

Minutes of the Fort Lowell Restoration Advisory Committee Meeting
5230 E. Fort Lowell Road, Tucson, Arizona 85712
April 11, 2012, 5:00 P.M.

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 5:05 p.m. A quorum of the Committee was present. Those in attendance (and signed in) were:

Larry Hecker (Committee Chair)
Elaine Hill (Committee Member)
Peg Sackheim (Committee Member)
Frank McClure (Committee Member)
Ann Woosley (Committee Member)
Patsy Waterfall (Committee Member)
Jim Conroy (City of Tucson)
Midge Irwin City of Tucson)
Lisa Cuestas (City of Tucson)
Jonathan Mabry (City of Tucson)
Pat Hartshorne (SCS Engineers)
Kendall Kroesen (Audubon Society)
Sheila Bowden (Friends of Fort Lowell Park)
Simon Herbert (Pima County)
Loy Neff, Pima (County)
Homer Thiel (Desert Archaeology, Inc.)
Janet Marcus (OFLNA)

2. (Action) Review of meeting minutes: January 11, 2012 meeting.

Patsy Waterfall moved to approve the minutes of the January 11 meeting. Peg Sackheim seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Work Plan: Project Status Reports.

a. COT, Project Status Updates

i. EPA Grant Environmental Clean Up Project – COT yielded to a presentation by Desert Archaeology, Inc. (see below). After the Desert presentation, Lisa Cuestas and Pat Hartshorne presented a summary of the current status of the environmental clean up project. The clean up is nearly complete, with only a single small area containing contamination to be removed. Allowing time for laboratory tests to confirm the clean up results, the fieldwork will probably be complete by the end of April. SCS Engineers will compile the results in a technical report and other compliance documents during May. The documents will be submitted to Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ is the regulatory agency delegated by the EPA to assess compliance requirements). The project will be considered closed after a No Further Action (NFA) letter is issued by ADEQ and approved by EPA. Additional work, such as the planned County project, can begin upon receipt of the NFA letter. Upon completion of the project, Pat will also produce a summary report written for non-professionals, for circulation to the Advisory Committee. Electronic copies of the reports will be placed on the project website as they become available.

ii. Cultural Resources Update – Homer Thiel presented information about the archaeological results of the COT clean up project. As many as 75 archaeological features were identified during the soil removal, including features representing the prehistoric Hohokam Hardy Site underlying the area, features associated with the Fort Lowell period, and post-Fort historic features. Among the prehistoric features were 10 well preserved pit structures interpreted as pithouses. The high number and good preservation of these features were surprising. Many other prehistoric features were identified and excavated, with all artifacts collected for analysis and, ultimately, curation at the Arizona State Museum, but no human burial remains were exposed during the project. Historic Fort-period features included identifying the southeast corner of the Fort Guardhouse stone wall foundations, +-+ and locating portions of the Bakery and the original Cottonwood Lane. Cottonwood Lane was marked by parallel irrigation ditches used to water the original trees as well as the tree locations, planting pits, and fence posts along the lane. Elements of the Officers Quarters were identified, including remains of an adobe wall between OQ 1 and OQ 2, remnants of the wooden porch around OQ 1, and a wall separating OQ 1 from Cottonwood Lane. Numerous small, regularly spaced soil stains were exposed between OQ 1 and OQ 2, interpreted as planting holes marking a garden area. Post-Fort period features included a pit containing

trash from the early twentieth century sanatorium period. Homer credited the Adkins family for their stewardship, contributing to the preservation of the buried cultural resources during their history of using the property for various businesses and family pursuits.

Larry Hecker asked how the archaeological results could benefit the Park and the Master Plan. Homer, Jonathan, and Loy commented on the scientific and interpretive value of the archaeological results. The number and variety of recorded features and collected artifacts add greatly to the interpretive stories that can be told in future exhibits about the prehistoric, historic Fort, and post-Fort periods at Fort Lowell and the Adkins Property. In addition to the potential use of archaeological maps, photos, and other records in interpretive exhibits, collected artifacts could be obtained through a loan agreement with the Arizona State Museum to contribute to future exhibits. Some buried features could be interpreted directly, like the Guardhouse wall foundations, and possibly other well-preserved buried features. The archaeological results can also aid the upcoming Adkins Property Preservation Plan implementation. For example, the precise location and alignment of Cottonwood Lane can be used to help define its modern recreation, including tree locations and fence lines. Identifying the many buried features within the property can assist with a strategy of “preservation in place” in the design and placement of new facilities, such as a proposed parking lot, to avoid impacting buried cultural resources. For now, the exposed features are being carefully documented and they will be reburied to continue preserving them until a future interpretive plan is developed and implemented, as called for in the Master Plan. Reburying the features will protect them from deterioration from erosion and from possible damage from vandalism, since the Adkins Property is a secure location, protected by fence, caretaker, and enhanced law enforcement. As with the clean up project, Desert Archaeology will produce a technical report on the results of archaeological excavations and monitoring. Preparing this report will take time, so a publication written for non-professionals also will be produced summarizing the archaeology of the Adkins Property for circulation to the Advisory Committee. The archaeological reports will be placed on the project website, as they become available.

iii. Status and Future Use of Adkins Residence – Peg Sackheim requested discussion of the status and future use of the Adkins Family Residence. Jonathan provided a summary of recent work conducted by COT to repair and stabilize the residence. Community Development Block Grant funds became available for work to be completed during the spring of 2012 under the category of “Blight Remediation,” so Jonathan was able to apply the funds to support extensive work on the exterior of the building. The roof was repaired, including removing the deteriorating tile roof and temporarily storing the tiles on site. New roofing was added to keep the building water tight and protected from the weather. Structural repairs were made to the walls, repairing cracks and other damage and rebuilding sections of the adobe walls. Similar repairs were made to damaged and deteriorated sections of the foundation and damaged windows were repaired and replaced with durable plexi-glass. Landscaping work was also done around the house to remove dead trees and prune living trees. Members of the Advisory Committee commented on the improved state and appearance of the former Adkins Residence.

Peg Sackheim posed the question about the future use of the Adkins Residence and asked about the possibility of placing an on-site caretaker to live there, adding that a living presence, with regular maintenance and repairs, would help preserve the building and improve security of the Adkins Property. Jim and Jonathan responded that the interior requires extensive work and the current funding was required to be applied to exterior work. No additional funds are available for rehabilitating the interior. Whether the residence will be reused or removed has not been officially determined, so additional investment in the residence should wait until a decision is made on its future – whether to keep the residence in its current location and either interpret or adaptively reuse it, or remove it. Concerning the idea of an on-site caretaker, Jim reminded the group that for several years through today, the Adkins Property has been protected by a caretaker, who resides in an apartment in the adjacent Commissary Building and who watches the property and conducts on-site security checks twice-daily. Very few security issues have arisen over the years the caretaker has been active. Loy added that the currently approved Master Plan includes provision to consider and decide the question of what to do with the Adkins Residence when Phase II of the Master Plan is funded and planning resumes. Changing the currently determined status

of the residence would require re-evaluating and modifying the Master Plan and also require additional review and, finally, approval by COT Mayor and Council and County Board of Supervisors. Given these facts, Peg agreed that the current stabilization and repair work, the caretaker's ongoing monitoring, and the provision for future consideration of the residence's use in the Master Plan, satisfied her concerns about its preservation and the over all security of the Adkins Property. She asked about the future use of the roof tile from the Adkins Residence and Jim responded that the tiles are temporarily stored near the Adkins Residence and secure storage will be located elsewhere.

iv. Other COT updates – Jim announced that the current maintenance compound at the Fort Lowell Park will be moved off-site, to another location by June 1, 2012. A small maintenance presence will be kept at the Park, but the facility no longer will be devoted to maintenance requirements and equipment and materials will not be stored there. This will free the maintenance facility for other uses, such as a “Nature Shop,” as called for in the Master Plan.

Jim introduced to the Project Team Kendall Kroesen, of the Audubon Society, and Sheila Bowden, of the Friends of Fort Lowell Park. Jim reviewed the important contributions made to Fort Lowell Park and other City parks by Kendall and Sheila, and their respective organizations. Kendall summarized his work in habitat restoration, cooperating closely with the City on natural resources and habitat preservation issues and in coordinating bird watching at City parks. Bird watching is important to bird species preservation and an significant contributor to the City and regional economies. Historic Fort Lowell Park is an important bird watching site, with numerous bird species present. Kendall pointed to the historical connection between bird watching and Fort Lowell, citing a historic military figure stationed at the fort in the 1870s who contributed to identifying and classifying native bird species in the area. Sheila's group provides extremely important work and support to Historic Fort Lowell Park, all conducted by volunteers, in regular park clean up activities and assisting with park maintenance. The group also provides assistance with organizing, setting up, and running special events at the park. Jim credits both groups as critically important partners with City Parks, without whose assistance Park maintenance, facilities, and special activities would suffer, or not be possible.

Jim announced the upcoming installation of a new sign within Historic Fort Lowell Park, illustrating bird species that can be seen at the park and providing information about the park and upcoming activities at the park. The bird photographs were provided by volunteers and all birds were photographed in the park. The six-foot-by-four-foot sign will be installed near the pond in the northern part of the park and dedicated at a public event on April 20, 2012, celebrating the establishment of the “Wildlife Oasis” at the pond, supported by the Friends of Fort Lowell Park and the Audubon Society.

b. County & Poster Frost Mirto (joint presentation) – County presents for PFM and Facilities Management

i. & ii. Adkins Parcel Preservation Plan Design & Implementation Update – Simon summarized the current status of the Adkins Parcels Preservation Plan Project, which is on schedule. Design is virtually final, with 100 percent plans completed, and only a few discussions on-going about minor changes, primarily concerned with phasing parts of construction. Plans are undergoing final checks in preparation for permit submittals. The next step in support of permitting is to complete a land survey of the property to obtain current elevations after the soil clean up so that site preparation for drainage can be determined. Once permits are obtained, the contracting process can proceed to hire a contractor qualified to conduct construction at historic properties. Timing the submittals and contracting for the County project will be tied to the completion of the COT environmental clean up project. Work cannot begin until the City receives ADEQ and EPA approvals and subsequently issues approvals for the County project to proceed. It is hoped construction can begin in the summer, 2012.

iii. Cultural Resources Update – Loy summarized the status of the cultural resources compliance actions necessary for implementation of the Adkins Parcels Preservation Plan Project. Desert Archaeology is under contract to provide cultural resources services to

ensure continuity and consistency with previous compliance work. Desert has submitted a draft Historic Properties Treatment Plan for County review. The results of Desert's work with the environmental clean up have led to several proposed adjustments in the construction of the County project, which require consideration in the treatment plan. For example, the dense distribution of well-preserved prehistoric and historic resources has led to shift in strategy to focus on "preservation in place." This strategy takes advantage of the good archaeological sample excavated for the City clean up project (in the form of the excellent information collected) and commits the County construction approach to reducing impacts to the minimum possible. One way to achieve this is by adjusting the elevations of the parking lot in the northwest part of the Adkins Property to eliminate or greatly reduce the need for cut-and-fill grading, which could impact buried cultural resources. This does not require a design change. PFM is exploring options to build the facility on introduced, clean fill placed on top of the current ground surface, thereby eliminating, or greatly reducing the need for grading. The newly discovered locations and alignments of the original Cottonwood Lane can also be used to determine the location of the modern recreation of Cottonwood Lane. Construction options are being considered that will use old alignments, while avoiding impacts to other identified buried features. Once a revised treatment plan is approved by the County, it will be used to initiate consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office. It is hoped the SHPO consultation can run concurrently with ADEQ and EPA review and the County contracting process to allow the construction to begin as soon as possible.

iv. Other County updates – No updates

4. New business.

a. Other new business – Elaine Hill reported that a 40-acre property at the southeast corner of N. Craycroft Rd. and E. River Rd. scheduled for commercial development is being reviewed by COT for possible annexation. Some discussion resulted concerning implications for increased traffic demands and pressure on Craycroft Rd. and its potential to affect foot traffic associated with Fort Lowell Park and to possibly affect the proposed HAWK crossing between the park and the Adkins Property. Elaine and Peg will attend an upcoming public meeting with other neighborhood residents to obtain new information and to voice their concerns and opposition to this development and annexation.

5. Call to the public – No response from the public in attendance.

6. (Action) Schedule for next quarterly meeting at San Pedro Chapel: July 11, 2012.

After discussion among staff and Advisory Committee, Peg Sackheim moved that the next quarterly meeting be scheduled for July 11, 2012. Patsy Waterfall seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Meeting adjourned at 6:06pm