




City of Palm Springs
Department of Planning Services

Memorandum

Date: February 14, 2012
To: HSPB Board Members
From: Craig A. Ewing, AICP, Director of Planning Services 
Subject: Secretary of Interior Standards and Guidelines – Draft Resolution

As requested at the last meeting, staff contacted several cities with active historic preservation programs to determine how they use the Secretary of Interiors Standards and Guidelines. Attached are the e-mail responses received from two cities: Carmel and Glendale. I also spoke by telephone with the staff from Long Beach and Riverside County.

From these few responses, it appears that the agencies generally focus on the ten Standards for Rehabilitation, whether or not they have adopted this limited excerpt or the entire book of Standards and Guidelines. All have indicated that few problems have arisen from this practice. (Please note that the County of Riverside does not have a preservation program for specific sites – only for historic districts.)

While this is an admittedly small sample, it provides some insight into the use of the Secretary's standards. Staff believes that a resolution that recommends adoption of the ten Standards for Rehabilitation, and identifies the full document as only a reference for applicants would be appropriate. A draft resolution is attached for the Board's consideration.

Attachments:

1. Draft Resolution
2. E-mails from the City of Carmel and the City of Glendale
3. The Standards for Rehabilitation, excerpted from "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings".

RESOLUTION NO. _____

OF THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT THE STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION FROM "THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES, WITH GUIDELINES..." FOR THE EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8.05 OF THE PALM SPRINGS MUNICIPAL CODE

WHEREAS, Chapter 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code establishes standards and procedures for the designation and preservation of historic sites, including the creation of the Historic Site Preservation Board (Board); and

WHEREAS, the preservation of designated historic sites is implemented through the issuance of Certificates of Approval, as approved by the Board, and subject to consideration of the following factors:

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;*
2. *The relationship of the exterior architectural features of any structure to the rest of the structure itself and to the surrounding area;*
3. *The general compatibility of exterior design, arrangement, texture and material which is proposed by the applicant;*
4. *Archaeological or ecological significance of the area.*

and

WHEREAS, the Historic Site Preservation Board has determined that additional guidance in the use and consideration of the above factors is necessary and desirable to assure that the highest standards of preservation are upheld in the preservation and use of historic properties in the City; and

WHEREAS, that the Board has reviewed the United States Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings ("Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines") and determined:

- (1) The Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines is a comprehensive and complete guide to historic preservation;
- (2) These standards and guidelines assure a full understanding by owners, architects, designers, and preservationists regarding the issues associated with the treatment of historic buildings; and
- (3) The specific "Standards for Rehabilitation" from the Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines would aid in the evaluation and consideration by the HSPB of the factors associated with issuing Certificates of Approval.

THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD DOES HEREBY RESOLVE:

SECTION 1: The Board recommends that the City Council recognize and adopt the Standards for Preservation from the "Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings" as the standards by which Certificates of Approval are evaluated under Section 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code.

SECTION 2: The Board further recommends that the City Council direct the staff and the Board to direct applicants to the Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines as they prepare applications for Certificates of Approval.

ADOPTED THIS ___th day of _____ 2012.

ATTEST:

Craig A. Ewing, AICP, Board Secretary

Craig Ewing

From: Sean Conroy [sconroy@ci.carmel.ca.us]
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2012 4:36 PM
To: Craig Ewing
Subject: RE: Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards
Attachments: secretary standards.pdf

We did adopt the full book, but we use primarily the one page set for rehabilitation in our reviews. I've attached a sample consultant review that is typical of what is prepared. We haven't had any issues dealing with it this way.

Sean

*Sean Conroy, AICP
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(831)620-2010*

From: Craig Ewing [mailto:Craig.Ewing@palmsprings-ca.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2012 4:24 PM
To: Sean Conroy
Subject: RE: Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

Sean,

Thank you for your reply. We are looking at adopting the Secretary's Standards and have found ourselves torn between the one-page set of standards for rehabilitation and the 177-page book of standards and guidelines. Does Carmel use the big book? Does it pose any administrative or other challenges on case-by-case review? We're trying to learn from actual experience rather than guess at what might happen. Again, your reply is much appreciated.

Craig A. Ewing, AICP
Director of Planning Services
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3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way
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760-323-8269

From: Sean Conroy [mailto:sconroy@ci.carmel.ca.us]
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2012 3:53 PM
To: Craig Ewing
Subject: RE: Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

Hi Craig. We have adopted the Secretary's Standards and they are used in the review of all exterior changes to historic buildings. Below is an excerpt from our Historic Preservation Ordinance along with a link to the full ordinance (CMC Section 17.32). Our design review process for projects impacting historic resources is as follows:

- Applicant submits a deposit of \$1500
- City hires a preservation consultant to review plans
- Consultant prepares a report summarizing how the project is or is not consistent with the Secretary's Standards
- Staff prepares a staff report and incorporates the consultant's report for review by the Historic Resources Board
- Board reviews the application in a public hearing and makes a determination of consistency with the Standards
- If determined to be consistent, project moves on to next stage of design review (staff approval or planning commission review).
- Remaining amount, if any, of the deposit is refunded to applicant

Hope that helps!

*Sean Conroy, AICP
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17.32.140 Determination of Consistency with the Secretary's Standards.

A. All major and minor alterations to historic resources shall require a determination of consistency with the Secretary's Standards. The Department shall make consistency determinations for minor alterations. Staff may shall retain a qualified professional, when necessary, to assist in making the determination.

B. Consistency determinations for major alterations shall require an evaluation by a qualified professional and review and approval by the Historic Resources Board. Qualified professionals retained by the City to evaluate proposed alterations to historic resources shall be at the applicant's expense. The Department shall determine whether the proposed project constitutes a minor or major alteration.

<http://www.codepublishing.com/CA/carmel.html>

From: Craig Ewing [mailto:Craig.Ewing@palmsprings-ca.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2012 3:00 PM
To: Sean Conroy
Subject: Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

Mr. Conroy,
 I am inquiring of other cities who are dedicated to historic preservation about the use of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Can you please tell me if the City of Carmel has adopted these Standards and, if so, how the Standards are incorporated into your review process. Any experiences you can offer would be helpful. Thanks.

Craig A. Ewing, AICP
 Director of Planning Services
 City of Palm Springs

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760-323-8269

When I am working on a problem I never think about beauty.
I only think about how to solve the problem.
But when I have finished, if the solution is not beautiful,
I know it is wrong.

- *Buckminster Fuller (1895-1983)*

Craig Ewing

From: Platt, Jay [JPlatt@ci.glendale.ca.us]
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2012 6:01 PM
To: Craig Ewing
Subject: RE: Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

We don't reference the book – generally just the 10 standards. The material in the book, however, covers similar specifics as our district design guidelines. We haven't had any serious problems with our design review. I think establishing city-specific guidelines is the best solution because it gives both applicants and staff more certainty than just using the Standards. That said, we don't have guidelines for our individual designations and things have been working fine.

Jay

Jay Platt

Glendale Community Development Department
Planning Division
Historic Preservation & Urban Design
(818) 937-8155

Find out more about historic preservation in Glendale [here!](#)

From: Craig Ewing [mailto:Craig.Ewing@palmsprings-ca.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2012 5:56 PM
To: Platt, Jay
Subject: RE: Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

Thanks, Jay. When you speak of the Secretary Standards for Rehabilitation, do you mean the one-page list of 10 standards or does City staff work with the 177-page book? Does the City experience much controversy with you use the Standards on case-by-case review?

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From: Platt, Jay [mailto:JPlatt@ci.glendale.ca.us]
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2012 5:16 PM
To: Craig Ewing
Subject: RE: Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

Craig –

Though our ordinances don't specifically mention the Standards (something we hope to change this year) they do underlie our district design guidelines and our day-to-day policies and practice. Specifically, work on individually-designated sites can be approved at staff level if it meets the Standards for Rehabilitation; work that doesn't must be heard by our Historic Preservation Commission. We retain flexibility to send any project, particularly those at high-profile and/or city-owned properties, to HPC even if we determine it to meet the Standards. Similarly, projects in our historic districts that follows our guidelines are typically approved by staff specifically because the guidelines are based on the Standards.

Hope this helps – let me know if there's anything else I can help with –

Jay

Jay Platt

Glendale Community Development Department
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(818) 937-8155

Find out more about historic preservation in Glendale [here!](#)

From: Craig Ewing [mailto:Craig.Ewing@palmsprings-ca.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2012 2:57 PM
To: Platt, Jay
Subject: Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

Mr. Platt,

I am inquiring of other cities who are dedicated to historic preservation about the use of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Can you please tell me if the City of Glendale has adopted these Standards and, if so, how the Standards are incorporated into your review process. Any experiences you can offer would be helpful. Thanks.

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The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The Standards (Department of Interior regulations, 36 CFR 67) pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior, related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

- 1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.**
- 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.**
- 3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.**
- 4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.**
- 5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.**
- 6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.**
- 7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.**
- 8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.**
- 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.**
- 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.**