

**MINUTES APPROVED AT THE HPC MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2025**

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING  
Richmond Room, 450 Civic Center Plaza  
Richmond CA 94804**

August 4, 2025  
5:30 P.M.

**MINUTES**

**Roll Call**

Chair Joann Pavlinec called the meeting to order at 5:35 P.M.

Present: Chair Joann Pavlinec, Vice Chair Caitlin Hibma; Commissioners Jerry Cole, Chad DeWitt, and Michael Hibma

Absent: Commissioner Fatema Crane

Guests: None

Staff Michele Morris, Senior Planner/HPC Staff Liaison

Two new members of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC): Jerry Cole and Chad DeWitt introduced themselves and described their interest in serving on the Historic Preservation Commission.

**Approval of Minutes:** None

**Approval of Agenda:**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**Meeting Procedures**

The meeting procedures were as shown on the agenda.

**Public Forum**

CORDELL HINDLER, Richmond, welcomed the new members of the HPC and invited everyone to the next Contra Costa Mayors Conference on September 4, 2025 hosted by the City of El Cerrito at 6:30 P.M., with a required RSVP and a cost of \$70, which also included dinner. The location had yet to be identified. He also invited everyone to the Richmond Rotary Club Weekly Meeting on September 19, 2025 at 12:30 P.M. at the Country Club, with a fee of \$35 for lunch. He added that he would speak to the Youth Council at its next meeting to encourage members to make application to City Boards and Commissions.

It was clarified that the HPC was a seven-member body and one position on the Commission remained to be filled at this time.

**Liaison Reports:** None

**Consent Calendar:** None

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**Appeal Date:** It was clarified that the item on the agenda was not subject to an appeal because no action would be taken on the item.

Both Vice Chair C. Hibma and Commissioner M. Hibma recused themselves from the next item on the agenda.

**Public Hearings**

<b>1.</b>	<b>PLN24-358</b>	<b>HISTORIC REGISTER NOMINATION OF JOHN HALEY STUDIO/HOUSE AT 771 OCEAN AVENUE</b>
Description	STUDY SESSION TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSED LANDMARK OVERLAY DESIGNATION (-L) AND MAKE A PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION BASED ON THE DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED WHETHER TO RECOMMEND THE -L DESIGNATION TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION FOR THE JOHN HALEY STUDIO/HOUSE (771 OCEAN AVENUE, RICHMOND, 94801) FOR THE RICHMOND HISTORIC REGISTER	
Location	771 OCEAN AVENUE	
APN	558-223-012	
Zoning	RL-1, SINGLE-FAMILY VERY LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	
Applicant	JOY TAHAN RUDDLELL AND DAVID RUDDLELL (OWNER)	
Staff Contact	MICHELE MORRIS	Recommendation: <b>CONDITIONAL APPROVAL</b>

Senior Planner Michele Morris presented the staff report dated August 4, 2025, for a study session to consider a proposed Landmark Overlay Designation (-L) and make a preliminary determination based on the documentation provided whether to recommend the -L designation to the Planning Commission for the John Haley Studio/House at 771 Ocean Avenue for the Richmond Historic Register.

CAITLIN HIBMA described the house built in 1932 as part of a pair of houses. The home at 771 Ocean Avenue had been owned and used as a studio by artist John Haley and his wife Monica, and the house next door at 775 Ocean Avenue had been used by his colleague. Both were professors critical to inventing the Berkeley School, a derivation of European Modernism that they practiced and purveyed around the area. It was seen as an important mode of local art and they were known for working around Point Richmond; a center for early modernist artists in the Bay Area. In 1949, Roger Lee, a prominent modernist, built an addition on the back of the house at 771 Ocean Avenue that contributed to the style, and because of his name and the way it had been integrated with the original house, it enhanced the property and became a gallery for art for the Haleys work as well as for many others.

For the importance of Haley and the importance of the architecture and the way it was used, Ms. Hibma stated it was definitely eligible to be a landmark. It met five of the six local criteria for landmarks, a valued element of the City's history in terms of its cultural and social implications of gathering artists in an artist's enclave; associations with Haley and Lee and architecture embodied in the house; and losing it would be a loss detrimental to the City of Richmond; and because it was a pair and there was potentially a possibility of someday nominating the other house as well. She stated the property owners would like to recognize the importance of the site and put the historic protections in place.

Chair Pavlinec asked for a tour of the house and acknowledged that such a tour would have to be noticed pursuant to the Brown Act.

Commissioner Cole noted that he had viewed the site. He asked whether an ad hoc committee could be designated to tour the home without having to do so under the Brown Act.

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Commissioner DeWitt stated as the owner of an architecturally significant home that was not in Richmond, there were times when it was wonderful to show off the home to people but that needed to be the choice of the owner since such tours could violate the property owners' privacy. He thought the tour of the house was a great idea, but he urged caution with respect to the public involvement. He commented that the Haleys had been like magnets within the community who brought so many of the people who were so formative in creating the eccentric, diverse, artistic, and intellectual blue-collar community that was Point Richmond, and to celebrate them and their home would be amazing.

Chair Pavlinec asked where the artworks associated with the Haleys were located and there were several comments as to where those artworks might be.

Commissioner Cole asked about the process and who had prepared the information presented to the HPC and who had prepared the staff report from that information. It was clarified that Caitlin Hibma had prepared the information presented to the HPC and Michele Morris had prepared the staff report from that information. There were questions as to who could make application for a landmark designation and it was clarified that the impetus would come from the property owner at the property owner's expense, and not from the City.

JOY TAHAN RUDELL, owner, explained that before she and her husband had any intention to purchase the home they had visited it and had been in awe of the home and its history that brought a lot to the Point Richmond community. She noted that a group of Point Richmond artists had met at the home up until recently. She explained that Mr. Haley had also worked with the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and there was a WPA-era mural painted inside the home. She added that she and her husband had worked very hard to retain the original elements of the home and wanted to make sure that it would not be torn down. She stated the owner of the second home was also interested in a historic designation. She added that they would be happy to host a tour for the HPC but not necessarily as a public open house.

Chair Pavlinec recommended a split tour that would not require compliance with the Brown Act.

Chair Pavlinec CLOSED the PUBLIC HEARING.

<p><b>ACTION:</b> It was M/S/C (DeWitt/Cole) to make a preliminary determination to recommend the -L designation to the Planning Commission and/or the City Council for the John Haley Studio/House at 771 Ocean Avenue, Richmond, CA 94801, for the Richmond Historic Register; approved by the following Roll Call vote: 3-0 (Ayes: Pavlinec, Cole, and DeWitt; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Crane and C. Hibma and M. Hibma (Recused)).</p>
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Caitlin Hibma and Michael Hibma rejoined the HPC at this time.

### Commission Business

- A. The Next HPC Meeting on Monday, September 1, 2025, is Labor Day – Discuss the Possibility of a Special HPC Meeting on Monday, September 8, 2025

The HPC agreed to a Special HPC meeting on Monday, September 8, 2025 given that the regular meeting would fall on Labor Day.

### Adjournment

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The meeting was adjourned at 6:11 P.M.