



**MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL MEETING OF**  
**CITY COUNCIL/SAN DIMAS**  
**REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**  
**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2006, 5:00 P. M.**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 245 E. BONITA AVE.**

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**PRESENT:**

Mayor Curtis W. Morris  
Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Templeman  
Councilmember Denis Bertone  
Councilmember John Ebner  
Councilmember Sandy McHenry

City Manager Michaelis  
City Attorney Brown  
City Clerk Rios  
Assistant City Manager/Community Development Stevens  
Assistant City Manager Duran  
Public Works Director Patel  
Parks and Recreation Director Bruns  
Planning Manager Hensley

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Morris called the study session to order at 5:08 p.m.

**2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

(For anyone wishing to address the City Council on an item not on the agenda. Under the provisions of the Brown Act, the legislative body is prohibited from taking or engaging in discussion on any item not appearing on the posted agenda.)

- a. Members of the Audience

No one came forward to speak.

**3. STUDY SESSION**

- a. Discuss proposed uses for the Walker House.

Planning Manager Hensley stated that the purpose of this discussion is to get input on desired uses for the Walker House. Mr. Hensley reviewed in detail uses for each floor and outlined some staff recommendations as follows:

Second Floor:

- Staff recommended that use of the north wing on the second floor should be designated for use by the Festival of Arts.
- Staff recommended that use of the south wing on the second floor should be deferred until final selection of first floor users and Mr. Hensley suggested the Historical Society could use this portion of the second floor if its use cannot be accommodated on the first floor.
- Staff recommended that the meeting room on the second floor should be kept available for the use by the City for city related and community meetings and other users.

First Floor:

- Staff recommended that the City recruit a food service use for the north wing. Mr. Hensley added that the food service should be flexible during the Festival of Arts major events; have the ability to accommodate historical tours; consider use of wall space for historical photographs or other community art; and have the ability to assist in securing the building at closing time.

Manager Hensley stated that one advantage in a food concessionaire is that it would allow the building to have greater public access, as well as generate income to defer a portion of the operational costs.

- Staff recommended that the parlor be reserved for an exhibit room or gift shop for one of its on-site users.
- Staff recommends that use of the south wing of the first floor be deferred until a food user has been selected. If the rooms are not used for special events and small parties by a food user, the space could be occupied by the Historical Society.
- Staff recommends using the grounds as an outdoor area for dining or meeting of community events, and the final decision could be made when all building use agreements are developed.

Manager Hensley could begin inviting proposals from interested food service uses for the first floor and City Manager Michaelis would work on a use agreement with representatives of the Festival of Arts and Historical Society and discuss ideas for a docent program.

Mayor Morris clarified that the walls have to be kept for structural purposes and are being replaced in place, with the exception of three rooms. He stated that restoration dictated what the facility would look like.

Manager Hensley stated that this was not tailor made for the Festival of Arts; however, the Festival was involved from the beginning. He stated that in terms of electrical plans, the second floor would be separately metered from the first floor.

Mayor Morris added that in addition to separately metered electrical, heating and air conditioning would also have separate controls.

In response to Councilmember Bertone, Mr. Hensley explained some possible sites, including the parlor, for the Historical Society exhibits while accommodating a food service. He further replied that the main dining room is about 800 square feet.

Councilmember McHenry agreed the Parlor location would be wonderful for a gift shop or display for the Historical Society. He thought that food service uses need to be unified to be viable, and not interfere with other uses.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Templeman, Manager Hensley stated there is a possibility for outdoor dining; however, access may pose a minor problem.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman felt the parlor as a gift shop/display area would capture the attention of visitors. He said there was a shortage of meeting rooms in the city and liked the idea of having meeting rooms available on the first and second floors. He felt positive that a restaurant would draw people in and felt the owner could make the space work.

Councilmember Ebiner was supportive of a food service, but not at the expense of other uses.

Mayor Morris welcomed public input and stated this is not a public hearing.

1) **Paul Rippens**, President/Archivist, Historical Society, stated that the Walker House is an original Railroad hotel in the original location and the main goal is to restore the building before it collapses.

2) **Alta Skinner**, President, Festival of Arts, stated that fundraisers were held in the Walker House during the Lease process. She said citizens have shared precious moments they had inside the Walker House and have expressed they want to see the Walker House open to the community. Mrs. Skinner said the Festival of Arts is excited about the restoration and said they not only want an office, but would appreciate storage space for equipment and supplies.

3) **Bob Poff**, Director/Boardmember, Festival of Arts, as an individual, shared his wedding memories at the Walker House. He stated there is no question a food service is needed; however, a restaurant with a lease would work contrary to the history of the building. He indicated a lease would become a primary use and would limit the use of the facilities for the Festival of Arts Western Show and Wildlife Show.

4) **Gary Enderle**, 2044 Via Esperanza, supported a restaurant use in the building to bring in needed revenue. He suggested considering a live-in caretaker or renting rooms to senior citizens or other low income persons. He inquired if the Festival of Arts was involved in the decision making process concerning lighting.

Manager Hensley replied that a representative of the Festival of Arts had discussions with the architect; however, staff conducted research and found the lighting works well.

Mr. Poff stated that the track lighting was inadequate for the Western Show and began working with Consultant Ellinger to get specifications for a lighting system that was acceptable for the Western Show as well as the Walker House. He reported that the Festival of Arts spent \$15,000 for the track light system which is to be installed in the Walker House.

5) **Gary Enderle** inquired if there is an agreement between the City and the Festival of Arts concerning payment of one-half the purchase price, or any other commitment, and did the Festival have a right to assign the lease to anyone else.

Mayor Morris replied that the sales agreement provided that the building shall be referred to as the Walker House as an obligation of purchase. The Festival of Arts has agreed and undertaken to raise money, and has done that primarily by hosting golf tournaments, and once the Walker House restoration begins, they will turn over the money to the City. He further replied that the Festival of Arts had the right to assign the lease only to the City. He said the City was not initially involved in the lease option, but Festival representatives had lengthy negotiations regarding the option on the property and convinced the city to purchase the property. By exercising the option, the City had the ability of getting Federal Government grant funds in order to renovate the Walker House and make it handicap accessible. The Festival of Arts pledged to raise \$250,000 and to date, has raised \$100,000, which will be deposited into city funds.

In response to Mr. Enderle, Manager Hensley stated that the electrical work to connect the lighting for the Festival is very minor.

In response to Mayor Morris, Manager Hensley replied that the entire building was deficient in heating, air conditioning and electrical. He said the second floor never had air and is the only floor that will have different lighting, which was discussed ahead of time.

Councilmember McHenry stated that the renovation would bring the building up to current standards along historical guidelines.

In response to Mr. Enderle, Manager Hensley stated that the building has the ability for minor storage on the third floor and staff has discussed storage use in the basement level, but the decision will be deferred until users and their storage needs are identified.

6) **Susan Higley** 952 Bayfield, pleaded to just get it done and not to sweat the small stuff. Her father, John Walgren, was involved from the beginning and he would have loved to see it happen.

7) **Marvin Ersher** said it is the Council's obligation to know the facts, apply the facts, and move forward. He expressed great respect for the City Council for making the right decision to restore the building.

8) **Alta Skinner** stated that for many years, the Festival of Arts has seen the Walker House as public art project No. 8, to be enjoyed by the whole community. She invited the public to take a walking tour of city hall to enjoy the many beautiful art and magnificent bronzes that adorn offices and entryways. She encouraged attendance at the fundraising golf tournament on February 26, at the Via Verde Country Club, and thanked Mr. Dal Lee for donating use of the course.

Mrs. Skinner replied to Mayor Pro Tem Templeman that the Festival of Arts hopes to use both upstairs and downstairs for the art displays, and eating would take place outside on the veranda.

9) **Don Rowson** expressed his gratitude to the City Council for bringing the project to this point. He said this is a wonderful project to complete and he's on board to support it.

10) **Julie Salazar**, past President, Festival of Arts, responded to Mr. Enderle's inquiries that the intent of the family was to restore the property historically correct to keep the family traditions alive and felt the Festival was a great partner to achieve their goal. The Festival entered into the agreement with the family, partnered with the City, and began raising funds. She added that when an agreement was entered with the City, there were several Council meetings to decide how to move forward.

11) **Don Green**, Rustlers, volunteer group with the City, said volunteers work hard year round to make the city a better place to live. He stated their one goal is to save the historic monument, and the city could later work out the details.

12) **Dean White**, resident since 1964, believes if the Walker House is historically restored, the City would have an attraction of historic interest that would draw visitors. He volunteered to donate any concrete needed for the Walker House.

Mayor Morris thanked everyone for their expressing their thoughts about the Walker House, and hopefully everyone would be enthused when the bids come in and the process begins to create a foundation.

Councilmember Bertone stated he is not opposed to a food service or restaurant, but that should not be the driving use of the building. He felt community use was more important.

Councilmember Ebner liked the idea of a food service, but agreed that should not drive the use.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman felt a restaurant with a dining room and kitchen made sense to draw the community.

Councilmember McHenry explained that he initially voted no because he felt a historical evaluation and a reasonable cost estimate were needed, as well as preliminary discussion of uses. At this point, there are two choices: 1) put the Walker House on the market with the burden of plans inherent to it to see if the private sector would express interest; however, the City would not allow it to be razed. 2) restore the structure. He stated that uses would include the Festival of Arts, Historical Society, and hopes a restaurant could occupy a portion of the building to help offset costs.

Mayor Morris thought a food service would enhance the public use of the building, but opposed entering into a lease agreement with a restaurant. He agreed with comments made to get the building completed and said flexibility is needed as uses change over a period of time.

- b. Report regarding the construction bidding process for the Walker House, including scheduling bid opening and related matters.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Templeman, Manager Hensley stated the process may take approximately three months to discuss food service uses. He mentioned that initially three contractors were pre-qualified and were invited to submit bids. Based on the prequalification requirements, two of the three bidders had encountered problems with the bonding requirement, and staff chose to extend the process to allow more flexibility and encourage more joint venture proposals.

In response to Councilmember Ebner, Manager Hensley stated that experience requirements include five examples of work on historic buildings, on national register buildings, and wood frame historic buildings, in addition to having a full time experienced superintendent onsite.

It was moved by Councilmember Bertone, seconded by Councilmember Ebner, to follow staff's recommendations as listed. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Morris adjourned the study session at 6:47 p.m. The next City Council meeting is September 26, 2006, 7:00 p.m.

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Mayor of the City of San Dimas

ATTEST:

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City Clerk