

Minutes of the Special HARC Meeting for Peary Court held on March 10, 2014

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Call Meeting To Order

HARC Chairman Michael Miller called the March 10, 2014 Special HARC Meeting for Peary Court to order at **5:30 pm** at Old City Hall, at 510 Greene Street, Key West.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Roll Call

HARC Commissioners present include: Richard McChesney, Janet Hinkle, Richard Logan, Patrick Wright, Theo Glorie, and Chairman Michael Miller. Vice Chair Maggie Gutierrez arrived at 5:45pm.

Also, present from City staff: Assistant City Attorney Ron Ramsingh, Planning Director Don Craig, Historic Perseveration Planner Enid Torregrosa, and Recording Secretary Jo Bennett.

Presentation from Chair – Objectives and Goals

Mr. Miller opened the meeting thanking everyone for their attendance and outlined the objectives and goals for the meeting. Mr. Miller explained the role of the Historic Architecture Review Commission (HARC) and explained what should and shouldn't be discussed during the meeting. Mr. Miller outlined the order and timing of the meeting as follows: 1) Applicant, 2) Historic Perseveration Planner's Report, 3) Public letters to be read into the record, 4) Public comments and questions, and HARC Commissioners comments, questions, and discussion, and 5) Commissioners vote.

Mr. McChesney recused himself due to a conflict of interest.

1a Major Development Plan- Initial approval of Peary Court typical units (subsequent detailed approval to follow). Approval of the site plan for replacement of 160 non-contributing dwelling units and the addition of 48 affordable dwelling units. Approval of project mass, scale, size, proportion and landscape concepts- #400 White Street- Critical Concerns Consultants (H14-01-0361)

Applicant Introductions and Presentation:

Donna Bosold introduced the project and its history. Ms. Bosold introduced Zyscovich Architects and explained why they were chosen by the owners for the project. Ms. Bosold asked the Commissioners to review the project based on the HARC Guidelines.

Bernard Zyscovich introduced his team Suria Yaffar and Ana Benatuil. Mr. Zyscovich explained the process they followed with meeting neighbors and multiple public workshops. Mr. Zyscovich presented the project drawing attention to a presentation which was displayed at the meeting. Mr. Zyscovich explained that they tried to include the site's history into the new design. Mr. Zyscovich stated that what his mission for the evening was to explain the basis for their design, which is the continuation of old town. Mr. Zyscovich explained that the new design uses mostly single family homes. Mr. Zyscovich described the expected traffic flow for the project with a planned 50% more parking. Mr. Zyscovich stated they plan to retain the old trees along with new landscaping. Mr. Zyscovich explained that with the design for White Street they tried to appropriately face the buildings out toward the other side of the historical street with building designs that would fit into the area. Mr. Zyscovich outlined each type of building in the plan. Mr. Zyscovich moved to explaining the plans for the Angela Street side and explained that as a result of the public meetings they decided to leave the fence in place except for a couple of pedestrian pathways at Florida and Pearl Streets. Mr. Zyscovich explained the plan for Angela Street came from a comment that was made at one of the Public Meetings concerning it would be nice to have "Mother-in-Law" units. That plan is for to build structures that face inward to the Peary Court property with a detached "Mother-in-Law/Guest Cottages" unit along the back of the property backing up to Angela Street. Mr. Zyscovich added that there would be up to 10 properties with "Mother-in-Law/Guest Cottages" units. Mr. Zyscovich concluded that

with this design they are making every effort to incorporate the new project into the community and address the issues of the neighbors in the Meadows. At this point Mr. Zyscovich went on to describe the different building sites within the property: Cottages (2 designs - 900SF-1,000SF), Medium Homes (3 designs - 1,600SF-2,000SF), Large Homes (3 designs - 1,700SF-2,200SF), Triplex (each unit 1,200SF), and the optional Guest Cottages for the Large Homes (600SF). Mr. Zyscovich mentioned that they do not expect a Certificate of Appropriateness for the houses tonight but wanted to present the vision for the project and added that the Commission could expect each of the houses to return for individual approval. Chairman Miller asked Mr. Zyscovich to move on the other buildings. Following Chairman Miller's request, Mr. Zyscovich turned everyone's attention to the Eisenhower Drive and Palm Avenue portion of the property explaining the Community building and apartment buildings planned for that corner area. Mr. Zyscovich explained the water tower would connect the project to the past and that the water would be used to water the landscape.

HARC Planner's Report

Ms. Torregrosa stated that her Staff Report is available on line. Ms. Torregrosa added that her report was based on the documents that were published on-line and not the document that was used during the applicant's presentation. Ms. Torregrosa noted that there are differences between the documents the Commissioners had to review and the document the applicant used during his presentation. Ms. Torregrosa said there were a few things she would like to point out the Commissioners need to understand that the development is designed to allow the purchaser to choose in the lot types and the structure types. Ms. Torregrosa also added that it is important to understand that what is being presented as street facades will not be what the overall site will appear due to the fact that purchaser's will be allowed to choose their house from prototypes. Ms. Torregrosa stated that the Guidelines clearly state that new projects should not exceed the established size and scale of other buildings in the vicinity. Ms. Torregrosa stated that the Guidelines are specific regarding the height of all new construction; new construction shall be based upon the height of existing structures within the vicinity. Ms. Torregrosa added that there must be a sympathetic relationship of height between new buildings and adjacent structures of the neighborhood. Ms. Torregrosa pointed out that the majority of the existing buildings on White Street are one and one and a half stories and that the proposed houses on White Street will have fluctuating heights between 29'-4" and 29' 11" and on White Street, towards the cemetery, the three proposed houses (cottage site) will have a maximum height fluctuating between 26'-9" to 29'- 1". Ms. Torregrosa stated that the average one and a half story historic house will have a maximum height around 18' to 23'.

Ms. Torregrosa added that the existing urban context has two very different streetscapes on each surrounding street. For instance, Ms. Torregrosa noted that White Street is a wider two lane street with a combination of one stories, one and a half stories and two stories buildings were the majority of the houses, fifteen (15) of them, are less than two stories. Towards the South portion of White Street (south of Southard), there is the Old Armory and two and a half story houses and after those one and one and a half stories houses completes the block. Ms. Torregrosa stated that by reviewing the plans there should be more variety of lower scale houses, particularly in the White Street block between Fleming and Southard streets in order to create a more balance streetscape with the existing historic houses located across the street. Ms. Torregrosa added that on the other side, Angela Street is a narrow street with no sidewalks and with a pedestrian sense, where the majority of the houses are less than two stories. Still all houses, with the exception of the corner ones, are facing Angela Street; the street has an urban façade on its south side. Ms. Torregrosa concluded stating that she has many concerns regarding the submitted application and the lack of details of what the finished project would look like in mass and scale.

Public Comments:

The following Public Comments were read into the record by the Recording Secretary Jo Bennett:

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Name	Address	Comments
Lee Dunn	701 Florida Street	Against project – Letter part of published public meeting package.
Bryan Green	910 Watson Street	Against project – Letter part of published public meeting package.
Tharon S. Dunn	701 Florida Street	Against project – Letter part of published public meeting package.
Donna Feldman	1420 Angela Street	Against project – Letter part of published public meeting package.
Ralph Enderby	702 Florida Street	Against project – Letter part of published public meeting package.

Public Comments from the audience:

Name	Address	Comments
Steve Dawkins	1212 Angela Street	Mr. Dawkins stated that we need to save and preserve the character of the Meadows. Mr. Dawkins asked for the fence to stay and not be opened in any way to Angela Street. Mr. Dawkins asked why would anyone close to an entrance that is working well. Mr. Dawkins stated that he is concerned about the large units planned with the “Mother-in-Law” units to be placed along Angela Street. Mr. Dawkins is concerned about the traffic and parking issues the new proposal will cause. Mr. Dawkins concluded asking the Commission to preserve the character of the Meadows.
Ted Baier	1420 Angela Street	Mr. Baier stated that at present there are currently sixteen (16) units with a presents on Angela Street and that in the evenings right now there is no parking available. Mr. Baier asked that the fence stay closed along Angela Street so as to not encourage the owners in the new Peary Court to park along Angela Street.
Linda Shield	1414 Angela Street	Ms. Shield stated that she is concerned about the impact the new project will have on the adjacent Historic community. Ms. Shield stated that the mass and scale of the proposed project will be detrimental to the community. Ms. Shield asked that the mass and scale and green space be reviewed before making a final decision on the plan.
Heidi Glasser	700 Pearl Street	Ms. Glasser asked that the Commission ask the White Street Partners to respect the Historic District and scale down the mass and scale of the proposed project.
Steve MacDonald	1215 Newton Street	Mr. MacDonald stated that he agrees with the previous speakers as it relates to the impact of the project will have on the neighboring Meadows area. Mr. MacDonald stated that we must “Save the Fence” to protect the Meadows.
Lee Dunn	701 Florida Street	Mr. Dunn reminded the Commissioners to follow the Guideline and protect the Meadows and other surrounding historic areas. Mr. Dunn asked that

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Jane Rohrschneider	1306 Angela Street	the following take place: 1) allow no setbacks, 2) allow no greater volume than currently exist, 3) require the maximum amount of landscaping between the development and the outlining streets, and 4) allow no penetration of the existing fences. In conclusion, Mr. Dunn asked the Commission to keep the new development as separate, as remote and hidden from the surrounding areas as possible.
Naja Girard	1214 Newton Street	Ms. Rohrschneider asked how much attention has been paid to the existing magnificent trees. Ms. Rohrschneider added that she does not understand why they can ask to build things that they have not completely laid out and reviewed the existing trees. Ms. Rohrschneider also inquired about the "ugly" buildings planned for the corner of Palm and Eisenhower and why those rather than something more suiting to Old Town. Ms. Girard started by asking if traffic flow and street grid designs fall under the purview of HARC and stating if not then maybe this project needs to be put on hold and reviewed by the Planning Board first. Ms. Girard stated that she has a strong objection to the street grid design as presented since it is designed as a gated community. Ms. Girard stated that this plan is in direct conflict to the Key West Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Girard added that the plan does not incorporate the new development into the City grid which needs to take place.
Sloan Gashinski	1711 Seminary Street	Mr. Gashinski stated that in his opinion the only reason the meeting is taking place is greed. Mr. Gashinski stated that it is obvious that the project cannot handle all the needed parking. Mr. Gashinski stated that the project does not fit into the surrounding areas.
Mark Songer	1310 Newton Street	Mr. Songer pointed out that as noted in the HARC Planners Report the height of the structures do not fit into the neighboring area with only one set being less than 29' in height.
Gary Lichtenstein	216 Front Street	Mr. Lichtenstein stated that he sees no reason to rush this 24 acre project and suggested that the project needs to do a scale model so the people of Key West can see what it is going to look like and how it should fit in. Mr. Lichtenstein stated that the project is being very vague. Mr. Lichtenstein suggested that there needs to be a traffic study prior to approval. Mr. Lichtenstein concluded stating that take time to do the project right this time.
Leon Coluces	329 William Street	Mr. Coluces stated that he made a mistake of not purchasing in Key West the first time he came to Key West. Mr. Coluces stated that there needs to be a place that is affordable for Disabled

Jim Hendrix 317 Whitehead Street

Veterans. Mr. Coluces stated the fence needs to come down and the developer needs to build something that will make both those purchasing in the project and those surrounding it pleased that it is incorporated into the community.

Mr. Hendrix signed up to speak and was called but he is part of the project team and will be part of the rebuttal discussion.

Board Discussion

Mr. Miller stated that since so many of the speakers had asked he wanted to ask Don Craig to explain why this project did not go through the Planning Board process prior to coming to HARC. Mr. Craig responded by saying that this is such a unique project that the Planning Staff determined it would be more appropriate to review the design review first. Mr. Craig reminded the Commission that they are charged in the Guidelines in reviewing both the structures but also the streetscapes. Mr. Craig stated that what will help drive the Planning Board approval is what HARC approves as the mass and scale of the project. Mr. Craig stated that connecting the urban grid is necessary to properly continue the historic streetscape and connect the streets. Mr. Craig stated that he does not wish to re-create the mistake made with Truman Annex in creating a walled-off community. Mr. Craig concluded stating that it is the opinion of the Planning Department that the integration of this neighborhood without walls is paramount to continuation of the grid pattern.

Mr. Miller stated that he currently lives in Peary Court.

Commissioner

Theo Glorie

Comments

Mr. Glorie stated he was impressed with the presentation. Mr. Glorie stated that he agrees with Bryan Green's letter concerning the sustainability of the project. Mr. Zyscovich responded that yes the water will be collected in the water tank and cisterns is planned to be used for watering the landscaping. Mr. Glorie asked if the project had any plans for solar panels. Mr. Zyscovich responded that the firm is using the Florida Green Building Guidelines. Mr. Zyscovich stated that a lot of the things that can be done under the Green Building Guidelines are integrated into the building and are not visible. Mr. Zyscovich stated that they would be open to using other things that would be "Green" methods but are not sure how well received each would be by the City.

Patrick Wright

Mr. Wright stated he appreciated the variety of the designs of the units. Mr. Wright asked if each building will need to come before HARC for approval. Ms. Torregrosa responded that is the plan at this time. Mr. Wright inquired as to the areas where the fence would remain. Mr. Zyscovich responded that the expectation is to leave the fence on Angela Street and Palm Avenue. Mr. Wright asked specifically if the fence on White Street would be removed and each of the property owners would then need to apply to

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Maggie Gutierrez

build HARC appropriate fences. Mr. Zyscovich stated that indeed the expectation is for each property owner would need to apply to build a fence when needed. Mr. Wright then inquired as to what was the logic for abandoning the existing entrance on Palm Avenue. Mr. Zyscovich responded explaining that the Palm Avenue entrance is a limited access entrance since it does not connect to the other entrance on Southard Street. Mr. Zyscovich stated that it is their concern with the addition of traffic at that entrance would cause traffic flow issues. Mr. Wright's last question related to if the new construction would be Green certified. Mr. Zyscovich responded saying that they have not decided if it will be LEED or Florida Green Building Code but it would be Certified. Mr. Miller stated that he believed that BPAS would be requiring Green Certifications for new buildings.

Ms. Gutierrez started she would like to hear what Mr. Hendrix would like to say. Mr. Hendrix responded that he did not have anything specifically to address. Mr. Hendrix stated that he did want to share that he and Ms. Bosold had been involved in a number of public meetings with the neighbors and the main issue that was raised during those meeting was the fence and access along Angela Street. Mr. Hendrix stated that it is not up to the project to make the decision as to open up the grid that they would do what they are told they should do. Mr. Hendrix stated that parking is a huge issue in the area. Ms. Gutierrez asked Mr. Craig if taking the fence down in order to complete the grid along Angela Street had been discussed with the neighbors. Mr. Craig stated "yes" and added that it had been discussed and that the Planning Department makes its decisions based on what is best for the City not just one neighborhood. Mr. Craig added that he had just Googled Peary Court and determined that the Palm Avenue entrance services at least 28 of the existing buildings which is more than half of the buildings. Ms. Gutierrez asked Mr. Craig if it is his position that the Palm Avenue entrance be used as a thoroughfare for the new project. Mr. Craig responded "yes" and drew the Commissioners attention to the traffic flow through the property. Mr. Craig reminded the Commissioners Key West is one (1) City not a City of compounds – that is what the Planning Department is trying to prevent. Ms. Gutierrez asked Mr. Craig if there had been any traffic studies done. Mr. Craig responded that "no" that traffic studies have not been done but

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they will need to be included as part of the Major Development Plan application for the Planning Board. Ms. Gutierrez asked Mr. Craig if there was going to be a problem with stacking of traffic. Mr. Craig responded by reminding Ms. Gutierrez that there is currently a turn lane which is already servicing over half of the existing buildings and there has not been any know traffic stacking issues. Mr. Craig stated that if Mr. Hendrix has seen anything to the contrary that he would like to review it as well. Ms. Gutierrez mentioned to Ms. Torregrosa that she mentioned in her Staff Report that she did not have a complete set of plans when she was writing her report. Ms. Gutierrez asked Ms. Torregrosa if she still feels she needs more information to be able to appropriately evaluate the mass and scale of the project. Ms. Gutierrez stated that she too has an issue with the mass and scale of the project. Ms. Gutierrez read from the Guidelines page 37 for new construction. Mr. Zyscovich asked if he could address the height issues being discussed. Mr. Zyscovich explained that the plans are to raise the buildings 3' in order to get them off the ground and out of any standing water which contributes to the added height. Mr. Zyscovich added that they originally thought they could build to 35' but found that the height limit is really 30'.

Richard Logan

Mr. Logan started by reminding everyone that most of the houses on Angela Street flooded during Wilma therefore it is a good idea to raise the new houses above grade. Mr. Logan asked about the large open space along Palm Avenue. Mr. Zyscovich responded that the open space is a swale which will remain. Mr. Logan mentioned that just because parking is on the street in most of Key West does not mean it has to be that way. Mr. Zyscovich responded stating that their on-street parking spaces will be numbered thus designating them for each property. Mr. Miller stated that most of off street parking was given up to build something else. Mr. Logan commented that he is sympatric with the Angela Street residences and the Meadows in general but opening up the streets is the right answer. Mr. Logan stated that he has a concern about no contemporary designs being offered.

Janet Hinkle

Ms. Hinkle asked Mr. Craig about density and what guidelines were given to the developer and what could be put on the property. Mr. Craig responded they were given specific guidelines which are included in the Historic Special Medium Density. Mr. Craig stated that they are allotted a

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Michael Miller

total of 208 units which are the 160 existing plus 48 affordable. Ms. Hinkle inquired if the parking issues have been addressed with the Angela Street neighbors. Mr. Zyscovich responded that this has been an on-going issue and many discussions have taken place but the Angela Street area continues to express their wishes to be left alone. Mr. Zyscovich stated that he agrees with Mr. Craig on the integration of the new project into the overall streetscape of Key West. Mr. Miller complemented Mr. Zyscovich on his presentation. Mr. Miller stated that he would like to have seen something included for the community. Mr. Miller stated that he has a problem with the sentiments of the people from Angela Street – this is the reverse of this issue that we had when Truman Annex was going in where they were trying to keep the people of Key West out but now it is like the people of Key West are trying to keep the new development owners out. Mr. Miller stated that he could never vote for a project that kept the fence up. Mr. Miller stated that he does have an issue with having the backs of the houses facing Angela Street. Mr. Miller stated that is also some strong feelings about the affordable units on the corner of Palm Avenue and Eisenhower Drive and the need to move the water tower elsewhere on the property. Mr. Miller asked Ms. Torregrosa if she feels the plans presented are complete enough for her to recommend approval. Ms. Torregrosa responded that she would still like to see more elevations as well as contextual drawings showing mass and scale.

Project Review:

Mr. Zyscovich stated that the project team knows what the Meadows want and what the City Planner has stated but they need to hear what the Commission wants and will approve. Mr. Miller stated that he would like to poll each of the Commissioners as to if they would like to see a re-design that shows Angela Street integrated into the grid.

Richard Logan

Mr. Logan stated that he feels the Great Wall of China needs to come down. Mr. Logan stated that he is in favor of the overall project and suggested the project needs to come up with a way to incorporate the project in the City grid without destroying the Meadows.

Theo Glorie

Mr. Glorie stated he would like to see more contemporary choices for the buildings and the fence taken out.

Patrick Wright

Mr. Wright asked if they are postponing if they are going to be for a time certain. Mr. Craig suggested schedule a special meeting after the regular April HARC Meeting.

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Maggie Gutierrez	Ms. Gutierrez stated that she shares Staff's concern of the mass and scale on White Street and Angela Street. Ms. Gutierrez added that she also would like to see the plan to include the area in the grid and the Palm Avenue entrance be included. Ms. Gutierrez ask Ms. Torregrosa what she would like for the applicant to provide.
Enid Torregrosa	Ms. Torregrosa stated that she would like to see the scale of the streetscape for both White Street and Eisenhower Street.
Janet Hinkle	Ms. Hinkle asked the community to work with the project team to come up with a plan that all feel comfortable with and help the Angela Street neighbors with their parking issues.
Michael Miller	Mr. Miller asked that the Palm Avenue entrance remain and that the mass and scale along Angela Street and White Street be improved.

Recap of Needs:

Mr. Zyscovich detailed the following: 1) Appreciation for the work that has been done, 2) Need to work on the balance between the Angela Street area and integrating the area into the grid, 3) No fundamental problems with the multifamily building but would like to see the water tower moved to somewhere else on the project, 4) Look to create a lane on Angela Street, 5) Look into ways to improve the issues with parking on Angela Street and incorporating whatever parking need to those units facing Angela Street, 6) Insure that whatever structures are place on Angela Street are appropriately scaled.

Actions/Motions:

A motion was made by Mr. Glorie, seconded by Ms. Gutierrez, that the item be **Postponed**.
The motion **Passed** by the following vote:
Yes: 6 – Mr. Glorie, Mr. Wright, Mr. Logan, Ms. Hinkle, Vice Chair Gutierrez, Chairman Miller

1b Demolition of existing units-#400 White Street-Critical Concerns Consultants (H14-01-0361)

Actions/Motions:

A motion was made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Ms. Gutierrez, that the item be **Postponed**.
The motion **Passed** by the following vote:
Yes: 6 – Mr. Glorie, Mr. Wright, Mr. Logan, Ms. Hinkle, Vice Chair Gutierrez, Chairman Miller

General Discussion

Adjournment

Actions/Motions:

Chairman Miller adjourned the meeting at **9:35 pm**.

Submitted by,

Jo Bennett

Recording Secretary

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Planning Department