

Miranda Bacon

From: Jedidiah Watson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 5, 2024 8:58 AM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Historical Commission Comments

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Good Afternoon City Council Members and Historical Commissioners,

As you look to give guidance on the future of the Historical Commission I believe that you should have a good understanding of the past. When I was on the Historical Commission (Vice Chairman) we also saw that there was overlap with the DRC and we asked to have representative/liason to the DRC, but to keep the commissions separate as there were topics and initiatives (Amistace Day Window Display downtown and the rededication of the Memorial Park on the 100th Anniversary) that the historical commission would be involved in and take on that didn't involve the DRC and vice versa. However, this idea was shot down by the staff and specifically Tom Last because he didn't want the historical commission involved with the DRC's processes.

There has been a long history of the staff not wanting to have the Historical Commission exist or be involved as they have excluded the commission from decisions around things like the Grass Valley Signage (in and around downtown) and the downtown plaza as they felt we were a hinderance to their processes. By excluding the Historical Commission this does a disservice to the community as many of the Historical Commissioners are either historians or have a passion for history and more specifically the history of our town and can give insight into the preservation of historical town.

My recommendation is that you look at a 4th option instead of being limited to the 3 options provided by the staff and it is the same recommendation I made as the Vice Chairman of the Historical Commission. The two commissions need to be separate as they look at projects with a different lense, but there has to be representation from the Historical Commission to the DRC. This representative will be able to answer questions, but also be responsible for taking items back to the Historical Commission as it has been proven that we can't rely on the staff.

Thank You,
Jedidiah

Miranda Bacon

From: Felicia Tracy [REDACTED] >
Sent: Monday, April 8, 2024 11:16 AM
To: Public Comments
Subject: city council and historical commission meeting

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Dear City Council and Historical Commission members:

I am deeply concerned about recent events concerning the Grass Valley City Manager, Tim Kiser, and his relationship to the members of the Historical Commission. There appears to be a lack of utilizing their expertise and an additional lack of respect as to the importance of history to Grass Valley and Nevada County. This breach created the resignation of two key members, who are recognized statewide and nationally for their deep understanding and scholarship of our history. One can only assume that members of the Council under the leadership of Mr.Kiser, do not recognize that Nevada County and Grass Valley's uniqueness is based on our history, and through promoting it, our economy is driven. It is a financial issue, not just an emotional one. Certainly the new owners of the Holbrooke Hotel would not have invested as they have to preserve a landmark with such a history, nor would the State have made the Empire Mine a State Park. The Union newspaper regularly has featured men and women and events of historical importance and interest. Multiple other examples include our historical libraries, the Nevada County Historical Society and their museums, the North Star House restoration, and the Nevada County Landmarks Commission.

Grass Valley has ignored the importance of Errol Mac Boyles contributions and made no move to be concerned about the Loma Rica Ranch, the historic redwood barns being recognized as important potentially to Grass Valley as the Ferry Building is to San Francisco. Members of the public met with the Council some time ago regarding how significant this property could be for Grass Valley, meanwhile it has been allowed to deteriorate. Nor did the Council consult with the Historic Commission on their renovation of Mill Street.

My great grandfather came from Europe to San Francisco, but his favorite place was Grass Valley in the late 1850ties. In 1942 my parents purchased property here, all because my father had heard about Grass Valley from his grandfather. Now four generations later, we continue to maintain and live on that property named Emigrant Springs, in recognition of the Emigrant Trail nearby. The lure of Grass Valley is it's rich history and the appreciation of citizens who nurture and educate others as to it's importance and beauty.

Certainly a solution to improve working relationships is a priority, but it must begin with a respect for those who serve on the Historical Commission and an understanding that for Grass Valley it is a financial issue now and in the future.

Sincerely, Felicia Tracy

Miranda Bacon

From: Mark Reilly [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 3:12 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Joint City Council and Historical Commission Meeting

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Dear City Council Members,

I'm writing in regard to today's special Joint City Council and Historical Commission Meeting. I'm commenting as a 32-year visitor to Grass Valley, a seven-year resident and homeowner in Grass Valley, and an architect with experience working on historic properties from both the design and development perspectives.

The Union's recent announcement of this meeting was the first I heard the Historic Commission was in need of new members, and the first I heard the future of the Commission was uncertain. The article also stated that staff have pinpointed three options up for discussion - to continue the Commission and solicit commissioners, to dissolve the Commission and transfer its responsibilities to the Development Review Committee (DRC), or to merge the Historical Commission with the DRC.

The Grass Valley Historical Commission is a vital, independent part of preserving and promoting our city's historic legacy. To eliminate or dilute it due to a current lack of members and/or conflicts between it and the Development Review Committee is short sighted. I strongly urge the City Council to instead look for ways to solicit new members and to make both the Historic Commission and Development Review Committee work better together to help preserve our past while moving our city forward.

With Gratitude,

Mark Reilly

Mark Reilly Architecture
[Mark Reilly Architecture](#)

