



CONTINUITY

Newsletter of the Preservation Action Council of San José

Volume 4, Number 3, May/June 1993

Destination Cities Ad Hoc Task Force Stimulates Project Proposals

Karita Hummer

Encouraged by information from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the California Preservation Foundation, and following a lead from local sources, in June of last year, the Preservation Action Council convened a meeting in the community to share information and stimulate interest in the enhancement funding provisions in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. Historic preservation is one of the ten criteria for funding through the act. We invited city council members, county officials, staff from county agencies and cities from throughout the county, and representatives of other Non-profits from around the county. Since the expectation was that California would be eligible for approximately \$200,000,000, it was reasonable to believe that Santa Clara County could attract important funding for enhancements, including preservation, under the law.

We had the first meeting at Trinity Cathedral on St. James Park, an important preservation and transportation site. It was well attended by public and private individuals from the City of San José, City of Santa Clara and other cities from throughout the county. Everyone attending the meeting expressed great interest and enthusiasm for continuing to meet. They discussed how to form an ad hoc group that could continue to obtain information about the law and plan

and coordinate efforts to obtain funds for local projects.

Early on, Preservation Action Council dubbed the task force effort, "Destination Cities Ad Hoc Task Force of Santa Clara County." The Preservation Action Council retained a facilitating role in the effort of the task force that continued to meet on a monthly basis. The task force was hosted by a great number of officials, public agencies, and nonprofit groups. After Trinity Cathedral, we met in Santa Clara county offices, San José city offices, the City of Santa Clara offices, the Santa Clara train depot, the San José Historical Museum, the County Parks Department, and in a private firm, Cirrus Logic. The offices of San José Councilmembers Jim Beall, David Pandori, and Judy Stabile's (when she was still on the city council) were very helpful. Santa Clara County Supervisor Rod Diridon's office provided us with a great deal of technical assistance and support throughout.

Throughout the time, we remained in communication with Caltrans and established important informational links with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, with the latter joining our meeting on almost a monthly basis, advising us on guidelines and providing other pertinent information.

The group brainstormed on a wish list of 64 preservation projects in the area that could be linked to intermodal surface transportation. John McLemore assisted the group in

Continued on page 2

Mosby Ranch Settlement Reached

April Halberstadt

Financial settlements from the litigation over the developer destruction of the Rocking M Ranch have provided about \$98,000. in funds to be used for historic projects. After fighting for several years, one of Santa Clara County's most colorful cowgirls lost her ranch to a developer in some controversial foreclosure activities. The developer then moved quickly and, without the required permits, demolished the remaining ranch structures. It broke Louise Mosby's heart as well as her health.

Santa Clara County filed suit for damages against the developer. The litigation has resulted in a financial settlement and the placement of a memorial plaque to commemorate the former site of the historic Rocking M Ranch. But, perhaps more important is the creation of a room in the Old Courthouse in her honor. Funds from the settlement will be used to furnish and decorate a meeting room to be used for visitors and receptions.

Visitors to our Landmark County Courthouse will now have a comfortable place to meet. As one commissioner noted, "Since Louise Mosby

Continued on page 2

Also In This Issue

From the President . . . 3
Watchdog Report . . . 7
Calendar . . . 8

Mosby Ranch

from front page

spent so much time at court fighting the developers, it seems especially fitting that her efforts are memorialized at the courthouse." Rock on, Louise Mosby!



Destination Cities

from front page

setting up a system for analyzing the possible projects along the lines of transportation function, transportation proximity, and impact and other key criteria. Three subgroups were formed based on interest: Buildings, Facades and Districts; Historic Trails; and Rails. Eventually, the group produced the concepts for five specific projects and helped in some measure in the development of two others for a total of seven projects that were ultimately endorsed by the task force.

The Preservation Action Council officially endorsed the same projects. The task force has taken on a distinct identity of its own, with the Preservation Action Council continuing to serve the development of the task force. All of these projects were submitted by public agencies. (Two downsides are that nonprofit organizations are not eligible to directly submit projects, nor are their volunteers' time considered as matches for ISTEAF funding. For example, Marvin Bamburg, our board member, Chuck Aldrich of the Santa Clara Valley Railroad Association, and John Dietrich of the South Bay Historical Railroad Association put an enormous effort into preparing proposals but their efforts cannot be considered part of the match in funds needed for their projects.)

The following projects are supported by the Ad Hoc Task Force:



Santa Clara depot control tower.

photo by Paul Hummer

1. South Bay Historical Railroad Association. Improvements to the station control tower and station building at the Santa Clara depot, submitted by the City of Santa Clara.



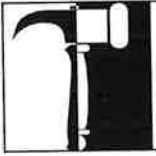
Santa Clara depot.

photo by Paul Hummer

2. Map of historic structures and trails in Santa Clara County with education brochure, submitted by the County Planning Department, with ideas stimulated by the Historic Trails Subcommittee.

3. Scenic designation of Hecker Pass, submitted by the County Planning Department, after exploration of ideas in the Historic Trails Subcommittee.

continued on page 4



From the President

Karita Hummer

What are we after when we fight these battles?

- Saving the Weir Building
- Going to bat to protect the Trinity Cathedral on St. James Square
- Fighting to save the Scheller House
- Urging the inclusion of turn-of-the-century homes on River Street (eligible as a district for the National Register) in the Guadalupe River Park
- Insisting on a solution for the First Church of Christ, Scientist building on St. James Square
- Urging the restoration and use of the José Theatre
- Fighting for restoration of the Bernal-Joice Ranch buildings and preservation of extremely historic elements of the old ranch (which dates from Native American through Spanish, Mexican and American periods)
- Promoting the best of new design for new projects such as the IBM building site, Keystone Housing site and others

The Preservation Action Council is made up of almost 200 citizens who are deeply committed to the city. As citizens, we want to be in a partnership with city government in making this city one of the finest in America. We envision a city that is respectful of its heritage and of what remains of its built reminders of that heritage, and

that aspires to architectural greatness and high aesthetic quality. We want a beautiful city that weaves excellent architecture from every era into its fabric. We want the city to demand and set the highest standards for achieving architectural excellence. We want aesthetic value and cultural merit to be an equivalent to economic values. Indeed, they go together. Historic Preservation and quality design enhance the economic viability of the city by attracting tourists and investment. Historic preservation, good design, and cultural conservation are not frills; they are necessities for any city. Why then are they given so little support in budgetary considerations and city economic decisions?

Many of us have invested a great deal of ourselves in San José. Many of us have bought homes here, many in the inner city, and have restored them, adding vitality to our core city. We need to be heard. We need to feel we can get a response when we voice our concerns. We are part of the solution, not a part of the problem.

A new spirit has emerged in America, where citizens are participating in government as never before. It is overdue. We know we have responsibilities as citizens, and we want to meet these responsibilities by contributing to making this the quality city it can be. Now it is time for the city to take us more seriously.

This means that the city would vigorously look for solutions for some of our greatest treasures, such as the former First Church of Christ, Scientist building, like the José Theatre, and the Fox Theatre. The city would not ignore the expertise of many authorities on the value the Weir Building holds for the city. This means when new development is considered that respect for existing structures becomes essential in the new design plans. It would mean that every effort is made to design the most

exciting and creative new structures and projects possible, compatible with existing structures. One way to accomplish this would be through competitive bids on new design.

The city might look to other cities that have achieved an exciting mix of old structures and the best of new architecture, and consider applying the methods they found to make it happen. They might start with Columbus, Indiana, one of the country's outstanding examples of where good design and historic preservation have combined to produce a showcase city. Why should we settle for less?

We need a coherent preservation policy in the city that doesn't just put mega-bucks into a few historic buildings, but that supports preservation in a consistent manner for the economical potential preservation has for attracting residents, businesses, and visitors. Imagine what greater investment in the Historic Commercial District would have done for downtown attractiveness and livability. We might have had an attractive, thriving, bustling retail center second to none.

Lastly, the city must find a way to attract the best talent in the development of new projects.

Altogether, the city cannot afford to leave preservation of historic architecture and good design out of the planning equation any longer.

Interested in joining the
Preservation Action
Council?

Use the membership
form insert.

Destination Cities *from page 2*



Roundhouse, San José

photo by Paul Hummer

4. Roundhouse relocation and restoration and land acquisition, worked on extensively by Marvin Bamberg, Preservation Action Council board member, and Chuck Aldrich of the Santa Clara Valley Railroad Association, and submitted by the county.

6. Grant Ranch County Park/Scenic Highway Designation submitted by County Parks and Recreation Department.

7. Adams School Site for a Native American heritage park submitted by County Parks and Recreation Department.

After consultations with Paul Bernal, Preservation Action Council board member, Bernal-Joice Ranch Improvements were conceptually developed by the County Parks and Recreation Department but will be submitted by the DeAnza Trail group, presumably for round two ISTE A funding.

These projects and many others in the city and county (that I think one can rightly say were stimulated by the Destination Cities Task Force) were submitted on April 1, 1993. Round two begins next and the task force has agreed to stay organized to consider new projects or expand old ones.

The Preservation Action Council was invited by the National Trust for Historic Preservation to give a presentation on our experience with this process at a Transportation Planning for Livable Communities Conference they cosponsored on April 2 and 3. Likewise, the California Preservation Foundation has invited us to give a presentation on ISTE A at their annual meeting in Long Beach, being held June 3 - 6.

For further information, contact
Karita Hummer (408) 971-0940.



The Alameda, San José

photo by Paul Hummer

5. The Alameda Gateway Project for facade restoration, electrolier lights, signage and other elements, many concepts for which were explored in the Buildings, Facades, and Districts Subcommittee, which was then developed and submitted by the Redevelopment Agency.

River Street Update

April Halberstadt

It's always fun to take visitors to Monterey, Santa Cruz, Los Gatos, and San Juan Bautista and wander around the various old towns, looking at the buildings. And how about Benicia or Old Town in Sacramento? Sadly for San Joseans, not much remains of California's oldest civil settlement that we can proudly show visitors. We do have a few splendid single buildings such as the Fallon House or the remaining structure from the Peralta adobe complex, but there is specific place in the city to give visitors and residents the feel of early life in San José.

However, San José does have the potential for such an attraction. The River Street historic area is eligible for the National Register of Historic Sites and has the potential for development as a small Old Town enclave.

Hiring a consultant to study feasibility alternatives for the River Street area has taken months longer than expected. The last update from the Corps of Engineers revealed that the contract was due to be let by the end of April. The consultant will be asked to evaluate which of the buildings are structurally able to be moved and where they could be sited. The consultant will also provide a business plan and economic analysis for a proposed development.

Although some buildings will have to be moved to accommodate the flood control project, it is hoped that an Old Town feature could be incorporated into the Guadalupe River Park project. The development would center around Henry's HiLife restaurant and the intersection at St. John Street.

In still another development along River Street, The Student Homeless Alliance, working with Housing for

Independent People (HIP) and the Santa Clara Valley Water District, has repaired one of the River Street houses and made it habitable as a temporary family home.

For further information contact co-chairpersons April Halberstadt, (408) 293-2860 or Karita Hummer (408) 971-0940.

Judy Stabile Appointed to Advisory Board

Judy Stabile has been appointed to the Advisory Board of the Preservation Action Council, and we feel very fortunate to have her serving in that capacity for our organization. Judy has done a stellar job for preservation in San José; she received a Preservation Award in 1991 for her outstanding contribution to preservation. Judy is currently employed by the San José Historical Museum Association to direct their efforts on behalf of the combined Peralta Adobe and Fallon House restoration projects. San José is lucky, because that combined project couldn't be in better hands.

As city councilmember for eight years, she spearheaded numerous preservation projects, notably the Plan for the Past, which made the Fallon House and Peralta Adobe priority projects, the Hayes Mansion, and the Unreinforced Masonry Task Force. She calls the Plan for the Past one of the most enjoyable activities she ever worked on.

Before serving on the city council, Judy worked as an analyst on the staff of Jerry Estruth, who had been City Councilman for District 2. She also served on the city's Landmarks Commission for five years, served as President of the League of Women Voters, and helped set up the Archives for the San José Historical Museum in the mid-seventies.

Judy graduated from Duquesne University, where she majored in literature. In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, she worked as a librarian for a period of time.

With all these talents, we are sure to benefit from Judy's guidance. Welcome, Judy, to the Advisory Board.

Bernal-Joice Ranch Update

April Halberstadt

After strong public testimony, the San José Planning Commission returned a proposed residential development project, Curie Estates, to the planning department for further study. About fifty people testified during the hearing to express their concern and outrage at the proposed residential development that would have erased the remaining traces of the historic Bernal-Joice ranch. Craig Mineweaser, A.I.A., testified on behalf of the Preservation Action Council.

Since the site is adjacent to the Santa Teresa County Park and since longterm plans had included acquisition of the rancho for the park, a recommendation was made to allow the most sensitive portions of the site to be sold to the county as soon as possible. The proposed development would have built nine houses on the site, surrounding a historic oak tree that would have required special protection easements and preservation covenants.

The oak tree and the Bernal-Joice ranch site are considered to be important cultural resources, and have been listed on Santa Clara County's inventory for many years. The oak tree is the famous "bear tree," which was the site of a bear-and-bull-arena that was considered amusing sport

Continued on page 6

Bernal-Joice Ranch Update

from page 5

during California's colonial period. Developers proposed capping the development area with two feet of soil to prevent disturbing any potential burial sites, and allowing the houses to be built around the historic tree, but the general feeling seemed to be that such measures would not adequately protect the site.

This historic remnant of the old Rancho Santa Teresa is also known as the Ygnacio Bernal Farmhouse and the Santa Teresa Springs area. Archaeological investigations have shown that the site appears to be a very deep and rich site for early

Native American studies. Preliminary research during several digs shows this to be an important living area as well as a burial site. Later it became the location of the Bernal rancho during the colonial period in California history. The Rancho Santa Teresa was deeded to Joaquin Bernal in 1834 by Governor Figueroa as payment for services.

We are especially grateful to Preservation Action Council members Paul Bernal, Kitty Monahan, and Craig Minweaser for their work in developing a strategy to save this important site.

California Preservation Foundation Conference Set for June 3 - 6

The California Preservation Foundation will be holding their 18th Annual Conference in Long Beach, June 3 - 6, 1993. It is sure to be one of their most fun conferences with headquarters on the HMS Queen Mary and their focus on celebrating diversity. With great speakers (Richard Moe and Peter Brink of the National Trust, Claudia Polley of the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, and Douglas Wheeler, California Secretary for Resources), important topics on neighborhood issues, cultural understanding, urban context and nuts and bolts topics; and great sites to see in and around Long Beach, the Conference promises to be a very rewarding experience.

This year the Preservation Action Council will be participating directly with Karita Hummer serving on an Urban Context panel on the topic of ISTEIA (Transportation Enhancements).

Don't miss this worthwhile conference.

For more information and registration, call the California Preservation Foundation, (510) 763-0972.



The San José Historical Museum is one location that would be identified on a map of historic structures, one of the Destination Cities project proposals. (See page 2.)

photo by Paul Hummer

Preservation Week is
May 9 - 15.

Celebrate by encouraging
your friends to join the
Preservation Action Council.



Watchdog Report

April Halberstadt

The Watchdog Committee of the Preservation Action Council keeps an eye on historic buildings that may be threatened by insensitive rehabilitation, demolition, or neglect. We are currently tracking the following projects:

■ The newest San Jose City landmark "**We and Our Neighbors**" Club is already in jeopardy due to traffic improvements at its busy location. One of the oldest women's clubs in California, it is located at the corner of Union Avenue and Los Gatos Boulevard. Their tiny frontage will be removed by traffic lanes. Already on the National Register, this 1910 landmark clubhouse is in need of attention. Contact Councilman Jim Beall if you have comments.

■ The **Schellar House** still sits on the San Jose State campus. It is now clear that the lawyer/developer who won a bid last year to move the property is now unable to complete his plans. San Jose State is once again meeting with the city in order to come up with a strategy for saving the structure.

■ The **Bernal-Joice Ranch** is now in the Environmental Impact Review (EIR) process. It is pretty obvious to everyone that building nine homes on the site will totally obliterate any traces of the ranch house, walls, landscape, and any Indian burial relics. The proposed mitigation is to cap the site with a couple of feet of soil. Best hope for salvage is to encourage Santa

Clara County to step up plans to buy the site and include it in the adjacent county park. Let your county supervisor know how you feel.

- We continue to watch the **Del Monte Cannery** site on The Alameda. A recent fire in a neighboring structure concerned all of us.

For more information about watchdog activities, contact April Halberstadt at (408) 293-2860.



Community Relations Committee Reactivated

The Preservation Action Council's Community Relations Committee has reorganized. New members have joined the committee and there is a lot of enthusiasm. Subcommittees are working on upgrading the brochure,

expanding newsletter staffing, planning and scheduling exhibits, working with the media, organizing a membership drive, updating the mailing list, and developing window displays.

The work of this committee is very labor-intensive, and we need lots of help. We especially need help on the newsletter, exhibits, the membership drive, window displays, and press releases. We also want to establish a speakers bureau that would provide both an opportunity to educate the public about historic preservation and architecture and promote our organization. Volunteer recruitment is an ongoing need.

The Community Relations Committee can make a difference in how strong a force we can become in the community. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 26, 8 p.m. at 96 Fox Avenue. All are welcome.

For more information, call Karita Hummer, (408) 971-0940.



The Preservation Action Council of San José is a non-profit membership organization providing information to property owners and education to the public, and promoting programs and policies for historic preservation and compatible new architectural design.

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Calendar

May

- 10 (Monday) Executive committee meeting. Karita Hummer's, 96 Fox Ave., 7:00 p.m., (408) 971-0940.
- 24 (Monday) Finance and operations committee meeting at our office, 40 N. First St., 8 p.m. Greg Casella, (408) 998-5034.
- 26 (Wednesday) Community relations committee meeting. Karita Hummer's, 96 Fox Ave., 8 p.m., (408) 971-0940.

June

- 3 - 6
(Thursday - Sunday) California Preservation Foundation annual conference, Long Beach. (See separate article)
- 14 (Monday) Executive committee meeting. Karita Hummer's, 96 Fox Ave., 7:00 p.m., 971-0940.
- 21 (Monday) Open board of directors meeting. Genesis Gallery, 40 N. First St., Second Floor. John Dietrich, South Bay Historical Railroad Association, will talk about the Santa Clara depot.
- 23 (Wednesday) Community relations committee meeting. Karita Hummer's, 96 Fox Ave., 7:00 p.m., (408) 971-0940.
- 26, 27 (Saturday
and Sunday) Living History Days, San José Historical Museum.

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