



# City of Santa Barbara

## DE LA GUERRA PLAZA REVITALIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 11, 2022

8:30 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.

This meeting was conducted electronically as described below.

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

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

#### City Council

Kristen Sneddon *Chair*  
Meagan Harmon

#### Planning Commission

Lesley Wiscomb *Vice Chair*  
Sheila Lodge

#### Historic Landmarks

Commission  
Michael Drury  
Steve Hausz

#### Parks and Recreation

Commission  
Beebe Longstreet  
Kathy McGill

#### 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  
Beth Anna Cornett, Project Planner

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### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sneddon opened the meeting at 8:44 A.M.

### I. ROLL CALL

**Kristen Sneddon, Lesley Wiscomb, Steve Hausz, Sheila Lodge, Beebe Longstreet, Kathy McGill, and Anne Petersen, Ph.D.**

Absent: Michael Drury, Meagan Harmon, Sam Edelman

### STAFF PRESENT

Ashleigh Shue, P.E., Interim City Engineer  
Brad Hess, Principal Project Manager  
Beth Anna Cornett, Project Planner  
Lia Monaco, Administrative Specialist

### INVITED SPEAKERS

Lief McKay, RRM Design Group  
Debbie Rudd, RRM Design Group  
Detlev Peikert, RRM Design Group

## II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

### A. Announcements

Due to Zoom technical issues, the meeting started later than the 8:30 AM start time. Mr. Hess announced that we have two new Committee Members: Ms. Sheila Lodge who replaced Mr. Reed from Planning Commission, and Ms. Kathy McGill who replaced Mr. Perry from Parks & Recreation Commission. No other announcements were made.

### B. Agenda Review/Changes

No changes

## III. AGENDA ITEMS

### TIME: 8:47 A.M.

- A. Discussion on Feedback from Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC). Chair Sneddon gave an opening remark regarding the format for the meeting and turned it over to Mr. Hess to begin the presentation.

Mr. Hess gave a summary of the HLC hearing, noting that the Advisory Committee is in agreement with HLC on more than they disagree, and the goal for today's meeting is to focus on those areas of disagreement.

Here are things we generally agree on:

- Closing the plaza and De La Guerra Street to vehicles;
- The plaza should be all on one level, building to building;
- The need for restrooms;
- Integrating arts, historic components, and cultures in the plaza;
- Enhancing the City Hall/Anacapa Street frontage landscape;
- Implementing an underground trash management system;
- Trees, tree-wells with seating; and
- Improved lighting

Here are topics working towards resolutions:

- An arcade feature;
- A surface materials selection;
- Restrooms located in Storke Pacita; and
- A quatrefoil/water feature

The presentation focused on the areas of design refinements: arcade design, restroom design, water feature, and Grass.

## **Arcade Design**

Mr. Hess outlined what the purpose and goals have been for the arcade, and Mr. McKay outlined the concerns raised by HLC. Mr. McKay presented three alternative design options, all moved back toward the parking lot and reduced in length with optional features. Mr. McKay began by showing what was previously proposed as a reference point.

1. Option A – three squared bays on either side, wing walls on the sides, a back wall to define the space, with a shed roof;
2. Option B – the same concept as previously submitted but with three arches on the sides, not four, scalloped walls at the ends and a reduced stage; and
3. Option C – same as Option B with two arches instead of three.

## **Restrooms**

Mr. McKay presented the sketch of the restrooms and pump room in Storke Placita with the restrooms closest to the Plaza. The design is consistent with HLC sentiments with a shed roof. The goal is to move it as close to the plaza as possible. Mr. Hess explained the reasons why the location in Storke Placita makes more sense than in other possible locations in the plaza are safety, access, visibility, and utilities.

## **Quatrefoil / Water Feature & Grass**

Mr. McKay restated the goal of the water feature design and that it is a very low-pressure, bubble style. HLC said they did not want a large water playground for kids. The design intent is for it to be a low-flow bubbler style so it is visually interesting, provides white noise, is beautiful and entertaining, provides a cooling effect for the space, and is drought appropriate.

Mr. Hess clarified the reasons the Committee, the City Administration, Public Works, Community Development, and Parks & Recreation feel ornamental turf is not appropriate to be in the design. Recycled water was proposed for watering the grass, however, it would be cost-prohibitive to bring recycled water to this project location, should ornamental turf be allowed in the design. Additionally, the ongoing maintenance costs to care for turf are high and after major events turf requires up to 3 months to regrow, making the space unusable during that time.

Mr. Hess concluded the presentation by requesting the Committee's preference on the Arcade design and confirmation of keeping the water feature in the design.

## **IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public comment opened at 9:13 A.M., and the following individuals spoke:

1. Mary Louise Days - discussed the origin of DLG Plaza and asked where the existing historic plaque will be relocated.

- a. Chair Sneddon - the historic plaque location has not been fully decided yet.
2. Dennis Thompson - very pleased with the progression. It is the right decision to exclude grass from the plan. Most main plazas throughout the world do not have grass. He is supportive of the water feature.
3. John Kelley - thanked the Committee for the work done thus far. There are three elements that are essential: removing curbs to improve accessibility, removing grass to improve function with level paving, and including a prominent feature that will benefit everyone and will explain Santa Barbara's history and rich cultural heritage.

Public comment closed at 9:20 A.M.

## **V. COMMITTEE MEMBER DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS**

Committee Member Discussion and Questions opened at 9:21 A.M.

### **Arcade Design**

Committee Discussion followed. Some of the highlights from the discussion are as follows:

- A majority of Committee Members approved of Option C but with a shed roof;
- Two Committee Members suggested they don't want this feature to hold up the project from making progress;
- Chair Sneddon remarked the Committee should aim to do it right;
- The majority of Committee Members agreed they preferred a smaller arcade, careful landscaping behind the arcade, the transparency the design provides, and the scalloped walls at the side.

### **Quatrefoil / Water Feature & Grass**

Committee Discussion on Quatrefoil/Water Feature followed. Some of the highlights from the discussion are as follows:

- Committee Members were in support of the bubbler water feature design, not a splash pad, as a cooling feature and a family-friendly activation of the space.
- The design promotes good behavior, whereas a Spanish-style water feature is an attractive nuisance that would not be supported by City Council. Larger fountains in town are now planters. Low volume bubblers provide interest, white noise, and cooling.
- The low profile design is appropriate for public spaces and location as proposed allows middle area to be used more efficiently.

The Committee discussion on Grass followed and some highlights from the discussion are as follows:

- The Committee Members were unanimous in eliminating grass from the plan in keeping with City Policies and guidelines; one member voiced support for keeping a small patch but understood its elimination.

- The concept plan is designed for a Civic Plaza, not a park, and would otherwise send the wrong message to include grass.
- The water feature will provide the cooling feature instead of grass.

Mr. Hess asked the Committee if another meeting is needed prior to returning to HLC. Discussion followed.

- It was suggested there be another Joint Work Session with HLC and this idea received strong support from the Committee;
- Several agreed that if the format changes then a Joint Work session could be very effective;
- It was asked if there is a timeline, but the clarification on timing won't happen until the project is submitted; and
- Mr. Hess concluded he would pursue a joint meeting with HLC and thanked the Committee for the direction and their work on this project.

Committee Member Discussion and Questions closed at 10:08 A.M.

**VI. NEXT STEPS**

**TIME: 10:09 A.M.**

A. Schedule Joint Work Session with Historic Landmarks Commission.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Sneddon adjourned the meeting at 10:12 A.M.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

**TBD**