



# City of Santa Barbara

## Planning Division

### HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

#### DISCUSSION / WORKSHOP MINUTES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

David Gebhard Public Meeting Room: 630 Garden Street

1:00 P.M.

**COMMISSION MEMBERS:**

- PHILIP SUDING, *Chair* – Present
- DONALD SHARPE, *Vice-Chair* – Present
- LOUISE BOUCHER – Present
- MICHAEL DRURY – Present at 1:03 p.m.
- WILLIAM LA VOIE – Present
- FERMINA MURRAY – Present
- JUDY ORÍAS – Present
- CRAIG SHALLANBERGER – Present at 1:21 p.m.
- BARRY WINICK – Present

**ADVISORY MEMBER:**

DR. MICHAEL GLASSOW – Absent

**CITY COUNCIL LIAISON:**

DALE FRANCISCO – Absent

**PLANNING COMMISSION LIAISON:**

STELLA LARSON – Absent

**STAFF:**

- JAIME LIMÓN, Design Review Supervisor – Absent
- MICHAEL BERMAN, Project Planner/Environmental Analyst – Absent
- SUSAN GANTZ, Planning Technician – Absent
- GABRIELA FELICIANO, Commission Secretary – Present

*Website: [www.SantaBarbaraCa.gov](http://www.SantaBarbaraCa.gov)*

#### DISCUSSION ITEM

**2559 PUESTA DEL SOL**

E-1 Zone

- (1:00)
- Assessor's Parcel Number: 023-271-003
  - Application Number: MST2010-00166
  - Owner: Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
  - Agent: Suzanne Elledge Planning & Permitting Services
  - Architect: Schacht Aslani Architects

(Proposed project consists of the Master Plan for the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. The project components include demolition of the majority of the existing structures, approximately 58,500 square feet, with the exception of the designated structures of merit and proposed new development of approximately 109,500 square feet. The project requires a Measure E allocation of no more than 57,000 square feet and has received a dual designation as a Community Priority and Economic Development project.)

**(Third conceptual level discussion workshop on Master Plan Improvements proposed for Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. Purpose of this discussion is to provide a forum to exchange ideas, discuss design options and rationale for design concepts at early stage of design review. Item last reviewed on December 7, 2011.)**

(1:00)

Present: Suzanne Elledge, Agent, SEPPS

Susette Naylor, Architect, Thompson Naylor Architects  
Walter Schacht, Architect, Schacht Aslani Architects  
Susan Van Atta, Landscape Architect, Van Atta Associates  
Dr. Karl Hutterer, Executive Director, SMNH  
Dr. Pamela Post and Timothy Hazeltine, Historical Consultants  
Danny Kato, City Senior Planner/Development Review Supervisor  
Peter Lawson, City Associate Planner

Discussion held with comments only; no action taken.

**Objectives and comments presented by Applicant representatives:**

1. Provided updated plans at the meeting and brought a model of the proposed design.
2. Whether the preparation of a Phase 2 Historic Structures Sites Report would be appropriate based upon the overall design presented to date. If a general consensus is reached, the report would be available for review in early July of this year. Clearly understand that if a general consensus is reached, it's not an endorsement of the project.
3. A series of neighborhood meetings are planned beginning in March of this year.
4. The design team has chosen a preservation treatment that is a socially responsible method of thinking: rehabilitation by retaining the historic and significant characteristics of the property and removing the non-historic portions of the museum.
5. An emotional record of history has been created through the unplanned additions that have created a campus that feels random, picturesque and charming.
6. The circulation of the existing legacy buildings is a direct circulation pattern that provides a story within a story.
7. This project is a campus and research institution. In order to serve the mission of the museum, the proposed design serves that purpose.
8. Would like to present a story of the development look backward and forward that supports the objectives of the El Pueblo Viejo Guidelines.

**Walter Schacht, project architect, and other design team members provided a presentation with the following comments:**

1. 80,000 square feet of existing development, with approximately 20,000 to remain. The largest portion of new development would be west of Fleischman.
2. Reduction of about 10% from the design presented at the last workshop.
3. The development has been "tightened" up creating more green space, and the butterfly pavilion is now a predominant feature near the creek, which connects to the creek.
4. Storm water will run through the site in swales and also be an acknowledgement of surrounding historic development.
5. Developed the courtyard areas to provide a greater connection with the interior and the oak woodland.
6. Fleischman's ridge line remains the tallest ridge line of the development because the proposed two story development would begin at a lower elevation and read as a one story from the parking lot.
7. The model of the proposed project was presented to the Commission and emphasized to look at the overall model and not to get caught up in the details.
8. Added a pergola to the Butterfly Pavilion and drew upon a historic photo of the El Paseo for inspiration.

**The Historical Consultants provided the following comments on the proposed design:**

1. Worked with the design team since the last workshop to bring the project more consistent with the El Pueblo Viejo Guidelines.
2. The buildings are now modulated with more traditional Mediterranean-inspired architectural elements that would relate to the existing buildings. Gable roofs have been incorporated. Courtyards have been made a prominent feature of the buildings and space.
3. Although mindful that the volumes are larger, the mission of the museum has changed since 1922. Some of the larger spaces are necessary in order to provide the needed educational outreach.
4. The new buildings are located at a fair distance from the original historic buildings and will not impinge directly on them and the design emphasizes a relationship with the buildings and outdoor space (the built environment, topography, interior courtyards, landscaping, and water features). They are pleased that a majority of the new buildings are staying, within the existing footprint.

Public comment opened at 1:52 p.m.

Kellam de Forest, local resident, commented on design progress.

Public comment closed at 1:54 p.m.

**The Commission provided the following comments:**

1. The efforts by the design team is appreciated, including the model, and it's a good starting point.
2. The Commission found that the project should move onto the next step and not have further workshops or subcommittees.
3. **Size, bulk and scale:** Generally acceptable, but needs work on the details.
4. The buildings should be made to look less monumental.
5. **Creek:** The buildings being pulled away from the creek is appreciated.
6. Take advantage of possible open views to the creek.
7. The design of the creek should be more open and express the idea that the buildings celebrate the creek as the current design does.
8. **Design:** The concept of the architectural style is acceptable, but it is difficult to articulate what is a "Santa Barbara" design. The transition from the legacy buildings to the new buildings need more work.
9. The bird hall dioramas should remain intact wherever they end up.
10. Provide details such as niches and other indentations that children would enjoy as they walk down pathways.
11. The end of the planetarium begins to look as if it belongs in Santa Barbara, but the tower lacks the charm and earthiness of Hispanic architecture.
12. The design of the proposed planetarium space should really be termed as a plaza and not a courtyard.
13. Avoid designing the museum like a school campus in spite of its indoor use.
14. Consider the mechanical needs of the project for venting, backup power and other equipment to support the facility.
15. **Entrance:** The entrance is acceptable to the majority of the Commission.
16. The use of a courtyard and loggia for the entry is appreciated.
17. Restudy the proposed entry pavilion so that it is given enough importance to draw visitors to it. The proposed design does not make it clear that it is indeed the entrance.
18. **Historic components:** The separation between the old and new is appreciated.
19. The buildings should look as if they were built over time, and some felt that was not achieved by the current design. A "looseness" to the design is needed.

20. **Landscape:** The landscape plan and its concepts are acceptable.
21. The use of water in the landscape design is appreciated.
22. Maintain the indoor-outdoor relationship as the landscape plan is developed.
23. **Site plan:** The linearity of the design is not acceptable. It is very rigid and linear.
24. The roofs and the long linear buildings need to be broken up to reduce the massing. The Santa Barbara County Courthouse is an example of a massive building that appears to be smaller due to breaking up the mass.
25. The footprint needs to be looked at and address the site more, so that it is similar to the existing. A slight rotation of the new buildings is needed.
26. Proposed design appears like a research facility. The current design has visual surprises at every corner. Provide more curves to the proposed design.
27. The ridge heights are inappropriate. It was suggested that what was done in the Administration Building with the one gable be an inspiration for the new design.
28. **Phase 2 HSSR:** The majority of the Commission felt that the project is ready to move forward to the next phase.
29. Provide an analysis of how the proposed removal of a portion of the legacy buildings would not be a negative impact, since the Phase 1 HSSR determined that they are eligible for landmark status.

**\*\* DISCUSSION ITEM ADJOURNED TO THE FULL COMMISSION MEETING AT 2:37 P.M. \*\***

**REGULAR FULL COMMISSION MEETING – SEE SEPARATE MINUTES**