



State of Nevada
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Joe Lombardo, *Governor*
James A. Settelmeyer, *Director*
Rebecca Palmer, *Administrator*
Joseph Curtis, *Chair*

MINUTES OF THE COMSTOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

DATE: Monday, June 12, 2023

PLACE: Storey County Courthouse Slammer Museum, 26 South B Street, Virginia City, Nevada

WORKSHOP MEETING: None

REGULAR MEETING TIME: 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: 6:01 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMISSIONER ROLL CALL: Quorum achieved

Calvin Dillon – present

Clay Mitchell – present

John Cassanelli – present

Joe Curtis – present

Tammy Hendrix – present

Julie Workman – present

Nancy Cleaves – present

Mercedes de la Garza – *absent*

(Deputy Attorney General Nathan Holland not present)

PUBLIC COMMENT (Comment limited to 3 minutes per speaker, no action will be taken until it is properly agendaized):

One public comment. Gold Hill resident Sam Toll spoke about the NV Energy street lights. He stated that he and his neighbors are opposed to the brightness of the light coming from the upgraded fixtures. He is sympathetic to the fact that the new technology is brighter, that safety is an issue with it being a highway, and that these lights are what NV Energy has available. But he does not feel that the brighter lights are appropriate for the district. He does not feel that the newly installed shields did enough to mitigate the brightness and glare. He doubts that they meet County code even though they do meet the Dark Sky ordinance. He thanked Joe Curtis and the CHDC for their work to preserve the historic district.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS:

Chair's Report – None; comments reserved for specific agenda items

Staff Report – Comstock Preservation and History Officer Kristen Brown referred the Commissioners to her staff report that was sent to them along with the meeting materials. Kristen also gave an update on an email reply from the BLM received earlier that day (June 12th). The BLM responded to the CHDC's questions and comments from the May meeting regarding the interpretive kiosk. The second kiosk is in

Carson City at Eastgate Depot. All three kiosks will have the same appearance. The BLM inquired who owned the land at the rest area at the north end of C Street and expressed interest in placing a kiosk there. The BLM expressed concern that the water tank location near the Catholic cemetery is too remote.

Commissioner Comments – Julie Workman stated that the Dayton fourth graders toured Old Town Dayton and the Schoolhouse Museum, learned about historical figures, and had a scavenger hunt. The museum is open on the weekends – on Saturdays and for a half day on Sundays. John Cassinelli noted that he attended the Sutro Tunnel grand opening celebration and toured Donovan Mill.

Correspondence – BLM consultation letter (see Agenda Item 9)

APPROVAL OF JUNE 12, 2023 AGENDA:

Cal Dillon moved to approve the June 12, 2023 agenda, and Nancy Cleaves seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the June 12, 2023 agenda was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MAY 8, 2023 MEETING:

Nancy Cleaves moved to approve the May 8, 2023 meeting minutes with one edit, to correct a typo misspelling her name on the last page. Clay Mitchell seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the May 8, 2023 meeting minutes were approved. John Cassinelli abstained from voting as he was not present at the May meeting.

ALTERATION APPLICATION FOR SOLAR PANELS AT 80 N. L STREET, VIRGINIA CITY, AGENDA ITEM 7:

Gregory Bolander is the owner and submitted an application to install solar panels on the south-facing roof plane of his 2006 house. Discussion among Commissioners regarding prior precedents for solar panels and whether they are appropriate in the district. Joe Curtis noted that the CHDC has been selective in the past and only allowed them where the public can't see them, and that these panels will be visible. Julie Workman noted that they will be black panels on a black roof, that it isn't a historic building, that there aren't many buildings near it, and that the substation equipment next door blocks the view. She suggested approving these panels as the CHDC is likely to receive more solar applications in the future. Nancy Cleaves agreed with Julie Workman. Joe Curtis decided to abstain from voting as his own home looks down onto this building and since his own panels were denied years ago, although solar panels were rare then versus common now. Clay Mitchell noted that there are obvious panels on the elementary school and he does see others in town. He desires a more consistent approach to reviewing panels in the future. Joe Curtis suggested the Tesla solar shingles, and Cal Dillion asked if we could request alternatives from the building owner. Clay Mitchell noted that Tesla roofs have long lead times and that other types of panels are also reflective, which the CHDC should consider. Tammy Hendrix asked if there was a clear precedent set in the past, and Joe Curtis said yes, the precedent has been to approve those that aren't visible. Julie Workman stated that the CHDC has discussed panels in the past and had come up with some guidelines that this applicant has met, including that they will be black on a black roof, on a non-historic building, and on a building far from the main tourist areas.

Public comment – None.

Julie Workman moved to approve the solar panels and Nancy Cleaves seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion to approve the solar panels was approved. Joe Curtis abstained from voting.

NEW CONSTRUCTION FOR HOUSE, BARN, AND RETAINING WALL ON S. D STREET JUST NORTH OF FLOWERY, VIRGINIA CITY, AGENDA ITEM 8:

Lane Puckett is the owner and was present. The proposed design is for a house with a wraparound porch and tall foundation on the D Street elevation, and a barn and retaining wall set back into the hillside on the west side of the lot. Discussion among the Commissioners and the applicant about the proposed design and materials. Lane Puckett proposes applying a veneer of reclaimed bricks to the house and creating a faux stone foundation using scored cementitious coating. Lane Puckett also proposes applying a veneer of reclaimed wood to the barn and installing historic reclaimed windows. Kristen Brown cautioned against creating a false sense of history, which does not meet the district construction standards or the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. New construction should be compatible yet differentiated and should not create a false sense of history or fool someone into thinking it is a historic building. Discussion among Commissioners and staff regarding several ideas to change the design slightly to meet the Standards, including leaving the foundation with only exposed modern concrete and no faux stone, leaving the Victorian "gingerbread" off of the porch, installing an asphalt shingle roof, installing simple balusters instead of turned balusters, and installing simple/flat trim.

Public comment – Michele Puckett spoke and stated that the lot was full of hoarder trash before they purchased it.

Nancy Cleaves moved to approve the new buildings, with a less Victorian appearance, an asphalt shingle roof on the house, a concrete block foundation on the house, and with the rest of the architectural designs to be worked out with staff. John Cassinelli seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

NEW CONSTRUCTION FOR GREENLINK WEST TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT, VARIOUS LOCATIONS NORTH OF VIRGINIA CITY, AGENDA ITEM 9:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is the lead federal agency for a federal undertaking to install a transmission line from Reno to Las Vegas. The BLM was not present at the meeting but requested CHDC comment on the undertaking via a consultation letter. Kristen Brown explained the Section 106 process and summarized the undertaking's scope of work. Discussion among Commissioners about possible historic resources that may be in or near the Area of Potential Effect (APE), including the Lagomarsino Petroglyphs, other petroglyphs in areas to the north, stone structures at the Washington Townsite, and the cinnabar mines near Castle Peak. Tammy Hendrix noted that the BLM told Lyon County that they were leasing land for a solar field, and asked if this transmission line was related to that, or if it would lead to other things of that nature being installed. Kristen Brown indicated that the BLM was conducting consultation on the transmission line as a single undertaking. Joe Curtis stated that he would like the CHDC to remain involved with the consultation efforts. Clay Mitchell indicated that he felt the APE was adequate.

Public comment – One public comment. Storey County Planner Kathy Canfield stated that the County is participating in scoping meetings. The County is supportive of the goal but has concerns, particularly about the new transmission line access road providing an easy route for people to drive to the petroglyphs. She is also concerned about the road providing access to private property, about the fact that the CHDC was not mentioned in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and that the EIS does not

contain clear alternatives. The County has invited the BLM to attend a Board of County Commissioner meeting. The County has a link to the EIS and its appendices on the County website.

Clay Mitchell moved to direct staff to send a letter to the BLM outlining the CHDC's feedback, including: the CHDC does not have concerns with the APE; the CHDC has identified several areas of concern (the petroglyph sites, the cinnabar mines, the Washington townsite, old sheep pens, Tribal game fencing, and chert tool sites); the CHDC encourages the BLM to investigate those sites and all sites in the APE; the CHDC asks the BLM not to disturb known sites with a new access road; and the CHDC would like to remain in communication. Nancy Cleaves seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

NEW CONSTRUCTION, NV ENERGY STREETLIGHTS, VARIOUS LOCATIONS, VIRGINIA CITY AND GOLD HILL, AGENDA ITEM 10:

NV Energy installed inappropriate light fixtures without consultation and the item was on previous meeting agendas to discuss a potential stop work order and later to discuss potentially approving the lights. In response to a CHDC letter mailed to NV Energy and a meeting with NV Energy in April, NV Energy installed small shields on several new lights in an attempt to reduce their glare. Discussion among the Commissioners regarding whether the shields helped with the brightness and glare, and regarding what other options might be available. Joe Curtis stated that he inspected the lights recently and that the new shields did not appear to help or change the glare. Traveling downhill in Gold Hill is slightly less bright, but the glare is the same or worse when traveling uphill, and also when you are standing near a light it is very bright like a spotlight. Joe Curtis also noted that NV Energy does not seem to want to help as they have stated several times that there are no other alternatives, but stating that nothing else is available seems inauthentic. Joe Curtis reminded the CHDC about Sam Toll's public comment at the beginning of the meeting. Cal Dillon stated that he does not think the shields helped, and that they in fact made the light glare worse in some places. Nancy Cleaves agrees that the lights have not gotten better with the shields. She can no longer stargaze at Maynard Station due to the light intensity. Cal Dillon asked if there was a frosted cover that could be installed. Clay Mitchell stated that NV Energy does have different light fixtures that only have one bulb instead of two. He asked if the diffusers from the cut sheets won't work on these light types, what about other light "temperatures" or lower wattages? Clay Mitchell pointed out that the shields were installed facing the adjacent houses to attempt to reduce glare in those directions, but aren't shielded toward the road. Joe Curtis asked if the lights were so bright they might not meet FHWA/NDOT safety standards. Clay Mitchell spoke regarding the design of the lights and its appropriateness within the district, and said that if the lights weren't so bright, the simple design of the fixtures might "disappear" to the point where people wouldn't notice them. Clay Mitchell suggested that he set up a meeting with NV Energy to discuss alternatives again.

Clay Mitchell moved to continue this agenda item at the July CHDC meeting to continue the conversation and provide our feedback to NV Energy. John Cassinelli seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

JULY 2023 CHDC MEETING DATE RESCHEDULING, AGENDA ITEM 11:

During the May 8, 2023 meeting, the Commission voted to move the monthly meetings to the first Tuesday of each month. The first Tuesday in July is a holiday so the Commissioners discussed an alternative meeting date for July. Julie Workman suggested the second Monday in July.

Clay Mitchell moved to change the July CHDC meeting to Monday, July 10th, 2023 at 5:00 PM. Cal Dillon seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Comment limited to 3 minutes per speaker, no action will be taken until it is properly agendaized): None

ADJOURNMENT:

John Cassinelli moved to adjourn the meeting, and Nancy Cleaves seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM.