



Historic Resources Review Board

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PLN250090 - MOSS RICHARD F & BETTINA E MOSS TRS

Public hearing to consider recommending that the Chief of Planning approve an Administrative Design Approval for the renovation/remodel of an existing 2,367 square foot single family residence known as the McDonald House, which was originally designed by Mark Mills. Renovation work includes the main entry, mud room/garage, primary bathroom, kitchen, laundry and guest bathroom; a new sky light will be installed at the entrance (all glass). All exterior doors, windows and roofs will be replaced with new units fit to existing openings. Existing exterior redwood siding will be patched and repaired and painted to match existing. Remove existing tile shingle roofing and replace with asphalt shingles. Exterior lighting will be replaced with low wattage lighting and Sandblast exterior concrete block walls will return to their original color (light tan). Landscape improvements will be done adjacent to the main residence and will include various new seating locations on pervious ground cover.

Project Location: 55 Encina Drive, Carmel Valley (Assessor's Parcel Number 187-041-042-000), Carmel Valley Master Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

- 1) Find the Project categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15331;
- 2) Approve an Administrative Design Approval for the renovation/remodel of an existing 2,367 square foot single family residence known as the McDonald House which was originally designed by Mark Mills. Renovation work includes the main entry, mud room/garage, primary bathroom, kitchen, laundry and guest bathroom; a new sky light will be installed at the entrance (all glass). All exterior doors, windows and roofs will be replaced with new units fit to existing openings. Existing exterior redwood siding will be patched and repaired and painted to match existing. Remove existing tile shingle roofing and replace with asphalt shingles. Exterior lighting will be replaced with low wattage lighting and Sandblast exterior concrete block walls will return to their original color (light tan). Landscape improvements will be done adjacent to the main residence and will include various new seating locations on pervious ground cover.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

In December of 2024, the McDonald House was added to the Monterey County Register of Historic Resources, and a historic Property (Mills Act) contract was approved for the property. The property is an approximately 6.27-acre lot on Encina Drive west of Laureles Grade developed with a single-family residence with an attached garage and pool (The McDonald House), constructed in 1972

and 1973, respectively. On May 17, 2024, a building permit (23CP03997) was issued to construct a detached 967 square foot accessory dwelling unit. In April 2025, the applicant submitted a Design Approval for a renovation/remodel to the existing single-family home. The application included a general Rehabilitation and Maintenance plan, however, did not include an evaluation of the project's potential impacts to the residence from an historian. Staff requested this additional information, during which time a requested site visit was conducted by staff and a member of the HRRB subcommittee on June 16, 2025.

The McDonald house is an excellent example of Wrightian Organic Design principles expanded upon throughout the inventive hands of one of Wright's apprentices, architect Mark Mills (1921-2007). Character-defining features of the residence include its curvilinear shape, use of cinder block and vertical redwood siding as the exterior wall-cladding; extensive glazing including multiple skylights extending portions of the fenestration onto the cementitious roof covering to garner more nature light for the interior; a pie-shaped pool and terrace project form the front of the building envelope, providing an expansive view through the natural landscape setting of the grounds toward the mountains to the South. The curvilinear redwood lath finish of the interior ceiling is a main design feature of the residence.

A Phase I historic report was prepared by Kent L. Seavey, a qualified historian on the County's list of historical consultants, using the Department of Parks and Recreation form (DPR) 523 which concludes that the property is historically significant under California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) Criterion (important persons) for its association with architect Mark Mills (1921-2007), and under CRHR Criterion 3 (architecture) with its character-defining features. The historic assessment concludes the property retains a high degree of integrity.

The renovation work includes a new sky light to be installed at the main entrance (all glass) and removing the existing tile shingle roofing and replacing it with asphalt shingles to match existing. Two additional letters were provided by the historian Kent Seavey dated October 27, 2023, and May 23, 2025, which conclude:

- 1) The skylight will bring much needed natural daylight into a difficult interior space, and essentially will not be visible for the exterior, affecting no visual change to the historic building envelope. This minor addition is fully consistent with the Rehabilitation Standards, as a compatible use, through minor alteration, while preserving those portions of features which convey its historical, cultural or architectural values of the historic resource, as it will not create a significant adverse impact;
- 2) The new roofing materials meet the requirements of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, under the Standard for Rehabilitation in at least two ways: first, as the material addresses the Criteria for integrity, in that it meets the definition of as the ability of a property to convey its significance through seven aspects of integrity, location design, setting, materials. workmanship, feeling & association with its historic character. The workmanship will be consistent with the existing character of the roof, in its rural location and setting, continuing the feeling of significant architect Mark Mills design intention; and, secondly, the material is consistent with code, especially as it pertains to fire resistance, as well as its design, & consistent with Rehabilitation Standards # 6, as the new material will reflect the

original roofing in design and materials, while meeting Standard #9 requirement for differentiation from the original material but compatible with the historic roof covering.

Staff reviewed the project for conformance with its existing Mills Act contract and believe the proposed work to be in conformance to the terms of the contract. As detailed above, the project would be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the treatment of historic properties under the treatment approach of rehabilitation.

CEQA

The proposed project qualifies for a class 3 exemption pursuant to section 15331 of the CEQA Guidelines with no exceptions to section 15300.2. This exemption applies to projects that are for the **"maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources"** in a manner consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties" ("the Standards") are exempt from CEQA. Additionally, the project will not have a cumulative impact on the environment, there are no unusual circumstances regarding this project that will cause a significant impact to the environment, the project is not visible from any scenic highways, the project is not located on a hazardous waste site and the proposed project will not cause a substantial change to any historical resources.

Prepared by: Erika Isidro-Valdovinos, Permit Tech II

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Gonzales, Permit Center Manager

Approved by: Phil Angelo, Senior Planner

The following attachments are on file with Housing and Community Development:

Exhibit A - Draft Resolution

Exhibit B - Project Plans, Colors and Materials

Exhibit C - Phase I DPR 523 Assessment prepared by Kent Seavey

Exhibit D - Qualifying Letters from Kent Seavey

Cc: Ashley Habluetzel (Applicant); Project File PLN250090