



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: July 11, 2012

PUBLIC HEARING

SUBJECT: CASE HSPB #79: APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION OF THE KOCHER-SAMSON BUILDING AT 766 N. PALM CANYON DRIVE AS A CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE

FROM: David H. Ready, City Manager

BY: The Planning Department

SUMMARY

Under Section 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code (Historic Resources), the City Council may designate properties as "Class 1" historic sites. The City's Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) has recommended such a designation for the entire site, excluding landscaping, at 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive ("Kocher-Samson Building"). The property owner has also expressed support for the designation. The Council will conduct a public hearing and determine if the site should be designated. Class 1 designation would place the building under the guidance of Municipal Code Section 8.05 "Historic Preservation".

RECOMMENDATION

1. Open the public hearing and accept public testimony.
2. Adopt Resolution No. ____: "A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA DESIGNATING THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 766 N. PALM CANYON DRIVE ("KOCHER-SAMSON BUILDING") AS A HISTORIC SITE, CLASS 1 – HSPB 79"

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The HSPB initiated an investigation to determine if the subject property should be designated a Class 1 historic site. Such designation would:

1. Place the subject property under the guidance of Municipal Code Section 8.05
2. Require present and subsequent owners to maintain the site consistent with that ordinance, and

ITEM NO. 16

3. Grant possible property tax reduction opportunities to the owner under the State of California Mills Act.

A full project description, historic assessment report, findings and recommendations can be found in the HSPB staff report and other exhibits attached hereto.

PRIOR ACTIONS

In 2004, the Kocher-Samson Building site was identified in the Citywide Historic Resources Survey as possessing significant historic importance.

On March 13, 2012, the Historic Site Preservation Board initiated an application to consider if the subject property should be designated a historic structure.

On April 10, 2012, the HSPB voted 5-0-1 (Strahl absent) to recommend that the City Council designate the site at 766 N. Palm Canyon Road, a Class 1 Historic Site in accordance with Municipal Code Section 8.05. HSPB Resolution #79 is attached.

DISCUSSION

The property is a 4500 square foot (one-tenth acre) lot located on the east side of North Palm Canyon, 84 feet south of the intersection with Tamarisk Road. The site is a flat, rectangular lot having a width of 36 feet and a depth of 125 feet. Surrounding uses include commercial to the north, south and west, with multi-family residential ("Casa Palmeras") to the east.

The lot is fully developed with the Kocher-Samson Building (1934-35) and associated parking, which is accessed from Indian Canyon Drive via an off-site driveway. The building was originally composed of four cuboid volumes organized to create enclosed and open spaces, both covered and uncovered. Perimeter walls further define the outdoor spaces. A metal carport for three vehicles (subsequently demolished) was constructed in the rear (easterly) portion of the property.

No building permits have been found in the City's records. From a comparison with historic photographs, the building has experienced several modifications:

- At least two of the four outdoor garden spaces have been enclosed to provide additional office space;
- Six 4 x 10 wood beams have been installed to connect the north side of the building to the adjacent building at 760 N. Palm Canyon Drive;
- The double-door entry has been replaced with new windows and a single glass door;
- The metal railing surrounding the upper level terrace has been replaced with a solid parapet wall; and
- The original carport was demolished.¹

¹Since the City's permit history generally begins after World War II, these changes were made either in the building's early years or subsequently without the benefit of permits.

Additional cosmetic exterior changes have occurred which are summarized in the attached analysis (Patrick McGrew; 2008, revised 2012).

Vehicle parking has been modified from the original metal carport. Two uncovered parking spaces are now located behind the building and are accessed by a driveway from Indian Canyon, along the south side of the Casa Palmeras apartments to common lot immediately south of the Kocher-Samson building.

There is no evidence that a landscape plan was prepared for the original building, except to note "garden areas" on the site plan, two or more of which have since been enclosed. The front area originally shown as "garden" is covered with wood planks. The rear of the site is landscaped but does not appear to be in any way reflective of the original condition.

The building was designed by architects Albert Frey and A. Lawrence Kocher (brother of local pioneer and building owner Jacob John Kocher) while they worked as partners in New York City. It is probably the second modern building in Palm Springs, following Lloyd Wright's Oasis Hotel (1923). The building is clearly set within the International Style, which is defined as:

An influential modernist style in architecture that developed in Europe and the United States in the 1920s and 1930s, characterized chiefly by regular, unadorned geometric forms, open interiors, and the use of glass, steel, and reinforced concrete. (American Heritage Dictionary, 2009)

According to Joseph Rosa's, Albert Frey, Architect², "In this, his first response to the climate and environs of the desert, Frey provided a concrete, steel-and-glass design which strongly asserted the modernist view that a 20th-century building should be a universal machine":

"Frey's Kocher-Samson Building pointedly illustrates the high priority which architects and clients have continually placed on imagery. But these modern, up-to-date appearing machines could cope with the desert and its climate if used only during the mild winter months, not during the heat of the late springs, summer or fall. Only with the gradual introduction in the 1930s of refrigerated air conditioning could these machine-image designs really be functional, year-round dwellings.

Frey and L. Kocher terminated their partnership in 1935 and Frey made Palm Springs his home. Future buildings, beginning with his first house (Frey House No. 1, 1940) demonstrated the flexibility Frey would bring to modernism in the desert. He could express "a sense of enjoyment, delight and of play more akin to popular science fiction"

² The information in the following paragraphs is cited from Joseph Rosa's, Albert Frey, Architect (1990; Rizzoli International Publications, Inc.).

(Frey No. 1), develop a more “refined modernism” as shown by Finchy Elementary School (1948-49) or with the Frey House No. 2, (1963-64):

“...look back to the early 1920s experimentations of Lloyd Wright and of Schindler, and link these concepts with his own version of the machine image, and then couple these with the simplicity of form associated with the California ranch house”

Frey’s varied responses to the desert environment found their start in the pure cubic design of the Kocher-Samson Building.

The Kocher-Samson Building was recognized in 1935 by the New York Museum of Modern Art and is included in James and Katherine Morrow Ford’s book, The Modern House in America (Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1940).

REQUIRED FINDINGS

Section 8.05.160 of the Municipal Code requires that the City Council find that designation of a site as historic furthers the purpose of the Historic Resources ordinance:

8.05.010 Purpose and authority. This chapter is adopted pursuant to the authority of Government Code Section 37361 for the purpose of preserving areas and specific buildings of the city which reflect elements of its cultural, social, economic, political, architectural and archaeological history. This chapter is intended to stabilize and improve buildings, structures or areas which are considered to be of historical, architectural, archaeological or ecological value, to foster civic beauty, to strengthen the local economy and to promote the use of specific buildings for the education and welfare of the citizens.

The HSPB concluded that the stated purpose and authority of the Historic Resources ordinance are furthered by this proposed designation. As the sole representation of the International Style, the Kocher-Samson Building holds a unique place in the City’s architectural history. The designation will help with future stabilization and improvement of the building as it can promote the restoration of the building to its original configuration and design. Preservation of the building will foster civic beauty, strengthen the local economy and improve the citizens’ education and welfare as recognition and restoration of the building adds to the City’s reputation as a Mecca of modern architecture.

As noted above in Background and Setting, Section 8.05.020 of the Municipal Code provides the definition of a historic site: “An historic site is any real property such as: a building; a structure, including but not limited to archways, tiled areas and similar architectural elements; an archaeological excavation or object that is unique or significant because of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship or aesthetic effect”. Seven other qualities are listed therein with the Board’s recommendation provided below:

1. *The resource is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community.*

No specific event of national, state or local history is known to be associated with the property.

2. *The property is associated with lives of persons who made meaningful contribution to national, state or local history.*

The building original owner, Jacob John Kocher, was a leader in the early years of the community's development, as the first licensed pharmacist, one of the earliest physicians and President of the Palm Springs Board of Trade. Dr. Kocher also developed a subdivision in the Movie Colony area that yielded several substantial Mission Revival style homes.

3. *The property reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history.*

Desert modern architecture can be argued to have begun with the Kocher-Samson Building. While Lloyd Wright's Oasis Hotel preceded it by more than a decade, the undecorated purity of the Kocher-Samson building is a clearer statement of the machine-age principles of modern architecture and the first of its kind in Palm Springs. Further, it has been recognized nationally as an important beginning of desert modernism.

4. *The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction.*

The building's use of unadorned cuboid shapes to create interior and exterior spaces sets it squarely within the International Style, which was one of the more significant expressions of modern architecture in the early 20th century.

5. *The property presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or that possesses high artistic value.*

The building's architect, Albert Frey (with A. Lawrence Kocher), is recognized as one of the seminal architects who contributed significantly to Palm Springs' trove of modern architecture. This building is the first of Frey's many contributions, yet it stands alone as a pure ode to the principles of the international style. The high artistic value of the building, as originally designed, is found in its simplicity and success in producing comfortable indoor and outdoor spaces. Subsequent modifications have compromised the building's integrity of design, but do not appear to pose a barrier to its restoration.

6. *The property represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.*

A look at the components of the original building may not reveal individual distinction, yet that is one of the principles of the International Style. By using simple shapes (cubes and cuboid volumes) and plain materials

(concrete, steel, glass) the architect has fashioned a significant and distinguishable building.

7. *The property has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to national, state or local history or prehistory.*

No information beyond the building's design and provenance has been found to support this finding.

The Kocher-Samson Building occupies a unique place as the earliest of Palm Springs' modern buildings. Further, it can be argued that the building is significant to the modern movement internationally. It is Albert Frey's first buildings in the desert (with Lawrence Kocher) and, notwithstanding the changes it has endured, the building remains a testament to the purity of undecorated modernism.

Subsequent changes to the building have not added to its historic significance, but neither are they so damaging that they could not be removed in the future and the building restored to its original shape and finish. The land surrounding the building is also recommended to be included in the designation to assure future control over potential development.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

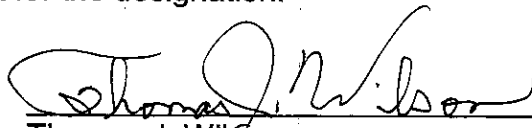
In accordance with Section 15331 (Historical Resources Restoration/Rehabilitation) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed designation is categorically exempt from environmental review as the proposed designation meets the conditions outlined for preservation of a historic resource.

NOTIFICATION

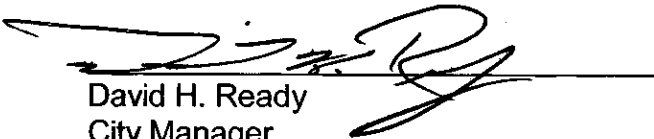
Pursuant to section 8.05.140 of the Municipal Code of Palm Springs, All property owners within four hundred (400) feet of the subject property have been notified and notice was made in a newspaper of general circulation. As of the writing of this report, staff has not received any inquiries on this matter. The property owner has also been notified and has previously expressed support for the designation.



Craig A. Ewing, AICP
Director of Planning Services



Thomas J. Wilson
Assistant City Manager, Dev't Svcs



David H. Ready
City Manager

Attachments:

1. Draft City Council Resolution
2. Vicinity Map
3. Resolution #79 of the HSPB
4. HSPB meeting minutes dated April 10, 2012
5. HSPB staff report dated April 10, 2012
6. E-mail and nomination application from Patrick McGrew / Palm Springs Preservation Foundation

RESOLUTION NO. _____

OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA DESIGNATING THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 766 N. PALM CANYON DRIVE ("KOCHER-SAMSON BUILDING") AS A HISTORIC SITE, CLASS 1 – HSPB 79

WHEREAS, Chapter 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code allows for the designation of historic sites; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2012, the Historic Site Preservation Board initiated an investigation to determine if the property at 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive should be designated a historic site; and

WHEREAS, on April 10, 2012, the Historic Site Preservation Board conducted a public hearing in accordance with applicable law to consider designation of the property at 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive as a historic site; and

WHEREAS, upon completion of said hearing and after considering all materials and testimony presented on the matter, the HSPB adopted Resolution #79 to recommend to City Council designation of the property located at 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive ("Kocher-Samson Building") as a Historic Site, Class 1; and

WHEREAS, notice of a public hearing of the City Council of the City of Palm Springs to consider designation of the property located at 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive ("Kocher-Samson Building") as a Historic Site, Class 1 was issued in accordance with applicable law; and

WHEREAS, on July 11, 2012 the City Council conducted a public hearing in accordance with applicable law to consider designation of the property located at 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive ("Kocher-Samson Building") as a Historic Site, Class 1; and

WHEREAS, the designation of the property located at 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive ("Kocher-Samson Building") as a Historic Site, Class 1 shall further the purpose and intent of Chapter 8.05 and promotes the sensitive preservation of said site; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the designation of a historic site is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15331 for the preservation of historical resources; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has carefully reviewed and considered all of the evidence in connection with the designation, including but not limited to the staff report, application and historical research, all written and oral testimony presented and notes the following:

WHEREAS, in 1934-35, Albert Frey, with A. Lawrence Kocher, designed and built a two-story building as offices and a residence at 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive; and

WHEREAS, the Kocher-Samson Building was among the first modern building constructed in Palm Springs and the first, and possibly only building designed in the International Style during the 1920's and 1930's, and

WHEREAS, the defining characteristics of this building include:

- A composition of four cuboid volumes organized to create enclosed and open spaces, both covered and uncovered, with perimeter walls further defining the outdoor spaces;
- The use of concrete, steel and glass as construction materials;
- The absence of adornment or decoration; and
- Adherence to the principles of the International Style.

THE CITY COUNCIL DOES HEREBY RESOLVE:

SECTION 1: Pursuant to CEQA, the City Council finds that the designation of the property at 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive ("Kocher-Samson Building") as a Class 1 historic site is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15331 whereby this designation is for the preservation of a historical resource.

SECTION 2: Pursuant to Section 8.05.020 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code, the City Council does hereby make the following findings regarding the property at 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive ("Kocher-Samson Building") to support designation as a Class One historic site:

- A. The stated purpose and authority of the Historic Resources ordinance are furthered by this proposed designation; because as the sole representation of the International Style, the Kocher-Samson Building holds a unique place in the City's architectural history; and because the designation will help with future stabilization and improvement of the building as it can promote the restoration of the building to its original configuration and design; and because preservation of the building will foster civic beauty, strengthen the local economy and improve the citizens' education and welfare because recognition and restoration of the building adds to the City's reputation as a Mecca of modern architecture.
- B. The property is associated with lives of persons who made meaningful contribution to national, state or local history, because the building original owner, Jacob John Kocher, was a leader in the early years of the community's development as the first licensed pharmacist, one of the earliest physicians and president of the Palm Springs Board of Trade; and because Dr. Kocher developed a subdivision in the Movie Colony area that yielded several substantial mission revival style homes.
- C. The property reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history, because desert modern architecture can be argued to have begun

with the Kocher-Samson Building; and while Lloyd Wright's Oasis Hotel preceded it by more than a decade, the undecorated purity of the Kocher-Samson building is a clearer statement of the machine-age principles associated with modern architecture and is the first of its kind in Palm Springs; and because it has been recognized nationally as an important beginning of desert modernism

- D. The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, because the building's use of unadorned cuboid shapes to create interior and exterior spaces sets it squarely within the International Style, which was one of the more significant expressions of modern architecture in the early 20th century.
- E. The property presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or that possesses high artistic value, because the building's architect, Albert Frey (with A. Lawrence Kocher), is recognized as one of the seminal architects who contributed significantly to Palm Springs' trove of modern architecture; and this building is the first of Frey's many contributions, yet it stands alone as a pure ode to the principles of the International Style; and the high artistic value of the building, as originally designed, is found in its simplicity and success in producing comfortable indoor and outdoor spaces; and because subsequent modifications have compromised the building's integrity of design, but do not appear to pose a barrier to its restoration.
- F. The property represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, because, while the components of the original building may not reveal individual distinction, they represent the principles of the International Style, because by using simple shapes (cubes and cuboid volumes) and plain materials (concrete, steel, glass) the architect has fashioned a significant and distinguishable building.

SECTION 3: Based upon the foregoing, the City Council does hereby designate as a Class 1 Historic Site the property at 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive ("Kocher-Samson Building"), subject to the following conditions;

1. The property owner shall permit the City to place a historic marker of the City's choosing at the site. The marker shall be placed in a location visible from the public right-of-way. The owner shall maintain the marker in the location installed and pay for the replacement cost if the plaque is lost, stolen, or otherwise removed from the property.
2. All future modifications of the existing structures, as well as any new buildings shall require HSPB review pursuant Municipal Code Ordinance 8.05.180. No HSPB review shall be required for new temporary, detached, non-habitable structures or modifications to landscaping.

3. All requirements of the Palm Springs Zoning Code shall be met.
4. That the City Clerk submit the Council Resolution to the County recorder for recordation within 90 days of the effective date of this resolution.
5. Any alterations or modifications to the exterior approved prior to the designation of this site by the City Council shall be deemed acceptable.

ADOPTED THIS ___th day of July, 2012.

David H. Ready, City Manager

ATTEST:

James Thompson, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE) ss.
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS)

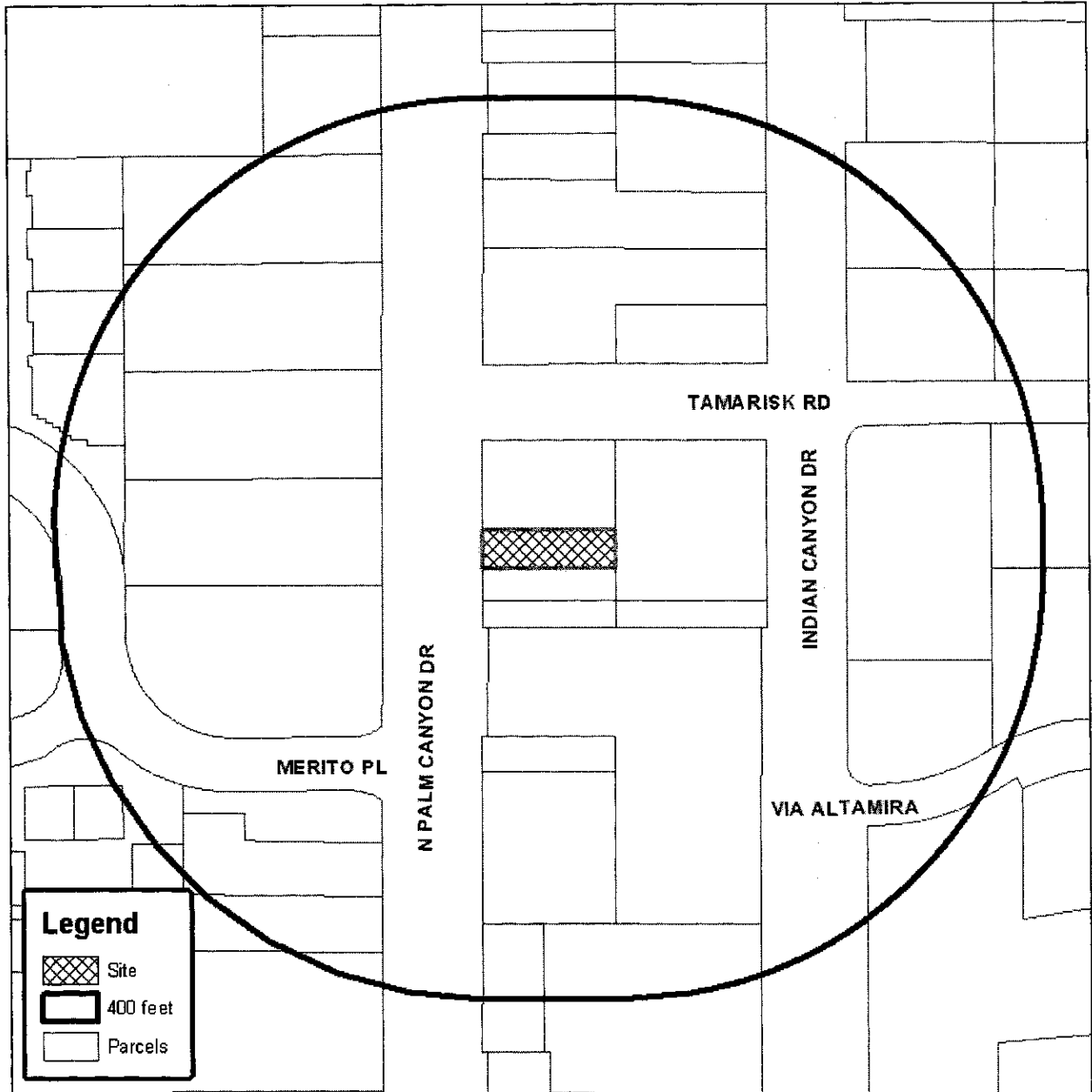
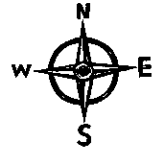
I, JAMES THOMPSON, City Clerk of the City of Palm Springs, hereby certify that Resolution No. _____ is a full, true and correct copy, and was duly adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Palm Springs on _____, by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

James Thompson, City Clerk
City of Palm Springs, California



Department of Planning Services Vicinity Map



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

CASE NO: HSPB 79

APPLICANT: City of Palm Springs

DESCRIPTION: To consider a recommendation by the Historic Site Preservation Board to designate the property at 766 North Palm Canyon Drive (The Kocher-Samson Building / APN 505-286-002) as a Class 1 Historic Site.

HSPB RESOLUTION NO. 79

OF THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL DESIGNATE THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 766 NORTH PALM CANYON DRIVE ("KOCHER-SAMSON BUILDING") AS A HISTORIC SITE, CLASS 1 – HSPB 79.

WHEREAS, in 1934-35, Albert Frey, with A. Lawrence Kocher, designed and built a two-story building as offices and a residence at 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive; and

WHEREAS, the Kocher-Samson Building was among the first modern building constructed in Palm Springs and the first, and possibly only building designed in the International Style during the 1920's and 1930's, and

WHEREAS, the defining characteristics of this building include:

- A composition of four cuboid volumes organized to create enclosed and open spaces, both covered and uncovered, with perimeter walls further defining the outdoor spaces;
- The use of concrete, steel and glass as construction materials;
- The absence of adornment or decoration; and
- Adherence to the principles of the International Style.

WHEREAS, Chapter 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code allows for the designation of historic sites; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2012, the Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) of the City of Palm Springs, initiated an application for Historic Site Designation; and

WHEREAS, notice of a public hearing of the Historic Site Preservation Board of the City of Palm Springs to consider designation of the property, known as the "Kocher-Samson Building", as a historic site was issued in accordance with applicable law; and

WHEREAS, on April 10, 2012, the Historic Site Preservation Board conducted a public hearing in accordance with applicable law to consider designation of the Kocher-Samson Building as a historic site; and

WHEREAS, the Historic Site Preservation Board has carefully reviewed and considered all of the evidence in connection with the designation, including but not limited to the staff report, application and historical research, all written and oral testimony presented.

THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD HEREBY FINDS AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The stated purpose and authority of the Historic Resources ordinance are furthered by this proposed designation.

- a. As the sole representation of the International Style, the Kocher-Samson Building holds a unique place in the City's architectural history;
- b. The designation will help with future stabilization and improvement of the building as it can promote the restoration of the building to its original configuration and design; and
- c. Preservation of the building will foster civic beauty, strengthen the local economy and improve the citizens' education and welfare because recognition and restoration of the building adds to the City's reputation as a Mecca of modern architecture.

Section 2. The property is associated with lives of persons who made meaningful contribution to national, state or local history.

The building original owner, Jacob John Kocher, was a leader in the early years of the community's development as the first licensed pharmacist, one of the earliest physicians and president of the Palm Springs Board of Trade. Dr. Kocher also developed a subdivision in the Movie Colony area that yielded several substantial mission revival style homes.

Section 3. The property reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history.

Desert modern architecture can be argued to have begun with the Kocher-Samson Building. While Lloyd Wright's Oasis Hotel preceded it by more than a decade, the undecorated purity of the Kocher-Samson building is a clearer statement of the machine-age principles associated with modern architecture and is the first of its kind in Palm Springs. Further, it has been recognized nationally as an important beginning of desert modernism.

Section 4. The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction.

The building's use of unadorned cuboid shapes to create interior and exterior spaces sets it squarely within the International Style, which was one of the more significant expressions of modern architecture in the early 20th century.

Section 5. The property presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or that possesses high artistic value.

The building's architect, Albert Frey (with A. Lawrence Kocher), is recognized as one of the seminal architects who contributed significantly to Palm Springs' trove of modern architecture. This building is the first of Frey's many contributions, yet it stands alone as a pure ode to the principles of the International Style. The high artistic value of the building, as originally designed, is found in its simplicity and success in producing comfortable indoor and outdoor spaces. Subsequent modifications have compromised the building's integrity of design, but do not appear to pose a barrier to its restoration.

Section 6. The property represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

A look at the components of the original building may not reveal individual distinction, yet that is one of the principles of the International Style. By using simple shapes (cubes and cuboid volumes) and plain materials (concrete, steel, glass) the architect has fashioned a significant and distinguishable building.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, based upon the foregoing, the Historic Site Preservation Board recommends that the City Council designate the entire property located at 766 North Palm Canyon Drive, Palm Springs, California ("Kocher-Samson Building") as a Historic Site, Class 1 subject to the following conditions;

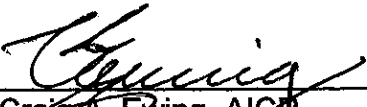
1. The property owner shall permit the City to place a historic marker of the City's choosing at the site. The marker shall be placed in a location visible from the public right-of-way. The owner shall maintain the marker in the location installed and pay for the replacement cost if the plaque is lost, stolen, or otherwise removed from the property.
2. All future modifications of the existing structures, as well as any new buildings shall require HSPB review pursuant Municipal Code Ordinance 8.05.180.
3. All requirements of the Palm Springs Zoning Code shall be met.
4. That the City Clerk submit the Council Resolution to the County recorder for recordation within 90 days of the effective date of this resolution.
5. Any alterations or modifications to the exterior approved prior to the designation of this site by the City Council shall be considered legal, non-conforming only as to Section 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code.

ADOPTED this 10th day of April 2012.

AYES: 5, Deleeuw, Ploss, Grattan, Cohen and Chair Gilmer
NOES: None
ABSENT: 1, Strahl
ABSTENTIONS: None

ATTEST:

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA



Craig A. Ewing, AICP
Director of Planning Services
Historic Site Preservation Board Secretary

Chris Menrad, Palm Springs Modern Committee submitted a letter asking the Board to adopt the entire Secretary of Interiors Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. He also reported PS ModCom's support for designation of the Kocher-Samson building and site, and described PS ModCom's efforts to preserve the PSHS administration building.

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: Minutes from the March 13, 2012 meeting.

Motion by DeLeeuw; second by Ploss; vote 3-0-2-1 (Cohen and Gilmer abstain; Strahl absent), to approve the minutes of March 13, 2012, subject to correcting the vote on Item 8A to indicate Board member Cohen was absent (not Grattan).

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

6.A HSPB 79 – An application by the City of Palm Springs, requesting the Historic Site Preservation Board recommend to the City Council designation as a Class 1 historic site the "Kocher-Samson Building" located at 766 North Palm Canyon Drive, Zone C-1, Section 10.

Director Ewing presented the staff report.

Chair Gilmer opened the public hearing. Patrick McGrew spoke in favor of the nomination including the entire property.

Board members asked questions / sought clarification on:

- The definition and characteristics of the International Style,
- The ceiling materials under the second floor decking,
- The carport materials, and
- The connection and relationship to the Lapham building to the south

Chair Gilmer closed the public hearing

The Board discussed:

- Inclusion of the entire site,
- Ownership of surrounding sites having parking in common.

Motion by DeLeeuw; second by Ploss; vote 5-0-1 (Strahl absent), to adopt the draft resolution recommending that the City Council designate the Kocher-Samson building and property as a historic resource, Class 1, subject to elimination of the last sentence of Section 2 (page 3).

~~7. CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL REQUESTS~~

~~7.A HSPB 07 / Case 3.1074 – Frances Stevens School and Palm Canyon Theater –~~



Historic Site Preservation Board Staff Report

Date: April 10, 2012

Case No.: HSPB-79 – “Kocher-Samson Building”

Application Type: Application for Historic Designation

Location: 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive

Applicant: The City of Palm Springs

Zone: C-1 (Retail Business Zone)

General Plan: NCC (Neighborhood Community Commercial)

APN: 505-286-002

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

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

An application by the City of Palm Springs, requesting the Historic Site Preservation Board to recommend to the City Council designation of 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive, the “Kocher-Samson Building” as a Class 1 historic site. Such designation would:

1. Place the subject property under the guidance of Municipal Code Section 8.05
2. Require present and subsequent owners to maintain the site consistent with that ordinance,
3. Grant possible property tax reduction opportunities to the owner under the State of California Mills Act.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) recommend that the City Council determine that the Kocher-Samson Building, 766 N. Palm Canyon Drive is a historic

structure and that it be assigned Class 1 historic status. A draft resolution is attached for consideration.

PRIOR ACTIONS

In 2004, the Kocher-Samson Building site was identified in the Citywide Historic Resources Survey as possessing significant historic importance.

On March 13, 2012, the Historic Site Preservation Board initiated an application to consider if the subject property should be designated a historic structure.

BACKGROUND AND SETTING

Definition of an Historic Site.

Section 8.05.020 of the Municipal Code provides the definition of a historic site as follows;

(a) *Historic Site.*

An historic site is any real property such as: a building; a structure, including but not limited to archways, tiled areas and similar architectural elements; an archaeological excavation or object that is unique or significant because of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship or aesthetic effect and:

- 1. That is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community; or*
- 2. That is associated with lives of persons who made meaningful contribution to national, state or local history; or*
- 3. That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history; or*
- 4. That embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or*
- 5. That presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or that possesses high artistic value; or*
- 6. That represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or*
- 7. That has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to national, state or local history or prehistory.*

A Class 1 Historic Site may also qualify for historic designation at the federal, state and/or county level.

Designation of Historic Sites.

The City Council is authorized to designate Historic Sites.

The Historic Site Preservation Board makes recommendations to the City Council that certain sites be designated as Historic Sites in accordance with Section 8.05.135 of the

Municipal Code. The Board may initiate studies, surveys and investigations it deems necessary to adequately gather information in consideration of a recommendation.

Conditions that apply to Class 1 Historic Sites.

According to Section 8.05 of the Municipal Code, the following shall apply to a Class 1 Historic Site:

1. It shall meet the definition of a historic site as outlined in Municipal Code Section 8.05.020.
2. An archival file shall be maintained on the property by the City.
3. It may be qualified as 'historic' at the federal, state, and/or county level.
4. The structure/site may not be modified nor objects removed without the approval of the City Council.
5. The use may be limited by the City Council to the extent that it may impair the integrity of the site.
6. A plaque explaining the historic nature of the site will be installed at the site.
7. Compliance with all rules and regulations for Historic Sites and Historic Districts under Article IV of Chapter 8.05 of the Municipal Code shall be required.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The property is a 4500 square foot (one-tenth acre) lot located on the east side of North Palm Canyon, 84 feet south of the intersection with Tamarisk Road. The site is a flat, rectangular lot having a width of 36 feet and a depth of 125 feet. There are no known special geologic features on the property. Surrounding uses include commercial to the north, south and west, with multi-family residential ("Casa Palmeras") to the east.

The lot is fully developed with the Kocher-Samson Building (1934-35) and associated parking, which is accessed from Indian Canyon Drive via an off-site driveway. The building sits on the front (westerly) two-thirds of the lot; there is no setback along the north side property line while a 3 to 4-foot setback runs along the south side property line. A front setback of approximately 6 feet from the Palm Canyon Drive sidewalk right-of-way is provided. The building was originally composed of four cuboid volumes organized to create enclosed and open spaces, both covered and uncovered. Perimeter walls further define the outdoor spaces. A metal carport for three vehicles (subsequently demolished) was constructed in the rear (easterly) portion of the property.

No building permits have been found in the City's records. From a comparison with historic photographs, the building has experienced several modifications:

- At least two of the four outdoor garden spaces have been enclosed to provide additional office space;
- Six 4 x 10 wood beams have been installed to connect the north side of the building to the adjacent building at 760 N. Palm Canyon Drive;
- The double-door entry has been replaced with new windows and a single glass door;

- The metal railing surrounding the upper level terrace has been replaced with a solid parapet wall; and
- The original carport was demolished.¹

Additional cosmetic exterior changes have occurred which are summarized in the attached analysis (Patrick McGrew; 2008, revised 2012).

In addition, vehicle parking has been modified from that provided by the original metal carport. Two uncovered parking spaces are now located behind the building next to slumpstone wall trash enclosures, which are not original. The parking spaces are accessed by a driveway, which is improved with pavement, curb and gutter, and runs west from Indian Canyon, along the south side of the Casa Palmeras apartments to the lot immediately south of the Kocher-Samson building. This driveway provides the only vehicle access to all three properties and, while no title reports are on file, staff expects that cross-access easements have likely been exchanged by the owners to support the common driveway and parking configuration.

There is no evidence that a landscape plan was prepared for the original building, except to note “garden areas” on the site plan, two or more of which have since been enclosed. The front area originally shown as “garden” is covered with wood planks. The rear of the site is landscaped but does not appear to be in any way reflective of the original condition.

The building was designed by architects Albert Frey and A. Lawrence Kocher (brother of local pioneer and building owner Jacob John Kocher) while they worked as partners in New York City. It is probably the second modern building in Palm Springs, following Lloyd Wright’s Oasis Hotel (1923). The building is clearly set within the International Style, which is defined as:

An influential modernist style in architecture that developed in Europe and the United States in the 1920s and 1930s, characterized chiefly by regular, unadorned geometric forms, open interiors, and the use of glass, steel, and reinforced concrete. (American Heritage Dictionary, 2009)

According to Joseph Rosa’s, Albert Frey, Architect², “In this, his first response to the climate and environs of the desert, Frey provided a concrete, steel-and-glass design which strongly asserted the modernist view that a 20th-century building should be a universal machine”:

“Frey’s Kocher-Samson Building pointedly illustrates the high priority which architects and clients have continually placed on imagery. But these modern, up-to-date appearing machines could cope with the desert and its

¹ Since the City’s permit history generally begins after World War II, these changes were made either in the building’s early years or subsequently without the benefit of permits.

² The information in the following paragraphs is cited from Joseph Rosa’s, Albert Frey, Architect (1990; Rizzoli International Publications, Inc.).

climate if used only during the mild winter months, not during the heat of the late springs, summer or fall. Only with the gradual introduction in the 1930s of refrigerated air conditioning could these machine-image designs really be functional, year-round dwellings.

Frey and L. Kocher terminated their partnership in 1935 and Frey made Palm Springs his home. Future buildings, beginning with his first house (Frey House No. 1, 1940) demonstrated the flexibility Frey would bring to modernism in the desert. He could express “a sense of enjoyment, delight and of play more akin to popular science fiction” (Frey No. 1), develop a more “refined modernism” as shown by Finchy Elementary School (1948-49) or with the Frey House No. 2, (1963-64):

“...look back to the early 1920s experimentations of Lloyd Wright and of Schindler, and link these concepts with his own version of the machine image, and then couple these with the simplicity of form associated with the California ranch house”

Frey’s varied responses to the desert environment found their start in the pure cubic design of the Kocher-Samson Building.

The Kocher-Samson Building was recognized in 1935 by the New York Museum of Modern Art and is included in James and Katherine Morrow Ford’s book, The Modern House in America (Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1940).

REQUIRED FINDINGS

Section 8.05.160 of the Municipal Code requires that the City Council find that designation of a site as historic furthers the purpose of the Historic Resources ordinance:

8.05.010 Purpose and authority. This chapter is adopted pursuant to the authority of Government Code Section 37361 for the purpose of preserving areas and specific buildings of the city which reflect elements of its cultural, social, economic, political, architectural and archaeological history. This chapter is intended to stabilize and improve buildings, structures or areas which are considered to be of historical, architectural, archaeological or ecological value, to foster civic beauty, to strengthen the local economy and to promote the use of specific buildings for the education and welfare of the citizens.

Staff has concluded that the stated purpose and authority of the Historic Resources ordinance are furthered by this proposed designation. As the sole representation of the International Style, the Kocher-Samson Building holds a unique place in the City’s architectural history. The designation will help with future stabilization and improvement of the building as it can promote the restoration of the building to its original configuration and design. Preservation of the building will foster civic beauty, strengthen the local economy and improve the citizens’ education and welfare as recognition and restoration of the building adds to the City’s reputation as a Mecca of modern architecture.

As noted above in Background and Setting, Section 8.05.020 of the Municipal Code provides the definition of a historic site: “*An historic site is any real property such as: a building; a structure, including but not limited to archways, tiled areas and similar architectural elements; an archaeological excavation or object that is unique or significant because of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship or aesthetic effect*”. Seven other qualities are listed therein with staff’s analysis provided below:

1. *The resource is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community.*

No specific event of national, state or local history is known to be associated with the property. Staff does not support this finding.

2. *The property is associated with lives of persons who made meaningful contribution to national, state or local history.*

The building original owner, Jacob John Kocher, was a leader in the early years of the community’s development, as the first licensed pharmacist, one of the earliest physicians and President of the Palm Springs Board of Trade. Dr. Kocher also developed a subdivision in the Movie Colony area that yielded several substantial Mission Revival style homes.

3. *The property reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history.*

Desert modern architecture can be argued to have begun with the Kocher-Samson Building. While Lloyd Wright’s Oasis Hotel preceded it by more than a decade, the undecorated purity of the Kocher-Samson building is a clearer statement of the machine-age principles modern architecture and the first of its kind in Palm Springs. Further, it has been recognized nationally as an important beginning of desert modernism.

4. *The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction.*

The building’s use of unadorned cuboid shapes to create interior and exterior spaces sets it squarely within the International Style, which was one of the more significant expressions of modern architecture in the early 20th century.

5. *The property presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or that possesses high artistic value.*

The building’s architect, Albert Frey (with A. Lawrence Kocher), is recognized as one of the seminal architects who contributed significantly to Palm Springs’ trove of modern architecture. This building is the first of Frey’s many contributions, yet it stands alone as a pure ode to the principles of the international style. The high artistic value of the building, as originally designed, is found in its simplicity and success in producing comfortable indoor and outdoor spaces. Subsequent modifications have

compromised the building's integrity of design, but do not appear to pose a barrier to its restoration. Staff supports this finding.

6. The property represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

A look at the components of the original building may not reveal individual distinction, yet that is one of the principles of the International Style. By using simple shapes (cubes and cuboid volumes) and plain materials (concrete, steel, glass) the architect has fashioned a significant and distinguishable building. The project meets this finding.

7. The property has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to national, state or local history or prehistory.

No information beyond the building's design and provenance has been found to support this finding.

CONCLUSION

The Kocher-Samson Building occupies a unique place as the earliest of Palm Springs' modern buildings. Further, it can be argued that the building is significant to the modern movement internationally. It is Albert Frey's first buildings in the desert (with Lawrence Kocher) and, notwithstanding the changes it has endured, the building remains a testament to the purity of undecorated modernism.

Subsequent changes to the building have not added to its historic significance, but neither are they so damaging that they could not be removed in the future and the building restored to its original shape and finish. That portion of the property immediately surrounding the building should be considered part of the site's historic character. The rear third of the lot has been developed with shared parking and is not recommended for inclusion in the designation.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board:

- 1 Determine that the Kocher-Samson Building is eligible for historic designation.
- 2 Recommend that the Kocher-Samson Building and site, excluding the parking area be designated as a Class One historic site and be so regulated under Chapter 8.05 of the Municipal Code.

A draft resolution is attached for the Board's consideration.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

In accordance with Section 15331 (Historical Resources Restoration/Rehabilitation) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed designation is

categorically exempt from environmental review as the proposed designation meets the conditions outlined for preservation of a historic resource.

NOTIFICATION

Pursuant to section 8.05.140 of the Municipal Code of Palm Springs, All property owners within three hundred (300) feet of the subject property have been notified. As of the writing of this report, staff has not received any inquiries on this matter.

Craig A. Ewing, AICP
Director of Planning Services

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity Map
2. Draft HSPB Resolution #79
3. Historic Site Preservation Board minutes of March 13, 2012
4. Background information

KOCHER-SAMSON BUILDING
766 North Palm Canyon Drive
Palm Springs, California 92264
Nomination Application for
Class 1 Historic Site

KOCHER – SAMSON BUILDING



Figure 1 View from the North, Image by
Stephen Willard

Prepared by Patrick McGrew
For the Palm Springs Preservation
Foundation
February 2008; Revised January 2012

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During the process of researching a building, certain phrases and/or points of view begin to surface. Sometimes exact quotes appear in many sources, usually uncredited. The research conducted on the Kocher-Samson Building was no exception: the oft-told story of the building and Albert Frey's concurrent move to Palm Springs was repeated many times in various magazines, books and Internet sites that contain information about the building. And so, it was a fortunate occurrence that, having saved the best until last, I finally read architect, author, scholar Joseph Rosa's¹ authoritative and comprehensive *Albert Frey, Architect*. Here finally was the complete story of both Frey and the Kocher-Samson building, based upon extensive personal interviews that Rosa conducted with Frey in 1986-1987. It has been a distinct pleasure to prepare an historic site nomination for this important building because the research was remarkably complete, seemingly waiting to be rediscovered. The building should be designated a Palm Springs Class 1 Historic Site, with public credit to Joseph Rosa.

- Patrick McGrew
Palm Springs, 2012

¹**Joseph Rosa** Joseph Rosa is currently the Director of the University of Michigan Museum of Art. He is the former John H. Bryan Curatorial Chair of Architecture and Design at the Art Institute of Chicago, as well as the author of 13 books; his writings have appeared in *Praxis*, *Architectural Design*, *Assemblage*, *Casabella*, *The History of Photography Journal*, *Oculus*, *Architektur & Bauforum*, and *Progressive Architecture*. Rosa has curated over 30 exhibitions and was formerly the Helen Hilton Raiser Curator of Architecture and Design at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), the Curator of Architecture at the Heinz Architectural Center at the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, PA, the Chief Curator at the National Building Museum in Washington, DC, and the Director of the Columbia Architecture Galleries. Rosa has been a Visiting Scholar at The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, a recipient of grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts. He has also taught at Columbia University, California College of the Arts, Catholic University, the University of California Berkeley, and SCI-ARC in Los Angeles. Rosa received a B.Arch. in Architecture from the Pratt Institute, a M.S. in Architecture and Urban Design from Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, and was a PhD. candidate in the Department of Art and Archaeology. He has worked in the architectural firms of Gwathmey Siegel and Associates, Peter Eisenman, and Agrest & Gandelsonas.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY and STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The architectural historian David Gebhard² has called the Kocher-Samson Building “probably the most pure and at the same time workable example of the International style in Southern California.” Others have said that the Kocher-Samson office building may be Palm Springs’ most important building today, though to some it hardly seems worth a second look, except the countless students and scholars who make regular pilgrimages to Palm Springs to visit this building. More important American architectural scholars have written about this building than possibly any other in early Palm Springs history; a partial list is included in the Bibliography.

DESIGNATION CRITERIA:

Previous evaluations: The Kocher-Samson building was previously evaluated and found to be eligible for National Register listing at the local level in the *Citywide Historic Resources Survey of 2004*. The authors of that survey did not have the time, money, or for that matter, the responsibility to examine all of the information available on this important early modernist building. The review and analysis contained in this report, of the additional information available, finds that the building is eligible for listing as a Palm Springs Class I Historic Site under five of the local ordinance’s seven criteria, as well as being eligible for listing on both the California and National Registries under three of their four criteria.³ The site has not been evaluated for archeological significance.

8.05.020 (a) paragraph 1 - Events: The Kocher-Samson Building is an important example of mid-century commercial development in Palm Springs. The building represents the overall commercial development of the downtown from the 1930s onward and contributes to the scale and character of the city’s main commercial street. As such, it is associated with a pattern of events that have made a meaningful contribution to the community, thereby qualifying it as eligible for listing on the local, California and National Registries. As Palm Springs’ first International Style building, the Kocher-Samson Building begins a chronology of a pattern of events that continues today as variations of the International Style continue to be built along Palm Canyon Drive. Today, Palm Canyon Drive is known internationally for its collection of buildings inspired by the International Style, including the Oasis Commercial Building, the Santa Fe Federal Building, the two Coachella Valley Savings and Loan buildings, and the City National Bank Building, to name the most prominent, but the Kocher-Samson was the first. The Kocher-Samson Building is eligible for listing on the Palm Springs Historic Site Registry, as well as the California and National Registries under this criterion.

8.05.020 (a) paragraph 2 - Persons: Jacob John Kocher was the first licensed pharmacist and one of the earliest physicians in Palm Springs. He was a key player in the emerging village’s commercial and civic

²**Dr. David Gebhard** (1928-1996.) Dr. Gebhard was born and raised in Minnesota; he received his Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota in 1958. He served, for six years, as director of the Roswell Museum and Art Center in New Mexico, before moving to UC Santa Barbara in 1961. As an historian and professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara, he was well known for his reference guides to the architecture of California, Los Angeles and San Francisco. He was also the author of numerous volumes on the architects and architecture of California, and was the founder and curator of the renowned architectural drawing collection at UCSB, where the Albert Frey Archive is housed. Gebhard was a leading architectural historian, particularly known for his books on the architecture and architects of California. He was a long-time faculty member at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and was dedicated to the preservation of Santa Barbara architecture. As a teacher he inspired many students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. In addition to his long teaching career, he served as director of the University Art Museum for twenty years, building a small gallery into a significant accredited university museum. In this position, he initiated the *Architectural Drawings Collection*, now one of the leading West Coast repositories for architectural materials. With Robert Winter he co-authored guides to architecture in northern and southern California. Gebhard was also active in service to his community, serving for many years on the Santa Barbara County Architectural Board of Review. He was active in the Society of Architectural Historians, and served a term as its president in the 1980s.

³ The National Register Criteria served as a model for the criteria established by both the California Register of Historic Resources and Palm Springs Municipal Code Section 8.05.020 which utilizes six sub-paragraphs (8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 1-6 as the criteria used for local designation. National Register Criterion A, *Events* finds its counterpart in the California and Palm Springs Registries as Criterion 1 and paragraph 1 respectively; similarly, the National Register Criterion B, *Persons* finds its counterpart in the California and Palm Springs Registries as Criterion 2 and paragraph 2 respectively. National Register Criterion C, *Design / Construction* is paralleled in the California Register as Criterion 3, whereas, in Palm Springs it becomes paragraphs 3, 4, 5 & 6.

life, and was also President of the Palm Springs Board of Trade - roughly the equivalent of Mayor - in the days before Palm Springs' incorporation in 1938. Research about Kocher indicates that the building is Registered in the National Register of Historic Places for this paragraph for its association with Jacob John Kocher, a person of significance in Palm Springs history.

8.05.020 all other Ordinance - 3, 4 & 5 **Design / Construction:** Because the building embodies the distinctive character of Palm Springs commercial modernist architecture, and because it is the work of two master architects, and because it possesses high artistic values, it qualifies as eligible for listing on the Palm Springs, California and National Registries.



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

Department of Planning Services

3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, CA 92262

Telephone: 760-323-8245 ~ Fax: 760-322-8360

Public Works & Engineering ~ 760-323-8253

Fire Department ~ 760-323-8187

Building & Safety ~ 760-323-8242

Building Inspections ~ 760-323-8243

Code Enforcement ~ 760-778-8434

HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION

The City of Palm Springs allows for the local designation of historic buildings, sites or districts within the City (Section 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code.) This application packet is to be completed in order to request a historic designation. For additional information, please contact the Department of Planning Services at 760-323-8245 or planning@palmspringsca.gov.

APPLICATION

The completed application and required materials may be submitted to the Department of Planning Services. The submittal will be given a cursory check and will be accepted for filing only if the basic requirements have been met.

A case planner will be assigned to the project and will be responsible for a detailed review of the application and all exhibits to ensure that all required information is adequate and accurate. Incomplete applications due to missing or inadequate information will not be accepted for filing.

Applicants may be asked to attend scheduled meetings pertaining to their project. These will include the Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) and the City Council.

HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD (HSPB)

Once the application has been determined to be complete, the HSPB will review the application to determine whether the site meets the minimum qualifications for designation pursuant to Chapter 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code. If such determination is made, a public hearing will be scheduled for a future meeting.

A public hearing will be held by the HSPB to receive testimony from all interested persons concerning the Historic Site Designation. The public hearing may be continued from time to time, and upon complete consideration, the HSPB will make a recommendation to the City Council. Notice will be provided as indicated below.

CITY COUNCIL

After receiving the recommendation of the Historic Site Preservation Board, a public hearing will be

held by the City Council to receive testimony from all interested persons concerning the requested Historic Site Designation. The public hearing may be continued from time to time, and upon complete consideration, the City Council will then conditionally approve, deny, or approve the application as submitted. The City Council's decision on the application is final.

NOTIFICATION

Prior to consideration of the application by the HSPB and the City Council, a notice of public hearing for a Historic Site Designation request will be mailed to all property owners within 400 feet of the subject property a minimum of ten (10) days prior to the hearing dates.



Office Use Only

Date:
Case No.
HSPB No.
Planner:

**CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
Department of Planning Services**

HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION APPLICATION

TO THE APPLICANT:

Your cooperation in completing this application and supplying the information requested will expedite City review of your application. Application submitted will not be considered until all submittal requirements are met. Staff may require additional information depending upon the specific project. Please submit this completed application and any subsequent material to the Department of Planning Services.

This form is to be used to nominate individual properties for Class 1 or 2 historic designation, or to nominate the formation of historic districts. Applicants are encouraged to review two bulletins from the US Department of Interior for additional information:

- “How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form” (National Register Bulletin 16A / <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/>); and
- “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation” (National Register Bulletin 15; <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/>).

Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions in the Bulletins.

1. Property Information

Historic name: Kocher- Samson Insurance Company Building

Other names: N/A

Address: 766 North Palm Canyon Drive, Palm Springs, California 92262,

Assessor parcel number: 505286002

Owner's name: Michael Kilroy

Owner's Address: The Kilroy Companies, LLC; 800 South Pacific Coast Highway, Suite 225

City: Redondo Beach State: California Zip: 90227

Telephone: unknown

E-mail address: m1@kilroy.com

2. Classifications

Ownership of Property. Check as many boxes as apply.

- Private
- Public - Local
- Public - State
- Public - Federal

Category of Property. Check only one box.

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property. TOTAL must include at least One (1) in Contributing Column.

Contributing	Noncontributing
_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _____ Buildings
_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _____ Sites
_____	_____ Structures
_____	_____ Objects
_____	2 _____ TOTAL

If the building or site is part of a larger group of properties, enter the name of the multiple-property group; otherwise enter "N/A".

3. Use or Function

Historic Use or Function: Mixed use: Residential above Commercial

Current Use or Function: Residential above Commercial

4. Description

Architect: Kocher & Frey

Construction Date and Source: 1934; Architectural Drawings

Architectural Stylistic Classification: International Style

Construction Materials:

Foundation: Reinforced Concrete

Roof: Composition and Tar & Gravel

Walls: Wood Frame with Cement Plaster

Other: Metal wall & ceiling panels

Building Description: *The following is a description of the Building including all character defining features.*

Building Description: The Kocher-Samson Building is located on a long, narrow lot on the east side of North Palm Canyon Drive, the main thoroughfare of Palm Springs. It is included, without reference in the Las Palmas Business Historic District. Frey realized that the parcels on both sides of the building would be built upon eventually, so he designed solid walls at the property lines, and opened the offices onto a series of interlocking interior courtyards. The first floor plan is a large rectangle broken into smaller rectangles and squares based on a 3'x3' grid. It contains individual offices, garden and terrace spaces wrapped by a high perimeter wall. A covered passageway acts as a central circulation spine, giving order to the assembly of alternating squares and voids that was something of a Frey motif during the early years of his career. At the second floor, the apartment is rotated ninety-degrees to provide a rooftop deck as an outdoor terrace for the apartment and a cantilevered overhang to shelter the office entrance below. The apartment is a pure rectangle featuring free-standing or wall mounted built-ins to define the kitchen, bathroom, and closets. This level is articulated by covering the secondary walls with plywood veneer and the perimeter walls with white cement plaster.

Construction of the Kocher-Samson Building utilized the latest building technology available. The first floor was a poured concrete post-and-beam system with concrete block in-fill for the walls. At the second floor, the perimeter walls were of lightweight pressed steel frames made in sections at a factory in Pennsylvania, trucked to California and joined together on the site. Four inch metal decking was used for the second floor and the roofs. The metal was exposed as the ceiling of the first floor and linear light fixtures were placed between the recesses in the ribbing. The building is a flat-roofed rectangular volume approximately 33 feet wide by about 65 feet deep, and about twenty feet high, containing approximately 1200 square feet on two levels. The building's design features an upper level in the form of a large white volume, visually floating above a glassy base that could be seen to recall Le Corbusier's early modernist masterpiece the Villa Savoye - an early and classic exemplar of the International Style. Le Corbusier was the architect who first made the world aware that a new style was being born and Frey worked on the detailing of that pivotal structure. Both buildings appear to hover above the ground plane and both feature strip windows, a flat roof and a glassy lower level that stands free of the structural system. To Frey's credit, the building made a bold aesthetic statement in its day, but the plan of the Kocher-Samson Building was determined by functional rather than aesthetic considerations. Other than the massing, important character-defining features of the building include the steel-rod lateral bracing, strip glazing, pipe columns and handrails, a metal circular stair, and the innovative roof deck system and prefabricated wall panels.

5. Criteria (Check all boxes that apply for the criteria qualifying the property for listing.)

Events

- (1) Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

Persons

- (2) Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

Architecture

- (3) That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, State or local history, or
- (4) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or
- (5) Represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or
- (6) Represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

Archeology

(7) Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Check all the boxes that apply.)

- owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes. removed from its original location.
- a birthplace or a grave. a cemetery.
- a reconstructed building, object, or structure. a commemorative property.
- less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

6. Statement of Significance

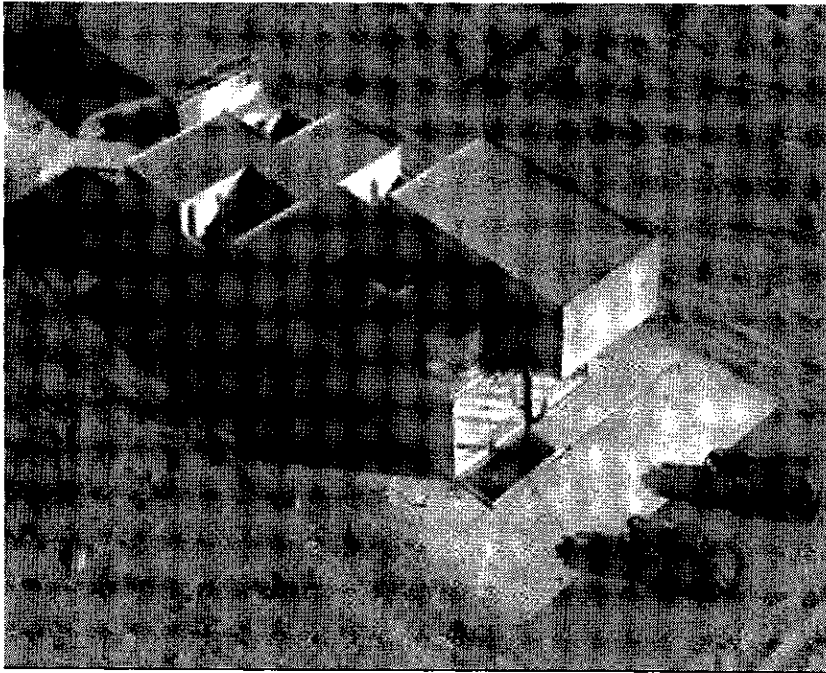


Figure 1 Original model of the Kocher-Samson Building.

A compliance evaluation is included in Section 5.

Building Background: Statement of Significance

The Kocher-Samson building was designed for Dr. Jacob John Kocher by his brother Lawrence in partnership with Albert Frey. Dr. Kocher was an early physician in Palm Springs, California. After other medical professionals located to the desert, Kocher retired from medicine and required a new building designed to house his real estate development and insurance office; the building also included a studio apartment on the upper level, and a free-standing carport with a metal roof (see Figure 1, above). So important was this new building, even in its own time that photographs of it were shown at New York's Museum of Modern Art exhibition "Modern Architecture in California" in October, 1935. The exhibition featured the works of architects Kocher & Frey, Richard Neutra, R. M. Schindler, and William Wilson Wurster, thereby placing the building and its architects in the forefront of American modernism. The Kocher-Samson Building was cited as being "typical of the restrained ingenuity of the eastern experimentalism which in contrast with that of California seems economical and chaste." Kocher and Frey were the only architects in the exhibition not based solely in California, and theirs was one of the first architectural offices to build on both coasts. The Kocher-Samson building was also included in James and Katherine Morrow Ford's book, *The Modern House in America* which showcased the best examples of the Americanized International Style Residential Architecture built before 1940. Important architects included in this book other than those already mentioned included Pietro Belluschi, Marcel Breuer, Walter Gropius, Harwell Hamilton Harris, Le Corbusier, William Lescaze, Raphael Soriano, Edward Durell Stone, and many others.

At the end of October 1934, Frey left for Palm Springs to detail and supervise the construction of the building. This was not his first trip across America; he had driven from New York to California in the summer of 1932, but at the time had not gone as far south as Palm Springs. He then stayed in Los Angeles where he met with and visited the works of important Los Angeles architects Neutra, Schindler, J. R. Davidson, and Kem Weber. The Kocher-Samson building was the project last that Kocher and Frey would do together. The dissolution of their partnership was amicable; there was no work in New York for Frey, and he had grown fond of the desert landscape and mountains. For Frey, Palm Springs had become the new frontier where he could be an architectural pioneer on a barren landscape. The Kocher-Samson Insurance Company building was the first International Style building to be built in

Palm Springs, and with that act presaged a future when the city would become known internationally for its modern architecture.

Building Style: The International Style became the basis of later Modern architecture throughout the world, a style that ironically has now become traditional. Henry-Russell Hitchcock¹, who literally "wrote the book" on the International Style has said: "The lines that led to the International Style are clearer now to everyone than they could have been in the in the 30s, and the principles are few and broad...there is, first, a new conception of architecture as volume rather than mass. Secondly, regularity rather than axial symmetry serves as the chief means of ordering design. These two principles, together with a third proscribing arbitrary applied decoration, mark the productions of the International Style." It has been said that only writers and critics are interested in stylistic terminology; fittingly, Frey found little use for the doctrinaire constraints of the International Style, and in time developed a warmer regional aesthetic. However, his works often display the stylistic markers that place the work squarely in the late International Style tradition, of which the Kocher-Samson Building is an excellent and rare example.

Previous Evaluations: The Kocher-Samson Building has been previously listed as an historic site, first on the 1987 Historic Site Preservation Board List and subsequently in the 2004 Citywide Architectural Survey found that the building appears to meet the level of significance necessary for individual National Register and California Register eligibility¹ at the local level under Criteria A / 1(Events) and C / 3 (Construction / Design.) Local Eligibility Evaluation: Based upon the information contained in the background research developed for this report, the building also appears for listing in the Palm Springs, California and National Registries under additional criteria as follows:

Significant Event (Complete if Criterion 1 is marked above): The Kocher-Samson Building is an important example of mid-century commercial development in Palm Springs. The building represents the overall commercial development of the downtown from the 1930s to today, and contributes to the scale and character of the city's main commercial street. As such, it is associated with a pattern of events that have made a meaningful contribution to the community, thereby qualifying it as eligible for listing under **events** on the Palm Springs, California and National Registries.



Figure 2 J. J. Kocher

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion 2 is marked above): Dr. Jacob John Kocher (c.1884-1938) was a California-born, Stanford-educated physician who began his medical practice in Palm Springs in 1917. In a small adobe building directly across the street from The Desert Inn, he established a pharmacy called the "Mortar and Pestle. The "desert doctor," as he became known, served a clientele that included most of the local citizenry, both Native American and Anglo. His reputation as a doctor spread throughout the valley and he was called upon to perform surgery, deliver babies, and otherwise attend to the well-being of the citizenry. During World War I he headed both the local Rations and Price Control Boards, and when the Palm Springs Board of Trade was formed in 1918, Dr. Kocher became its first president, a position that translated as roughly equivalent to Mayor after the city was incorporated in 1938. Near the end of his career, a "Stork Party" celebration was held for Dr. Kocher and many of the babies he delivered were in attendance, including the first Anglo infant born in Palm Springs, Ted McKinney, his sister Barbara McKinney, Beatrice Willard, and Elizabeth and Owen Coffman. After Dr. Henry Reid

¹Henry-Russell Hitchcock (1903-1987) was the leading American architectural historian of his generation. A long-time professor at Smith College and New York University, he is best known for writings that helped to define Modern architecture. In the early 1930s, at the request of Alfred Barr, Hitchcock collaborated with Philip Johnson (and Lewis Mumford) on "Modern Architecture: International Exhibition" at the Museum of Modern Art (1932), the exhibition that presented the new "International Style" architecture of Europe to an American audience. Hitchcock and Johnson's co-authored book *The International Style: Architecture Since 1922* was published simultaneously with the New York Museum of Modern Art exhibit. Over the course of Hitchcock's career, he produced more than a dozen books on architecture. His *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (1958) is an exhaustive study of more than 150 years of architecture and was widely used as a textbook in architectural history courses from the 1960s to the 1980s. It is still a useful reference today. Hitchcock focused primarily on the formal aspects of design and he regarded the individual architect as the chief determinant in architectural history.

² An unresolved internal contradiction in the Citywide Survey Form also assigns the building a National Register Status Code of 5S3. The initial number indicates the general status; "5" is defined as ineligible for the National Register, but still of local interest. "5S3" is defined as "Not eligible for separate listing or designation under an existing local ordinance but is eligible for special consideration in local planning." No response has been forthcoming to queries made to ARG regarding this discrepancy.

came to town Kocher retired from his medical practice to concentrate on his real estate investments. Kocher had wisely invested in the land that would become downtown Palm Springs.

Along with Pearl McManus, Kocher became one of the earliest civic leaders to promote new architecture. Kocher's career change required a new building from which to tend to his property investments in Palm Springs. In 1934, he turned to his architect brother in New York to design a small office building with a studio apartment above on the north end of town. Kocher's brother, A. Lawrence Kocher was then in partnership with Swiss-born architect Albert Frey, and also served as the editor of *Architectural Record*, the leading American architectural publication of its day. Both architects were devoted to modernism, and Dr. Kocher embraced the radically Modern structure the firm designed for him. Dr. Kocher can be seen as a person of significance in Palm Springs history and is intimately associated with the building, thereby qualifying the building as eligible for listing under persons on the Palm Springs, California and National Registries.

Significant Architecture (Complete for each of Criteria 3, 4, 5 and / or 6 marked above): 3) That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history; or (4) that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or (5) that presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or that possesses high artistic value; or (6) that represents a significant and distinguishable entity (such as an Historic District) whose components may lack individual distinction.^{3 1}

The Kocher-Samson building possesses the distinctive characteristics of Palm Springs commercial buildings of the modern era. It also represents a construction method of prefabricated steel panels and metal decking, as well as iconic stylistic features including free-standing columns, nearly transparent first floors and other signature details of International Style architecture, as previously described. These stylistic markers commonly occur in the important modern buildings of the period that line Palm Canyon Drive, but the Kocher-Samson was the first building to be built in this style in Palm Springs. The building contains enough of those characteristics to be considered to exemplify its particular period in local history. The characteristic described are expressed in specific terms embodied in the form, proportion, structure, plan, style, and materials and may be seen to represent a type, period and method of construction

Both A. Lawrence Kocher and Albert Frey are master architects who are generally recognized for greatness in their field. Their work was significant, even if their practices were small. "Kocher and his partners produced only a handful of projects, but these projects epitomize the straightforward, innovative, simple, mechanical logic of the International Style in America."² Their building may also be said to possess high artistic values as expressed in design, planning, and engineering. A property is eligible for its high artistic values if it so fully articulates a particular concept of design that it expresses an aesthetic ideal. The Kocher-Samson Building successfully embodies the aesthetic ideals of International Style architecture.

Because the building embodies the distinctive characteristics of Palm Springs commercial modern architecture, and because it is the work of two master architects, and because it possesses high artistic values, it qualifies as eligible for listing on the Palm Springs, California and National Registries.

Significant Archeologically (Complete if Criterion 7 is marked above)

The site is the location of the first International Style building in Palm Springs. It was not, however, noted as a Native-American site of significance. No archeological data is available for the site, so based upon the information currently available, it would not qualify as an historic resource under this criterion.

³ Paragraph 6 refers to buildings that might not qualify individually, but might be a contributor to a potential historic district; this section is not applicable to the subject property.

7. Integrity Analysis

Attach an analysis of the Building / Site / District's integrity based on the criteria in this section.

In addition to being determined eligible under at least one of the Applicable Criteria listed above, the building / site / district must also retain its architectural integrity. Integrity is based on significance: Why, where, and when a property was built is important. Only after significance is fully established can a determination be made with regard to the issue of integrity.

There are seven aspects or qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity: **Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling and Association.** To retain historic integrity, a property will always possess ~~several~~ and usually most, of the aspects. The retention of specific aspects of integrity is paramount for a property to convey its significance.

- *Location:* The Kocher-Samson Building remains on its original site and therefore retains integrity of location.
- *Design:* The character-defining elements of the original design Kocher-Samson building have survived intact. Some superficial changes have occurred, such as replacing the smooth white stucco on the 2nd floor facade with textured stucco, or wrapping the pipe column with stucco. Still, the property retains integrity of design.
- *Setting:* Many have written about the changes in the setting of the Kocher-Samson building, but to the architects' credit, they anticipated future development adjacent to the property, and resolved this eventuality by erecting windowless walls along the north and south property lines, thus creating a building that looks inward. An important aspect of the setting was the large planter along the Palm Canyon property line, which is neglected, but restorable. The property retains integrity of its setting.
- *Materials:* The original materials palette has survived intact, including the prefabricated steel panels, metal decking, free-standing columns, most of the first floor glazing and other signature details of International Style. The property retains integrity of its materials.
- *Workmanship:* Unlike historic buildings of an earlier era, the design of the Kocher-Samson Building relied on catalog parts and easily assembled prefabricated elements that do not bear the imprint of fine craftsmanship. Nonetheless, the examples of workmanship that characterize the building have survived intact, and the property retains integrity of workmanship.
- *Feeling:* This is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular time. Although the significance of the building's place in architectural history may not be immediately apparent, its "floating" second floor is sufficient to place it within the International Style, and thus, its feeling survives and the property retains integrity of feeling.
- *Association:* A property retains its association if it is the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an informed observer. Like *feeling*, *association* requires the presence of physical characteristics that convey the property's historic character. In this case, the building's stylistic characteristics are sufficiently intact to convey the building's early modernist roots, and the property therefore retains integrity of association.

Alterations to the Kocher-Samsom building over time have blunted the dazzling effect that the building must have had upon visitors arriving on North Palm Canyon Drive in the 1930s after the building was completed. Later alterations caused its perfect pattern of alternating open-air and roofed squares to meld into one roofed space. Its graceful lines were subtly altered by a clunky textured stucco parapet that replaced the slender pipe railings on the roof terrace, and blunted the pristine quality of

the projecting second level. Although the interior courts have been roofed over and converted into enclosed rooms it is still possible to fully understand the character of the original design. Although these unsympathetic accretions have been applied to the building, it still possesses sufficient integrity to convey its significance. And while the building has undergone these alterations, virtually all of its character-defining features survive, insuring that with the guidance of the Historic Site Preservation Board and the sensitive stewardship of its owner, these less-than-sensitive changes can be reversed. The building retains all seven aspects of integrity.

8. Bibliography

The following is a list of all books, articles, and other sources cited or used in preparing this application. Also included are the previous surveys that cite the subject property and any other documentation on file.

Books

- Architectural Resources Group, *Citywide Historic Resources Survey*. San Francisco: 2004.
- Bogert, Frank M., *Palm Springs, First Hundred Years..* Palm Springs Public Library. Palm Springs: 2003.
- , *View From the Saddle. Characters Who Crossed my Path*. ETC Publications, Palm Springs, 2006.
- Bacon, Mardges, *Le Corbusier in America: Travels in the Land of the Timid*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2001.
- Betsky, Aaron *Three California Houses: The Homes of Max Palevsky*; 2002; Rizzoli: New York: 2002
- Cunningham, Allen, *Modern Movement Heritage*, E & FN Spon, London and New York, 1998.
- Curtis, William R., *Modern Architecture Since 1900*. Phiadon Press, 1982.
- Cygelman, Adele, *Palm Springs Modern, Houses in the California Desert*. Rizzoli International Publications, New York: 1999.
- Ford, James and Katherine Morrow Ford, *Classic Modern Homes of the Thirties, 64 Designs by Neutra, Gropius, Breuer, Stone and Others*. Architectural Publishing Co., New York, 1940.
- Frey, Albert *In Search of a Living Architecture*; 1939; Monograph;
- Gebhard, David and Robert Winter, *A Guide to Architecture in Southern California*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1965.
- Golub, Jennifer Albert Frey / *Houses 1 + 2*; 1999; Monograph; Princeton Architectural Press, New York: 1999.
- Hess, Alan, and Andrew Danish, *Palm Springs Weekend: the Architecture and Design of a Midcentury Oasis*. Chronicle Books, San Francisco: 2001.
- Hitchcock, Henry-Russell and Phillip Johnson, *The International Style*. W. W. Norton & Co., New York, 1966.
- Jenks, Charles, *Le Corbusier and the Continual Revolution in Architecture*. The Monacelli Press, New York.: 2000.
- Kahn, Hasan-Uddin, *International Style: Modernist Architecture From 1925-1965*. Taschen: Koln: 1998.
- Loewy, Raymond, *Industrial Design*. Woodstock Press, Woodstock: 1979.
- , *Never Leave Well Enough Alone*. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1950.
- Longstreth, Richard, *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to America's Commercial Architecture*. Preservation Press, Washington, D. C.: 1987.
- National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C.,
- Nieman, Greg, *Palm Springs Legends: Creation of a Desert Oasis*. Sunbelt Publications: San Diego: 2006.
- Silberman, Steve, Executive Editor, *Desert Memories*. The Desert Sun, Palm Springs: 2002.
- Rosa, Joseph, Albert Frey, Architect; Princeton Architectural Pres, New York: 1990.
- Williamson, Roxanne Kuter, *American Architects and the Mechanics of Fame*. University of Texas Press, Austin: 1991.

Magazines

- "Saint Paul's in the Desert, Palm Springs, Ca."; *Architectural Forum*; 12/1949, 91, 6

"Palm Springs Eternal;" *Esquire*; 3/2001, 3; Serial
"House in the Desert;" *Life*; 03/24/1947; Serial
"Inside Palm Springs: In the Frey;" *New York Times Magazine*; Spring 2001, Part 2; Newspaper
Engal, Allison, "Modern Love", *Palm Springs Life*, February 2007, p. 86-96
-----, "Modern Treasures", *Palm Springs Life*, November 2005, p. 70-77

Sources Consulted:

Palm Springs Assessor's Office
Palm Springs Historical Society
Palm Springs Public Library
Palm Springs Planning Department
<http://www.csupomona.edu>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Frey
<https://digital.lib.washington.edu>
<http://www.psmodcom.com>
<http://www.volume5.com/albertfrey>
<http://www.wilsonart.com/design/statement>
<http://www.modernsandiego.com/AlbertFrey>
<http://www.findagrave.com>
<http://links.jstor.org>
<http://www.archleague.org/index>
<http://query.nytimes.com>
<http://www.archi.fr/DOCOMOMO>
<http://www.palmspringslife.com/media/Palm-Springs-Life/February-2007/Modernism-Timeline>
<http://www.sellmodern.com/listing-Northport+Historic+Modern+Masterpiece+on+Long+Island>
<http://www.sunset.com/sunset/travel/article>
<http://www.psmodernhouse.com>

9. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: .229 Acre

Property Boundary Description: Attach a description of the boundaries of the property, or District
Boundary Description: Attach an explanation for the selection of the district boundaries.

10. Prepared By

Name/title: Patrick McGrew
Organization: Palm Springs Preservation Foundation
Address: 674 South Grenfall Road, Palm Springs, California 92264
Telephone: (760) 416-7819; Cell: (760) 567-2978
E-mail address: patrickmcgrew2@gmail.com

11. Required Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed application form. **Do not mount any exhibits on a board.**

1. **Attachment Sheets.** Include all supplemental information based on application form (above).

2. **Maps:** For Historic Districts, include a sketch map identifying the proposed districts boundaries.
3. **Photographs:** Eight (8) sets of color photographs showing each elevation of the property and its surroundings.
4. **Non-owner's Notarized Signature:** If the applicant is not the owner, a notarized affidavit shall be provided (see following page).
5. **Site Plan:** One 1/8" to 1/4" scale drawing of the site, and eight reduction copies (8 1/2 x 11 inches) The site plan shall show all of the following: Property boundaries, north arrow and scale, all existing buildings, structures, mechanical equipment, landscape materials, fences, walls, sidewalks, driveways, parking areas showing location of parking spaces, and signs. **Indicate the square footage and use of each building and the date(s) of construction.**
6. **Public Hearing Labels:** Three (3) sets of typed self-adhesive labels of all property owners, lessees, and sub-lessees of record. **The labels shall include the Assessor's parcel number, owner's name and mailing address of each property with 400 feet from the exterior limits of the subject property.** Additionally, all Assessor Parcel Maps clearly indicating the 400-foot radius and a certified letter from a title company licensed to conduct business in Riverside County, California shall be submitted.

Note: If any property on this list is owned by the United States Government in trust for the Agua Caliente Indian Tribe or individual allottee, copies of notices with postage paid envelopes will be submitted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to notify the individual Indian land owners of the public hearings.

**NON-OWNER
AFFIDAVIT**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
(COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE) ss

I (We), _____ being duly sworn,
depose and say that I (we) am (are) the person(s) herein named and that the foregoing
statements and answers herein contained and the information herein submitted are in all
respect true and correct to the best of my (our) knowledge and belief.

Name: (Please print) _____

Mailing address: _____ City, _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Signatures: _____ Signatures: _____

Who proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the person(s) whose
name(s) is/are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that he/she/they
executed the same in his/hr/their authorized capacity(ies), and that by his/her/their
signature(s) on the instrument the person(s), or the entity upon behalf of which the
person(s) acted, executed the instrument.

I certify under PENALTY OF PERJURY under the laws of the State of California that the
foregoing paragraph is true and correct.

WITNESS my hand and official seal this _____ day of
_____, 2012

Notary Public in the State of _____

with principal office in the County of _____

Place Notary Seal Above

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD
Historic Site Nomination Continuation Sheet

Appendix I: Biography of the firm of Kocher & Frey

Alfred Lawrence Kocher (1885 - 1969) was born in San Jose, California and graduated from Stanford University in 1909, after which he pursued a graduate degree at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1910-1912. He was an instructor in Architectural History and Design at Pennsylvania State University where he received an MA degree in 1916; he was promoted to full professor, and ultimately head of the Architecture Department there until his resignation in 1926. From 1926-1928 he taught at the University of Virginia before becoming managing editor of the *Architectural Record*, a position he held from 1928-1938, during which time he included news of the latest developments in design in Europe and the United States. From 1940 to 1943 Kocher taught at Black Mountain College, an experimental school that was internationally known for its modernist advancements in American art and education. The college faculty and students were leaders of the day and included architect and scholar Kocher; composer John Cage; Bauhaus artists Josef Albers, Willem DeKooning and Franz Kline. From 1944 to 1954 he worked as an architectural recorder on conservation and restoration projects at Williamsburg, where he died in 1969.

Albert Frey (1903 - 1998) was born in Zurich, Switzerland. Frey received his architectural education from the Institute of Technology in Winterthur, Switzerland, from which he graduated in 1924. The training he received there was vocational instruction rather than the architectural design instruction of the sort taught by the French *École des Beaux-Arts*. It should be noted that Frey's future employer William Lescaze also received his architectural education in Zurich. Following his graduation, Frey was drawn to the work of his countryman, Swiss architect Le Corbusier, who has been called "the most important architect of the Twentieth Century." In 1928 Frey secured an intern position in Le Corbusier's small Paris office, which after a few months became a paid position. Although Frey was with Le Corbusier for only ten months, his tenure coincided with the creation of the seminal modernist residential masterpiece the Villa Savoye of 1929, with which he was involved. In 1930 Frey moved to New York where he worked for William Lescaze⁴ (1931-33), and began a small practice with early modernist A. Lawrence Kocher, while maintaining a correspondence with Le Corbusier for many years. While most architects of the Twentieth century admit to being influenced by Le Corbusier, very few can claim a connection as direct as that enjoyed by Frey.

In 1930 in New York, Frey and Kocher established their two-person office that produced the famous "Aluminaire House," one of the key modernist buildings of the Twentieth century, and one of the few examples of American modernism to be included in Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Phillip Johnson's⁵

⁴ Designed by William Lescaze, the 1932 Philadelphia Savings Fund Society (PSFS) building is today generally considered the first International Modernist skyscraper, and the first International Style building of wide significance in the United States.

⁵ Phillip Cortelyou Johnson (1906-2005) was an influential American architect. With his thick, round-framed glasses, Johnson was the most recognizable figure in American Architecture. In addition to his many large projects, Johnson produced dozens of such small works over his long career; some of which were built. In 1930, he founded the Department of Architecture and Design at MoMA. Then in 1928 Johnson met the Bauhaus architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, who was at the time designing the German Pavilion for the Barcelona exhibition of 1929. The meeting was a revelation for Johnson and formed the basis for a lifelong relationship of both collaboration and competition. Johnson returned from Germany as a proselytizer for the new architecture. Touring Europe more comprehensively with his friends Alfred H. Barr, Jr. and Henry-Russell Hitchcock to examine firsthand recent trends in architecture, the three assembled

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD
Historic Site Nomination Continuation Sheet

seminal tract 1932 on modernism, *The International Style*. The show was profoundly influential and is seen as the introduction of modern architecture and architects Le Corbusier, Gropius, and Mies van der Rohe to the American public. As critic Peter Blake has stated, the importance of this show in shaping American architecture in the century "cannot be overstated." With this single project, the place of Kocher and Frey in architectural history was assured. One historian has said that, given this early success, the surprise was that Frey did not become more important than he did. The brief collaboration of Kocher and Frey lasted until 1935. Of the few projects completed by the partners, the Kocher-Samson Insurance Services Building brought Frey to Palm Springs for the first time. Subsequently, it became his home and the setting for his career, an event that changed the course of Palm Springs history. One of a handful of important Palm Springs architects, Frey worked and practiced into his nineties, and many of his works are icons of the City of Palm Springs.

their discoveries as the landmark show "The International Style: Architecture Since 1922" at the Museum of Modern Art, in 1932.

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD
Historic Site Nomination Continuation Sheet

Appendix II: Photographic Documentation:

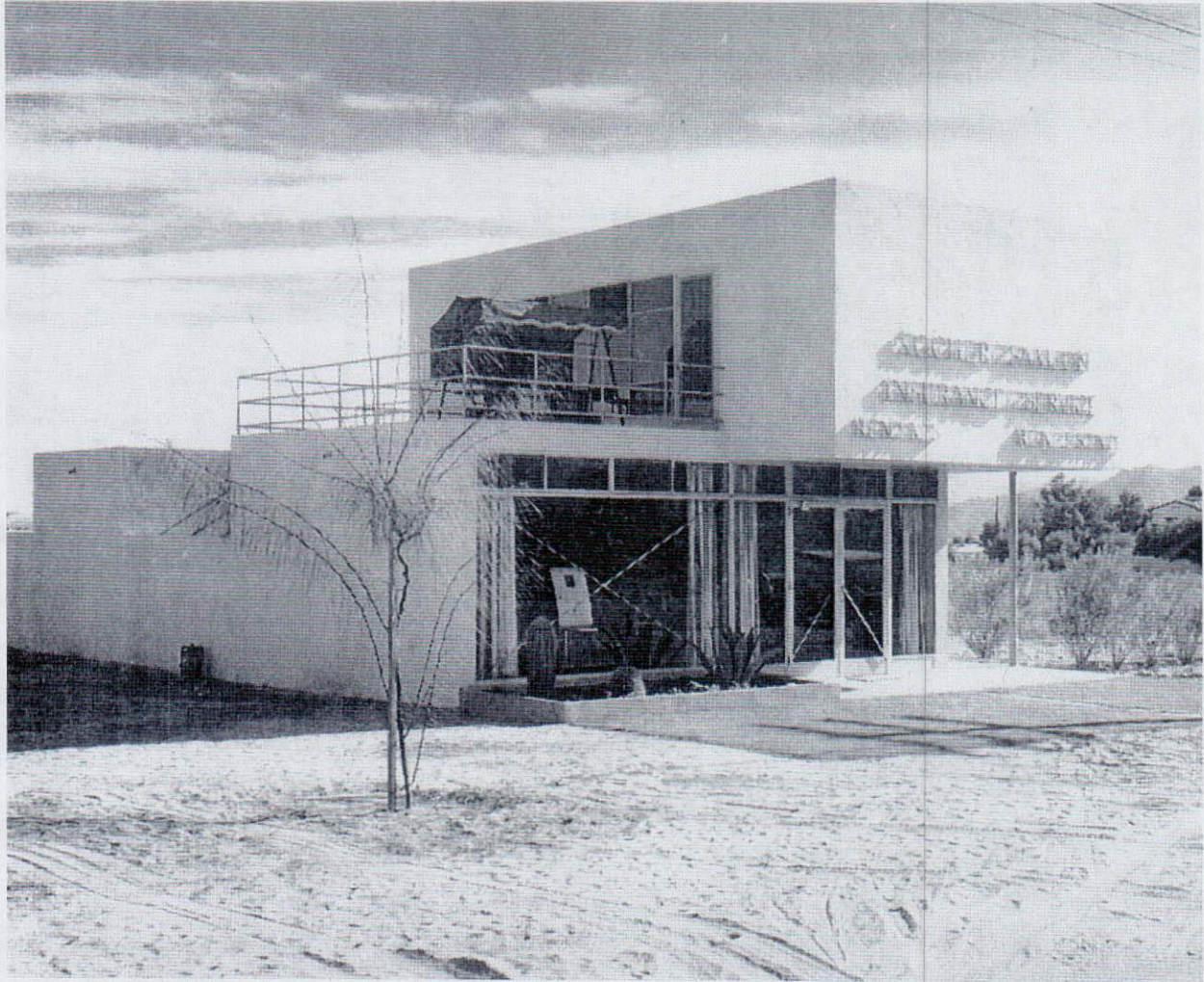


Figure 3 This historic photo illustrates the building's original appearance and underscores how easily the front façade could be restored.

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD
Historic Site Nomination Continuation Sheet

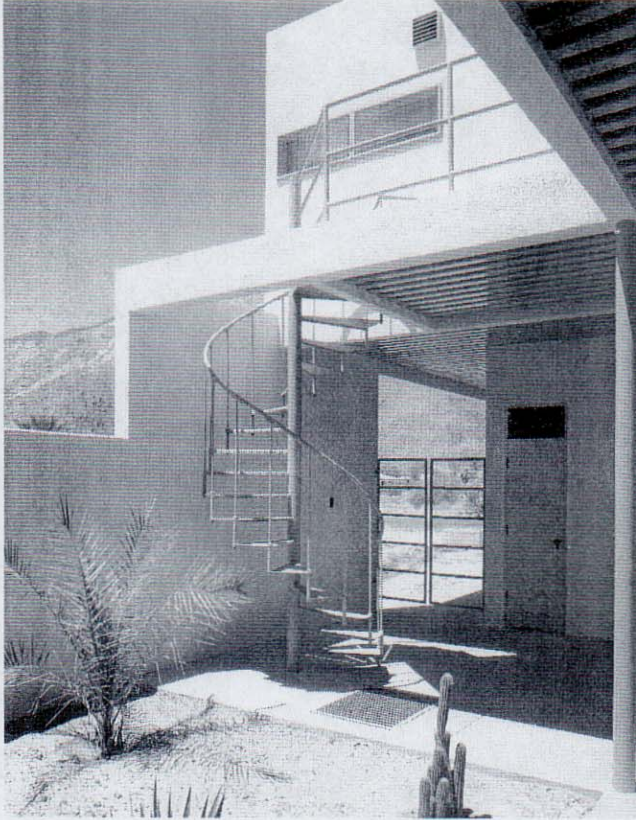


Figure 4 View from courtyard looking toward Palm Canyon.

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD
Historic Site Nomination Continuation Sheet

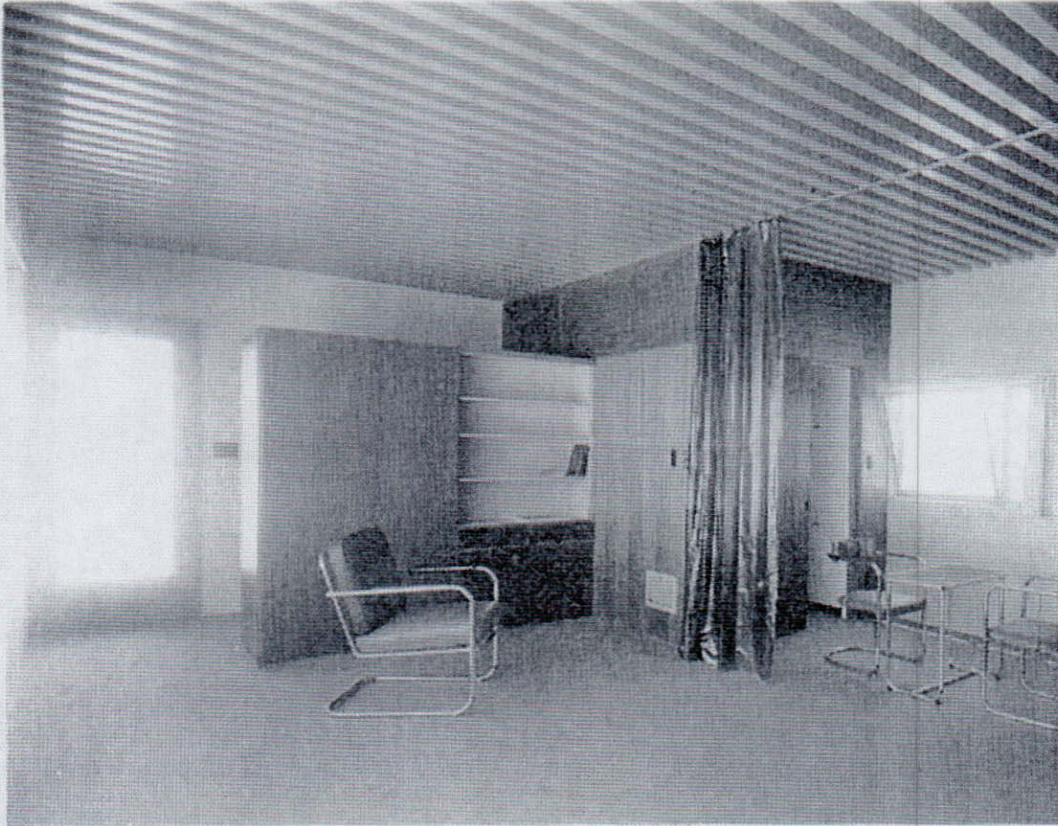


Figure 5 Original appearance of the apartment interior.

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD
Historic Site Nomination Continuation Sheet

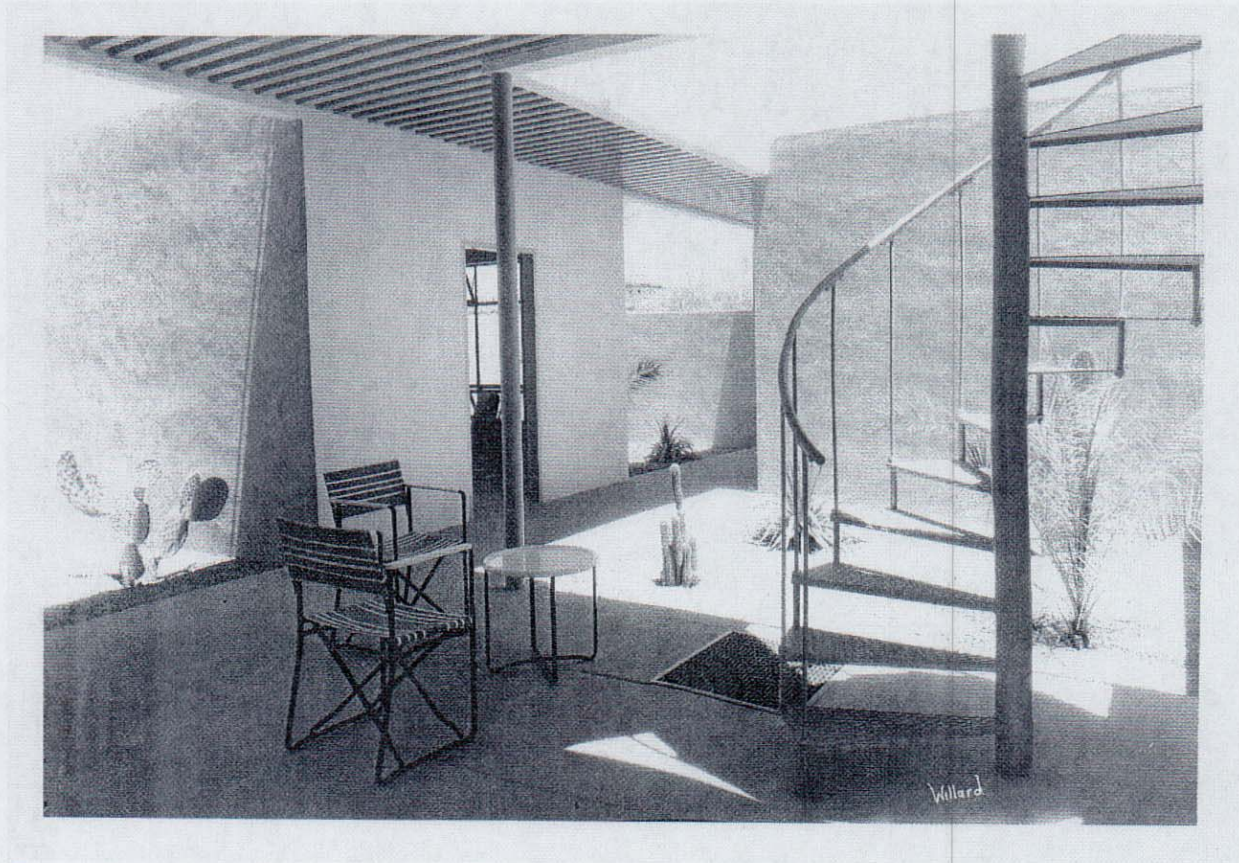


Figure 6 View of Inner Courtyard looking Northeast.

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD
Historic Site Nomination Continuation Sheet



Figure 7 In this 2008 photograph, insensitive alterations conceal the largely intact primary facade of the building. A sensitive removal of the inappropriate alterations and restoration of the building's original character-defining spatial concepts could restore the building's original appearance and reconfirm its importance as Palm Springs first International Style building.

PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD
 Historic Site Nomination Continuation Sheet

Appendix II: Site Map

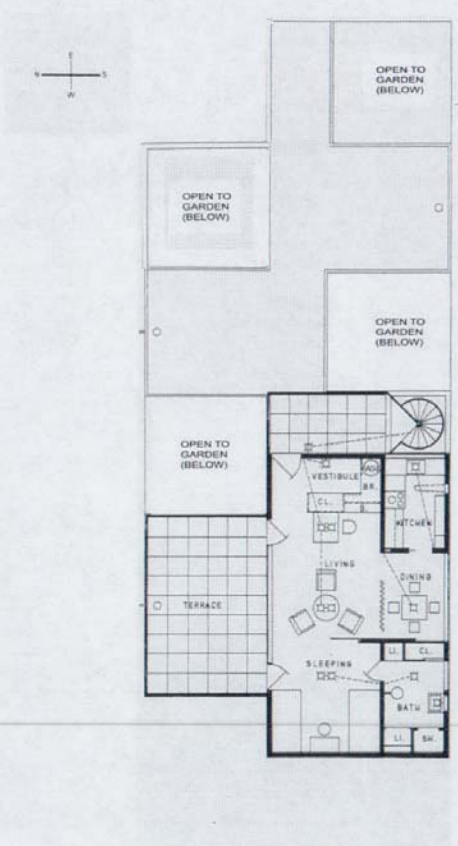
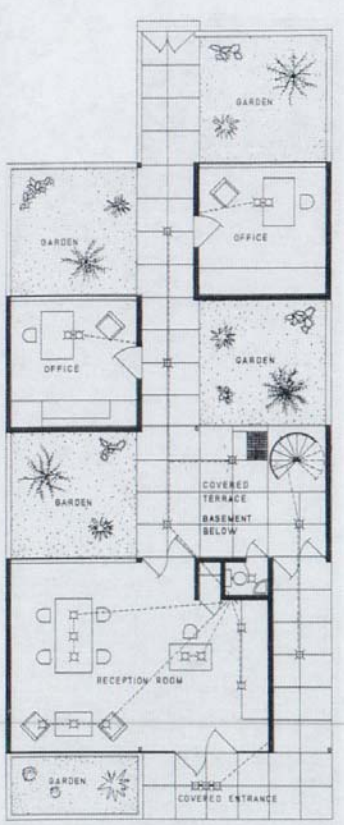
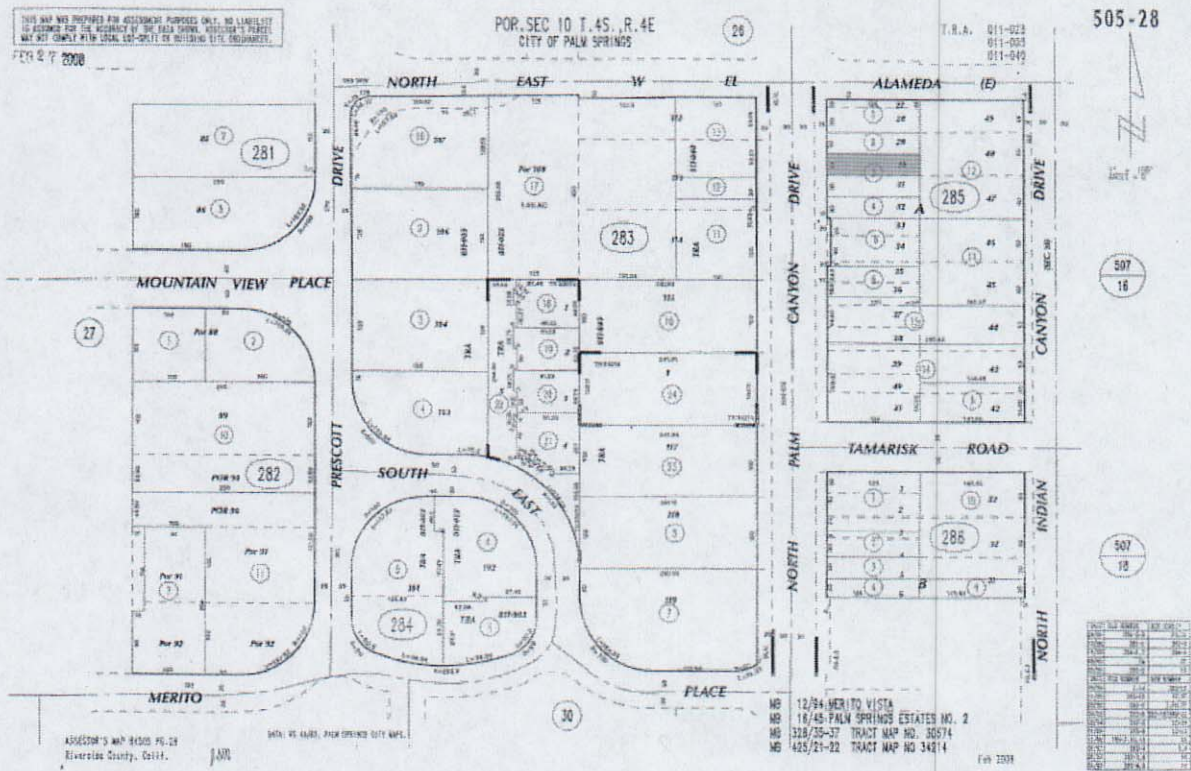


Figure 8 Floor Plans: Upper (top) and Lower (bottom).



PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD
 Historic Site Nomination Continuation Sheet

Appendix III: Assessor's Map



PALM SPRINGS HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD
Historic Site Nomination Continuation Sheet

Appendix IV: Historic Consultant Qualifications

Professional Qualifications Standards: The Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Part 61 defines the minimum education and experience required to perform historic preservation identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment activities. The minimum professional qualifications in architecture are a professional degree in architecture plus at least two years full-time experience in architecture; or a State license to practice architecture.

Patrick McGrew received his Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Oklahoma in 1965. He has been actively engaged in the architectural profession, specializing in historic preservation, since then. McGrew has been a licensed architect in the State of California since 1970, as well as a holder of the NCARB (national licensing) certificate. He possesses an in-depth knowledge of all procedures and standards utilized in the identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment of historic properties as evidenced by his lengthy career known for the depth and breadth of accumulated architectural / historical knowledge. He places a high value on the objectivity and completeness of his written works. He has several years' experience in research, writing, practicing and teaching architecture with an academic and historical agencies and institutions. He has made a substantial contribution through research and publication of a body of scholarly knowledge in the field of California architectural history. His experience has included the preparation of numerous historic research reports, National Register nominations, and San Francisco and Palm Springs historic site nominations, as well as the preparation of plans and specifications for architectural preservation projects. He regulates his firm through the use of ethics standards developed by the Society of Architectural Historians.

Patrick McGrew's knowledge and reputation in the field of historic preservation provided the basis his public service as the long- time President of San Francisco's Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, which extended over an eighteen year span beginning in 1978 when he was first appointed by then-Mayor George Moscone; he served the next ten years under Mayor Dianne Feinstein. Although he served less than a year under Mayor Art Agnos, it was Agnos who declared November 17, 1991 "Landmarks of San Francisco Day" to honor the publication of McGrew's first book, *Landmarks of San Francisco* (Harry Abrams, New York, 1991). Reappointed in 1992 by Mayor Frank Jordan, McGrew served four more years on San Francisco's Landmarks Board. McGrew's second book, *Landmarks of Los Angeles* was published by Abrams in 1994. His acknowledgment by government and/or regulatory agencies, combined with Mr. McGrew's impressive list of publications on California's historic architecture, is a testament to his proficiency as a leading expert in California architectural history. He is a member of the Society of Architectural Historians, and has received many awards for his work during a distinguished career. In 1995, his book *The Historic Houses of Presidio Terrace*, received an award of honor from the California Heritage Council. Upon the occasion of Mr. McGrew's induction into the City Club of San Francisco's Wall of Fame, Mayor Willie Brown declared November 30, 2003 as "Patrick McGrew Day" in San Francisco, and a Commendation from the United States Senate was presented in recognition of McGrew's 'distinguished career and outstanding contributions to the City of San Francisco.' Patrick McGrew moved to Palm Springs, California in 2005 and is currently working on a book about Palm Springs' Architectural History. Palm Springs Class One Historic Site Nominations completed by McGrew include the Oasis Commercial Building, the Sidney Noles Residence, the Hugh Stephens Residence, the Frank Sinatra Residence, the Town & Country Center and the Royal Hawaiian Estates Historic District. McGrew was also the author of National Register nominations for the Thomas O'Donnell Residence and the Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum and in 2009 completed *Donald Wexler, Architect* for the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation. In 2011 McGrew was named Preservationist of the Year by the Palm Springs Modern Committee.

**CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
PUBLIC HEARING NOTIFICATION**



City Council

Meeting Date: July 11, 2012

Subject: Proposed Designation of the Kocher-Samson Building

AFFIDAVIT OF MAILING

I, Kathie Hart, Chief Deputy City Clerk, of the City of Palm Springs, California, do hereby certify that a copy of the attached Notice of Public Hearing was mailed to each and every person on the attached list on June 28, 2012, in a sealed envelope, with postage prepaid, and depositing same in the U.S. Mail at Palm Springs, California. (53 notices)

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.



Kathie Hart, CMC
Chief Deputy City Clerk

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

I, Kathie Hart, Chief Deputy City Clerk, of the City of Palm Springs, California, do hereby certify that a copy of the attached Notice of Public Hearing was published in the Desert Sun on June 30, 2012.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.



Kathie Hart, CMC
Chief Deputy City Clerk

AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

I, Kathie Hart, Chief Deputy City Clerk, of the City of Palm Springs, California, do hereby certify that a copy of the attached Notice of Public Hearing was posted at City Hall, 3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Drive, on the exterior legal notice posting board and in the Office of the City Clerk on June 28, 2012.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.



Kathie Hart, CMC
Chief Deputy City Clerk

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE KOCHER-SAMSON BUILDING
AS CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE 79 AND NOTICE OF EXEMPTION FROM CEQA

766 NORTH PALM CANYON DRIVE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City Council of the City of Palm Springs, California, will hold a Public Hearing at its meeting of July 11, 2012. The City Council meeting begins at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs.

The purpose of the hearing is to consider a recommendation by the Historic Site Preservation Board to designate the property at 766 North Palm Canyon Drive (The Kocher-Samson Building / APN 505-286-002) as a Class 1 Historic Site (Case HSPB 79).

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: This request is categorically exempt from review pursuant to Section 15331 (Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), whereas the proposed designation meets the conditions outlined for preservation of a historic resource. The application is available for public review in the Planning Services Department, City Hall, 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

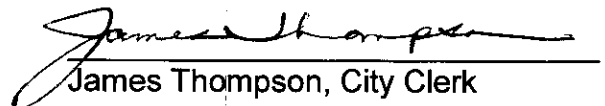
REVIEW OF PROJECT INFORMATION: The staff report and other supporting documents regarding this project are available for public review at City Hall between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Please contact the Office of the City Clerk at (760) 323-8204 if you would like to schedule an appointment to review these documents.

COMMENT ON THIS APPLICATION: Response to this notice may be made verbally at the Public Hearing and/or in writing before the hearing. Written comments may be made to the City Council by letter (for mail or hand delivery) to:

James Thompson, City Clerk
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

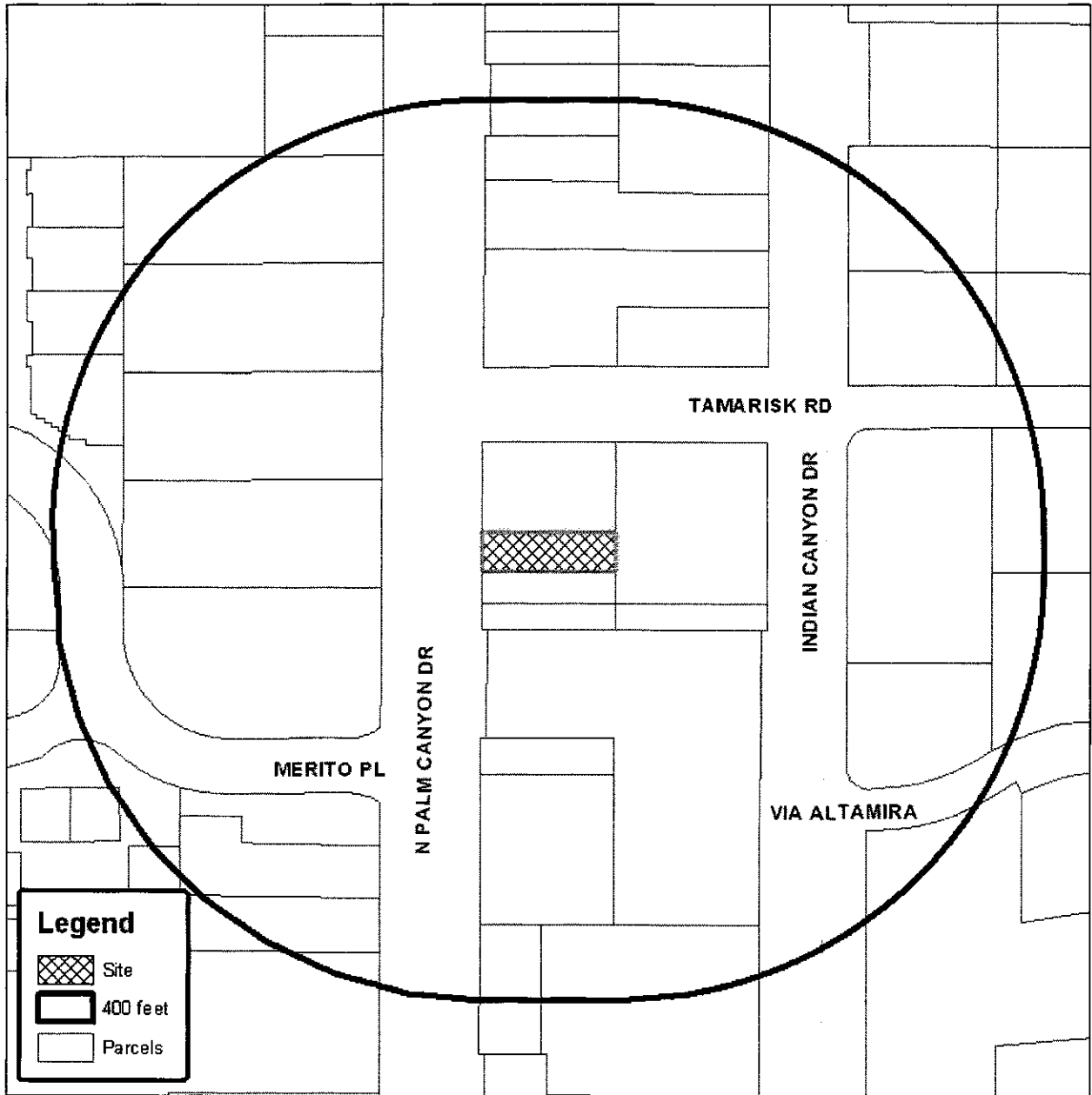
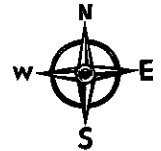
Any challenge of the proposed project in court may be limited to raising only those issues raised at the Public Hearing described in this Notice or in written correspondence delivered to the City Clerk at, or prior to, the City Council hearing. (Government Code Section 65009[b][2]). An opportunity will be given at said hearing for all interested persons to be heard. Questions regarding this case may be directed to Craig A. Ewing, AICP, Director of Planning Services at (760) 323-8245.

Si necesita ayuda con esta carta, porfavor llame a la Ciudad de Palm Springs y puede hablar con Nadine Fieger telefono (760) 323-8245.





James Thompson, City Clerk



Department of Planning Services Vicinity Map



Legend

-  Site
-  400 feet
-  Parcels

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

CASE NO: HSPB 79

APPLICANT: City of Palm Springs

DESCRIPTION: To consider a recommendation by the Historic Site Preservation Board to designate the property at 766 North Palm Canyon Drive (The Kocher-Samson Building / APN 505-286-002) as a Class 1 Historic Site.