

**UNOFFICIAL MINUTES  
OF THE  
SALINAS HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD  
June 2, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. in the City Hall Rotunda.

**ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Chairperson Hirahara, Vice Chairperson Mazgai, Board Members Callender, Shim, and Munoz

ABSENT: Wadsworth

STAFF: Planning Manager, Grant Leonard, Community Outreach Assistant, Bianca Arizmendi, Assistant Planner, Yesenia Segovia, and Assistant Director for Community Development, Christy Hopper

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Opened for public comment at 12:02 p.m.

Closed for public comment at 12:02 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** May 5, 25 ID #25-208

Chair Hirahara called for approval of the May 5, 2025 meeting minutes. Board Member Mazgai noted two corrections: the full name for the nominee at 14 Los Sorales should be Eric Michael Wynkoop, and the correct name for the organization is Monterey County Historical Society. With no further corrections, a motion to approve the minutes as corrected was made by Board Member Munoz and seconded by Board Member Shim.

AYES: Chairperson Hirahara, Vice Chairperson Mazgai, Board Members Callender, Shim, and Munoz

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Board Member Wadsworth

This motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

## CONSIDERATIONS

### Sacramento Chinatown Tour and CPF PRESENTATION

**Chair Hirahara:** Presented a report on the Sacramento Chinatown tour and Preservation Conference presentation. Described the original ground level of the Chinatown area, its transformation in the 1960s into a pedestrian mall with many two-story buildings built by family and benevolent associations. Highlighted notable sites including the Siu Yen Benevolent Association, Confucius Church (underutilized despite significant funding), and Bing Kong Tong. Noted the area's decline and lack of foot traffic despite proximity to Old Town and parking. Mentioned historic plaques and signage as inspiration. Reported that their presentation was well received, especially for its early-stage community-focused design process. Emphasized the Sacramento Chinatown project as an example of a failed revitalization strategy, with most structures being 1960s recreations. Confirmed the area is the original Chinatown site but mostly rebuilt. Concluded that the tour served more as a cautionary tale than a preservation effort.

**Grant Leonard:** Affirmed that their presentation was well received, especially for showing early design concepts and community engagement. Highlighted discussions around preserving versus honoring historical structures and the challenges of demolition.

**Board Member Shim:** Asked if there were any revitalization plans or historical photos of the area before redevelopment. Expressed interest in understanding what originally existed.

**Chair Hirahara:** Responded that few or no original photos were shown, and the focus was more on the redevelopment story.

**Board Member Mazgai:** Questioned the historic value of the structures, noting many seemed new or recreated. Asked about specific buildings like the Travelers Hotel, which was not clearly visible.

**Chair Hirahara:** Clarified its location and confirmed the building's presence.

**Board Member Munoz:** Asked if there was any feedback on the Chinatown project. Chair Hirahara relayed that Doug Tom viewed it as an example of what not to do, highlighting the lack of historical authenticity and the project's limited success.

## OTHER BUSSINESS

### ***34-38 Soledad Street Status***

**Chair Hirahara:** Requesting an update on 34–38 Soledad Street. Expressed interest in obtaining a second opinion regarding the demolition plan, suggesting it currently leans toward removing most of the building while preserving or reusing the front facade elements. Asked if board members had questions.

**Grant Leonard:** Reported that they are working with Public Works to prepare a scope of work for demolition and preservation services. After evaluating feasibility, it was determined that preserving only the front wall is not structurally viable. The plan now focuses on recovering and documenting historically significant materials to be incorporated into the new design. Welcomed specific feedback and offered to report further at the next meeting.

**Board Member Shim:** Asked for clarification on whether the Republic Café is included in the project. Confirmed the buildings involved include the pool hall and others on the same side.

**Board Member Mazgai:** Clarified the location of the affected buildings, including the PI Market and Shell Station. Confirmed with Grant Leonard that elements from the east facade will be removed, retained, and incorporated into the new building design.

### ***Audit and Flagging of Historic Resources***

**Grant Leonard:** Reported that the audit and flagging of historic resources in the permit system is underway, with each property needing to be flagged by both APN and address due to system limitations. Confirmed the process is primarily for internal use to help staff identify historic properties. Noted that an updated public-facing web page with a geolocated map of historic properties is in development as part of the ongoing survey.

**Chair Hirahara:** Pointed out that some properties, like the Republic Café, have multiple addresses but only one APN, underscoring the need for dual flagging.

**Yesenia Segovia:** Estimated that the flagging process would be completed by the end of this month or early next month.

**Board Member Mazgai:** Asked whether both APN and address will be used for future flagging, and how the HRB or public can access this information. Expressed concern that property owners may be unaware unless involved in the permit process.

### ***Historic Survey Workshop, Historic Context Statement***

**Chair Hirahara:** Asked when the final historic context statement would be published and confirmed that HRB approval is not required. Clarified that the context statement is an overview of Salinas' history, not a tool for district designation.

**Board Member Shim:** Asked if the context statement covers the entire city and whether individual historic resources would have separate write-ups.

**Board Member Mazgai:** Emphasized the need to include district-level mapping, ideally color-coded by period or style, and referenced other cities as examples. Expressed hope that Page & Turnbull will provide ranked or suggested historic districts.

**Board Member Munoz:** Referenced the 1980s survey, which identified potential historic districts tied to Steinbeck and Victorian homes, and supported further listing and mapping of these areas.

**Grant Leonard:** Reported that a public meeting was held with about 20 attendees to gather feedback on the context statement. A digital survey will be posted online. The admin draft is under review, and a public draft will be available this summer. Confirmed the context statement provides a historical framework by era and style, supporting future evaluations. While it does not include district recommendations directly, district mapping is part of Page & Turnbull's broader scope.

### ***Certificates of Appreciation***

**Grant Leonard:** Reported that the Certificates of Appreciation are being prepared, with formatting nearly complete. Printing is delayed due to waiting on high-quality cardstock. Once printed, they'll be signed by the Chair and Mayor, and recipients will be contacted to arrange delivery or pickup. He noted that a planned city council presentation on May 13 was rushed, but they hope to recognize recipients properly at a future meeting.

**Chair Hirahara:** Suggested the certificates be officially announced at a city council meeting and ideally presented at the beginning of the agenda so recipients can be recognized publicly.

**Board Member Mazgai:** Asked if certificates could be ready for presentation at the upcoming Salinas History Day on June 7 at the Welcome Center.

**Grant Leonard:** Responded it was unlikely due to timing but appreciated the reminder about the event.

### ***CPF Membership***

**Grant Leonard:** Confirmed the invoice for California Preservation membership is being processed. Once paid, the city will be officially registered under a government nonprofit membership, covering up to 10 people (HRB members and staff). Benefits include conference tickets, access to 300+ recorded sessions, and ongoing training opportunities. He will notify the board once registration is complete.

**Chair Hirahara:** Asked if a membership ID will be available for accessing webinars and other online resources, and confirmed the invoice is in hand.

**Board Member Mazgai:** Asked when the membership can be used.

**Grant Leonard:** Reiterated that access begins once the invoice is paid.

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

#### ***Election of Officers***

**Chair Hirahara:** Opened the discussion on future agenda items, specifically the upcoming election of officers in July. Noted a personal decision to step down as chair but remain on the board. Suggested that it would be appropriate to publicly identify candidates for chair and vice chair in advance of the official vote.

**Grant Leonard:** Confirmed that per bylaws, officer elections occur at the meeting after in July. Since the item wasn't agendaized, no vote could take place at this meeting, but discussion was permitted.

**Chair Hirahara:** Acknowledged the typical practice of the vice chair stepping into the chair role and asked Vice Chair Mazgai if he would accept the nomination.

**Board Member Mazgai:** Agreed to serve as chair.

**Chair Hirahara:** Asked for volunteers for vice chair.

**Board Member Shim:** Volunteered to serve as vice chair.

**Chair Hirahara:** Seeing no other nominations, stated the item will be placed on the next meeting's agenda for a formal vote.

### ***Rehab Right- Guidance for Rehabilitating Historic Resources***

**Chair Hirahara:** Brought up the topic of rehab rights guidance, originally introduced by Board Member Mazgai at a prior meeting.

**Grant Leonard:** Confirmed the item will appear on a future agenda. Plans to research similar examples from other cities across the state and nation to support the discussion.

**Board Member Mazgai:** Shared that he's been in contact with the City of Oakland, specifically Betty Marvin, regarding their rehab rights guidance. Oakland is open to Salinas using their materials as long as proper credit is given and the original link is shared. He offered to distribute the link to the board.

**Grant Leonard:** Confirmed staff will send out the link to all board members.

## ADJOURNMENT

Confirmation of attendance for next regular meeting on July 7, 2025.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

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Larry Hirahara  
Chairperson

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Grant Leonard  
Executive Secretary

