

Summer 2023

Historic Folsom Residents Association

President's Message

Mike Reynolds, HFRA President

As we begin another membership renewal year, I wanted to take a few moments to review the goals of HFRA when it was first re-started and where we are now.

The priorities of the board at the time HFRA was re-formed, included the following:

1. Communicate effectively with the HFRA membership to foster a sense of unity
2. Establish HFRA as a voice for the Historic District residents that is recognized by city leadership
3. Address resident concerns regarding commercial district parking in residential neighborhoods

At our July meeting, the current HFRA board of directors reviewed those priorities and agreed that those three main goals had been addressed and achieved. We have regular communication with our HFRA membership via email. We are notified by the city any time there are major issues impacting the Historic District neighborhoods and are given the opportunity to weigh in. And we helped lead the pilot parking project in portions of the Historic District neighborhood.

This leads us to today. What will HFRA focus on in the coming year? The board will be brainstorming at the August meeting to set future priorities and we'd love your input. If you have ideas for HFRA, please reach out to us via email at "thehfra@gmail.com"

Finally, we wanted you to know that the River District Master Plan Advisory Committee has been established by the City Council and I have been appointed to that committee in my role as HFRA President. Many other residents of the Historic District are also serving on that advisory committee as well, so our neighborhood will be well represented. From HFRA's perspective, we recognize that the power of that advisory group will be somewhat limited, as will the power of the city to take action in areas that are not city property. As such, my efforts will mostly be focused on issues that directly impact the Historic District, to include the future use of the Corporation Yard when the city moves to their new location. Keep in mind a date for that has not yet been determined.

Once again, please feel free to reach out if you have ideas for us. And if you haven't renewed your HFRA membership yet, please do so by visiting our website at www.thehfra.org.

HFRA Membership Drive

The 2023 membership drive is complete, but it's not too late to join if you either forgot to renew your membership or a neighbor is still interested.

By renewing your membership in HFRA, you continue to support our efforts to protect and preserve the Historic District so we remain the vibrant community we all enjoy.

Over the past year, HFRA has worked to ensure residents' interests were represented in the pilot parking project, weighed in on multiple development projects within the historic district, built close relationships with merchants and other HD groups such as Folsom History, District 1 Council Member and other Council Members. Most recently HFRA organized an avenue to allow residents to donate unused fruit on their trees to our local Twin Lakes Food Bank.

But there is more work to do! In the coming year we intend to be an active voice in the River District project, will continue our efforts to donate neighborhood produce to Twin Lakes Food Bank, and will continue to monitor and weigh in on development projects in the historic district boundaries. Your membership renewal will ensure we are able to continue our advocacy for safe and quiet neighborhoods as well as appropriate development for the Historic District that honors our rich history.

Simply click on the link below to get a quick link to the HFRA website where you can join. We accept online payments via PayPal, with an option for automatic renewal each year. Or you can print out a membership application and mail in a check if you prefer.

Don't forget, you can always invite your neighbors to join as well. We would be honored to represent their interests as well.

<https://www.thehfra.org/join-us>

E-Shuttle Service Expands

The Historic Folsom E-Shuttle service has expanded! The service, which is active on Friday and Saturday evenings, as well as during special events, has expanded to serve the area just south of Bidwell Street between Riley and Sibley (in the business park where Red Bus Brewing is located) as well as the Natoma Shores neighborhood west of Folsom Boulevard. This free service operates between the hours of 4:30 PM and 10:30 PM on Friday and Saturday nights. To use the shuttle, search the app store on your phone for "Historic Folsom Shuttle." Download the app and hail a ride from your front door (Uber-style) to any of the businesses in the historic district shuttle service area. Shuttles are electric, have climate control and are an easy and fun way to get around the historic district.

Development Continues in the Historic District



One of the most important functions of HFRA is to monitor proposed developments in the historic district and provide comments to the city and the Historic District Commission when HFRA identifies issues that warrant comment. But did you know not all development in the historic district comes before the Historic District Commission?

Certain projects, particularly Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), are approved at the city staff level if they are less than either 16 feet high or 18 feet high (depending on the application date) as outlined by state law and city municipal code.

From 2020 to present, approximately 17 ADUs have been approved by city staff in the historic district. Outside the historic district, 41 ADUs were approved at city staff level.

Allowing city staff level approval of most ADUs is just one of the many ways the California State Legislature has changed the laws to encourage homeowners to build ADUs as an avenue to increase affordable housing.

In other development news, at the July 11 Folsom City Council meeting, the city council consented to allow the city manager to execute a lease for the city owned property on the back side of the parking garage located at 905 Leidesdorff Street. Uncle Charlie's Brewery will be located in that space, across the plaza from Scott's seafood.

And finally, the proposed development at 603 Sutter Street will likely be coming back to the Historic District Commission for review later this year, with a couple of significant changes. First, the number of residential units has been reduced from 3 units to 2 units. And secondly, the owner will no longer propose any parking be provided on-site, consistent with state law that allows developments within ½ mile of a public transit stop to forgo any provisions for parking. In the past, HFRA's main concern with this project was the developer's request for a variance to provide less parking than was required under the Folsom Municipal Code. With the change to state law, that will no longer be a viable issue. Nonetheless, we will read the revised application once it is made available for public review to determine if there are any other issues we might comment on.

Sweeping Updates in State Housing Laws

At the May 3 meeting of the Folsom Historic District Commission (HDC), the commissioners heard an update from a housing attorney about many of the sweeping changes to state housing laws that have the effective result of cutting back local city control regarding development. The changes have been put forth by the California state legislature in order to remove barriers to building new housing. Following is a sampling of some of those changes:

- Cities can no longer require the provision of parking as a part of any development that is within ½ mile of a mass transit stop (e.g. the Historic Folsom light rail stop).
- Design review standards set by cities must be specific and objective. As an example, design review cannot address the “look and feel” of a development project but must instead specifically focus on objective items like size, height, types of materials, etc.
- Front yard setback laws have changed to allow for easier placement of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in the front yards of homes.

We encourage interested HFRA members to listen to the recording of the May 3 HDC meeting to understand more about the limitations of local control and review of development projects.

To learn more about these changes, we encourage you to listen to the city council meeting at the link below:

<https://folsom.granicus.com/player/clip/2582?&redirect=true&h=0bd12c5a6933f8889e247642ebcff159>

To see the written PowerPoint presentation from the land use attorney, click on this link:

<https://www.folsom.ca.us/home/showpublisheddocument/14031/638191450863430000>



CITRUS CARE FOR WINTER HARVEST

While the winter citrus harvest is still a ways off, mid-summer is a great time to check in with your trees to ensure that they are getting the care that they need. Here are some things to pay attention to in order to get the best winter harvest:

Water : Is your tree on an adequate watering schedule? Deep, slow watering once per week or every other week is ideal. The amount of water and time will vary based on how established your tree is. Mulching with wood chips around your tree will help with water retention.

Nutrients: Have you fed the soil around your tree this summer? Adding some nutrient-rich compost or organic fruit tree fertilizer will help your tree stay nourished during the growing season. As your wood chip mulch breaks down over time, this will also add organic matter and vitality to the soil.

Growth/pruning: Do you see any suckers or watersprouts on the trunk or scaffolding limbs? These vigorous new shoots can take energy from fruit production and can create overgrowth that make harvesting/accessibility more difficult down the road, so pruning them now is a good idea. This is also a good time to cut away any dead wood.

Questions? If you are looking for help to better maintain your citrus, seek out a knowledgeable arborist or gardener who has experience with fruit tree care.

In preparation for possible citrus donation to the Twin Lakes Food Bank again next season, they have offered the best practices in care for your fruit trees (see right) in order to keep them healthy and maximize production. HFRA will partner with Twin Lakes Food Bank again next winter to collect donated fruit from HFRA members.

Thank you for your support. By being a member of HFRA, you help us to preserve and protect Historic Folsom.

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