



Historic Preservation Board REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 26, 2020 | 5:00 PM

City Council Chambers, City Hall, 70 N First St., Campbell, California

CALL TO ORDER

The Special Historic Preservation Board meeting of February 26, 2020, was called to order at 5:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers, 70 North First Street, Campbell, California by Chair Foulkes, and the following proceedings were had to wit.

ROLL CALL

HPB Members Present:

Michael Foulkes, Chair
Susan Blake
Laura Taylor Moore
Todd Walter

HPB Members Absent

Yvonne Kendall, Vice Chair

Staff Members Present:

Daniel Fama, Senior Planner
Corinne Shinn, Recording Secretary
Michael Shwe, Planning Intern

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS OR POSTPONEMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of Minutes of December 16, 2019

Motion: Upon motion of Member Walter, seconded by Member Blake, the Historic Preservation Board approved the minutes of the meeting of December 16, 2019. (4-0-1; Member Kendall was absent)

2. Approval of Minutes of January 22, 2020

As there was not a quorum available at this meeting to adopt the draft minutes of the HPB meeting of January 22nd, they will be continued to the next meeting when the quorum that attended the December 16th meeting is in attendance.

3. Approval of Minutes of January 29, 2020.

Motion: Upon motion of Member Moore, seconded by Member Walter, the Historic Preservation Board approved the minutes of the meeting of January 29, 2020. (4-0-1; Member Kendall was absent)

ORAL REQUESTS

None

BOARD AND STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

4. Attendance for 2020 CPF (California Preservation) Conference

The Board will discuss attendance of up to two Board Members to the 2020 CPF California Preservation Conference, which will be held May 17-20, in Sacramento.

Planner Danel Fama:

- Reported that funding is available to send two members of the HPB and himself to this conference.
- Added that the City covers all the expenses for attendance.
- Advised that the event will be in Sacramento from May 17th to 20th, at the Embassy Suites Sacramento.
- Asked the Board to advise if they are interested in attending within the next week.

Member Blake advised that it is important to make conference arrangements as soon as possible to secure accommodates in the host hotel.

Chair Foulkes:

- Reported that he had watched the webinar Mills Act presentation and found it most helpful.
- Added that it shows how we could do things much better and how other communities are creative with their programs.
- Said that there are lots of tools out that to help track Mills Act contracts project by project.
- Stated that there are also different ways of timing contracts. There are things (repairs) that they will fund and will not fund.
- Suggested this be agendized for the next meeting.

Member Moore said that this webinar is another reason why State Conferences are so good. So valuable.

Chair Foulkes said that this would be a good conversation for the next meeting and help us to make our Mills Act Program a “world class” one. He stated that this webinar helped make him excited about our program.

Member Moore reported that the Historical Museum is hosting “Historic Happy Hour” events and promised to forward information outlining the specific topics of each event.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

NEW BUSINESS

5. Mills Act *ad hoc* Subcommittee Report

The Subcommittee will provide a monthly update on its activities to the Board

Member Blake:

- Reported that the Subcommittee met with Planner Daniel Fama and Intern Michael Shwe and minutes of this first meeting were taken.
- Advised that letters have now been mailed to the holders of Mills Act Contracts going out on February 14th (Valentine's Day).
- Stated that the Subcommittee is hoping to see the responses come in by the end of March.
- Said that Intern Michael Shwe created a nice template for the Mills Act Contract holders to use to prepare their report.
- Informed that two of the homes are due for a five-year visit. One on Catalpa and the other on Peter Drive.
- Stated that those visits will be scheduled after receipt of the requested reporting information.
- Outlined some of what she has learned about "Best Practices" in reaching out to other cities.
 - Palo Alto told her they started to update their Mills Act Program in 2017. They are not yet finished with their update as there is not enough staff in Palo Alto to dedicate to this task. She said that their layout has a nice template.
 - About Oakland, She stated, "OMG, it's so cool!" They provided her with a copy of their application.
 - All around the State: she's learned that some jurisdictions concentrate just on exterior restoration. Some have 15-year duration of a Mills Act Contract. It's kind of interesting.
- Stated that it is important for us to determine what we need moving forward. The Subcommittee has identified some things already.

Member Walter:

- Said that the City Council wants HPB to do a refresh of its Mills Act.
- Added that once the research is completed, Council will want to receive a report from the HPB evaluating our program and giving suggestions on how best to improve it.
- Stressed the importance of slowing down to allow enough time to do the necessary "fact finding" and then provide a "big-picture" recommendation to Council after which the HPB could go back to draft and roll out the most appropriate plan for Mills Act Contracts in Campbell.
- Stated that after that draft plan is developed, the HPB would take it back to the Council for its blessing.

Member Blake:

- Pointed out that the current Mills Act Program is not currently codified. The goal is to have it codified.
- Stated that Council is asking us, “where’s the accountability?”

Member Walter:

- Advised that he conducted Mills Act Program research from the internet about six cities.
- Said one jurisdiction gives just two times per year (i.e. August and February) when a property owner can apply for a Mills Act Contract. He admitted he is not absolutely sure why those particular times of year.

Member Blake reminded that it was mentioned in the webinar why those dates.

Member Walter:

- Said that they determined that reviewing and comparing Mills Act applications one at a time throughout the year was less effective than reviewing multiple applications just twice a year.

Member Blake:

- Suggested Member Walter look at the list online that shows what you want to have. What’s allowed with a Mills Act Contract.

Member Walter:

- Said that the Subcommittee will discuss this further.
- Opined that this Mills Act update is a “big thing” and should not be rushed before having the opportunity to obtain some direction and feedback from Council.

Chair Foulkes:

- Reported that he recently attended a meeting of the Chairs of Boards and Commissions with Mayor Landry.
- Advised that in Monrovia, seismic upgrades are required first thing with a Mills Act Contract.
- Suggested perhaps syncing specific improvements for the money (tax savings benefit) received by Mills Act Contract holders.
- Stated that he didn’t want to see this process of updating the Mills Act to drag on for three years.
- Added that it’s these details that make this program successful.
- Stated that he is very excited by the webinar he watched and hearing about the work already being done by our *ad hoc* Subcommittee.

Member Walter:

- Admitted that he has no issue or concern that HPB will not be able to come up with a good plan for its Mills Act Program.
- Said that we have a lot of information and just need to consolidate it into our plan.

Planner Daniel Fama:

- Said that for the next meeting agenda he will include a continued discussion to include the following:
 - Create a “game plan” moving forward
 - Scheduling the process
 - Developing a sequence of what happens next

Chair Foulkes:

- Added other components to include:
 - Areas of Campbell with historic properties (buckets)
 - Fees
 - Accountability
 - Duration of Mills Act Contracts
 - Project worthiness
- Said that there are two different ways of going.
- Stated that we must decide what side of the fence we are on.
- Pointed out that another issue of consideration is landscaping. Some jurisdictions don't allow costs for landscaping as a qualified improvement for Mills Act funds.

Member Walter:

- Said that the *ad hoc* Subcommittee can look at our current plan and come back to discuss as a group to pinpoint our collective preferences.
- Stated that one thing to consider may be the cost to apply. He asked what that cost currently is.

Member Blake said that it is approximately two-thousand dollars (\$2,000).

Member Moore:

- Said that if we are tailoring our Mills Act specifically to our community, Campbell is a working-class community.
- Added that there are only about 130 potentials.
- Stated that it behooves us to maintain the Downtown Core Area.
- Pointed out that Oakland may have at least 500 potential locations for a Mills Act Contract while we have maybe 130.

Planner Daniel Fama suggested that offering a Mills Act Contract could serve as an incentive to be voluntarily added to the HRI list.

Chair Foulkes;

- Said that HPB could encourage those owners of the most dilapidated of the 130 houses.
- Said it could be very project based. Contract on windows, etc., and specific time frames.
- Reminded that Mills Act Contract is a huge benefit to property owners. It would provide an easier way of entry onto the HRI.

Planner Daniel Fama said that Mills Act is sanctioned by Council and a clear policy direction will help a lot.

Member Walter said he was not sure how much input HPB would have on what Mills Act application fees to charge as it is his understanding that the application fee is the estimated overhead cost of processing such an application.

Planner Daniel Fama:

- Said that is true to some degree.
- Added that fees are policy as well.
- Advised that the City subsidizes fees for single-family residential substantially.
- Stated that he recently had a long phone conversation with the owner of 140 S. Peter Drive. She went to the County and was informed that the County destroys and doesn't even really look at the annual reports provided by the Mills Act Contract holders. She told him that a lot of work was done that was substantial and permitted.

Member Blake:

- Reported that San Francisco recently reduced its Mills Act filing fee.

Member Walter admitted that he is not really concerned about 140 Peter Drive.

Chair Foulkes said that they have photographs both before and after to document the work done.

Member Walter:

- Added that Google Earth offers historic aerials and street views as well.
- Pointed out that Campbell's Mills Act Contracts run for 10 years but every year it extends out again to 10 years after each year concludes.

Planner Daniel Fama said that it's true that every year, the Mills Act Contract keeps going for more 10 years. He said that would be the case until a program to expire them is created.

Chair Foulkes said it must be 10 years worth of scheduled and specific projects.

Member Walter pointed out that Campbell has not yet had a Mills Act Contract for longer than five years as of yet. Two of them are at the five-year mark now.

Planner Daniel Fama said he didn't think Council was aware that these are continuing contracts rather than ending at 10 years.

Chair Foulkes:

- Suggested that HPB bring pictures of potentials to show to Council when the two groups meet.
- Stated that the Mills Act Contracts provide an investment in the City to help its homeowners improve historic homes within the City.

Member Moore stated that she wants to have people who "love" their historic house to benefit from these contracts.

Member Walter said that Mills Act Contracts offer tax savings for homeowners versus what is lost by the City if the small supply of potential historic homes disappear.

Member Blake said that allocating Mills Act Contracts effects schools as well.

Member Walter reminded that Council was afraid of loss of tax revenue so limited the number of Mills Act Contracts to five.

Chair Foulkes:

- Said that there are three levels of taxation for homes. Proposition-13, standard and Mills Act.
- Suggested that members of HPB approach the County Assessor (Larry Stone) to get the data/information on our Mills Act Contracts with the support of our City Council in making that request.

Planner Daniel Fama said he would structure the staff report for this conversation at the next meeting.

Member Blake said that would be helpful. She added that it is nice to have Intern Michael Shwe working with us on this project.

Member Walter advised that he and Member Blake included their personal phone numbers on the letters recently sent out to the existing Mills Act Contract holders.

Member Moore asked how many such contracts Campbell has now

Member Blake replied there are eight Mills Act Contracts in total.

Member Walter asked what happens if there is no response form these eight Mills Act Contract owners.

Planner Daniel Fama:

- Replied that follow up phone calls would be made. Staff could find the numbers for the *ad hoc* Subcommittee to use for follow-up calls.
- Cautioned that revocation of a Mills Act Contract would be both difficult and time consuming.

Members Blake and Walter both said they have no problem calling these eight Mills Act Contract holders if the reports are not submitted by the end of the month.

Member Walter asked if all eight properties are actually owner-occupied.

Planner Daniel Fama said that staff would look into that.

Member Moore said she already has the contact phone numbers for the owners of Catalpa and Peter.

Ms. Marie Jasinsky, Property Owner 204 Alice Avenue, asked the HPB if they are taking in new applications as she is interested in applying for a Mills Act Contract.

Planner Daniel Fama replied yes.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 5:47 p.m. to the next Regular Historic Preservation Board meeting scheduled for **March 25, 2020**, at 5:00 PM, in the City Hall Council Chambers, 70 North First Street, Campbell, California.

PREPARED BY: _____
Corinne Shinn, Recording Secretary

APPROVED BY: _____
Michael Foulkes, Chair

ATTEST: _____
Daniel Fama, HPB Staff Liaison