

THE CAPITAL

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

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AUGUST MEETINGS OF INTEREST

PEARL CHASE SOCIETY

Next Board of Directors meeting at the Carriage and Western Art Museum of Santa Barbara, 129 Castillo Street, August 13 at 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. Or Watch on You Tube [HERE](#)

City Council

Tuesdays at 2 pm at Council Chambers, City Hall. [HERE](#). AUGUST 4, 11, 18, 25

Planning Commission

First, second and third Thursdays of the month at 1 pm at Council Chambers, City Hall. [HERE](#). AUGUST 13, 20

Historic Landmarks Commission

Every other Wednesday at 1:30 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street. [HERE](#). AUGUST 12, 26

Architectural Board of Review

Alternate Mondays at 3 pm at the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street. [HERE](#). AUGUST 3, 31

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

County Board of Supervisor Meetings and Planning Commission meetings are broadcast live on CSBT20. 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 a.m. 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. AUGUST 18 (SB), 25 (SM)

County Planning Commission

Three Wednesdays of the month at 9 a.m. 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. AUGUST 5 (SB), 12 (SM), 26 (SB)

County Historic Landmarks

Advisory Commission

Second Monday of the month at 10 a.m. at 123 East Anapamu St., Room 17 (unless specified otherwise). AUGUST 10

News and Notes

By Cheri Rae

We are pleased to announce that Los Angeles-based architectural historian and preservationist Valerie Smith, expert on the Small House Movement in Santa Barbara and Better Homes in America, will be our next speaker for the Kellam de Forest Speaker Series.

Her Master's thesis on Model Houses and the Small House Movement has been used to document and nominate resources in Santa Barbara and Beyond. Mark your calendar for Friday, September 18 at 6 p.m. at the Carriage and Western Art Museum. Call (805) 961-3938 to reserve your seat.

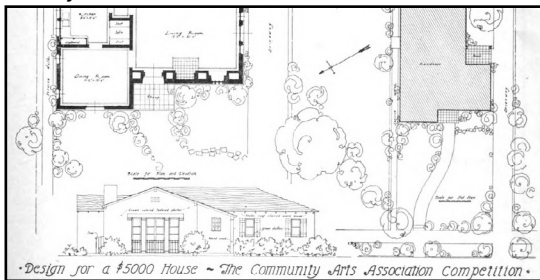
The Small House Movement commenced in 1919 with the establishment of the Architects' Small House Service Bureau by the American Institute of Architects (AIA). Santa Barbara's Community Arts Association made noteworthy contributions to the Small House Movement in the early 1920s. Santa Barbara's Pearl Chase was an advocate at this time for compact, high-quality house designs that were affordable.

In 1920, Pearl Chase declared, "Several people have been interested in a project to provide a number of small desirable cottages near the center of the city where people work, but the difficulty of building under present high prices has kept them from going ahead with the improvement."

House plans and model houses in Santa Barbara were featured in Better Homes publications throughout the 1920s after successful local housing campaigns that won national prizes. Many of the houses are extant and "hiding in plain sight" throughout the city of Santa Barbara.

Pearl Chase's observations about the high cost of housing in Santa Barbara reverberate as a quality-of-life issue to this day. There is no issue in Santa Barbara that has been more contentious, complex or continual than housing. And yet, from the time she made that observation, Santa Barbara was on the

forefront of the Small House Movement and the notion that home ownership was a significant community priority. You won't want to miss this presentation—as timely and significant today as it was a century ago.



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



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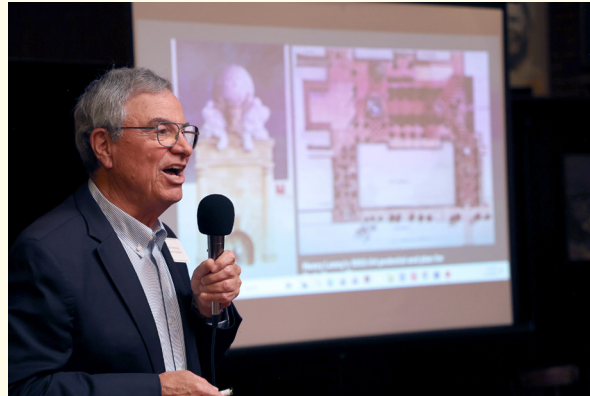
NewsletterCheri Rae, *editor*Lisa DeSpain, *graphics*

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Fred Sweeney: A Man with a Plan, not the Sweeney Plan, the Community Plan

By Cheri Rae

The annual meeting of the Pearl Chase Society took place on Sunday, July 19 at Harry's Café. It was well-attended by longtime and new members of the Society, and all were appreciative of the presentation by architect Fred Sweeney, "Santa Barbara: Its Journey Continues." He shared his expertise and visionary thinking about Santa Barbara of the past, present and future.



Fred Sweeney: Telling it Like it Could Be.

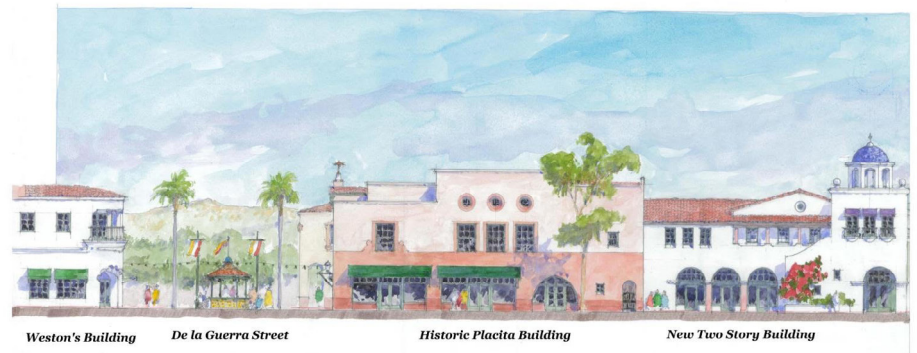
Photo: Monie Photography

He reminded us of the importance of retaining the mountain views, celebrating the local waters, and how the Courthouse lawn remains "beautifully green" and lush all year. In stark contrast, De la Guerra Plaza has been left to survive on its own; Sweeney referred to the historic spot "the City's Living Room." Despite

all kinds of proposals over the years, it remains now a sadly neglected public space with great potential.

A member of SAGE, "Smart Action for Growth and Equity," and grounded in Santa Barbara history, Sweeney offered his thoughts on three current issues of concern in Santa Barbara: the possible impacts of the outsized Builder's Remedy projects on Los Olivos and Grand Avenue; reconsidering De la Guerra Plaza—and of course, State Street.

Through it all, Sweeney encouraged all to be positive and encouraging while working together to create a vision for the community. He also suggested that we consider "the Big Idea," and what longtime local



Bringing the city's civic center into State Street

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Remembering Sheila Lodge

By Cheri Rae

We honor the memory of Sheila Lodge, first woman mayor of Santa Barbara, who served this community most of her life. At the time of her death in July—at the age of 97—she was a member of the Historic Landmarks Commission, having also served as a Planning Commissioner, member of City Council and highly regarded civic leader for many decades.

It was during the difficult and confusing days of Covid-19 that had the honor of working with Sheila to produce her book, *Santa Barbara: An Uncommonplace American Town*. Her manuscript had been completed, intended as a volume of *Noticias*. But during the pandemic, the historic journal had suspended publication, and Sheila's years of work and research sat on her computer.

When she told me of her frustration, I volunteered my editorial and publishing expertise to get the work into print so that valuable information could find its intended audience. During those uncertain and scary days, I appreciated the opportunity to work on a project that I knew would be important to the community. And what I never said to her, was that I also wanted to be sure she would have chance to experience the great reward of presenting published work, of adding author to her long list of accomplishments. At the time, she was 91, and I frankly feared she might not outlive the pandemic.

True to form, Sheila did—and then some. During production, she remained true to her vision. She resisted nearly every edit to her written work and flat-out refused most of my suggestions for additional content and images—including a lovely photo of her accompanied by California State Parks director Henry Agonia and National Parks Director William Penn Mott. She finally compromised on the selection of the book cover and a tweak to the title, but was not thrilled with either change.

Sheila enthusiastically took on several tasks promoting the book when copies arrived in September. She ventured out during the lockdown to deliver review copies, participated in ZOOM interviews, and checked in regularly to make sure that the book was available in places other than Amazon.

In early December, she wrote to me: *Several people have told me that they are buying copies of my book to give for xmas. I'm curious—do the book sales seem to reflect this?*

I certainly can't complain about Nick's review of my book, although I do object being described as obstinate. Or do you think I'm obstinate, too? (I've sometimes described myself as soft-spoken but persistent.)

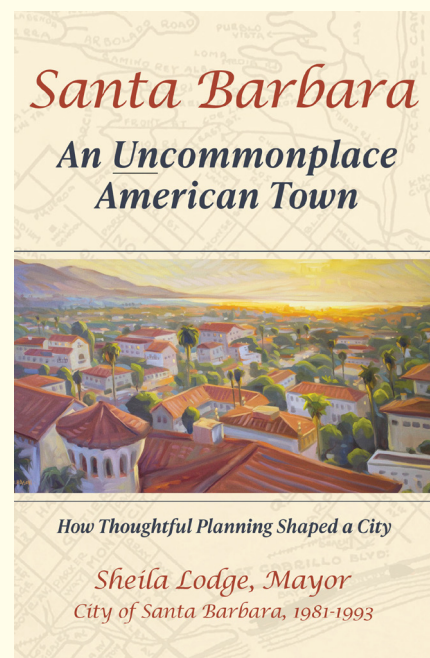
What I appreciated most in both Nick's and Josh's reviews is that they got the point of the book... that it takes community involvement to keep SB uncommonplace.

Nick's review [HERE](#)

Josh's review [HERE](#)

After one of Sheila's contemporaries read the book, she offered a memory: *She is so remarkable and modest; many moons back I got to know her when we served on the board of "Home Owners Board Association" for this area solving issues such as annexing etc. in Santa Barbara / Goleta, and more concerns before Goleta grew etc. We were the only 2 women on the board and used the time knitting during the lively meetings.*

It's a nice image to imagine. Thank you, Sheila for your many years of service to Santa Barbara.



Not so long ago, Pearl Chase Society members celebrated our historic uncommon town: (Left to Right) Kitty Peri, Dennis Whelan and Sheila Lodge. Photo: Monie Photography.