



# City of Santa Barbara

## DE LA GUERRA PLAZA REVITALIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES DECEMBER 18, 2020

8:30 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

This meeting was conducted electronically

[SantaBarbaraCA.gov](http://SantaBarbaraCA.gov)

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

#### City Council

Kristen Sneddon *Chair*  
Meagan Harmon

#### Planning Commission

Lesley Wiscomb *Vice Chair*  
Barrett Reed

#### Historic Landmarks Commission

Michael Drury  
Steve Hausz

#### Parks and Recreation Commission

Beebe Longstreet  
Roger Perry

#### Santa Barbara Certified Farmers' Market

Sam Edelman

#### Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation

Anne Petersen, Ph.D.

### ALTERNATE MEMBERS:

None

### STAFF:

Brad Hess, Principal Project Manager  
Sara Iza, Senior Planner  
Phil Davis, Engineering Technician

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### CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Sneddon opened the meeting at 8:32 a.m.

### I. ROLL CALL

Kristen Sneddon, Lesley Wiscomb, Meagan Harmon, Steve Hausz, Michael Drury, Beebe Longstreet, Barrett Reed, Roger Perry, and Anne Petersen, Ph.D.

Absent: Sam Edelman

### STAFF PRESENT

Paul Casey, City Administrator  
Jill Zachary, Parks and Recreation Director  
Rebecca Bjork, Interim Community Development Director  
Brian D'Amour, Acting Public Works Director  
Nicole Hernandez, Project Planner and Urban Historian  
Michelle Bedard, Associate Transportation Planner  
Brad Hess, Principal Project Manager  
Sara Iza, Senior Planner  
Phil Davis, Engineering Technician  
Rachel Becerra, Administrative Assistant

### INVITED SPEAKERS

Lief McKay, RRM Design Group  
Ann Kale, Ann Kale Associates Architectural Lighting

**II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS**

A. Announcements

No announcements.

B. Agenda review/Changes

No changes

**III. AGENDA ITEMS**

**TIME: 8:34 A.M.**

A. Continuing Discussion on Draft Concept Drawing ([Click here for Staff Report link](#))

Mr. Hess gave a brief reminder of the history of the project and its development to the present time. He gave an overview on the agenda items, informing the Committee that Staff would be providing an update to Council on February 2, 2021. Mr. McKay gave a brief recap of progress since last meeting. Mr. Hess then discussed one concept change proposed at the last meeting of swapping the splash pad location with the other focal point in front of City Hall and summarized the pros and cons of this change. Mr. Hess clarified that the primary issue is that the Phase II Archaeology Report identified more cultural resources in the grass portion of the Plaza, specifically the focal point in front of City Hall. Overall, the project would prefer not to exceed 12" below ground surface to not disturb the cultural resources and expand the scope of the required Phase III Study. Mr. Hess then requested to Chair Sneddon a decision from the Committee. Based on the information provided, the Committee decided to leave the splash pad in its current proposed location, while one member still prefers the more northern location and suggested to relocate the accompanying splash pad tank closer to De La Guerra St too.

**Kiosk**

Mr. McKay presented the Kiosk concept from the last meeting, articulating the general location, use, and style. Mr. Hess noted that a long-term lease could complicate the potential financing of the project, and requested of Chair Sneddon for feedback from the Committee on this concept. Because the usage of the Kiosk is unclear, there are potential competition issues with surrounding businesses, and adding the Kiosk potentially adds architectural challenges to the space, the Committee decided to remove the Kiosk from the plan at this time. However, the project will still add necessary infrastructure for sewer, water, and electricity for a potential future use.

**Trees**

Mr. McKay presented on the changes made to the tree plan previously proposed.

Trees – narrowed tree choices to two from three: the Palo Verde and the Floss Silk. Palo Verde blooms yellow in spring, sometimes in early summer, and is deciduous. The Floss

Silk Tree blooms heavily in the fall, and is briefly deciduous. Other trees in the Plaza are evergreen, including those in the Casa courtyard. The first concept plan shows installing trees in rows, which strengthens the geometry of the Plaza. Additionally, Mr. McKay presented another slightly varied layout with a space on the west side opposite the Pepper Tree, for a more garden-like feel, and showed the colors of the proposed trees when in bloom, which has the pink Floss Silk as bookends. The omission of the tree opposite the Pepper Tree is to maintain a balance of symmetry once the Pepper Tree dies. There is no projection on this timing, as the Pepper Tree is healthy. Comments from the Committee ranged on this proposal regarding tree location and spacing, but all favored the two types of trees proposed, emphasizing the added color to the Plaza. Several suggested the removal of one of the Palo Verde trees that are in front of the restaurants and scalloped wall, and this will be studied by the design team. Part of the proposed tree layout had two Floss Silk trees framing the Casa De La Guerra, but were removed as part of the discussion due to potential moisture issues in the adobe due to shading the walls. The tree species proposed have been vetted for Santa Barbara climate and are on the El Pueblo Viejo approved list of trees.

### **Lighting**

Ms. Ann Kale presented on the lighting.

Lighting: Ms. Kale recapped the highlights from last meeting. She proposed switching the current light poles with the four two-head light poles in the middle and four three-head light poles on the corners. This would provide three times more light than the existing lights. Lighting pendants hanging from the arcade are proposed, moonlight lighting the Pepper Tree and up lighting the palm trees in Storke Placita are proposed for added light and interest. Projection lighting would be proposed as event or seasonal lighting and would be flexible for pattern, color, or image, etc. The splash pad and lighting under the seat portion of the tree wells adds interest, highlights the beautiful Spanish tile proposed on the tree wells, and adds additional overall light to the space. The new proposed lighting layout provides much more overall light and brightness in the Plaza than the existing lighting. A light art piece could provide additional interest and lighting, but that was shown as a possibility, and not formally as part of the plan. The Committee was unanimous in its excitement on the lighting proposal with high praise for Ms. Kale and her work. They noted how the lighting proposal accentuates the landscaping and architecture, how the lighting highlights the historical aspects of the Plaza, and clearly provides a safer environment without it looking commercial. Several members noted this plan is consistent with the Purpose Statement with several noting it also provides flexibility of use when referencing the projection lighting. Other than the light art piece, the Committee elected to keep all options in the plan to allow maximum opportunity for the future.

**\* THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECESSED FROM 10:09 TO 10:15 A.M. \***

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public comment opened at 10:18 a.m., and the following individuals spoke:

1. Mary Louise Days – Agreed with Mr. Reed’s comment on trees to loosen up number of trees on the southwest side to accommodate scenic views of building or Casa. Consider moving historic palm tree or scalloped wall. Consider moving California state landmark plaque. Does not want lighting to be too modern. Mr. Hess remarked that moving the Washingtonian Filifera California Fan Palm tree is still in discussion, and scalloped wall will remain.
2. Natalia Jovani – Suggested reconsideration of this project. She stated the design is too bare and too sterile. Suggested Committee look at Pasadena as an example. Stated the concept lacks a demand and environmental analysis.
3. Berry Remis – Prefers not to obstruct the Casa De la Guerra, but rather to frame the Casa. Suggested a shift of the Silk Floss trees to the ends instead of Palo Verde. Loves the lighting, favors under-lighting space while keeping it safe, suggested the splash pad lighting have ability to change colors. As a representative for Coalition for Sustainable Transportation (COAST), Mr. Remis is interested in where bicycle parking will be located.
4. Ohan Arakelian – Supports Ms. Kale’s lighting plan. Emphasize more of the Spanish colonial architecture. Requests a more focal point of the Armenian drinking fountain and plaque.

Public comment closed at 10:30 a.m.

**V. NEXT STEPS**

**TIME: 10:32 A.M.**

- A. Review of City Development Review Process  
Steps shown on presentation.

- B. Provide Recommendation to City Council  
The Committee unanimously voted to release the concept design from the Committee into the Development Review process.

The Committee formulated and unanimously voted on the following statement for the update to Council at the meeting on February 2, 2021.

The Committee recommends that the concept plan be forward to Council with the findings from the Committee that it meets the purpose statement:

*De La Guerra Plaza celebrates and honors the historic heart of our city and provides the flexibility to serve our community’s diverse social, cultural, historic, economic and environmental vitality; and*

The Committee further finds it meets the social, cultural, historic, economic, and environmental vitalities formulated by the Committee; and

The Committee recommends to the Council the continuation of this Committee for the purpose of the following considerations: cultural, art, site furnishings, public outreach, connectivity and integration of State St and De La Guerra Street and revisions as needed.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Sneddon adjourned the meeting at 11:03 a.m.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

**TBD**