TO:        HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
FROM:      CITY MANAGER       DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND
            COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT
DATE:      JULY 15, 2002

SUBJECT:  423 KIPLING STREET:  RECOMMENDATION FROM THE
            HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD AT THE REQUEST OF THE
            OWNERS, THE ORWITZ FAMILY, TO RECLASSIFY A
            CATEGORY 3 BUILDING ON THE CITY OF PALO ALTO'S
            HISTORIC INVENTORY TO CATEGORY 2 PURSUANT TO
            MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 16.49 (HISTORIC PRESERVATION
            ORDINANCE)

RECOMMENDATION
The Historic Resources Board (HRB) and staff recommend that the City Council honor
the owner's request to reclassify the building located at 423 Kipling Street as a significant
building in Category 2 based on findings that the building meets the definition of a
Category 2 building and all six local criteria for historic designation as set forth in
Chapter 16.49.

BACKGROUND
This Victorian former residence was designed and built by Henry L. Upham in 1900 as
the home and funeral parlor of Josiah Roller, whose firm eventually became Roller and
Hapgood, a prominent funeral service that still operates in Palo Alto. The building's
complex design combines a low-sloped one-story section at the front with a steeply
gabled two-and-a-half story section that contains telescoping gables and staggered
miniature attic windows. These diverse design elements work together to produce an
illusion of soaring verticality despite the modest height of the structure (see Attachment
A). An examination of 423 Kipling in the context of Upham's other residential work in
Palo Alto reveals that dramatic illusional strategies are characteristic of his designs, and
constitute the essence of his highly original approach to Victorian residential architecture
(see Attachment B).
The building maintains a high level of historic integrity. The only changes that appear to have occurred within the last 50 years are the addition of a second front entry door to serve the upper floors, and concrete entry steps and metal railings on the front and right facades.

The historic character-defining features of the building include the overall form composed of one-story and two-and-a-half story sections, the telescoping gables, the varied decorative fenestration, and the front porch columns and wood railings.

**DISCUSSION**

The property owner has indicated that the primary purpose of the proposal to reclassify the building in Category 2 is to provide an increased measure of recognition and protection for the historic property. Designation in Category 2 would also make the property, located in the CD zone, eligible for certain development-based incentives for preservation and rehabilitation. The incentives, set forth in Municipal Code Section 18.49.060 and Chapter 18.87, include a floor area bonus, parking exemptions, and participation in the Transfer of Development Rights program.

Regulatory consequences to this property if the Council chooses to accept the Board's recommendation include:

- Upon designation in Category 2, demolition of the building at 423 Kipling Street, would be prohibited unless certain conditions were met as set forth in PAMC 16.49.060.

- Upon designation in Category 2, Architectural Review Board review of proposed alterations or additions to the building would be required to include referral to the Historic Resources Board for recommendations, as provided in PAMC 16.49.050 (1)(A).

- Upon designation in Category 2, the building would be subject to maintenance regulations for historic structures as set forth in PAMC 16.49.080 and the enforcement provisions set forth in 16.49.090.

**HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION**

The HRB, at its meeting on June 26, 2002, reviewed the application for the historic designation of the building at 423 Kipling Street (see Attachment C). The HRB unanimously voted (6-0-0-1, Mario absent) to support the staff recommendation for the reclassification of 423 Kipling as a Category 2 historic building and to forward the Board's recommendation to the City Council. The Board's recommendation was based on consideration of the definitions of the Historic Categories and the criteria for designation found in Palo Alto Municipal Code Chapter 16.49.
ATTACHMENTS
Attachment A: Current Photograph of the Building at 423 Kipling Street.
Attachment C: Verbatim Minutes of the HRB Meeting of June 26, 2002.

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