

From: Lisa Vande Voorde <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, October 2, 2023 2:52 PM
To: City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>; Alex Khojikian <akhojikian@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: COMMENTS ON DRAFT GENERAL PLAN: Historic Resources Element

Dear City Council Members and City Manager,

I have taken a close look at the Staff Report for tonight's 10/2/23 City Council meeting, and I am submitting the following comments on items of specific concern.

First, regarding the staff recommended revisions to the Historic Resources Element as outlined on Attachment 3, I encourage Council to consider adding the changes highlighted in yellow. *My reasoning follows in green italics.*

Change ID 5: Add new policy to clearly support the City's comprehensive approach to historic preservation.

Comprehensive Approach to Historic Preservation. Implement a comprehensive approach to historic preservation based on conformance with state and federal laws and CEQA, community input and best practices from State and federal agencies, to find the right balancing between preservation with other important priorities such as providing new homes and supporting local businesses.

State law, federal law and CEQA must provide the framework to this policy to ensure compliance.

Change ID 6: Combine 2040 Draft General Plan Policies CD 5.1 and 5.2 to reduce redundancy.

Historic Preservation. Actively identify and preserve historic resources and concentrations of historic resources which convey the

flavor of local historical periods, are culturally significant, or provide an atmosphere of exceptional architectural interest or integrity, when they meet national, State, or local criteria. Historic resources include individual properties, districts, contributor properties to eligible historic districts, and sites that maintain San Mateo's sense of place and special identity, and enrich our understanding of the city's history and continuity with the past.

Contributor properties are very important components of an historical district. As illustration, one can consider an historical district as a quilt made up of squares of both eligible individual properties as well as contributor properties. All of them individually contribute to the whole, to the beauty, the identity, and character of the quilt.

Secondly, I would also like to provide my comment on specific provisions of the Chapter 5 Community Design Historic Resources Draft and ask the Council to consider adding the following language highlighted:

Policy CD 5.3: Historic Resources Definition.

Define historic resources as buildings, structures, sites, and districts, including contributors to historic districts, that are listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and/or California Register of Historical Resources, designated resources in the 1989 Historic Building Survey Report, and resources found to be eligible through documentation in a historic resources report.

Please add "contributors to eligible historic districts" to the definition of historic resources, for the same reasons I outlined above.

Finally, I'd like to comment about the Planning Commission's feedback regarding the Historic Resources Element, specifically:

Community Design and Historic Resources Element

- Remove eligible as part of the definition of Historic Resources in Policy CD 5.3 Historic Resources Definition.

WORDS HAVE MEANING. STRIKING ONE LITTLE WORD CAN HAVE MAJOR CONSEQUENCES. And I strongly object to the Planning Commission's recommendation to remove the word "eligible" from the definition of historic resources. That definition is critical to ALL provisions that follow in the Draft General Plan Historic Resources Element Goals, Actions and Policies. Deleting that word not only has serious implications for the entirety of the Historic Resource Element, it also goes against State, Federal, and CEQA laws. That our Planning Commission would advocate going against these laws should be of major concern to our City Council.

Thank you for your time, and I sincerely hope my comments will be considered as you go forward in your deliberations this evening.

Lisa Vande Voorde

San Mateo Resident