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Direct questions or concerns to the Commission Liaison at (310) 618-5990, or individual department head prior to submission to the Commission. Parties will be notified if the complaint will be included on a subsequent agenda.

The Historic Preservation Commission is an advisory body to the City Council that meets on the third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public. Agendas, staff reports, and minutes are available for review on the City webpage at www.TorranceCA.gov/Historic-Preservation-Commission-Agendas-Minutes.

Members of the public may prepare written comments to the Commission. Comments may be submitted via email to HistoricPreservationCommission@TorranceCA.Gov and write "Public Comment" in the subject line. In the body of the email include the item number and/or title of the item. All comments submitted by 5:30 p.m. the day prior to the meeting will be included as a "Supplemental" and made available on the City webpage. Comments received after 5:30 p.m. will be made available the following day on the City webpage.

**TORRANCE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION AGENDA
WEST ANNEX COMMISSION MEETING ROOM CITY HALL
3031 TORRANCE BOULEVARD
6:30 P.M. MARCH 21, 2024
REGULAR MEETING**

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MAY TAKE ACTION ON ANY ITEM
LISTED ON THE AGENDA**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

ROLL CALL: Commission Members: M. Higginbotham, Kartsonis, O'Donnell, Schwartz, Trivelli, Weideman, and Chair G. Higginbotham

2. FLAG SALUTE

3. REPORT OF THE STAFF ON THE POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Bl. and on the City's Website on Friday, March 15, 2024.

4. ANNOUNCEMENT OF WITHDRAWN, DEFERRED, AND/OR SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS (Limited up to a 15-minute period)

*This portion of the meeting is reserved for comment on items on the Consent Calendar or not on the agenda. Under the Ralph M. Brown Act, the Commission cannot act on items raised during public comment, but may respond briefly to statements made or questions posed; request clarification; or refer the item to staff. **No longer than 1 minute per speaker.** If presenting handout material to Commission, please provide 10 copies to staff before speaking.*

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

Matters listed under the Consent Calendar are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion and one vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed by a Commissioner from the Consent Calendar and considered separately.

6A. Approve Commission Minutes: January 18, 2024.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

7A. Mills Act Overview.

7B. Public Outreach Discussion.

7C. Historic Preservation Month Proclamation.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

9. COMMISSION ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

10. ADJOURNMENT

10A. Adjournment of Historic Preservation Commission Meeting to Thursday, May 16, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the West Annex Commission Meeting Room.



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
TORRANCE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION AGENDA**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The Torrance Historic Preservation Commission convened in a regular session at 6:34 p.m. on Thursday, January 18, 2024, in the West Annex Meeting Room.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners M. Higginbotham, Kartsonis, O'Donnell, Schwartz, Trivelli, Weideman, and Chair G. Higginbotham.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Planning Manager Oscar Martinez, Senior Planning Associate Carolyn Chun, Long Range Planning Manager Kevin Joe, and Community Development Assistant Riley Symons.

2. FLAG SALUTE

Commissioner Trivelli led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. REPORT OF THE STAFF ON THE POSTING OF THE AGENDA

Senior Planning Associate Chun reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard and on the City's Website on Thursday, January 11, 2024.

4. ANNOUNCEMENT OF WITHDRAWN, DEFERRED, AND / OR SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS

Senior Planning Associate Chun announced new liaison, Planning Manager Oscar Martinez.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

6A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: NOVEMBER 16, 2023

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to approve the November 16, 2023, minutes. Commissioner O'Donnell seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

7A. YEAR END SUMMARY OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION FOR 2023

Community Development Assistant Symons presented Item 7A, a year end summary of the Historic Preservation Commission for 2023:

- There were (9) Commission meetings with (15) Agenda Items reviewed.
- In 2024, Commission and staff conducted public and social media outreach, heard multiple presentations by staff, other Commissions, and various historic preservation groups, and discussed processes and refined procedures to pave the way for more Historic Landmark applications.

Members of the Commission spoke.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to accept and file the annual report for the Historic Preservation Commission in 2023, with an amendment that the video shoot for the first Landmark house be included. Commissioner Trivelli seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

7B. INTRODUCTION OF THE 2024 AGENDA CALENDAR FOR THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Long Range Planning Manager Joe presented Item 7B, an introduction of the 2024 Agenda Calendar for the Historic Preservation Commission; the Agenda Calendar contains a tentative schedule and is subject to change with Items requiring the Commission's review.

Commissioner Kartsonis requested adding a discussion to the Agenda which included outreach to contributing properties and monthly social media posts. Community Development Director Ramirez acknowledged the request, stating that staff can research outreach costs and coordinate with the City Manager's Office to see if outreach (mailers, postcards, etc.) could be done.

Commissioner Schwartz inquired on expanding Landmark status to commercially zoned properties. Community Development Director Ramirez replied that staff is currently researching the matter.

Long Range Planning Manager Joe clarified that the Historic Resources Survey encompassed the entire Torrance Tract which included commercial, industrial, and residential properties.

Commissioner Kartsonis inquired if Landmark status could be applied to homes beyond the Torrance Tract. Community Development Director Ramirez replied, stating that funding would need to be researched and City Council would need to support and provide direction to the Commission to move forward.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to accept and file Item 7B. Commissioner M. Higginbotham seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

7C. OVERVIEW OF HISTORIC LANDMARK AND DISTRICT DESIGNATION PROCESSES

Long Range Planning Manager Joe presented Item 7C, an overview of the Historic Landmark and District Designation processes.

- Homeowners interested in having their property designated are encouraged to speak with the Community Development Department, Planning Division, and staff to understand processes before submitting application.
- Once application has been completed, a building permit hold is placed on the property for major alterations and demolition that could potentially affect the integrity of the resource; requests will be placed on the Commission’s Agenda and public hearing notices will be published, printed, and mailed.
- When the public hearing is scheduled, the Commission will decide to approve or deny the application based on the merits of the application, written and oral testimony received, and staff’s recommendation.

Members of the Commission spoke.

MOTION: Commissioner Weideman moved to accept and file Item 7C. Commissioner Schwartz seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

9. COMMISSION AND STAFF ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Trivelli announced that the Point Fermin Lighthouse will be observing its 150th anniversary this year, and a talk, *A Tale of Two Lighthouses*, will be held at Malaga Cove Library, Saturday, February 3, 2024.

Chair G. Higginbotham inquired if applicants could be asked to come to a Commission meeting who visit the Planning counter looking to alter a contributing structure. Planning Manager Martinez stated that staff can investigate and bring back additional information to the Commission.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 7:45 p.m., Commissioner Weideman moved to adjourn the meeting to Thursday, March 21, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the West Annex Meeting Room. Commissioner M. Higginbotham seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

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AGENDA ITEM NO. 7A

TO: Members of the Historic Preservation Commission
FROM: Planning Division
SUBJECT: Mills Act Overview

Enacted by the State legislation in 1972, the Mills Act is the most powerful economic incentive program for the restoration and preservation of qualified historical buildings. In California, the Mills Act Program allows an owner of a property that has been designated historic on a local, state or the National register to realize a substantial reduction in property taxes. The Program is administered and implemented at the local level through a Mills Act contact between the homeowner and city. The Mills Act is a voluntary program that is owner initiated.

Under the City's Historic Preservation Plan, the Mills Act Program will be available to properties listed in the Torrance register as a historic landmark and Contributing Resources in a Historic District. An interested owner of an eligible property must submit a Mills Act Property Tax Program Supplemental Application form along with a property maintenance and rehabilitation plan; photographs documenting the condition of the resource; site plan; copies of property tax bill, grant deed and legal description, and title insurance; structural report; and the application fee. The application and materials will be reviewed, and an inspection of the property will be performed by the Community Development Department. A report, recommendation, and draft Mills Act contract will be prepared for the Historic Preservations Commission's consideration.

The Mills Act Contract is executed between the City and property owner for a minimum ten-year term that is automatically renewed annually on its anniversary date for new ten-year term until the owner requests for non-renewal. The contract runs in perpetuity with the land, is recorded on the property deed and is transferred to a future property owner who must commit to maintaining the property. The contract will include a plan for the property maintenance and rehabilitation to be completed or performed by the owner for the next ten years (the minimum term of the contract). By entering into the contract, the owner agrees to maintain and perform the rehabilitation work outlined in the plan. Annual inspections by City staff will be conducted to ensure compliance with the terms stipulated in the contract. Failure to comply with the terms or breach of contract may result in financial penalties or termination of the contract. The owner must provide written notice of non-renewal of the contract at least 90 days prior to the anniversary renewal, otherwise the contract is automatically renewed for a year.

Mills Act participants may realize between a 40% to 60% property tax reduction during the term of the contract. The County Assessor assesses properties using three methods: restricted value, factored base year value, and current market value. For a historic structure, the property can be assessed using restricted value, which typically will be the lowest of the three assessment methods. This value will normalize to the market value over time where property tax savings will be less and eventually there will no savings realized.

Proposed additions to a historic landmark or contributing structure under a Mill Act contract could potentially occur subject to the approval of Certificate of Appropriateness by the Commission or Community Development Director. New additions to the structure and property improvements that are not considered historic would be assessed on market value. Work necessary to restore and preserve the

historic resource would be assessed at a restricted value. The total assessed value for determining property tax would be the sum of restricted value of historic improvements, the market value of the new additions, and the land value.

The Mills Act Program is designed to be an incentive for homeowners to preserve a historic structure and work in tandem with the landmark and historic district designation process.

Prepared by,

/s/ Kevin Joe
Planning Associate

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Oscar Martinez
Planning Manager

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7B

TO: Members of the Historic Preservation Commission
FROM: Planning Division
SUBJECT: Discussion on Public Outreach

One of the goals of the Historic Preservation Commission is to promote public understanding of and involvement in the history of the City. This item has been brought forward at the request of the Commission to discuss outreach strategies and goals for the 2024 calendar year.

In 2023, the Historic Preservation Commission conducted outreach at the City Yard Open House and the Rock around the Block event. The Historic Preservation Commission also reviewed and accepted the National Preservation Month proclamation from City Council. Staff posted historical facts about the City of Torrance on social media each day of May 2023, to commemorate National Preservation Month.

Outreach efforts for the 2024 year may include: an informational flyer sent to contributing residences in the Torrance Tract, promotional Historic Preservation Month social media posts, National Preservation Month proclamation, and attending events such as Rock Around the Block. These outreach efforts are described below for discussion and consideration.

1. Staff, at the request of the Commission, has created a draft flyer to send to contributing residential structures within the Torrance Tract. The flyer aims to inform the property owners of contributing residential properties that their property may be eligible for Landmark designation and subsequently the Mills Act. The draft flyer is attached for your consideration.
2. Attached are the top performing 2023 Preservation Month posts on social media for reference. Staff asks that the Commission discuss possibilities for content to post for 2024.
3. The proclamation will be addressed in item 7C.
4. The July 18th meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission falls on the same date as the Rock Around the Block event. Staff asks, that the Commission discuss the possibility of attending the event to conduct outreach and the shift of the election of the Historic Preservation Commission Chair to another date.

Recommendation of the Community Development Director that the Historic Preservation Commission provide input on the draft flyer and social media outreach, and determine whether to or not to attend the Rock Around the Block event in lieu of the July 18th Commission meeting.

Prepared by,

/s/ Riley Symons
Planning Assistant

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Oscar Martinez
Planning Manager

Attachments:

1. Draft Public Outreach Flyer
2. 2023 Preservation Month Social Media Posts



The Historic Preservation Commission is looking for **TORRANCE'S NEXT HISTORIC LANDMARK**

Your property may be eligible to be designated as a historic landmark!

Do you know its history?

Is it affiliated with important people or events of the past?

Does it feature design or workmanship of a bygone era?

If so, you may be eligible for designation!



Contributing homes listed on the Historic Resources Survey are eligible to apply for a Historic Landmark designation. Homes designated as Landmarks are eligible to apply for the Mills Act contract, which can effectively reduce property taxes. The primary goal of City of Torrance's Historic Preservation Program is to encourage the designation of properties as historic landmarks and the establishment of historic districts in order to preserve the Torrance Tract's unique place in the City's history, maintain its neighborhood character, manage appropriate change, and promote its sense of place.

Contact the Community Development Department about applying to become the next Historic Landmark!

For more information, call (310) 618-5990, visit www.TorranceCA.Gov/Historic or email CDDInfo@TorranceCA.Gov


City of
TORRANCE
California

www.TorranceCA.Gov

MAY IS HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH

VOL. 1 NO. 25 TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, MAY 25, 2023

**DOWNTOWN TORRANCE TO RECEIVE
NEW LOOK; WILL RETAIN SAME FEEL**




City of
TORRANCE
California

www.TorranceCA.Gov

MAY IS HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH

VOL. 1 NO. 1 TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, MAY 1, 2023

**THE ORIGINAL TORRANCE TRACT
WAS DESIGNED BY
THE OLMSTEAD BROTHERS**



MAY IS HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH

VOL. 1 NO. 7

TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, MAY 7, 2023

**TORRANCE HIGH: FIRST TORRANCE
PROPERTY ON THE NATIONAL
REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**



MAY IS HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH

VOL. 1 NO. 16

TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, MAY 16, 2023

**OLD TORRANCE POST OFFICE STILL
USED AS INTENDED 90 YEARS LATER**



AGENDA ITEM NO. 7C

TO: Members of the Historic Preservation Commission
FROM: Planning Division
SUBJECT: Historic Preservation Month Proclamation

The month of May is Historic Preservation Month. In May 2023, The Historic Preservation Commission accepted the Historic Preservation Month Proclamation from the Torrance City Council. The same proclamation is attached to provide the Historic Preservation Commission a chance to review before the request is forwarded to the City Council for the May 7, 2024 meeting. Staff would also like to determine who the Commission would like to appoint to accept the Proclamation at the City Council Meeting.

Recommendation of the Community Development Director that the Historic Preservation Commission provide input on the draft Historic Preservation Proclamation and determine who will accept the Proclamation.

Prepared by,

/s/ Riley Symons
Planning Assistant

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Oscar Martinez
Planning Manager

Attachments:

1. Historic Preservation Month Proclamation

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, May is declared National Preservation Month by the National Trust for Historic Preservation; and

WHEREAS, through the Preservation Plan and Historic Preservation Ordinance, the City endeavors to protect neighborhood character, preserve irreplaceable cultural resources, and create a distinct sense of place; and

WHEREAS, historic preservation is an effective tool for revitalizing neighborhoods, fostering local pride, and maintaining community identity while enhancing livability; and

WHEREAS, it is important to recognize our past and celebrate Torrance's rich heritage that shaped and influenced our community and environment; and

WHEREAS, the Torrance Historical Society's mission is to promote interest and education in the history of Torrance and the San Pedro Rancho; to promote historical research in Torrance, to collect, preserve, and make available of Torrance historical records and related documents through the operation of a museum and archives; and

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission was established to foster public understanding of and involvement in the unique historical, architectural and cultural heritage of the City and to encourage the protection, enhancement, appreciation and use of historic structures deserving of recognition; and

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission approved the first Historic Preservation Landmark on October 20, 2022, and continues to foster interest in and provide education about the designation of Historic Resources in the City of Torrance.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE K CHEN, as Mayor of the City of Torrance, California, do hereby proclaim the Month of May 2024 as

National Preservation Month

Signed this 7th day of May 2024.

Mayor George K Chen

ATTEST:

Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk