



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

City Council Staff Report

From: City Manager

Report Type: CONSENT CALENDAR

Lead Department: Planning and Development Services

Meeting Date: June 17, 2024

Report #:2404-2909

TITLE

CONSENT: Approval of a Record of Land Use Action to Upgrade the Property Located at 411 Kipling Street From a Category 4 Resource on the Local Historic Inventory to a Category 2 Resource.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Council reclassify 411 Kipling Street, an existing one-and-a-half-story residential building currently used as a commercial building located in the Downtown North neighborhood, from Historic Inventory Category 4 Resource ('Contributing Building') to a Category 2 Resource ('Major Building') as recommended by the Historic Resources Board (HRB).

BACKGROUND

This report and Record of Land Use Action (Attachment B) provide background and support for the HRB's April 11, 2024, recommendation to upgrade the one-and-a-half-story building, located at 411 Kipling Street, from Historic Inventory Category 4 ('Contributing Building') to Category 2 ('Major Building'). The HRB staff report¹ included the consultant's assessment and inventory form. These documents are also available on the project webpage (Attachment C).

411 Kipling Street, located within the Downtown Commercial Community (CD-C) zone district with Pedestrian Combining District (P), was built in 1902 and was part of a group of early Palo Alto residences surviving the change to commercial zoning and commercial development in the vicinity. It provides a contrast to the larger commercial scale and higher density of University Avenue and sections of Lytton Avenue and Cowper Streets. The subject building was designed by George W. Mosher in Square Cottage style with stylistic elements of Colonial Revival and Queen Anne Free Classic. The building is individually listed on a local historic resources inventory as Category 4 "Contributing Building."

The building at 411 Kipling Street, built in 1902, was first evaluated and added to the local historic inventory in 1983 as a Category 4 resource for its architecture. The one-story utilitarian

¹ Link to April 11, 2024 HRB staff report with consultant assessment and inventory form
<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/historic-resources-board/2024/hrb-4.11-411-kipling.pdf>

version of the four-square form has a hipped roof, clapboard exterior, small porch, modest ornamental elements include the porch columns, lentil cornices, attic dormer with diamond-pattern mullions in the windows, and wreath molding applied to the lower section of the front door. Just after World War II it served as a rooming house.

ANALYSIS

On April 11, 2024, the Historic Resources Board (HRB) reviewed the applicant's proposal to reclassify the subject building from the current "Contributing Building" designation in Category 4 on the Historic Inventory to Category 2 "Major Building." The Historic Resource Board (HRB) voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council reclassify 411 Kipling Street Avenue to Category 2.

The analysis concluded that the qualities and values of 411 Kipling Street are considerably more significant than the Municipal Code's definition of the qualities of a Category 4 building. The HRB staff report included three detailed findings for the consistency of the qualities of 411 Kipling Street with the Municipal Code definition of a Category 2 building. The analysis found the building retains its historic integrity and represents outstanding and regionally important architecture consistent with the definition of a Category 2 resource in the Municipal Code Chapter 16.49.

The HRB discussed its support for the reclassification to a Category 2 resource. The applicant and the property owner participated in the review of the proposed reclassification and support this recommendation; no members of the public spoke to the item. The language of the three findings for reclassification that HRB adopted are provided in the attached draft Record of Land Use Action (Attachment B). Each of the three findings reflect the language of the Municipal Code's definition of Category 2.

FISCAL/RESOURCE IMPACT

There is no significant fiscal or resource impact associated with this application. The City's consultant costs were covered by the property owner.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

As of the writing of this report, no project-related, public comments were received.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Maintenance of historic designation of a property or reclassification of historic designation of a property is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act and CEQA Guidelines Section 21065 because it will not cause a direct change to the physical environment nor a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Location Map

Attachment B: Draft Record of Land Use Action

Attachment C: Project Webpage with Plan Set

APPROVED BY:

Jonathan Lait, Planning and Development Services Director