



# HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD STAFF REPORT

DATE: September 8, 2015

PUBLIC HEARING

SUBJECT: AN APPLICATION BY THE PALM SPRINGS PRESERVATION FOUNDATION (PSPF) REQUESTING CLASS 1 HISTORIC DESIGNATION FOR "TAHQUITZ PLAZA" LOCATED AT 600, 650, 700 AND 750 EAST TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY (APN'S #508-055-003 AND 508-044-006), ZONE "TRC" (TOURIST RESORT COMMERCIAL) (HSPB #97)

FROM: Department of Planning Services

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## SUMMARY

On June 8, 2015, the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation (PSPF) submitted an application seeking Class 1 historic designation for Tahquitz Plaza. Tahquitz Plaza was designed and built in two phases: 600 and 650 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, known as "Tahquitz Plaza I" was designed by Hugh M. Kaptur, principal in the architectural firm Kaptur - Lapham & Associates and constructed in 1974. Seven-hundred (700) and 750 Tahquitz Canyon Way, known as "Tahquitz Plaza II" was designed by architect Hugh M. Kaptur and constructed in 1977.

The application was submitted without the property owner's participation. The property owner opposes the proposed historic designation.

On Thursday, May 28, 2015, the Building Department issued a demolition permit for Tahquitz Plaza and on Tuesday, June 2, 2015, PSPF filed an appeal of the issuance of the demolition permit with the City Clerk, to be heard by the City's Board of Appeals. At its meeting of June 8, 2015, the HSPB approved a 120-day stay of demolition pursuant to PSMC 8.05.170 to study the qualifications for nomination pursuant to PSMC 8.05.135.

## RECOMMENDATION:

1. Open the public hearing and take testimony.
2. Close the public hearing and by motion, direct staff on the Board's desired action and recommendations. A resolution reflecting the Board's actions and recommendations will be prepared for a public hearing of the City Council on the matter.

**BACKGROUND AND SETTING:**

<i>Related Relevant City Actions by HSPB, Planning, Fire, Building, etc...</i>	
February 25, 2015	The Planning Commission held a public hearing for a proposed multi-family residential development on the subject sites called “Aberdeen” that was submitted by the property owner (O & M, HR, LLC) and voted to table the matter with direction to the applicant to revise the project. The project proposed the demolition of Tahquitz Plaza.
March 25, 2015	The Planning Commission reviewed the revised project and voted 4-3 to deny the Aberdeen project.
March 31, 2015	The applicant / owner for the Aberdeen project filed an appeal to City Council of the Planning Commission action to deny the development application.
April 22, 2015	The City Clerk received an appeal by the Palm Springs Modern Committee (PSModcom) opposing the demolition of Tahquitz Plaza as a part of the Aberdeen development project.
May 28, 2015	The applicant / owner for the Aberdeen project withdrew the application for the Aberdeen project and filed an application with the Building Department to demolish the buildings known as Tahquitz Plaza.
May 28, 2015	The Building Department approved a demolition permit for Tahquitz Plaza.
June 2, 2015	The City Clerk received an appeal by the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation (PSPF) to the City Board of Appeals of the Building Department’s approval of a demolition permit issued to O & M, HR, LLC to demolish Tahquitz Plaza.
June 9, 2015	The Historic Site Preservation Board voted 7-0 to initiate study of Tahquitz Plaza for possible Class 1 historic Designation and voted 7-0 to place a 120-day stay of demolition on the site.
June 24, 2015	The owner of Tahquitz Plaza filed an appeal to the City Council of the HSPB’s action to initiate study and place the stay of demolition on the sites. Prior to hearing the appellant withdrew the appeal.
August 11, 2015	A public hearing of the City’s Board of Appeals was noticed, however due to a lack of quorum, the matter was not heard. (The stay of demolition placed by the HSPB on June 9, 2015 remains in effect).

<i>Neighborhood Meeting</i>	
None	

<i>Ownership Status</i>	
2008	Purchase by current owner.

Historic Preservation activities in Palm Springs are regulated under Municipal Code Section 8.05 (“*Historic Preservation*”). The purpose of the Historic Preservation Ordinance is:

*“... 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.”*

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE:

A complete detailed description of the site is provided in the Historic Resources Report dated June 2015, prepared by the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, which was provided to HSPB members at their June 2015 meeting and attached to this staff report.

Tahquitz Plaza is comprised of two adjacent parcels located east of Calle El Segundo on the north side of Tahquitz Canyon Way. The westernmost parcel on which the buildings addressed as 600 and 650 Tahquitz Canyon Way are sited is approximately 1.55 acres in size and the eastern parcel on which the buildings addressed as 700 and 750 Tahquitz Canyon Way are located is approximately 1.8 acres.



**AERIAL VIEW OF TAHQUITZ PLAZA**

The buildings are located in Section 14, which is the central part of the historic land area of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians reservation, however the parcels are held in fee simple title by non-tribal owners.



**STREET ELEVATION OF TAHQUITZ PLAZA**

## ANALYSIS:

The historic resources report (“the report”) prepared by the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation dated June 2015 provides a description and analysis of the site against the definition of a historic site and defining criteria as listed below.

### *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...”*

In addition to this statement, the Municipal Code lists seven criteria, or “characteristics” that the Board may use in determining whether a particular site may be deemed historic. A site may be deemed historic based upon the following criteria:

PSPF’s evaluation of the subject site against each of the seven criteria is listed below.

#### ***Criterion 1: That is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community; or***

The report notes that the subject site is associated with the pattern of events associated with the gradual rise of Palm Springs’ prominence in midcentury architectural excellence. It notes that Tahquitz Plaza is an outstanding example of commercial design and the construction of buildings within the context of midcentury desert modernism.

#### ***Criterion 2: That is associated with lives of persons who made meaningful contribution to national, state or local history; or***

The report does not identify any known persons of significance associated with the subject site.

#### ***Criterion 3: That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history; or***

The report asserts that Tahquitz Plaza possesses numerous distinctive characteristics that make up the modernist style, including modulated horizontality, large geometric volumes, expressed structure, expansive amounts of glass, use of inexpensive man-made materials, and solar control.

The report notes that modernist buildings began to emerge in Palm Springs beginning

with the Kocher-Samson Building (1934) and continued with other buildings such as the Edgar J. Kaufman Residence (1947) Frank Sinatra Residence (1947), Town & Desert Apartments (1947), and the Town & Country Center (1946), Later architecturally significant modern works include the James Abernathy Residence (1962), Arthur Elrod Residence (1968) and Kings Point Condos (1968). It notes that Tahquitz Plaza reflects the late period and culmination of a long rich history of applying modernist architecture to the built environment in the Palm Springs community.

***Criterion 4: That embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction;***

The report details that the Tahquitz Plaza bulidngs are of wood frame construction using a combination of solid wood timber and “Glu-Lam” beams. The structure is clad in stucco, glazed ceramic tile, exposed wood “lap’ siding, steeply pitched flat clay-tile roofs, and unique configurations in window fenestration.

The deeply set windows shield the glazing from the harsh desert sun and the covered walkways provide shade to occupants working and moving between the various buildings and integrates the “outdoors” into the construction of the building. The report notes the critical integration of the “eyebrows” over the long horizontal windows as providing visual interest to the horizontal planes of the building’s design.

Quoting Kaptur, the report notes that Kaptur, “tried to make windows an important element of (my) designs in general, and with the Tahquitz Plaza buildings in particular.”. Kapur’s construction technique on the walls and windows are further described in Morris Newman’s book, *The Desert Modernists: The Architects who Envisioned Midcentury Modern Palm Springs*. In it Newman writes, “the Tahquitz buildings manage to look like masonry due to walls that are sculpted to look as massive as concrete. To further the illusion of thick walls, Kaptur provided the buildings with windows that appear deeply recessed. In other places, windows push outward from the wall surface as if trying to break free from the building.”



EXAMPLES OF THE VARIETY OF WINDOW SHAPES AND TREATMENT

***Criterion 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;***



The report notes that Hugh Kaptur’s aesthetic is unique in Palm Springs, demonstrating the wide range of fertile innovation in the City Modernist architecture. It notes that Tahquitz Plaza should be viewed as a later, but important component of the city’s tradition of modernist architecture and that Kaptur should be viewed as an important figure in the history of Palm Springs’ built environment.

Kaptur’s architectural style has been described by various experts and observers as “organic” and “pueblo-influenced (modernist) architecture. The report quotes Kaptur in noting, “I tried to bring in mountain profiles so I might tend toward calling it natural or organic”. The report underscores Kaptur’s personal reflections about Tahquitz Plaza noting, “The massed midpoint culminates with a mountain-profile roofline giving the sense of the surrounding desert flatland swooping upward to the symbolic mountain top.” Expressed structure, one of the tenets of modernist architecture, is exhibited in Tahquitz Plaza by the large Glu-lam beams and the heavy vertical timbers that support the roof.



THE STEEPLY PITCHED ROOFS OF TAHQUITZ PLAZA REFLECT THE STEEP SAN JACINTO MOUNTAIN PEAKS NEARBY



LOW PITCHED ROOFS WITH STEEPLY PITCHED ROOFS BEHIND ARE REFLECTIVE OF THE FOOTHILLS WITH THE STEEP PEAKS BEHIND

Quoting from architectural historian Patrick McGrew, the report notes, “In a town that loves Modernism, designs that show the influence of Pueblo Architecture are often discredited. Oddly, early modernists such as Irving Gill and Albert Frey paid homage to the style of this continent’s oldest structures, but somehow when Hugh Kaptur does the same thing (with Tahquitz Plaza) he gets no respect. Go figure...” The report notes

“with the loss of the Chart House restaurant in 2012 to fire, the inventory of local organic architecture has been diminished making Tahquitz Plaza incrementally all the more significant and important.”



COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN THE ROUNDED FORMS OF TAHQUITZ PLAZA AND VERNACULAR ADOBE STRUCTURES

The report states that only recently is Kaptur’s significant contribution to the rich architectural legacy of Palm Springs becoming understood and documented. Nonetheless, Kaptur’s architecture responds to the harsh environmental conditions of the desert with a similar competency and understanding of that of his contemporaries. (I.e. Wexler, Lautner, Frey, Krisel, Cody, and Neutra).

It is noted that the buildings that comprise Tahquitz Plaza present an excellent example of Kaptur’s design talent and showcase a well-articulated form of Expressionist Modernism, which is not commonly found in Palm Springs. The report notes, “As an example of the maturing modernist movement, the Tahquitz Plaza complex certainly articulates the best of modernist “adobe-influenced” architecture to a level of excellence and confidence that, in total, could easily be considered an aesthetic ideal.

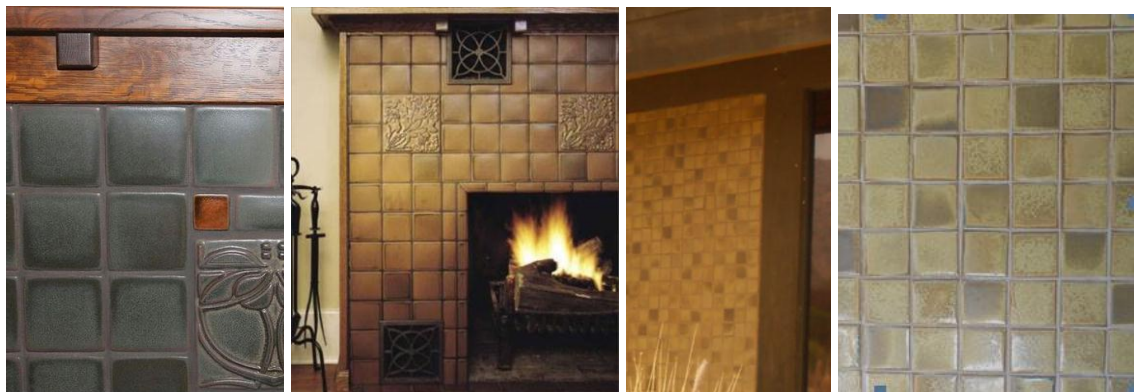
***Criterion 7: That represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;***

The report notes that the subject property does not meet this criterion.

***Criterion 8: That has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to national, state or local history or prehistory.***

There is no known archaeological or pre-historical relevancy to this site.

Beginning on page 27, the report further analyzes Tahquitz Plaza in terms of its “integrity”; again noting such things as Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling and Association.



**AN EXAMPLE OF WORKMANSHIP, MATERIALS, FEELING AND ASSOCIATION, THE CERAMIC TILE PANELS AT TAHQUITZ PLAZA REFLECT THE WORKMANSHIP OF HAND CRAFTED TILES FROM THE ARTS & CRAFTS MOVEMENT WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE FEELING OF ORGANIC MODERNIST ARCHITECTURE.**

### DEFINING HISTORIC CHARACTERISTICS

The report describes the physical character-defining historic features of Tahquitz Plaza to include the following:

- The “campus” that is created by the two pairs of connected buildings with a common aesthetic.
- The open, but covered porches, breezeways, arcades and walkways attached to the buildings and the two paved plazas between the pairs of buildings.
- The exposed dark-stained wood: including posts, porch surfaces, vertical lapped siding, “Glu-lam” timbers, natural timbers, soffits, fascias, and other exterior wood surfaces.
- The rounded stucco “hoods” over the long horizontal windows on the south façade.
- The steeply sloping roofs clad in flat clay tile.
- The inset wall panels of earth-tone-colored ceramic tile.
- The rounded corners and radiused stucco at the parapets with no exposed flashing or drip edge.
- The texture of the stucco wall surfaces.
- The angular stucco “wing walls” flanking deep set windows and walls.
- The deeply-set “slot” windows and the “M-shaped” windows.

Not mentioned in the report are the following site elements. The Board may consider these to be Non-contributing elements at the site.

- The surface parking lots to the north of the buildings and the paved driveways, carports, and parking areas between the two pairs of buildings.
- The existing landscape (which is due to a lack of maintenance, improper pruning and loss of much of the original plant palette that once likely existed.)



### *Designation of Historic Sites.*

Only the City Council is authorized to designate historic sites. When the Historic Site Preservation Board determines that Class 1 historic designation of a certain site or district would further the purpose of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Board may initiate studies, surveys and investigations it deems necessary to adequately gather information in consideration of such a recommendation to the City Council.

Pursuant to PSMC 8.05.170 the Board may impose a 120-day stay of demolition to allow time to initiate studies on possible historic sites. The HSPB initiated such a stay at its June 9, 2015 meeting. The stay expires on October 6, 2015. The ordinance allows the stay to be extended one time for an additional 60 days. Such an extension would allow time for the City Council to schedule a public hearing to consider the board's recommendation on the subject nomination.

### *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 marker explaining the historic nature of the site will be installed at the site in a location viewable from the public way.
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.

Class 1 historic sites are also eligible for application of a Mills Act Historic Property Preservation Agreement, which are intended to provide property tax relief to owners of historic properties and can contribute to the economic viability of adaptive reuse of historically significant structures.

### REQUIRED FINDINGS

In considering a recommendation for Class 1 historic designation, pursuant to Municipal Code Section 8.05.145 the Board, by motion, must make findings in support of its recommendation to the City Council for historic designation of Tahquitz Plaza. Those findings may be enumerated and based on the information and criteria provided in the historic resources report.

Staff will compile the Board's findings in a final resolution that will be presented to the City Council at a noticed public hearing.

## 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 (Class 31 Categorical Exemption).

## NOTIFICATION

Pursuant to section 8.05.140 of the Municipal Code of Palm Springs, the property owner and all property owners within five hundred (500) feet of the subject property have been notified and notice was made in a newspaper of general circulation. Recognized neighborhood organizations in the vicinity have also be provided copies of the agenda. As of the writing of this report, staff has not received any inquiries on this matter.



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Ken Lyon, RA,  
Associate Planner

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Flinn Fagg, AICP  
Director of Planning Services

### Attachments:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Historic Resources Survey, Application, Photos

# Tahquitz Plaza

600, 650, 700 and 750  
East Tahquitz Canyon Way  
Palm Springs, CA 92262

**Nomination Application  
for City of Palm Springs  
Class 1 Historic Site**



Prepared by

Ron & Barbara Marshall

for the

Palm Springs Preservation Foundation

June 2015

## **Acknowledgements**

The authors would like to thank the following individuals for their assistance in preparing this nomination:

**Hugh Kaptur  
Frank Lopez  
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Susan Secoy Jensen  
Jim Harlan  
Vince Williams  
Gary Johns  
Ron Duby**

# **Tahquitz Plaza**

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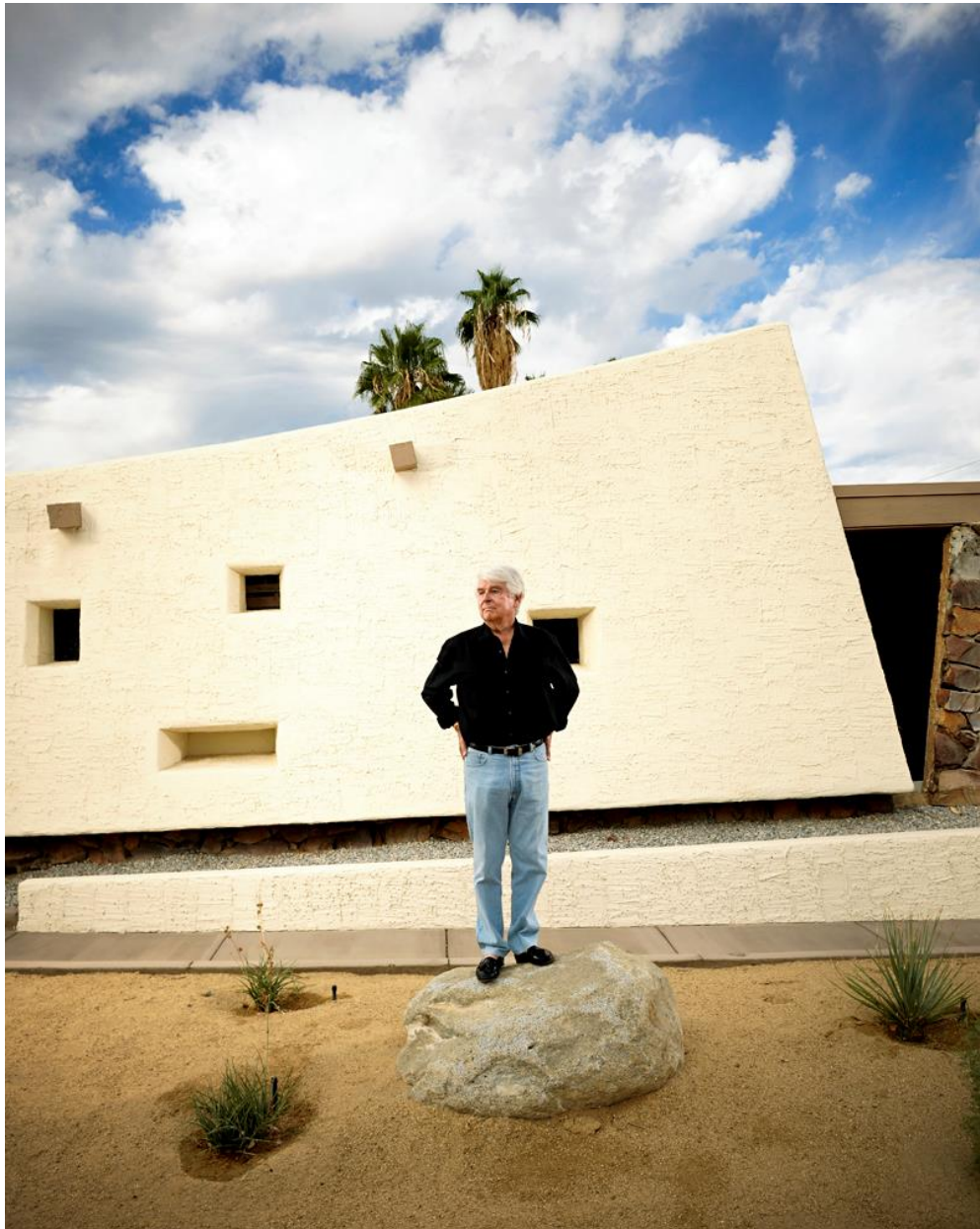
(Cover architectural rendering courtesy Palm Springs Art Museum)



## INTRODUCTION

The Palm Springs Preservation Foundation (PSPF) is a non-profit organization whose mission is “to educate and promote public awareness of the importance of preserving the historical resources and architecture of the city of Palm Springs and the Coachella Valley area.”

In early 2015 the PSPF board of directors assigned the task of writing the Class 1 Historic Site nomination of Tahquitz Plaza to board members Ron and Barbara Marshall.



**Architect Hugh Kaptur poses in front of his Palm Springs Golf Course Clubhouse (1967) another notable local example of his organic, pueblo-inspired modernist architecture**  
(Courtesy Jim Schnepf)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Tahquitz Plaza was designed in two stages by the architectural firm of Kaptur-Lapham & Associates in 1974 (i.e., Tahquitz Plaza I at 600 and 650 East Tahquitz Canyon Way) and by Hugh M. Kaptur, A.I.A. in 1977 (i.e., Tahquitz Plaza II at 700 and 750 East Tahquitz Canyon Way). As an important and largely intact example of a desert modernist commercial structure, the complex exhibits numerous stylistic markers that place it in the historic context of Palm Springs' modern period.

**DESIGNATION CRITERIA:** Tahquitz Plaza has not previously been evaluated for Class 1 Historic Site eligibility. However, Tahquitz Plaza was recommended by PSPF to Historic Resources Group (HRG), LLC, a firm contracted by the city of Palm Springs to conduct an historic resources survey. The HRG survey is expected to be completed later in 2015.

A brief summary of the evaluation contained in this nomination is as follows:

8.05.020 (a) paragraph 1 - **Events:** This criterion recognizes properties associated with events or patterns of events or historic trends. In this nomination, the applicable "pattern of events" is the gradual rise of Palm Springs' prominence in midcentury architectural excellence. Tahquitz Plaza is an outstanding example of commercial design and the construction of buildings within the context of midcentury desert modernism. The nominated commercial complex is associated with this pattern of events for its ability to exemplify the modern period of the national, state and local history. *Tahquitz Plaza is associated with this pattern of events, and is associated as well with Criterion 3 for its ability to exemplify a particular period of the national, state or local history. Therefore, Tahquitz Plaza qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criterion 1.*

8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 3, 4 & 5 - **Design/Construction:** Tahquitz Plaza is eligible under the theme of Modern architecture because it possesses numerous distinctive characteristics that make up the modernist style, including modulated horizontality, large geometric volumes, expressed structure, expansive amounts of glass, use of inexpensive man-made materials, solar control, etc. Additionally, the work of architect Hugh Kaptur must be catalogued as the work of a "Master" architect because of his record of architectural excellence. Therefore, for its distinctive characteristics, as the work of a Master, and for its high artistic values, Tahquitz Plaza qualifies as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criteria 3, 4 & 5.

**SUMMARY:** This evaluation finds Tahquitz Plaza eligible for listing as a Palm Springs Historic Site under 8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 1, 3, 4 & 5 of the local ordinance's seven criteria. Additionally, Tahquitz Plaza retains a very high degree of architectural integrity. (Note: The authors recognize that the city of Palm Springs has traditionally not accepted the above mentioned rationale for criterion 1, i.e., PSMC 8.05.020 (a) paragraph 1. However, that criterion is cited here for consistency with past nominations submitted by PSPF).



# 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

## **HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION**

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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](mailto: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:

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**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 designations, 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.

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**1. Property Information**

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Historic name: Tahquitz Plaza

Other names: Also referred to individually as “Tahquitz Plaza I” (600 and 650 East Tahquitz Canyon Way) and “Tahquitz Plaza II” (700 and 750 East Tahquitz Canyon Way) and in later years informally referred to locally as the “Anderson Travel Buildings”

Address: 600, 650, 700, 750 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, CA 92262

Assessor Parcel Number(s): 508-055-003 and 508-055-006

Owner’s Name: O&M HR, LLC

Owner’s Address: Nexus Development Corporation, 1 MacArthur Place, Suite 300

City: Santa Ana State: CA Zip: 92707

Telephone: (714) 546-5600

Fax number: (714) 546-5660

E-mail address: Not available



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## 2. Classifications

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Ownership of Property. Fill as many boxes as apply.

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

Category of Property. Fill only one box.

- Building (Note can include site)
- District
- Site (Exclusive of Structures)
- Structure
- Object

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

Contributing	Non-contributing	
2		Buildings (Note: Two (not four) buildings are cited due to substantial shared structural elements)
		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
<hr/>		
2		<b>Total</b>

If the building or site is part of a larger group of properties, enter the name of the multiple-property group: Tahquitz Plaza is submitted as a Class 1 site (versus a two-building Historic District) due to current single ownership, near contemporaneous construction (1974 & 1977) and integrated design by the same architect.

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## 3. Use or Function

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Historic Use or Function: Commercial Business

Current Use or Function: Commercial Business

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## 4. Description

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Architect: Hugh M. Kaptur

Construction Date and Source: 1974 (Tahquitz Plaza I) and 1977 (Tahquitz Plaza II). Multiple building permits and Certificates of Occupancy.

Architectural Classification: Modernist - Desert Regional Variation

Construction Materials:

Foundation: Concrete slab on grade

Roof: Concrete tiles and composition

Walls: Frame wood construction covered with stucco, board & ceramic tile

Other:

Building Description: *Attach a description of the Building/Site/District, including all character defining features, on one or more additional sheets. (See pages 14-19)*

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## 5. Criteria *(Fill all boxes that apply for the criteria qualifying the property for listing.)*

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### Events

(1) Fill this box if the property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

### Persons

(2) Fill this box if the property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

### Architecture

(3) Fill this box if the property reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, State or local history, or

(4) Fill this box if the property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or

(5) Fill this box if the property represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or

(6) Fill this box if the property represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

### Archeology

(7) Fill this box if the property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Other Criteria Considerations (Check all the boxes that apply.)

the property is owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes

the property has been removed from its original location.

the property is a birthplace

the property is a grave or cemetery.

the property is a reconstructed building, object, or structure

the property is commemorative

the property is less than 50 years of age or has achieved significance within the past 50 years

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## 6. Statement of Significance

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### Summary

The award-winning Tahquitz Plaza commercial complex was designed and built in two stages. “Tahquitz Plaza I” (located at 600 and 650 East Tahquitz Canyon Way) was designed by the Palm Springs-based architectural firm of Kaptur-Lapham & Associates and erected in 1974. “Tahquitz Plaza II” (located at 700 and 750 East Tahquitz Canyon Way) was designed by Hugh M. Kaptur, A.I.A. and erected in 1977. It should be noted that the incorrect date “1971” has frequently (and incorrectly) been cited for the construction date of Tahquitz Plaza primarily due to its appearance in earlier sources. Additionally, the historic address at the time of construction was on East Tahquitz-McCallum Way (later renamed East Tahquitz Canyon Way).

In 1979 Tahquitz Plaza won a Palm Springs Chamber of Commerce “Golden Palm Award.” Although the 600 East Tahquitz-McCallum Way address is cited on the award, by 1979 both Tahquitz I and Tahquitz II had been constructed so it is reasonable to assume that the entire complex was being recognized. In 1980 Kaptur again received a “Golden Palm Award” for the Curtis-Keiley Professional Building at 1900 East Tahquitz-McCallum Way (developed by Ron Fragen and is often referred to as the “Fragen Building”).



**The 1979 and 1980 Golden Palm Awards. The citation on the 1979 award (left) reads:**

TAHQUITZ PLAZA  
600 E. TAHQUITZ-McCALLUM WAY  
HUGH KAPTUR, ARCHITECT

**The citation on the 1980 award for the nearby Curtis-Keiley Professional Building (right) reads:**

PROFESSIONAL OFFICE BUILDING  
HUGH KAPTUR, ARCHITECT

## The Architect

One of five children, Hugh Michael Kaptur was born on May 22, 1931 in Detroit, Michigan. His father Vincent was a design engineer for General Motors Styling. Kaptur along with his brothers and sisters followed in their father's tradition and all ended up as artists and engineers. As a child Kaptur was always building things, mostly model airplanes, and his mother told him he would be the architect in the family. With this encouragement he started taking architectural-related classes in high school. Upon graduating from high school in June of 1949 he entered college at Lawrence Institute of Technology (now Lawrence Technological University).



Breaking Cranbrook's stranglehold on the Idea Home architectural competition were these Lawrence Tech students: Hugh M. Kaptur, left, of 24554 Peteburg, East Detroit, who placed 5th, and Richard Y. Rochon, right, of 9034 Rockland, Redford Township, who took third prize of \$50. Admiring Kaptur's \$50 check is Earl Perlin, center, dean of architecture at Lawrence Tech. Cranbrook won 8 of 10 prizes.

**This April 1956 newspaper photo shows a young Kaptur (left) receiving an award at the “1957 Builders Show Idea Home” architectural competition which included 53 submissions from architectural students at six Michigan colleges. The top ten prizes were awarded to students from the Cranbrook Academy of Art and the Lawrence Institute of Technology.**

Facing the military draft, Kaptur joined the United States Marine Corps in February of 1951 and was soon stationed at Camp Pendleton in California. It was during this time that he met his first wife Rosemarie Hutton. Rosemarie's parents were in the real estate business and were considering building a new office building. With his interest in architecture they asked Kaptur to design their building. This was his first project and was built in 1953. Hugh and Rosemarie were married on May 30, 1953 in San Clemente. A month later he was transferred overseas, first to Hawaii then to Japan and finally Korea. With the signing of the Korean armistice he was transferred back to California and honorably discharged in February of 1954.

After his discharge Kaptur obtained his real estate license and went to work for his in-laws. Feeling he was destined for a better career, he returned to Detroit and went to work for General Motors Styling in the Exhibit Design department. This department had many tasks including designing Frigidaire appliances, Waldorf show interiors and doing graphic design for products. GM Styling was moving into the new Eero Saarinen-designed Tech Center in Warren, Michigan and Kaptur worked on the studio equipment layouts and the other design and drafting tasks this multi-faceted studio performed.



While working days, Kaptur went back to night school at Lawrence Institute of Technology to continue his education in architectural engineering.

At the urging of his wife, who wanted to be closer to her family, Kaptur moved to Palm Springs in September 1956 where he briefly apprenticed with the architectural firm of Wexler & Harrison. Gifted as a delineator, Kaptur created many renderings of Wexler & Harrison's schools and residences. In 1966 Kaptur became a licensed California architect.

Summary of Kaptur's architectural practice partnerships:

1957-1964	Hugh Kaptur, AIBD
1964-1967	Ricciardi & Kaptur
1967-1976	Kaptur & Lapham (starting in 1972 did business as Kaptur-Lapham & Associates)
1976-1982	Hugh M. Kaptur
1982-1992	Kaptur & Cioffi
1992- Present	Hugh M. Kaptur (in "semi-retirement")

During his professional career Kaptur contributed considerable volunteer time to the city and was a member of the city of Palm Springs' Architectural Advisory Committee for "10 years" and served on the Planning Commission "for eight years." On October 12, 1972 the *Desert Sun* newspaper reported that Kaptur had been appointed to a newly created



The caption of this photograph in the October 27, 1972 edition of the *Desert Sun* newspaper reads (in part), "DESERT DORADO—Architects Hugh Kaptur (seated) and Larry Lapham (left) discuss rendering of single-family Desert Dorado home with Bill Bachwick. Lapham and Bachwick are principals with Philip E. Crystal in LBC Enterprises, developers of Desert Dorado at Sunrise and Alejo...."

seven-member "Environmental Impact Committee" by the mayor of Palm Springs. The committee was created to "deal with major projects that might need an Environmental Impact Report." The seven-member committee included five city government

employees and “two men from outside city government, Jack Green, executive director of the Regional Anti-Pollution Authority, and Hugh Kaptur, well-known architect.”

Kaptur became a licensed pilot in 1965 and a commander and charter member of the Palm Spring Police Aero Squadron.



This photograph appears in the March 24, 1972 edition of the *Desert Sun* newspaper. The caption reads (in part) “Fiesta Parade Flyers...members of the Palm Springs Aero Squadron. Left to right: Lieutenant Hugh Kaptur....”



One of architect Hugh Kaptur’s earliest Palm Springs commissions was the Impala Lodge (designed in 1957 and built in 1958) which still stands today at the corner of Random Drive and San Lorenzo Road. The “luxurious” nine-unit building featured “a lobby and family room framed in plate glass and steel reaching a height of 15 feet.” The May 27, 1958 edition of the *Desert Sun* newspaper reported that the new building was an example of “Indian Modern” architecture.

In 2014, architect Hugh Kaptur's contributions to the Coachella Valley's built environment were recognized by the non-profit Modernism Week organization with a star on the Palm Springs Walk of Stars. In a February 2014 *Palm Springs Life* magazine article written by Morris Newman entitled "Modern Master," Modernism Week chairman Chris Mobley is quoted as follows:

We are delighted to honor Hugh Kaptur during Modernism Week 2014...Mr. Kaptur is a visionary, and our community celebrates the significant role he played in the development of Palm Springs as a mecca for midcentury modern architecture. With more than 200 projects in the area, he represents a prolific and dynamic career. Many of his designs were considered among the most creative and innovative of the era.

Abbreviated listing of Kaptur's architectural projects:

Burgess Residence, Palisades Drive (1957)  
Impala Lodge, San Lorenzo & Random (1958)  
Indian Wells Country Club (1958)  
Leaver Residence, demolished (1958)  
Kaptur Residence, Belding Drive (1959)  
Strebe Residence I, S. Camino Monte (1959)  
Strebe Residence II, S. Camino Monte (1959)  
Russell Residence, Palisades Drive (1960), today the Siva Residence  
Plaza Theatre Interior Remodel, S. Palm Canyon Drive (1961)  
Gillette Residence, Via Colusa (1961)  
The Inn at Bermuda Dunes, Adams Street and Baracoa Drive (1962)  
Kauai Apartments, S. Grenfall Road (1963)  
521 Via Lola, a spec design for developer Thomas Griffing (1964)  
Griffing (spec) Residence, Southridge Drive (1964), known as the Steve McQueen Residence  
Fire Station #3, E. Racquet Club Road (1964)  
Palm Springs Golf Club Clubhouse (1959), now Tahquitz Creek Golf Resort  
Casa Blanca Motor Hotel, S. Palm Canyon Drive (1967), now Musicland Hotel  
Dalú Residence, Brentwood (1970)  
Theis Residence, Eldorado Country Club (c. 1970)  
Sun Villas, N. Saturnino Drive (c. 1970s)  
Fire Station #4, E. La Verne Way (1971)  
London Residence, Fern Canyon Drive (1972)  
Desert Dorado, N. Sunrise Way and E. Alejo Road (1972)  
Tahquitz Plaza, E. Tahquitz Canyon Way (1974 & 1977)  
Holden Residence, Southridge Drive (1977)  
Anderson Residence, Granvia Valmonte (1978)  
Curtis-Keiley Professional Building, E. Tahquitz Canyon Way (1979)  
Caballeros Plaza, E. Tahquitz Canyon Way (1979)  
Mazaheri Medical Building, E. Tahquitz Canyon Way (1980)  
Villa Caballeros, Avenida Caballeros (c. 1980s)  
Desert Flower Apartments, E. Palm Canyon Drive (1984)  
Seltzer Residence, W. Maricaibo Circle (1988)  
John's Restaurant, N. Palm Canyon Drive (1989)  
Sunplex Center, E. Tahquitz Canyon Way (1990)  
Big Bear Shores Clubhouse, Big Bear (1992)

(Note: The foregoing listing of Kaptur's projects was derived from various secondary sources. The historical names, dates and addresses, while generally accurate, have not been verified through primary sources.)

## Local Architectural Context

Although there were a small handful of significant modernist buildings erected prior to World War II, including the Kocher-Samson Building (1934, A. Lawrence Kocher & Albert Frey) and the Grace Lewis Miller Residence (1937, Richard Neutra), the city of Palm Springs saw a dramatic increase in commercial and residential modernist building after the war ended in 1945. These were designed by a variety of talented local and “outside” architects and designers including the Edgar J. Kaufmann Residence (1947, Richard Neutra), Frank Sinatra’s Twin Palms Residence (1947, E. Stewart Williams), the Town & Desert Apartments (1947, Herbert Burns), the Town & Country Center (1948, A. Quincy Jones & Paul R. Williams) and the Dr. Hugh Stephens Residence (1949, Clark & Frey) to name just a few. This record of architectural excellence continued through the 1950s and 1960s with architect-designed modernist tract housing by Wexler & Harrison, Palmer & Krisel and Charles Dubois. Simultaneously, increasingly larger commercial and residential projects were being built including the award-winning J. W. Robinson Department Store Building (1958, Luckman & Pereira), the James Logan Abernathy Residence (1962, William Cody) and the Arthur Elrod Residence (1968, John Lautner). Also seen were a host of “lifestyle” condominium projects like Park Imperial South (1960, Barry A. Berkus), Royal Hawaiian Estates (1961, Wexler & Harrison), Country Club Estates (1965, Jones & Emmons) and Kings Point (1968, Palmer & Krisel).

Placing Kaptur within this local architectural context, architectural historian Alan Hess observed (in a February 19, 2015 letter to Palm Springs Planning Commission) that “...an extraordinary group of talented architects lived or worked in Palm Springs; and while they addressed the same problems they expressed a wide range of aesthetic solutions...Hugh Kaptur’s aesthetic is unique in Palm Springs, demonstrating the wide range of fertile innovation in the city.”

Today, the architecture of 1970s Palm Springs is only now starting to be appreciated. As such, Tahquitz Plaza should be viewed as a later, but important, component of the city’s tradition of modernist architecture. Accordingly, architect Hugh Kaptur should likewise be viewed as an important figure in the history of Palm Springs’ “built environment.” Because Kaptur designed both commercial buildings and private residences, many residents and visitors have directly experienced Palm Springs’ modernist architecture through his striking buildings.

## Site Description

Location. Tahquitz Plaza is located on the north side of Tahquitz Canyon Way, a major city thoroughfare extending from the Palm Springs Airport to the city’s downtown area. The complex is bounded by North Calle El Segundo to the west and North Calle Alvarado to the east. To the north is a large parcel that serves as a parking lot (informally referred to as the Prairie Schooner lot after the Prairie Schooner trailer court which previously occupied the site).

Size. Tahquitz Plaza encompasses 3.35 acres (with Tahquitz Plaza I at 1.55 acres and Tahquitz Plaza II at 1.80 acres). Detailed property information can be found in Appendix III.

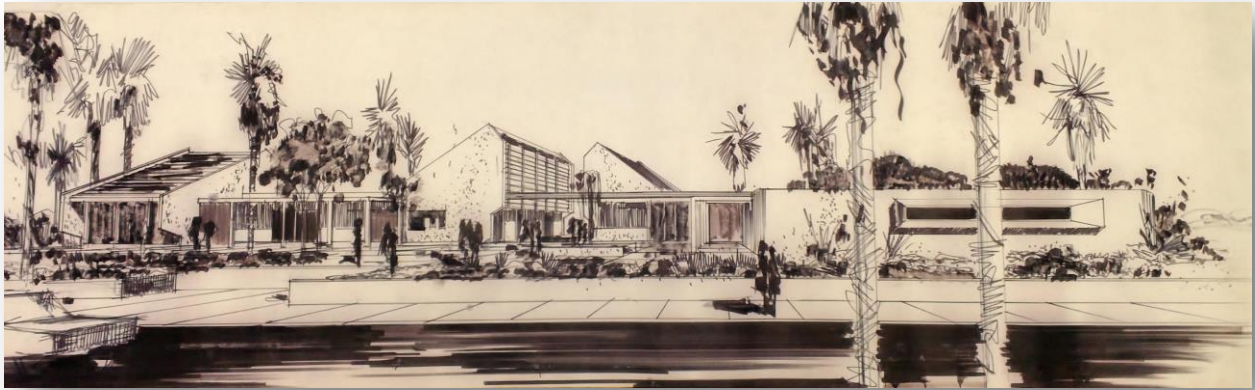
Additional. The Tahquitz Plaza complex is elegantly sited and stretches unhurried along East Tahquitz Canyon Way taking full advantage of mountain views to the south and west. There is significant on-site parking. Plantings on the site range from various types of palm trees to low, decorative chuparosa and barrel cacti. A full legal description of the Tahquitz Plaza property is provided at Appendix II and the Assessor's Parcel map is provided at Appendix III.



**An aerial view of Tahquitz Plaza complex (oriented north). This aerial view also shows the “Prairie Schooner” parking lot to the north (only the 600 address is notated with 650, 700 and 750 addresses to the east).**  
(Google Maps)

## **The Architecture**

Tahquitz Plaza is a fascinating and important contribution to Palm Springs’ renowned collection of commercial modernist architecture. Sometimes inexactly described as four buildings (due to the four separate addresses), Tahquitz Plaza is more properly described as a pair of buildings. Each of the two buildings, Tahquitz Plaza I (at 600 and 650 East Tahquitz Canyon Way) and Tahquitz Plaza II (at 700 and 750 East Tahquitz Canyon Way) consist (individually) of two large structures connected by substantial structural and design elements over breezeways. According to building permits, Tahquitz Plaza I encompasses approximately 16,000 square feet of office space with Tahquitz Plaza II also consisting of 16,000 square feet (for a total of 32,000 square feet).



**A vintage architectural rendering of Tahquitz Plaza I (see Appendix V for a larger view)**  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Art Museum)

While inarguably a modernist architect, over the decades Kaptur's architectural style has been described by various experts and observers as "organic," "Indian Modern," "Mexican modern," and "pueblo-influenced [modernist] architecture." However, regardless of the adjectives used, in the case of Tahquitz Plaza this styling is only an overlay superimposed over skillfully articulated modernist buildings. In a May 26, 2015 interview with the authors, architect Hugh Kaptur made the following observations about his architectural "style" in general and the architecture of the Tahquitz Plaza in particular:

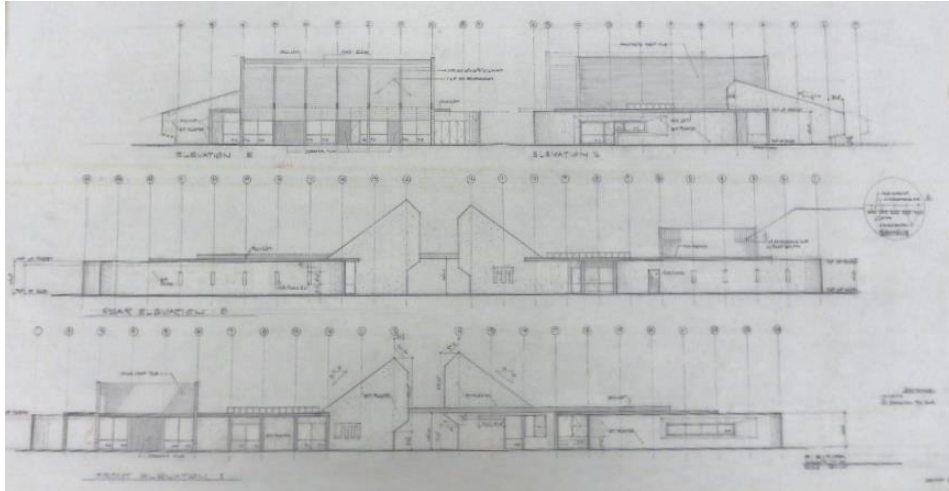
If I had my way I'd like to be able to call it "Hugh Kaptur-style" [smiling]. With the Tahquitz Plaza project, as with many of my projects, I tried to bring in mountain profiles so I might tend towards calling it natural or organic. Frankly, being confined to the modernist "square box" can get boring sometimes. I feel the architecture has to blend into the natural surroundings, the hillsides and so on. I was probably subtly influenced by my travels to Mexico, and Arizona, Hawaii and even Japan. Ancient peoples were obviously stuck with building with adobe bricks and that influences all architecture even up to today. It might surprise people that I was even influenced by tropical as opposed to desert climates because I've always been fascinated with the interesting rooflines in early Polynesian and Hawaiian architecture where they had to deal with heavy rains...hence the shapes seemed to become more organic.

My early architecture in Palm Springs was certainly influenced by height limits...something I was not always happy about. With Tahquitz Plaza...my partners in the project were a bunch of lawyers and they didn't really care what I was going to build, they just wanted nice office spaces. Most importantly though, I was not restricted by height limits so I had an opportunity to be more expressive with rooflines. I got to "explode out of the [modernist] box" so to speak. That's why I say I was allowed great creativity with regard to Tahquitz Plaza I and later with Tahquitz Plaza II. Obviously, I wanted to continue the same style with Tahquitz Plaza II. In fact, I had long-term plans to maybe develop the large lot to the north [then a trailer park called Prairie Schooner] behind Tahquitz Plaza. Had it been built, the new development would have continued the architectural style.

Overall, the design of both Tahquitz I and Tahquitz II follow the same formula: horizontality on the east and west sides of both buildings meet in the center to support a visually and physically massed midpoint. The massed midpoint culminates with a



mountain-profile roofline giving the sense of the surrounding desert flatland swooping upward to the symbolic mountain top.



**Elevations of Tahquitz Plaza I (see Appendix V for a larger view)**  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Art Museum)



**The modernist design of Tahquitz Plaza I culminates at midpoint in two large geometric volumes. It is important to note that the volumes, while aesthetically similar, are asymmetrical (pre-modern architectural styles placed an emphasis on symmetry). Asymmetry is an important movement in modernist design along with attenuation and bio-morphism. This perspective shows the naturalistic “mountain peak” rooflines.**

“Expressed structure,” one of the tenets of modernist architecture, is probably best exhibited in Tahquitz Plaza by the huge glu-lam beams used by Kaptur in the construction of the building. Glued laminated timber, called “glu-lam” (or glulam) is a type of structural timber product comprising a number of layers of dimensioned timber bonded together with durable, moisture-resistant structural adhesives. Glu-lam beams can also be considered a technology-driven “modern” material. Another example of expressed structure can be seen in the heavy vertical support timbers supporting the roof (shown in later photographs).



**Glu-lam beams (two shown, one at the extreme top of the photograph and the other in the center) express the structure of the building. This photograph also shows, left and right, the wood *brise-soleil* (or “sunbreak”) that blocks direct sunlight but allows indirect light into the interior of the building through windows that rise almost to the rooftops. The breezeway integrates the “outdoors” into the design of the building.**

The techniques used in Tahquitz Plaza to moderate the harsh desert sun vary from the straightforward to the ingenious. For example, aside from deep eaves integrated into the building’s design are the striking “eyebrowed” windows (these are discussed at length later in this section). The wood *brise-soleil* shading the large windows facing the breezeways are another. Another clever method of solar control can be found in the projecting “fins” found throughout the Tahquitz Plaza complex. These “fin” elements are integrated into the building and create the striking “reverse angle” design feature. While the feature is at first blush a beautiful sculptural element, in true modernist tradition it is also highly functional.

The variety of window (and combination window-entryway) designs found throughout Tahquitz Plaza are some of the more striking found anywhere in Palm Springs with one clever design following another (see Appendix IV). Some window designs are “conventional” (e.g., long rectangles) but deeply recessed. Others are geometric and read as “letters.” Other windows are surrounded by dramatic organic eyebrows. But it

is important to understand that many of the windows are critical to the functional modernist design: the aforementioned eyebrowed windows throughout the complex not only provide interior light and solar protection but provide visual interest to the longer horizontal planes of the building's design.



**Dramatic organic “eyebrowed” window at Tahquitz Plaza II**

When asked specifically (during the May 26, 2015 interview with the authors) about the interesting and expressive windows used on Tahquitz Plaza and his other commissions (e.g., Casa Blanca Motor Hotel) architect Kaptur had the following to say:

I never liked windows sitting on the surface...square flat standard windows and even case-ment windows always struck me as appropriate for dull, austere wartime housing...probably more so than most architects I have always tried to make windows an important element of my designs in general...and with the Tahquitz Plaza buildings in particular.



**Deeply-recessed “letter” window of an unconventional design at Tahquitz Plaza II**

In the recently published book *The Desert Modernists: The Architects Who Envisioned Midcentury Modern Palm Springs*, author Morris Newman makes the following interesting observations about the architecture of Tahquitz Plaza, calling it “one of Kaptur’s favorites”:

After an original design called for concrete, cost considerations dictated that a less expensive wood frame structure be employed. Despite this constraint, the Tahquitz buildings manage to look like masonry, due to walls that are sculpted to look as massive as concrete. To further the illusion of thick walls, Kaptur provided the buildings with windows that appear deeply recessed. In other places, windows push outward from the wall surface as if trying to break free of the building.

When asked during the May 26, 2015 interview with the authors about where Tahquitz Plaza stands in his body of architectural work, Kaptur opined:

I think due to the creative freedom I had, it [Tahquitz Plaza] is one of my best buildings. My other favorites would probably be the [Palm Springs] Golf Course Clubhouse, the bermed Fragen Building and the Selzer Residence. If you’d like to tear down a building of mine I have a list...on many occasions I’d provide plans to clients and they’d take some unfortunate liberties and even cut corners on materials. So, I would say Tahquitz Plaza is certainly one of the best I ever did.

While the architectural significance of Tahquitz Plaza has recently become more appreciated, that appreciation has been hard-won. As recently as 2010, the late Patrick McGrew (one of the city’s most astute and accomplished architectural historians) lamented the fact that the architectural significance of Tahquitz Plaza was both unacknowledged and unappreciated when he opined:

In a town that loves Modernism, designs that show the influence of Pueblo Architecture are often discredited. Oddly, early modernists such as Irving Gill and Albert Frey paid homage to the style of this continent’s oldest structures, but somehow, when Hugh Kaptur does the same thing [with Tahquitz Plaza], he gets no respect. Go figure....

Finally, it is interesting that Kaptur, without prompting, will frequently use the term “organic” when describing his architecture. While “organic architecture” can range from the exuberant to the restrained it is inarguable that examples of organic architecture in the Coachella Valley are relatively rare. Certainly two of the most notable examples are the Arthur Elrod Residence (1968, John Lautner) on Southridge and the “sea creature-like” Chart House Restaurant (1978, Kendrick Bangs Kellogg). With the destruction of the Chart House by a suspicious fire in January of 2012, the inventory of local organic architecture has been diminished making Tahquitz Plaza incrementally all the more significant and important.

Additional photographs and commentary concerning the architecture of Tahquitz Plaza is contained in Appendix IV.

## **Chain of Ownership**

### Tahquitz Plaza I (600 and 650 East Tahquitz Canyon Way)

A United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Deed to Restricted Indian Land documents the transfer of Assessor Parcel Number 508-055-003 (also identified as "Land being conveyed under ACBCI Tribal Tract T5298") to O&M Indian Canyon, LLC, a California limited liability company, on September 12, 2007. The mailing address is Nexus Development Corporation, 1 MacArthur Place, Suite 300, Santa Ana, CA 92707. The Deed to Restricted Indian Land is signed by Richard M. Milanovich, Chairman, United States of America in trust for the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians.

By a Grant Deed executed on February 7, 2008 O&M Indian Canyon, LLC granted O&M HR, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, grantor's entire interest in and to the property. O&M HR, LLC's mailing address is Nexus Development Corporation, 1 MacArthur Place, Suite 300, Santa Ana, CA 92707. A copy of the February 7, 2008 Grant Deed is at Appendix II.

### Tahquitz Plaza II (700 and 750 East Tahquitz Canyon Way)

On January 13, 1975 the Bureau of Land Management granted a Land Patent (Patent Number 04-75-0037) for land described as "T. 4 S., R. 4 E., Sec. 14, Block 9" to Lorene McGlamary Martinez.

By a Grant Deed executed on February 25, 1975 Lorene McGlamary Martinez "for a valuable consideration" granted Block 9, Section 14, Township 4 South, Range 4 East to AKW, a partnership. The "AKW" partnership was comprised of Lois Anderson, Hugh Kaptur and Webb Engineering.

By a Grant Deed executed on September 11, 1997 AKW Partnership "for a valuable consideration" granted the property to Lois Anderson, Trustee of The Lois Anderson Revocable Family Trust.

By a Grant Deed executed on January 24, 2007 Lois Anderson "for a valuable consideration" granted the property to O&M Indian Canyon, LLC, a California limited liability company.

By a Grant Deed executed on August 3, 2007 O&M Indian Canyon, LLC granted O&M HR, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, grantor's entire interest in and to the property. A copy of the August 3, 2007 Grant Deed is at Appendix II.



## Permit History

### Tahquitz Plaza I (600 and 650 East Tahquitz Canyon Way)

(Note: The city's microfiche building permits for Tahquitz Plaza I have been scanned in backwards and are extremely difficult to read.)

- Application for Construction Permit, Undated, Special Approval Number 5-730. Owner's Name: Best, Best & Krieger. Plans by: Kaptur-Lapham & Associates. Square footage: 16,000. Valuation: 280,000. Contractor's Name: Heathman Construction Co., Inc.
- Building Permit B6462, 7-10-73 for "plan check"
- Building Permit B6685, undated, small drawing attached, possibly partition layout
- Building Permit B6746, 9-26-73 to "construct one story frame & stucco commercial bldg. with two completed offices & two "shell" office areas for future offices. Partial compo roof, partial tile roof. 16,000 sq. ft., \$280,000"
- Mechanical Permit M2989, from job record card, date and details unavailable
- Sewage Permit A2881, from job record card, date and details unavailable
- Electrical Permit A7153, from job record card, date and details unavailable
- Plumbing Permit P3452, from job record card, date and details unavailable
- Plumbing Permit, P3235, 10-23-73 for bathroom fixtures
- Building Permit, B7149, 1-10-74 to "Const 460 lin ft of 2 ft 6 in conc block Wall along South Property Line and 757 Lin Ft of 6 Ft conc block wall along North and East property lines"
- Plumbing Permit, P3497, 4-27-74 for "sprinklers, irrigation system"
- Certificate of Occupancy, November 8, 1974, Best, Best & Krieger
- Application for Construction Permit, 1-18-77 to "remodel"
- Building Permit 0077, 1-26-77 for "interior partitions to form new office space"
- Building Permit B6900, 1-8-82 for "gas pressure test"
- Building Permit B7426, 4-12-82 details unavailable
- Building Permit B3339, 2-17-84 to "repartition walls in commercial building to create new rental space – includes electrical"



- Building Permit B6685, 5-6-85, from job card, details unavailable
- Building Permit B7903, 12-16-85 to “replace A/C unit with a screen”
- Building Permit B09008, 9-14-86 to “replace existing 3TN A/C unit on roof”
- Building Permit B13820, 9-28-88 to “tear off old roof and reroof with built-up 4-ply roof per U.B.C. chapter 32, Contract & Manufacturers specs.”

Tahquitz Plaza II (700 and 750 East Tahquitz Canyon Way)

- Application for Construction Permit, Undated. Owner’s Name: AKW Partnership. Plans by: Hugh M. Kaptur AIA & Assoc. Square footage: 16,000. Valuation: 600,000. Contractor’s Name: Pending.
- Building Permit B10108, 6-4-76 to “Const frame & stucco, single story commercial/office bldg., with partial compo roof, partial tile roof. West wing 8,000 sq. ft. office, East wing 8,600 sq. ft. office, \$600,000”
- Electrical Permit A8314, 6-8-76 for temporary service
- Electrical Permit A8314, 6-9-76 for “Temp Pole”
- Sewer Permit A4266, 6-24-76 for bathroom fixtures
- Plumbing Permit P4385, 6-24-76 for bathroom fixtures
- Sewer Permit A4284, 6-30-76, illegible
- Plumbing Permit P4747, date illegible, for “sprinklers, irrigation system”
- Mechanical Permit M3997, 9-15-76 for A/C
- Electrical Permit A8497, 9-23-76 for outlets, light fixtures
- Electrical Permit A8814, 12-9-76 for temporary use
- Certificate of Occupancy, February 25, 1977, AKW Partnership
- Building Permit B0476, 4-19-77 for “Interior partitions within existing commercial building”
- Electrical Permit A086, 5-3-77 for outlets, light fixtures
- Building Permit B0737, 6-6-77 for “Interior partitions within existing commercial building”

- Plumbing Permit P5565, 6-7-77 for bathroom fixtures
- Plumbing Permit P5570, 6-8-77 for bathroom fixtures
- Building Permit B1010, 7-8-77 for “Interior partitions within existing commercial bldg.”
- Mechanical Permit M6150, 7-12-79, for A/C. Owner: E. F. Hutton
- Building Permit B1424, 4-27-83 for “Suite D: Interior remodel of existing commercial rental unit. R&R partitions. Electrical work.” Owner: L. Anderson
- Building Permit B1668, 6-8-83 to “Combine two existing suites and remodel interiors”
- Building Permit B2295, 9-28-83 to “Reroof per proposal & city specs”
- Building Permit B09843, 12-11-86 for “Gas pressure test”
- Building Permit B13627, 8-30-88 to “Construct 360 L.F. of 6’ slumpstone block wall on rear property line. Per city detail”
- Building Permit B13712, 9-14-88 for “Tenant improvement – construct partition walls per plan, adding electrical outlets where needed, no changes to lighting & H.V.A.C. systems. 1633 S.F. of remodeled area out of 3001 S.F.”
- Building Permit B20434, 4-10-91 to “Remove existing roof and reroof with 4-ply built-up roof per U.B.C. 32.”
- Certificate of Occupancy, September 28, 1993, Access Long Distance of the Desert, Inc.
- Certificate of Occupancy, January 5, 1994, Dr. William Longfellow

## **Research Note**

While significant documentation is available on Tahquitz Plaza I, unfortunately similar documents are missing for the Tahquitz Plaza II complex. For instance, elevations, mechanical drawings, etc. for Tahquitz Plaza I were found in the Palm Springs Art Museum’s Hugh Kaptur archives collection. However, those for Tahquitz Plaza II have not yet been located and are most likely only “temporarily” missing. While this lack of documentation on Tahquitz Plaza II has subtly influenced the content of this nomination this should not be regarded as placing any less importance on the Tahquitz Plaza II building as the availability of documentation could have been just as easily reversed. The two structures were designed by the same architect, at near the same time (i.e., within three years) and Tahquitz Plaza II was intended to seamlessly blend with Tahquitz Plaza I into a single masterwork.

## BACKGROUND / HISTORIC CONTEXT

The relatively short history of Palm Springs can be organized into three more or less distinct periods that include Prehistory, the Settlement Period, and the Modern Period. It is within the context of the last period that these buildings will be evaluated.

**Modern Period (1925-1960s):** This period can be considered to have begun with the construction of the area's first "modern" structure, Rudolph Schindler's Paul and Betty Popenoe Cabin in 1922. With this building the area's predominant architectural style, which was based on well-established Mexican and Spanish Colonial motifs, began to change. Incorporation of the town of Palm Springs followed in 1938. During the post-WWII era, Palm Springs' economy prospered through tourism. Hollywood celebrities discovered the desert oasis and patronized its hotels, inns, nightclubs and restaurants; celebrity-seeking tourists soon followed, transforming Palm Springs from a sleepy village into an increasingly cosmopolitan environment that saw the construction of schools, hospitals, an airport and other important public works projects. The commercial core along Palm Canyon Drive (originally Main Street) flourished. In the 1950s the downtown core was expanded by the construction of the cross-axis of Tahquitz-McCallum Way that extended from the center of the original settlement to the airport, spurring new development along the way. Early private residential development also expanded into new sub-divisions composed of midcentury modern second homes in the flat lands surrounding the town's original core.

Palm Springs' Hollywood associations certainly imparted an air of sophistication to the city. By 1964, the city had built a reputation for cutting edge architecture as a result of local architectural practitioners like John Porter Clark, Albert Frey, E. Stewart Williams, William F. Cody and Donald Wexler.

## EVALUATION:

**Criterion 1:** Significant Event (*Completed because Criterion 1 is marked above*).

To qualify for listing under this criterion, a property must be associated with one or more events important in the defined historic context. *Criterion 1 recognizes properties associated with events or patterns of events or historic trends, such as the gradual rise of the city's prominence in architectural excellence in midcentury modern architecture that is an important pattern of events within this associated context. Tahquitz Plaza is an outstanding example of commercial design and construction of buildings within the context of midcentury desert Modernism. Tahquitz Plaza is associated with this pattern of events for its ability to exemplify the modern period of the national, state and local history. Tahquitz Plaza qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 1.*

**Criterion 2:** Significant Persons. Criterion 2 recognizes properties associated with the lives of persons who made meaningful contribution to national, state or local history. While architect Hugh Kaptur might be considered an individual of local importance, the documentation for that additional qualification was not deemed necessary for this

nomination. Hence, Tahquitz Plaza does not qualify for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 2.

## **ARCHITECTURE** (Criteria 3 – 6)

**Criterion 3:** *(That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history)*

Tahquitz Plaza was designed by the architectural firm of Kaptur-Lapham & Associates and constructed in two phases (Tahquitz Plaza I in 1974 and Tahquitz Plaza II in 1977). The complex was intended to house the architectural offices of Kaptur-Lapham and Associates and the commercial offices of a supportive and sympathetic client (i.e., the law firm of Best, Best & Krieger). As a result, architect Kaptur was given significant creative latitude. The stylistic markers of Tahquitz Plaza place it directly in the historic context of Palm Springs' Modern Period. Tahquitz Plaza represents a prime and largely intact example of the significant modernist architecture for which Palm Springs is widely known. As such Tahquitz Plaza may be viewed as an important component of the historic trends that have come to define Palm Springs' image as a center of important modern architecture, i.e., an historic trend that exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history. Tahquitz Plaza qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 3.

**Criterion 4:** *(That embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or) Type, Period, and Method of Construction: "Type, period, or method of construction" refers to the way certain properties are related to one another by cultural tradition or function, by dates of construction or style, or by choice or availability of materials and technology. To be eligible under this Criterion, a property must clearly illustrate, through "distinctive characteristics" a pattern of features common to a particular class of resources. "Distinctive characteristics" are the physical features or traits that commonly recur in individual types, periods, or methods of construction. To be eligible, a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction. Characteristics can be expressed in terms such as form, proportion, structure, plan, style, or materials.*

Tahquitz Plaza is eligible under the theme of Modern architecture because it possesses distinctive characteristics that make up the many qualities of the style, such as modulated horizontality, large geometric volumes, expressed structure, expansive amounts of glass, use of inexpensive man-made materials, solar control, and the integration of outdoor areas. As such, Tahquitz Plaza is eligible under this criterion because it represents an important example of modernist building practices in Palm Springs at the time. Tahquitz Plaza qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 4.

**Criterion 5:** *(That (a): represents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or (b): that possesses high artistic value).*

**5a: Work of a Master:** A master is a figure of generally recognized greatness in a field, a known craftsman of consummate skill. The property must express a particular phase in the development of the master's career, an aspect of his work, or a particular idea or theme in his craft. A property is not eligible as the work of a master, however, simply because it was designed by a prominent architect. For example, not every building designed by Frank Lloyd Wright is eligible under this portion of Criterion 5, although it might meet other Criteria.

The architectural firm of Kaptur-Lapham & Associates was in partnership during the construction of Tahquitz Plaza I and Hugh M. Kaptur, A.I.A. was in business during the construction of Tahquitz Plaza II. Kaptur qualifies as a "master architect" in view of his large body of architecturally significant works that have stood the test of time. Among Kaptur's significant works are the Steve McQueen Residence (1964), the William Holden Residence (1977) and Palm Springs Fire Stations #3 (1964) and #4 (1971). (A listing of Kaptur's many other commissions are provided in his biography).

**5b: Properties possessing high artistic values:** High artistic values may be expressed in many ways, including areas as diverse as community design or planning, engineering, and sculpture. As an example of the maturing modernist movement, the Tahquitz Plaza complex certainly articulates the best of modernist "adobe-influenced" architecture to a level of excellence and confidence that, in total, could easily be considered an aesthetic ideal. Architectural historian Alan Hess expounds as follows: "The Tahquitz Plaza offices are an excellent representation of [Kaptur's] use of sculptural, expressionist forms influenced by Native American adobe structures, but modernized and abstracted aesthetically in the spirit of Modernism." *As the work of a master architect, and for its high artistic values, Tahquitz Plaza qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 5.*

**Criterion 6:** (That represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction). This Criterion was created to address the resources contained within a potential historic district. As such, Criterion 6 does not apply. *Hence, Tahquitz Plaza does not qualify under Criterion 6.*

(Note: The foregoing evaluation was reviewed and validated by licensed California architect Susan Secoy Jensen who meets the minimum professional qualifications under 36 CFR Part 61 both in "Architecture" and "Historic Architecture").

## ARCHEOLOGY

**Criterion 7:** (That has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to the national, state or local history or prehistory). *Tahquitz Plaza does not qualify for listing on the local registry under Criterion 7.*

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## 7. Integrity Analysis (using U.S. Secretary of Interior Standards)

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### INTEGRITY

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be listed in the local registry, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the criteria, but it also must have integrity. The evaluation of integrity is sometimes a subjective judgment, but it must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. Historic properties either retain integrity (that is, convey their significance) or they do not. The definition of integrity includes seven aspects or qualities. 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. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a particular property requires knowing why, where, and when the property is significant. The following sections define the seven aspects and explain how they combine to produce integrity.

### LOCATION

Location is the place where an historic property was constructed or the place where an historic event occurred. The relationship between the property and its location is often important to understanding why the property was created or why something happened. The actual location of a historic property, complemented by its setting, is particularly important in recapturing the sense of historic events and persons. Except in rare cases, the relationship between a property and its historic associations is destroyed if the property is moved. ***Tahquitz Plaza remains in its original location and therefore qualifies under this aspect.***

### DESIGN

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. It results from conscious decisions made during the original conception and planning of a property and applies to activities as diverse as community planning, engineering, architecture, and landscape architecture. Design includes such elements as organization of space, proportion, scale, technology, ornamentation, and materials. A property's design reflects historic functions and technologies as well as aesthetics. It includes such considerations as the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; textures and colors of surface materials; type, amount, and style of ornamental detailing. ***Unlike many buildings in Palm Springs, Tahquitz Plaza has seen little alteration and the essential characteristics of form, plan, space, structure, and style have survived intact. Similarly, the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; and the type, amount, and style of detailing, has survived. There is extensive documentation in the form of plans, renderings and photographs that illustrate the intent of the architect.***



## SETTING

Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. Whereas location refers to the specific place where a property was built or an event occurred, setting refers to the *character* of the place in which the property played its historical role. It involves *how*, not just *where*, the property is situated and its relationship to surrounding features and open space. Setting often reflects the basic physical conditions under which a property was built and the functions it was intended to serve. In addition, the way in which a property is positioned in its environment can reflect the designer's concept of nature and aesthetic preferences. ***The setting of Tahquitz Plaza continues to reflect the architect's original design relationship of site and structure.***

## MATERIALS

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. The choice and combination of materials reveals the preferences of those who created the property and indicate the availability of particular types of materials and technologies. ***While some of the Tahquitz Plaza's exterior surface materials have been poorly maintained, this deferred maintenance does not constitute a significant loss of the physical elements that expressed the design during the building's period of significance; the particular pattern and configuration that today forms the building site survives intact.***

## WORKMANSHIP

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. It is the evidence of artisans' labor and skill in constructing or altering a building, structure, object, or site. Workmanship can apply to the property as a whole or to its individual components. It can be expressed in vernacular methods of construction and plain finishes or in highly sophisticated configurations and ornamental detailing. It can be based on common traditions or innovative period techniques. Workmanship is important because it can furnish evidence of the technology of a craft, illustrate the aesthetic principles of a historic or prehistoric period, and reveal individual, local, regional, or national applications of both technological practices and aesthetic principles. Examples of workmanship in historic buildings include tooling, carving, painting, graining, turning, and joinery. ***The workmanship of the Tahquitz Plaza is comprised of integral ornamental detailing reflected in stucco, wood, glass, ceramic tile and steel. The property continues to express a high degree of contemporary period workmanship.***

## FEELING

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. For example, a rural historic district retaining original design, materials, workmanship, and setting will relate the feeling of agricultural life in the 19th century. ***When constructed, Tahquitz Plaza was elegantly sited along a***

***prominent city thoroughfare and takes advantage of panoramic views of the mountains to the south and to the west. Accordingly, Tahquitz Plaza retains its original integrity of feeling.***

## ASSOCIATION

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. A property retains association if it *is* the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. Like feeling, association requires the presence of physical features that convey a property's historic character. For example, a Revolutionary War battlefield whose natural and man-made elements have remained intact since the 18th century will retain its quality of association with the battle. Because feeling and association depend on individual perceptions, their retention alone is never sufficient to support eligibility of a property for the National Register. ***Tahquitz Plaza is an important example of commercial modernist architecture in Palm Springs. Accordingly, it continues its association with a pattern of events that have made a meaningful contribution to the community.***

INTEGRITY SUMMARY: Tahquitz Plaza appears to be in very good condition partially due to the use of construction materials suitable for the harsh desert environment. Deferred maintenance by the current building owner has resulted in largely cosmetic deficiencies. This integrity analysis confirms that the buildings and site of the Tahquitz Plaza still possess all seven aspects of integrity. Virtually all of the character-defining features survive. The commercial complex and site both retain a high degree of integrity sufficient to qualify it for designation as a Class 1 historic site.

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## 8. Bibliography (Annotated)

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Attached is a list of books, articles, and other sources cited or used in preparing this application and other documentation that may be relevant.

### Books

Hess, Alan and Andrew Danish. *Palm Springs Weekend*. Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 2001

*The Desert Modernists: The Architects Who Envisioned Midcentury Modern Palm Springs*. Modernism Week and Desert Publications, Inc., Undated (Incorrectly cites date of Tahquitz Plaza as "1971")

Rosenow, Erik. *The Architecture of Desert Leisure*. Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, Palm Springs, CA, 2013

Schnepf, James. *Palm Springs Modern Living*. Gibbs Smith, Layton, UT, 2015

Stern, Michael and Alan Hess. *Julius Shulman: Palm Springs*. New York: Rizzoli, 2008

## Other Documentary Sources

“*Residence in Las Palmas Estates, Palm Springs, California.*” Architectural Digest, Vol. 21, No. 3, Spring 1965

Architectural Resources Group. *City of Palm Springs Historic Resources Survey*. San Francisco, 2004

Brown, John C. and Bert Simonis. *Quiet Elegance: The Architecture of Hugh M. Kaptur*. This 'n That Films, 2014

*Desert Sun* newspaper. May 27, 1958 (article entitled “Impala Lodge Construction is Underway,” characterizes Impala Lodge design as “Indian Modern”); April 10, 1972 (Legal Notice section records architectural firm’s business name as “Kaptur-Lapham & Associates” and firm’s address at “612 E. Sunny Dunes”). September 15, 1959 (article entitled “Living in the Desert” reports “Los Angeles investment broker Robert A. Leaver...his family’s winter residence. Designed by Hugh Kaptur the home relies on Bethlehem steel to keep and give it a substantial hold on the mountainside”). August 26, 1965 (article entitled “Journal Spots P.S. Homes Sites” reports the “August edition of the international magazine, American Journal of Building Design, devotes five of its pages to a story of a Southridge development home here,” referring to the Kaptur-designed Thomas Griffing spec house). November 30, 1973 (article entitled “Dorado Uses Award Winning Decorator” reports the project’s model home “features interiors created by the award-winning, nationally known firm of Arthur Elrod and Associates.” October 1972 – December 1973 (Kaptur’s Desert Dorado project was featured in several lengthy *Desert Sun* articles)

Allison Engel. “The Great Escape: Steve McQueen made Hugh Kaptur’s Southridge House His Own.” *Palm Springs Life* magazine, December 2008 (article notes that the house was built as a spec design for investor Thomas Griffing who never moved in to the house but sold it shortly after construction to Edwin Morris)

Hugh Kaptur. Personal interviews with the authors. May 25 and 31, 2015.

“Hugh Michael Kaptur, AIA Palm Springs Walk of Stars Dedication Program.” Modernism Week, February 14, 2014

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.

Newman, Morris. “Modern Master.” *Palm Springs Life* magazine, February 2014 (article quotes owner of Selzer Residence as characterizing Kaptur’s architecture as “Mexican Modern”).

*Palm Springs Life* magazine, March 1964, “Socialife” column reports “Four exciting and colorful houses have been selected for the annual Home Tour sponsored by the

American Association of University Women on March 8...the luxurious Hugh Kaptur home at 521 Via Lola is Spanish contemporary, equipped with the latest gadgetry.”

“Spanish Contemporary.” *Palm Springs Life* magazine, April 1964 (the 3-page article notes that the house was a spec design for developer Thomas Griffing)

#### Other Sources Consulted

- City of Palm Springs (Planning and Building Departments)
- Palm Springs Historical Society
- Palm Springs Public Library
- Riverside County Assessor’s Office

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#### **9. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of Property: 3.35 Acres (1.55 + 1.80 acres) (See Appendix III)  
Property Boundary Description: See Appendix II

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#### **10. Prepared By**

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Name/title: Ronald W. & Barbara A. Marshall  
Organization: Submitted on behalf of the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation  
Street address: 1775 East Palm Canyon Drive, Suite 110-195  
City: Palm Springs State: CA Zip: 92264  
Telephone: (760) 837-7117  
e-mail address: info@pspreservationfoundation.org

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#### **11. Required Documentation**

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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.

## **Appendix I: Letter of Owner Support (Not Included)**

While the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation considers owner support for historic designation desirable, the Palm Springs Municipal Code (Chapter 8.05) does not require owner support. In the past, the Palm Springs city council has designated some buildings as historic even in the face of strong owner objection (e.g., the Santa Fe Federal Savings & Loan Building and the J.W. Robinson Department Store Building).

Contacting the owner of Tahquitz Plaza regarding this nomination was not viewed as constructive by the authors for three reasons:

- The owner has proposed a project (“Aberdeen”) which proposes to demolish 75% of Tahquitz Plaza.

- On April 14, 2015 the firm of Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP representing NDC Equities Downtown PS, LLC (“Nexus”) sent a letter to Mayor Pougnet and the city council asserting, among other things, that Tahquitz Plaza “does not have a high artistic value,” that Kaptur “should not be considered a ‘master architect’,” and further that “recognition has been associated with his residential, not his commercial/municipal projects.”

- On April 16, 2015 (after briefly withdrawing the Aberdeen project) the owner’s representatives attempted to draw a demolition permit for Tahquitz Plaza. On May 28, 2015 (after withdrawing the Aberdeen project) the owner’s representatives attempted to draw another demolition permit for Tahquitz Plaza.

The foregoing notwithstanding, PSPF recognizes it has been the past practice of city staff to solicit owner views regarding historic designation and we encourage staff to do so.

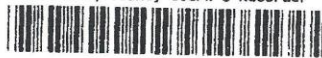


**Appendix II: Grant Deeds (includes Legal Description)**

Tahquitz Plaza I (600 and 650 East Tahquitz Canyon Way)

1002035503 K24  
 Recording Requested By  
**CHICAGO TITLE COMPANY**  
 RECORDING REQUESTED BY  
 AND WHEN RECORDED MAIL TO:

DOC # 2008-0073115  
 02/14/2008 08:00A Fee:36.00  
 Page 1 of 4  
 Recorded in Official Records  
 County of Riverside  
 Larry W. Ward  
 Assessor, County Clerk & Recorder



Nexus Development Corporation  
 1 MacArthur Place, Suite 300  
 Santa Ana, California 92707  
 Attn: Matthew B. Kaufman

MAIL ALL TAX STATEMENTS TO:

Nexus Development Corporation  
 1 MacArthur Place, Suite 300  
 Santa Ana, California 92707  
 Attn: Matthew B. Kaufman

S	R	U	PAGE	SIZE	DA	MISC	LONG	RFD	COPY
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M	A	L	465	426	PCOR	NCOB	SMF	NCHG	EXAM
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(Above Space for Recorder's Use Only)

*DTT #0  
 no consideration*

**GRANT DEED**

36 T 051

Documentary transfer tax is \$ None. No consideration. This transfer is exempt from documentary transfer tax as the transfer is between legal entities that results solely in a change in the method of holding title to the realty and in which the proportional ownership interests in the realty, directly or indirectly, remain the same immediately after the transfer. (See, California Revenue and Taxation Code, Section 11925(d)).

FOR VALUABLE CONSIDERATION, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, O & M INDIAN CANYON, LLC, a California limited liability company ("Grantor"), hereby grants to O & M HR, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, Grantor's entire interest in and to the following described real property, located in the City of Palm Springs, County of Riverside, State of California (the "Property"):

SEE EXHIBIT "A" ATTACHED HERETO AND INCORPORATED HEREIN BY THIS REFERENCE

SUBJECT TO:

1. Taxes and assessments.
2. All other covenants, conditions, restrictions, reservations, rights, rights of way, easements, encumbrances, liens and title matters whether or not of record or visible from an inspection of the Property.

**EXHIBIT "A"**

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY**

BLOCK 10 IN THE SOUTH HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 14, TOWNSHIP 4 SOUTH, RANGE 4 EAST, SAN BERNARDINO BASE AND MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL PLAT OF SAID LAND FILED IN THE DISTRICT LAND OFFICE ON JUNE 11, 1927 AS SUPPLEMENTED ON MAY 12, 1960

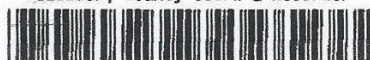
Tahquitz Plaza II (700 and 750 East Tahquitz Canyon Way)

RECORDING REQUESTED BY:  
SOUTHLAND TITLE OF SAN DIEGO

RECORDING REQUESTED BY  
AND WHEN RECORDED MAIL TO:

O & M HR, LLC  
1 MacArthur Place, Suite 300  
Santa Ana, CA 92707  
Attn: Matthew B. Kaufman

DOC # 2007-0530414  
08/18/2007 08:00A Fee: 33.00  
Page 1 of 3  
Recorded in Official Records  
County of Riverside  
Larry W. Ward  
Assessor, County Clerk & Recorder



MAIL ALL TAX STATEMENTS TO:

O & M HR, LLC  
1 MacArthur Place, Suite 300  
Santa Ana, CA 92707  
Attn: Matthew B. Kaufman

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M	A	L	465	426	PCOR	NCOR	SMF	NCHG	EXAM
MC BK'd Log Des. T:							CTY	UNI	042

**GRANT DEED**

Documentary transfer tax is \$ NONE. No consideration. This transfer is exempt from documentary transfer tax as the transfer is between legal entities that results solely in a change in the method of holding title to the realty and in which the proportional ownership interests in the realty, directly or indirectly, remain the same immediately after the transfer. (See, California Revenue and Taxation Code, Section 11925(d)).

33  
T  
042

34330082

FOR VALUABLE CONSIDERATION, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, O & M INDIAN CANYON, LLC, a California limited liability company ("Grantor"), hereby grants to O & M HR, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, Grantor's entire interest in and to the following described real property, located in the City of Palm Springs, County of Riverside, State of California (the "Property"):

SEE EXHIBIT "A" ATTACHED HERETO AND INCORPORATED HEREIN BY THIS REFERENCE

SUBJECT TO:

1. Taxes and assessments.
2. All other covenants, conditions, restrictions, reservations, rights, rights of way, easements, encumbrances, liens and title matters whether or not of record or visible from an inspection of the Property.

IN WITNESS WEHREOF, Grantor has caused this Grant Deed to be executed as of the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of August, 2007.

O & M INDIAN CANYON, LLC,  
a California limited liability company

By: Curtis R. Olson  
Curtis R. Olson, Managing Member



(continued)

**EXHIBIT "A"**  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY**

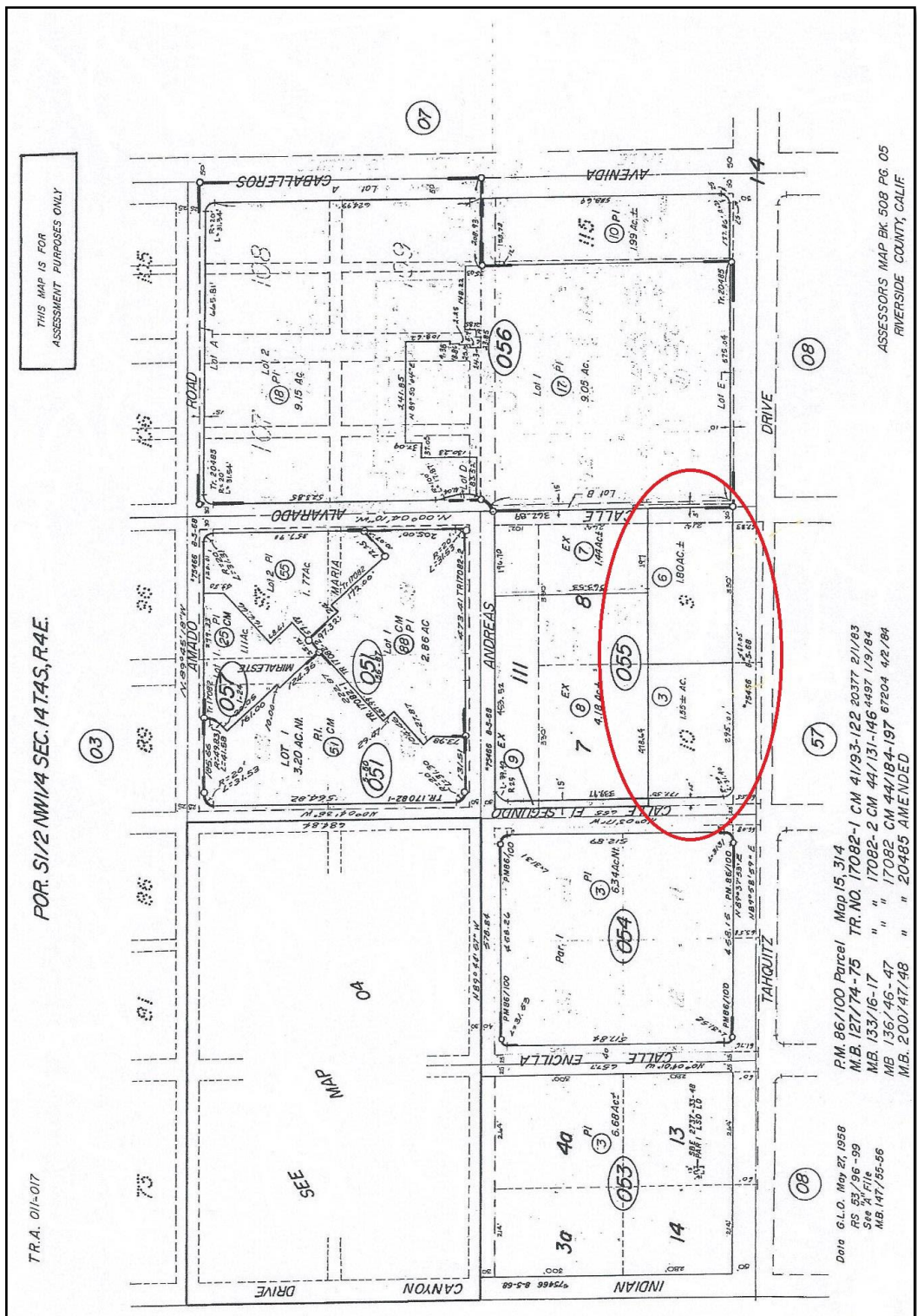
IN THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, BEING THOSE PORTIONS OF BLOCK 9 AND VACATED CALLE ALVARADO AS SHOWN ON RESOLUTION NO. 15302 RECORDED DECEMBER 19, 1984, AS INSTRUMENT NO. 270713 OF OFFICIAL RECORDS OF SAID COUNTY AND SUPPLEMENTAL PLATS OF SECTION 14, TOWNSHIP 4 SOUTH, RANGE 4 EAST, SAN BERNARDINO BASE AND MERIDIAN, ACCEPTED BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, GENERAL LAND OFFICE ON SEPTEMBER 7, 1927, AND JUNE 27, 1956, RESPECTIVELY, MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCEMENT POINT BEING THE CENTERLINE INTERSECTION OF SAID CALLE ALVARADO WITH THE EAST-WEST QUARTER SECTION LINE OF SAID SECTION 14 AS SHOWN ON TRACT NO. 16043 RECORDED IN BOOK 116, PAGES 88 AND 89 OF MAPS, IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAID COUNTY; THENCE PROCEEDING COINCIDENT WITH SAID QUARTER SECTION LINE SOUTH 89°58'36" WEST, 30.01 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 00°01'24" EAST, 5.59 FEET TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID BLOCK 9 AND THE TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE PROCEEDING COINCIDENT WITH THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF SAID BLOCK 9 NORTH 89°53'39" WEST, 330.43 FEET TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID BLOCK 9; THENCE PROCEEDING COINCIDENT WITH THE WESTERLY LINE OF SAID BLOCK 9 NORTH 00°04'33" WEST, 264.11 FEET TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID BLOCK 9, ALSO BEING A POINT ON THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF PARCEL 1 AS SHOWN IN GRANT DEED TO COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, RECORDED JANUARY 24, 1995, AS INSTRUMENT NO. 021208 OF OFFICIAL RECORDS OF SAID COUNTY; THENCE PROCEEDING COINCIDENT WITH LAST SAID LINE, ALSO BEING THE NORTHERLY LINE OF SAID BLOCK 9, THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF PARCEL 2 AS SHOWN ON SAID GRANT DEED AND THE EASTERLY PROLONGATION OF THE NORTHERLY LINE OF SAID BLOCK 9 SOUTH 89°56'24" EAST, 360.31 FEET TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH THE CENTERLINE OF SAID CALLE ALVARADO; THENCE PROCEEDING COINCIDENT WITH THE CENTERLINE OF CALLE ALVARADO SOUTH 00°06'04" EAST, 198.74 FEET TO THE WESTERLY PROLONGATION OF THE NORTHERLY LINE OF TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY AS SHOWN ON AMENDED MAP TRACT NO. 20485 RECORDED IN BOOK 200, PAGES 47 AND 48 OF MAPS, IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAID COUNTY; THENCE PROCEEDING COINCIDENT WITH LAST SAID LINE SOUTH 89°58'36" WEST 30.00 FEET TO THE EASTERLY LINE OF SAID BLOCK 9; THENCE PROCEEDING COINCIDENT WITH LAST SAID LINE SOUTH 00°06'04" EAST, 65.59 FEET TO THE TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING.

APN: 508-055-006-7



# Appendix III: Assessor's Map & Property Information



# Property Information Center

Property Information for the 2014-2015 tax year as of January 1, 2014

## Property Information

Parcel Number: 508055003-4  
 Property Address: 600 E TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY  
 PALM SPRINGS CA 92262  
 Legal Description: N/A  
 Property Type: N/A  
 Assessment Description: N/A  
 Year Built: N/A  
 Square Feet: N/A  
 Bedroom: N/A  
 Bath: N/A  
 Pool: N  
 Lot Size: 1.55 Acres

## Sales Information

Last Recorded Document: 02/2008  
 Recording Number: 0073115

## Related Property Information

City Sphere: PALM SPRINGS  
 Supervisorial District: JOHN BENOIT  
 Landuse Designation: CITY  
 Agriculture Preserve: NOT IN AN AGRICULTURE  
 PRESERVE  
 School District: PALM SPRINGS UNIFIED  
 Water District: DWA  
 Fema Flood Plan: FLOOD ZONE 0.2 PCT ANNUAL

## Assessed Value Information

Land: 2,098,008  
 Structure: 1,437,959  
 Full Value: 3,535,967  
 Total Net: 3,535,967

## Assessment Information

Assessment Number: 508055003-4  
 Tax Rate Area: 011-017  
 Taxability Code: 0-00  
 Base Year: 2009

## Parcel Map

[View Parcel Map](#)

## Tax Assessment District

CITRUS PEST CONTROL 2  
 CITY OF PALM SPRINGS DEBT SV  
 CSA 152  
 CV MOSQ & VECTOR CONTROL  
 DESERT COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
 DESERT HOSPITAL  
 DESERT WATER AGENCY  
 FLOOD CONTROL ADMINISTRATION  
 FLOOD CONTROL ZONE 6  
 GENERAL  
 GENERAL PURPOSE  
 PALM SPG TAHQUITZ-ANDREAS RDV  
 PALM SPRINGS PUBLIC CEMETERY  
 PALM SPRINGS UNIF B & I 1992-A  
 PALM SPRINGS UNIFIED SCHOOL  
 RIV CO REG PARK & OPEN SPACE  
 RIV. CO. OFFICE OF EDUCATION

**Parcel Lot Size for Tahquitz Plaza I (at 600 and 650 East Tahquitz Canyon Way) shown as 1.55 Acres (from the Riverside County Assessor's Office, Property Information Center)**

## Property Information Center

Property Information for the 2014-2015 tax year as of January 1, 2014

### Property Information

**Parcel Number:** 508055006-7  
**Property Address:** 700 E TAHQUITZ CANYON WAY  
PALM SPRINGS CA 92262  
**Legal Description:** N/A  
**Property Type:** N/A  
**Assessment Description:** NONEASSESSABLE  
**Year Built:** N/A  
**Square Feet:** N/A  
**Bedroom:** N/A  
**Bath:** N/A  
**Pool:** N  
**Lot Size:** 1.80 Acres

### Sales Information

**Last Recorded Document:** 08/2007  
**Recording Number:** 0530414

### Related Property Information

**City Sphere:** PALM SPRINGS  
**Supervisory District:** JOHN BENOIT  
**Landuse Designation:** CITY  
**Agriculture Preserve:** NOT IN AN AGRICULTURE  
PRESERVE  
**School District:** PALM SPRINGS UNIFIED  
**Water District:** DWA  
**Fema Flood Plan:** FLOOD ZONE 0.2 PCT ANNUAL

### Assessed Value Information

**Land:** 635,000  
**Structure:** 1,500,000  
**Full Value:** 2,135,000  
**Total Net:** 2,135,000

### Assessment Information

**Assessment Number:** 508055006-7  
**Tax Rate Area:** 011-017  
**Taxability Code:** 0-00  
**Base Year:** 2008

### Parcel Map

[View Parcel Map](#)

**Tax Assessment District:** CITRUS PEST CONTROL 2  
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS DEBT SV  
CSA 152  
CV MOSQ & VECTOR CONTROL  
DESERT COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
DESERT HOSPITAL  
DESERT WATER AGENCY  
FLOOD CONTROL ADMINISTRATION  
FLOOD CONTROL ZONE 6  
GENERAL  
GENERAL PURPOSE  
PALM SPG TAHQUITZ-ANDREAS RDV  
PALM SPRINGS PUBLIC CEMETERY  
PALM SPRINGS UNIF B & I 1992-A  
PALM SPRINGS UNIFIED SCHOOL  
RIV CO REG PARK & OPEN SPACE  
RIV. CO. OFFICE OF EDUCATION

**Parcel Lot Size for Tahquitz Plaza II (at 700 and 750 East Tahquitz Canyon Way) shown as 1.80 Acres (from the Riverside County Assessor's Office, Property Information Center)**



## Appendix IV: Photographic Documentation of Buildings and Site



This photograph shows a variety of building materials including earth tone ceramic tiles, large expanses of glass, stucco surfaces and wooden timbers. The deep eaves and sculptural “reverse-angle” support wall (which could also be called a “fin”) provide solar protection (Tahquitz Plaza I)



Heavy roof support timbers “express” the structure (Tahquitz Plaza I)





**eyebrow over window-entryway (Tahquitz Plaza I)**



**Rounded “organic” massing at corner (Tahquitz Plaza I)**



**Dramatic “signature” Kaptur eyebrow (Tahquitz Plaza I)**



**Projecting “fins” provide additional solar protection (Tahquitz Plaza II)**





**A signature Kaptur window eyebrow and rounded organic massing at the corner also appears at Tahquitz II. The repetition of these important design elements help to aesthetically mesh the Tahquitz Plaza I and II designs**



**Studio-style (or craft-style) ceramic tiles in pleasant earth tones**



**Slumpstone block wall**

Delivered with this nomination are an additional 101 photographs (on compact disc) providing photographic documentation of the buildings and site

**Appendix V: Miscellaneous Historical Photographs & Ephemera**



**A 1952 photograph of the office building Kaptur designed for his in-laws**  
(Courtesy Kaptur Family)



**The caption of this photograph, which appears in the April 11, 1958 edition of the *Desert Sun* newspaper, reads in part “Civic minded persons who are responsible for the tremendous turnout and success of the Model Airplane Club...left to right, Hugh Kaptur....”**

PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

# Casa Blanca

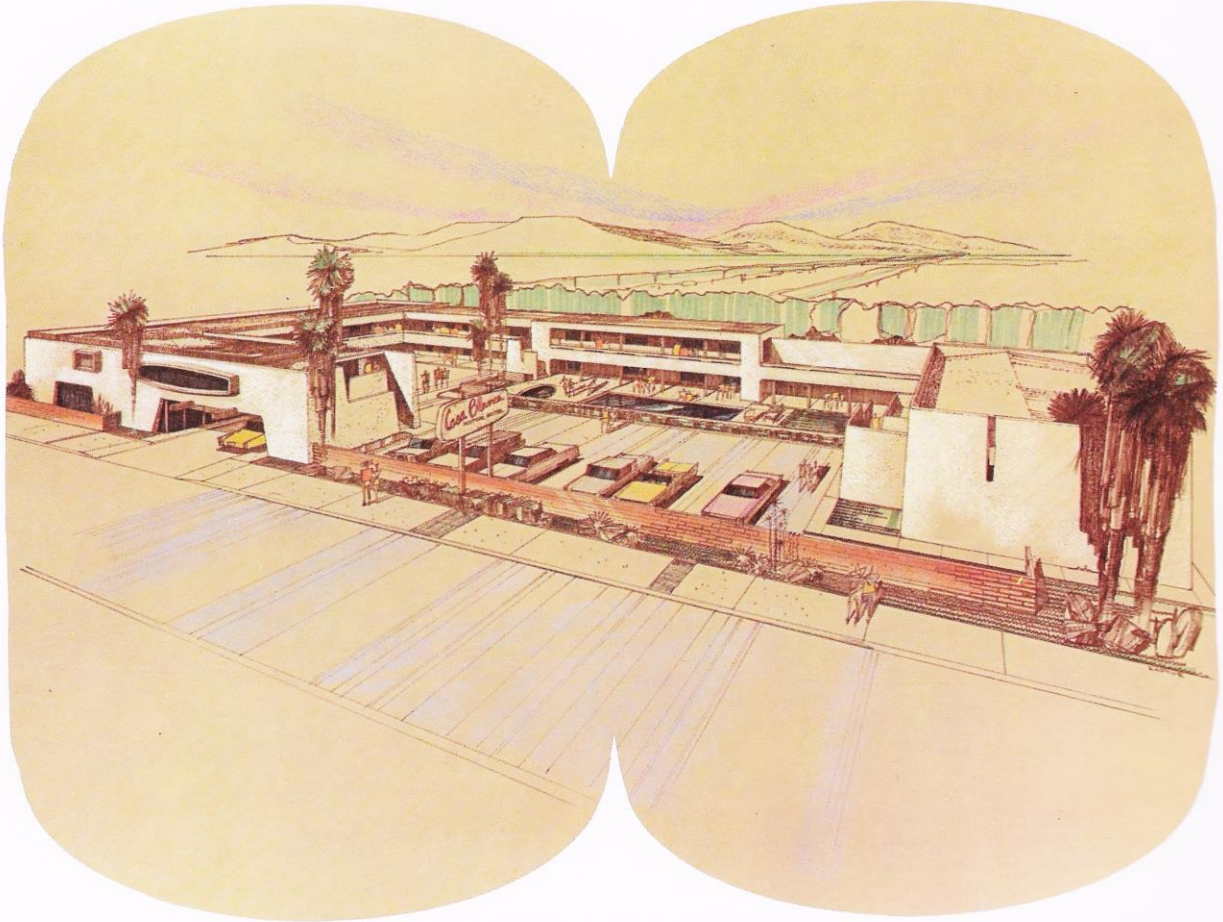
## MOTOR HOTEL

ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

The CASA BLANCA Motor Hotel offers the finest in accommodations, facilities and service at surprisingly low rates.

..... Enjoy 350 days  
of "SUNSHINE" annually!  
... in the wind free South end!

Here is everything your heart desires to rest and relax  
in exquisitely-furnished comfort.

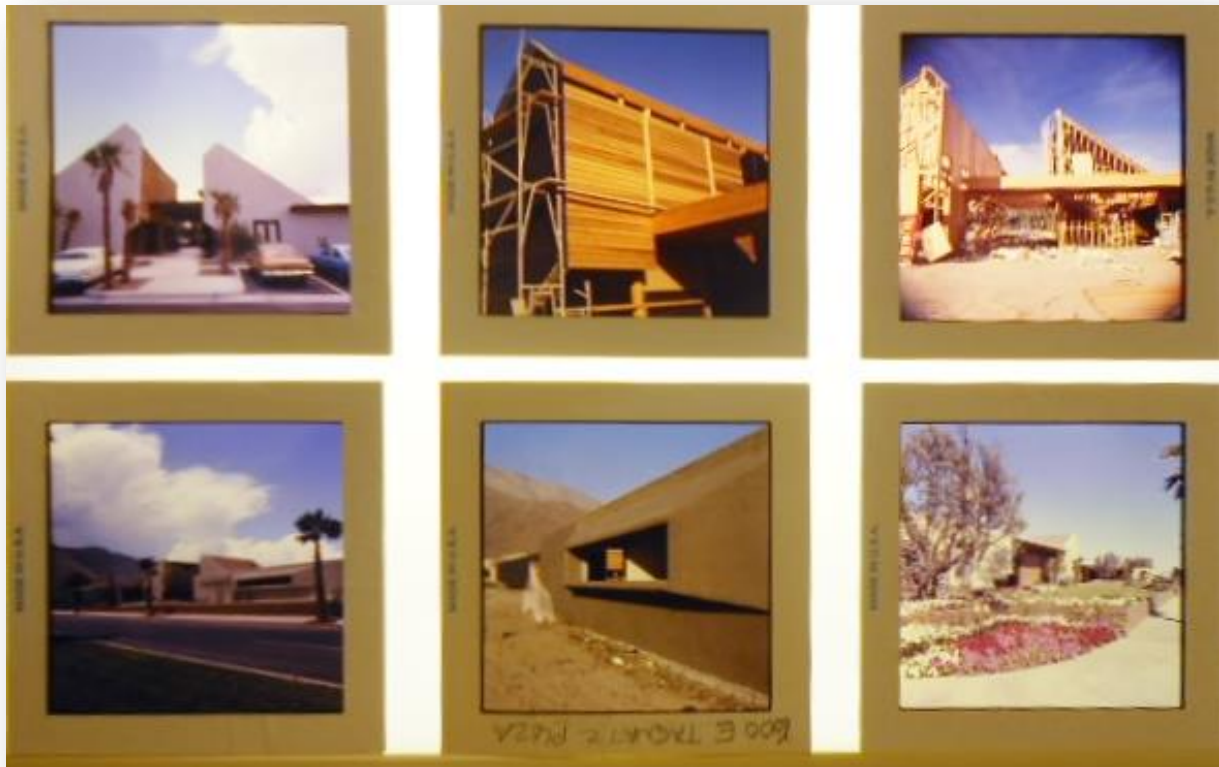


An earlier project similar in architectural "style" to Tahquitz Plaza is the Casa Blanca Motor Hotel (today the "Musicland Hotel") at 1342 South Palm Canyon Drive. One of the more notable features of the Casa Blanca Motor Hotel is the prominent sculptural "eyebrow" around the street-facing second-story window. This rendering appears in an advertisement for the motor hotel in the September 1970 issue of *Palm Springs Life* magazine.

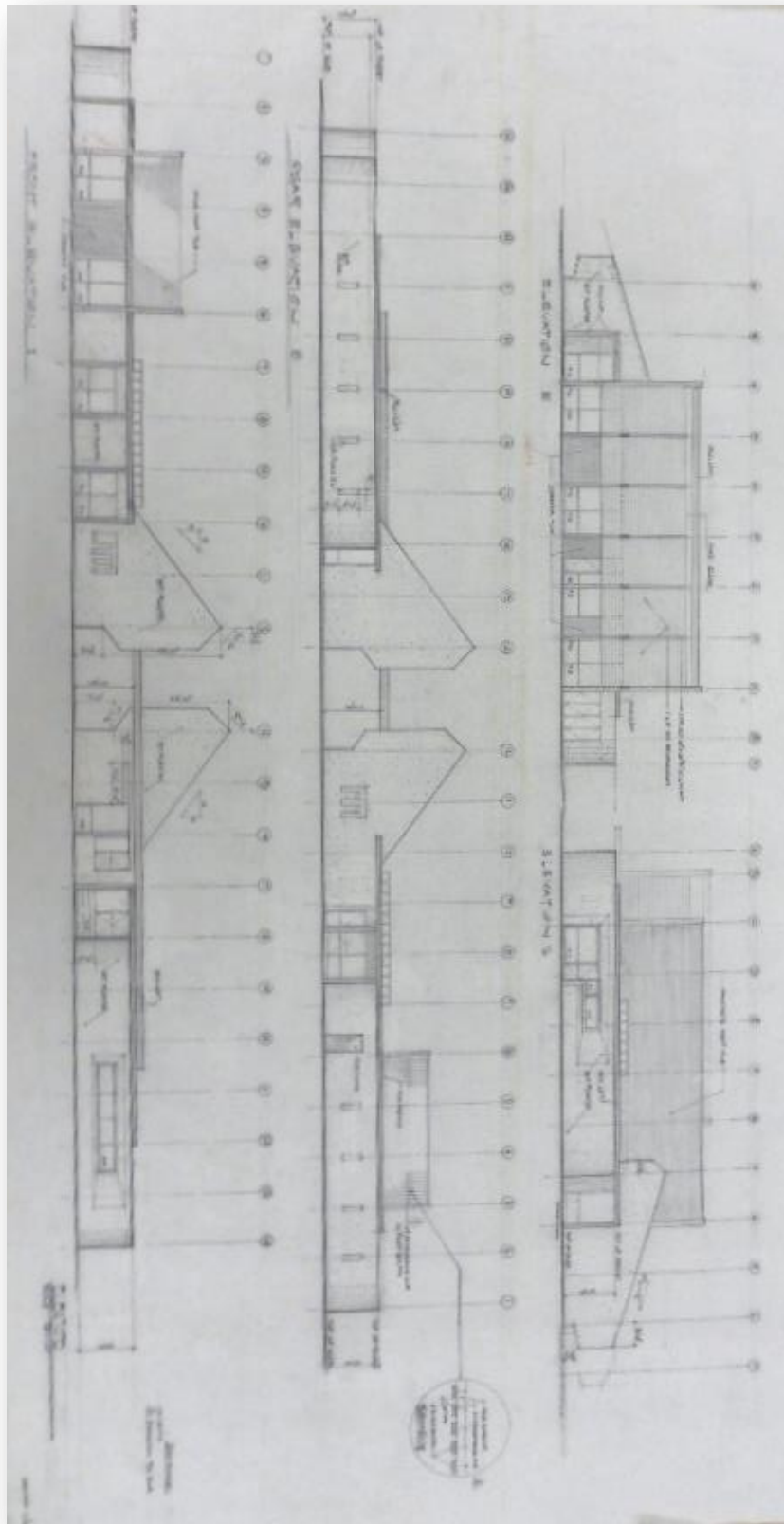




**Kaptur's window eyebrow at 650 Tahquitz Canyon Way under construction in 1974**  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Art Museum)



**Collection of vintage photographic slides of Tahquitz Plaza I under construction and shortly after construction**  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Art Museum)



**Elevations of Tahquitz Plaza I**  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Art Museum)



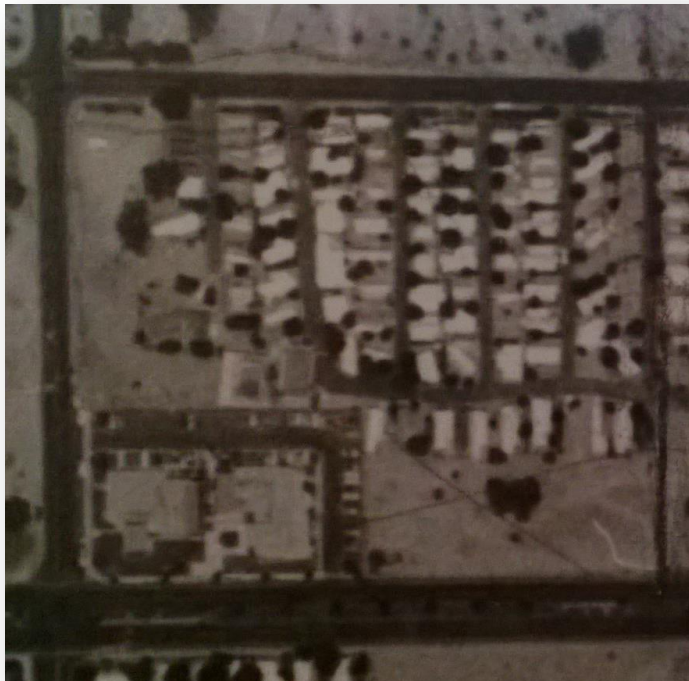


**Architectural rendering of Tahquitz Plaza I**  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Art Museum)



**Kaptur's buildings have often been characterized as "pueblo-influenced." Shown above is Taos Pueblo in New Mexico one of the oldest adobe structures in the United States constructed between 1000 and 1450 A.D.**

(Courtesy [www.worldheritageroutes.travel](http://www.worldheritageroutes.travel))



**Aerial photograph from 1974 (oriented north) showing the completed Tahquitz Plaza I to the southwest and the Prairie Schooner trailer park to the north and northeast. Note that Tahquitz Plaza II has not yet been constructed.**

(Courtesy City of Palm Springs)