



THE CAPITAL

"Preserving Santa Barbara's historic sites of enduring community value"

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SEPTEMBER MEETINGS OF INTEREST

PEARL CHASE SOCIETY

Next Board of Directors meeting: SEPTEMBER 8, 3:30; Location TBA

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

City Council Public Comment and Participating Online

In order to promote social distancing, City Council chambers will not be open to the general public. Public participation can be done in two ways: 1) via telephone: Call (805) 564-5301 and leave your name, return phone number and the number of the item you wish to speak on. You will be called back during the meeting and will have the chance to make your statement then. 2) you may participate in the Zoom meeting that may be accessed [HERE](#).

City meetings are broadcast live on City TV channel 18 and streamed live [HERE](#), where they are also archived and viewable on demand.

City Council

Tuesdays at 2 pm at Council Chambers, City Hall: September 13, 20, 27

Planning Commission

First, second and third Thursdays of the month at 1 pm at Council Chambers, City Hall: September 1, 8, 15

Historic Landmarks Commission

Every other Wednesday at 1:30 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street: September 14, 28

Architectural Board of Review

Mondays at 3 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street. Full Board meets September 6, 19

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

County Board of Supervisor Meetings and Planning Commission meetings are broadcast live on CSBTV20. They are also streamed live [HERE](#) where they are also archived and viewable on demand.

County Board of Supervisors

Three Tuesdays of the month at 9 am. The first and third meetings are held in Santa Barbara in the Board of Supervisors Hearing Room, 105 East Anapamu St., 4th Floor. The second meeting is (typically) held in Santa Maria at 511 East Lakeside Parkway. September 13 (SB), September 20 (SM)

County Planning Commission

Three Wednesdays of the month at 9 am. The first and third meetings are held in Santa Barbara at 123 East Anapamu Street, Room 17, and the second meeting is (typically) held in Santa Maria at 511 East Lakeside Parkway. September 7 (SB), September 14 (SM), September 28 (SM)

County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission

Second Monday of the month at 10 am at 123 East Anapamu, Room 17 (unless specified otherwise). September 12

Society News & Notes

August 20, 2022

City of Santa Barbara Architectural Board of Review

RE: Item #5, 418 N. Milpas Street, ABR Agenda August 22, 2022

Dear Architectural Board of Review Members,

The Pearl Chase Society is a group of concerned citizens whose mission is to encourage the protection and enhancement of Santa Barbara's historic buildings, gardens, and neighborhoods.

We are opposed to the design of the project at 418 North Milpas Street mainly because it is incompatible with the architectural scale and character of the neighborhood.

This project epitomizes the kind of development of which we expressed our concern in our letter to the Planning Commission in November 2019. Then we wrote that the AUD ordinance could bring inappropriate changes to the downtown by the combining of two or more parcels to build large-scale AUD residential buildings. This is such a project where a single, mega-building disrupts the existing historical building pattern of single-story and two-story structures. Our multi-family developments need to be architecturally broken-up for the purpose of neighborhood compatibility.

The project name "Milpas Gardens" certainly does not signify the building's composition of the site. The arrangement of massive, four-story high, building blocks encircle a narrow prison-like courtyard. There is hardly any area on the site for "gardens." Additionally, the drawings demonstrate that little-to-no good architectural design/detailing has been achieved here.

We urge the ABR to deny the project design.

Steve Dowty

President, Pearl Chase Society



*Founding Member of the Pearl Chase Society,
Sue Adams*

gracefully embodies the spirit, vision and determination of our namesake Pearl Chase, a founding member of Santa Barbara Beautiful.

Just as Pearl organized the annual Garden Tours, Sue organized the Historic Homes Tours for years ~ tirelessly carrying on a great tradition of sharing the beauty of Santa Barbara.

Congratulations, Sue!

2022 Recipient of the Santa Barbara Beautiful Jacaranda Award for Outstanding Community Service

For Tickets and More information: [HERE](#)

Congratulations to all the 2022 Awardees.

**Want to get involved, or have submissions for
The Capital? Email us at PCS@pearlchasesociety.org.**

Preservation Report

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Please direct inquiries
and comments to:

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Newsletter

Cheri Rae, *editor*
Lisa DeSpain, *graphics*

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By Christine Neuhauser

Where is the gentle Santa Barbara going? This is the question on the mind of many Santa Barbarans with the introduction of numerous projects that seem out-of-character for this place.

A Call to Action: What is Preservation about if all we do is read articles and columns and don't get involved enough to write letters to the different boards and commissions to voice our opinions? This month we watched as project after project gets moved along by these commissions and or staff. The commissions rely on input from the affected community. Observe what is happening around town and see where Pearl Chase Society members can make a difference.

Preservation of our treasured historical ambience has long been taken on by citizens of this community, and always encouraged by Pearl Chase herself. An overview of current projects that have come to our attention:

121 E. Mason Street—This returned to ABR for concept review as a revised proposal and requires Planning Commission. It is currently proposed at a height of 45 feet, with the developer requesting a height of 60 feet. Of the 151 units, 29 are proposed to be below market rate.

Some ABR comments included: Too (airplane) "hangar" looking, and no interior light. ABR members lamented again—the detrimental effect of design allowed because of their "limited purview." They are only to speak on aesthetics of design, materials and landscaping.

According to city staff guidelines, no public views are impacted by the project at 121 E. Mason. What then is a public view if four stories at 60-foot in height, at the ocean front do not impact a public view? Should this not be revisited? Especially since developers clamor for the view. Is it that the public doesn't get to view the mountains unless they pay for it? Numerous neighbors spoke against the projects size and scale, and the board received approximately 150 letters in opposition to the development.

Here is *Noozhawk's* detailed report on the project: [HERE](#)

425 Garden Street—At 19-units and four stories, but with no parking for cars, only bicycles. Two units are designated very low and one for moderate income occupants. The height is 48 feet but the developer is requesting the height exceed 48 feet for a "community benefit." The question is, who benefits? Only the developer. Need we say more? This presentation was delayed per the applicant.

311 W. Montecito Street—A two-story, three-unit hotel, each with two bedrooms, a living room and a kitchenette. No parking is provided on site, but there is a parking agreement for a space at the 34-room hotel at 302 W. Montecito Street.

This property is one of many related parcels that the developer, Ed St. George and Associates, is building in their attempt to clean up the neighborhood. The others are at 302 and 328 W. Montecito Street.

The concern about this is taking away existing affordable housing in exchange for hotel rooms. The developer proposes to put up money to build replacement housing, but many questions arise about the agreement and the likelihood of it being carried out in a timely manner that is fair to all parties involved. The terms need to be carefully spelled out and monitored, with

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www.facebook.com/PearlChaseSociety

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housing replaced for these hotel units, like for like, not in some faraway locale.

Citizen participation is essential if we are to maintain the look and feel of Santa Barbara. Do we see where the city is headed? It is imperative we get involved.

222 E. Canon Perdido Street—After thoughtful direction by the HLC, and a good outcome for the compatibility of this project located in the El Pueblo Viejo, things changed during the PC meeting of July 21, 2022. Four of the five Planning Commissioners who were present voiced frustration and disappointment that the project lost seven units when it removed the fourth story. We would think that was a victory in compromise. Instead, they encouraged the applicant to return with the fourth story reinstated.

Only Commissioner Lodge backed the HLC and said it was the HLC's job to protect historic resources and findings on size, bulk and scale for compatibility.

Chair Escobedo said he looks forward to changes in decision-makers from Design Review Boards to

Planning Commission. On that we are worried, what good is a review board if four stories are rubber-stamped with no consideration for the neighborhoods for an onslaught of housing.

Several projects were last seen in 2021 and should be making a reappearance at PC soon:

208 Cottage Grove Avenue—a three-story and four-story building, six apartments with two bedrooms each with six covered parking spots. Design in 2021 was completely out of scale and the design too commercial for a residential street. On quiet Cottage Grove.

15 S. Hope—an existing small cafe is to become an amenity for housing. The proposal is for the parking lot to become four-story with 47 units and just 48 parking spots, with additional 32,000 sq ft of auxiliary use.

533 E. Micheltorena Street—using AUD benefits, proposed—is 45-foot height development of six condos in the existing service parking lot to rear of the medical offices (48-foot mixed-use condo). Two existing condos will remain as part of the mixed use of the medical facility.

PROJECT UPDATES:

425 Garden Street

The AUD at 425 Garden St. has come back from a May 2022 concept presentation to the ABR. The design failed miserably then and, now again, the redesign has been given mostly negative comments from the board. The architectural style was presented in two flavors: One-half of the building is of modern design and the other half shows some weak Spanish Colonial Revival details. No parking spaces proposed in this extremely traffic-congested place where street parking is difficult to come by.

Due to its location, this project has been considered a gateway project for Santa Barbara. However, the elevations are “uninspired” and, the adjacent shopping center, sorry to say, is a better “gateway,” noted one ABR member.

418 N. Milpas Street

Many residents and owners in the neighborhood spoke against the proposed 90-unit residential and mixed-use hotel/commercial project. The ABR had mostly negative comments on the design, noting that the project was much too massive in terms of size, bulk, and scale.

It will be imperative for the public to come forward and address this project at the Planning Commission. Even larger than the project at 711 N. Milpas, which is proceeding to the start of construction, this project is extremely out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood and would be a terrible precedent for AUD housing in the Milpas corridor.

~ Steve Dowty



Drawing of the proposed project to be built on the mountain side at 418 N. Milpas Street, on the site of the former La Sumida Nursery and several existing rental units. Hochhauser Blatter Associates rendering

Everything Old is New Again

By Cheri Rae

Chas. F. Lummis



Pearl Chase knew a good rallying cry when she heard one. And she recognized the value of community education, tirelessly promoting the natural beauty, cultural heritage and architectural uniqueness of Santa Barbara. In view of the many changes that are in the works for Santa Barbara, it's time to revisit a bit of our meaningful past.

Pearl had a kindred spirit in the well-traveled Bohemian Charles Fletcher Lummis, who recognized the promise of Santa Barbara, and the ever-present possibility it would be lost forever. Lummis, who had attended Harvard with Theodore Roosevelt, was inspired by his former classmate who delivered an impassioned speech about protecting the Grand Canyon at the edge of that national treasure. He remembered that speech and adapted it as his own, when he issued a cautionary statement of his own, this one about Santa Barbara, delivered at scenic Gaviota Pass.

As he described his stirring speech, *Stand Fast, Santa Barbara!*: "It is a sermon for all who love Santa Barbara, for all who love California, for all who love the West, and Beauty, and History and Romance—which is as much to say, for all who really have souls."

He explained, it's "Not a gospel of Sissies and sentimentalism, but the two-fisted gospel of the men who have made the world nobler by their words. And my text may very well be from T.R."

Thanks to Pearl's determined promotion, the speech immediately became a classic. She knew the value of his "picturesque phraseology and his knowledge of and interest in the West," and quickly sought his permission to reprint and distribute the impassioned work widely.

Under the auspices of the Plans and Planting Committee of the Community Arts Association Pearl arranged for reprints of a portion of his address in a brochure. She had it sent out all over the country, and arranged with local publisher Thomas Storke to have the entire speech printed in the local newspaper once a year. It's time to pay attention once more:

Stand Fast, Santa Barbara!

Do not let selfish men or greedy interests skin Santa Barbara of her Romance! They are sure to do it, unless you watch and stand fast. This is essentially the Vandal Age. Romance is the greatest asset California has. It has been, for more than 350 years. To all this centuried romance Santa Barbara is the legitimate and favorite heiress — about the only town left that has yet to trade away her birthright.

Beauty and sane sentiment are Good Business as well as good ethics. Carelessness, ugliness, blind materialism are Bad Business. The worst curse that could befall Santa Barbara would be the craze of GET BIG! Why big? Run down to Los Angeles for a few days — see that madhouse! You'd hate to live there!

By all that is fine and reverent and high — Faith to Patriotism — get together! The honor of Santa Barbara is in your hands ~ and do not fancy for a moment that her Good Name will stand if you let the materialists strip her of her Romance and leave her nakedly Common.

It is up to you to save Santa Barbara's romance and save California's romance for Santa Barbara. I would like to see Santa Barbara set her mark as the most beautiful, the most artistic, the most distinguished and the most famous little city on our Pacific Coast. It can be, if it will, for it has all the makings.

Wise words from 1923, 99 years ago. Do they still matter today?

Lummis, like Pearl, exhorted Santa Barbarans to stand fast in the protection of the romance of this unique part of old California—always at risk of being lost forever. Then and now.

In Memoriam

We send our sincere condolences to Board Member Emeritus Bob Baum at the passing of his beloved wife, Esther, on August 6, 2022. Bob has been a devoted caregiver for many years. A celebration of her life will be held at Maravilla in early November.

May her memory be eternal.