

# Historic Preservation Board



## Minutes

Virtual Platform  
57 E 1<sup>st</sup> St

Date: June 1, 2021 Time: 6:00 p.m.

### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brandon Benzing, Chair  
Barbara Bingham  
Jim Babos  
Niti Desai  
Michelle Dahlke  
Bruce Nelson, arrived at 6:15pm

### MEMBERS ABSENT:

Laura Schaffer-Metcalf Ed.D., Vice-Chair

### STAFF PRESENT:

Arianna Urban  
Dr. Nana Appiah  
Charlotte McDermott

### GUESTS:

Vic Linoff  
Robert Wadsack  
Ben Graff  
Ron Bailey

## 1. Call meeting to order.

### Chair Brandon Benzing

Hello, everybody. We'll call the June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, Historic Preservation Board meeting to order at 6:01pm. First order is to take roll: Chair Benzing is present. Vice Chair Schaffer-Metcalf is absent. Boardmember Bingham is present. Boardmember Babos is present. Boardmember Dahlke is present, and Boardmember Nelson is currently absent.

## 2. Approval of minutes from previous meeting.

### Chair Benzing

Were there any comments to the meeting minutes? Do we have a motion to approve the minutes?

### Boardmember Jim Babos

I make a motion that we approve the amendment the minutes of the May 4 meeting.

### Boardmember Barbara Bingham

I'll second.

**AYES: Benzing-Bingham-Babos-Dahlke-Desai**

**NAYES: None**

**ABSENT: Schaffer-Metcalf, Nelson**

## 3. Items from citizens present.

### **Arianna Urban**

I think I saw Vic on the on the call. If you're out there, please go ahead.

### **Vic Linoff**

Good evening. Just a couple of things. One, an update on the Buckhorn Baths. The sale has now closed, so the baths have a new owner. We haven't met the owner yet, but everything that we've heard, and I think that Ariana can confirm, that is their interest in preserving the property. Also, very important ever since the Buckhorn closed was our concern for the records that Alice Sliger kept. Every year, there was a binder that delineated all of the guests that were at the Buckhorn, all of the services they received, and things of that sort. Plus, she kept diaries and just a wealth of information, which can be very revealing in telling the entire Buckhorn story. We tried many times to acquire that material, and then finally, during this transfer of ownership, we were able to get all of those materials, including binders of records, from 1949, to about 2009. Anything that happened at the Buckhorn was recorded there: you can go to the baseball years and can see which room Willie Mays stayed in and type of services he received. Also, there are two or three binders of Alice's diaries, plus a couple of smaller ones, where she was writing her own personal history. So anyone that wants to do research in the future, is going to find this material incredibly valuable, though it has received neglect over time. Some of it is in pretty rough shape right now, and we are trying to conserve it, organize it, and then it will ultimately reside at the mesa Historical Museum and be accessible for public research.

Just one other quick note. I don't know if you're aware, that the Mayor does a podcast called It's Always Cool in Mesa, and the last one, which was just released a few days ago, is on the diving lady. It's really kind of an entertaining look at the history and the people that were involved with the restoration of the diving lady. So you might want to take a listen to it. I think if you go to the Mesa website and google, "It's Always Cool in Mesa" it will take you to the link to the podcast. Thank you.

### **Chair Benzing**

That is great news about Buckhorn, thanks for sharing. And thanks for sharing the other tidbit about the podcast. Sure to listen.

## **4. Introduction of the new property owners of the property located at 200 N Macdonald (formerly the Mesa Woman's Club) and discussion of the future use of the property.**

### **Arianna Urban**

Hi Trevor, great to finally meet you guys. Thank you so much for joining us. Chair Benzing and Members of the Board this is this is Trevor Woodford and his family, the new owners of the Mesa Women's Club. I'll just let you go ahead and take it away.

### **Trevor Woodford**

We're really excited to be a part of the community and everything. Our goal is to keep on keeping on, like the building has been going since 1931. It's been a positive force in the community, and we'd like to just continue that. We've already reached out to everyone that they had contracts there in the past and reschedule their appointments. We've got things lined up until 2022. We're still working things out and doing the same thing that they've been doing in the past. We've got

Quinceaneras and birthday parties there, and we're just really excited to keep the building continuing on as it has been for all these decades.

**Chair Benzing**

Terrific. It's nice to meet you and put a face to you and your family. We're super excited about it. We know that was one of the concerns when the property went up for sale. What would it be transformed into? Knowing that a community center has always been the best use of that little property there. I think I can speak for the whole Board that we're super excited and super happy that you're on Board with the preservation efforts of Mesa.

**Trevor Woodford**

It's kind of a passion project. We've always loved the building so when we saw it went up for sale we were really excited. We also own the building at 101 West Main on the corner of Main Street and Macdonald. That is also on the Historic Register. We really are committed to downtown. We're really pleased to be able to expand our dedication to the downtown area of Mesa and be part of everything that's happening.

**Chair Benzing**

Well, it's much appreciated. Do of the Boardmembers have any questions for new owners? Well, we look forward to continuing our partnership with you guys. Your efforts for preservation make it great to have people like you. I think it makes it so much easier to keep the history going in downtown and Mesa in general. Thank you again.

**5. Hear a presentation and discuss the rehabilitation of the historic Federal Building located at 26 N Macdonald.**

**Arianna Urban**

I'll have Robert from the architect's team introduce himself here.

**Robert Wadsack**

My name is Robert Wadsack, I am an Associate Principal and Architect with GH2 Architects here in Mesa. We're very excited to be a part of this project, and will give just a brief update as to where we are and how we got here. We were hired a little over a year ago now by the City with a pretty broad goal of reintroducing the building and creating a welcoming environment that emphasizes the history and character of the existing structure.

To give a little history of the building, it was originally built in 1936 as Mesa's post office. There was an addition in the 60s that expanded the building to include the US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife and ATF at one time. Since then, it has actually sat more or less vacant, only really housing storage in the basement for the museum group.

Over the past several years, the City has really worked to reintroduce the building and in 2018, with additional bonds, allocated additional funds to improve the building. We're dubbing it "The Post" and it will be a new medium scale multipurpose event and function space. It will still house the storage space in the basement for the museum's group. The mezzanine and second floor will actually have office space and conference space that'll be utilized by the Downtown Transformation Group and the Downtown Mesa Association (DMA).

I'll briefly walk through the floor plans. This building, as many of you are aware, is fairly gutted, They've taken out all existing mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. There's currently just stair access and ramp access to the first floor and stair access to the second floor and to the mezzanine, none of which is to code. Part of our challenge is to make this building fully accessible and make all levels fully accessible. We do that by the introduction of ramps at both the front of the building and rear of the building, a new stair tower and new elevator tower at the southwest corner of the building. Ultimately, we decided this was the most logical location for a new stair and elevator tower so that we could gain access to all levels with an accessible elevator. So again, the first floor's main function will be a medium-size event space. We're going to remove the demising wall, or most of the demising wall, between the original building and the 1960 edition. We'll reintroduce a new partition so that it can be divided if desired. But that space will be opened up and will be able to host a variety of different functions, be it banquets, be it lectures, you name it.

We are also relocating the entrance that was a part of the addition. We're moving it one bay north. The reasoning for that is so that we can take the ramp that currently is not an ADA accessible ramp and get it out from in front of the original building so that it goes to the south. This way we can actually get the ADA landings we need and the space we need. It also allows us to put the new entry vestibule at the demising wall so that anyone coming into the building can either enter that space as a single space or if it's divided, enter the space to the south of the north as needed. We'll also be reintroducing a large restroom bank to the first floor, and a serving kitchen. The dock that's currently at the west side of the building which used to be for mail, we're going to introduce some platforms too, so that the parking lot in a future phase can be used for different outdoor events. So that back area is a usable space. It has some seating and direct access to the restrooms that were introduced in the building. Again, the majority of the basement will be storage space. As well as the new mechanical systems that will serve the majority of the first floor and parts of the second mezzanine, with some additional mechanical space on the on the second floor.

Preliminary layouts show the DMA and Downtown Transformations on the second floor. They also have their shared space on the mezzanine level. Parks/Facilities will have a manager's office there to manage the building.

The site plan shows we're going to reintroduce some landscaping to the front of the building, as well as where we have all of the existing window wells, which we found out through the existing drawings and some probing, that the window wells are currently tied into sanitary sewer. In lieu of trying to try to disconnect those and dig all that up, we're going to introduce ball lights to the top of those and add translucent caps to the wells. This will allow us to keep water out of those spaces without really modifying the facade of either the original building or the addition and reintroduce and introduce a pretty unique feature to the front of the building as well.

We developed renderings to show what all this will look like. The new entry piece takes you into the new addition and into that new vestibule with new stair and platforms. The new wall will be similar to what was there previously but a break from the existing granite with a board-formed concrete at those platforms. There will be new lighting fixtures at both new platforms and the original, as well as that new ramp and guard rail. The addition of the elevator and stair tower that will take place on the southwest corner of the building will be a primary access point for the second floor and mezzanine

space. This is visually a little more than just an elevator and stair tower, so we've introduced some more modern elements to it since we are on the back side of the building away from that original facade. The concept renderings show the interior space. We introduced an LVT flooring for durability. Acoustical baffles will allow us to expose the original structure above but introduce some softer materials into what's going to be a fairly hard space. The city has been very adamant about trying to expose as much of the original structure as we can. We are going to be removing as much of the plaster and some of the terracotta infill tile that covers the existing exterior load bearing masonry. So that we can show some history of how that was built. There are sections at the original main entrance where we are looking to just remove the plaster and leave the terracotta infill. To again, tell the story of how this building went up. We've suggested that we reuse some of the original hardwood flooring as a as part of a demising wall and as part of the super graphic. We would take that flooring and put it on the wall between the serving kitchen and that main space with "The Post" text on the on the wall, backlit if we can make that work. We welcome any questions and input from the group.

### **Chair Benzing**

I think it's a very nice project going on right now. We had a past Boardmember who ran a studio at ASU and used this as one of their semester projects and I got to be a part of that. It's been a long time coming getting this property back into public use. I really like how you've re-engineered the ramp because I know that's always been a visual issue with this building. As the old non-ADA ramp kind of dominated the façade. This is a very nice way to clean it up. Treating the new stair tower a little bit different to make sure that the modern addition is differentiated, I think it's a great. My only questions are kind of what are what are our timelines that the city is looking at for this project? I mean, is it going through design phase and then it's waiting a little bit or is this kind of a full steam ahead?

### **Robert Wadsack**

This is full steam ahead. We have had the construction manager come on, I think in April or March, and we are about to submit our 60% signed submittal for construction documents to the City by the end of this month, with the intent of having full construction permit sets or bid sets ready to go this fall with construction complete fall 2022

### **Chair Benzing**

Great.

### **Boardmember Babos**

I also think it's a very nice project. You guys seemed to think everything through very well. I especially like the entry vestibule. I didn't care for it so much in plan but looking at it, kind of like a glass cube in there, I like that a lot because it defines the vestibule obviously, but it keeps the feeling of that whole open space. And I think that's a very nice feature. Thank you.

### **Arianna Urban**

I'll add, Chair Benzing and Members of the Board, that Robert and his team have been great partners in historic preservation and have really been able to appreciate the historic nature of the building. Like Boardmember Babos said, have paid a lot of attention to the details. There is one original window left in the building on the backside, and they have committed to preserving that and

making it part of the new bathroom. I just want to express our appreciation for the architect team and their commitment to historic preservation. We appreciate it.

### **Chair Benzing**

If there are no more questions or comments from the Board, thank you for sharing Robert. We look forward to a successful project for you.

## **6. Hear a discussion on the history of the Washington-Escobedo Heritage Neighborhood and the cultural resources within the neighborhood.**

### **Boardmember Bruce Nelson**

Thank you for having me.

### **Arianna Urban**

Chair Benzing and Members of the Board, we wanted to give Boardmember Nelson some time and space to elaborate on some of the things that you brought up last at last month's meeting regarding the Washington-Escobedo Neighborhood Action Committee's historic preservation award and give us a little bit more background about that organization and the history and role it plays in the community. We' just like to learn more about it, so please go ahead.

### **Boardmember Nelson**

Okay, so the committee was started in early 2011, maybe, or somewhere around 2010. The history of what's happening goes back to 1986, when the community was under siege by the City of Mesa. They were trying to gentrify the city, and the elders fought back and pushed back. Jerry Boyd, who was the first African American Council Member came up to sort of help lead that charge. A woman that was very involved was Minnie Brisco, and when that was happening, she was 103 years old and in an interview with the newspaper she told them, "Look, I've been here for a long time, I'm going to die here. You can't kick me out." Her neighbors felt the same way, we don't want to live in a concrete jungle, we want to keep this neighborhood looking the way it was. So they really push the City and the City Clerk. I remember in the newspaper, they quoted him saying it was an old ghetto neighborhood that should just die a natural death. And people just pushed back and said, you know what, there's a lot of wonderful things that come out of here that you probably don't know: we have Bruce Cooper from the neighborhood, who was on Channel 12 for a long time. We had two football players, the Livingstons, that came out in the 60s. One was in Dallas, and one was in Chicago. The first Black doctor was there. Miss Johnson, the first African American female principal was there. A veterinarian was there and we have quite a few veterans from the neighborhood. There was a famous photographer, Guillermo, I think his name is, who worked with Frank Lloyd Wright, H\he lived in that neighborhood, he lived in the projects. So it has a great history of wonderful things happening.

So we organized to push back and say, look, we need to do something so people don't come in and build five and six story apartments. We organized different committees, and I was voted to be on the Economic Development team. They sort of stuck me in there, I don't know why. We reached out to the developer and he was very good and really listened to what we had to say, and they ended up saving four of the original projects. One became a sort of business center or the office, one became a community center, one became a gym, and one is the Heritage room. That's the room that I have been organizing and run. We really sort of pushed it and just said, look, we want to

maintain so we tried to figure out what we could do. We had regular meetings. The council member, Chris (I can't think of his last name) at the time was our Council Member, and he was really very helpful. He even came, I think he did, maybe four visits, like on a Tuesday for a "Meet the Councilmember" at the Alston house. He would come and say, hey, look, this is what we think. As time went on, we tried to figure out what we could do. We thought it would be good to do a heritage or historical neighborhood. They said, well, too many of the buildings had been changed. Which happens. So it became a Heritage Neighborhood, which gave us some little protection. When people come in, we try to have them talk to folks and say, hey, this is what it was and this is why it's so important to the neighbors and everything.

Remember, it was the segregated community in Mesa. A lot of people don't know that. A lot of good things came out of it. We organized and we did things. We had trainings with Gorman [the developer]. It was really great, they did forklift training, and about 10 people came out and learned to drive one of those huge commercial forklifts and got licensed to do that. Other people got some work and stuff. It was the effort from the community really pushing. We had barbecues; at one point, we used to have a thing where it would be meet the police. They would come and talk to the community (that's kind of gone by the wayside). It's a community that is thriving and pushing and people are doing some wonderful things. And so we keep going, though we haven't met in a while because of COVID like everything else, but we plan on restarting up. So I kind of gave you a history of what's happening in that neighborhood, if that helps any.

#### **Chair Benzing**

That's great. I know before you were on the Board, the Washington-Escobedo Neighborhood Action Committee was the reason why the Heritage Neighborhoods were started. Because of all your hard work the Board wanted to do something to give some recognition and a little bit of protection to those neighborhoods. It was just very important, the history that was there that you so thoughtfully explained to the Board, way back. It must have been four or five years ago. So thank you for all that, that you got done back then and all you guys continue to do for the neighborhood.

#### **Boardmember Nelson**

Yeah, they keep pushing. I did make a documentary, *Northtown*, it's on Amazon to stream. I was working with the Mesa Historical Museum, we wrote a grant for SRP to do an exhibit at the library, originally, called "Hallelujah Hats!". I had enough money; we shot for one day and ended up getting a documentary that turned out to be 65 minutes, which I really didn't expect. It was great. I've done exhibits at the libraries for the veterans. I have an exhibit that I put up two years in a row recognizing the veterans and stuff we found. As a matter of fact, a lot of people don't know the first casualty from World War One was a Native American. It's amazing, you know, the VFW in Chandler used to be named after him. Unfortunately, when McCain passed away, they changed it, which I didn't understand, they should have put his name side by side to McCain's. But he was the first casualty from World War One, a Native American, from just up the street from our neighborhood. Also from my veterans exhibit, we had two veterans that were former slaves, and were Buffalo Soldiers at one point, who lived in that neighborhood. McPearson was one of them, the first black family, and it turned out to be my great grandfather was one, which I didn't really know. There's a lot of history there and some wonderful things. Thank you for recognizing that. I'm sure they'll be very grateful for that.

#### **Chair Benzing**

I know speak for everybody; we're looking forward to the fall. Hopefully we get to tour some of the stuff with you and really dive into a little more of the details as well.

**Boardmember Nelson**

Definitely, I've got stories.

**Arianna Urban**

Chair Benzing and Boardmember Nelson, I just wanted to bring up on the screen here, I believe this is the housing community that Board member Nelson was referring to, where four of the historic buildings were able to be saved and turned into the community centers and the Heritage room. These are kind of neat little buildings, you can kind of see some sort of stylistic porch fins and things like that. This turned out to be a really neat project. So it's worth a drive by and we're certainly looking forward to coming to visit in the fall. We should also arrange for a screening of your film. That sounds wonderful.

**Boardmember Nelson**

That would be great you know, the Mesa Historical Museum found the, the plaque that went up when it converted back to public housing in '51 or '52. It's a cast iron and it's very heavy, but I have it and we want to put it near the front of the apartments so people can see it. With COVID that kind of stopped everything, but I'm back on track. It would be a nice thing to have and to see all those names from way back in the day. I think some of you will recognize some of the founding families names on there with Council Members and stuff. So yeah, it's a great little spot.

**Arianna Urban**

That's great. Thank you.

**Chair Benzing**

Well I know 10-15 minutes isn't anywhere near enough to dump the plethora of knowledge you have on the neighborhood, but today you gave us these little tidbits, and it was great. So, thank you for sharing.

**Boardmember Nelson**

Yeah, I've got a lot of stuff. It's just in my head. Doing research for the documentary and the veterans' documentary, I came across things that I didn't realize that happened. One thing was very fascinating, Jerry Boyd, our first African American Council member, his mother, we call her Peewee, her and her friends back in '51 or '52, organized and created the first area for the YMCA. The Mesa YMCA was segregated so they created the colored YMCA for the folks in the neighborhood. And I just stumbled on that by accident because she never talked about it. But that was fascinating that they were doing stuff like that. And another woman back in the 40s found out that the veterans from Williams Field couldn't read. She took it upon herself and taught them to read and write on a weekly basis and stuff. So a lot of wonderful things come out of that.

**Arianna Urban**

Chair Benzing, if I may ask one last question of a Boardmember Nelson, you mentioned the Washington Escobedo heritage room. What sort of contents do you have? Do you have archives and records and some sort of material history of the neighborhood?

**Boardmember Nelson**



Well the first thing I did was make areas. I put a big panel up of the history of the Center, history of the school, history of the swimming pool, some of the churches, and they're just big panels with the information on them. Then when I did an exhibit, the veterans exhibit, I put it on there first. It's all kind of there. I reached out to the community, and unfortunately, they were not as forthcoming as I hoped. I asked people to bring me stuff, but they had to tell me a story about it. They couldn't just dump stuff off to me. We did get a chest from one of the community members living there, it belonged to their grandmother. I still have it, it's over 100 years old; that chest is in there. So those are the kinds of things I was asking for, in pictures, and saying, look, whatever you bring you need to write something about it too, you can't just give me a chair and say, oh, here's a cool chair. Who did it belong to? Where did it come from? I'm still hoping to get more of that stuff. That's kind of what that building is. I did another exhibit with games and toys from the neighborhood. We put in a big, tall, dollhouse. People would call me at 10 o'clock and I'd run down and open it up, their grandmother or their grandfather would want to see it. It's still there. We'll see what happens in the future.

**Arianna Urban**

Neat. We'll look forward to seeing that as well.

**7. Discuss a draft agenda for the June 26, 2021 Historic Preservation Board retreat.**

**Arianna Urban**

Chair Benzing and Members of the Board, over the past couple months, we've been working on putting together our annual Historic Preservation Board retreat, and have come up with the date of June 26. It's a Saturday and we'll be meeting in the morning. Our location has been confirmed as the Mesa Woman's Club. It'll be neat to be able to get in that building. Trevor is very excited to host us and there's plenty of space in there to have a great meeting. If you have all had a chance to take a look at the agenda, I'm happy to make any additions or hear any comments you might have on it.

**Boardmember Michelle Dahlke**

Chairman, I read through the agenda, and I've personally found that it covers a lot of things that I was hoping it would cover. And I think it looks great as it is, I don't have any changes that I would recommend.

**Chair Benzing**

Nothing that I had. I think, as we discussed, this is well laid out.

**Boardmember Babos**

Unfortunately I didn't make last years, so I'm not really sure how is it going to work, but it looks terrific to me.

**Boardmember Bingham**

I agree. I think it looks good. I'm excited about El Charro for lunch. There seems like there's plenty to fill a four hour retreat.

**8. Conduct a public hearing and make a recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Board on the following zoning case:**

**ZON21-00129 District 1. Within the 2200 to 2400 blocks of East McDowell (south side) and east of Gilbert Road on the south side of McDowell Road (3.85± acres). Rezone from RS43-HL to RS43. This request will remove the Historic Landmark Overlay on a property commonly known as the Crismon Farm Homestead. Quarles & Brady, LLP, applicant; Gunning Mark S/Ron Bailey Trust, owner.**

### **Chair Benzing**

This is ZON21-00129. In district one. It's within the 2200 to 2400 blocks of East McDowell. It's on the south side and east of Gilbert Road. It's a little triangle off the 202 and the case is to rezone it from an RS43-HL historical overlay to just an RS 43. This request removes the historic landmark overlay on the property commonly known as Crismon Farm Homestead.

### **Arianna Urban**

I just have a short presentation for you guys to give you some background about this case. As Chair Benzing said, the request is to actually remove the historic landmark overlay from the property that was formerly the Crismon Farm Homestead. Our intention for doing this is really to be able to reflect the current state of the property which, had already had it's historic resources removed back in 2006. There really isn't anything there left, the site has been graded and we just want to make sure that the zoning reflects the state of that property. As Chair Benzing said, the location of the property is kind of funky. It's east of Gilbert road, on the south side of McDowell. But it also bounded by the 202 Red Mountain Freeway and to the south by the South Canal. It's an interesting property shape. And the site itself is also below grade pretty significantly.

So just a brief history of the Crismon Farm: it was established by Charles Crismon Sr. in the 1870s. Crismon Sr. was from not the first, but the second, Mesa pioneer company that that traveled out here not to settle in Lehi, but to settle in Mesa itself. This was traditionally a farming property and remained so for many generations. There aren't a ton of historic photographs, but there were livestock cows, animals, horses. As far as we can tell the property had been this shape and size for quite a while. Just as a little interesting study, I went back through the historic aerial photographs for Maricopa County, I've bounded where the extant historic buildings had been. In 1969 the property was still clearly being used for farmland, and then in 1996 you can they were actually starting to plan the freeway here.

So anyway, this is what the buildings looked like prior to their removal. There was some documentation done in 2000, which are the two pictures on the bottom. Not only were there a couple of extant farm buildings, but there were also some site features as well, and some farm implements that had been left on the property. And also the site itself, you can see some of the trees and the groves in the background in their historic formations and rows and things like that. So in 2001, the historic overlay was placed on the property in order to protect the remaining buildings which were roughly in this condition, because of its association significance with the Crismon family as an important pioneering family in Mesa, though you can kind of see the rest of the property had been cleared.

The buildings had been vacant and abandoned for several years prior to their removal, in 2006 the City approved the removal of the buildings. So today, unfortunately, because the property has been completely cleared and graded, we are proposing to remove the historic landmark to be sure that

the City of Mesa zoning map is kept up to date with the with the with the status and the condition of the property. The reason that the historic landmark overlay was placed was due to the buildings and the site features themselves. So now that they've been removed, we feel it's appropriate to remove the historic landmark overlay, as the entirety of its historic character defining features are gone now. As I mentioned the site itself is pretty significantly below grade which makes it kind of interesting. But there's not a whole lot to see at this point out there. So, the applicant has done their requisite citizen participation and the property owners were notified of this proposal to remove the historic landmark overlay within 500 feet, and the homeowners associations were notified of the case to remove the overlay within half a mile, and then registered neighborhoods were notified within a full mile. The applicant also hosted a neighborhood meeting just a couple weeks ago on May 26.

In summary, we find that the request to remove the overlay does comply with the Mesa General Plan, which directs a thriving and up to date Historic Preservation Program, and also indicates one of the goals of the of the General Plan was to keep a current historic property register in Mesa, which this case will contribute to. So staff recommends approval, and we currently don't have any conditions. And I'll be happy to answer any questions you might have. We also have our planner here, Evan, that is working with the developer in a greater context for this case going forward.

#### **Arianna Urban**

All right. I hope that we've got the applicant able to come online with us either via phone or zoom.

#### **Ben Graff**

I'll go ahead and introduce myself, I'm Ben Graff with law firm of Quarles and Brady. I represent Sweetwater companies which is in contract to purchase this property, and would be the developer of this property as well. Before I jump into my brief presentation, I just want to thank Arianna for all of her coordination from our office. And that presentation was phenomenal. In fact, you found some photographs we didn't so as we collaborate for the history presentation inside that cafe, I'll definitely coordinate with your office on that. You can go the next slide. I won't be too repetitive, because Arianna's presentation was phenomenal.

We are uniquely situated site; I really liked that photograph that was shown of the older canal system. I think, and I'm glad, the Chairman and Members of the Board picked up in our narrative that we are not just a team of developers that that's going to ignore this history. In fact, we really want to embrace it. So if you move on to the next slide, we've done our own research and, it's been really interesting to read about this family in order to incorporate the history into some of our architecture, through things like the old homestead, picket, white fence, some of those integrated aspects will be in the exterior of our design as well. I appreciate Ariana pointing out that in 2006, the current property owners did, of course, coordinate with the City and receive the appropriate approvals for the demolition of the of the existing buildings and the grading.

Although the design of this development is obviously not before the Board tonight, I want to let you know how far we've gotten in terms of some of our plans. So first of all, the project will be named the Homestead at Lehi Crossing, and that will be a permanent name for the entire development. In addition, we've already figured out the design and location of the Crismon soda shop, which is right off of the main public trail access. So not only would this be an amenity for the residents, but more importantly, this will be open to the public. So those that are on horseback, running, jogging, or walking on the trail system will be able to stop by the Crismon soda shop.

So this is a depiction we have of what it would look like from the trail. But before my presentation, I was able to consult with my client, and they would be more than happy, in addition to the soda shop to have an exterior brass plaque outside of the building. I think that's a good point in the event for some reason the soda shop doesn't remain than the brass plaque will, so we're very amenable to that idea. Again, we think it would be just an iconic place to meet to enjoy, you know, a nice drink or breakfast. Interior wise, our architect team has already started to kind of devise how we would incorporate the Crismon Homestead history with those photographs or if there's any historic items, anything we can do to kind of create that theme on the inside.

We did work with Arianna to understand the legal test for the removal of the overlay, and it pretty much goes in reverse of how it was placed. And of course, since the structures were properly and legally removed, and even the configuration of the orchards are no longer there, this property no longer qualifies for the HL overlay. And as Arianna pointed out as a good planner, it also will now bring this site back into conformance with the General Plan, which promotes neighborhood characters and a diversity of neighbors.

just wanted to be brief. I appreciate your time this evening, Chairman, Members of the Board and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

#### **Chair Benzing**

I think from my end, you answered the questions that unfortunately, we went out of order. Does any buddy else in the Board have any questions or comments?

#### **Boardmember Babos**

I live not too far from there, and I'm familiar with the property and between the freeway, it's kind of a nowhere land, so to speak. But I did read through the proposal, and you did a great job with the presentation. I don't have any problem with removing the historic overlay. My only comment would be reading through the paperwork their "nod to the history," is that they talked about having photographs in the soda shop. And my suggestion might be that they do something a little bit more permanent, maybe the brass plaque on a rock outside or something that. You know, businesses can fail; I'm sure this one will do great, but if they could do something like that, it would be a lot more permanent and harder to move. And I mean, as you stated, there's a lack of photographs of the property. So perhaps you could have one plaque, that's a description of what was there with a timeline, another one might be the picture and use something a little bit more permanent to designate that area rather than what they have proposed.

#### **Arianna Urban**

Chair Benzing and Boardmember Babos in my conversations with the applicant, and they'll tell you more about this, they have expressed interest in a dedication to doing that historical interpretation. And staff will be able to assist them with that. Certainly.

#### **Chair Benzing**

I don't have anything objection to removing the overlay. I agree with Boardmember Babos' comments. But it seems like the owners and developers are willing to do that to maintain some sort of history of the place.

#### **Boardmember Nelson**

You know, I'm glad to see that you're embracing the history. That's a big thing to me. I appreciate that. I would encourage you to reach out to the Mesa Historical Museum to see what they have. And also the Mesa Room in the library downstairs. You may come across some more items. I remember that area as a child that's there were cotton fields over there and onion fields and other things. It's nice that you want to include that as always very important. The Crismon family, I think I have a photo of one of their cotton fields. I'll look and see if I can find it for you. But thank you for wanting to embrace the history it's always important to remember the past so you can move into the future.

**Ben Graff**

Couldn't agree more. And yeah, please through Ariana, Chairman, Members of the Board, if you have any photographs, anything you want to share with us, we will start archiving those in anticipation of this development.

**Chair Benzing**

Is the next item is to see if there's any items from citizens that are present at the meeting?

**Arianna Urban**

Yes, Chair Benzing, and Members of the Board we had one person submit a comment card. Mr. Ron Bailey, if you're on the line please go ahead.

**Ron Bailey**

Yes, I'm Ron Bailey, and my address is 1930 E Brown Road, Suite 101, Mesa, Arizona, 85203. And I've been part of the ownership since we bought it from the city of Mesa in 2006. I'll be happy to answer any other questions, but other than that, I don't have any comments. I've practiced law in Mesa for 43 years. That's the address of my law office. Thank you.

**Chair Benzing**

Does anybody on the Board have any other comments or questions for either the applicant or Mr. Bailey? Seeing none, the next item would be to look for a motion to close the public hearing. Okay. At this point, we're closing the public hearing. And we'll take this to a discussion within the Board. Does anybody want to share? I know we had asked them, potentially to do a brass plaque, which the applicant had said they will look into, and we're more than willing to help out with that. We could put that in the recommendation, to do a little bit more.

**Boardmember Babos**

I was just suggesting something a little bit more permanent, as things inside the soda shop can disappear. Also, this might be off topic, and I'm not that familiar with Mesa zoning, but R-43 zoning is that single family residence? Is it possible to do multifamily?

**Nana Appiah**

Chair Members of the Board for the R-43 basically what it means is one dwelling unit per acre on the property, you cannot do multifamily. There is other things going on outside the scope of what is before you that will go before Planning and Zoning and City Council to rezone the property. But that's outside the scope of this project. Then back to your discussion about a plaque. One of the conditions that you can put on or you can authorize that when this case goes before Planning and Boning Board for us to either work on a condition with the applicant to put their condition that whenever there is an actual development on the property, it will incorporate some kind of plaque on

the property. We don't have a written condition, but that's something you can add and they will work with the applicant so that when it goes in for Planning and Zoning, we will have the exact language.

**Chair Benzing**

In order that do that, we would need a motion to recommend to staff the approval of this application with the condition of a more permanent type of recognition of the historical significance of the property.

**Boardmember Babos**

I make a motion with that we approve the removal of the overlay district and that we recommend a stipulation that there's a more permanent monument or history noted on the property rather than just photoshopped photographs in the soda shop.

**Nana Appiah**

Chair Members of the Board that is correct. Just to add a clarification, you are making a recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Board and the Historic Preservation Board is now making a motion to approve it. So your recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Board and ultimately to City Council is to remove the historic overlay on the property and also add a condition to include some permanent fixture that demonstrates the historical significance on the property when the zoning case goes before P&Z and ultimately to City Council.

**Boardmember Babos**

I make a motion that we approve that we pass on to the Planning and Zoning Board a recommendation to remove the overlay and include a more permanent monument.

**Michelle Dahlke**

I'll second that.

**Chair Benzing**

We'll take it to a vote now.

**AYES: Benzing-Bingham-Babos-Dahlke-Desai-Nelson**

**NAYES: None**

**ABSENT: Schaffer-Metcalf**

**9. Hear reports from Board Members on museums, exhibits, committees, and/or events related to historic preservation.**

**Boardmember Nelson**

I will be doing a presentation at the Zen Nights talking about the matriarchs of Washington Park, and also at the Mesa Historical Museum for Juneteenth. Since Mesa doesn't really have anything official to celebrate that I will be there on that Saturday morning. The Zen Nights is the 18th. We're doing a presentation, remembering the matriarchs from Washington Park, just as something that's out there.

**Chair Benzing**

Alright, thank you for sharing. Is there does anybody have anything else to add at the moment?

**10. Future agenda items.**

**Chair Benzing**

As always, if you think of them prior to the meeting, we can bring them to staff's attention and we can discuss and add them to agenda.

**11. Adjournment.**

**Boardmember Bingham**

I move to adjourn.

**Boardmember Babos**

I second.

**AYES: Benzing-Bingham-Babos-Dahlke-Desai-Nelson**

**NAYES: None**

**ABSENT: Schaffer-Metcalf**

**Chair Benzing**

This concludes the June Historic Preservation Board meeting at 7:07pm.