



Monterey County

Planning Commission

Agenda Item #5

Legistar File Number: PC 16-007

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May 11, 2016

Introduced: 4/27/2016

Version: 1

Current Status: Agenda Ready

Matter Type: Planning Item

Schwenk PLN150453

Public hearing to consider adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration and approval of a Coastal Development Permit and Design Approval to allow a residential remodel within 750 feet of a known archaeological resource. The property is located at 2486 17th Avenue, Carmel, Carmel Area Land Use Plan, Coastal Zone (Assessor's Parcel Number 009-471-020-000).

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Planning File Number: PLN150453

Owner: Schwenk, Heidi

Project Location: 2486 17th Avenue, Carmel

APN: 009-471-020-000

Agent: Jeff Crockett

Plan Area: Carmel Area Land Use Plan

Flagged and Staked: No

CEQA Action: Mitigated Negative Declaration

Planner: Steve Mason

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Planning Commission adopt a resolution (**Exhibit A**) to:

- a. Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration;
- b. Approve a Coastal Development Permit and Design Approval to allow a new exterior stairwell and excavation under the foundation to increase ceiling height of an existing 144 square foot room within 750 feet of a known archaeological resource, based on the findings and evidence and subject to eight (8) conditions of approval; and
- c. Adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan.

SUMMARY:

Property owner wants to provide adequate ceiling height in a partially subsurface room. The single issue associated with this application is excavation in close proximity to known archaeological sites on the Carmel Point. Soil samples were collected in the area of the excavation and analysis has determined that the area is not likely to support cultural resources. From a design standpoint, the improvements will not be visible to the public. Staff recommends approval subject to monitoring during excavation.

DISCUSSION:

The 0.10-acre project parcel is located in a residential neighborhood near Carmel Point and includes a 2,080 square-foot (non-historically significant) 1930's-era single family dwelling. A new exterior stairwell and excavation under the foundation to lower the floor by 2-feet of a

connecting 144 square-foot room are sought. In its current form, the room is not entirely functional as the clearance from floor to ceiling is approximately 6-foot. This proposal would increase the clearance to 8-foot. Additionally, the “lower” floor of the house is presently afforded no indoor/outdoor egress aside from the existing vehicle garage doors. Installation of the proposed stairwell will address this shortcoming. As proposed, the project will require excavation to a depth of 36”-42” below the existing floor for placement of a new foundation. Additional minor interior re-modeling is proposed which will not require excavation. Applicable policies within the Carmel Area Land Use Plan include:

- 2.8.4 (5): *No development proposals in archaeologically sensitive areas shall be categorically exempt from environmental review.*
- 2.8.4 (6) *When other site planning constraints do not permit avoidance of construction on archaeological or other types of a cultural sites, adequate preservation measures shall be required. Mitigation shall be designed in accord with guidelines of the State Office of Historic Preservation and the State of California Native American Heritage Commission.*

An Initial Study drafted for the project identified a potential impact to cultural resources. The project site is within the recognized historic ethnographic territory of the Costanoan (often referred to as “Ohlone”) Native Americans. The project site is located within 750 feet of known archaeological resources according to data provided by the Northwest Information Center of Historical Resources at Sonoma State University. The underlying archaeological resource area has been formally recognized as “CA-MNT-17,” as it is known to have historically served as an area of habitation by Esselen (Costanoan) Native Americans.

Given the proximity of the site to CA-MNT-17 staff required subsurface sampling. A series of auger borings were collected at various points on the project parcel. In order to gauge potential impacts as accurately as feasible, auger borings were taken directly through the foundation of the 12’ x 12’ room where excavation is proposed. The auger borings indicate a previously undisturbed midden layer exists in the project area beneath the basement floor, however, it is a sparse deposit, with limited quantities of shellfish remains and, based on the auger bore, almost no other cultural materials.

Midden, in and of itself, is not considered a “cultural resource” but is an indicator of the potential for resources to be present. County Policies seek to avoid disturbing cultural resources. In this case the quality of the midden, even though it is undisturbed, does not indicate the likely presence of cultural resources. In the unlikely event that cultural artifacts may be uncovered during the proposed excavation, the following Mitigations were proposed in the Initial Study:

1. A qualified archaeological monitor and a Native American monitor of Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation shall be present during all project excavations. All materials remaining in the screen shall be provided to the Chairperson of the Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation.
2. If potentially significant archaeological resources or intact features are discovered, the monitors shall be authorized to temporarily halt work until the find can be evaluated.

3. If human remains are identified, the Monterey County Coroner must be notified and, if it is determined that the remains are likely to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission must be notified.

These measures are incorporated into a Mitigated Negative Declaration which was circulated from March 28-April 27, 2016 (**Exhibit B**). No comments have been received as of the completion of this staff report. Any comments received subsequently will be discussed at the hearing for the project.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The following agencies have reviewed the project, have comments, and/or have recommended conditions:

Environmental Health Bureau
RMA-Public Works
RMA-Environmental Services
Water Resources Agency
Cypress Fire Protection District

Conditions recommended by have been incorporated into the Condition Compliance/Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan attached to the draft resolution (**Exhibit A**).

Prepared by: Steve Mason, Associate Planner, Ext. 5228

Approved by: Carl P. Holm, AICP, Resource Management Agency (RMA) Director

This report was reviewed by John Ford, RMA Services Manager

Attachments:

Exhibit A Draft Resolution including:

- Conditions of Approval/Mitigation and Monitoring and Reporting Plan
- Site Plan
- Floor Plan
- Elevations
- Vicinity Map

Exhibit B Mitigated Negative Declaration

cc: Front Counter Copy; Planning Commission; John Ford, RMA-Planning Services Manager; Cypress Fire Protection District; Public Works Department; Environmental Health Bureau; Water Resources Agency; Heidi Schwenk, Applicant/Owner; Jeff Crockett, Agent; California Coastal Commission; The Open Monterey Project (Molly Erickson); LandWatch (Amy White); Project File PLN150453