



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD
Community Meeting
Friday, February 23, 2024
Community Meeting Room & Hybrid
6:00 PM

Boardmember Mike Makinene Remote Call-In Location: 851 University Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94301

Historic Resources Board meetings will be held as “hybrid” meetings with the option to attend by teleconference/video conference or in person. To maximize public safety while still maintaining transparency and public access, members of the public can choose to participate from home or attend in person. Information on how the public may observe and participate in the meeting is located at the end of the agenda. Masks are strongly encouraged if attending in person. The meeting will be broadcast on Cable TV Channel 26, live on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/c/cityofpaloalto>, and streamed to Midpen Media Center <https://midpenmedia.org>. Board member names, biographies, and archived agendas are available at <https://bitly.com/paloaltoHRB>.

VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION **CLICK HERE TO JOIN** (<https://cityofpaloalto.zoom.us/j/96800197512>)
Meeting ID: 968 0019 7512 Phone: 1(669)900-6833

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comments will be accepted both in person and via Zoom for up to three minutes or an amount of time determined by the Chair. All requests to speak will be taken until 5 minutes after the staff’s presentation. Written public comments can be submitted in advance to hrb@cityofpaloalto.org and will be provided to the Board and available for inspection on the City’s website. Please clearly indicate which agenda item you are referencing in your subject line.

Spokespersons that are representing a group of five or more people who are identified as present at the meeting at the time of the spokesperson's presentation will be allowed up to fifteen (15) minutes at the discretion of the Chair, provided that the non-speaking members agree not to speak individually. The Chair may limit Public Comments to thirty (30) minutes for all combined speakers. The Chair may reduce the allowed time to speak on Study Sessions and Actions Items to two (2) minutes or less to accommodate a larger number of speakers.

PowerPoints, videos, or other media to be presented during public comment are accepted only by email to hrb@cityofpaloalto.org at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Once received, the Clerk will have them shared at public comment for the specified item. To uphold strong cybersecurity management practices, USB’s or other physical electronic storage devices are not accepted.

CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public may speak to any item NOT on the agenda. Three (3) minutes per speaker.

AGENDA CHANGES, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

The Chair or Commission majority may modify the agenda order to improve meeting management.

STUDY SESSION

Public Comment is Permitted. Three (3) minutes per speaker.

1. Community Meeting Regarding Historic Preservation Ordinance and Incentives

BOARD MEMBER QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS OR FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDAS

Members of the public may not speak to the item(s).

ADJOURNMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Members of the Public may provide public comments to teleconference meetings via email, teleconference, or by phone.

1. **Written public comments** may be submitted by email to hrb@cityofpaloalto.org.
2. **Spoken public comments using a computer** will be accepted through the teleconference meeting. To address the Board, click on the link below to access a Zoom-based meeting. Please read the following instructions carefully.
 - You may download the Zoom client or connect to the meeting in- browser. If using your browser, make sure you are using a current, up-to-date browser: Chrome 30, Firefox 27, Microsoft Edge 12, Safari 7. Certain functionality may be disabled in older browsers including Internet Explorer.
 - You may be asked to enter an email address and name. We request that you identify yourself by name as this will be visible online and will be used to notify you that it is your turn to speak.
 - When you wish to speak on an Agenda Item, click on “raise hand.” The Clerk will activate and unmute speakers in turn. Speakers will be notified shortly before they are called to speak.
 - When called, please limit your remarks to the time limit allotted. A timer will be shown on the computer to help keep track of your comments.
3. **Spoken public comments using a smart phone** will be accepted through the teleconference meeting. To address the Board, download the Zoom application onto your phone from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store and enter the Meeting ID below. Please follow the instructions above.
4. **Spoken public comments using a phone** use the telephone number listed below. When you wish to speak on an agenda item hit *9 on your phone so we know that you wish to speak. You will be asked to provide your first and last name before addressing the Board. You will be advised how long you have to speak. When called please limit your remarks to the agenda item and time limit allotted.

CLICK HERE TO JOIN Meeting ID: 968 0019 7512 Phone:1-669-900-6833

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CITY OF
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Historic Resources Board Staff Report

From: Planning and Development Services Director
Lead Department: Planning and Development Services

Meeting Date: February 23, 2024
Report #: 2402-2576

TITLE

Community Meeting Regarding Historic Preservation Ordinance and Incentives

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Historic Resources Board (HRB) conduct this community meeting to discuss the existing Zoning Code benefits for properties listed on the local Historic Resources Inventory and hear from members of the public regarding incentives for historic preservation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is to support the HRB as it hears from the community and considers:

- The existing Zoning Code incentives for properties on the historic inventory listed as Category 1, 2, 3 and 4 and how these have helped listed resources
- Incentives the City might consider adding - in addition to a Mills Act program, and
- The community's ideas for meaningful incentives for historic preservation

Only the City Council can direct staff to add Title 18 revisions to the HRB and department work plans and allocate resources for such effort. To add incentives to the City's Zoning Code, Title 18 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC), would require approval by City Council, after review and recommendation by the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) in public hearings.

The historic preservation ordinance is located in the city's building regulations, PAMC Title 16, Chapter 16.49; changes to this ordinance do not require PTC review. In an upcoming meeting, the HRB will consider ways Chapter 16.49 can be improved. Chapter 16.49 does not address historic resources that are merely eligible for listing on the National and California Registers. It does address review of local inventory Category 1 and 2 properties citywide, and Category 3 and 4 properties in the Downtown and in registered historic districts.

BACKGROUND

Work Plan Goals to Review Incentives and PAMC Chapter 16.49

During the October 12, 2023, the HRB discussed reviewing incentives and developing steps and a timeline for reassessing Chapter 16.49. Reassessment is a policy in the Comprehensive Plan and found within the HRB Work Plan goal 4, which includes improving outreach, review existing preservation incentives, and approaches and timeline for evaluating Chapter 16.49. The staff presentation for the October 12, 2023 meeting is provided as Attachment A to this report; it contains information as to what Chapter 16.49 requires with respect to review of exterior modifications and the presentation was not published online. The presentation notes that some exterior projects for listed historic resources do come to the HRB for review and cites ordinance provision 16.49.050(a)(1)(B) emphasizing compliance with HRB recommendations is voluntary.

Community Meetings and 2023 Historic Resource Reconnaissance Survey

City staff and HRB members began conducting evening meetings for the community to ensure greater access to the HRB. The first evening meeting was in April 2023 after completion of the field survey for the 2023 Historic Resources Reconnaissance Survey (2023 Survey). The second evening meeting, held on a Tuesday in October 2023 and also focused on the 2023 Survey, followed the release of the draft survey report. The October 24, 2023 community meeting featured the release of a plan for three public hearing dates to enable the HRB to consider the nominations of eligible resources to the local historic inventory. Links to the October community meeting staff report¹, video², and presentation³ are provided below. Staff notes the engagement with the public during the October meeting was at a high level, so the staff was unable to finish the presentation regarding zoning code incentives and case studies.

The webpage for the 2023 survey included a link to the incentives⁴ for historic preservation in Palo Alto. The public hearing dates on which the HRB recommended local inventory listing of the previously deemed eligible properties, for which no objections were received, were:

- November 9, 2023
- December 14 of 2023, and
- January 11, 2024.

¹ October 24, 2023 staff report link: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/historic-resources-board/2023/historic-community-meeting.pdf>

² Link to the community meeting video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ZUMqEQPy98>

³ Link to presentation of October 25, 2023 community meeting: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/planning-amp-development-services/historic-preservation/paloalto-reconsurvey-community-meeting-2-2023-10-24.pdf>

⁴ Link to the incentives for historic preservation in Palo Alto <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Planning-Development-Services/Historic-Preservation/Preservation-Incentives>

The 2023 Survey webpage⁵ provides an overview, links to staff presentations during these HRB meetings, an interactive map and list of eligible properties, FAQs regarding the survey and historic resources, incentives, the survey report, letters, and the property groupings document that enables readers to click on each address to see nomination memos and associated evaluations.

The HRB webpage⁶ provides links to HRB staff reports, meeting minutes, videos, presentations, and public comments. The HRB added a fourth meeting on January 25, 2024, to consider the properties for which owners' objections to listing on the local inventory had been received prior to the meeting. Staff has tracked all of the owners' objections and only the properties for which no owner objections were received would be presented to the City Council in a public hearing. No Council hearing date has been set for Council consideration of the nominated properties, though staff is considering asking for an April meeting date. Staff and the HRB identified the need to first hold the February 2024 community meeting to discuss the existing incentives, and a need to reach out again to all property owners whose properties the HRB recommended the City Council place on the inventory.

Historic Preservation Webpages and Incentives

Palo Alto's historic preservation web homepage⁷ provides a portal to information and many important documents, including the information on the California Register⁸, National Register listed individual properties and districts in Palo Alto⁹ and lists providing access to evaluations of properties listed on the local historic inventory¹⁰. The incentives webpage has links to the Palo Alto Municipal Code sections from the building, zoning, and subdivision titles, the South of Forest Area Coordinated Area Plan, Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan, and Federal Investment Tax

⁵ Link to 2023 Historic Resources Reconnaissance Survey webpage:
<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Planning-Development-Services/Historic-Preservation/2023-Reconnaissance-Survey>

⁶ HRB webpages for 2023 meetings: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Planning-Development-Services/Historic-Resources-Board-HRB/Previous-HRB-Agendas-Minutes> and current year meetings: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Planning-Development-Services/Historic-Resources-Board-HRB/Current-HRB-Agendas-Minutes>

⁷ Link to the City's historic preservation website homepage:
<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Planning-Development-Services/Historic-Preservation>

⁸ California Register of Historical Resources webpage link: https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21238

⁹ Link to National Register listed properties in Palo Alto <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Planning-Development-Services/Historic-Preservation/Historic-Registers>

¹⁰ Link to the existing historic inventory: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Planning-Development-Services/Historic-Preservation/Historic-Registers>

Credit (which is only applicable to substantial rehabilitation of commercial properties listed on the National Register of Historic places).

There is a link to the history of incentives¹¹ for historic preservation from inception in 1976 up to 2003. The history summary notes how originally, there was only a short policy on historic preservation in the city's Comprehensive Plan and a mention of several buildings worthy of preservation with a single local zoning incentive cited: "Allow non-conforming use for buildings of architectural or historic merit for the life of the building." The summary notes that the first Inventory of historic buildings was completed in 1979, and that the City adopted the historic preservation ordinance in 1980, providing for HRB review of Inventory buildings.

California's State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit

The City's webpage does not yet provide a link to California's State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit¹² which is a \$50 million program to be administered by the State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP), following the adoption of Senate Bill SB 451 on October 9, 2019. The OHP and California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC) are currently developing instructions, guidelines, and application forms, following the 2023 comment period and hearing regarding draft regulations. The OHP page states:

"Regulations are now in review at the Office of Administrative Law, and going through the final rulemaking process prior to program launch in 2024. The rulemaking file is available upon request. To stay apprised of updates as well as more specific information about the program as it becomes available, check this webpage and/or sign up for the OHP email list."

Confusion Regarding Deemed Eligible and Potentially Eligible

PAMC 16.49 does not address properties deemed eligible for listing on any historic register, and there is no plan to modify the ordinance with respect to eligible properties. The Comprehensive Plan the Council adopted in December 2017 contained Policy L7.2. Since adoption and to implement Policy L7.2, staff has been preparing evaluations using qualified consultants, at owners' requests, of potentially eligible properties built prior to 1948 that were identified in the 1997-2000 historic survey. Each year, the City finds many of these potentially eligible properties are not eligible for the California Register. At that point, staff removes the

¹¹ link to history of incentives <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/planning-amp-development-services/historic-preservation/history-of-palo-alto-historic-preservation-incentives.pdf>

¹² Link to https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=27495

'potentially eligible' statement in the City's database and replaces it with a note that the property was found ineligible for the California Register. Very few are found eligible.

There is a difference between 'potentially eligible' properties and 'deemed eligible' properties:

- The properties noted as 'potentially eligible' in the City's database are basically unevaluated properties built before 1948 and so noted during the 'windshield survey' in 1997. Some of these properties were studied further as part of that earlier survey, with an evaluation to determine whether the property was actually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Since 2018, given Policy L7.2, the owner of a potentially eligible property shoulders the cost of an evaluation and must await the preparation of the evaluation to determine the eligibility of a property for the California Register.
- The 'deemed eligible' properties are those for which an evaluation was prepared by a qualified historic preservation professional that resulted in a determination the property was eligible for the National and California Registers. The properties deemed eligible during the 1997-2000 survey were sent to the State Office of Historic Preservation. For properties 'deemed eligible' for listing in the prior survey, and confirmed as still existing with integrity in the 2023 survey, there is no requirement for the city to evaluate the properties further as to historic status.

HRB Member Request to Include in February Community Meeting Presentation

An HRB member requested staff include in the presentation during the meeting:

- For residential listed properties, real life examples (and/or hypotheticals, if necessary) of such incentives, including dollar-based examples and explanations of how they are, or can be calculated
- A similar explanation of incentives available to commercial and multiple unit housing properties, and
- Side-by-side comparison of residential and commercial incentives

Staff is consulting others to see if there are good examples of how using the historic building code may result in cost savings. Staff plans to research and share case studies to illustrate how the City's zoning incentives (such as non-counted floor area for listed homes, home improvement exceptions, and transferrable development rights/bonus floor area) have enabled listed historic properties to increase in value.

QUESTIONS/TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AT COMMUNITY MEETING

Staff's presentation for the community meeting will support discussion related to three questions that pertain to historic resources on the City's local inventory:

1. How do existing zoning code incentives help Local Inventory properties?

Slides to be prepared will answer this question for the following categories of properties:

Commercially Zoned Properties

- *Historic properties in Downtown and SOFA*
- *Historic Districts*

Residentially Zoned Properties

- *Category 1 and 2 properties*
- *Category 3 and 4 properties*
- *Historic Districts*

2.What Other Incentives Could Palo Alto Consider Adding?

The HRB has already discussed recommending City Council establish a Mills Act program, a tool many CLG cities use to support historic preservation. The HRB has discussed and supported establishing a tailored, pilot program in Palo Alto at prior HRB meetings. The HRB 2023-2024 work plan notes Goal 5 is to bring the program forward to the City Council for discussion and direction in the third quarter, if other projects and goals have been completed (such as the 2023 Historic Reconnaissance Survey project).

3.What are Community Ideas for Meaningful Historic Preservation Incentives?

During the HRB's recent consideration of surveyed properties, staff received and shared public correspondence containing ideas for incentives. Staff will prepare slides to help tee up the HRB discussion of potential additional incentives. Some members of the public are interested in what owners of eligible properties are currently enabled to use and how that would change if their property were placed on the local inventory. Many owners who objected to placement on the local inventory stated that they did not want to modify their homes so the incentives in the Zoning Code were not helpful to them. Some expressed interest in financial benefits such as tax benefits that might be provided.

One property owner suggested the city restore previous code benefits, such as enabling additional floor area in the amount of 500 sq ft (i.e. not 250 sq ft) that was listed in the prior historic Ordinance 4571 from which the current code was derived. Attachment B is the property owner's email containing concepts for the HRB to consider. Staff intends to review other public correspondence to determine whether other ideas for incentives emerged during the 2023 survey.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Presentation from October 12, 2023

Attachment B: Community member comment on potential incentives to explore

AUTHOR/TITLE:

Amy French, Chief Planning Official



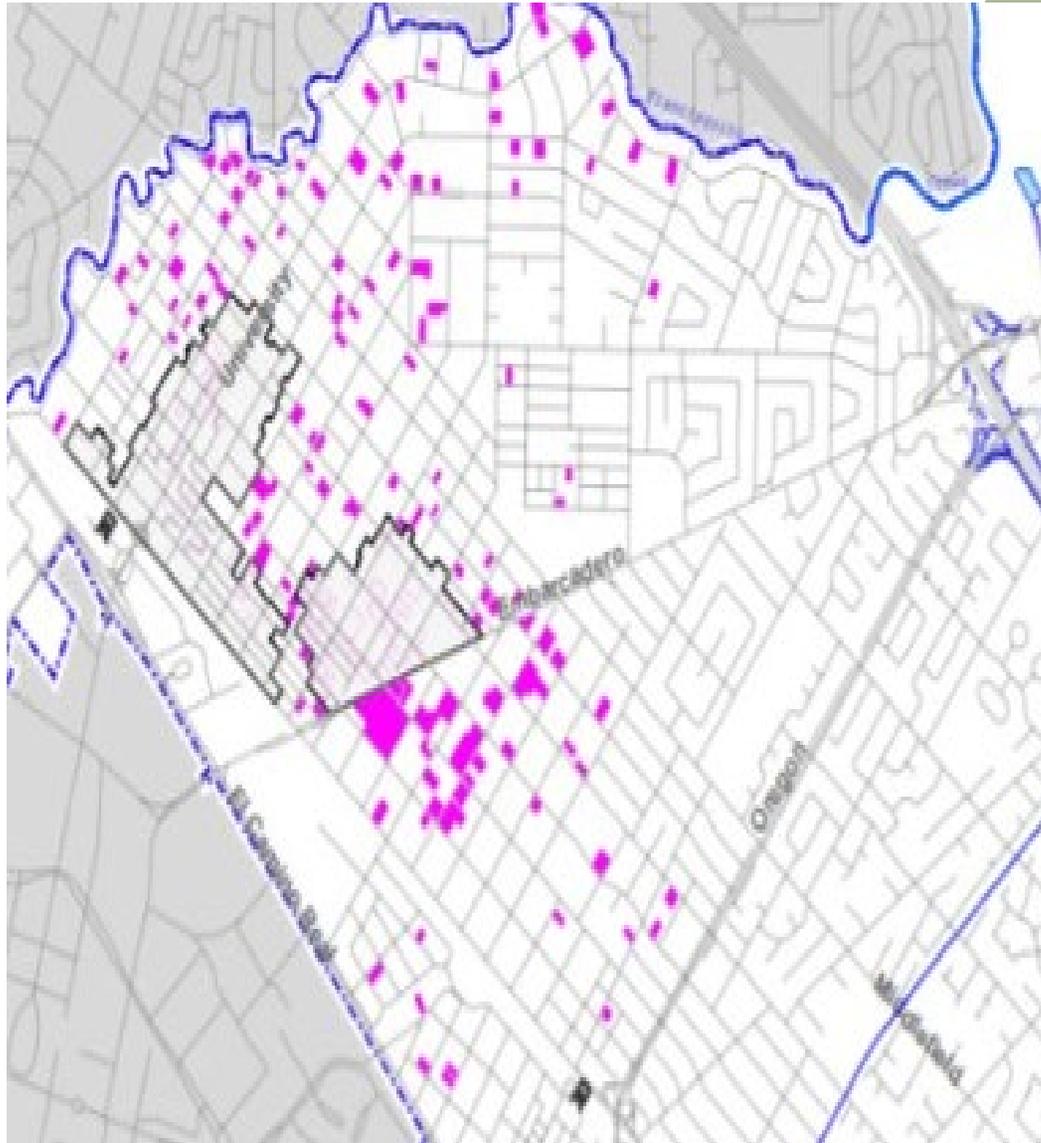
Upcoming HRB Meeting Dates

Members Planned Absence

10/12/2023	8:30 AM	Hybrid	Regular	Rohman
10/24/2023	6:00 PM	Hybrid	Community Meeting	
10/26/2023	8:30 AM	Hybrid	Regular	
11/09/2023	8:30 AM	Hybrid	Regular	
11/23/2023	8:30 AM	Hybrid	Cancelled	Thanksgiving
12/14/2023	8:30 AM	Hybrid	Regular	
12/28/2023	8:30 AM	Hybrid	Cancelled	Christmas

MEETING SCHEDULE

Historic Resources
Board



HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD

2023-24 Work Plan Goal 4

- Improved outreach
 - ✓ Webpage update – Local Inventory forms
 - ✓ Quarterly evening meetings (change bylaws?)
 - ✓ Review process bulletin
- Reviewing incentives for rehabilitation is on HRB 2023-24 work plan
- Developing work program steps and timeline - for implementing Comprehensive Plan Policy L7.1.2, to Reassess Palo Alto Municipal Code Chapter 16.49, Historic Preservation
 - ❑ **Explain how existing ordinance applies to locally listed historic resources**
 - ✓ Applicability: Bulletin, Group A: Listed in the City's Inventory as Historic Categories 1-2 and Categories 3-4 located in the Downtown Area, or located in one of the City's locally designated historic districts, Professorville, or Ramona Street)
 - ✓ After HRB review: The existing ordinance's regulations 16.49.050 (a)(1)(B) note that voluntary compliance with the HRB's recommendations after HRB reviews of significant buildings
 - ❑ **Consider timing of ordinance review** related to historic reconnaissance survey meetings (November 9, December 14, January 11, and evening meeting late January/early February)
 - ❑ **Review the existing ordinance's deficiencies**
 - ❑ **Consider outreach and process needed for amendments** to ordinance sections such as to 16.49.040, *Designation of Historic Structures and Sites* – procedure and criteria (Council direction needed to bring forward amendments)

Want to learn more?

Check out these resources to learn more.

- [Project Review](#)
- [List of properties on the Palo Alto Inventory](#)
- Palo Alto Historic Inventory Individual DPR Forms
 - [A-F](#) (PDF, 126MB)
 - [G-M](#) (PDF, 14MB)
 - [N-S](#) (PDF, 9MB)
 - [T-Z](#) (PDF, 10MB)

REVIEW OF INCENTIVES FOR REHABILITATION

The City's website provides information about incentives intended to assist historic resource owners in preserving, rehabilitating and improving historic structures and sites, compatible with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The California State Building Code applies to all resources designated at the Local, State, or Federal levels. Local incentives apply to locally designated resources on the City's inventory:

Palo Alto Building Code

Palo Alto Municipal Code

South of Forest Area Coordinated Area Plan (SOFA)

Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan

Subdivision Code

Federal Investment Tax Credit

The HRB may wish to consider best outreach approaches to encourage use of incentives and expanded incentives such as:

- A simpler process for voluntary local-list nominations of eligible properties
- Workshops to discuss using the incentives and explore additional incentives in focus group format
- The Tailored Mills Act pilot program per HRB workplan Goal #5
 - Finalize outreach approach
 - Write a report to send to Council describing the Tailored Mills Act program

- Review process applies to exterior alterations of historic structure/site in the downtown area or a **significant building** elsewhere in the city, new construction on a parcel where there is currently a historic structure in the downtown area or a significant building elsewhere in the city.
 - "Significant building" means any building, group of buildings or site categorized on the historic inventory as #1 or #2 and all structures within historic districts.
- ARB reviews non-single-family and duplex homes and refers applications to the HRB; ARB actions (by Director) are appealable to City Council
- HRB reviews exterior alterations of single-family and duplex homes Downtown and in historic districts, and local inventory category 1 and 2 homes elsewhere
- Regarding proposed demolitions:
 - HRB reviews within 30 days proposed demolition of Downtown resources
 - HRB reviews within 60 days elsewhere - significant buildings category 1 and 2 homes outside of downtown or contributing buildings downtown (and Council receives information report) and there is a 60-day moratorium.
- Staff reviews minor alterations that 'do not adversely affect the exterior architectural characteristics nor the historical or aesthetic value of the historic structure, its site or surroundings.'

(b) Standards of Review. In evaluating applications, the review bodies shall consider the architectural style, design, arrangement, texture, materials and color, and any other pertinent factors. The prime concern should be the exterior appearance of the building site.

- (1) On **buildings not in a historical district**, the proposed alterations should not adversely affect the exterior architectural characteristics nor the historical or aesthetic value of the building and its site.
- (2) In **historic districts**, the proposed alterations should not adversely affect:
 - (A) The exterior architectural characteristics nor the historical, architectural or aesthetic value of the building and its site; or
 - (B) The relationship of the building, in terms of harmony and appropriateness, with its surroundings, including neighborhood structures;

LATE 1990s ORDINANCE CHANGE PRO

- 1996: Council directed ordinance plus extensive survey of potentially historic properties built before 1948
- Ordinance amendment process included Environmental Impact Report (1999 Draft EIR and Final EIR)
- Ordinance to amend Chapter 16.49 and add new chapter 18.18, *Special Standards for Single-Family and Two-Family Uses on the Palo Alto Historic Register*
- Ordinance was to replace interim ordinance, Chapter 18.50, *Historical Designation and Demolition of Pre-1940 Residential Structures*, that enabled 'Compatibility Review'. The interim regulations included a section prohibiting the demolition of 'contributing' residences unless the replacement residence complied with compatibility review standards. Chapter 18.50 was to set expire March 31, 1999.
- Changes were proposed to Title 18 requiring Planning and Transportation Commission recommendation
- The Palo Alto Register of Historic homes was going to require owner request for listing and provide for mandatory compliance with regulations. The Register was intended to initially list no new properties until interested owners began to nominate their properties and was to be related to the incentives to be spelled out in the regulations
- Council held four meetings (June 7, 8, 15, 28, 1999), approved the ordinance (Ordinance 4571) June 28
- The ordinance was subject to petition and was rejected by a majority of voters on March 7, 2000

- Provide input on adding procedures:
 - Owner objection when nomination is by non-property owner
 - Criteria for upgrades and nominations; when evaluations needed
 - National and Cal Register listed resources review by HRB
- Discuss pros and cons of enhancing protections:
 - Local inventory cat 3 and 4 located outside Downtown and Professorville are not protected by 16.49
 - Demolition delay is only for category 1 and 2 resources
 - HRB recommendations do not lead to mandatory compliance
 - Homes and duplexes found to be eligible for listing that are not subject to discretionary planning entitlement processes are unprotected
 - Process for adding future-eligible properties after 2023 reconnaissance survey



CITY OF
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AMY FRENCH

Chief Planning Official/ HRB Staff Liaison

From: Alan Cooper
To: Historic Resources Board
Cc: Council, City, French, Amy
Subject: 6 NEW preservation incentives
Date: Sunday, January 21, 2024 11:20:09 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

To: Historic Resources Board members,
Cc: Palo Alto City Council,

I ask the HRB to consider 6 new incentives for listing historic homes on the Palo Alto historic register. To assure that the City and historic-home owners are treated equitably in achieving community historic-preservation goals, more incentives than now exist should be implemented and promoted.

Incentives 1 and 2: these resurrect prior historic preservation incentives that were formally approved by City Council in 1999.
Incentives 3 to 6: these are new ideas to align City historic incentives with contemporary incentives by other civic organizations.

The following two historic preservation incentives were part of the prior Palo Alto Ordinance 4571 that was approved on June 28, 1999.
(<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/city-clerk/ordinances/ordinances-1909-to-present/ordinances-by-number/ord-4571.pdf>)

1. Increase FAR to 500 ft.² from 250 ft.² (ie. Today) - when Ordinance 4571 was later rescinded and revamped to the current Ordinance, the number of square feet allowed was reduced to 250 ft.² However, there is no public record and justification as to why this reduction from 500 ft.² was made.
PA Ordinance 4571 Section 3:

18.18.040 Increased Floor Area Ratio.

The permitted floor area ratio for a Protected Historic Resource shall be increased over that otherwise allowed for a parcel of the particular size and district by the lesser of fifteen percent (15%) or five hundred (500) square feet. Provided, the maximum allowable house size shall be six thousand (6000) square feet.

As a greater economic incentive to list homes on the PA register, why not raise the square footage allowed back to 500 ft.²

2. Reinstate the HRB resident advocate - Section 10 of Ordinance 4571 appointed one member of the HRB "... To represent and further the interests of persons, having an economic interest in real property... eligible for inclusion on the Palo Alto Register." Alternatively, this function might be done by a city planner dedicated exclusively to educating and helping the public with historic preservation issues.

SECTION 10. For the purposes of section 18703.3 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations (Fair Political Practices Commission Regulations), it is hereby found and declared that the member of the historic resources board who must be an owner or occupant of a structure on the Palo Alto Register is appointed to represent and further the interests of persons having an economic interest in real property included on or potentially eligible for inclusion on the Palo Alto Register.

3. Eliminate costs to an owner for listing their home/building on the historic register - encourage owners of historic homes/buildings to list their homes on the register by having the city, absorb the costs for evaluation and approval of the home/building being listed. For the owners that have filed objections to their house/building being listed this year, allow them to remove the objection and list their property at no cost.

4. Provide civic recognition for owners of historic homes/buildings - civic recognition is a fundamental tenet of charitable and volunteer organizations. Recognition could include such things as an honor roll plaque/wall (eg PA Anniversary Wall), annual invited social function (eg. PAST functions), City-hosted events at a historic home/building. All of these would be paid for by the City in acknowledgment of the help/participation of historic property owners.

5. Eliminate administrative, permitting and inspection fees for historic preservation work requested by the HRB - work that is suggested/required to the exterior of a building to continue to make Palo Alto a beautiful place to live, should be supported in part by the City. Eliminating fees is a straightforward way to do this. For work that is not historic preservation as determined by the HRB, such as interior work, usual City fees would apply.

6. Provide listed-historic property owners with educational opportunities - for these property owners, provide a free membership in the California Preservation Foundation (<https://californiapreservation.org/>). As members, they can sign up for lectures and seminars on historic preservation.

The objectives of these incentives are to encourage more historic-property owners to join the Palo Alto Historic Register AND to engage the city more actively in equitably augmenting the Register.

I hope that the HRB and City Council will look favorably on implementing these and other new historic preservation incentives!

Thank you,

Alan Cooper
270 Kellogg Ave