



Debate Builds as Historic Ordinance is Revised

(The following is adapted from an article by Tom Sharpe, Santa Fe New Mexican, September 27, 2004).

Santa Fe's historic-architecture ordinance should avoid general, objective, written standards and continue to depend on independent, subjective hearings before a citizens' panel, say members of the Old Santa Fe Association.

"Strict standards may catch the letter of the law, but not the spirit," association board member and Realtor Sara Melton said during last week's panel discussion of the rewrite of the 57-year old ordinance.

Wayne Nichols, an association board member and builder, said that rather

**"Strict standards may catch the letter of the law, but not the spirit."
—Sara Melton**

than specific rules, historic integrity would be better

"preserved by the ongoing, qualitative judgment of a



City Councilor Karen Heldmeyer with Eleanor and Phillip Bové

trained, professional staff and a committed group of citizens sitting on the Historic Design Review Board."

Association President Karen Walker, a Realtor who heads the City Policy Planning Commission, questioned the compe-

tence of the city's contractor that is rewriting the land-use code, Clarion Associates of Denver.

When two Clarion officials visited the city earlier

this year, she said, they "didn't know the difference between adobe brick and plaster."

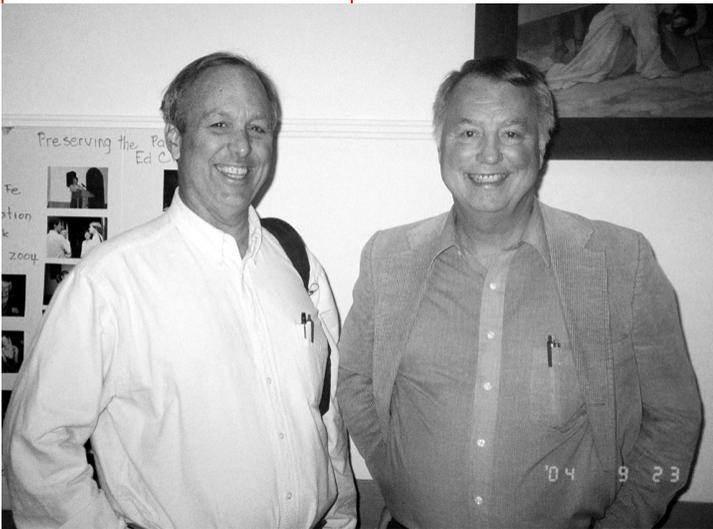
The discussion drew about 50 people to the historic Santuario de Guadalupe on Thursday, September 23.

Architectural conserva-

tion and board member Alan "Mac" Watson had some specific suggestions for the new law.

Establish a preservation fund for city-owned

**Consultants on the land-use code rewrite "didn't know the difference between adobe brick and plaster."
— Karen Walker**



Tom Sharpe and Richard McCord



Walt Chapman of Chapman Construction

ple who can show financial hardship.

Waive city fees and encourage tax breaks for approved preservation work for the wealthier owners of historical properties. "Show me a Republican who doesn't like a tax credit," Watson

historic properties. Watson showed slides of several city properties that he said need preservation work, including a water-works

building just across Canyon Road from Cristo

Rey Church; the Main Library on Washington Avenue, originally built as City Hall; and stonework along the Santa Fe River. Watson said the limestone was quarried from the same pit in Lamy that supplied stones for St. Francis Cathedral.

Establish a preservation fund available to owners of historic properties. Watson suggested interest-free loans of up to \$25,000 for approved preservation work could be made to peo-

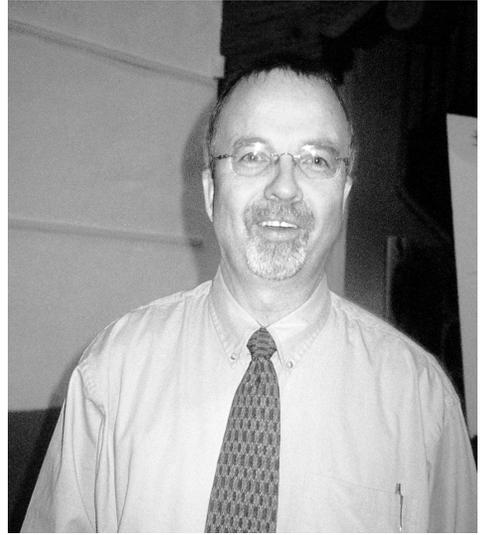
said. "Anybody who is given some kind of incentive is going to be much more positive about doing appropriate preservation work."

Require city certification for architects and contractors qualified to do historic-preservation work. Watson said few

modern craftsmen know how to work with adobe and other traditional materials.

Dale Zinn, a local architect who used to serve on the Historic Design Review Board, said many visitors to Santa Fe inaccurately believe that

architectural styles are strictly controlled all over town. Only about 20 percent of the city in the historic zones is subject to historic architecture codes, so most Santa Fe home-



Lee Brown, Government Affairs Director, Santa Fe Association of Realtors

owners voluntarily adhere to regional style, he said. Randall Bell, an attorney on the Historic Design Review

Board, said the city needs to enforce its architectural regulations more strictly.

City red tags for such violations often are ignored, and only occasionally does the City Attorney's Office cite violators in court, he said.

Allan Baer, an associate of Lloyd & Associates, said "We are 100 percent in favor of the historic ordinance, but we are looking at specific things in the rewrite of the ordinance which are either impractical or impossible."

Board member Alan "Mac" Watson had some specific suggestions for the new law.

**"Only about 20 percent of the city in the historic zones is subject to historic architecture codes..."
— Dale Zinn**



Wayne Nichols, OFSA Board, moderated



The Book Corner

In the 1980's, it occurred to me that, while Santa Feans were actively preserving their physical heritage and its atmosphere, we were losing the sense of what made Santa Fe into the City Different in the first place. That is, we were losing the memories and the experiences of a period - roughly 1920 to 1955 - when events and people caused us, in time, to become world famous. While there had been compendia of art and artists, books and writers, politicians and events, there had been little collection of memories and experiences. I had grown up with my parents' and relatives', their friends', and my friends' parents' stories and memories. My elders had consciously pointed out what and who I should

notice and understand: eccentrics and eccentricity, art and artists, poetry and writers, people who had come here to "get away," and all the various reasons for doing so, the interrelationships between our three cultures, and the three cultures, themselves. With all this was an assertion that the period had been a "golden age" and was not merely nostalgia.

As an historian, I was drawn to write a history but was born too late to write a memoir of the period. The work of Studs Terkel gave me insight. I was not to write an academic history but to compile an oral history. Everything I needed and desired to bring the period alive was to be found in that format. Moreover, what better way to keep faith with my parents

and forebears than to create an archive of their very words?

Paradoxically, the greatest flaw of oral history is its greatest strength: One cannot entirely trust memory and it may be consciously or unconsciously colored by feelings or prejudices. Thus, while these qualities may be seen in academic history as a fault, in bringing alive the feel and the atmosphere and the personality and personalities of a time, it is a strength.

—John Pen La Farge

Available at Collected Works Bookstore (\$29.95)

Alert!

David Rasch was selected as Senior Planner in the historic preservation division of the city's Planning Department. OSFA supported David's selection.

OSFA further supports additional staff for the enforcement of the regulations that protect the precious historic resources of our community.

Support Santa Fe's Historic Design Review Board!

Recent Efforts

OSFA members spoke to the City Council in support of the Historic Design Review Board decision to preserve the historic fabric of Plaza Chamisal on Acequia Madre. The owner and his architect had appealed the HDRB decision denying the partial demolition of an existing wall. The HDRB decision was upheld.

On another important topic, OSFA board members encouraged the City Council to **purchase** water rights for the city rather than only leasing them.

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David Pfeffer	983-5834
District 2	
Karen Heldmeyer	982-3968
Rebecca Wurzburger	982-6351
District 3	
David Coss	988-7373
Miguel Chavez	984-8125
District 4	
Carol Robertson Lopez	690-4114
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OUR MISSION

“To promote the prosperity and welfare of the City and County of Santa Fe and their inhabitants, to preserve and maintain the ancient landmarks, historical structures and traditions of Old Santa Fe and to guide their growth and development in such a way as to promote that unique charm and distinction, born of age, culture, tradition and environment, which are the priceless assets and heritage of Santa Fe.”

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