



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

City Council Staff Report

From: City Manager

Report Type: CONSENT CALENDAR

Lead Department: Planning and Development Services

Meeting Date: August 19, 2024

Report #:2406-3114

TITLE

CONSENT: Addition of Five Properties to the City's Historic Resources Inventory Based on Owner Interest. CEQA Status: Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21065, the Historic Designation of Properties is not a Project Subject to Environmental Review.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council adopt the attached record of land use action (Attachment A) to add five properties meeting specified criteria to the City's Historic Resources Inventory, based on expressed owner interest.

BACKGROUND

In early 2022, the Council had directed staff to review properties previously identified as being eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). The HRB's recommendation supported listing 63 properties whose owners had not objected to listing on the local inventory and staff forwarded to Council only the 16 properties for which the owners had affirmatively expressed interest in being listed on the inventory prior to publication of the April 22, 2024 packet. Until a week before that Council packet, there were many owners who hadn't responded; some owners did not respond because the reports to the Historic Resources Board stated over many months that if the owner didn't object, their properties would be forwarded to the City Council for listing on the local inventory.

On April 22, 2024, Council:

- Placed 16 properties, whose owners expressed interest, on the City's Historic Resource Inventory; the parcel reports now reflect these addresses as historic inventory properties.
- Directed staff to:
 - Continue outreach to eligible property owners among the properties discussed in this report and to place future additions to the Historic Resources Inventory with expressed owner interest on the Consent Calendar, and

- Study the possibility of a process for removing the properties shown as potentially eligible in the parcel reports and return to Council with evaluations on any alternatives.

The week of July 22, 2024, staff again sent certified letters to owners of the remaining 32 properties the HRB had recommended for placement but for which staff had not received affirmation for inventory placement. A total of 17 certified cards were returned signed, four letters were returned to the City unsigned; the remaining 11 certified cards were unsigned/unreturned.

Owners of two properties had expressed confirmation of listing after publication of the staff report for Council's April 22 meeting. The properties, at 211 Quarry Road (Hoover Pavilion) and 825 Kipling Street, are noted in Discussion below, and included in the attached Draft Record of Land Use Action (RLUA) for inventory placement. Three additional property owners, prompted by another round of certified letters, recently expressed affirmative interest in listing their properties. The addresses are 1215 Emerson Street, 904 Bryant, and 751 Channing Avenue. These properties with expressed owner interest in listing are discussed below and included in the Draft RLUA.

DISCUSSION

The following is a summary of the properties proposed for nomination, the address, the local criterion met for designation, and a brief description supporting the recommendation:

1. 211 Quarry Road¹ built in 1931, is recommended for placement on the local Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) as a Category 1 resource under local criteria 1, 2 and 5². The building is one in a series of Palo Alto municipal hospitals and is a late and rare surviving example of a hospital based on the pavilion plan and is significant as an Art Deco-style hospital designed by the important Oakland-based architecture firm Reed & Corbett. It is significant as a late and rare surviving example of a hospital based on the pavilion plan and was designed in the Art Deco style by the important Oakland firm of Reed and Corbett. It is also significant as an example of one of several Palo Alto municipal hospitals.

¹ Link to nomination form and evaluation for 211 Quarry Road:

https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/planning-amp-development-services/historic-preservation/historic-inventory/quarryrd_211.pdf

² Criterion 1 (The structure or site is identified with the lives of historic people or with important events in the city, state or nation); Criterion 2 (The structure is particularly representative of an architectural style or way of life important to the city, state or nation); Criterion 5 (The architect or building was important).

2. 825 Kipling Street³ built in 1898, is recommended for placement on the local HRI as a Category 2 resource under local criteria 2 and 6.⁴ The building is significant as one of the most elaborate early square cottages in Palo Alto that uses Queen Anne style detailing and is reminiscent of several typical pattern book designs of the late nineteenth century that used the diagonal projecting wing plan. The building illustrates the familiarity of local builders with the popular pattern book designs of the day.

3. 1215 Emerson Street⁵ built in 1917 and with a period of significance 1917 to 1936, is recommended for placement on the local HRI as a Category 2 resource under local criterion 1, for its association with Arthur Martin Cathcart, who was a local city council member and a Stanford University professor during his years of residence at the subject building. 1215 Emerson Street was his personal residence while he was known as a leader in the civic affairs of Palo Alto. Therefore, the building is sufficiently associated with the life and achievements of Arthur Cathcart as a civic leader. The building has a high level of integrity.

4. 904 Bryant Street⁶ built in 1904, is recommended for placement on the local HRI as a Category 2 under criteria 2 and 3⁷, with a revised style description as a Colonial Revival style Foursquare, significant as an early and excellent example of the Colonial Revival style Foursquare constructed in Palo Alto in the early years of the twentieth century. Despite its relocation, the building retains a high level of historic integrity.

5. 751 Channing Avenue⁸ built in 1906, is recommended for placement on the local HRI as a Category 2 under criterion 2, significant as an early and well-built American Foursquare style building in Palo Alto, with notable Colonial Revival and Prairie influences. The building appears to retain a high level of integrity.

³ Link to nomination form and evaluation for 825 Kipling Street:

https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/planning-amp-development-services/historic-preservation/historic-inventory/kiplingst_825.pdf

⁴ Local criterion 6: The structure or site contains elements demonstrating outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

⁵ Link to nomination form and evaluation for 1215 Emerson Street

https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/planning-amp-development-services/historic-preservation/historic-inventory/emersonstreet_1215.pdf

⁶ Link to nomination form and evaluation for 904 Bryant Street:

https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/planning-amp-development-services/historic-preservation/historic-inventory/bryantstreet_904-former-802-804.pdf

⁷ Criterion 3: The structure or site is an example of a type of building which was once common, but is now rare

⁸ Link to nomination form and evaluation for 751 Channing Avenue:

https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/planning-amp-development-services/historic-preservation/historic-inventory/channingave_751.pdf

Further Outreach

Since April 22, staff has held conversations with several of the remaining 32 property owners who had not responded during the HRB process nor prior to the April 22 Council meeting. Staff sent final certified letters to these owners the week of July 22, to notify them of the August 19 Council consent calendar opportunity. The letter noted that if additional owners request placement of their property on the inventory prior to the publication of the packet, their property could be added to this second round of placements.

Parcel Report Notes

After the Council meeting on April 22, staff met with realtors who described their concern with the City's parcel data (GIST Parcel Report) note showing properties as 'potentially eligible' for California Register.

At its retreat on August 8, 2024, the HRB will have the opportunity to discuss the issue of Parcel Report notes. Staff provided a brief presentation during the Historic Resources Board meeting of July 11, 2024, reflecting an exploration into removing the potentially eligible label from parcel reports.

FISCAL/RESOURCE IMPACT

There is no resource impact related to adding the five additional properties to the local historic inventory. Regarding the parcel report relabeling this would not require Council action and staff could receive additional inquiries, but this is not estimated to impact resources. Planning staff can answer these questions during normal business hours.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Certified letters were sent in July to the property owners who had not responded to the prior certified letters, to alert them to the August Council consent calendar item.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Historic designation of properties is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines per Section 21065. Notably, historic resources do not need to be on a register to be protected under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) when a discretionary permit or approval is required. CEQA may, therefore, require reviewing a project for potential historic status even if it is not on the local historic inventory.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Record of Land Use Action with Exhibit for August 19, 2024 Inventory Update

APPROVED BY:

Jonathan Lait, Planning and Development Services Director