

El Cerrito Historical Society

Minutes of Board Meeting October 14, 2021

Present: David Weinstein, Dianne Brenner, Pat Shaw, John Falconer, Tom Panas

****Indicates Action Items**

- 1.) **Treasurer's Report:** There was no Treasurer's Report at the time of this meeting.
- 2.) **Board Member Comments – not on Agenda:**
 - a. Chris Treadway is working on his book. Anyone who wants to contact him is recommended to do so through his wife, Diana. Dave W. has her contact information. City Council is preparing a commendation for Chris, recognizing his years of local reporting in the East Bay Times and the Bay Area News Group. His column, Around the Neighborhood, supported many local events.
 - b. Shadi Room: Apparently the electronic key access system is down and due to supply chain issues, it may be a while before it is fixed. Meanwhile, the room can only be accessed with a regular key. **** Tom will follow up** with Alexis, the assistant city manager, about getting a key.
- 3.) **Public Comments:** None, but we agreed to publicize the Board meetings in Sparks and The Forge.
- 4.) **Rodini House:** This is one of the oldest houses in El Cerrito, with a creek on the property and an exterior that retains its historical integrity (circa 1897), though apparently the interior does not. Construction signs are up so it appears work will begin shortly on the project to build 16 units and move the house to a back corner of the lot. The city of El Cerrito has a 99-year lease on the house. **** Dianne agreed to contact Sean Moss**, City Planner, about the project and potential/planned use for the house itself. We want to keep an eye on things and make sure that the house is preserved. We also want to explore any possibility that the Historical Society could use the house as a museum space or other purpose. **** Dave W. will send Dianne an article about the house.**
- 5.) **Membership Flyer:** The new flyer is ready for distribution. **** Dave will bring them around** to board members' houses so we can distribute them around town. Key locations include the Community Center; Markets in Kensington; Libraries in EC, Kensington, Richmond, Albany; Grand Barber Shop, Richmond Historical Society, Berkeley Historical Society. For those few locations where we need to provide our own stand for the flyers, Dianne will make adhesive labels for the stands, to say "Property of El Cerrito Historical Society." When Dave asked at the EC Library about displaying the flyer, he was told that they won't promote a group that charges for membership. **** Tom will follow up** on this issue, as the library displays flyers from other organizations that charge for membership.

6.) **Events:**

- a. The annual meeting will be in January 2022. After discussion, we agreed to hold the meeting via Zoom, not in person, unless the pandemic situation gets much better after the holidays. At our next board meeting (November 11) we will discuss the agenda and program for the annual meeting.
- b. 50th Anniversary of the Recycling Center will be in August of 2022. The Historical Society will collaborate with the Environmental Quality Committee to plan a celebration. The event will be outdoors, with the Historical Society focusing on the historical aspect. The EQ Committee is expected to recommend installing a plaque to honor Joel Witherell, who was a key player in seeing the Center realized. Maria Sanders was also an important figure in the effort.

7.) **Friends of the Cerrito Theater:** Dave raised the question of whether the Historical Society might establish a fiscal relationship with the Friends of the Cerrito Theater (FCT) – perhaps creating a restricted fund account to hold the FCT’s money to save them bank fees, etc. Tom pointed out that Dave is violating our Conflict of Interest policy in bringing this up. The policy restricts people affiliated with another organization from mixing the group’s interests with those of the Historical Society. Dave acknowledged that this could be the case and agreed to examine the policy. The group decided not to discuss this item further.

8.) **Land Acknowledgement:** There was a discussion about the usefulness and value of Land Acknowledgement. It has been criticized by native American anthropologists as “a way for white people to sound good without actually doing anything.” In our programs, as a matter of course, we should acknowledge the full extent of the history of a place as we know it. Tom moved that we table this discussion pending further information. John seconded and the vote was unanimous.

9.) **Copyrights of photos, etc. on the website:** Dianne reported that she is working with Tom on this. She has captured screenshots of the photos on a finite section of the website and forwarded them to Tom, who will make every attempt to identify the attribution. As Tom finishes with that group, Dianne will send the next group to him, and so on until finished. Every image we publish should be attributed, including images in newsletters, on the website, etc., even if it is just “from the collection of the El Cerrito Historical Society.”

10.) **Sparks & Forge:** Dave’s article on Gerald Martin is not yet finished. Other ideas for future articles include Ray Faraday Nelson, a sci fi writer and David Pryde, from Pasttime Hardware. **** Dave will ask Jon Bashor** if he would write an article about the historical mural at the Del Norte BART station for the next issue of Sparks.

11.) **New Board Members:** We should all be thinking of future candidates for Board members.

12.) **Adjourn:** The next meeting will be on Thursday, November 11.

