

Honorable Chair and Members
of the Torrance City Council
Community Planning
and Design Committee
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: Review options for a Historic Preservation Program

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Community Development Director that the Community Planning and Design Committee provide direction regarding the potential adoption of a historic preservation program as outlined in the attached staff report, including the following possibilities:

- A. Adopt the Historic Resource Survey prepared by the Torrance Historical Society
- B. Institute a property recognition program
- C. Allow the establishment of conservation overlay districts
- D. Establish a Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) Program
- E. Establish a Mills Act program whereby a property owner's consent is required for both entering into a contract agreement and listing a structure on a historic register

BACKGROUND

In 2007, the Torrance Historical Society was tasked by the City Council to update the City's Historic Building Inventory. The Historical Society presented a draft of the completed historic resource survey for the original Torrance Tract (see attachment A) to the City Council on August 4, 2014. The Torrance Tract is area bounded by Western Avenue to the east, Plaza Del Amo and Carson Street to the south, Crenshaw Boulevard to the west and Dominguez Street to the north. The resource survey could serve as the basis for determining if a property is eligible to participate in a preservation program. Approximately 1,800 structures in the Torrance Tract were surveyed and categorized. There are three categories: contributing (structures built between 1912 and 1945 and retaining their original design integrity, form, massing and features), altered contributing (structures built between 1912 and 1945 and having been altered in a manner that is reversible and its historic integrity remains), and noncontributing (structures built after 1945). Of the 1,798 structures surveyed, 535 structures (30%) are categorized as contributing, 326 altered contributed (18%), and 937 noncontributing (52%).

On October 14, 2014, an item outlining the various options for the Strategic Plan goal of historic preservation was presented to the City Council. The options included adopting the Historic Resource Survey, property recognition program, providing financial incentives or relief from development standards, establishing Mills Act program and historic preservation overlay and conservation districts, and adopting the California Historic Building Code. The Council concurred with staff's recommendation to refer the consideration of options for historic preservation to the Community Planning and Design Committee by a unanimous vote.

On November 20, 2014, January 29, 2015 and April 29, 2015, the Community Development Department held community workshops at the Bartlett Center in Downtown to receive public input and present potential preservation program options. At the third meeting, a presentation of the history of Torrance and preservation strategies was also given by a preservation architect. Also, two homeowners from Angelino Heights in the City of Los Angeles, were invited to share their experience of living in a historic preservation overlay zone. Approximately 65 to 70 property owners, business owners, and residents attended each workshop. Members of the audience were given the opportunity to comment and ask questions. Interest survey forms were also distributed during the workshops.

Based on the comments and the survey forms received from the audience, the majority of responses were in favor of establishing a historic preservation program, particularly one that allowed the Mills Acts property tax abatement and historic preservation overlay zones. Those that were opposed or undecided expressed concerns about the loss of property rights and imposing restrictions that would affect the ability to develop their property and the need for more information and education about the various programs. A summary of the public comments, survey results and written comments from the community workshops are attached to this report (Attachments C, D & E)

ANALYSIS

The 2008 Strategic Plan identified ten Strategic Priorities which included the Appearance, Character and Quality of the Community. Appearance, Character and Quality was defined as enhancing and maintaining the image and preserving the rich heritage of Torrance and maintaining the character of carefully planned neighborhoods. The Strategic Plan goal of preserving the heritage of historical sites outlined five sub-goals: identification and awareness of historical sites, restoration and rehabilitation of historical sites, celebration of the community's heritage, formulation of a historic preservation program for the city, and intensification of efforts to revitalize Downtown Torrance while preserving its historic character. Historic preservation aims to protect and preserve the community's heritage, cultural resources, and neighborhood character. The purpose of this item is to provide an overview of the options for achieving these goals, receive public input, and receive direction on how to proceed.

Updating the historic resource survey for the Torrance Tract was the first step taken towards the identification and awareness of historic sites. A comprehensive survey

serves as a key resource for implementing other preservation programs and can be used for establishing a local historic register and identifying properties that could be included in historic preservation overlay districts. The Council may choose to adopt the historic resource survey of the Torrance Tract as a foundation for Historic Preservation efforts.

Once the foundational survey is in place, the continuum of options for historic preservation runs from programs easily implemented at a staff level to those requiring creation of a new Historic Preservation commission, a formal Historic Preservation Plan and outside consultant expertise, as well as additional internal staffing. The easiest to establish is a recognition program, which would establish guidelines for recognition of Historic structures. A Conservation District would require greater administrative effort in defining guidelines and a basic program, however, it would not require the level of effort required for either an actual Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) or Mills Act participation, both of which would require the formation of a Historic Preservation Commission and the formulation of a Historic Preservation Plan. These options will be described in greater detail below.

Property Recognition

The creation of an annual historic property rehabilitation recognition program would help realize several historic preservation goals. Under this program, an ad hoc committee could be created to nominate properties for consideration in residential and commercial categories. Based on the nominations, the Council could award certificates of recognition to property and business owners who have rehabilitated or restored their property in a historic fashion.

Conservation District

A conservation district is typically enacted as an overlay district for special protection of older neighborhoods that may not be able to qualify for historic designation. Conservation districts place more emphasis on preserving neighborhood character and less on a resource's historical significance. The Small-Lot Overlay District encompassing R-2 properties along Andreo Avenue and Gramercy Avenue between Carson Street and Plaza Del Amo is an example of conservation district. This option would require formulation of requirements for establishing a district, such as minimum number of properties to be included, minimum threshold of property owners desiring to establish a district as well as design criteria focusing on the areas of concern to the neighborhood, however, it is a much less formal and restrictive option.

Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ)

Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZ) provide the highest level of protection of historically significant structures, but also require a much higher level of administrative and staff involvement. The initial requirements for an HPOZ would include the creation of a formal Historic Preservation Plan and a Historic Preservation Commission, which would in turn require additional staffing at both the administrative and professional level as well as possible consultant expertise.

A historic district is defined by a geographic area and typically comprised of physically contiguous group of structures that are developed during a particular period of significance and have a common architectural style or cohesive design theme. A district can range in size from a few properties on a single street to an entire neighborhood. In a zoning overlay district, additional design standards are put in place to preserve the character of the area, while the underlying zoning designation of property, as well as the uses permitted and development standards, would remain in place.

To ensure neighborhood character, compatibility and architectural integrity are maintained, proposed exterior modifications and new construction are subject to a formal design review to prevent inappropriate development or alterations. The City would have to develop a review process for the analysis of proposed modifications and create thresholds of review at the staff, Community Development Director or Commission level. Design review would apply to exterior alterations, restorations, rehabilitation, and additions to contributing or altered contributing structures. Minor alterations and repairs (minor additions that are not visible from the street, window replacement, roof and siding repairs when materials match existing and are consistent with architectural guidelines) can be approved by the Community Development Director and major projects (large additions, façade restorations, change of use, demolition, significant remodels) can be approved by the newly created historic preservation commission.

Mills Act

The Mills Act is a State law enacted in 1972 that encourages the preservation and maintenance of Qualified Historic Structures. The Mills Act permits cities to enter into agreements with owners of Qualified Historic Structures to preserve and maintain their properties, in exchange for the County Assessor assessing their property at a lower rate by utilizing a formula established by the State.

The Mills Act is a property tax incentive program that is intended to be a component of either a voluntary or mandatory historic preservation program. Properties that have been designated as historic by the federal, state, or local government are eligible to participate in the Mills Act program.

A formal agreement, generally known as a Mills Act or Historical Property Contract, is executed between the local government and the property owner for a minimum of a ten-year term. This contract is a perpetual ten year contract. Contracts are automatically renewed each year unless owner elects to not renew the contract and are transferred to new owners when the property is sold. Property owners agree to restore, maintain, and protect the property in accordance with specific historic preservation standards and conditions identified in the contract. An annual inspection of each Mills Act property would be required by city staff to ensure proper maintenance of the property. Local authorities may impose penalties for breach of contract or failure to protect the historic property. The contract is binding to all property owners during the contract period.

Owners of qualified historic buildings may qualify for the Mills Act property tax relief if they pledge to rehabilitate and maintain the historical and architectural character of their properties for at least a ten-year period. The Mills Act program is especially beneficial for recent buyers of historic properties and for current owners of historic buildings who have made major improvements to their properties. Mills Act participants may realize substantial property tax savings of between 40% and 60% each year for newly improved or purchased older properties. The percentage of property tax savings is negotiated with the Los Angeles County Tax Assessors. Because the County Assessors are required to assess all properties annually, Mills Act properties may realize slight increases in property taxes each year.

An ordinance to establish a Mills Act program would include determining the eligibility criteria/requirements such as the structure must be listed on a local registry, categorized as contributing or altered-contributing structure on the historic resource survey, be limited to residential structures; formation of a Historic Resource or Cultural Heritage commission (comprised of at least 5 members who have demonstrated interest in historic preservation, including two professional historians or architects); and creating an application process. Adopting the Historic Resource Survey will help facilitate the creation of local registry.

The application process would entail a staff recommendation of whether structure meets the eligibility criteria and preparation of a draft Mills Act contract; the Historic Resource or Cultural Heritage commission consideration of the staff recommendation and the draft contract; Historic Resource or Cultural Heritage commission's decision can be appealed to City Council; and City Council consideration the Mills Act contract.

Implications

The establishment of a historic preservation program can have both intended and unintended positive and negative consequences to a neighborhood and to the City. Advantages may include preservation of the character of structures and neighborhoods, preservation of the community's heritage, enhancing the appearance of properties and neighborhoods, stabilization of neighborhoods, the investment and reinvestment in properties, encouraging of property rehabilitation and experiencing property tax savings through the Mills Act program. Disadvantages may include potential regulatory taking of property rights, prevention of future demolition and redevelopment of property to full potential allowed under the Zoning Code, design review and building permit process could be lengthened, additional costs to applicant for processing permit applications and preparation of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents. Adopting a Historic preservation programs could also require the commitment of additional staff resources for the review of Mills Act applications and development applications, preparation of environmental review document required by CEQA, coordination with County Tax Assessor, and periodic compliance inspections; and the potential loss of property tax revenue through the Mills Act program.

Summary of Options

The Committee may choose to select one or more of the following options for a historic preservation ordinance:

- Adopt the Historic Resource Survey prepared by the Torrance Historical Society.
- Institute a property recognition program.
- Allow the establishment of conservation overlay districts
- Establish a Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) Program
- Establish a Mills Act program whereby a property owner's consent is required for both entering into a contract agreement and listing a structure on a historic register.

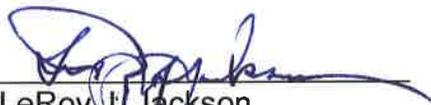
After the Committee provides staff with direction on the components of the historic preservation program, staff will bring back more in-depth analysis of the preferred options and draft ordinance provisions for consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

LEROY J. JACKSON
City Manager

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CONCUR



LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

By 

Jeffery W. Gibson
Community Development Director

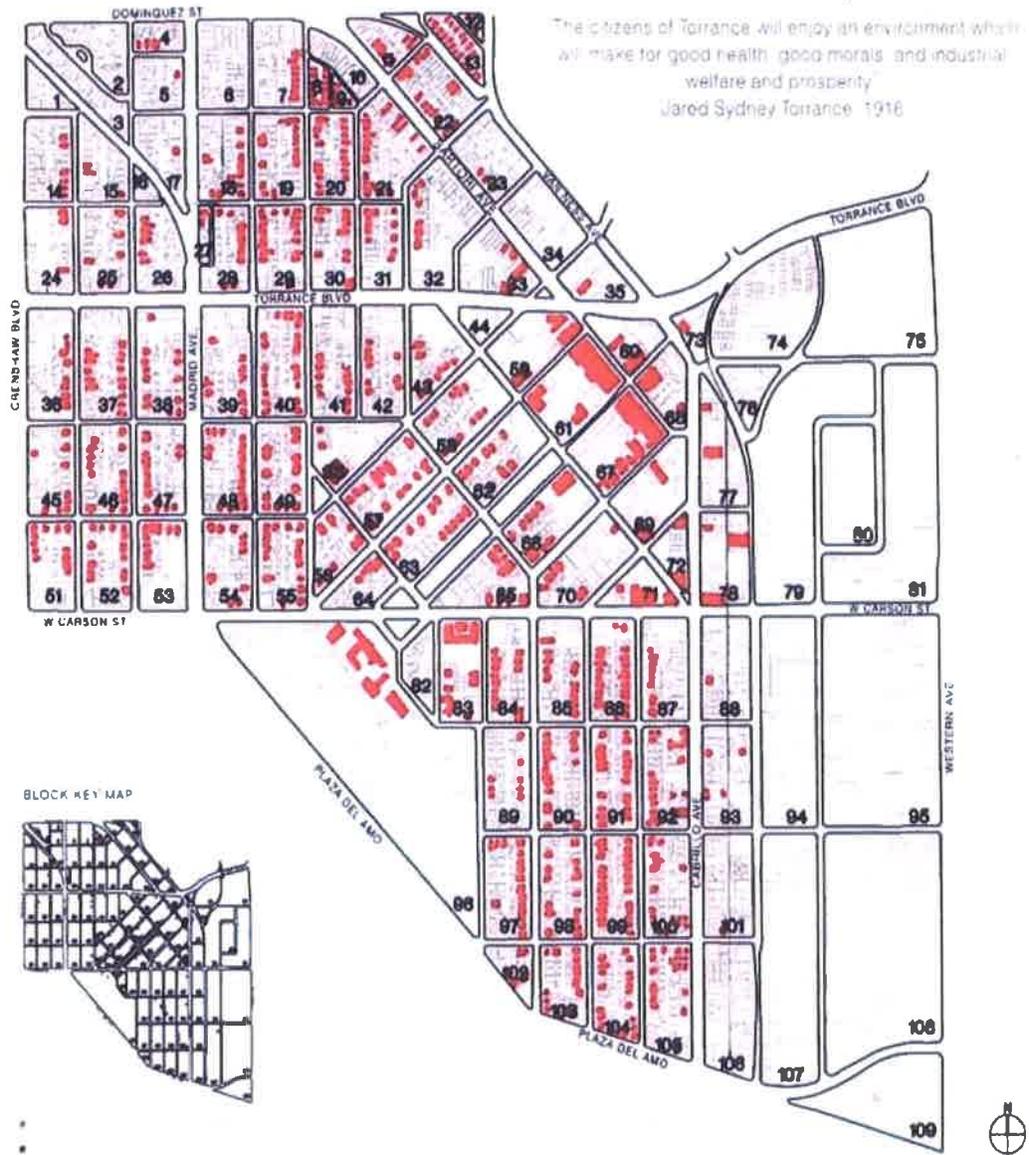
Attachments:

- A. Historic Preservation Program Summary
- B. Torrance Tract Map, Contributing & Altered Contributing Structures
- C. Public Comments from Workshops
- D. Written Comments from November 20, 2015 Workshop
- E. Interest Survey Results
- F. Correspondences

Historic Preservation Program Summary

	Recognition Program	Conservation District	Historic Preservation Overlay Zone	Mills Act
How established/implemented	Nomination committee	Ordinance	Ordinance	Ordinance, Resolution & Contract
Consent to initiate	N/A	Majority of property owners w/in proposed district	Majority of property owners w/in proposed overlay	Property owner
Participation	Voluntary	Mandatory	Mandatory	Voluntary
Adoption of Historic Resource Survey	optional	recommended	Yes	Yes
Listing on a Historic Register required	No	No	No	Yes (Local register)
Historic Preservation/ Cultural Heritage Commission required	No	No	Yes	Yes
Scope of Design Review	Exterior	Exterior	Exterior	Exterior
Eligible properties	Residential, Commercial	Residential	Residential	Residential, Commercial
Design Review	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes
Approval of requests for minor alterations to structures	N/A	Community Development Director	Community Development Director	Community Development Director
Approval of requests for major alterations to structures & new construction	N/A	Planning Commission	Historic Preservation or Cultural Heritage Commission	Historic Preservation or Cultural Heritage Commission
Restoration of Altered-Contributing resources required	Prior to nomination	Upon owner initiation of construction	Upon owner initiation of construction	Prior to application for register listing
Treatment of Non-Contributing Resources	Not eligible for recognition	Future alterations may be reviewed for compatibility	Future alterations may be reviewed for compatibility	Not eligible for participation
Compliance with the Secretary of Interior Standards	Voluntary	Voluntary	Mandatory	Mandatory
Additional staff required	No	No	Yes	Yes

Torrance Tract Map Contributing and Altered Contributing Structures



Map of Contributing and Altered-contributing Buildings (in red)

Historic Preservation in the City of Torrance

A series of informational meetings have been held for members of the Community residing in the Torrance Tract Area. The Torrance Tract is loosely bounded by Crenshaw Blvd, Plaza Del Amo, Dominguez Way and Western Avenue. Notification was sent by mail to every registered property owner in the Torrance Tract Area, a mailing of a little over 2,000. These notices were sent prior to each meeting. A Display ad was also published for each meeting. Announcements at City Council and CitiCable station were also made. Notices encouraged participation in this process since the adoption of any Historic Preservation program could affect property values. At each meeting, a PowerPoint presentation was presented, after which feedback was received from attendees. A synopsis of comments from these meetings follows:

November 20, 2014, Community outreach meeting at the Bartlett Center

This was the first of the Community outreach meetings and over 60 attendees. Community Development Director Jeff Gibson welcomed the workshop attendees and introduced staff. Planning Manager Gregg Lodan presented a PowerPoint presentation which covered the various options for carrying the Strategic Plan goal of historic preservation. This included a property recognition program, incentive program, Mills Act program, Overlay District program, and the California Historic Building Code. Feedback included a number of questions and comments regarding Historic Preservation, property rights and values, tax benefits and the process to designate a building historic. Comments included:

- How is a Building designated Historic?
- What are the options to prevent the tear down of a historic property and if they run out of money which causes the delay in construction.
- Railroad right of way – convert to park. such as Dominguez St
- Each city decides on program rules
- HPOZ provides huge protection for historic homes
- in support of adopting Historic Building Code
- Mills Act provides property owners a 10-50% property tax savings
- Foster Freeze saved from Demo in Past
- Does City have a landmark Ordinance?
- Is Preservation geared towards exterior and/or interior
- Conservation District – preserves the character of the neighborhood, but does not protect a historic building, which is a drawback

- Not all homes are on R-1 lots. Will the preservation Ordinance change the zoning of the existing property.
- Will an existing non-historic home be torn down because it does not fit in?
- If HPOZ is adopted, What is the ramification of new construction or existing construction that is non-conforming. What can they do on an empty property?
- 3 types of Historic designations include Contributing, altered contributing and non-contributing
- Add to city Website – What are the pro's and cons of the different options presented.
- Add more info on the website on Mill's act property tax ramifications.
- Noise pattern of the neighborhood is changing. will this be considered?
- Check for more financial incentives for property owners.
- Mills act – good. Property tax saved is supposed to be used to improve the property.
- This process is going to take time. Need every ones input to put on the record.
- Save Historic.com
- How Many Historic buildings have been lost
- Don't inter-mix historic homes with downtown Torrance
- Would historic options prevent projects under donstruction from sitting idle
- Impacts on Property value? (HPOZ)
- Mills Act tax break
- Access Workshop info on City's Website
- Not for additional Layer of regulations—can they opt out? in favor of mills act
- Conservation District - Protection of neighborhood character
- Look at hybrid of designated area
- Don't refer to as "old Downtown" – instead refer to as Historic District

- What options do those who don't want to be involved have?
- Want Historic options in place in near future improves property values.
- Post URL re: Study on property values increasing
- Has Planning Commission been involved to date in historic preservation? Wants PC to hear tonight's feedback.
- Financial impacts of Mill's Act
- Likes property Recognition program option
- Wants City to find out financial incentives available
- LA Conservancy website – See resources Link to find out what other cities have done – grades assigned.
- Recognize burden on staff-consider volunteers to help staff or hire
- Frederick L Olmstead Jr – founder of original district layout – Learn history and give recognition where due.
- Get absentee owners involved and concerned with who they rent to..

Next Steps

January 29, 2015 – Bartlett center from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm – 2nd Community Workshop. City Council's - Community Planning and Design Committee Meeting to be scheduled for late February or March.

January 29, 2015, Historic Preservation Workshop at the Bartlett Center

This was the second Community outreach meetings with over 70 residents in attendance. Staff presented a PowerPoint presentation on a recap of the previous November 20th workshop and included more detailed information on the different Historic preservation program options. After the presentation, staff received input from the attendees during a Q & A session. Attendees at the January workshop voiced both for and against historic preservation in the City. Those in favor of historic preservation wanted regulations and/or a method to be able to save the remaining buildings that are deemed historic. They were concerned with the loss of many historic homes being demoed and/or altered so much that they can no longer be classified Historic. Those against historic preservation, had concerns on property values, government restrictions and property rights--control over their property. They wanted to be able to have the freedom to do what they want on their property without someone telling them otherwise. Attendees seem to like the Recognition and Mills Act Property program, since it was a voluntary program and it didn't seem to affect their property rights. Comments included:

- How do the different programs affect the property owners? Need more information on this.
- Has historic home on Engracia and in favor of voluntary approach....concerned with too much government control.
- Doesn't want government telling her what to do with her house.
- Has commercial building on Carson Street so concerned with how it would be affected. Staff explained it would be exempt most likely.
- Asked for clarification on whether new program would require modifications. Staff answered that it would not.
- When would the historic preservation program be put in place? Staff responded that it depends on the type of program adopted.
- If the survey has already been done, when will it be available for property owners to see?
- Will the adopted program include MFR? Staff answered that it depends on how it is designed and what is included....also on what the neighborhood wants to see in it.
- Very concerned with any additional oversight by government.
- Wants more information than given tonight because it's hard to fill out the survey based on the limited information given in the presentation. Linda answered that all the information from tonight will be posted on the City's website.
- Has City staff been in touch with other cities that have these programs? Staff answered that yes, and Redondo Beach has both a HPOZ and Mills Act.
- The LA Conservancy has a lot of information on who has what along with a rating of how well they're doing.
- How is a homestead different than what Torrance is trying to do?
- Has financial interest in overlay zone but leave the decision up to the property owners.
- If you don't want to live in a historic district with guidelines, then why live here? Why did you buy here? Some bought because they do want to keep historic integrity and preserve. It does increase property values. The City spent a lot of time/money on its guidelines, which allow you to paint your house the color you want.
- City staff needs to be educated on historic preservation and we need one staff member trained specifically with this expertise.

- Does City know how many people are for and against historic preservation program? Staff responded not yet, but will after results taken of survey given tonight.
- Will City be working with City Council on this? Yes.
- A number of structures have already been demolished and rebuilt, so concerned that a historic district will add cost and time to making any improvements.
- If you can stop the redevelopment of the Foster Freeze, why not others? Why have historic preservation?
- Sad to see new and ugly construction in historic areas....good to preserve and increase property values!
- Don't call this area the Old Torrance or Old Town....refer to as Downtown Torrance.
- Recommend staff lay out options all on one slide to help clear up any confusion among those attending tonight. Wants to stop construction that contrasts with the historic structures.
- Asks that staff report on what other communities are doing and how the different programs really work.
- Wants to grow the Downtown. Need more education and need to have a historic district, not HPOZ, not Mills Act, not Recognition Program. Need to have staff list out the different options side by side so the audience can better understand what each one is all about and to allow a comparison of benefits/disadvantages.
- The common theme tonight is a lack of education...these are important decisions for folks to make so they deserve to have more education on this. Staff hasn't touched on the roots of historic preservation, how we got the boundaries of the historic district, etc? What is a homestead and what is the importance of living there?
- Wants printed out material on each of the options discussed tonight.
- Doesn't want someone to dictate what color she has to paint her house.
- Loves her historic home but doesn't like someone asking her why she moved there if she doesn't like historic preservation.

Staff at the January workshop distributed a Historic preservation interest survey for attendees to voice their opinions. According to the survey, about 71% of the attendees are interested in a historic preservation program, while 29% are not.

April 29, 2015, Historic Preservation Workshop at the Bartlett Center

This was the third Community outreach meetings with over 78 residents in attendance. Gordon Olschlager, historic preservation expert and Architect focused on the history of the Torrance

Tract Area and Historic Preservation. Two Guest property owners from the City of Los Angeles shared their experiences with a historic district. After which City staff took questions and comments. Feedback included a number of questions and comments regarding Historic Preservation, property values and the overall process of a potential Historic Preservation Ordinance. Comments included:

- This resident was worried about current rehabilitation occurring right now. For example, there are a group of bungalows with wood siding being stuccoed over. He fears the process will take too long to save historic homes, such as these. Can there be a Moratorium?
- This resident was opposed to other landowner imposing restriction on their property and limiting the market, especially since the economy is just recovering from the financial collapse.
- This resident commented that generally, property values go up as properties are enhanced, especially those in a Historic District.
- According to this resident, her alley hasn't been repaved since 1912, how do they get the alley repaired. Property is located on Cabrillo Avenue.
- 1902 in Pasadena, City didn't allow repair of windows unless you restored it to it's original architectural style. Who's going to pay for a historic remodeling, versus the cost of vinyl windows.
- Can they build on an R-3 zoned lot?
- Non-contributing buildings should not be included in the Ordinance.
- Historic preservation doesn't lower property values. Allows for certain advantages. Gives Stability to a neighborhood.
- This is a special area, thanked the speaker (Gordon) and Mr. Torrance for his vision.
- There's benefit to have a home in a Historic District. Have they experienced tax benefits, financial savings. The speakers reported rents going up and the Mills Act is available to home owners.
- What determines a home historic? A home can be historic in several ways such as Architectural or defined period of significant, period of age, period of style.
- Fix the sidewalks and alleys – infrastructure improvements
- Historic preservation does not affect the inside of the building.
- Conservation District – Hometown? just adopted a conservation district.
- Are there pictures they can see from the survey.

- The Survey included 1912 thru 1940 the period of significant. there are 1700 – 800 contributing.
- This person's building is surrounded by large ugly buildings, will her home be restricted?
- He has a 1912 home – he wondered if his rights be taken away / restricted? and be told what to do?
- Walkability of the neighborhood – People enjoy walking it is much more safer.
- This commercial property owner supports the Historic concepts. He states that retail in the area is struggling. His building located at 1606 Cabrillo Ave was recommended to change the existing first floor windows with large windows. but he was against due to they are very expensive to replace. he feels that historic preservation will slow down the process, if a historic preservation Ord. is adopted.
- What is the process. Next steps. This will probably go in front of City Council Subcommittee. They will make a recommendation to council and then council will direct staff.
- How will the Historic Preservation process.. What needs to be reviewed. what will trigger a review for historic preservation hearing?
- What will be done with the Non-compliant homeowner? Code Enforcement
- What happens if a disaster happens, such as a metrorite land on a historic home?
- This resident lives in a condo on 220th and Cabrillo avenue. wants the alley repaired!
- if building lives in a home 50 years from now, who is going to pay for all changes to fix it to retain it to be a historic home. Rules should apply to everyone after the date of adoption.
- This resident bought a house they thought they were in a historic district. Loves it. wants to prevent a Historic home from being demolished, to be protected and preserved.
- Who are members of the City Council subcommittee?
- Who would be selected on the subcommittee/historic commission? Who should be selected on the HP commission?
- This resident Loves his home that is a contributing home.
- This resident hopes that we can come to an agreement on what we all want to see on the Historic Preservation Program
- Design of the Original Torrance Tract designed by noteworthy architect/designer Fredrick Law Olmsted jr.. The District itself is a Historic District an "Olmsted District".

- How does it effect the homeowner being in the Olmsted District? the Importance of Nature.
- What are the % of basic rules requirements that will be approved?
- If your home is a contributing structure, you can add to your home that fits in the codes. most of the people don't understand what they can do. A house sold for \$1 million and had a remodel / addition in the back of the property.

Results of Historic Preservation Interest Survey (Conducted at Public Workshop Held 1/29/15 at the Bartlett Center)

Survey Question	Response (Number)	Percent
Would like to see some type of historic preservation program adopted in Torrance	40	71.43%
<i>Would not</i> like to see some type of historic preservation program adopted in Torrance	16	28.57%
Total:	56	100%
<i>*56 of the 63 (89%) of the workshop attendees turned in a completed survey</i>		

Those responding that they would like to see a historic preservation program adopted in Torrance were further asked which type of program they would prefer. The survey included a list of 4 possible programs (Property Recognition Program, Mills Act Program, Conservation District, and Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) for participants to choose from. A few participants suggested adding a Historic District as an additional program for consideration. The table below shows that eight (8) or 20% of those who would like to see a historic preservation program were undecided/requested more information on the different programs in order to decide.

Undecided/requested more information to decide the program they would prefer	8	20%
Stated their preferred program	32	80%
Total:	40	100%

Of the 40 participants who said they would like to see some type of historic preservation program, 32 stated their preferences for programs. Of these, 22 (68.7%) would like to see 2 or more of the options put in place. The following chart shows the distribution of responses. Programs receiving the most support included the Mills Act and Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (tied), followed by the Property Recognition Program.

Preservation Program	Response (Number)
Property Recognition Program	20
Mills Act Program	24
Conservation District	12
Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ)	24
Historic District	4

Surveys submitted also included the following written comments:

Comments from Participants Against any Historic Preservation Program
I am strongly against historical preservation that impedes a property owner to do what they want with their own property. I feel that if you purchase your property, you should be able to do what you want with it and others should not be able to restrict you.
Everyone who owns property has their own purpose and they should be able to choose to do whatever style or color to their house as long as it's within the city planning guidelines. Has to be voluntary participation!
I want to preserve my R2 status and build 2 houses on it. It is the reason I bought my property in Torrance.
Strongly opposed to historical preservation that impedes a property owner the ability to do what they want with their own property.
Do not rush to force the will of others on individual property owners. You need to preserve the rights of the owners. No one or no group should control or trump the rights of the individual. Those who want to preserve should preserve their own property on their own free will. Realize the importance of freedom of choice.
I have lived in Torrance 67 years and you are trying to preserve something that does not exist anymore. My grandson will be the 6 th generation to graduate from Torrance High, but people have the right to build their house the way they want.
Need more information and time.
I would not object to a voluntary Property Recognition & Mills Act only Historic District where the individual owners choose their level of participation.

I am vehemently opposed to any type of preservation program in the Old Torrance area. The Property Recognition Program is ok, but anything beyond that is an infringement on property owner's rights.

Comments from Participants who would like to see some type of historic preservation program but did not state their preferred program

Need research...little confused, however very interested in some historical preservation.

I am strongly in favor of a historic preservation program; however, I don't have enough knowledge to be able to choose a specific program at this point.

Need more information to choose preference. Small "pockets" of preservation seem to make little sense. One block preserved and one modernized will not make a desirable neighborhood.

Yes, I think that historic preservation is an excellent idea. Hopefully, completion will occur soon.

Not sure, need to know more.

Undecided. My house was built in 1940. Original windows, but the wood is harder to care for than vinyl it seems. Plus, one of the windows is ugly – fake shutters. Every house is different. Perhaps a matrix presentation with the different plans, historic and non-historic, the impacts, and include the historic district option.

I need more information to respond to this survey.

Comments from Participants who would like to see some type of historic preservation program and stated a preferred program

The California Historic Building Code is needed for Torrance.

Use the California Historic Building Code

The idea has been kicking around for most of the years I have lived here (14 years). Let's go! Thank you!

Work is basically done on Resource Survey, State and National requirements.

Like all, need more education. Ideally, I want to stop the teardown of unique homes, and having them replaced with 2 Mc Mansions on one lot or multi unit housing. That's it. Please get the survey data out as soon as possible. I like the idea of an entire historic district. Thank you.

Can the Committee please outline a Mission Statement? How to help the Community? How to help the

businesses? How to help the landlords?

People in the Old Town Torrance are destroying the character of the area with new, modern and or distasteful construction. If people complain about not having a driveway, they should really use their alley entrance.

Any of the [programs] is a good start.

Voluntary programs are what we now have. Need HPOZ to preserve the neighborhood.

Send information for posting on old Torrance neighbors.org and Torrance Historical Society.org to dber@pacbell.net

A comparison chart is an excellent idea. We need to know more about all the options.

Please outline why Olmsted is important. Add "Olmstead District" identifying the area. Add better signage. Discuss why driveways cannot be added because that is not part of the Olmstead Plan. Outline in presentation the programs in other cities, e.g. L.A., Hermosa Beach, Redondo Beach, Santa Monica, and see the L.A. Conservancy web. Property rights and values.

Results of Historic Preservation Interest Survey (Conducted at Public Workshop Held 4/29/15 at the Bartlett Center)

Survey Question	Response (Number)	Percent
Would like to see some type of historic preservation program adopted in Torrance	31	75.61%
<i>Would not</i> like to see some type of historic preservation program adopted in Torrance	10	24.39%
Total:	41	100%
<i>*56 of the 63 (89%) of the workshop attendees turned in a completed survey</i>		

Those responding that they would like to see a historic preservation program adopted in Torrance were further asked which type of program they would prefer. The survey included a list of 4 possible programs (Property Recognition Program, Mills Act Program, Conservation District, and Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) for participants to choose from.

The following chart shows the distribution of responses. Programs receiving the most support included the Mills Act and Historic Preservation Overlay Zone, followed by the Property Recognition Program.

Preservation Program	Response (Number)
Property Recognition Program	8
Mills Act Program	17
Conservation District	5
Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ)	20

Surveys submitted also included the following written comments:

Comments from Participants Against any Historic Preservation Program
I would not like to see some type of historic preservation program adopted in Torrance other than specific recognition for a specific bldg. and nothing more.
I am not against historic preservation. I'm against <u>control</u> . I'd prefer to not go through a lot of hoops to do work on my home because of historic preservation rules. You can and are able to keep your home looking as <u>old</u> as you want. I should be able to keep my home looking good without needing or requiring

permission from my historic preservation neighbors.

Real estate market is not conducive (sic) for this type of change. Do not want to be controlled on what I can and cannot do to my property.

I am opposed to any preservation!!! We don't need ad'l red tape/bureaucracy from gov't!

I am against historic preservation, I think the homeowner should be able to do what they want w/their property.

Let current owners decide whether to adopt the preservation and then hold all future owners to it. Alt: have current owners wanting the preservation sign a covenant affecting just their property.

Although I would not want to see a historic preservation adopted in Torrance, if there is to be one (the respondent prefers) Property Recognition Program and Mills Act Program (but not) Conservation District or Historic Preservation Overlay Zone. Old style is not necessarily good. If those who like historic want it I respect that. But it should not be imposed on others.

Comments from Participants who would like to see some type of historic preservation program

It would nice if Torrance would repair our alleys, sidewalks, and street in "old Historic" Torrance – 220th and Cabrillo! The "least" invasive type of property conservation/preservation (respondent opposes Mills Act, Conservation District & HPOZ)

Please repave all alleys which are nearly all in disrepair. Alley from Carson St. to the south, east of Cabrillo is awful. Garages all face the alleys.

Property owners whose homes are considered "historic" or "contributing" should be able to opt-in or opt-out of historic restrictions or standards. This should happen before an ordinance is adopted. After ordinance is in effect, then an opt-out and opt-in process should be in effect.

I'm tired of seeing 2 homes constructed on one lot. I wonder about solar panels or metal roofs.

Not sure, need more details of each (in reference to each program)

Check 1350/1350 ½ Engracia see parking off alley a "CUP" was approved (this as a good example) carport oversized 2 car garage carport

Keep Old Torrance beautiful!

In the long run it might be more efficient to use a process of elimination to reach consensus: 1) communicate with owner of properties that don't contribute and allay their fears! 2) Identify owners of contributing properties that are on board with HPOZ and know you have their vote 3) set up

appointments, perhaps telecons(?)/email with the remainder and address their specific concerns on a case by case basis because everyone will have a different story and we all don't need to hear them all.

Hurry up!

I am very interested in preserving Old Torrance and hope that we can as a community advance to the next stage with City Planning.

Really unsure (in reference to HPOZ program)

Need more info (in reference to Mills Act program) Great presentation. Thank you.

Need research....little confused, however very interested in some historical preservation.

I am strongly in favor of a historic preservation program; however, I don't have enough knowledge to be able to choose a specific program at this point.

Need more information to choose preference. Small "pockets" of preservation seem to make little sense. One block preserved and one modernized will not make a desirable neighborhood.

Written Public Comments from the November 20, 2014 Historic Preservation Workshop

I have a R3 lot which I purchased 40 years ago with the eventual goal of replacing the current 2 houses (one built in 1935 and one in 1953) with condos- craftsman style. Because Cabrillo has lost so many homes to big condos I hope I won't have to necessarily have to preserve the existing homes. Cabrillo has so many ugly properties that it would be nice if they will be replaced w/new craftsman style homes or units. I just want the option if I wanted to develop the property.

Very important to listen to the "people" and not be arbitrary – we need to save our "historic" places.

We need an HPOZ, the Mills Act and the California Historic Building Code.

These are long overdue. Happy that maybe it may actually happen in Torrance. Sure hope my hope don't get crushed again.

Important to identify strategies for spurring economic development in Downtown District – need more people & Businesses.

As a landscape Architect, proud to live in Olmsted Designed community (son of 1st Landscape Architect). Hope O.T. can celebrate History of Olmsted's design & keep historic landscape.

Critical to recognize significant historic trees in neighbor

concerned that my 1927 originally Spanish colonial home which looks more bungalow upon purchase – would it be restricted from refining design to be more craftsman/ bungalow (would be more expensive & difficult to regain original character)

Joe, Kevin

From: Gibson, Jeff
Sent: Tuesday, January 20, 2015 8:48 AM
To: Chun, Carolyn; Lodan, Gregg; Joe, Kevin; Cutting, Rebecca; Cessna, Linda
Subject: FW: Historic Preservation

Fyi.....

From: CDD Info
Sent: Tuesday, January 20, 2015 8:07 AM
To: Gibson, Jeff
Cc: Cessna, Linda; Chun, Carolyn
Subject: FW: Historic Preservation

From: Librada Holden [<mailto:libraholden1@sbcglobal.net>]
Sent: Monday, January 19, 2015 11:45 AM
To: CDD Info
Subject: Historic Preservation

Dear Mr Gibson,

We are the homeowner here at 2225 Gramercy Ave. Torr. CA 90501. We want you to know that we are against this historic preservation program of old town Torrance. There is no sense of preserving old small houses, and here are the reasons why :

- 1) These small old houses are falling apart unlike those huge Pasadena mansions it even have servants quarters.
- 2) Closets of these small houses are so small so so out dated people nowadays have so much clothes & shoes that cannot fit on those small closets.
- 3) Families now are bigger and more and more children stays with their parents that cannot afford to buy their own houses.
- 4) Garages needs to be more bigger same reasons as # 3 above.

Last but not the least it is reasonable to have this historic preservations if the houses are huge & earthquake retrofitted. It's out of reach for ordinary citizen to update or earthquake retrofit their homes. Please reconsider the above reasons.

Sincerely,

The Holdens

2225 Gramercy Ave.

Torrance, CA 90501

libraholden1@sbcglobal.net

IMPORTANT MEETING FOR THE PEOPLE OF OLD TORRANCE

Hello Save Historic Old Torrance Members and Residents,

IMPORTANT MEETING FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

WHAT: COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DESIGN COMMITTEE MEETING on HISTORIC PRESERVATION

(This is the three council members on the committee who will make a recommendation to the entire city council)

WHEN: THURSDAY, JULY 30TH FROM 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

WHERE: TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS 3031 TORRANCE BLVD. TORRANCE

This is the first public meeting with this committee. It is a great idea to put your thoughts into writing, so they become part of the public record. Email your thoughts to: CDDinfo@TorranceCA.gov and cc a copy to the city clerk at CityClerk@TorranceCA.gov. And, please attend and speak in favor of historic preservation.

Bonnie Mae Barnard, VP of Save Historic Old Torrance will be out of the state during this meeting, but has sent a letter to the above email. Bullet points of the letter request:

- Qualified historic preservation officer
- HPOZ
- Mills Act
- California Historic Building Code
- Budget to support historic preservation and the personnel needed

Historic Preservation Plans & Perks

Historic District -- HPOZ : In other counties a designated historic area is known as an historic district. In Los Angeles County the district is called an Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ). An HPOZ (in LA County) is a city designated historic district composed of a group of buildings that are related to one another historically, architecturally and/or culturally. In an HPOZ buildings within the HPO do not need to "landmark" quality. It is much easier for a neighborhood of houses or buildings to qualify for an HPOZ than it is for an individual house or building to be designated as significant.

Perservation Perks:

First and foremost the designation brings an enhanced sense of community and community pride. Neighbors appreciate the care given by neighbors in preserving the charm of the neighborhood and business areas appreciate the continuance of the friendly "hometown" feel of the area.

An HPOZ is culturally significant. It states that neighbors (or businesses) want to preserve the streetscape (that viewed from the street), which makes their area special. It also means that the charm is there for the future generations to appreciate.

Specifically for Torrance: An HPOZ gives us "Bragging rights." You see, Mr. Jared Sidney Torrance, the founder of this city, paid \$10,000 in 1912 for the most renowned landscape architect and city planner, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. to plan our city. (That was such a large sum of money then, and Olmsted was so famous, that it made the front page of the papers! That in itself gives us "bragging rights," but only if we preserve the charm of that design for future generations.

Then there are those charming homes all over Old Torrance. They are NOT cookie-cutter homes. We have a variety of styles built between 1912 through WWII. If you have walked down many of the streets in the residential district of Old Torrance, you have seen the charm. In fact, those who visit always exclaim that they had no idea that Torrance still had such charm.

Another significant reason for an HPOZ is diminishing the threat of demolition and condominiums placed where a charming home once was. An HPOZ does not directly protect from demolition, but does make it necessary to consider the impact on the community. This is called an Environmental Impact Review. It has helped Save Historic Old Torrance save

many a homes and/or assure that homes built resemble what is in the neighborhood. (But that's another story for another issue).

Financial Boost is another reason for an HPOZ. While the Los Angeles Conservancy recognizes that no significant study has been done in Los Angeles County to demonstrate the increase in property values, it does recognize that there have been studies done in other areas demonstrating that historic districts raise property values.

A ten year study in the Orange, CA demonstrates that property values in an HPOZ increased by 36% in a ten year period over those that were not in the HPOZ. A link to this study can be found on SaveHistoricOldTorrance.com website (under restoration resources). More benefits of Historic Preservation in future Old Torrance Telegram issues.

FACEBOOK---SAVE HISTORIC OLD TORRANCE HAS A FACEBOOK PAGE.

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK--AND BECOME OUR FRIEND!

<https://www.facebook.com/savehistoricaltorrance>

JUL 23 2015

2750 Motor Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90064-3413
July 20, 2015
(310) 836-5898

City of Torrance
Community Development Department
3031 Torrance Boulevard
Torrance, CA 90503

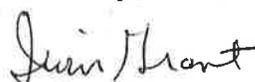
This will acknowledge receipt on Saturday, July 18, 2015, of the notice of the meeting to be held at the City of Torrance Council Chambers in Torrance on Thursday, July 30, 2015, to discuss the potential creation of a Historic Preservation Program (HSP) that could affect property values on Abalone Avenue in which I have a propriety interest.

The notice is not accompanied by any information of the proposed changes that could occur if the HSP is adopted. Most of the commercial/industrial properties within the proposed HSP are essentially investment properties that are more than likely owned by persons and firms who reside or are based outside of the Torrance area. It is very doubtful that many property owners within the proposed HSP will be able to attend the workshop on July 30. I live in Los Angeles. My residence is a substantial distance from the Torrance City Hall. The difficult traffic conditions that usually prevail on the 405 Freeway require travel time of about an hour get to the Torrance property and even longer if there is a traffic problem on the freeway. It will be very difficult for me to attend night meetings relating to HSP.

Your letter suggests that property owners who are not able to attend the July 30 meeting submit written comments prior to the workshop. Property owners have no information with respect to the proposed HSP on which they can comment. It is essential that all matters and proceedings relating to the proposed HSP be conducted by written communication to all concerned so that property owners can make an informed decision to support, oppose, or make suggestions about the proposed HSP. It should be made clear at the outset that the proposed HSP will require approval by property owners in the same manner and extent as is required for a property tax increase.

The Committee has a list of property owners within the proposed HSP. This list is a public record. I request that I be provided by mail the names and addresses of the property owners to whom the notice has been sent and that you inform me when you will provide this list.

Yours truly,


Irvin Grant

C: Robert G. Popovich