

**SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING COMMISSION
&
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**Draft Meeting Minutes
of Joint Hearing**

**Commission Chambers - Room 400
City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
Thursday, January 28, 2010
10:30 AM**

PLANNING

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Miguel, Olague, Antonini, Lee, Moore, and Sugaya
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Borden

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chase, Damkroger, Martinez, and Wolfram
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Buckley, Matsuda, and Hasz

**THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY PLANNING COMMISSION PRESIDENT
MIGUEL AT 10:38 A.M.**

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: John Rahaim – Director of Planning, Larry Badiner – Zoning
Administrator, Alicia John-Baptiste, Elaine Forbes, Kelley Amdur, David Alumbaugh, Bill
Wycko, Tina Tam, Chris Haw, and Linda Avery – Commission Secretary.

A. SPECIAL CALENDAR

1. (E. FORBES: (415) 558-6417)
FY 2010-2011 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT: REVIEW OF DRAFT FY2011
BUDGET AND DRAFT WORK PROGRAM - Informational presentation and
discussion only. No action is required by the Planning Commissions.

SPEAKERS: **Aaron Goodman** – the issues regarding preservation in this city
are unique and the issues that both commissions review in
regards to large scale projects is critical right now. Park Merced
is one of them. My concern is we need to complete adequate
surveys and the review of such landscapes. We need to look
seriously at what types of preservations alternatives are
available and what is being impacted overall. Please look
seriously at the fee issues and the possibility of funding
adequately surveys
Zach Stewart – I am interested in how much money is allocated
separately for each commission

Joan Wood – I'm preoccupied with the North Beach Library. I'm very unhappy about the proposed 8.5% overall reduction to the Historic Preservation Commission. It looks like the survey program would be affected. The designations would be affected and that would impact the North Beach Library. We would like as much money as possible to go to landmarking and to increase whatever is possible for the Historic Preservation Commission.

Jack Gold, Executive Director of San Francisco

Architectural Heritage – We recognize that these difficult economic times demand sacrifice from all city departments. The preservation community and the Historic Preservation Commission must do its fair share to help balance the city's budget. Adequate staff and efficient planning will be essential to the successful performance of both commissions during these trying times. We believe that it is important for the Department to follow through with the completion of neighborhood plans and surveys, including the Department's commitment that designates historic districts identified by area plan efforts. We urge that any staff reductions or reallocations be implemented in a manner that is fair and equitable for both commissions and does not single out the Historic Preservation Commission for reductions in staff or other support.

Peter Warfield, Executive Director of Library Users

Association – I agree with previous speakers, in particular about disproportionate reductions for the Historic Preservation Commission. According to the Department's memo, the reduction in survey staffing is from 3.37 to 1.57 FTE. That is a 53% reduction. I think that 53% is out of proportion and not in proportion with other funding actions that are being proposed. I think it is very important to fully fund the Historic Preservation Commission. The HPC needs funding for all of its proposed duties including for the provision of sufficient public information so that folks can follow what is going on with minutes. We brought a complaint about those minutes and the Sunshine Task Force found that the minutes were not adequate and not lawful. I'm glad to say that the HPC appears to be making efforts to improve that, but to the degree that requires staffing, that should be fully funded.

Sue Cauthen – The Historic Preservation Commission was created by a substantial vote of the electorate. I think there is a real will in San Francisco for a separate body that can deal with preserving our historic resources and thus adding to our urban fabric. I would add my voice to those who call for proportionate funding for the Historic Preservation Commission. I'm also concerned about the cut in the Preservation staff. The Commission has recently started a procedure of landmarking 8 Appleton & Wolfard Libraries. Five of the eight have been declared historic resources. The most egregious one is North Beach. It is the only one that does not have a permit, and is the only one in which a landmarking designation could affect the outcome as to whether it is demolished or preserved. The area plans for the various neighborhoods need to proceed, but I am making a special pitch for historic preservation.

Howard Wong, Friends of Appleton & Wolfard Libraries –

Both the Planning Commission and the HPC are two of the most demanding commissions in the city. Both these commissions shouldn't be fighting over a fixed sum gain. The new commission warrants attention and has legal mandates established by the voters to be equivalent to the Planning Commission. The funding needs to flow appropriately as mandated by the voters. Both commissions need to work together to demand your rightful funding from the total General Fund to commiserate proportion to the amount of work and case load that you carry. I think you have a great deal of support from neighborhoods throughout the city. You should work with staff to request an appropriate level.

Gee Gee Platt – I want to talk about how the Landmarks Board was always taken care by the Planning Department (staffing wise) since its founding in 1967. About 14 years ago there was a definite switch in how the Landmarks Board was handled. It was a political decision. I think the lack of effort and energy devoted to the Landmarks Board over the last 12 years had a great deal to do with the passage of Prop J. I think that staff needs to go back and look at Prop J and see what the Historic Preservation Commission mandates are and figure out a way to realign staff. We were told at the Historic Preservation Fund Committee that there are 11 people on staff that are considered qualified historic preservation professionals. This is not going out and hiring somebody, it is simply moving them around. The Director has explained that the choice of Ms. Avery to take care of the Historic Preservation Commission equates with the care the Planning Commission gets. That's great, but Ms. Avery does not have a degree in historic preservation, preservation, or planning at all. I don't think she has worked for another landmarks commission and I don't think she has any preservation legal training. The Historic Preservation Commission needs some of that. I agree that everybody has to take their hits proportionately, but I'm not sure that staff adequately understands what the preservation issues are – either that or they want to ignore them. I am going to show up throughout this process to make sure this is remedied. You've got qualified professionals and they need support. The only support they have now doesn't have the background to do the follow up for them, to say nothing of designation reports. Three to five of the 11 staff identified have the necessary qualifications to help the HPC. I do want to know what this Preserve America Grant is. None of us have ever heard of it. I don't see a request in the State Historic Preservation Office for a grant. I think that you need to do the work that you need to do in this down year and it is a good time to get surveys done. The Department should not be underwriting the Mills Act. You should be charging the public for those items if they come in. I also don't see TDR in the work program.

Mark Riser – I am associated with two different entities that from time to time have made grants to the Department and I have two questions with respect to the Historic Preservation activity as shown on page two. One showed a reduction in FTE devoted to preservation staff training and professional development. [I'm wondering] if there is a quick and easy answer to the reason for

that. That has been funded in the past by grants from the Friends of City Planning. The other item is with respect to item A, and I know that it has had some comment – the Preservation Survey Program – I know it has been funded over the last couple of years in part by grants from the Historic Preservation Fund Committee. I'm assuming with the reduction there the Department does not propose to approach the Fund Committee for this fiscal year. I just want to ask if I have a correct understanding of that.

ACTION: Informational presentation and discussion only. Although no action was taken, the HPC instructed that this item be calendared for further discussion at its February 3, 2010 meeting. Commissioner Sugaya from the Planning Commission requested that a member of the HPC come to the regular meeting of the Planning Commission on 2/4/10 and report on HPC's 2/3/10 budget discussion.

Adjournment: **1:15 p.m.**