



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item

19-0355

Agenda Date: 6/12/2019

REPORT TO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

SUBJECT

Make Recommendations to City Council Regarding the Sunnyvale Historical Society and Museum Association's Proposed Expansion of the Sunnyvale Heritage Park Museum

BACKGROUND

The Sunnyvale Historical Society and Museum Association (SHSMA) expressed interest in an expansion of the Museum by approximately 1600 square feet. The Museum is located across from the Sunnyvale Community Center, see Attachments 1 and 2. The expansion, as proposed (Attachment 3), will require the removal of 6 to 10 trees in the orchard. The purpose of the expansion would be to accommodate historical items from the closed Onizuka Air Force Base's "Blue Cube" (see Attachment 4).

EXISTING POLICY

General Plan, Chapter 3, *Land Use and Transportation - Open Space, Goal LT-8*

Adequate and Balanced Open Space: Provide and maintain adequate and balanced open space and recreation facilities for the benefit of maintaining a healthy community based on community needs and the ability of the City to finance, construct, maintain and operate these facilities now and in the future.

From the Orchard Heritage Park Master Plan Action Statements:

2. Maintain a working fruit orchard throughout the largest portion of Orchard Heritage Park for as long a time period as practical within the resources made available by the City. Provide public access to the greatest extent possible while meeting the goal of maintaining a working fruit orchard.

5. Assist the Sunnyvale Historical Society per written agreements, and to the greatest extent practical, in developing a Heritage Museum facility at Orchard Heritage Park consistent with City Council direction.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15262 as the action relates to the authorization of a feasibility and planning study for possible future actions that the City Council has not approved, adopted or funded. If the City Council directs staff to proceed with development of plans for an addition, appropriate CEQA will be completed prior to final approval. The action taken today does not commit the City Council to approving the project. Typically, an addition to an existing building, up to a certain size, may qualify for a Class 1 Exemption for Existing Facilities (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301). However, due to the potential impacts of the proposed addition to the Sunnyvale Heritage Orchard, the project may require a higher level of CEQA review.

Use of the existing annex building for additional exhibits would not impact the orchard and would be a negligible expansion of the existing use. Therefore, this alternative would be exempt from CEQA under the Class 1 Exemption.

DISCUSSION

The Sunnyvale Historical Society and Museum Association (SHSMA) has proposed expanding the museum at Orchard Heritage Park by adding approximately 1600 square feet. The purpose of the expansion would be to accommodate additional items specifically from the Onizuka Air Force Base's "Blue Cube" and space for a research library. The expansion as proposed will require the removal of trees in the orchard. See Attachment 4 - Letter from SHSMA. The society is committed to full costs of implementation of their preferred location, including CEQA analysis.

It is worth noting that there is a current study issue, DPW 17-05 Orchard Heritage Park and Heritage Park Museum - Analysis and Options for the Long-Term Operations and Maintenance of Orchard Heritage Park and Review of the Sunnyvale Historical Society and Museum Association Proposed Expansion of the Sunnyvale Heritage Park Museum Site. The purpose of the study is to identify long-term options for operating and maintaining the orchard and to consider concepts to expand the current Museum facility, including the identification of boundary limits. It is expected the study will be completed in FY 2019/20.

City staff hosted a public meeting at the Community Center Campus to gather input on the proposal (Attachment 5 - Summary of Meeting Notes). The meeting was held on Wednesday, February 20, 2019 at the Sunnyvale Community Center Ballroom and was attended by more than 100 people. The goal of the meeting was to receive input regarding the expansion and possible removal of trees in the adjoining orchard. This was also an opportunity for the public to ask questions and receive information about the project. Numerous community members commented that no orchard trees should be removed to accommodate the expansion of the Museum. Other community members however stated that the materials from the Blue Cube should be saved for future generations and the addition should be built where proposed by SHSMA.

Two alternative locations for museum expansion were discussed at the community meeting. One alternative is located to the south-east of the existing museum building. The construction of this alternative may still affect existing orchard trees. The second alternative is to repurpose the existing annex building located to the east of the museum. Neither of these alternatives is desired by the SHSMA.

Should the direction to staff be to move forward with further evaluation of the museum expansion including environmental review, the City will require an agreement with the society to fully fund the cost of implementation of the project (including CEQA analysis, anticipated to be approximately \$25,000 to \$60,000 for staff to hire an environmental consultant, plus privately funded design and construction).

FISCAL IMPACT

This proposal will have no fiscal impact to the City as the SHSMA would incur all costs of the expansion as they proposed, if approved.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's website.

A public meeting for the project was conducted by Sunnyvale staff at the Sunnyvale Community Center on Wednesday, February 20, 2019. Notification was provided through posting of informational fliers at Orchard Heritage Park and mail delivery to neighbors that live within 1,000 feet of the project. Those that attended any of the meetings and provided contact information received additional notification of scheduled meetings on this subject.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Recommend that the City Council direct staff to develop modifications to the Orchard Heritage Park Master plan and associated agreements and documents, including appropriate CEQA review, of Alternative Plan 1 - add an addition to the Museum at the location preferred by SHSMA, with all costs including CEQA (estimated \$25,000 to \$60,000) to be fully funded by SHSMA.
2. Recommend to City Council not to proceed with the addition to the Museum at this time.
3. Recommend to City Council to direct staff to develop modifications to the Orchard Heritage Park Master plan and associated agreements and documents, including appropriate CEQA review, for a different alternative with the costs to be funded by the City, because SHSMA has indicated that they will not support a different alternative.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff makes no recommendation.

Prepared by: Jim Stark, Superintendent of Parks
Reviewed by: Chip Taylor, Director, Public Works
Reviewed by: Teri Silva, Assistant City Manager
Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Orchard Heritage Park Area Map
2. Orchard Heritage Park Site Map
3. Orchard Heritage Park Site Map with Alternatives
4. Letter from Sunnyvale Historical Society and Museum Association
5. Summary of Outreach Meeting Notes

Orchard Heritage Park Area Map



Orchard Heritage Park Site Map

Bianchi Barn &
Orchard Operations



Park maintenance building replaced with
landscaping



Multi-purpose building – currently
storage for Museum

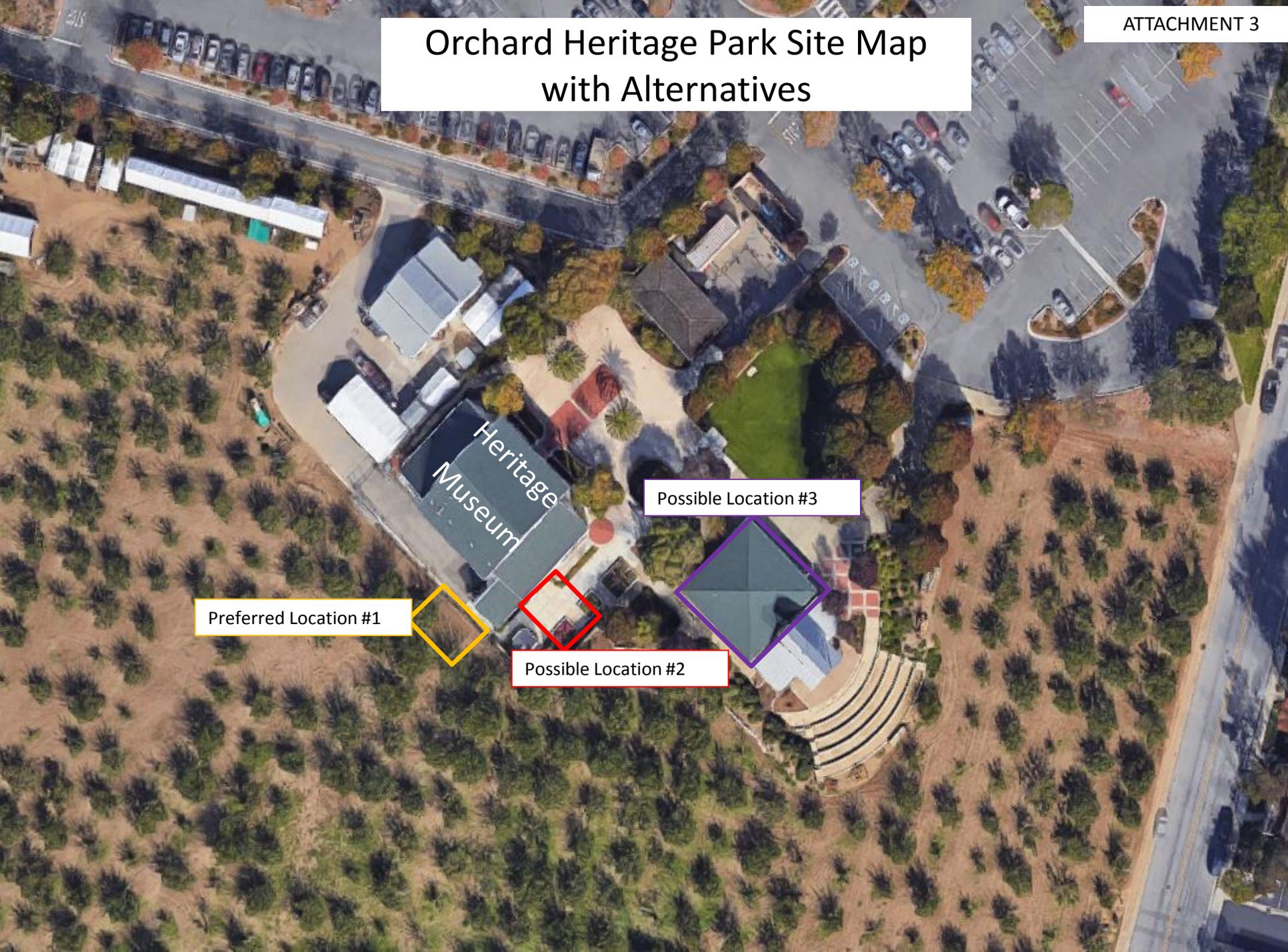


Orchard Heritage Park
Interpretive Exhibit

Heritage
Museum



Orchard Heritage Park Site Map with Alternatives



Preferred Location #1

Possible Location #2

Possible Location #3

Heritage
Museum



Sunnyvale Historical Society and Museum Association

P.O. Box 2187 Sunnyvale, California 94087-0187
www.heritageparkmuseum.org • 408.749.0220

March 5, 2018

City Manager, Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor and City Council Members:

The mission of the Sunnyvale Historical Society is to preserve, archive, restore and protect items pertaining to the history of our community. We are presented with a rare opportunity to execute that mission in a manner that will benefit the museum, the City, and the generations of residents to follow.

Last summer we posted a request to former employees of the iconic Blue Cube building to share their stories and history of the many projects that were designed and controlled in the Cube, while thinking ahead to a possible new exhibit. The response was overwhelming! The history and innovation that took place in that building were of vital importance to Sunnyvale and indeed the national security of the world. Among many others, some of the major programs at the Blue Cube included Manned Orbiting Laboratory, Corona, Gambit and Hexagon Programs and the Samos and Midas Programs. Now is the time to save and record this history before it is gone.

The Sunnyvale Historical Society and Museum Association, respectfully requests to enter into a joint project with the City of Sunnyvale to build a 1600 square foot addition to the current museum building. The Society is fully willing to raise all funds required to build this addition and operate and maintain it for the future, as we do the current museum. Along with the OHPIE Exhibit, the Museum building, the Bianchi Barn, and newly refurbished Annex building, this addition would further allow our visitors, young and old, to understand what this valley looked like in the late 1800's as it morphed into the High-Tech Capitol of the Bay Area.

Would the City please agendaize this request to build the addition to the current museum building as soon as possible? The requested addition will house the new Blue Cube and Navy exhibits as well as a much needed research library space.

Sunnyvale has always been known as a City that knows how to do the right thing. We think that the "right thing" is to save the history of the Blue Cube, that irreplaceable part of Sunnyvale history, and we hope you think so, too.

Sincerely,

Flo Stafford
 President

Laura Babcock
 Director

Attachments: preliminary building plans and Blue Cube photo

Summary of Meeting Notes

Orchard Heritage Park Museum Expansion Proposal Outreach Meeting

Sunnyvale Community Center Ballroom

February 20, 2019

7:00 p.m.

The following information was discussed during the meeting and/or received via comment cards:

1. Support for a bigger and better museum.
2. Research possibilities at the museum would improve with the expansion.
3. Limited room for exhibits addition needed badly.
4. May have an overall gain of trees by planting elsewhere and only a small number of trees to be removed (6-10).
5. Provide education to the public and students with a larger library through the expansion. Do not have facilities needed for continued student programming
6. Museum does not have adequate space
7. Do not support the infringement on the orchard. Is it possible to place the expansion elsewhere? Build a basement?
8. CEQA guidelines and outcomes?
9. Defend open space.
10. Suggestion to create an orchard preservation plan prior to considering the expansion.
11. There is a loss of trust between the residents and the Museum due to the Butcher House proposal.
12. Represent technology in the museum (NASA, Blue Cube and Onizuka Air Force Base).
This is not an either or decision. How can it be more inclusive?
13. Don't like issues that pit people against one another.
14. No other work or additions should be allowed in the orchard or museum.
15. Put addition to the east of the museum on museum property
16. Plant trees where they'll be successful. Soil and dirt issues do not allow for trees to be placed in every area of the orchard.
17. Area is needed by orchard staff. Pieces are being removed a little at a time.
18. This is an opportunity to work together on a solution through compromise.
19. The orchards is a commercial business.
20. A viable orchard must be 10 acres in order to hire workers, etc.

21. Do not appreciate coming back again and again, lock in the boundaries of the museum and orchard.
22. Move the museum to the new City Hall site.
23. The museum expansion is not aesthetically pleasing.
24. Trees would be destroyed, not preserved. This will result in a loss of farming opportunities.
25. Digitize materials and make them available to all.
26. A loss of trees affects other businesses, such as beekeepers and personal gardeners
27. Charlie Olson and the working farm are forms of Sunnyvale's history.
28. Get the museum what they need but do not remove trees.
29. More parking spaces will be needed with the expansion. Parking is already limited at certain times of the day.
30. Concern this is not the last request from the museum to expand
31. Do not remove one tree
32. How many more people will the addition bring? Take parking into consideration.

The City also received 136 email responses, 38 in support of SHSMA's proposal and 98 against the expansion into the Orchard.