

## APPROVAL NO. 2024-\_\_\_\_\_

**RECORD OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALO ALTO LAND USE APPROVAL FOR 411 KIPLING STREET:  
HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY CATEGORY 4 TO CATEGORY 2 UPGRADE (24PLN-00032)**

On June 17, 2024, the Council held a duly noticed public hearing and, after considering all of the evidence presented, approved the property owner's request to reclassify the commercial building at 411 Kipling Street currently a Local Category 4 Historic Resource. The Council approved the Historic Resources Board (HRB) recommendation to an upgraded level, Category 2 Historic Resource on the City of Palo Alto Historic Resources Inventory. In approving the application, the Council make the following findings, determination, and declarations:

SECTION 1.     Background.

A. On February 6, 2024, the property owner contacted staff to request a reclassification of a one-story commercial building at 411 Kipling Street, designed by George W. Mosher in the Square Cottage style with stylistic elements of Colonial Revival and Queen Anne Free Classic style, completed in 1902 from a 'Contributing Building' Category 4 resource to a 'Major Building' Category 2 resource on the Palo Alto Historic Inventory. With the owner's request and funding, staff obtained a historic resource evaluation from the City's consultant, Page & Turnbull, including an integrity evaluation to understand building's eligibility for a classification upgrade. The historic resource evaluation supports a classification upgrade to a Category 2 historic resource. The consultant describes the building's eligibility in a report dated November 21, 2023, noting its eligibility under local criteria 2, 5, and 6:

- **Criterion 2** (The structure or is particularly representative of an architectural style or way of life important to the city, state or nation)  
411 Kipling Street is an excellent extant example of the Square Cottage house type in Palo Alto's Downtown North neighborhood. The Square Cottage is a Palo Alto residential house type that mixed familiar forms and finishes of the Colonial Revival, Queen Anne Free Classic, and sometimes Craftsman styles in later examples. The subject building is an early extant example of this important building type and is also a unique variation featuring a hipped roof, simple Tuscan columns, and a flat front façade, instead of the more common cross-gabled roof and projecting bay window.
- **Criterion 5** (The architect or building was important)  
George W. Mosher was a builder of merit who made important contributions to the early built environment of Palo Alto. While Mosher's works are considered more modest in size and design compared with other architect-designed residences from the same period, he built and designed numerous "Square Cottage" house types and was the builder for several larger high style residences in Palo Alto. The subject building is an important extant example of George W. Mosher's contributions to the high-quality housing stock built in Palo Alto's early period of development.
- **Criterion 6** (The structure or site contains elements demonstrating outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship)  
411 Kipling Street showcases the high level of craftsmanship and architectural design implemented by builder-of-merit George W. Mosher. Elements of the façade that meet the

definition of Criterion 6 include original wood windows with one-over-one double-hung sashes, ogee lugs, and cottage windows with diamond mullions, along with shiplap siding and cornice with dentil molding.

1. On April 11, 2024, the HRB received a staff report (ID #2403-2766), conducted a public hearing, and concurred with the consultant's evaluation regarding the building's eligibility for category upgrade from the current local historic inventory Category 4 to Category 2.

SECTION 2. Environmental Review. The project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as it is not a project under CEQA Guidelines per Section 21065.

SECTION 3. Designation Findings.

- A. The following criteria, as specified in Municipal Code Section 16.49.040 (b), shall be used as criteria for designating historic structures/sites to the historic inventory:
  1. The structure or site is identified with the lives of historic people or with important events in the city, state or nation;
  2. The structure or site is particularly representative of an architectural style or way of life important to the city, state or nation;
  3. The structure or site is an example of a type of building which was once common, but is now rare;
  4. The structure or site is connected with a business or use which was once common, but is now rare;
  5. The architect or building was important;
  6. The structure or site contains elements demonstrating outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship.

The building at 411 Kipling Street met many of the above criteria when it was first listed on Palo Alto's Historic Resource Inventory in 1983. With the historic assessment in 2023, the building's status as a historic resource has remained per Page & Turnbull's conclusion.

- B. The definition of Category 2 in Municipal Code Section 16.49.020 (b) must be met to allow the upgrade to the structure's category designation:

Category 2 Definition: "Major building" means any building or group of buildings of major regional importance, meritorious works of the best architects or an outstanding example of an architectural style or the stylistic development of architecture in the state or region. A major building may have some exterior modifications, but the original character is retained. The applicant requested and the consultant found Category 2 appropriate for this building.

Page & Turnbull historic consultant supported applicant's request. The City's consultant found the building at 411 Kipling Street meets the Palo Alto Inventory Category 2 Definition. The integrity evaluation found that the building at 411 Kipling Street retains all seven aspects of integrity (location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association). The minor exterior modifications cited in the consultant's report have not caused the building to lose its original character.

National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historical Resources listing: 411 Kipling Street is currently listed in the City of Palo Alto Historic Inventory as a Category 4: "Contributing Building." It was surveyed for the Historic Resources Inventory and added to the local register in 1983.

SECTION 4. Category Upgrade Approved. The City Council approves the property owner's request for re-classification of 411 Kipling Street to a Category 2 historic resource on the City's Historic Resources Inventory.

PASSED:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTENTIONS:

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Planning and  
Development Services

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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Deputy City Attorney