



Historic Resources Board

Staff Report (ID # 7349)

Report Type: Action Items **Meeting Date:** 10/11/2016

Summary Title: Revised Bulletin

Title: Discussion of Historic Resources Review Procedures. The HRB will consider revisions to the City's updated Historic Resources Review Bulletin.

From: Hillary Gitelman

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Historic Resources Board (HRB) take the following action(s):

1. Review and provide comments to staff on the Planning and Community Environment (PCE) Department's updated draft new procedural bulletin (Attachment A) for historic resources review.¹

Report Summary

The updated draft new procedural bulletin contains changes implemented by staff following the HRB's review and comment to staff on September 22, 2016. The new bulletin will replace the 2011 bulletin described in and attached to the HRB staff report of September 22, 2016, which is available on the City's website at: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/53897>. The new bulletin presents the PCE department's existing practice, and is intended to explain to property owners and the public how planning staff reviews applications involving historic resources and properties that are subject to historic resource evaluations. The new bulletin does not propose any new application review procedures or submittal requirements.

Background

For a project background, please see the HRB staff report of September 22, 2016.

Discussion

¹ For the purposes of this discussion, "historic resource" means the same as "historical resource" as defined and used in the California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21084.1.

The draft new bulletin presented to the HRB on September 22, 2016, was supported by HRB members and by the Council Member/HRB Liaison subject to minor changes. Draft minutes of the September 22 meeting are included in the October 11, 2016, HRB meeting packet. A video of the September 22 meeting is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pwApYjutl4c&start=203&width=420&height=315>. Below is a summary of changes which staff has made to the currently proposed draft bulletin:

- Retitled the document “What You Need to Know About Historic Resources & Permit Review Requirements” in order to clarify the topic of information. The previous draft was titled “What You Need to Know About Historic Resources in Palo Alto”, which may have given an impression that all topics related to historic resources were addressed (which they are not), and which was redundant with the official seal of the City of Palo Alto.
- Added introductory language declaring that “Historic resources enrich the quality of life in Palo Alto”.
- Added language throughout the document to better explain the Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and how they relate to the historic resource groupings and the application review procedures; and reorganized the table on page 2 to include PAMC and CEQA column headings.
- Changed the nomenclature of historic resource groupings from “Class” to “Group”, in order to avoid any perception that the groupings indicate a ranking or ordering of historic resources based on importance. The purpose of the groupings is to group together existing resources that may have different types of designations and/or evaluations, but for which the same application review procedures apply, in order to streamline the process of determining the review procedure applicable to a particular project.
- Incorporated references to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation as the standards used for development application review; and provided a URL to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation on the National Park Service’s website.
- Clarified that, in the case of a potential impact to a “Group B” historic resource, the Planner refers the application to the HRB. The previous draft stated that the Planner “may” refer the application to the HRB.
- Specified that, in the case of a Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) report, the HRE is expected to result in an evaluation of eligibility for the California Register of Historical Resources, which was not previously identified as the applicable framework for historic resource evaluations.
- Simplified, streamlined and clarified language throughout the document wherever possible.
- Added decorative scrollwork graphics to the header of page 2.

Environmental Review

The activity is not a “project” subject to review per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), because it is general policy and procedure making which does not involve activity directly undertaken by a public agency, or by a person supported in whole or in part by a public

agency, or an activity involving the issuance of a lease, permit, license, certificate or other entitlement for use by a public agency, per CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.

Policy Implications

Consistent with direction provided by the CEQA Guidelines, and in regards to potential impacts to historical resources, the Department has developed procedures and standards for determining whether an activity may have a substantial adverse effect on a property that is not currently identified as, but that may qualify as, a historic resource.

Public Notification, Outreach & Comments

The item was included in the standard public notification for the October 11, 2016 Special HRB meeting.

Next Steps

Following receipt of comments and recommendations by the HRB, and following any additional work that may be required, the PCE Department will finalize the new bulletin and use it for the purposes of informing and guiding applicants, staff, and the general public through the application review procedures involving historic resources.

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Attachments:

- Attachment A: Historic Resources Review Info Bulletin 09.26.16 (PDF)

² Emails may be sent directly to the HRB using the following address: hrb@cityofpaloalto.org



What You Need to Know About Historic Resources & Permit Review Requirements



- Historic resources enrich the quality of life in Palo Alto. They include buildings, structures, sites, and areas of historical, architectural, and cultural significance. The Planning Department groups historic resources according to the development application review procedures that apply. Some development projects involving historic resources are subject to review under the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 16.49) and/or the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as explained further below and on the reverse page.
- For information on a specific property, please review a Parcel Report for the subject property, available at the City's website at <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/pln/parcel.asp>, or request a Parcel Report from City staff at: Development Services, 265 Hamilton Avenue; (650) 329-2496; planner@cityofpaloalto.org.

What is a "Group A" Historic Resource?

A "Group A" historic resource is an existing property that is listed in the Palo Alto Historic Inventory, and which is subject to Historic Resources Board (HRB) review under the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance. A "Group A" resource may also subject to CEQA review as explained on the reverse page. "Group A" resources include historic properties that are:

- Listed in the City's Inventory as Historic Category 1-2; or
- Listed in the City's Inventory as Historic Category 3-4 and located in the Downtown Area; or
- Located in one of the City's locally designated historic districts, Professorville or Ramona Street.

What is a "Group B" Historic Resource?

A "Group B" historic resource is an existing property that was previously designated or formally evaluated, and which may subject to CEQA review as explained on the reverse page. "Group B" resources are subject to HRB review if CEQA review indicates that a resource may be impacted. "Group B" resources include historic properties that are:

- Listed in the City's Inventory as Historic Category 3-4 and located outside of the Downtown Area and local historic districts; or
- Listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NR) or the California Register of Historical Resources (CR); or
- Listed in the Palo Alto Historic Survey Update (Dames & Moore, 1997-2000) as NR-eligible or CR-eligible; or
- Previously determined CR-eligible through a development application review procedure.

When Does a Property Require Evaluation as a Historic Resource?

A property that has not yet been evaluated or designated may qualify historic resource for the purposes of CEQA review. In the case of a development application being filed for certain properties, a Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) report to determine CR-eligibility may be required in order to complete CEQA review. The City of Palo Alto may require an HRE report to be completed for an existing property if the property meets all of the conditions below:

- A "discretionary" development application proposes demolition, new construction, new addition, or other substantial exterior alterations; and
- The existing development on the property is more than 45 years old; and
- The existing property is not a single-family residence in a Single-Family Residential zone. (A single-family residence in any non-Single Family Residential zone, or a non-single family residence in any zone, is subject.)

See the reverse page for application review procedures.



**APPLICATION REVIEW PROCEDURES FOR HISTORIC RESOURCES
AND PROPERTIES THAT REQUIRE HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION**



HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE (PAMC 16.49) REVIEW PROCEDURES	CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) REVIEW PROCEDURES
<p>“GROUP A” HISTORIC RESOURCES</p> <p><i>See the reverse page for explanation of properties that qualify as “Group A” Historic Resources.</i></p>	
<p>Route any permit applications for exterior changes (including ministerial) to the Historic Resources Planner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Planner reviews the application for consistency with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation* (“Standards”) and the Historic Preservation Ordinance. ➤ If the project is inconsistent with the Standards, or it exceeds the scope of a “minor exterior alteration” according to the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Planner refers the application to the HRB. 	<p>Route discretionary development applications** for exterior changes to the Historic Resources Planner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Planner reviews the application for consistency with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation* and potential impacts to a historic resource per CEQA. ➤ If CEQA analysis indicates that there may be a potential impact to a historic resource, the Planner refers the application to the HRB.
<p>“GROUP B” HISTORIC RESOURCES</p> <p><i>See the reverse page for explanation of properties that qualify as “Group B” Historic Resources.</i></p>	
<p>Not subject to the review procedures in the City’s Historic Preservation Ordinance.</p> <p>(Only “Group A” properties are subject to review under the Historic Preservation Ordinance. For more information, see PAMC 16.49.050.)</p>	<p>Route discretionary development applications** for exterior changes to the Historic Resources Planner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Planner reviews the application for consistency with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation* and potential impacts to a historic resource per CEQA. ➤ If CEQA analysis indicates that there may be a potential impact to a historic resource, the Planner refers the application to the HRB.
<p>PROPERTIES THAT REQUIRE EVALUATION AS HISTORIC RESOURCES</p> <p><i>See the reverse page for explanation of when a property requires evaluation as a historic resource.</i></p>	
<p>Not subject to the review procedures in the City’s Historic Preservation Ordinance.</p> <p>(Only “Group A” properties are subject to review under the Historic Preservation Ordinance. For more information, see PAMC 16.49.050.)</p>	<p>Route discretionary development applications** for demolition, new construction, addition, or substantial exterior alterations to the Historic Resources Planner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Planner determines if a Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) report is required in order to conduct and complete CEQA review. If a property is found to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Places, it is reviewed as a “Group B” historic resource.

*The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation are found on the National Park Service’s website at:

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm>.

**Discretionary development applications include: Architectural Review; Design Enhancement Exception; Home Improvement Exception; Neighborhood Preservation Exception; Single Family Individual Review; Site and Design Review; Variance.