



CITY OF LAS CRUCES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

September 17, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

The following are minutes of the Historic Preservation Committee Meeting held September 17, 2025, at the meeting room at the Papen Center, 304 Bell Avenue, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Jerry Wallace, Chair
Ernie Campos
Paul John Deason, PhD
Norma Chairez-Hartell
Fernando Baeza
Rosanna Torrez

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeffrey Shepherd, PhD

STAFF PRESENT: Caitlin Beesley, Historic Preservation Specialist

OTHERS PRESENT: Greg Shervanick
JT O'Brien
Jamie Blair
Donald Leslie
Norman Harly
Jaye Williams

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wallace called the meeting to order at 6:04.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES -

2.1 August 20, 2025 HPC Minutes

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

3. DESIGN REVIEW AND CASE RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Rehabilitation of property at 327 E. Bowman Ave.

1 Caitlin Beesley stated it is the casita that is on the property. The applicant,
2 JT O'Brien, is in the audience. The casita is approximately 20 x 17 feet, to
3 be rehabilitated. This would involve installing plumbing, electricity, and
4 adding a roof. The property is in the original townsite within the historic
5 district. Sanborn map of the property was shown from 1927. The next
6 documentation of this building is the National Register nomination in 1985.
7 Between 1927 and 1985 the main building was divided up into different units
8 that were owned by different members of the same family. Between 1985
9 and today the main house was significantly altered. The house was
10 contributing in the historic district, but may no longer be contributing in its
11 current state. The National Register nomination calls out the house size and
12 casement windows that are steel. The windows are still present but are not
13 operable. The house and the casita both are there and debatable whether
14 they are contributing or not because the house has lost a significant portion
15 of the property that was termed contributing. The casita's contributing status
16 to the historic district is similarly up for debate. Initial drawings from the
17 property owner were shown, with elevation and rendering. The owner will
18 retain the existing walls, install new doors and roof, and is going to be
19 finishing up the parapets with adobe.
20

21 Chair Wallace likes that in Mesquite the parapets low and nod to several
22 different styles. He suggested it would nice if the parapet reflected
23 vernacular architectural styles and was not so prominent. This is going to
24 be 6 inches above the height limit of 14 feet and is going to need a variance.
25 Setbacks are all appropriate. Questions about any landscaping. There will
26 have to be off street parking so minimal landscaping. Board Member
27 Canpos asked for a floor plan and if the floors will be tiled. They were told
28 it was a simple, open floor plan. Also told that much of what they are asking
29 has not yet been decided. Board Member Deason stated the earth floor
30 was practical. He asked the nature of the windows and Clerestory.
31 Clerestory for light, storage, and heat exhaustion. This was originally
32 recommended to O'Brien by former historic preservation specialist Troy
33 Ainsworth. Adobe will cover about two-thirds of what is shown on the
34 picture.
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36 Board Member Deason asked about the windows, metal casement that are
37 there and if they can be fixed. He knows the windows can be replaced. If
38 there is increased desire for thermal window protection, to go for indoor
39 window or a shutter. Chair Wallace feels the windows already meet the
40 requirement and aesthetics of the community. Caitlin Beesley stated that
41 whether the building is contributing or not to the historic district may hang
42 on the retention of the casement windows, which is for the board to decide.
43 Chair Wallace feels the window discussion is possibly placing an undue
44 burden on the homeowners. It was asked what are the guidelines/future
45 guidelines for windows. Caitlin Beesley stated it is something the board is
46 going to have to consider. The property owner gives evidence that the

1 element cannot be repaired, and that the replacement would have to
2 approximate the original, if not in material then appearance. Only the
3 windows visible from the street are being discussed. Board Member Deason
4 asked that with the motion to approve that the property owner be asked to
5 consult with the specialist on the windows as the information states the
6 windows were a significant characteristic of the registered nomination of the
7 property.

8
9 Chair Wallace states setting a condition on the motion is causing an undue
10 burden that they have not asked other property owners to do. Caitlin
11 Beesley stated that the windows were included in the report for the property
12 owner related to the contributing status of the casita and the possibility for
13 the project to be eligible for tax credits.

14
15 It was asked if there was interest in the property remaining on the register
16 as a contributing property, or because of modification potentially and falling
17 off, but still being within the historic district. Question on if the property
18 already fell off the register. Caitlin Beesley stated the survey was never
19 updated officially as part of the national register nomination. The updates
20 were primarily for the specialist, etc. Earlier historic districts included
21 properties listed as “significant,” which is no longer considered; districts with
22 “significant” properties can be interpreted as contributing or noncontributing
23 to the historic district from the earlier iteration depending on its current
24 condition.

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26 Board Member Deason moved to approve Case 25DR0500051; seconded
27 by Board Member Campos. Motion passed unanimously.

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29 **4. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

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31 **4.1 Update on the Design Guidelines draft**

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33 Caitlin Beesley stated this will be a discussion they have for the next couple
34 of months. The guidelines will be a document that people use when looking
35 at rehabilitation projects, different projects happening on their historic
36 house, or a house that is in the historic districts. It was contracted out in
37 2021 and the contractor provided a final draft in 2022 and former HPC
38 members worked on the update. She has just found the update recently
39 after spending several months working on edits to the contractor’s draft. A
40 lot of information was repetitive, some information was not presented until
41 later in the document, including the purpose of design guidelines, and why
42 property owners should use design guidelines? She has been considering
43 how to reorganize and edit the draft. The history section was significantly
44 dense. The section on architectural styles needs to be more legible. The
45 National Alliance of Preservation Commissions provided a webinar earlier
46 this summer that dealt specifically with how to produce design guidelines.

1 Beesley included images from one of the examples provided during the
2 webinar, in MacArthur Park in Little Rock, Arkansas, in the presentation.
3 She also liked Old Town design guidelines in Portland, Oregon.
4

5 For the update Beesley will provide, she asked that members of the
6 committee and the public look at content as the design will change before
7 the final guidelines are published. She stressed that edits should be on the
8 content, not the photos or the design. She has updated the design to some
9 extent to make it look cleaner and more accessible. She showed some
10 images as part of the presentation, beginning with the introduction and what
11 is the purpose of the report but also what is design review, which has been
12 cleaned up, extraneous or repetitive information removed. She parsed the
13 history section down a bit and added some historic photos. For future
14 readers, she mentioned that the photos with a red border will be retaken or
15 replaced, just keep that in mind when the board receives the draft design
16 guidelines. Historic District maps will be updated, to be more consistent.
17 Next is architectural styles. The examples need to highlight successful and
18 compatible design in the historic districts. Construction materials are also
19 mentioned. Residential architecture guidelines, she moved ADA from the
20 back. Next guidelines for residential siding setting, she added photos.
21 Appendices, text, font, layout to be the same.
22

23 Chair Wallace suggested the board do a work session on this, probably
24 more than one. Suggested bridging designs from between 1930, 1980, etc.
25 New historic districts will be added as time goes on. City Council has not
26 approved the guidelines, although an earlier iteration of HPC brought their
27 edited guidelines to one of City Council's work sessions.
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29 **5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
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31 Donald Leslie stated in history you had zoning, overlay. Every house in the historic
32 district has become sold and now rentals. The aesthetics are changing, and
33 changing in a negative fashion. Landscaping being neglected. Board Member
34 Deason mentioned demolition by neglect, and that landscaping is part of the
35 design element of the property could fall under those same restrictions. It was
36 mentioned that the City of Las Cruces has no build requirements for short term
37 rentals. Rentals have no interest in the neighborhood, no interest in maintaining
38 aesthetics. Hundred year old trees being left to die. Chair Wallace mentioned that
39 this conversation has gone way outside of their purview.
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41 Gregory Shervanick stated he thinks this is a valid discussion. There needs to be
42 landscaping within the guidelines for the historic areas.
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44 **6. STAFF AND COMMITTEE INPUT**
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1 Caitlin Beesley mentioned the lecture series for the Doña Ana Historical Society is
2 tomorrow at the Las Cruces Village Nursing and Rehabilitation.

3
4 Board Member Deason stated Friday night at 5:30 a meet and greet at Nopalito's
5 Galeria featuring Caitlin Beesley. He also mentioned FEMA, emergency
6 management has a booklet out on preserving for the hazard of flooding for historic
7 properties, especially adobes. Also information on community organized to assist
8 in disasters.

9
10 Board Member Campos asked about the old Church's Chicken location at E.
11 Lohman and S. Campo.

12
13 Gregory Shervanick stated this is an election year and members of public need to
14 address the candidates running for City Council as districts do not matter
15 concerning historical preservation.

16
17 Caitlin Beesley stated they possibly cannot meet in Council Chambers until
18 January because of other events. Discussions could continue to be had about
19 where the next HPC meeting will be held, possibly at the Papen Center in the
20 auditorium or at the Rio Grande Theatre.

21
22 Chair Wallace stated the 25th through 27th is the Historical Society of New Mexico
23 Conference.

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25 **7. ADJOURNMENT**

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27 Motion to adjourn by Paul Deason; seconded by Ernie Campos. Motion passed
28 unanimously.

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Chairperson