



# Historic Resources Board

## Staff Report (ID # 12379)

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**Report Type:** Approval of Minutes **Meeting Date:** 6/24/2021

**Summary Title:** HRB Draft Minutes April 8, 2021

**Title:** Approval of Historic Resources Board Draft Minutes of April 8, 2021

**From:** Jonathan Lait

### Recommendation

Staff recommends the Historic Resources Board (HRB) adopt the attached meeting minutes.

### Background

Attached are minutes for the following meeting(s):

- April 8, 2021

### Attachments:

- Attachment A: HRB Draft Minutes April 8, 2021 (DOCX)



# HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD MEETING

## DRAFT MINUTES: April 8, 2021

Virtual Teleconference Meeting  
8:30 A.M.

### Call to Order/Roll Call

Present: Chair David Bower, Vice Chair Shepherd; Board Members, Michael Makinen, Margaret Wimmer, Christian Pease, Gogo Heinrich, Caroline Willis

Absent:

Chair Bower: Before we get to Oral Communications I'd like to welcome Gogo and Caroline to the Board. I'm sure you're going to have much to provide in terms of your experience, and I'd like to have a more formal introduction later, but I did want to welcome you, and at the same time thank Martin Bernstein for his many, many years of service on the Board. I'd like to also recognize that at a later date.

### Oral Communications

Chair Bower: At this point we offer oral communications to anyone who would like to speak on anything that is not on our agenda today. Do we have anyone who wants to speak?

Mr. Vinh Nguyen: Chair Bower, we do not have any oral communications.

### Agenda Changes, Additions and Deletions

Chair Bower: Next item is agenda changes, additions and deletions. I don't think there are any, but I'll check with Amy to make sure there's nothing we need to add.

Ms. Amy French: No agenda changes or deletions.

### City Official Reports

1. Historic Resources Board Schedule of Meetings and Assignments.

Chair Bower: Okay, let's move on to item number one, the schedule of meetings. I think that's pretty self-explanatory. Gogo and Caroline, we meet when the Board has a project to review, or when the Chair or staff, Amy, generates a meeting request to do some other work. You can see on page six of our packet the normal meeting date, but we will not get even remotely get close to meeting on every one of those dates. Amy, do you have anything to add about that?

Ms. French: It's true, we have a very small workload compared to many of the boards and commissions, because the instances of historic properties that are subject to our Ordinance, as far as projects coming forward, is pretty infrequent. We have, later on the agenda, the Handbook, which maybe we can get into the work program at that time, because that is on the agenda today.

Chair Bower: Right, and we'll talk about that, because Debbie and I, as all board chair and vice chairs have done, we were participants in a meeting with the City Manager and the Communications Manager for the City of Palo Alto. They went over what is expected of us and what the Handbook has to offer us as Board members, so we'll talk about that later.

## Study Session

2. Receive Certified Local Government (CLG) Annual Report for the 2019-2020 Reporting Period.

Chair Bower: Let's move on to the Certified Local Government Annual Report for 2019-2020, item number two. Amy, you can take over. Let me say at this point that if you're not speaking, it's useful to have your computer on mute so we don't get background noise. Then just unmute when you are wishing to speak, or raise your hand, either with the Zoom control hand, or just raise your hand.

Ms. French: Good morning. I'm Amy French, Chief Planning Official and the Staff Liaison to the HRB. Of course, we have our Council Liaison, Allison Cormack, who is attending. Thank you. I did a quick little one slide for Martin, because he has been here since I've been here at least, and I began in 1998. Just a couple of photos of him on field trips, so a big thanks to Martin Bernstein.

Chair Bower: Absolutely.

Ms. French: And welcome to our new members. I just put a quick slide on our roles and duties with the HRB. Members Heinrich and Willis did have an orientation just recently, so they are up to speed on all of the activities and roles that the HRB has, but here it is on the screen for anyone out there in viewing land that would like to know what it is we're up to here. Just framing that, too, there are some notable Comprehensive Plan policies that the Council adopted in 2017. These are policies that we are actively implanting day-to-day in the Department of Planning to ensure that we are not demolishing California register-eligible properties. That's quite a program that keeps us very busy, as you can imagine, with a lot of properties bought and sold in Palo Alto, residential properties in particular. These are some other Comprehensive Plan policies. These are basically the same as the ones I just showed. These are the policy wordings themselves. These are ongoing and pending. And then we have some future-gear goals for policies related to historic preservation. It's a broad set of polices that include reassessing our Historic Preservation Ordinance to ensure its effectiveness. I guess this is later on the agenda. I did a quick slide on that, so we'll wait to talk about this slide, but it does include a work plan. I presented a slide show back in the end of February when we first talked about our CLG reporting period. At that time we didn't have a date about the deadline, but that is the end of this month, so now it's timely. There's really no action related to this report. It's an informational report. I do thank all of the HRB members that provided descriptions of the trainings they attended. Hopefully, I've captured that properly in the informational report. Please do check that if you haven't already, but I think I captured those as you had sent descriptions to me. This is just basically the five meetings we had this year, the items that we had on those agendas, and the fact that we did get two awards for our "I Quit" guidelines that were prepared in previous years. These are just some questions. These are some areas that if the Board wishes to discuss perhaps when we get to our discussion on our work program, I can bring these back. These were the past goals just for the new members to see. This was our past set of goals for the reporting period that we just prepared the report for. Now, we didn't move forward with the HRB Subcommittee's proposal for our Mills Act Program, so that's still an outstanding goal. These are pretty much ongoing goals, 1, 2 and 3. I think that's about it. We have the fifth goal from last time, which was tracking the demolishes of potentially eligibles. I don't know that I've updated this for this review period. But basically, you can see that the goals are not too much of a stretch, but that Mills Act Program is one that the Board may want to talk about. I'm going to end the show now. That concludes the discussion on the CLG report.

Chair Bower: I noticed back on page 13 that board terms were listed for all of us except for Debbie. I think Debbie's term ends in 2022, because I think Debbie and Christian and I were appointed in November of 2016. Isn't that right, Debbie?

Board Member Shepherd: Yes, that's correct. Thank you, David.

Chair Bower: Okay, so that needs to be filled in. Also, on page 14, for our new Board Members, they do keep track of when we come to these meetings, so it makes a difference. Attending – we can't all attend every meeting in a more active year, but in this past year, because everybody was basically at home, we were able to, I think, effectively have 100 percent Board participation, except for one Board Member. The other thing that I would point out is that starting on page 15 and going on to 16, are the list of Preservation seminars, or in this case, this year they're all webinars. Although there might be other in-person events. At

any rate, we are required to have in-service training, so that we remain and continue to be updated by changes in interpretation of historic preservation application of the Secretary of the Interior Standards. The California Preservation Foundation has a superb set of seminars that Caroline and Gogo, you should look into because they are very informative and easy to attend. As a Board Member, your annual membership is paid for by the City. I think that's right, Amy, isn't it? The City of Palo Alto pays our membership in the California Preservation Foundation, so we can attend them?

Ms. French: Yes.

Chair Bower: Okay, just clarifying that. I'm just going over a couple of things for Caroline and Gogo. In the Certified Report I think – and you brought up the Mills Act – I think we might deal with that at the end of the meeting in Board Members' questions. So, unless there are other comments by Board Members about our report to the State, I think we could move on to our next item. Anybody have any comments about that? Good morning, Alison. I forgot to say hello, because for some reason, you popped off my screen.

Council Member Cormack: As I think some of you know, I live in an Eichler and when the light comes in at a certain time in the morning it's literally just not worth having my video on, so fortunately Council meetings are in the evening, but it's moved enough that I'm willing to show my face again.

Chair Bower: Anyway, welcome and glad you could attend this morning.

3. Review the City of Palo Alto's Boards, Commissions, and Committees Handbook, and discuss implementation of its contents.

Chair Bower: As I mentioned earlier, Debbie and I have attended two different seminars provided by the City that explain this. I certainly hope every Board Member here has read this. I have not included the Handbook for this meeting. I thought I had it here, but I don't. But it's important that on page five, if I'm remembering the page number correctly, that we sign and return that to the City, which says that we have read and reviewed it. I'm really upset that I don't have the whole thing in front of me, because I made notes in my copy, which is really irritating. At any rate, I'm wondering if any Board Members have any comments about the Handbook. I guess what I would say, in summary, my impression of reading this and reviewing it is that it's a guideline for us as Board Members in the way in which we speak and behave in meetings. We have no problems with any behavior that's difficult, at least in my experience on this Board but I do know that there are other meetings that do not have the same kind of respect and decorum that we share here. But also I thought it was important to listen to a discussion of the ways in which language can be used in a normal daily fashion that actually is unpleasant to some people. I'm not being very articulate in describing this, but very small examples of everyday behavior can actually be interpreted as a slight or a diss by people. Bob Wenz, who is on another Commission with me, wrote in the *Palo Alto Daily* about a simple thing he experienced. He's head of the interaction between Palo Alto's sister cities. I'm blanking on the name of his organization, but he realized that when he would say to someone – because he travels the world and a number of the sister cities, a couple of them are Spanish-speaking countries and cities – he had remarked that the English spoken by people he was meeting with had really improved, and he realized after this training that, while he was intending to compliment the person for their language skills, that that actually could be seen as a criticism of the language skills in the past. It was a very informative thing for me because I totally understand, as he explained it, what his intention was there, but then it's also apparent how that phrase could be seen as a criticism. The Handbook, I think, has a very good scope in trying to make sure that we're aware of how very small things like that could be considered criticism, even though it's intended to be something not critical at all.

Board Member Heinrich: I have a question on the Handbook. There's no date.

Chair Bower: Alison or Amy, do you have a sense of the date? My understanding is it's effective the day that the Council passed the Ordinance, or whatever they did. Is that right?

Council Member Cormack: Yes, and I'll just say, since I have the microphone for a moment, it is intended to be a living document, so this was our first pass at it, and to the extent that any of you have suggestions about improvements, please share those. I guess the best way to do it is to give them to Ms. French, and that way we can incorporate them with and if we do a new version.

Board Member Heinrich: Okay. I had signed the document when I joined the Board, so was the document I signed this same document, or do I need to sign another one? I signed it about two weeks ago.

Ms. French: We can coordinate with this offline, with Vinh or myself, if you want to take a snapshot of what you signed, I guess, we can keep those in a file.

Board Member Heinrich: It was a digital signing.

Ms. French: Oh, I see, so you worked with the Clerk perhaps?

Board Member Heinrich: Yeah.

Ms. French: Oh, okay, fabulous.

Board Member Heinrich: So what is the right document, or is this a new one?

Ms. French: I imagine it was the right document. Since November 30<sup>th</sup> it has not changed. That's my understanding.

Board Member Heinrich: Okay, thank you.

Chair Bower: Vinh, maybe since you're in the background you could manage this. In a week or so, send emails to the various people who have not sent in those documents. I think Caroline and Gogo probably signed that document when they came on the Board, because that was part of the orientation materials that came to me for their orientation. The work program, or the work that we intend to do as a Board is slightly different than other boards, because the Historic Resources Board and the ARB are reactive boards. We are reviewing things that people bring to us. We don't have very many work projects, except for the Mills Act, and I'd like this year to try to get to that, but we'll talk about that later. So, our work plan is relatively straightforward. I appreciate you putting that together, Amy. I was going to talk with you this week but got distracted by other things.

Ms. French: I think with our CLG report that we have to prepare every year and submit to the State, we kind of have a leg up on this activity, as far as touching base on how many meetings we had and the work of the Board. One thing that we don't send off to the State that is new with this work plan is information on equity in the work. That's one thing that the State doesn't ask us to comment on, at least not as of yet. So, that's one thing we could discuss, as well as I'm just looking at the fact that we have in the past had joint meetings with the City Council, where we go over our work plan and the kinds of things that...and usually how that works is we will meet with the Mayor and Chair of the HRB. It didn't happen this last year for obvious reasons, to discuss what we would like to talk about in a joint meeting with the Council. So hopefully this coming year we'll have the opportunity to do that. Typically, the City Clerk will send out the dates or the months that we might be meeting with Council. It's been quite a busy agenda, and right now we're in budget season and all. Hopefully, we'll take up that discussion in the fall.

Chair Bower: I think one of the most important things that was stressed in the handbook is that Board Members come to meetings having read and prepared to discuss the issues that are raised by the items on the agenda. I think we're pretty good at that, but I just want to remind people to do that. Sadly, Martin was one of the best at reviewing the projects and catching very small things that I think were significant to our discussion of any decisions. I will use the example of the last meeting Martin attended, where he offered a very useful suggestion about the windows that were being added to the building. I think that made the building and the project better for that. So, I'm going to miss that and expect and hope that the rest of us can pick up the slack that we're going to miss from his not being on the Board. Any other comments by other Board Members about the Handbook? I'm not seeing any. Alison, did you want to say something?

Council Member Cormack: I'll just say that I was one of the two members of the Ad Hoc that worked on it, and it really is intended to make the experience more professional and rewarding for everyone who participates, so again, if there are suggestions, please share them with Amy.

Chair Bower: Thank you. Amy, maybe this would be an opportunity to look at the work plan that you've prepared?

Ms. French: Sure. Let me upload that.

Chair Bower: I'm sorry. I made some extensive notes on the handbook and then did not bring them to the meeting today, so I don't know where they are. I thought they were with all my other materials for this meeting, so I'm embarrassed to say that I'm unprepared.

Ms. French: This was just my snippet of the staff report that talked about the work plan. I highlighted just now this information on equity in the work because I think that is something worth talking about. It just so happens that last meeting we tried to reach out to community regarding this original AME Zion Church to see if there was interest in participating and commenting on the work of the historic church there, and we weren't able to get participation, but I think it was a worthy exercise to begin that work, to reach out to the community. There are some other possibilities that we could explore if there's perhaps interest on the Board to do some research and look into neighborhoods perhaps that were primarily folks back in the day, in the 20's or 30's. There's a neighborhood near I think where David lives that might be of interest to research and see what was going on with that. There's also the Eichler example, where Eichler was building communities, tracts, that did not have the prohibitive language in the CC&Rs regarding who could purchase houses. I think that's a worthy exploration for understanding the history of our community here. There's some not-so-great parts of our history as well, so I think it's an important thing to understand how our community grew, the physical environment representing the people who lived here. So that would maybe be my contribution to that thought.

Chair Bower: I'd like to focus the Board's attention on the last line, if new issues arise during the year, the work plan should be amended. It's my impression – and please correct me if I'm wrong in this – that if something comes up we don't have to go to the Council for permission to review it, but we just have to notify them this is something that has come up that's outside of what our work plan is. Is that, Amy and Alison, your understanding of that requirement?

Ms. French: I can respond to that. Sure. I think that's what that says if you just take it at its face. We submit a work plan the second quarter of the year. We're in the second quarter now. We'll share the work plan with them that we have in our CLG report. And then if we change that, we can let them know. For instance, if we decided we were able to submit that grant for the Modern Era Contact Statement, which is on ice waiting until we have resources, we could let them know, "Oh, by the way, we submitted that." We won't know if we're going to be awarded the grant but that would be an example of changing what's on our plan for the year if we were to get a grant.

Council Member Cormack: May I add something, Chair Bower?

Chair Bower: Of course.

Council Member Cormack: All right. When we were putting this together – and obviously each Board and Commission is a little bit unique – it certainly was never my intent, and I don't believe that it was the Council's intent that anytime a project came to you, you would need to tell us about it if it hadn't been on the list. The idea was that you would say, "What are the things we're working on in the short, medium and long term?" So, a few of the things you've talked about today, it's really not intended for your day-to-day work. It's more like is there an objective we have for the main year? And it's really just intended to be informational. We have occasionally gotten into a situation where a commission feels they're not able to take something up because Council hasn't directed them to, so it should be a low level of difficulty. Probably it will go on Consent. It will really be an informational item, and that way the community is aware if you want to take up one of the things that Ms. French mentioned. It's not intended to prevent you from doing your work. It's intended to share information and also help in case a board or commission is headed down a direction that the Council might not think is appropriate, then the Council can decide to pull it from Consent and have a discussion. So I realize it's a change, and we'll just see how it goes. I know one of the things that we learned in the survey is that many board and commission members felt very disconnected from the Council, whether it's their liaison didn't attend, whether it's there hadn't been the year review, whether they didn't know how the process worked. So, it's intended to foster more understanding on the part of the Council of the work that you're doing. I hope that's helpful.

Chair Bower: I think it is, and I'd just follow that with the obvious comment that last year has so disrupted everything that the City does and that we do as individuals. I think this year is kind of the test run for this, just because of the backwash from the pandemic, and we're not out of it yet. So maybe by next year we'll actually have a little more experience with this, and it'll be a smoother ride. Anyone else have comments

about the Handbook? Amy, we need to have the work plan in to Council...? We don't have a next meeting date, so maybe we do this with an Ad Hoc subcommittee?

Ms. French: We could have a subcommittee, but I don't think it's a hard and fast...HRB is actually the first in the planning, the boards and commissions, that is having this discussion and talking about the Handbook, so I don't know that everyone is going to meet that initial deadline. I think that's an ongoing goal in the second quarter. I think that we could talk about this again. I would just say that, with our CLG report, I believe that did include goals for the coming period. I may be forgetting, but we could have a look at that, since that is on our agenda. I was going to go find the page that talks about it.

Chair Bower: Let me interrupt and say, we have to have this report to the Council before the end of June and we're just at the beginning of the second quarter, so I'm assuming that before June we'll have another meeting, so we need to agendaize this plan on our next meeting. You can I can get together and rough it out. I'm just reminded of one of the comments that I wanted to make about the Handbook. There are two kinds of subcommittees. There is the standing subcommittee, which we do not have on the HRB, and there is an Ad Hoc subcommittee. Those last for 12 months and then expire. We're going to have an Ad Hoc subcommittee meeting after this meeting to look at colors for the President Hotel. That's an important distinction to make. Other boards – I think the Utility Advisory Board, maybe the Art Board, I'm not sure about that one – but they have standing subcommittees that have a different interaction with the community than an ad hoc committee in that they stay there for a longer period of time. So any time I refer to a subcommittee I'll try to remember to say an ad hoc subcommittee. And those are just created, in our case, for reviews of projects that don't need full Board approval but are minor detail approvals that we as a Board asked the staff to send to us so that we could oversee them. So, we'll pick up the work plan at our next meeting, and if we don't have a meeting before the deadline, then we'll call a meeting just to deal with that. If anyone at any time wants to make a comment, please don't be shy. Gogo and Caroline, I don't think I said anything the first year I was on the Board. It was a little intimidating sitting up on the dais in City Council chambers with people in the audience. Obviously, you can tell I've gotten over that problem.

### **Approval of Minutes**

#### 4. Approval of Historic Resources Board Draft Minutes of February 25, 2021

Chair Bower: Our next item on the agenda is approval of minutes, and that is a new standard that the Handbook has adopted. The minutes are not, as I understand it, going to be verbatim minutes now, but they will be minutes that summarize actions that the Board has taken. Is that a fair way to describe it, Amy?

Ms. French: Yes.

Chair Bower: This might be one of the last opportunities to look at every word of our previous meeting, which is exhausting. I didn't see anything in the minutes from our meeting of February 25<sup>th</sup> that I saw that substantially deviated from what we discussed. Did anybody else want to make any corrections or additions? I'm seeing heads shaking no here, so do I hear a motion to approve the minutes?

Board Member Wimmer: David, I will move to approve the minutes of our last meeting, February 25<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Bower: Is there a second?

Board Member Makinen: I'll second it.

Chair Bower: Okay, Michael. Thank you Any further discussion since there were no corrections or deletions? Seeing no further comment, how do we do this? Vinh, do you want to call roll?

Mr. Nguyen: Yes. Chair Bower?

Chair Bower: Yes.

Mr. Nguyen: Board Member Heinrich?

Board Member Heinrich: Abstain since I did not attend.

Mr. Nguyen: Board Member Makinen?

Board Member Makinen: Yes.

Mr. Nguyen: Board Member Pease?

Board Member Pease: Yes.

Mr. Nguyen: Vice Chair Shepherd?

Vice Chair Shepherd: I abstain. I wasn't in attendance.

Mr. Nguyen: Board Member Willis?

Board Member Willis: I think I abstain also, same reason, wasn't there.

Mr. Nguyen: Board Member Wimmer?

Board Member Wimmer: Yes.

Mr. Nguyen: The motion carries, 4-0-3.

### **Board Member Questions, Comments or Announcements**

Chair Bower: Do we have any questions, comments or announcements? I think we've covered...Let me start by saying I'd like to put on the agenda the Mills Act. We are 90 percent of the way to finishing a proposal that can be reviewed by the Board, but we're having trouble getting the next 10 percent, in large part because we haven't had any staff help. Amy can only run six or seven departments at once, so it's difficult to ask her to help. We tried last year to get outside help from Page and Turnbull or some other company like that, but that didn't work, and then of course last year the budget collapsed. I'm not sure where that's going to go, but I'd like to keep that sort of at the top of an agenda, because I think the City does need to have a program. We need to have a defined way of granting this kind of property tax redirection. We're way, way behind other cities. It's not a difficult thing to do. It's a little controversial, because any time you touch the tax base, people are very sensitive about that, but the Council has the final say on whether or not this moves forward on a particular project, so basically they are the representatives of all of us as residents, so having a plan doesn't mean you're actually going to spend the money. The plan is just a guideline or a roadmap for the Council to use in making a decision.

Ms. French: I'll jump in and just say something about this. There has been quite a bit of discussion lately in this list serve from different cities about the Mills Act. Perhaps David and I will have a moment to catch up. These are conversations that are maybe of interest. It's a debate or what have you, for issues that cities are dealing with regarding the Mills Act, so I think it would be interesting to delve back and have that discussion since it's been on ice for a while. Maybe we can touch base on that, David, and then put a study session on a future HRB agenda.

Chair Bower: I'd like to do that. I think the important thing to think of is that the Mills Act defines how the tax redirection should be used. Currently, we have one Mills Act contract in Palo Alto, as I understand, and that's the Squire House façade. That's historic. I think it was established in the 1970's, so it's very old, and the City gets nothing out of it, because the City owns the façade of the building anyway, as I understand it from Steve Emslie. Protecting the façade of a façade that that City owns does not seem to me to be serving the needs of the people, and yet that property tax relief should and is supposed to be used to maintain the buildings. There are many successful Mills Acts around the state that provide, not a tax break. It's just a redirection. The money still has to be spent on the project. That's what's important to know about current or modern Mills Act programs. So, currently we're not really benefitting as much as we could in Palo Alto. Debbie, go ahead.

Board Member Shepherd: I just wanted to encourage you and Amy and the Commission to go forward with this. I also serve on the Historical Heritage Commission in the County where the Mills Act has been effectively used. People ask me about it, and frankly, I'm embarrassed for Palo Alto. Many other municipalities, at least it's my impression, are using this successfully. I think it would be great, especially since you've already put some work into this, so it would be great if we could go the next step. Thank you.

Board Member Wimmer: David, I also wanted to mention that we obviously put a lot of extra hours into our work with the Mills Act, and I think half of us – you and I are the only two left of that original committee, so if I can be included or contribute at all, please let me know. Also, one thing I think of is I have friends



– and Debbie, one of our Board Members, is one – who has a historic house. I think some of the community members simply don't even know about the Mills Act, so I think our outreach would also be to educate people and tell them that this is something that could possibly benefit them at some point. It's not only establishing the program. The program is roughly established. It's making the program available for Palo Alto residents and reaching out to the specific residents who could possibly benefit from it.

Chair Bower: Good point. Amy can verify that at one point, a year or maybe more than a year ago, the tax assessor, I guess, contacted Amy and told her that there were five Mills Act contracts, or some number of Mills Act contracts that should not have been granted. So, there is a...you want to briefly fill in on that?

Ms. French: Sure. We had a number of properties that had covenants placed on them, and the County misinterpreted those as Mills Act contracts. They were giving tax breaks to those properties. Then the error was discovered. That was a difficult scenario for those property owners that suddenly had their taxes –

Chair Bower: Increased.

Ms. French: Past due for a five-year term or something.

Chair Bower: Yeah, I remember that. That's not something that...and that was all done by the tax assessor's office. It had nothing to do with the City staff or anything that the HRB did.

Ms. French: Correct. Very awkward.

Chair Bower: Mike?

Board Member Makinen: Thank you, Chair Bower. I had just a comment on this Mills Act situation, which has been ongoing for years and years with this City. I think probably we could all use a summary of what Mills Acts are occurring at other California cities and the successes or failures that they might have had. Maybe that would be an educational tool that we could use to bring to Council, to show them where we stand on it, compared to other cities that have viable historic preservation programs.

Chair Bower: Yes, absolutely, so that's why we should just flesh out the last ten percent. There are going to be lots of questions to answer. I'm expecting everyone will have opinions about how to move this forward so we could actually get something official to the Council. Caroline, I'm sorry. I didn't see your hand until after I called on Mike. Go ahead.

Board Member Wimmer: That's okay. I have a question. I have a couple of comments on our goals, or my goals. If somebody applied for a Mills Act now, is that possible, or not possible?

Ms. French: We don't have a program. We don't have an ordinance. There's no inroads to get that.

Board Member Wimmer: Okay, so it's a no?

Ms. French: It's a no.

Board Member Wimmer: Too bad. I know a good candidate that's coming up. So, my comments on my goals while I'm serving on the HRB, is I'd like to see our website more enthusiastic. I'd like to see it really promoting preservation. I'd like to see the inventory, not just a list of house numbers, but actually our whole inventory. Do most of you have copies of the inventory? The printed inventory? I think that should be readily available to anybody online. I know PAST has a lot of that up, but I'd like to see that on our website, too. I just feel like the website looks very technical, and I'd like it to maybe have walking tours, which originally, I know PAST took these over, but originally the booklets that were done on walking tours and historic properties in Palo Alto were done by the early HRB. I'd like to see, especially now, everybody is walking this last year. It was really a missed opportunity but it would be lovely to see that up online.

Chair Bower: I think you're absolutely right, and oddly, I'm on the PAST board, and a number of PAST board members were early HRB members. That's, I think, one of the reasons why it was ported over. PAST tried to do walking tours, tried to figure out a way to do them during the pandemic, but we just couldn't figure out a way that was safe for everyone, so they're starting up in the fall. PAST is a huge resource for Palo Alto residents.

Board Member Wimmer: I wasn't thinking so much about guided walking tours as a pamphlet that you would have a little map, would have information about the properties. You could walk through Professorville or Downtown, or the Eichler neighborhoods and see our historic resources and read a little bit about them.

Chair Bower: Alison was instrumental in getting a small art tour like that up in *The Weekly*, where I saw it, and we discussed it during I think one of the Handbook webinars that I attended. That was really great, and I'd love to do that for historic properties in Palo Alto. Information like that is the way we preserve buildings here. Anybody else have any comments about this?

Board Member Wimmer: I was just saying, I was looking through my book, and I have...does anyone recognize this?

Chair Bower: Yeah, right.

Board Member Wimmer: This was done by the American Association of University Women, Palo Alto Branch, and then I also have this little book, *Streets of Palo Alto*. Isn't that cute? Does anyone have that? I mean, maybe we can reissue these. Is that kind of what you're thinking? And also, I have some pamphlets like from Redwood City. They have a really neat walking tour pamphlet that they have at their Building Department, and I have a couple of copies of those. It's not quite as extensive as these books because these books are quite big, but something like that that we could just put them at the Building Department and see if anybody picks them up.

Board Member Willis: I have old pamphlets that are just trifold or something, one for Professorville, one for Downtown. I think I might even have a College Chairs one. I think I will try to copy those and distribute them to the Board, so you can see what has been out there in the past. It's not very available. I think PAST did try and keep them in the libraries for a long time, but that seems to have fallen off. I think that maybe in conjunction with PAST or on our own, I'd love to see something like that on the web. Everybody's walking around with their phone now. And just see an online version of these walking tours.

Chair Bower: Yeah, I think that would be wonderful. Everything is now online, on phones. I think somewhat to our detriment but that's the kind of information that actually would be very helpful. Alison, you had a comment?

Council Member Cormack: Thank you, Chair Bower. Just to be clear, I wasn't instrumental in getting that art tour done. I just highlighted it, because I think it's an effective way of doing what Commission Willis was describing – making it really easy for someone on their phone to figure out where are these things and to go. I'll just offer one other suggestion. We were told earlier this week at Council meeting that the May Fete Parade will be a week...I don't quite follow how it all works – but it will be a week-long reverse drive-by type thing where I think you're supposed to do decorations, for example, at your home, and then it will be on some tour. And there's stuff that's Downtown. It seems like it's in the very early stages. The reason I bring it up is that to the extent they are historic properties that would like to participate in this, then the parade route or whatever the design is would show that. So, I just offer that as a way to incorporate historic buildings into something that the City is already doing that might reach a new audience.

Board Member Wimmer: Alison, who is organizing that? Is that the City?

Council Member Cormack: Yes. The City is organizing it, so I'm sure that Ms. French can work with the City Manager's office to figure out if there's a way for this to work. It may be too rushed at this point. For all I know, we don't have contact information for people, but I just offer it as a way perhaps at least one property would be interested in participating this way.

Ms. French: I can bring it up to the Special Events Committee leader, and see if there's a way I can see what the route is. I don't know if they've already established the route, or if it's in process.

Council Member Cormack: I don't know either, but I think that there is an opportunity for people to volunteer to be on the route. So anyway, just one option

Chair Bower: The route used to start at High and University, go down University to Webster, and then turn south on Webster and end at Addison School. I don't think that's the case anymore. I think it ends at the park, doesn't it?

Council Member Cormack: It's actually not a parade this year. It's called a reverse parade, so rather than everyone gathering and going in the same place, you will do this in your car. I think they probably should have also said bicycles, but whatever. Instead of people watching you parade, you will drive around town and look at things that people have put out to see. I'm not describing it well, because I don't have a great vision of it yet in its early stages, but I'll just suggest that if there's a particular building, then this might be an opportunity to...Maybe it's the AME Zion Church that the group talked about last time. That might fit with the equity work and set an example. Anyway, that's enough on that. Just an idea of a way to, since the City will already be promoting sites around the city.

Board Member Shepherd: Is there any reason we couldn't have them just plug in everything that's on the inventory on that route? You don't need permission from owners. It's just public information, but it would raise awareness and then people can just Google it and they go to the PAST website.

Chair Bower: Good idea.

Ms. French: That is a good idea.

Board Member Shepherd: I don't think that's asking too much of anyone.

Ms. French: Certainly, we can grab some images from that PAST website that has the color photos of the inventory properties, the home, et cetera. That could be something that could be management, I imagine, because it's already on the web. So, links to those specific pages or something.

Chair Bower: That's actually lots of good ideas here. Thank you all for suggesting it. Thank you, Alison, for pointing that out. I had totally forgotten about the May parade, along with lots of other things.

Board Member Shepherd: I just wanted to add one other resource that's already out there. When we had the California Preservation Foundation meeting in Palo Alto they handed out all kinds of walking tour information and they had a reprint of a brochure that I'm sure lots of you are familiar with that was about Birge Clark from Palo Alto. My husband and I spent days during early COVID walking, and it hasn't been updated, so there's a couple things that don't exist anymore, but as we all know, there are really a lot of them.

Chair Bower: Are there any other comments? We should probably let those of us that work – I'm not in that group – get back to work. I'm not seeing any hands raised or any interest, so if there are no further comments. One moment, before I adjourn the meeting, we do have a subcommittee meeting after this to review the President Hotel colors. I'm on that. Debbie, can you do that?

Board Member Shepherd: Yes.

Chair Bower: Okay, and Amy do we have anyone else that volunteered?

Ms. French: I know that I had sent to Margaret and hadn't heard back, but Margaret, I believe you received the plans. Are you able to stay?

Board Member Wimmer: Yes, of course.

### **Adjournment**

Chair Bower: Okay, good. We'll just stay on. Debbie, Margaret and I will stay here for that subcommittee meeting, and for the rest of you, thank you for joining. Welcome, Gogo and Caroline, and I look forward to the time we might actually be able to meet in person. I'm hoping that's coming soon. And thank you, Council Member Cormack, for attending, very diligent. It's been very rare that we see our Council Liaison here all the time, because it's early in the morning. Anyway, thank you all. With that, I'll adjourn the meeting.