



PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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MEMORANDUM: Historic Resource Evaluation Response

MEA Planner: Brett Bolinger
Project Address: 15th Ave. and Wawona St.
Block: 2540 Lot: 008
Case No.: 2006.0608E
Date of Review: April 12, 2007

Planning Department Reviewer:
Sophie Middlebrook
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Preparer / Consultant

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Owner

Name: Edward Sage
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PROPOSED PROJECT

- ☐ Demolition
☐ Alteration
☒ New Construction

Project description:

The project site, Assessor's Block 2540, Lot 008, measures approximately 32,570 square feet and is currently undeveloped parkland that was originally part of a 12.23-acre property (445 Wawona Street) owned by the private non-profit residential care facility called Arden Wood. The project site is located on the northeast corner of the original Arden Wood property. The proposed project is to construct an eight-unit, single-family residential development. Each of the eight proposed new dwellings is a detached unit on its own distinct lot. Development of the proposed project would help to provide financial support for the Arden Wood assisted living/nursing care facility, located adjacent to the project site to the west.

In order to develop eight single-family detached dwellings, the 32,570 square foot area of the project site has been subdivided into eight lots, seven of which would measure approximately 4,000 feet and front on 15th Avenue, and one of which would measure approximately 4,560 square feet and front on Wawona Street. The lot subdivision application was approved by the Planning Department on December 1, 2006.

A detached, single-family dwelling that measures approximately 35' high and 3,760 gross square feet (gsf) is proposed for each of the eight lots. Each of the proposed new units is a three-story, three-bedroom unit with two off-street parking spaces. The seven residences proposed for 15th Avenue would each have a front setback that measures approximately 15', and a rear yard that measures approximately 40' in length, and side yards that measure approximately 4' in width. The unit proposed for Wawona Street would have a front set back that measures approximately 15', a rear yard of approximately 49' in length, and two side yards of 5' in width.

Pre-Existing Historic Rating / Survey

The project site is located adjacent to an existing residential care facility and its associated landscaped, wooded grounds. According to information provided by the Project Sponsor and the County Assessor's records, the residential care facility and the landscaped grounds were designed and constructed in 1929. The site is not listed on the California Register or the National Register. The proposed project does not include demolition of the existing structure or any new construction on the property of the Arden Wood care facility; however, the project site is adjacent to the potential historical resource, and is comprised of land that was formerly part of the Arden Wood landscaped grounds.

Historic District / Neighborhood Context

The project site is located on Assessor's Block 2540, Lot 008, in an RH-1(D) zoning district and a 40-X height and bulk district, in the Lakeshore neighborhood adjacent to both the Parkside neighborhoods and the West of Twin Peaks neighborhood. The landscaped parkland, including large trees, open green space, and pedestrian paths, characterizes the subject block. The surrounding blocks are primarily residential, with detached, one- and two-story single-family homes, as well as multi-family buildings in the adjacent RH-2 district, and limited commercial buildings on West Portal Avenue across the street.

1.) California Register Criteria of Significance: **Note,** a building may be an historical resource if it meets any of the California Register criteria listed below. If more information is needed to make such a determination please specify what information is needed. *(This determination for California Register Eligibility is made based on existing data and research provided to the Planning Department by the above named preparer / consultant and other parties. Key pages of report and a photograph of the subject building are attached.)*

- **Event:** or ☐Yes ☒No ☐Unable to determine
- **Persons:** or ☐Yes ☒No ☐Unable to determine
- **Architecture:** or ☒Yes ☐No ☐Unable to determine
- **Information Potential:** ☐ Further investigation recommended.
- **District or Context** ☒Yes, may contribute to a potential district or significant context

If Yes; Period of significance: 1930 – Present

Notes: The project site was legally subdivided in December, 2006 from the property owned by Arden Wood, on which the residential care facility and the majority of the parkland is located. However, the eight subdivided lots, located on the northeast perimeter of the original property, fronting on both 15th Avenue and Wawona Street, form part of the historic context for the residential care facility and its grounds. The site's significance appears to derive from the architecture of the residential care facility, constructed in the "French Chateau" style, as well as the building's historic context in the park setting. The property is eligible for the California Register based on Criterion 3:

Criterion 3: It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values;

The residential care facility is a four- and five-story concrete building configured in a "Y"-shaped plan with a steeply pitched, red-shingle clad roof and fenestration pattern typical of the French Chateau architectural style. The building, known historically as the Christian Science Sanatorium, was constructed in 1929 by the Christian Science Benevolent Association, Pacific Coast, and continues to operate in the same capacity today. The architectural firm of Henry H. Gutterson designed the building to fit the park-like setting, designed by landscape architect Helen Van Pelt.

An article published in the July, 1930 issue of *The Architect and Engineer* describes the relationship between the building and it's wooded setting as key to understanding the architectural style: "The building is placed in a grove of splendid Eucalyptus trees and has taken its idea from its setting[...], though the building is conceived and treated in a traditional style of architecture, it is a style that is not often used here in California and its use required courage, and a conviction that it was peculiarly adapted to the unusual conditions not only of the program but also of the immediate surroundings."¹ The purpose of the building was to provide a place of rest and recuperation, and its setting in the secluded grove was essential to its mission. An emphasis was placed on the importance of access to light and air, both through the architecture – the large number of windows, the high ceilings, and multiple terraces and balconies allowed for each room to have ample access to light and air – and through the landscaped park paths.

¹ John Bakewell, Jr., "A Christian Science Sanatorium," *The Architect and Builder*, (July, 1930), page 59.

2.) Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be a resource for the purposes of CEQA, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the California Register criteria, but it also must have integrity. To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects. The subject property has retained or lacks integrity from the period of significance noted above:

location,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks	setting,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks
design,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks	feeling,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks
materials,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks	association.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks
workmanship	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retains	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks			

Notes: As noted above, the project site is comprised of land that formed part of the historic context of the Christian Science Sanatorium. The site is significant based on the architecture of the residential care facility, as well as the historic association between the building and the landscaped grounds. The residential care facility has neither changed ownership nor use since its construction, and remains largely unchanged. The grounds remain wooded with landscaped paths, and also remain largely unchanged despite the administratively approved subdivision of the northeast corner of the property into eight distinct lots.

The character-defining architectural features of the residential care facility will not be impacted by the proposed project, as no alterations to the existing building are included in the proposed project. The historic significance of the grounds is derived from their ability to provide seclusion from the surrounding urban setting. The proposed project is focused on the outer edges of the property, on deep lots with detached buildings that preserve large front and rear setbacks and retain a thick landscaping pattern. Although the proposed project includes adding eight single-family dwellings to the northeast section of the property, the addition of the eight buildings does not appear to constitute a significant impact to the historic grounds. The proposed new buildings are each located on the perimeter of the property, on deep lots with extensive front and rear yards. The interior portion of the block – an area of over 11 acres – will remain as park-like grounds on the interior of the block.

3.) DETERMINATION Whether the property is an “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA

<input type="checkbox"/> No Resource Present (Go to 6. below)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historical Resource Present (Continue to 4.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category A (1/2) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Category B <input type="checkbox"/> Category C
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4.) If the property appears to be an historical resource, whether the proposed project is consistent with the Secretary of Interior’s Standards or if any proposed modifications would materially impair the resource (i.e. alter in an adverse manner those physical characteristics which justify the property’s inclusion in any registry to which it belongs).

- ☒ The project appears to meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards. (go to 6. below)
(Optional) See attached explanation of how the project meets standards.
- ☐ The project is **NOT** consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and is a significant impact as proposed. (Continue to 5. if the project is an alteration)

Notes: The proposed new construction of eight single-family residences will not significantly impact the historic landscaped grounds of the Arden Wood residential care facility. As noted above, because the proposed project is focused on the perimeter of the property, on large lots with street frontage, the significant interior mid-block wooded grounds are not impacted by the proposed project. The proposed new units appear to be compatible with the character of the neighborhood, and with the architecture of the adjacent Arden Wood residential care facility.

The Department is aware that there are additional development projects under consideration in the northwest portion of the property. Future development proposals should confine new construction to the perimeter of the property in order to maintain the character-defining landscaped grounds at the midblock.

5.) Character-defining features of the building to be retained or respected in order to avoid a significant adverse effect by the project, presently or cumulatively, as modifications to the project to reduce or avoid impacts. Please recommend conditions of approval that may be desirable to mitigate the project's adverse effects.

Notes: In order to avoid a significant, cumulative impact to the historic grounds associated with the Arden Wood residential care facility, any future development proposals should confine new construction to the outer perimeters of the property. A large, green, landscaped park area in the mid-block is a character-defining feature of the property, and should be protected in any subdivision or development proposals.

6.) Whether the proposed project may have an adverse effect on off-site historical resources, such as adjacent historic properties.

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Unable to determine

Notes: As noted above, the project site is comprised of land that was historically part of the parkland and grounds associated with the Arden Wood residential care facility. The proposed construction of eight single-family dwellings on the perimeter of the property appears to avoid an adverse effect to the adjacent historical resource by concentrating all development on the perimeter of the property.

PRESERVATION COORDINATOR REVIEW

Signature 
Mark Luellen, Preservation Coordinator

Date: 4-13-07

Cc Sonya Banks, Recording Secretary, Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board
Virna Byrd / Historic Resource Impact Review File
Michael E. Smith/Neighborhood Planner, SW Quadrant