



Historic Resources Review Board

Legistar File Number: 26-637

July 02, 2026

Introduced: 6/22/2026

Current Status: Agenda Ready

Version: 1

Matter Type: General Agenda Item

DA240329 - VARELA ERNEST & MARTHA

Public hearing to consider recommending that the Chief of Planning approve an after the fact Design Approval to clear code enforcement case (24CE00295) for the painting of an historic residence and to complete the repairs of a dilapidated detached storage shed to include an additional 150 square feet to the non-habitable accessory structure serving as a work garage. Colors to consist of 407 Carbon (black) for the trim, HLS4252 (Tudor Tan) for the accent and HLS4263 Hammered Pewter (greyish) for the house, materials to consist of vertical wood siding for the garage. The property is located at 20 First Street, Spreckels (Assessor's Parcel Number 177-033-018-000) Greater Salinas Area 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 qualifies for a Class 31 exception pursuant to section 15331 of the CEQA guidelines; and 2) approve an after the fact Design Approval to clear code enforcement case (24CE00295) for the painting of an historic residence and to complete the repairs of a dilapidated detached storage shed, as well as to include an additional 150 square feet to the non-habitable accessory structure and convert back to a garage.

DISCUSSION:

On June 5, 2025, the Varela application went before the HRRB to consider the application before them. However, the application was continued to a date uncertain due to confusion caused by the lack of a legible clear plan set and potential inconsistencies of the proposal with the Spreckels Design Guidelines. Staff stated a construction permit would be required and the current plans would be insufficient to submit for that purpose. HRRB member, Belinda Taluban, recommended revising the plan set for clarity, and suggested the applicant work with a draft person or professional designer to do so, and to consider working with staff and the HRRB site design subcommittee on ways to bring the project into alignment with the Spreckels Design Guidelines.

On April 21, 2026, the applicants submitted revised plans to address the lack of legible clear plan set of the 1954 detached garage. Although the site is historic, the Assessor's records show this detached structure is a storage structure built after the Victorian House of 1857. The existing storage structure will be rebuilt to maintain its historic roof and will use the same materials and be finished in the same colors as the main structure (Guideline R1.10); and the small 150 square foot addition in the front of the accessory structure will differentiate from the original structure.

The applicants maintain the colors used on the historic main house are compatible with the material of the historic structure, the historic character of the district, the style of the building and compatible with adjacent structures. There is a home around the corner with the same dark grey base but with a white

trim (Guideline R4.3).

According to the Spreckels Design Guidelines established by the Monterey County Planning and Building Inspection Department, the house is a residential type A, two story L-shaped Victorian Cottage house. This type of home was built from 1898-1908 by prominent architect, William H. Weeks. The residence is located on one of the main blocks, block "B". On August 27, 1991, the town of Spreckels became an official designated Historic District when the County enacted the new Monterey County Zoning Ordinance (Title 21). This concludes that the property is historically significant. According to the Official Map of Spreckels, the structure is a contributing structure with minor corrections. Contributing refers to a structure that was built by the Spreckels Sugar Company for worker housing, commercial or public use between 1897-1957. The contributing structures in Spreckels include residential buildings, early commercial buildings and some civic structures. Contributing structures must maintain their original historic characteristic, such as style, materials, and details in order to be labeled in this category.

The residence is a 2,126 square foot two-story L-shaped Victorian Cottage house constructed in 1857. In 1954 a detached 450 square foot garage and storage structure was built on the rear left side of the property according to Monterey County Assessor's records. According to Monterey County building records, in 1995 the County approved Design Approval DA94039 for a 72 square foot addition to the front of the house. In 1999, a building permit was finalized for repairs to the foundation for the single-family dwelling and showed the garage/shop to be 342 square feet. In 2003, a building permit was finalized for the interior bathroom remodel, new 20 square foot mechanical room addition, new 220 square foot uncovered deck, new stair rails and the replacement of windows in the bathroom and stairs.

In June 2024, a code enforcement case (24CE00295) was opened for alterations to the main structure and detached accessory structure within a Historic Resource District without the benefit of permits. The applicant now proposes an after-the-fact Design Approval for the painting of the historic residence and to complete the repairs of the dilapidated detached storage shed to include an additional 150 square feet and convert back to a garage. Colors to consist of 407 Carbon (black) for the trim, HLS4252 (Tudor Tan) for the accent and HLS4263 Hammered Pewter (greyish) for the house, and new materials to consist of vertical wood siding for the garage.

The Design Guidelines for Residential Building Types address 1) changes to existing residential buildings, 2) new construction of residential buildings. Pursuant to Policy 1, new buildings, alterations and additions to residential buildings should reflect the architectural qualities that unify the structures of the district. Designs for new buildings should also maintain the design integrity and distinguishing features of the existing historic district and of existing historic buildings. Guideline R1.10 states, accessory buildings should use the same materials and be finished in the same or compatible colors as the main structure. Accessory buildings should be smaller than the main building and can be a maximum height of 15 feet. The proposed repairs of the dilapidated 450 square foot detached storage shed with an additional 150 square feet brings it to a 600 square foot proposed garage. Existing roof structure will remain 15 feet in height. Colors and materials will match the existing single-family dwelling. The proposed siding is horizontal consistent with the existing horizontal siding of the historic

structure.

Appropriate materials, colors and finishes, in Policy 4, state colors and finishes that complement the existing building's style and materials, and the surrounding environment, should be used. The homes in Spreckels are simple structures and should be painted using simple schemes. Monochrome or polychrome color schemes, using white, light pastel or earthtone base colors with one or two compatible trim colors are appropriate. Hammered pewter (dark grey) and Carbon (black) are considered earthtone base colors. The two blend into a monochrome scheme and there are other houses in the neighborhood that have color schemes of a similar character. If the HRRB wishes, staff would be amenable to requiring the trim to be the same color as the roof accent. The Tudor Tan accent is consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

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: Elizabeth Gonzales, Permit Center Manager

Reviewed and Approved by: Jordan Evans-Pollockow, Assistant Planner

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

Exhibit A - Draft Resolution

Exhibit B - Revised Project Plans

Exhibit C - Design Approval application with Photo of Existing House

Exhibit D - Site Visit Photos

Cc: Ernest Varela (Owner/Applicant); Project File DA240329