




City of Palm Springs
Department of Planning Services

Memorandum

Date: January 11, 2011
To: HSPB Board Members
From: Craig A. Ewing, AICP, Director of Planning Services 
Subject: HD 1; 645 N. Indian Canyon Drive
Pepper Tree Inn; Review of Certificate of Approval

SUMMARY

At its meeting of December 14, 2010, the HSPB requested that this item be placed on the January 2011 agenda after noting that additional landscape had been added to the site. Staff noted at the time that no landscape plans or other items had been submitted for Board review, as required by the Certificate of Approval, granted November 9, 2010.

On January 4, 2011 staff sent a letter to the property owner indicating that the Board would review this item on January 11, 2011. Coincidentally, the applicant submitted the brown color for repainting the exposed wood, as well as a proposal for an additional door entry. No landscape plans have been submitted. The Board is requested to review the submitted items.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Historic Site Preservation Board approve the submitted brown color option, and approve the proposed entry door. The Board may direct staff regarding any remaining item on this matter.

PRIOR ACTIONS TAKEN ON THE PROJECT

On April 16, 1986, the City Council established the Las Palmas Business Historic District, identifying the Pepper Tree Inn as a "contributing structure".

On September 27, 1991, Planning Staff approved a repaint of all buildings at the Pepper Tree Inn according to submitted paint samples.

On September 11, 2002, the Planning Commission granted a request to construct a new hotel / restaurant building including the painting of all buildings "La Habra Adobe" color at 622 N. Palm Canyon Drive.

On December 14, 2010, the HSPB granted a Certificate of Approval for a repaint of the structure, including certain conditions of approval.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Pepper Tree Inn has substantially remodeled over the years. In 1986, it was identified as a "contributing structure" within the Las Palmas Business Historic District (HD 1) and was reviewed November 9, 2009, after a repaint had begun without prior HSPB approval. The Board's action November 9th action included conditions of approval, as noted in the meeting minutes:

M/S/C (Ploss / Strahl, 7-0) To approve the removal of the tile (to be re-stuccoed) and repainting the stucco walls white.

The applicant is directed to return to the HSPB with plans for finishing all exposed wood trim, balustrades, door and window frames, entry building, and patio additions, as well as a landscape plan. Chair Gilmer noted that the lighter color wood at Cheeky's was preferable to a darker color.

The applicant has submitted plans for the brown repaint of the building's wood trim. It is a medium brown (Behr Ultra; Artisan UL120-3; flat) , which can be viewed at the following site:

<http://www.homedepot.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/ProductDisplay?jspStoreDir=hdu&catalogId=10053&productId=202180262&navFlow=3&keyword=ul120-3&langId=-1&searchRedirect=ul120-3&storeId=10051&endecaDataBean=com.homedepot.sa.el.wc.integration.endeca.EndecaDataBean%4017ed8354&ddkey=Search>

A paint sample will be presented at the meeting.

As regards the proposed door, it is proposed to be located on the south façade under a covered porch and would provide a new entry to the inn. The door is proposed with mullioned windows set between two mullioned lights and matches other doors on the building. It will be stained brown to match other brown trim. Detailed plans will be presented at the meeting.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends that the Board approve the brown color and the proposed door. The Board may take other appropriate action regarding the landscape plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This project is categorically exempt from environmental review per Section 15301(L), (1) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

ATTACHMENTS

1. November 9, 2010 Staff Report and Meeting Minutes (excerpt)
2. Proposed plans and color sample (to be displayed at the meeting)



Historic Site Preservation Board Staff Report

Date: November 9, 2010

Case No.: 3.1018 – HD #1 Las Palmas Business Historic District

Application Type: Certificate of Approval – Building Repaint, New Doors

Location: 645 N. Indian Canyon Drive

Applicant: Pepper Tree Inn

Zone: R-3 (Multi-Family Residential and Hotel Zone)

General Plan: NCC (Neighborhood Community Commercial)

APN: 505-303-029

From: Glenn Mlaker, AICP, Assistant Planner

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is for a certificate of approval for the Pepper Tree Inn to repaint six (6) contributing structures within the Las Palmas Business Historic District the color white for exterior walls, doors, colored tile, trim, eaves, and all other wood elements, plus the re-orientation of the main office to include a new steel door and four (4) west facing patio doors at 645 N. Indian Canyon Drive.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Historic Site Preservation Board continue the request to repaint six (6) contributing structures and direct the applicant to submit an appropriate paint scheme and new door proposal.

PRIOR ACTIONS TAKEN ON THE PROJECT

On September 27, 1991, Planning Staff approved a repaint of all buildings at the Pepper Tree Inn according to submitted paint samples.

On September 11, 2002, the Planning Commission granted a request to construct a new hotel / restaurant building including the painting of all buildings "La Habra Adobe" color at 622 N. Palm Canyon Drive.

BACKGROUND AND SETTING

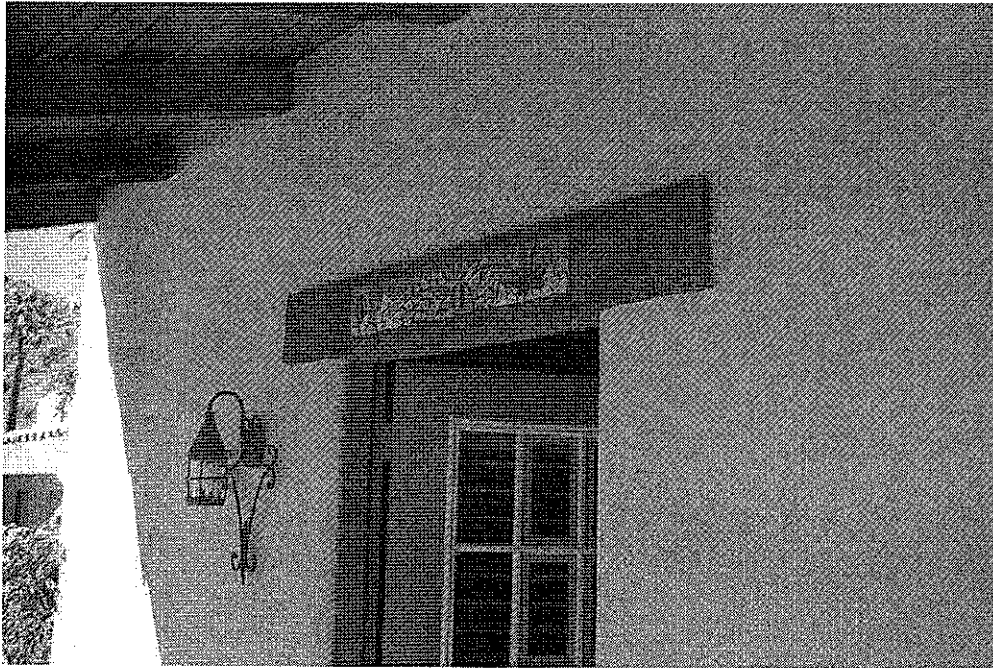
The property located at 645 North Indian Canyon Drive is located within the Las Palmas Business Historic District which is comprised of two types of buildings; contributing and non-contributing structures. The site known as the Pepper Tree Inn at the southern end of the historic district is considered to be a contributing structure. Contributing structures within the historic district are subject to Class 1 regulations.

The Las Palmas Business Historic District is the first historic district established in the City of Palm Springs. While it was created by the City Council in 1986, the District was not implemented until August 2009. The City Council adopted a map of the District for contributing and non-contributing structures. (See attached map) In the twenty-three years since the District was established, no applications were reviewed under the terms of the District. During that time, many permits were issued for new development and for renovations or remodels of existing buildings. It is staff's position that all development that received permits prior to August 2009 is grandfathered, notwithstanding the lack of any District-level review.

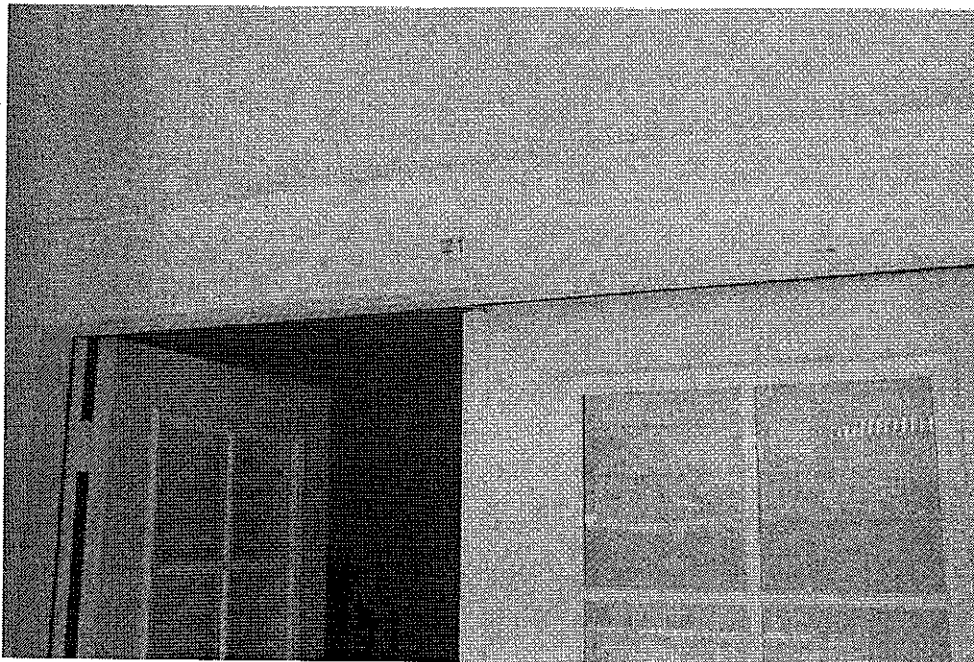
Staff became aware of an on-going repaint of the Pepper Tree Inn on Thursday, October 28, 2010. At that time Code Enforcement conducted a site visit to inform the on-site manager that an approval is needed from the City of Palm Springs and all painting must stop.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

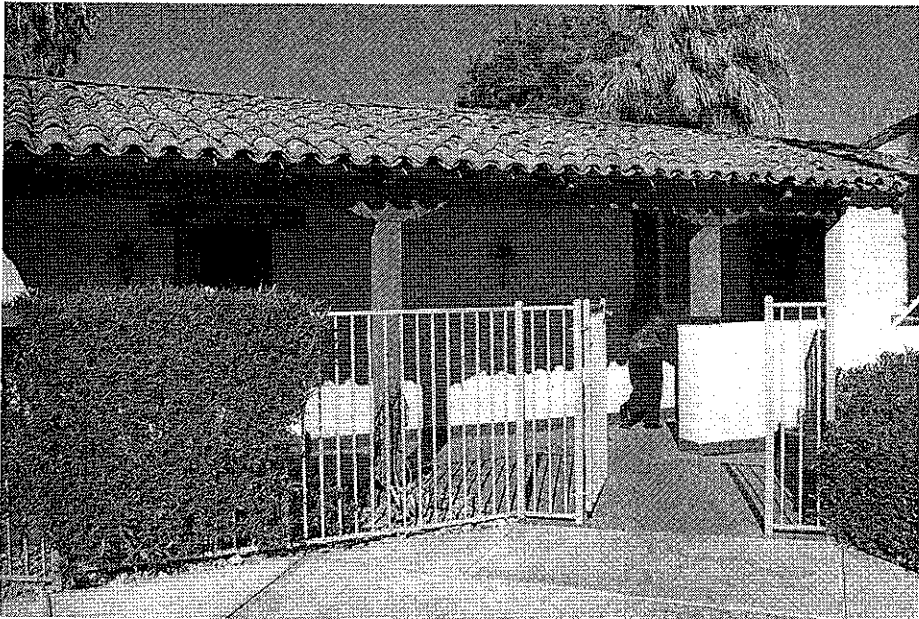
The applicant has proposed a repaint of six (6) structures from their current paint color of "La Habra Adobe" to bright white. The repaint that has occurred without approval includes painting of exterior walls, door trim, roof eaves, tiles, and other natural wood elements.



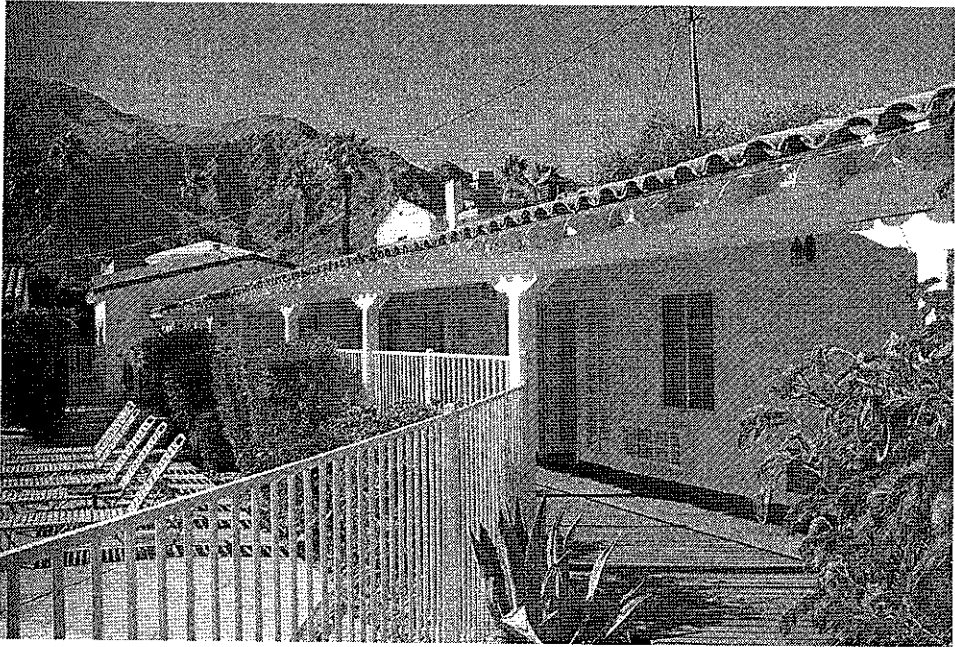
Wood trim, door, tile and eave before painting.



Wood trim, door and tile after painting.



Wood posts, doors, eaves, and trim before painting.



Wood posts, doors, eaves and trim after painting.

FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED

Section 8.05.180 of the Municipal Code provides for factors to be considered upon an application or alteration of a contributing structure within an Historic District are as follows:

8.05.180 Approval required

No person may undertake any of the following within or upon a Class 1 historic site without a certificate of approval from the historic site preservation board:

- (1) *Construction of a new structure;*
- (2) *The moving, demolition or alteration of an existing structure in any manner which affects the exterior appearance of the structure;*

The Pepper Tree Inn a contributing structure within the Las Palmas Business Historic District is subject to Class 1 building regulations. The Inn has been altered in a manner that affects the exterior appearance of the structure. The painting of the wood and tile elements to bright white will change the look of the building from a warm brown adobe color commonly associated with a Spanish Hacienda.

- (3) *A change in land use which affects the exterior appearance of a structure or the interior arrangement of public buildings;*
- (4) *The erection, remodeling or replacing of a sign which affects the exterior appearance of a structure.*

8.05.190 Factors to be considered upon application.

In reviewing and acting upon each application, the historic site preservation board shall consider:

- (1) *The historic value and significance, or the architectural value and significance or both, of the structure and its relation to the historic value of the surrounding area;*

Staff has evaluated this application to repaint from "La Habra Adobe" to bright white and finds that the painting of the wood trim, roof eaves, door frames, and tiles diminishes the significance of the building.

(2) *The relationship of the exterior architectural features of any structure to the rest of the structure itself and to the surrounding area;*

The alteration of the distinctive and unique architectural elements of the Pepper Tree Inn will compromise this contributing structure. The repaint of the building including wood trim and other details to bright white will be detriment to the overall aesthetic look of the property and the historic district. The exterior alteration to these buildings will not further the intent of the Las Palmas Business Historic District.

(3) *The general compatibility of exterior design, arrangement, texture and material which is proposed by the applicant;*

The building repaint will not be compatible with other Spanish style buildings within the historic district. The unique design elements of a Spanish style building to include wood trim, colorful tile work, exposed wood eaves, and wooden door frames if altered will not be consistent with other contributing structures within the Historic District.

CONCLUSION

Staff has concluded that the proposed building repaint will alter the exterior Spanish style of the Inn and HSPB should continue the request until such time that an appropriate paint scheme and new door proposal can be submitted. The applicant must agree to the continuance (and an accompanying extension of time beyond the 45-day limit). If the applicant does not support the continuance, staff recommends denial of the request.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This project is categorically exempt from environmental review per Section 15301(L), (1) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

Glenn Mlaker, AICP
Assistant Planner

Craig A. Ewing, AICP
Director of Planning Services, AICP

ATTACHMENTS

1. Site Photographs
2. Site Plan
3. Map of Contributing Structures within Las Palmas Business Historic District

~~7. CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL REQUEST(C)~~



7A. Case 3.108 / HD #1, Las Palmas Historic District – Tara Lazar, owner of Pepper Tree Inn for the repaint of six (6) buildings to the color white and the re-orientation of the main office to include a new door and four (4) new west facing patio doors at 645 N. Indian Canyon Drive, Zone R-3, Section 10, APN 505-303-029.

Glenn Mlaker summarized the staff report.

Board members asked questions regarding the prior approval for repaint, the reconstruction of the property and the status within the Old Las Palmas Business Historic District.

Carol Blum, recently took ownership with Tara Lazar to remodel and reposition the hotel. Adjacent buildings, including former parts of the original Pepper Tree Inn, are currently white and a repaint to white would establish a more cohesive look to the site and surroundings. New site, sign, and landscape plans are being developed.

Hugh Gasper, architect, described the remodel work that was undertaken in the early 2000's, including demising (dividing) the building at the underlying property lines and bringing the structure up to current code. He provided comments on the repaint undertaken a few months ago, including the effect of the bright white paint. He also indicated that the wood rafter tails would not be painted, the tile would be removed and re-stuccoed, and landscaping would be added to mitigate the white building.

Board members raised questions on:

- The decorative tile work added in 2000 and its removal,
- The painting of the eaves, corbels and columns.
- The color of the trim, especially white (proposed) versus brown / wood

The Board discussed:

- The proposed white paint for the building -and how it fits into the historic district
- Wood-colored trim, rather than white;
- The change of name from Pepper Tree Inn to the Alcazar
- Replacement of Queen Palms with more desert-appropriate tree
- Review by the Architectural Advisory Committee
- The impact of the project on holiday business.

M/S/C (Ploss / Strahl, 7-0) To approve the removal of the tile (to be re-stuccoed) and repainting the stucco walls white.

The applicant is directed to return to the HSPB with plans for finishing all exposed wood trim, balustrades, door and window frames, entry building, and patio additions, as well as a landscape plan. Chair Gilmer noted that the lighter color wood at Cheeky's was preferable to a darker color.

~~8. OTHER BUSINESS.~~

- ~~8A. HSPB 67 - Request for Recommendation of Mills Act Agreement with the City of Palm Springs for the "de Brabant House" located at 982 Avenida Palmas, Zone R-1-B, Section 11, APN 507-155-006. (CE)~~

~~Edward Robertson summarized the staff report.~~

~~M/S/C (Stahl / Grattan, 7-0) To recommend to the City Council to enter into a Mills Act contract with the property owner.~~

- ~~8B. Discussion of Potential Candidates for Historic Designation~~

~~Edward Robertson summarized the staff report.~~

~~The Board discussed the materials presented by staff. Vice Chair Marshall offered to create an updated list of properties for consideration at the next meeting. The Board discussed:~~

- ~~• Additional properties not found on prior lists;~~
- ~~• Potential historic districts, and the issues surrounding the creation of new districts; and~~
- ~~• The City's ability to process no more than about five or six applications.~~

~~The Board accepted Vice Chair Marshall's offer to prepare a consolidated list of candidate properties for review at the December meeting.~~

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 9A. Las Palmas Business Historic District Committee – Board members Ploss and DeLeeuw presented a list of contributing properties within the district, and reported that research continues into relevant background information. A panorama photo survey is also being prepared. Non-contributing properties will also be researched. The Board discussed:

- The potential of reclassifying non-contributing properties;
- Analyzing all properties in the district, including each property's status in the current district, its current use(s), and any potential for reclassification;
- Creating an overlay zone district beyond the current historic district; and
- The status of construction projects within the district.

- 9B. Public Outreach Committee – Chair Gilmer had no additional comments.