



CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH

HISTORIC WINTERSBURG PRESERVATION TASK FORCE

MINUTES

THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 2017

Attendance:

Council Member Jill Hardy (not present), Council Member Erik Peterson (not present)

Chair Mary Urashima, **Committee Members** Barbara Haynes, Dennis Masuda, Gregory Robertson (not present), Dave Wentworth (excused absence), Mark Bixby, Ernie Nishii (excused absence), Kanji Sahara (excused absence), Rebecca Nehez (not present), Dann Gibb, Miguel Zamudio, Art Hasegawa (excused absence), Frankie Edeza

Advisory: Phil Chinn (Orange County Historical Commission)

Public: Krista Nicholds, Preserve OC; Victor Valladares, Huntington Beach resident

Chair Urashima opened the meeting at 6:05 pm

Staff provided two certified mail communications dated April 2, 2014, from Rainbow Environmental Services, held at city hall. The hard copy communications were duplicate statements to emails received from Rainbow Environmental regarding their participation in historic preservation discussions.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Victor Valladares, representing ComUNIDAD, an organization in the Oak View neighborhood, expressed his concern regarding the recent vandalism and tagging at Historic Wintersburg. He stated ComUNIDAD's position is in support of preservation of the full property as a heritage park. Valladares also informed the Task Force regarding periodic water ponding on Belsito Street, on the south side of the property. He stated the residents in the neighborhood try to watch out for the property and alert the Task Force if they see something of concern. Chair Urashima thanked Valladares for alerting the Task Force regarding the recent tagging on the 1934 Church building.

Dennis Masuda commented on the upcoming joint exhibit, Hometown Teams: How Sports Shape America, with Smithsonian Institute at the Heritage Museum of Orange County (HMOC). A planning meeting is scheduled with HMOC and the main focus of the Historic Wintersburg display will be the early 1900s Japanese American baseball and other sports in the Wintersburg Village and Huntington Beach area. Actor/director Chris Tashima has agreed to screen his film, Day of Independence, during the exhibit which runs from August 19 through September 30. The film screening will be an outdoor picnic event on the grounds of the Heritage Museum. Chair Urashima stated a discussion on the exhibit will be placed on the July agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Barbara Haynes, second by Mark Bixby to accept the minutes with no revisions. Motion passes unanimously.

FINANCIAL:

The preservation fund balance was reported at \$16,032, with additional deposited anticipated from recent donations. An additional \$5,000 is held by the National Trust for Historic Preservation for the planned analysis and report by the preservation architect. Chair Urashima restated that active fundraising continues to remain on hold until status of agreement or future path with property owner is confirmed for donors and supporters.

Status of discussions with Republic Services and the City of Huntington Beach:

Chair Urashima stated the Trust for Public Land (TPL) is engaging in discussions with Republic Services on behalf of the Task Force to negotiate a purchase agreement for the Historic Wintersburg property. She explained how TPL works to assist the creation of public parks in urban areas, with an emphasis on underserved neighborhoods. TPL does not own parks; they assist with acquisition and funding of parks. They also can help with the technical visioning and planning of the historic park site, which alleviates costs for the Task Force or the City. TPL has assisted locally with the acquisition of land for the Bolsa Chica Wetlands preservation. The property could be held by the City of Huntington Beach as a park, while work is done to clean up and stabilize the structures. The Task Force can then also submit for National Register listing and support from State or National park agencies.

Phil Chinn, Orange County Historical Commission, asked about pay back of funds. Chair Urashima explained there is no "pay back" and that the assistance of TPL comes through grants and foundations for public parks. She added that the Task Force can also fundraise concurrently with TPL, once the purchase agreement is in place.

Mark Bixby expressed concern about getting an agreement in place to commence stabilization and more clean up at the property. He is concerned about both fire hazard and the approaching rainy season, and that the property could further deteriorate without additional cleanup and stabilization. He also noted there is a City obligation for property owners to comply with the weed abatement ordinance. Bixby also noted the importance of getting the word "park" as part of the final name of the property.

Chair Urashima stated there also will be issues to work out with the Ocean View School District (OVSD), which placed some use restrictions on the property as part of their settlement agreement with Republic Services. She stated that the OVSD has publicly stated their support for full preservation as a heritage park site.

Vandalism at Historic Wintersburg property:

Chair Urashima noted the vandalism / tagging appears to have occurred sometime during the night of June 5, 2017. The tagging is on the 1934 Church building and on the fence line along Warner Avenue and Nichols Lane, and is two to three feet high in some places. A report with photographs was provided to Republic Services and the City Council liaisons. She said she has received an offer from a colleague / volunteer with the Heritage Museum of Orange County for "all the paint you need" to whitewash the street sides of the building. Other offers have been received from community volunteers who would like to help paint or cleanup trash and weeds. Chair Urashima reported a request was sent to Republic Services to allow the Task Force to whitewash over the blotchy exterior, pick up trash and remove weeds in the area outside the fence line on both Warner Avenue and Nichols Lane. To-date there is no response to this offer.

Frankie Edeza reported he had noticed a light on inside the 1947 ranch house. This was reported to the Huntington Beach police who were asked to conduct a drive-by to check the property.

Krista Nicholds, Preserve Orange County, explained that Preserve Orange County is a new non-profit organization with prominent members from around Orange County in a variety of disciplines relating to historic preservation. Nicholds stated they plan to support Historic Wintersburg.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

The next meeting is planned for Thursday, July 20, 2017, 6 p.m. at Huntington Beach city hall.