



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

## PLANNING DEPARTMENT

701 OCEAN STREET, 4<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060  
 (831) 454-2580 FAX: (831) 454-2131 TDD: (831) 454-2123

TOM BURNS, PLANNING DIRECTOR

January 4, 2006

**AGENDA DATE: January 24, 2006**

Board of Supervisors  
 County of Santa Cruz  
 701 Ocean Street  
 Santa Cruz CA 95060

**SUBJECT: REPORT BACK ON 1) DISCLOSURE OF DESIGNATION OF A PROPERTY AS AN HISTORIC RESOURCE AND RECORDATION OF NOTICE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE DESIGNATION AND 2) ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROCESS FOR A CONSULTANT TO REVIEW HISTORIC REPORTS**

Members of the Board:

On September 20, 2005, as part of your review of a request to remove 226 Highland Drive, Rio del Mar, from the County's Inventory of Historic Resources, your Board directed Planning to research issues and procedures related to 1) disclosure of designation of a property as an historic resource and recordation of notice of historic resource designation and 2) establishment of a process for a consultant to review historic reports.

### **DISCLOSURE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE DESIGNATION AND RECORDATION OF NOTICE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE DESIGNATION**

County Code states that when a property is designated an historic resource, a Notice of Historic Resource Designation is to be recorded describing the resource, its historic/architectural value, and a statement that the resource is subject to County Code Chapter 16.42, the Historic Resource Preservation ordinance.

In addition, the Public Resources Code states that a local agency shall submit a "certified resolution establishing the historical resources designation" to the County Recorder for recordation.

Unfortunately, staff research found that none of the properties currently on the County's Historic Resources Inventory has had any notice or resolution of historic designation recorded.

We believe that all properties on the HRI should have this information recorded so it will appear on title reports and inform potential purchasers of the existence of an historic resource and its being subject to Chapter 16.42. If your Board agrees, we will begin developing the needed resolutions for all properties on the HRI and return to your Board for approval of the resolutions in the spring.

Not only should certified resolutions be recorded for designated historic resources as discussed above, but there are several inconsistencies involving phrasing between the County Code and the Public Resources Code that need to be reconciled through amendments to the County Code. If your Board so directs, we will take draft amendments to the Historic Resources Commission for formal review and recommendation and then to the Planning Commission for recommendation. We anticipate that these reviews would occur in early spring and that we would return to your Board in May with a formal recommendation for action.

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROCESS FOR A CONSULTANT TO REVIEW HISTORIC REPORTS**

### Current practice for historic report reviews

Currently, when a report is submitted in support of an application for action by the Historic Resources Commission (HRC), it is reviewed by staff and summarized for the Commission in a staff report. Most of the applications the HRC receives are for changes to the exterior of an existing designated historic resource such as an addition or other minor changes. The reports for these kinds of proposals are relatively straightforward and staff is qualified to review and summarize them for the HRC. However, staff lacks the qualifications to adequately review and summarize very complex reports.

### Other Jurisdictions and Consultants

Planning staff asked other jurisdiction about their processes for consultant review of historic reports. The kinds of projects for which other jurisdictions require outside review range from any project involving an historic resource to only for demolitions or where the reviewing body deems it necessary. Staff also asked two consultants what they would charge to review a report of similar size and scope to that accompanying the request to remove 226 Highland from the HRI. They estimated their fees would range from \$1,200.00 to \$1,500.00.

### Proposed Process

Modeled after the current process for review of geological, biotic, and archeological reports, staff believes that it would be appropriate to establish a similar process for the review of more complex historic reports. If your Board approves this concept, it will be implemented through your Board's approval of a contract with a qualified professional and the adoption of appropriate fees.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Both the Public Resources Code and County Code require recordation of a document providing notice of the designation of an historic resource. However, the language used in the County Code is inconsistent with the Public Resources Code in this regard. None of the historic resources currently on the HRI have had the required documents recorded. To ensure conformity with State law, County Code Chapter 16.42 needs to be amended. To ensure conformity with both State law and County Code, documents providing notice of the designation of historic resources need to be recorded.

Recent experience with a report supporting a request to remove a property from the HRI suggests that the County retain a qualified professional historical consultant to review reports.

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that your Board take the following actions:

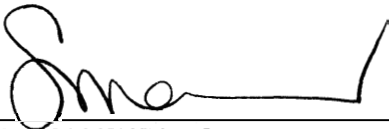
1. Direct the Planning Department to prepare the appropriate resolutions establishing the historic resources designation for each property on the County's Inventory of Historic Resources and to return for Board action on those resolutions this spring;
2. Direct the Planning Department to prepare and process through the Historic Resources Commission and the Planning Commission draft amendments to County Code Chapter 16.42 to conform County Code to the Public Resources Code and to return to your Board in May for action on the Historic Resources Commission and Planning Commission recommendations; and
3. Direct the Planning Department to prepare a Request For Proposals to retain a consultant to review historic reports as described above.

Sincerely,



Tom Burns  
Planning Director

RECOMMENDED:



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SUSAN A. MAURIELLO  
County Administrative Officer

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