on the property was built circa 1969. The structure is not on any state
37 or national registry. The proposal is for a 350 square foot wood frame
38 addition to the existing home located on the east side. It will have a stucco
39 finish to match the existing residence. The roofline is a little different
40 because the existing home has a pitched roof. The addition will have a
41 parapet with a flat roof that matches the surrounding structures in the area.
42 The addition does meet all setback requirements and development
43 standards for the City of Las Cruces. Next would be a new 864 square foot
44 second home that will be located on the property. Since the property is
45 zoned for multifamily it does meet minimum density requirements. This will
46 also be a stuccoed exterior finish to match the existing residence on the

1 property and surrounding area. Development will meet all setback
2 requirements and density requirements of the R-2 zoning district and South
3 Mesquite Overlay. Pictures shown of the neighborhood for comparison.
4 Staff received one phone call from a neighbor wondering what was going
5 on and she was happy about it. Staff recommends approval.
6

7 Paul Deason asked for clarification of the additional as he noted no facilities.
8 The addition is just two new bedrooms and closets. Ernie Campos asked
9 about when people first come in who reviews for close proximity to the
10 original townsite and who reviews for matching, etc. Adam Ochoa stated
11 that planning staff overviews. Ernie Campos applauded the staff and the
12 applicant for the hard work and matching with the original structure. Chair
13 Wallace stated that the original structure was built in 1969 and it now
14 qualifies for the national register of historic places. In the future with those
15 types of properties that should also be taken into consideration.
16

17 George Pearson asked about off-street parking requirements. Adam
18 Ochoa stated that was part of the evaluation, and the off-street parking
19 requirements are met. As it is a two-family property, they are required to
20 have three parking stalls.
21

22 Motion to approve again by Paul Deason; seconded again by Ernie
23 Campos.
24

25 Motion passed unanimously.
26

27 **3.3 Approval of the Historic Building Watch List**
28

29 There was a discussion at last meeting about this list, and then it was
30 finalized. This will be posted to the HPC website. Chair Wallace stated he
31 wants this as an action item to be done every year, discussion in January,
32 finalize the list in February. The list they have is a snapshot of buildings the
33 board considers to be an important part of the build fabric and part of the
34 City's building identity. Paul Deason stated there are several he would like
35 to add but of most interest the Lamars Bar off of Solano, Papen Bank Tower,
36 and the Queen Mary style house on Las Cruces Avenue which is the only
37 adobe Queen Ann style house east of the Mississippi. Chair Wallace
38 recognized Chris Schurtz in attendance who is the editor of the Southern
39 New Mexico Historical Review. Chris Schurtz puts out a monthly newsletter
40 for the Doña Ana County Historical Society and so that could be
41 incorporated to also bring attention to buildings. Also good to do a write-up
42 on the First National Bank Building, Papen Building. These aforementioned
43 buildings will be incorporated into the list for next year. Chris Faivre stated
44 this list will be put on the website. He would also like to see building out a
45 description and photos for each building on the list. Paul Deason suggested
46 people having the ability to fill in stories, ideas, history of the buildings on

1 the list. Chair Wallace suggested this would be great once the historic
2 specialist is hired and a student intern could help with this.

3
4 Deb Dennis asked what the long-term goal for the watch list. And how will
5 it help individual properties be restored, rehabilitated, etc. Chair Wallace
6 stated the idea is to include buildings that are outside of the scope of the
7 districts in the community that would not necessarily get any attention.
8 Chris Faivre stated it could also be an opportunity to educate the property
9 owners who might not know. And maybe connect them to funding via grants
10 they may not be aware of. George Pearson stated the list is more of what
11 we are worried about as opposed to things we know about and working on,
12 working on example is the WIA building, City owns it, has plans for \$700,000
13 in repairs, just no money to do it. But the Boys and Girls Club, that is going
14 to be vacant in two to three years and what is going to happen to that, it is
15 a significant historic property but is it salvageable. Chair Wallace stated this
16 list is ongoing and fluid. He also states it would be great to turn the mall
17 into lofts at a point if needed. He states although HPC is spearheading this
18 list it is actually the community's watch list.

19
20 Motion to approve by Paul Deason; seconded by Ernie Campos.

21
22 Motion passed unanimously.

23 24 **4. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

25 26 **4.1 Amador Hotel Designation Update**

27
28 Deb Dennis stated the first slide is a historic photo of the Amador from mid
29 1930s. The period of significance is designated by the State Historic
30 Preservation Office is 1910-1945. The building has been standing since the
31 1870s and oldest public building still standing in Las Cruces. The final
32 restoration will be back to the 1930s. The lime plaster on the building is
33 nubbly which took special skilled labor to be able to do that. She pointed
34 out the territorial style portico over the south entrance which was the primary
35 entrance for the building. In November 1946 Martin Amador, the son of
36 Martine Amador, came home from the war and his father wanted to
37 modernize the building. There are photos from October 1946 that shows
38 territorial style, and November 1946 have the pueblo revival that you see
39 today. The portico is the only portion of the building to be reconstructed as
40 they are going to be carrying things down and building new. The reason
41 they go the permission to do that is hundreds of photos looking at every
42 angle. The neon sign will be replicated and on the building.

43
44 The west façade is the first phase of the work and has been completed.
45 They were asked about the choice of blue which was not chosen. The
46 colors come from chemical analysis of the original materials. Phase two is

1 also complete. Much of the work is not visible to the public. On the east
2 side they did a fix. Phase three and four will probably be combined. Phase
3 three involves the replacement of the high roof and then restoration of the
4 walls. They are prioritizing the exterior repair. Taking down what is left of
5 the bank drive-thru on the north side, and working on the north side. These
6 phases are projected to be finished by 2025, although they are behind
7 schedule. There is money because the TIDD Board voted to provide
8 \$5 million over five years to the Amador project. Chris Faivre stated the
9 timeline is about 14 months which will cover the sides and the roof, and
10 estimated cost is about \$3.5 million.

11
12 Phase five is beginning the work in the lobby and beginning restoration of
13 the first floor. And also the hotel is being turned into an event center,
14 creating a need for catering kitchens which will utilize two bank vaults that
15 are still there. The vaults will remain as removing them left unknowns for
16 structural integrity of the building. They will be adding a second set of stairs,
17 and an elevator in the northeast part of the building. This phase will also
18 involve the restoration of the lower roof and start landscaping work. Chris
19 Faivre stated the interior, first and second floor, is about \$15 million for that
20 renovation. Deb Dennis's concern now with tariffs and current national
21 economic issues on how that may impact construction etc.

22
23 The last phase includes the patio, outside work. A bar will not be
24 incorporated into the renovation nor a restaurant, although originally that
25 was in the works, but things were rethought and City/public partnership
26 changed those plans. A brief video was shown that was created years ago
27 to show what could be done with the Amador Hotel. After discussions with
28 the State Historic Preservation Office they submitted a national register
29 nomination for the building to the keeper in Washington. They had a lot of
30 documentation, renderings, drawings, reports, etc. They had been going
31 around in circles with the State Register, Mr. Moffson who they need his
32 approval to move to the National Register. But Mr. Moffson would ask for
33 something and that would be done and then ask for something else, and
34 not approving. In May of 2024 suddenly they needed to have the exterior
35 totally done but in particular the south side, and then also the lobby
36 completed. The foundation was being pressed to raise money to help with
37 the project for which they have always done. But without being on the
38 National Register the foundation cannot see funding. They finally got
39 permission to send it on their own. They have not heard back since sending
40 it September. They finally heard and were told they have to do more work
41 on the building. Hopefully, the south side will be done by the end of the
42 year/ early 2026 consider having Mr. Moffson follow procedure and send to
43 the keeper.

44
45 Paul Deason asked if it would help to have the building on the City Register.
46 Deb Dennis stated it is not, and does not know what happened to that

1 nomination as Judy Berryman had been working on it. There are no funds
2 request that are attached to City Register. Paul Deason persisted in
3 suggesting putting it on the City Register and that might help move it
4 forward. Others stated that the building is already on the State Register
5 and has been since 1963. Chair Wallace stated he and Chris Faivre have
6 been speaking on this, the challenge is the list from Dr. Berryman all had
7 the same address for the properties in Las Cruces, which was a P.O. box.
8 There is an Excel spreadsheet but that is a bit jumbled. The list is P.O.
9 boxes and random legal descriptions and are not all City buildings. The City
10 GIS team is trying to figure out if there is a way to pull addresses of buildings
11 within the areas that are already historic and build that inventory. Paul
12 Deason stated he provided the board with what the university geography
13 department and Dr. Brown had provided that was done by a master student
14 who put historic districts into the GIS. Maybe this and the Excel could be
15 used to populate the P.O. boxes with more descriptive elements. Chair
16 Wallace stated there is a nomination form that the City has. This is
17 something hopefully the specialist would be doing. He stated this will be
18 worked on, but cannot give a timeframe. Deb Dennis stated the Amador
19 Hotel Foundation is only advisory and are not in anyone's loop for
20 information from the City. Councilor McClure stated to Deb Dennis that
21 there would never be a time that the City would go to the legislature for
22 funding, and only TIDD funding would be provided. Chris Faivre stated
23 there was a downtown master plan that was put out approximately
24 2016/2018. The City is going to be doing a third final phase through the life
25 of the TIDD which is 2032 approximately. That process will be started later
26 this year. There will be opportunities for public engagement to weigh in on
27 the priorities from the community. There are a lot of nonprofits that do
28 advocate on behalf of themselves and the City becomes the fiscal agent for
29 monies that they have received from the state. Las Esperanzas offered
30 their support also.

31
32 Chair Wallace asked how many times Mr. Moffson has been to the Amador,
33 and the answer was twice. Deb Dennis stated Mr. Moffson's opinion on his
34 first visit, which was just after it was closed up, was that this building will
35 never be eligible, which unfortunately set the tone. HPD gave them a grant
36 to write a National Register nomination in 2014. They received a letter from
37 Jeff Pappas that the building was not eligible, there was no structural
38 integrity. Deb Dennis called Jeff Pappas and had a long discussion about
39 still having a lot of work to do and show him that there is historic fabric,
40 structural integrity, etc. at the Amador. Mr. Moffson was again here in
41 approximately 2022 and was amazed by what he saw at the Amador.

42
43 **4.2 Remembrance of Patricia Williams**

44
45 Paul Deason stated Patricia Williams was nominated to the HPC and served
46 in the later part of 2024. He only met her once at one HPC meeting. She

1 was born in 1964 in Commerce, Georgia. Had her education at Clayton
2 State University and University of West Georgia. She was an outstanding
3 advocate for education and history. She was married to Jasper Williams
4 and mother to Regan and Noah. She passed February 22, 2025. Deb
5 Dennis had met her just after she moved here from Atlanta. She was a one
6 of a set of twins. Parents had twin daughters and twin sons.
7

8 **5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
9

10 Deb Dennis stated it was mentioned there is a historic specialist in place and asked
11 for further information. Chris Faivre stated Caitlin Beesley is starting May 4th. She
12 was the highest scorer when the interviews were done at the end of last year.
13 When the position was offered, she had already accepted another position, and so
14 the City moved forward with reposting the position. When things when wonky with
15 federal hires on a probationary period and then terminated, he then reached out to
16 her, and talked her out of the other job and into coming here. She will begin
17 attending meetings in May. He did suggest not to overwhelm her to begin with.
18 Chair Wallace stated she was the best interviewee of everybody. Paul Deason
19 asked about if she has a working knowledge of Spanish. Chair Wallace stated that
20 was not asked. Corrina Miramontes complimented the staff and HPC. She stated
21 someone drove into the building across the street from her hitting the front door.
22 Chris Faivre stated they have been conducting appraisals of that location as the
23 City is looking to sell the property.
24

25 **6. STAFF AND COMMISSION COMMENTS**
26

27 Paul Deason stated there is concern with vacant properties being used as drug
28 houses on Willoughby Street.
29

30 Ernie Campos stated a friend of his is remodeling two of the homes next to the
31 apartments. He invited contractor/builder Michael Coranado but he had to leave
32 earlier. He has some concerns about some of the vacant buildings in Mesquite.
33 Chris Faivre invited Michael Coranado to contact staff directly with issues.
34

35 Chris Faivre stated they do have three vacancies on HPC and staff will be
36 advertising the vacancies through the regular process. All positions are at-large,
37 not district assigned.
38

39 **7. ADJOURNMENT (7:50)**
40

41 Motion to approve by Paul Deason; seconded by Ernie Campos. Motion passed
42 unanimously.
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Chairperson