

# THE CAPITAL

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

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## MARCH MEETINGS OF INTEREST

### PEARL CHASE SOCIETY

Next Board of Directors meeting: March 7, 2024 at the Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society, 316 Castillo Street, 3:30 p.m.

### CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

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: March 5, 12, 19, 26

#### Planning Commission

First, second and third Thursdays of the month at 1 pm at Council Chambers, City Hall: March 7, 14, 21

#### Historic Landmarks Commission

Every other Wednesday at 1:30 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street: March 13, 27

#### Architectural Board of Review

Mondays at 3 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street. Full Board meets March 4, 18

### 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. March 5 (SB), 12 (SM) 19 (SB)

#### 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. March 6 (SB), 12 (SM), 19 (SB)

#### County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission

Second Monday of the month at 10 am at 123 East Anapamu, Room 17 (unless specified otherwise). March 11

## News and Notes

By Cheri Rae

Our community continues to balance the value of preservation with the forces of change—in the environment and in priorities. We are heartened by the continued participation of citizens who care. We show up and speak up—at community meetings like the recent one to determine the future of Francheschi House (see page 4). And we are encouraged by the work of those who serve on our Boards and Commissions, who strive to keep the historic look and feel of our Santa Barbara.

One example is a recent discussion about the State Street Master Plan at the Historic Landmarks Commission:

On February 14, Anthony Grumbine, Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) Chair, facilitated a discussion by the Historic Landmarks Commission regarding the HLC's purview related to the State Street Master Planning process. Here are some of the high points from that discussion:

The guiding principle, "The Master Planning Effort to preserve and enhance the distinctive architectural urban character of El Pueblo Viejo (EPV)" should be reflected and respected.

There was a clear statement that State Street is first and foremost a street. They expressed support for the features that establish and maintain the identity of State Street as the main street of Santa Barbara. It must also maintain the distinctive urban, architectural, and landscaped character of Santa Barbara that those who live in Santa Barbara cherish, and tourists travel great distances to experience.

Public spaces should be planned, intentional, and work within the existing fabric of Santa Barbara. All elements of the streetscape that are solid and fixed in place should come before HLC for approval because there are clearly articulated design guidelines for EPV that are to be respected. Simple and flexible spaces that are well built are preferable. Street furniture should have long term flexibility without locking in a permanent design.

The imagery that was used for the State Street Master Plan presentation is not EPV appropriate. New structures should neither hide nor block views of historic buildings. They should be appropriately placed and work within State Street.



Want to get involved, or have submissions for The Capital? Email us at [PCS@pearlchasesociety.org](mailto:PCS@pearlchasesociety.org).

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

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# PRESERVATION WATCH

**HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION, JANUARY 31, 2024****400 W. Carrillo Street**

Currently this a city commuter parking lot by permit only, located in El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District. The Proposal is to construct a new 63-unit residential building. With at-grade surface parking and garage parking as well as additional amenity spaces such as a common room and courtyard outdoor space. The units are proposed to be 100% rent-controlled Moderate-Income and Middle-Income Affordable.

The project calls for the removal of existing Palms, Jacaranda, and Tipu trees on the parcel; but no street trees or trees within the flood control area will be removed.

The proposal received Project Design Approval.

**920 Summit Road**

The Montecito Club's clubhouse (only) is a designated Structure of Merit, designed in 1918 by Bertram Goodhue in the Spanish Colonial Revival style and remodeled in the 1920s by George Washington Smith. The project proposal is to extend the existing pool deck to accommodate a new spa and cold plunge pool at the existing pool complex. Existing glass windscreens are to be reused to enclose the adjusted shape of the pool deck and a new pathway will be created to service the equipment shelter.

A Historic Structures/Sites Report concluded that the proposed project meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation; therefore, project impacts on significant historic resources would be less than significant.

**1919 State Street**

Located within El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District.

The project proposal is to convert three buildings at 1913, 1919, and 1921 State Street from office use to hotel use. This would convert ground floor area to private patios and an addition to the existing fourth floor to create livable space and a roof deck.

The project includes reduction of square feet at the second floor, and at the third floor, plus the replacement and relocation of existing stairs, elevator extension, site alterations, and new landscaping. There are no proposed exterior alterations to 1913 State Street and the proposed reduction of square feet and new entry doors at 1921 State Street.

Motion: Continue indefinitely to Consent with comments:

The Commission was supportive of the applicant for a great project and the hard work they have done. The design for the cell tower enclosure is appropriate as presented.

**HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION, FEBRUARY 14, 2024****1514 Garden Street**

This building is the Gifford Residence, designed in 1874 in the Italianate style, is a designated a Structure of Merit. The project is adjacent to 1520 Garden Street, the Fisher Residence, also an historic Structure of Merit.

The proposal is for reduced parking spaces to accommodate two special Accessory Dwelling Units under a separate permit.

The project includes parking lot landscaping, fencing, and bicycle parking and requires approval of an Alternative Open Yard Design Waiver.

**32 & 36 W. Carrillo Street**

Located in El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District.

The proposal is for new wood trellis structures and new landscaping; associated with a new electric vehicle charging station on a vacant lot at the northern corner of Chapala and West Carrillo Streets.

**531 E. Ortega Street**

The project consists of redevelopment of the existing site to accommodate a Junior/High School campus for Providence School. The existing building is listed on the Historic Resources Inventory, designed in 1964 by Robert Ingle Hoyt in the Mid-Century Modern style.

The project involves additions and alterations to the existing single-story main building, demolition of the existing gymnasium and construction of a new gymnasium, a new two-story building comprised of a theatre, library and chapel, and a new building comprised of additional classroom and office administration space. The project includes alterations to the existing surface parking lot, new bicycle parking, grading, and landscape/hardscape improvements throughout the site.

The Commission is supportive of the modification in terms of the aesthetic appropriateness of the development finding the project is beautiful as presented and the courtyard is nicely done.

**225 Equestrian Avenue**

Located in El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District.

The project site is currently developed with a warehouse and attached apartment. Proposal to demolish the existing onsite structures and construct a new three-story mixed-use building comprised of a single-unit residence, an Accessory Dwelling Unit, a commercial office, and attached two-car garage.

On appeal, the Planning Commission upheld the Staff Hearing Officer's approval of the setback encroachments and open yard modification.

The Jeff Shelton project design was determined to be consistent with design guidelines applicable to its location within the city and compatible with desirable architectural qualities and characteristics that are distinctive of Santa Barbara and of the particular neighborhood surrounding the project. The project is consistent with the slightly whimsical character of the neighborhood. The design of the project is appropriately sensitive to adjacent Landmarks or other nearby designated historic resources. The design of the project responds appropriately to established scenic public vistas.

The amount of open space and landscaping is appropriate to the use and the building is set back from the street which is consistent with other buildings in the neighborhood.

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# Deeply Rooted: Speaking for the Trees

## Santa Barbara's Urban Forest boasts some 35,000 street trees, 9,000 trees in parks and another 30,000 in open spaces

By Cheri Rae

We love our trees, here in Santa Barbara and across the nation, where we designate annual Arbor Day celebrations by planting, appreciating, and walking among them. While most of our states set aside the last Friday of April for Arbor Day, California has historically observed it to coincide with the birthday of horticulturist Luther Burbank on March 7. The week following was formerly known as Burbank Week, now Arbor Week.

In 1935, when Pearl Chase founded the California Conservation Council, March 7-14 was designated "Conservation, Bird and Arbor Day," and eventually, "California Conservation Week," a part of her year-round campaign to "Save Space for Beauty."

In a pamphlet titled, "Tree Planting and Arbor Day," she wrote, "Arbor Day should be a day of dedication of service to school, community, and state, and of tribute to those who have shown us the way."

### The Man Who Planted Trees

As President of the City's Park Commission from 1902-1920, Augustus Boyd Doremus planted hundreds of species of trees all over Santa Barbara. Alameda Park was his favorite spot for plowing and planting, and where a plaque memorializes him today. [MORE: Doremus](#)

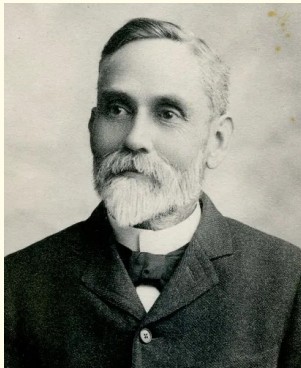
### The Trees He Planted

The five-block-long stand of Italian Stone Pines was planted the 1920s by Doremus and his friend Francesco Francheschi. For decades the iconic canopy has shaded Anapamu Street and beautified the Eastside. Today, the City Landmark stand of trees is stressed, due to a combination of factors including age, a changing natural and built environment and what appears to be benign neglect of the historic trees. When designated they numbered 79, today just 57, and there seem to be no apparent plans for replacement when these historic trees are lost. We can only hope the severely pruned tree on the 800 block is not a harbinger for the other specimens on this street.

### Other Living Landmarks

In 1941, when the Moreton Bay Fig Tree was said to be 63 years old, the city's engineering department estimated that 9,500 people could stand beneath its shade at noon, as reported in the Works Project Administration guide to Santa Barbara.

To learn more about Santa Barbara's urban forest: [HERE](#)



*Doremus portrait, Courtesy Gledhill Library Plaque by Cheri Rae*



*Arboreal accommodations at the Lobero Building. Photo by Cheri Rae*



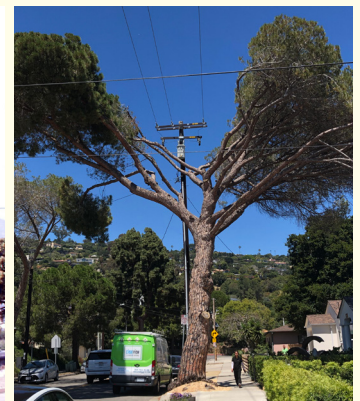
*Moreton Bay Fig ca 1990, Michael Feigenbaum, German Wikicommons*



*Landmarked Fernald Eucalyptus Tree, 400 Santa Barbara Street (at the Smart & Final entrance). Photo by Cheri Rae*



*Arbor Day Planting in the 1950s Courtesy UCSB Special Collections*



*Pruned Landmark on Anapamu by Rick Closson*

## What to Do at Francheschi Park?

By Richard Closson

On Saturday, February 10, the City Department of Parks & Recreation sponsored a public workshop at the Riviera Ridge School. There's an article about the meeting posted later that night on *Noozhawk* [HERE](#). At least four (maybe more) of us from The Society attended. Here's a brief report on what happened.

The workshop was not what I expected. A couple of months ago there was an informational meeting on the same topic to the Riviera Association (I was a guest of a member) at the same site with some of the same City representatives. I expected the same format: a structured presentation, followed by an extended Q&A period. This was not that.

This meeting started with about 20 minutes of introduction with speakers including Jill Zachary, Director, Department of Parks & Recreation, Kevin Dumain, Architect with DesignArc, the company contracted to turn public comments into project concepts, Scott Capps, Landscape Architect with EPT Design, and Sean Stewart, City's Park Project Planner. Introductions and brief comments were followed by three general audience questions.

The rest of the time had the audience freely looking at "vision boards" mounted on the walls, talking to City staff and architectural consultants around the room, and adding written comments on large poster pages. You will see the vision boards on the wall in the [Noozhawk piece](#) and they are all included as an attachment at the [Franceschi Project webpage](#).

My overall impression was positive. I give credit for extra effort, and I felt there was effort expended to engage the public honest and varied input, even if it might not seem initially productive. In the past I've felt planners had preconceived notions of what was possible (codeword = affordable) that limited their vision. I'm willing to be wrong, but this process seems more open.

Below are many of the comments written by attendees near the vision boards.

### Franceschi history means \_\_\_\_\_ to me.

- "Horticulture—a focus on non-native edible species that work in the SB climate."
- "The dilapidated nature of the house is a reminder that our time is fleeting. It's a reminder to not sweat the small stuff we eventually crumble into obsolescence and, as such, it behooves us to stop and smell the flowers."

### The project should value \_\_\_\_\_:

- "One of the main user groups of the park—adolescents who treat it as a 'lovers' lane,' a place where they can go to figure things out."

### Franceschi House Comments:

- "Eliminating the house will improve the park tremendously. Preserve the medallions"
- "The house is in horrible shape. The current codes, structural + ADA requirements would be incredibly expensive to the project scope"
- "Sell off lower portion of park to generate \$ to maintain park"



- "Don't like the 'ghost' idea" [My comment: This refers to a "ghost structure" of just the outline of the prior house]
- "Create opportunity for learning—Bring students for lectures"
- "Find a way to improve path from upper parking"
- "I feel options should be explored for new stewardship of the house, funded by donors."
- "Pearl Chase Society for years attempted to raise funds to save/restore the house—they failed. The prospect of saving it has been 'litigated' and it's now time to move ahead."

### Horticultural Comments:

- "How will the project address the areas outside of the scope? Concerned about invasive plants, erosion, etc."
- "Yes [to above comment] ... Good opportunity to restore 'wild' areas to fire resistant native ecosystem. Eucalyptus are major FIRE ISSUE."

### General Design Comments:

- "More lookouts—good idea"
- "Minimize artificial manufactured interpretive signage"

### I visit the park because \_\_\_\_\_:

- "The views, connection to nature, connection to old S.B."
- "Solitude, mystery and history"

### Historical Comments:

- "The medallions offer a wonderful opportunity to educate the public about historical figures. Explanatory links to each person represented would be great"
- "Keep medallions!"

Recently (Saturday, February 17), my letter regarding the *Noozhawk* story on the meeting was [published](#). It echoes my opinions here and adds my concern that Franceschi House is a designated Structure of Merit protected by the City's Municipal Code, but has been allowed to be "demolished by neglect," apparently without consequence. Too bad.