

**PORT HUENEME  
CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD  
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
AGENDA FOR SPECIAL MEETING OF JUNE 21, 2010  
ITEM NO. 4a**

**SUBJECT:**

Demolition and Reuse of a Potentially Eligible Historic Residential Structure. CEQA Environmental Review Project No.10-308

**APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER:**

Greg Brown, Community Development Director  
Port Hueneme Redevelopment Agency  
250 North Ventura Road  
Port Hueneme, CA 93041

**REQUEST:**

Port Hueneme Redevelopment Agency is requesting a review and comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the demolition and reuse of a potentially eligible historic residential structure, Project No.10-308

**LOCATION AND ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER:**

The project site is located at 245 through 253 E. Port Hueneme Road, in the City of Port Hueneme. The Assessor's Parcel Number is 206-0-094-050.

**BACKGROUND:**

The project site consists of a multi-family (triplex) residence built in 1885 and a one-story outbuilding built in 1892. The multi-family residence is a one-story Victorian era residence (originally a single family dwelling) that is rectangular in shape with a medium pitched side facing gable with two front facing gable wings on each side and a one-story outbuilding. The porch is attached between the two wings and supported by two chamfered columns and a wood railing. The residence has retained the majority of its design integrity and is in good condition.

The rear outbuilding was a residence at one time and is covered with the same siding as the main residence. Other than a door replacement and the boarded windows, this building retains its design integrity and is in fair condition.

The residence was built for the Charles B. McCoy family following the purchase of the land from the estate of Thomas Scott in 1885. A native of Steubenville, Ohio, McCoy moved his family to Hueneme where he was employed on the John Fey ranch for three years. Thereafter, he was listed as a livestock dealer, slaughterer, and meat cutter. In 1891, the McCoy family left Hueneme and moved to Simi where Mr. McCoy took over the management of the Simi Land and Water Company, organized by Thomas Bard to sell off the Rancho Simi lands which Bard had originally purchased for Thomas Scott.

## **PROJECT ANALYSIS**

The applicant is proposing to demolish an existing residential structure to allow for the future redevelopment of the site in conjunction with the current "C-1" (General Commercial) Zone which would allow up to a 35 foot high commercial building up to 5,000 square feet in size, no front yard setback, 20 foot rear yard setback and 10% of lot area would be dedicated to landscaping on the subject property. The site is a city lot that is 70 feet in width by 130 feet in length.

The Area of Potential Effect (APE) was determined to be the area shown on Figure 1 of the Historic Resources Report (consisting of APNs 206-0-094-05, -06 -09, -10, and -15). (see Exhibit 1 – Appendix B).

The City of Port Hueneme employed San Buenaventura Research Associates to prepare a Historic Resources Report dated January 15, 2010 and employed Rincon Consultants to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) dated May 2010 (see Exhibit 1) for demolition and construction at this site as part of the City permitting process. Pursuant to Port Hueneme Ordinances 438 and 447 adopted by resolution, Sec. 1.55-060.b states that your Board is responsible for evaluating any potential historical resource in the City and providing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review on historic matters (Sec. 1.55-130).

CEQA and the Environmental Initial Study Assessment Guidelines also require consistency with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings to make a finding that any impact is mitigated below a significant level. In determining if there is a significant impact to historic resources, there is a two-part test: (1) Is the resource "historically significant" and (2) Would the project cause a "substantial adverse change" in the significance of the resource." (Bass, Herson and Bogdan, CEQA Deskbook, 2002, p. 103).

The questions then for your Board are:

1. Is the site historically significant?
2. Does the demolition of the structure constitute a significant impact upon it and therefore, cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of the resource? If so:

### 3. Appropriate mitigations may be determined

The City prepared Draft EIR has addressed all of these issues and the task is for your Board to examine the information presented and to concur or not. Taking these questions in order:

#### 1. Historic significance of the site.

There are two reports to consider at this meeting on this subject:

- Rincon Consultants' Draft EIR; and
- San Buenaventura Research Associates (SBRA) Historic Resources Report.

The Draft EIR concludes that the multi-family residence may be eligible for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listing and California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) listing since the site is closely associated with the historical theme of the development of the original town site of Hueneme during the 1870's and 1880's and that the site is one of a few remaining residences in the City representing this period (NRHP Criterion A and CRHR Criterion 1). The site is also a scarce example of an 1880's Folk Victorian architecture within Port Hueneme. Two other unaltered examples remain in the City (309 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. and 258 E. Clara St.).

Rincon Consultants' referenced criteria for determining eligibility for listing on the NRHP Guidelines in the EIR (Sec. 4.1-3). Those criteria are: A) associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; B) associated with lives of significant persons in our past; C) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represent the work of a master; OR D) have yielded or may likely to yield information important in prehistory or history. According to the EIR and the SBRA report, the property meets Criterion A.

In addition, according to the Guidelines, the property must retain its integrity to be eligible for listing on the NRHP. The seven aspects of integrity (which are essentially identical to those in the California Register) are: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The EIR concludes that six out of the seven integrity criteria<sup>1</sup> have been maintained due to the following:

- Building continues to be used as a residence;
- Only a few minor changes have been made to the buildings;
- The feeling and the association of the property remain intact since it continues to maintain its historic sense of a particular period of time;
- The site's design remains intact; and
- The building's location remains essentially intact although the outbuilding was moved a few feet.

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<sup>1</sup> The seventh NRHP criteria, the property's setting, has been altered extensively due to redevelopment of the area for the past 50 years.

The report states that the subject property with the other two sites (309 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. and 258 E. Clara St.) appear eligible for listing on both the National and State Register as a part of a multiple property submission.

Staff Comment: The site is eligible for listing on both the National and State Register as a part of a multiple property submission. I have been informed by the applicant, Mr. Brown, that the City of Port Hueneme, as the owner of the subject property, and the other two property owners have no interest in being listing under the National or State Register. Therefore, it is unlikely that the properties would be listed.

The SBRA Historic Resources Report (SBRA report) indicates that the City of Port Hueneme defines a historical resource as “any building or structure which is of particular historic, cultural, scenic or aesthetic significance to the City in which broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the state, nation, or community is reflected or exemplified” (Page 2 of SBRA report). Both the SBRA report and the Draft EIR concluded that the subject property appears to be eligible as a City of Port Hueneme Landmark under criterion (f) for its historical association with the early development of Hueneme, and criterion (i) for its locally scarce characteristics of the Folk Victorian style of the 1880s (Page 4.1-9 EIR and Page 8 of the SBRA report).

Staff Comment: Your Board may wish to consider, in the light of the draft EIR and the evidence it offers, that the site is historically significant and is eligible for listing as a City of Port Hueneme Landmark under criterion (f) and (i).

## **2. Project impact on the historic resource.**

Your Board must determine the proposal’s environmental impact on the historic structures. The Draft EIR concludes that demolition creates a significant and unavoidable adverse impact to historical resources. (EIR, p. 4.1-8)

Staff Comment: The project would involve the demolition of the existing on-site residential structure as well as the outbuilding that are eligible for both the National and California Register listing. In addition, the project would involve demolition of the residential structures that are eligible for designation as a City of Port Hueneme Landmark because of its historical association with the early residential development of the City. Consequently, staff recommends that the Board finds that the proposed demolition would result in a significant unavoidable adverse impact to cultural and historic resources. Your Board must either agree or disagree with the staff finding that the demolition is a significant impact before moving on to mitigation.

## **3. Appropriate Mitigations**

*245 E. Port Hueneme Road Demolition and Reuse EIR  
Section 6.0 Alternatives*

*p. 6-2*

“Alternative 2: Adaptive Reuse of Existing Structures would be considered environmentally superior, as it would reduce impacts in virtually all issue areas, **would eliminate the unavoidably significant historic resources impacts of the proposed project**, and would also reduce the potential impact for disturbance and release of asbestos and lead (hazardous materials). Therefore, the impacts’ mitigation measures recommended for the proposed project would apply and would reduce the potential for impacts to below a level of significance. However, this alternative would not fulfill the basic project objective of allowing for future redevelopment of the site with commercial uses that would be compatible with existing and planned future commercial development along the north side of East Port Hueneme Road.”

Staff Conclusion: The mitigation measure of photo documentation recommended in the Draft EIR does not eliminate the impact. Your Board has previously discussed the retention of part of the site rehabilitated to some other use like a commercial use. The “Alternative 2” does eliminate the impact with preservation of the structures. It appears that adoption of the “Alternative 2” including active rehabilitation of the site by the developer to other uses is the best solution. Consequently, staff recommends adoption by the City of the “Alternative 2” including active rehabilitation of the site by the developer to other uses would reduce the potential for adverse impacts to below a level of significance.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comment regarding this application has been received

### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

1. Conduct public hearing, hear testimony, and consider staff report;
2. Find the proposal inconsistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards and advise the property owner of the Board’s findings as follows:
  - A. Find that the site is significant historically;
  - B. The effect of demolition creates a significant adverse impact; and
  - C. Recommend adoption by the City of the “Alternative 2” including active rehabilitation of the site by the developer to other uses.
3. Consider initiating the Landmark designation process.

Prepared by:

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Attachments:

Exhibit 1: Draft EIR  
Exhibit 1- Appendix B: SBRA Historic Resources Report