



Historic Resources Review Board

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PLN230203 - COUNTY OF MONTEREY (PORTER-VALLEJO MANSION)

Public hearing to consider a recommendation to the Monterey County Planning Commission for a Use Permit to allow alterations to a historic resource (Porter Vallejo Mansion), including repair and replacement of roofing, siding, and windows; repair and relocation of mechanical equipment including exterior screening to hide equipment; replace front porch decking; repairs to front railing to be replaced in kind; mothballing of a detached water tower; and removal of a trellis, fencing and play equipment.

Project Location: 29 Bishop Street, Royal Oaks (Assessor's Parcel Number 117-323-013-000)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Monterey County Historic Resources Review Board (HRRB) adopt a resolution recommending that the County of Monterey Planning Commission:

1. Find that repair and rehabilitation of the historic property qualifies for a Class 31 categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15331; and
2. Approve of a Use Permit to allow alterations to a historic resource (Porter Vallejo Mansion), including repair and replacement of roofing, siding, and windows; repair and relocation of mechanical equipment including exterior screening to hide equipment; replace front porch decking; repairs to front railing to be replaced in kind; mothballing of a detached water tower; and removal of a trellis, fencing and play equipment.

SUMMARY

On October 5, 2023, Staff presented the proposed project for PLN230203. The HRRB asked about the current state of the siding and voiced concerns that the original siding may be damaged during the process of removing it. The Applicant confirmed that there is no barrier at the exterior walls to prevent water intrusion and removing the siding would be necessary to install a new moisture barrier and properly waterproof all of the windows. The HRRB requested an analysis on the condition of the siding and to report back to the HRRB the quantity of siding that can be salvaged/reused and quantity of new siding that would be installed. The HRRB also asked the Applicant to confirm the type of material of the existing siding and to propose a new substitute material to the HRRB. The HRRB requested for an analysis of the windows and asked the Applicant to confirm the number of windows that would need to be replaced. The HRRB recommended for the windows to be rebuilt in order to match the existing profiles/style of the windows and did not approve the use of the Anderson A Series as a feasible replacement to the existing windows.

Staff presented the following options to the HRRB with the intent for the Applicant to present to Community Stakeholders for additional input: Screening for the mechanical heat pumps and exterior venting, decking material, siding material, and exterior Program Site. The HRRB asked

the Applicant to make recommendations for each and the HRRB will make a recommendation for approval. In reviewing the project, the HRRB asked if there was a color selection available and the Applicant did not have this information at the time beyond the intent to match the existing colors. The HRRB asked Applicant to provide a proposed color selection for the HRRB to review and approve. Additional requests from the HRRB included confirming the base flood height and clarifying the proposed waterproofing and sloping changes at the front porch roof. The porch roof is relatively flat and needs to be addressed properly. Due to these requests, the HRRB motioned to continue the item to the next meeting to address the following requests:

1. Applicant to provide a comprehensive survey of the existing windows and to confirm the quantity of windows that will need to be replaced.
2. Confirm the condition of the siding on each façade and confirm the amount of siding that would need to be replaced. Applicant to propose material to replace the existing siding.
3. Propose a color selection for the exterior façades.
4. Establish (via survey) the base flood height and record the height on the project plans.
5. Provide proposed sloping at the front porch roof to confirm that the roofline would not be adjusted/changing at the north façade.

The Porter Vallejo mansion is a historic site being used by the Pajaro Library. The mansion is significant for its association with John Porter, who was a major force in the development of the Pajaro Valley, and for its remodeled design by Architect William Weeks, which transformed the home into a Queen Anne style while retaining its original Gothic Revival features. A detached water tower is also on the site and is a contributing structure to the site's significance.

County Public Works, Facilities, and Parks (public works) are proposing repair and rehabilitation to address recent water intrusion and flooding issues from the recent 2023 Pineapple Express storm. This work includes removing the mechanical equipment from the basement; replacing the roofing; removing and repairing/replacing portions of the siding and windows. As proposed the siding would be removed, the shell of the building waterproofed, and as much of the original siding as possible would be installed back on the final structure. However, the extent of the water intrusion and damage is unknown, and siding too deteriorated to use may need to be replaced. The windows have been assessed for damage and 8 windows located on the second floor will need to be replaced/rehabilitated. The rest of the windows are in good shape and/or need repairs to the window jambs or sill. Associated site improvements include removal of a non-historic trellis and play equipment and mothballing of the historic water tower.

Public works are seeking HRRB approval of finish materials and color, in particular appropriate screening for exterior mechanical heat pumps and the flooring for the exterior deck. At the HRRB's discretion, it may include a specific finish approval in their recommendation on the permit.

DISCUSSION

Background and Historic Significance

The Porter Vallejo Mansion is a historical home of John Porter, whose role as a significant figure within the Pajaro community as a businessman and community leader falls under

Criterion B of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). In the 1870s, John Porter moved the one and a half story residence from the Vallejo property to its current location and hired Architect William Weeks to remodel the home into a 23-room, three-story house. This remodel is also significant as an example of the early architectural work from Weeks and meets Criterion C of NRHP. The Porter Vallejo Mansion is notable for Week's ability to convert the home into the Queen Anne style while maintaining the home's original Gothic Revival features. The house is listed on the National and Monterey County historical registers, and has been used as the Pajaro Branch Library since 1996.

Historic Residence Scope

The project proposes to remove the existing mechanical equipment and ductwork from the basement and installation of new low profile equipment throughout the building interior to allow the equipment to be permanently located 1'-0" above the level of the base flood per FEMA Code of Federal Regulations, Section 44 CFR 59.1. Relocating utilities above established flood risk levels is recommended by the Secretary of the Interior's (SOI) Guideline on Flood Adaption for Rehabilitating Historic buildings. The proposed equipment will have one single exterior penetration per unit, totaling seven penetrations. The location of the units have been placed to maintain the integrity of the building's seismic upgrades and minimize the visual impact on the exterior; none are located on the primary façade. There are three heat pumps that will be located on concrete pads. Public works is asking the HRRB to approve the latticework option proposed to screen the heat pumps and exterior mechanical vents.

There is evidence of water intrusion at the exterior envelope. Proposed work includes removing and replacing the roof system, removing existing trim and siding at windows and damaged areas, waterproofing around windows, and replacing the siding and trim. Windows will be assessed for damage and will be repaired if possible. If the windows are too damaged, the applicant is proposing to rebuild the wood double-hung windows to match the exiting style and look. New waterproofing will be installed around windows and undamaged trim will be installed back into place. Once the siding is pulled off, a waterproof membrane and new flashing will be installed. Public works has evaluated the integrity of the siding and can reinstall the original siding on the north, east and west façades (north and east are the primary public facing facades). Public works has evaluated the integrity of the siding and can reinstall the original siding on the north and east façades, 75% of the original siding on the west façade, and proposes to use Americana thermally treated wood at the remaining 25% of the west façade and 100% at the south façade. Public works is recommending to use the Americana thermally treated wood due to its durability and the wood can be custom milled to match the profile of the existing shiplap siding. Damaged trim will be replaced in kind. The exterior will be repainted to match the existing colors. The applicant has provided an assessment report (Attachment B - Project Plans) for the exterior siding and windows to confirm that the SOI's Standards for Rehabilitation addressing deteriorated historic features as being met.

Public works is requesting approval of the color selection proposed on Attachment B - Project Plans, page 13. The proposed colors match the existing colors of the mansion.

The front porch decking and railing need to be replaced. The proposed decking material is an Americana thermally treated wood that will be painted to maintain the look of the Queen Anne Style. The front railing will be repaired and/or replaced in kind to match existing.

Site Improvements Scope

Due to its current deterioration, the applicants are proposing mothballing the water tower until a new use for it can be identified. Proposed mothballing will be consistent with U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service Preservation Brief 31, the work will include structurally stabilizing the building, repairing and coating the siding, installing new corner trims to secure the siding, and cleaning up the exterior. New flashing and a metal cap will be installed to cover an existing opening on the roof where the (now removed) water tower tank was located. The building will be secured from break-ins and vandalism.

Additional site improvements will include removing the children's play equipment, chain link fence, and wood trellis. A 3'-0" white picket fence will be installed around the perimeter, which is a typical style for Queen Anne homes. The applicant will present options for an Exterior Program Site of outdoor area (removed play equipment) to the HRRB for feedback.

The applicant will present the following options to the HRRB to recommend approval from the Planning Commission:

- Screening for the mechanical heat pumps and exterior venting
- Decking material - Americana thermally treated wood
- Siding material - Americana thermally treated wood
- Color Selections
- Exterior Program Site

Analysis

Proposed exterior work to the siding and windows shall be consistent with the SOI's Standards for Rehabilitation #6 where deteriorated historic features shall be repaired as first priority. If the siding material is too deteriorated to repair, the replacement material will be consistent in design, texture, and other visual qualities. Original siding material shall be prioritized at the public-facing facades first. The windows will be repaired as priority, and if deterioration is too severe, the Applicant is recommending to re-build the double-hung wood windows. A report documenting the replacement siding and window analysis is available in Attachment B - Project Plans, pages 15-17.

Exterior work related to the relocation of the mechanical equipment shall be consistent with the SOI's Standards for Rehabilitation #9 where exterior alterations or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The proposed new equipment will be located in areas away from the front entrance façade (North Elevation), keeping within Standard #10 where new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that it removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired. and proposed screening will be consistent with designs that are associated with the Queen Anne style.

The proposed site improvements are consistent with the SOI's Standards for Rehabilitation #2 and #9 in that the trellis, the play equipment and the chain link fence are all not typical features of Queen Anne style homes and are therefore being removed. A proposed garden with a designated exterior program area will be presented to the HRRB for feedback.

Next Steps

This project will be referred to the North County Land Use Advisory Committee to recommend approval to the Planning Commission. Should public works come forward with the elevator addition, that work would be subject to future HRRB and permit review.

CEQA

CEQA Guidelines section 15331 categorically exempts projects limited to the maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation, or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The project consists of the repair and rehabilitation of a historic property, consistent with the intent of this exemption, and none of the exceptions from CEQA guidelines section 15300.2 apply in this case:

- Class 31 exemptions are not qualified by their location;
- Repairing and rehabilitating a historic property would not contribute to a cumulative environmental effect;
- There are no unusual circumstances associated with the project that would create the reasonable possibility of a significant environmental effect;
- The project would not cause damage to scenic resources within view of a state scenic highway;
- The project is not on a hazardous waste site listed pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code; and
- The project would not cause a substantial adverse change to a historical resource.

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The following attachments are on file with HCD:

Attachment A - Draft Resolution

Attachment B - Project Plans

Attachment C - National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form

Attachment D - HRRB Narrative by RIM Architects (LET_LARSEN_PLN230203_082823)

Attachment E - Proposed Options for Exterior Program for review

Attachment F - Proposed Options for Exterior Decking and Siding Materials for review

cc: Historic Resources Review Board Agenda Distribution List; Hya Honorato, Planner; Phil Angelo, Associate Planner; Florence Kabwasa-Green (PWFP, County of Monterey), Applicant; Sylvia Larsen (RIM Architects), Agent; Planning File PLN230203