



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SERVICES

MEMORANDUM

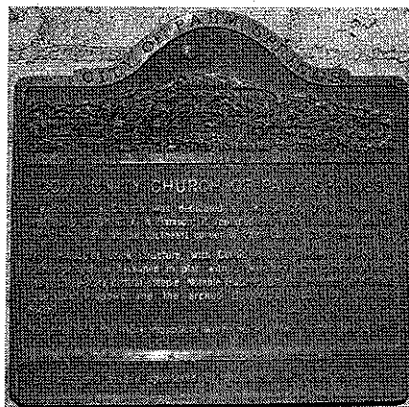
Date: June 11, 2013
To: HSPB Board Members
From: Ken Lyon, RA, Associate Planner
Subject: Historic Markers – Protocol for Text

The subject of the preparation of markers for historic sites comes up as a discussion topic at board meetings every few years. At the Board's May meeting the topic again came up in discussion. Below is the Municipal Code ordinance that establishes the markers.

8.05.165 Markers for designated historic sites.

(a) *Upon designation of an historic site by the city council, the historic site preservation board may determine which historic sites shall be marked with uniform and distinctive markers. The markers shall be of a design approved by the planning commission.¹*

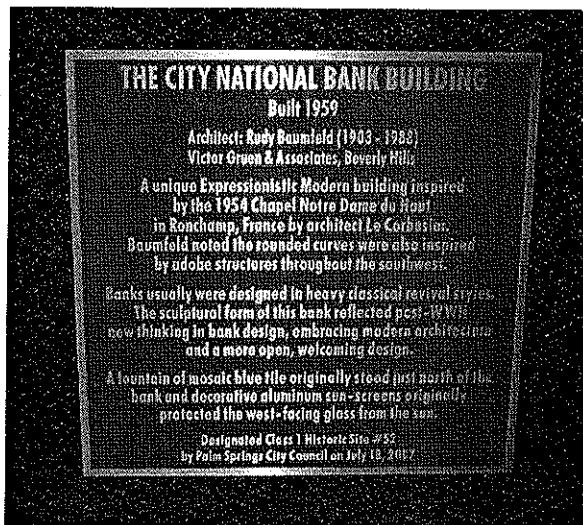
The first generation of historic markers tended to follow the template below. Due to increasing cost associated with the casting of the three-dimensional desert scene at the top, this marker type was abandoned.



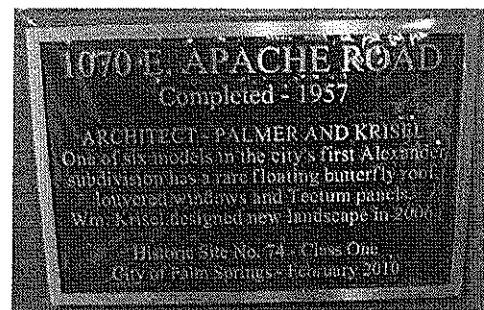
Example of old marker type.

¹ Staff is reviewing past resolutions to determine the date of the most recent Planning Commission design approval for the current standardized markers.

Currently the City uses simpler marker types that come in two sizes: 20" x 20" for commercial sites and 8" x 10" for residential sites. Cast bronze markers are generally used on sites with traditional architecture and cast aluminum markers are used on sites with modern or contemporary architecture.



20 x 20 Aluminum Commercial Marker
Marker



12 x 18 Aluminum Residential

The current marker format has been used for several decades.

Of particular concern to many is the text on the markers. Some feel only the original owner, the architect, the year built and date designated should be mentioned. Others feel the markers are an important tool to educate and inform the public; giving some detail about the architectural style, or significant people or events associated with the site.

While there is no 'right' formula for preparing the texts, staff follows these guidelines:

1. The name of the property, as it is most clearly or commonly identified for historic preservation purposes, is listed at the top.
2. The year built and architect, if known, are identified immediately below the name.
3. A brief description of the historically significant features is provided, based on the staff report and Council resolution. The information could be about the builder, one or more of the owners or occupants, significant events, construction methods, materials, architectural features, or other important elements. The description also attempts to identify in a few words the historical importance of these elements.

4. At the bottom, in two lines, are the Historic Site No., “Class One” or “Class Two”; “The City of Palm Springs” and the date the site was approved by the City Council.

Given the limited amount of text available (about 300-350 characters, including spaces) staff recommends this approach because it provides useful summary information to a visitor, while also providing enough data for further investigation, if desired.

The cost of labor and material to fabricate and install the markers is currently about \$600 for the residential size markers and about \$1,000 for the large markers for commercial sites. From time to time, the City has accepted sponsorships to help defray the expense of the markers, thereby preserving the limited HSPB budget for other forms of preservation education and outreach. Sponsor acknowledgement on the markers can be done discreetly using smaller font at the bottom of the marker to avoid the perception of advertising or commercial promotion. The creation of sponsorship opportunities also raises awareness and community participation in historic preservation and leverages the Board’s limited budget for greater public outreach.²

Staff recommends continuing the current protocols and practice as an efficient means of producing historic marker text.

Attachments – HSPB Marker Policy, March 2011

² Sponsorship opportunities could be limited to philanthropic or not-for-profit organizations or foundations to avoid the perception of commercial promotion or advertisement.



HSPB Policy for Historic Markers

March 2011; Revised June 2013

ALL MARKERS

- Color may be aluminum or bronze, and will complement the style or historical character of the building / resource.
- Font may be Times New Roman for bronze markers and Futura or Arial for aluminum.
- Characters are always centered.
- Copy should break for readability.
- Words should never be broken.
- Write for readability and a clean look.
- Descriptive copy may be in phrases, rather than complete sentences, to provide maximum descriptive copy.
- The policy should apply to the vast majority of Class One designations. There will always be exceptions to the policy. Common sense should prevail.

COMMERCIAL SIZE MARKER

- Size is 20 x 20 inches.
- It is primarily used for commercial and may be used for large estate-size residential sites.
- Maximum number of characters , including spaces, is approximately 310
- Widest line can contain no more than approximately 49 characters.
- Maximum number of lines deep are 16 , including spacing.
- Name of site is in largest font, always in capital letters and may have to be broken into two decks, for example:

SANTA FE FEDERAL SAVINGS & LOAN

- Name of a commercial site is always the name of the first occupant, rather than subsequent occupant or owner such as Washington Federal Savings and Loan or Chase Bank, for example:

**SANTA FE FEDERAL
SAVINGS & LOAN**

- Name of a partial site designation can be named accordingly. For example:

**PALM SPRINGS
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
WEST FACADE**

- The line following the name is the year the site was completed.
- This year line is always in upper and lower case.
- The year line floats in space between the site title and the descriptive copy.
- The year line is in smaller font carried out through the body copy until the two lines at the bottom, which are in the smallest font size.
- It is always the year the structure was completed or, if it is a non-structure, developed.
For example:

**SANTA FE FEDERAL
SAVINGS & LOAN**

Completed in 1957

- The first line of the descriptive copy states the name of the architect or, if unknown, the name of the builder. For example:

**SANTA FE FEDERAL
SAVINGS & LOAN**

Completed in 1957
Architect - E. Stewart Williams

- Body copy follows the designation of architect. It is in the same font size and upper and lower case. It can consist of stand-alone descriptive phrases or complete sentences as long as the content is understandable. There is no space between the architect line and the descriptive copy. For example:

SANTA FE FEDERAL SAVINGS & LOAN

Completed in 1957
Architect - E. Stewart Williams

A modern interpretation of the bank as a temple,
a human scale. Expansive glass, exposed
steel and pierced aluminum screens
above a concrete base.

- Descriptive information is to be based on the most significant historic attributes of the property, as taken from the historic record
- Depending on the depth of the copy lines, leave one or two spaces between the last line of body copy and the standard two final lines indicating site No. and class designation.
- First of last two lines is as follows:
Historic Site No. # – Class One (or Two)
- Second of two final lines is always as follows:
City of Palm Springs – (Date Approved by Council)
- The final two lines are in a slightly smaller font than the body copy.
- No third parties associated with the designation, including current owners, tenants, or sponsors are to be identified on the marker, unless their association is significant to the historic record.

SANTA FE FEDERAL SAVINGS & LOAN

Completed in 1957
Architect - E. Stewart Williams

A modern interpretation of the bank as a temple,
a human scale. Expansive glass, exposed

steel and pierced aluminum screens
above a concrete base.

Historic Site No. 54 ---Class One
City of Palm Springs ---May 6, 2009

RESIDENTIAL SIZE MARKER

- Size is 8 x 12 inches.
- The marker can accommodate no more than approximately 290 characters.
- The widest line can be no more than approximately 50 characters wide.
- The marker can be no more than 14 lines deep including blank lines.
- Name can be the original owner or a later owner / occupant that the community has used to describe the house over time. This is a matter of judgment. For example, a house named for the original owner:

DE BRABANT HOUSE

- A mid-century modern house recognized as an important example of a historic architectural style:

1070 E. APACHE ROAD

- The second line is the date line and the third line is for the architect / builder, as appropriate. They are in a smaller font, in upper and lower case. They float in space between the site name and the body copy.
- Identify the architect (or builder) in the same manner as for commercial buildings, if:
 - The architect / builder is known and is appropriate to historic value of site
 - Identification line for architect / builder shall count as one of the five text lines:

1070 E. APACHE ROAD

Completed in 1957
Architect William Krisel

- The body copy is in upper and lower case:

1070 E. APACHE ROAD

Completed in 1957

Architect William Krisel

This post-and-beam house sports a rare "floating butterfly" roof, landscaping designed by the architect and the high ceilings, open floor plan, and clerestory glass characteristic of a mid-century modern home

- Identify the architect (or builder) in the same manner as for commercial buildings, if:
 - The architect / builder is known and is appropriate to historic value of site
 - Identification line for architect / builder shall count as one of the five text lines.
- Depending on the depth of the copy lines, leave one or two spaces between the last line of body copy and the standard two final lines indicating site No. and class designation.
- First of last two lines is as follows: Historic Site No. ___ -- Class One
- Second of two final lines is always as follows: City of Palm Springs - the date approved by the council.
- The final two lines are in a slightly smaller font than the body copy.
- Commercial companies, advocacy groups or other preservation groups are not to be credited with designation in lieu of the city. The City Council always makes the final designation as on behalf of the City of Palm Springs. Note last two copy lines in this example:

1070 E. APACHE ROAD

Completed in 1957
Architect William Krisel

This post-and-beam house sports a rare "floating butterfly" roof, landscaping designed by the architect and the high ceilings, open floor plan, and clerestory glass characteristic of a mid-century modern home

Historic Site No. 74 – Class One
City of Palm Springs – February 3, 2010

(end)



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

Subject: Historic Designation Marker for your Class 1 Historic Site

Dear

Pursuant the Municipal Code Section 8.05, upon designation by the City Council, Class I historic sites in the City of Palm Springs are required to have a historic marker or plaque mounted at the site that is viewable from the public way. These markers are provided and installed by the City and are approximately 8 x 10 inches cast bronze (for sites with traditional architecture) or cast aluminum (for sites with contemporary architecture). The purpose of the marker is to inform the public about the historic significance of the site.

The text for the marker for your site is as follows;

Customarily historic site markers are best placed on the outer side of a front garden wall or fence viewable from the sidewalk or street. If such a wall or fence is not present at your site, the sign may be mounted on its own vertical supports adjacent to the public way, and at a height compliant with accessibility standards as adopted by the city.

If you have a particular location at your site you would like considered, please contact me and within reason, we will endeavor to mount it at your preferred location. Thank you for your participation and for your ongoing stewardship and interest in of one of Palms Springs important Historic Resources!

Sincerely,
THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SERVICES

Ken Lyon,
Associate Planner