



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

File #: 18-0423, Version: 1

REPORT TO HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

SUBJECT

Proposed Project: **RESOURCE ALLOCATION PERMIT** to consider the historic significance of a single-family home which is listed as part of the Sunnyvale Heritage Resources Inventory.

Location: 435 East McKinley Street (APN: 209-11-051)

File #: 2017-7961

Zoning: R-2

Applicant / Owner: Gary Holmes Architects (applicant) / Meena and William Tapsall (owner)

Environmental Review: Environmental review will be conducted as required by California Environmental Quality Act provisions and City Guidelines upon determination of significance by the Heritage Preservation Commission.

Project Planner: Aastha Vashist, (408) 730-7458, avashist@sunnyvale.ca.gov

REPORT IN BRIEF

General Plan: Low Medium Density Residential

Existing Site Conditions: Single-Family Residence

Surrounding Land Uses

North: Single-Family Residence

South: Single-Family Residence

East: Single-Family Residence

West: Single-Family Residence

Issues: Historic Significance of the Single-Family Home

Staff Recommendation: Determine that the single-family residence does not have local historic significance and recommend that the home be removed from the City Heritage Resource Inventory

BACKGROUND

Description of Proposed Project

The applicant is requesting a determination from the Heritage Preservation Commission in regards to the local historical significance of the subject property, and staff is requesting a determination to conduct appropriate environmental review prior to reviewing building renovations or future redevelopment of the site. The applicant has expressed interest in adding a second residential unit on the property.

See Attachment 1 for a map of the vicinity and mailing area for notices and Attachment 2 for the Data Table of the project.

Previous Actions on the Site

A Planning permit to allow the operation of a two-unit hotel in conjunction with a single-family home was approved in 1980. The use was discontinued and the property has been used as a single-family home for several years.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), any application that may cause a substantial adverse change to a Heritage Resource is subject to environmental review. Since, the applicant intends to add a second residential unit, there is a potential adverse impact to the environment if the structure is considered historic. CEQA statute states the following:

“§ 21084.1, Historical Resource: A project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. For purposes of this section, a historical resource is a resource listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources. Historical resources included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5050.1, or deemed significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (g) of Section 5024.1, are presumed to be historically or culturally significant for purposes of this section, unless the preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that the resource is not historically or culturally significant. The fact that a resource is not listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources, not included in a local register of historical resources, or not deemed significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (g) of Section 5024.1 shall not preclude a lead agency from determining whether the resource may be an historical resource for purposes of this section.”

Generally, when projects such as these are reviewed by local agencies, a historical and architectural evaluation is requested from the applicant, which evaluates the historical significance of the structure at the National, State, and local levels. This report is used as “the preponderance of evidence” as stated in the CEQA statute. In this case, the report for the subject property determined that the single-family home is not eligible to be listed on the National and State registries of historic resources. The report also concluded that the single-family home should be removed from the City of Sunnyvale Heritage Resource Inventory because City adopted criteria are not met.

Historic Preservation Policies

In order to determine any local historic significance, the Heritage Preservation Commission should evaluate the home with respect to the City’s Municipal Code, Title 19 (Zoning Ordinance) which provides the criteria for nomination of a City Heritage Resource. Criteria for evaluation and nomination of Heritage Resources in Section 19.96.050 of Title 19 state the following:

“Any improvement, building, portion of buildings, structures, signs, features, sites, scenic areas, views, vistas, places, areas, landscapes, trees, or other natural objects or objects of scientific, aesthetic, educational, political, social, cultural, architectural, or historical significance can be designated a heritage resource by the city council and any area within the city may be designated a heritage resource district by the city council pursuant to provisions of this chapter if it meets the Criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, or one or more of the following:

(a) It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the city’s cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic engineering, architectural, or natural history;

- (b) It is identified with persons or events significant in local, state, or national history;*
- (c) It embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship;*
- (d) It is representative of the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect;*
- (e) It contributes to the significance of an historic area, being a geographically definable area possessing a concentration of historic or scenic properties or thematically related grouping of properties which contribute to each other and are unified aesthetically or by plan or physical development;*
- (f) It has a unique location or singular physical characteristic or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city of Sunnyvale;*
- (g) It embodies elements of architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represents a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation;*
- (h) It is similar to other distinctive properties, sites, areas, or objects based on a historic, cultural, or architectural motif;*
- (i) It reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of park or community planning;*
- (j) It is one of the few remaining examples in the city, region, state, or nation possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historic type or specimen;*
- (k) With respect to a local landmark, it is significant in that the resource materially benefits the historical character of a neighborhood or area, or the resource in its location represents an established and familiar visual feature of the community or city.*
- (l) With respect to a local landmark district, a collective high integrity of the district is essential to the sustained value of the separate individual resources;*
- (m) With respect to a designated landmark and designated landmark district, the heritage resource shall meet Criteria of the National Register of Historical Places, which are incorporated by reference into this chapter. (Ord. 2623-99 § 1 (part): prior zoning code § 19.80.060)."*

The criteria for the National Register for evaluating properties are included in Attachment 3.

Required HPC Determination

The applicant has submitted a historic and architectural evaluation by a consultant; Anthony Kirk, which is included in Attachment 3. The evaluation, completed January 16, 2018, includes DPR (State of California Department of Parks and Recreation) 523A, 523B and 523L forms. The report concludes that property does not qualify for State or National registers and that the property does not meet any of the City's criteria for designation.

The original DPR forms from 1979 lists the significance of the property as an old Sunnyvale industry that was converted into a residence, while retaining the unpretentious industrial design. However, the evaluation by the consultant states that the one-and two-story wood frame structure was constructed as a single-family residence in 1938 by Samuel De Vita. The house was used as the headquarters for a potato chip and salted nut business owned by the occupants for four years, beginning in 1940. As stated in the attached DPR forms, the various alterations made to the structure since the property was used as an industry have led to the loss of integrity. The evaluation further indicates that the potato chip and salted nut factory, which operated for a brief time, was not listed as a significant industry in early Sunnyvale history that provides a context to the development in the City. The house was also not associated with an individual whose life was important within the history of the nation, state or the city. In addition, the house does not have distinctive characteristics of an architectural style.

If the Commission determines that the structure has local historic significance, and significant modifications are proposed, further environmental review including an Initial Study would be required. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) would likely be required if the home is proposed to be destroyed. If the Commission determines that the structure does not have local historic significance, redevelopment of the site or other modifications to the home could proceed with appropriate environmental review based on the scope of the proposed project without concern for historic preservation.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impacts other than normal fees and taxes are expected.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Notice of Public Hearing

- Published in the Sun newspaper
 - Posted on the site
 - 87 notices mailed to property owners and residents within 300 feet of the project site
- See Attachment 1 for a map of the vicinity and mailing area.

Staff Report

- Posted on the City's website
- Provided at the Reference Section of the City's Public Library

Agenda

- Posted on the City's official notice bulletin board
- Posted on the City's website

Public Contact: Staff has not received any correspondence or phone calls from neighbors at the time of writing of this report.

Conclusion

Staff has reviewed the proposal to remove the home from the Heritage Resource Inventory and has concluded, based on the provided information including the revised DPR forms and the criteria listed in the Municipal Code, that the home should be removed from the inventory. The research has determined that the original design of the home has been significantly compromised over the years and that there is no evidence of notable people or events for historical context.

The home has at one time been an old Sunnyvale industry. However, the evaluation notes that the home has been significantly altered over the years, including conversion of garage to living quarters and bathroom (has now been converted back into a garage), replacement of windows and addition of outdoor dining that has changed the architectural integrity of the original design. There are no known significant associations of the property with any persons considered prominent in the development of Sunnyvale. Staff concurs with the historical evaluation and recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission determine that the residence at 435 East McKinley Avenue does not meet the criteria for a local Heritage Resource as identified in Section 19.96.050 of the zoning ordinance.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Determine that the single-family home does have local historic significance.
2. Determine that the single-family home does not have local historic significance.

RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 2. Determine that the single-family home does not have local historic significance.

Prepared by: Aastha Vashist, Assistant Planner
Approved by: Noren Caliva-Lepe, Senior Planner

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity and Noticing Map
2. Evaluation Letter & DPR Forms Completed by Anthony Kirk, January 2018
3. DPR form from the City's Cultural Resource study, September 1979