TO:       HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
FROM:     CITY MANAGER
DEPARTMENT:  PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT
DATE:  MARCH 15, 2004       CMR:182:04

SUBJECT:  REVIEW OF NOMINATIONS OF GREENMEADOW AND GREENGABLES NEIGHBORHOODS TO NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

This is an informational report: No Council action is required

BACKGROUND
On February 27, 2004, the City received two letters from the State Office of Historic Preservation referring applications for nomination of the Green Gables and Greenmeadow neighborhoods as historic districts to the National Register of Historic Places. Both applications were initiated by the Eichler Historic Quest Committee. The letters from the State request review and comment on the applications by the City in compliance with its participation in the State’s Certified Local Government Program. The provisions of a Certified Local Government require the Mayor to provide comments on the proposed National Register applications and to submit a report of the City’s Historic Resources Board (HRB) to the State prior to consideration of the applications by the State Historical Resources Commission. The report to the State from the HRB should indicate whether or not the Board considers the proposed districts meet the criteria for listing on the National Register.

The State will be sending all the property owners in both neighborhoods a letter in late March explaining the National Register process and what the designation means and announcing a community meeting scheduled to be held on April 3 and conducted by the State Office of Historic Preservation. The State Historical Resources Commission will consider the application for designation of both areas at its April 28 meeting in San Francisco. If the nominations are approved by the State Historical Resources Commission, they will subsequently be forwarded to the Keeper of the National Register in Washington, D.C for final review and approval.
DISCUSSION
Staff has placed review of the two applications for National Register nomination on the March 17, 2004 HRB meeting agenda, consistent with the City’s agreement with Eichler State as a Certified Local Goverment. Public hearing notices of the meeting (Attachment A) were sent to all property owners within the potential district boundaries in both the Greenmeadow and Green Gables neighborhoods. The HRB’s review will be limited to comment on the adequacy and accuracy of the nomination applications under the National Register’s nomination criteria. In order to recommend listing to the National Register as districts, the HRB must conclude that the majority of homes in the Green Gables and Greenmeadow neighborhoods have retained their historic integrity and convey a strong sense of past time and place. According to the applications, the Green Gables and Greenmeadow subdivisions were chosen by the Eichler Historic Quest Committee for nomination because they are among the earliest and most unaltered of the Bay Area Eichler subdivisions.

It should be noted that listing on the National Register is an honorary status only. As the two attached bulletins (Attachments B and C) from the website of the National Register of Historic Places indicate, designating either neighborhood on the National Register would not impose any new restrictions on the modifications owners can make on their homes nor would it require that they offer tours of their property.

Subsequent to review and comment by the HRB, staff will prepare a letter to the State to be signed by the Mayor transmitting the HRB’s report. The report and the letter will be forwarded to the full Council in its April 5 packet prior to submitting to the State Historical Resources Commission.

ATTACHMENTS
Attachment A: Notice of Public Hearing for Historic Resources Board meeting of March 17, 2004
Attachment B: Results of Listing in the National Register
Attachment C: How Does the Federal Government Designate Properties as Historic?

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