



HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD STAFF REPORT

DATE: December 10, 2019

PUBLIC HEARING

SUBJECT: AN APPLICATION BY J.R. ROBERTS, OWNER, FOR CLASS 1 HISTORIC RESOURCE DESIGNATION OF "THE LAWRENCE WELK RESIDENCE" LOCATED AT 730 PASEO EL MIRADOR (APN #507-082-020), CASE HSPB #126. (KL).

FROM: Department of Planning Services

SUMMARY

The property owner is requesting historic resource designation of a single family residence that was owned by famous bandleader, entertainer and TV personality Lawrence Welk. The design and construction of the home is attributed to well-known builder Joseph S. Pawling, who is credited with having built approximately 400 homes in and around Palm Springs. The architectural style of the home is a Modern interpretation of the rambling western ranch style home popularized by architect Cliff May.

If designated as a Class 1 resource, the property would be subject to the regulations outlined in Section 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Open the public hearing and receive public testimony.
2. Close the public hearing and adopt Resolution HSPB #126, "A RESOLUTION OF THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL DESIGNATE "THE LAWRENCE WELK RESIDENCE" LOCATED AT 730 PASEO EL MIRADOR, AS HISTORIC RESOURCE HSPB #126, SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS (APN 507-082-020)."

BACKGROUND AND SETTING:

A historic resources report prepared by Melissa Riche dated September 2019 ("the report") is the basis of this staff report.

Related Relevant City Actions by HSPB, Planning, Fire, Building, etc...

November 2019	Site inspection by members of the HSPB and City Staff.
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Ownership Status

April, 2018	Purchase by the current owner.
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BELOW AN AERIAL VIEW OF THE LAWRENCE WELK RESIDENCE.



ANALYSIS:

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

“...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 historic resources for the education and welfare of the citizens.”

Standard Conditions that apply to Class 1 Historic Sites or Resources

The following shall apply to a Class 1 Historic Site or Resource:

1. It shall meet the definition of a Class 1 historic resource as outlined in Municipal Code Section 8.05.020 including the findings outlined in Section 8.05.070 (C).
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. A marker explaining the historic nature of the site may be installed at the site in a location viewable from the public way.
5. Compliance with all rules and regulations for Historic Resources and Historic Districts under Chapter 8.05 of the Municipal Code.
6. If designated, the findings in support of designation shall be stated in a resolution of the City Council that shall be recorded with the County Recorders’ office within 90 days of the effective date of the Council’s resolution.

Evaluation of the Application. Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 8.05.070 (C,1,a), the HSPB shall evaluate the application and make findings in conformance with the following criteria:

Criteria for the Designation of Class 1 Historic Resources. A site, structure, building or object may be designated as a Class 1 historic resource, provided both of the following findings (“a” and “b”) are met:

- a. The site, structure, building or object exhibits exceptional historic significance and meets one or more of the criteria listed below:*

The Lawrence Welk residence exhibits exceptional historic significance because of its association with well-known bandleader and entertainer Lawrence Welk and as a notable example of a modern interpretation of the California Ranch style home popularized by architect Cliff May.

(Criterion 1) The resource is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community;

The report does not identify any events associated with the site, thus the site does not qualify under Criterion 1.

(Criterion 2) The resource is associated with the lives of persons who made a meaningful contribution to national, state or local history;

The report identifies Lawrence Welk (1903 - 1992) as a person who made a meaningful contribution to national history as a bandleader, entertainer and TV personality. Welk's ballroom band music became popular in the 1930's and culminated with a nationally syndicated TV show on the ABC television network from 1955 until 1971, making it one of the longest running TV shows in U.S. history. Welk released 139 musical albums during his career and wrote five books about his life and work. Welk bought the Paseo El Mirador residence in 1961 at the height of his musical career. Thus the Wells Residence qualifies as a historic resource under Criterion 2.

(Criterion 3) The resource reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, state or local history;

The Wells Residence reflects the Post World War II period in the development of Palm Springs when many businesses and homeowners embraced the Modern architectural style for the design of their businesses and homes. The home's design exemplifies the relaxed lifestyle of the post-World War II era. As such the Welk Residence qualifies as a historic site under Criterion 3.

(Criterion 4) The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction;

The Welk Residence is a noteworthy example of a modern interpretation of the California Ranch style home, first popularized in the twenties and thirties by architect Cliff May. The characteristics of the California Ranch style found in the Welk residence include its asymmetrical floor plan in the form of a wide "V", an emphasis on casual indoor / outdoor living, large expanses of glass use of natural materials such as exposed beams and tongue and groove Douglas Fir ceiling and the cut stone fireplace. For these reasons the Welk Residence qualifies under Criterion 4.

(Criterion 5) The resource presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age, or that possesses high artistic value;

The Welk Residence was designed and built by Joseph S. Pawling. Pawling designed and built approximately 400 homes in and around Palm Springs in the 1950's and 60's. Later in his career, he also affiliated with notable architects such as Wexler & Harrison and Hugh M. Kaptur. As noted in the report, Pawling's projects were frequently recognized in local media in the 1950's. Kaptur is quoted on Pawling, "*He always wanted to have exceptional architecture, making sure of that on the things he built.*" Pawling justifiably can be recognized as a master builder whose work has been widely recognized at a local level. As such the Welk Residence qualifies as a historic resource under Criterion 5.

(Criterion 6) The resource represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, as used in evaluating applications for designation of historic districts, for parcels on which more than one entity exists; or

The report does not assert that the Welk Residence qualifies under Criterion 6.

(Criterion 7) The resource has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to national, state or local history or prehistory.

No information has been provided in the historic resources report on any pre-historic significance of the site.

Analysis of Integrity. (PSMC 8.05.070 (C,1,b). The site, structure, building or object retains one or more of the following aspects of integrity, as established in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards: integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, setting, feeling, or association.

The application includes an evaluation of the site relative to the seven aspects or qualities of integrity, as recognized by the National Register of Historic Places. The seven aspects or qualities include location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The application concludes that the site retains a high degree of integrity. Below is staff's evaluation of the site's integrity.

1. *Location:*

The Welk Residence remains in the same location that it was constructed, thus it retains integrity of location.

2. *Design:*

Although there have been some modifications to the Pawling-designed home, notably removal of the louvered panels beneath some of the windows and modification of some of the windows and doors, the Welk Residence possesses a high degree of design integrity and has been well maintained.

3. *Setting:*

The setting of the Welk Residence, within a tract of custom-designed homes, remains as it was from the time of its construction; it thus retains integrity of Setting.

4. *Materials:*

The Welk Residence is a wood frame and stucco structure. The material composition of

the home remains intact with only a few modifications or alterations. Thus the home exhibits a good degree of material integrity.

5. Workmanship:

The workmanship in the Welk Residence reflects high quality craftsmanship typical of a custom residence built by a master builder and thus retains integrity of workmanship.

6. Feeling:

The casual informal living style expressed in the Welk Residence with its large expanses of glass that create a strong visual connection between the inside and outside of the home is still intact as is the open floor plan. The home continues to exude a comfortable sense of casual “indoor / outdoor” living and thus retains integrity of feeling.

7. Association:

The association with Lawrence Welk is well documented in the report and the home also retains its association with master builder Joseph Pawling; thus integrity of Association remains strong.

DEFINING HISTORIC CHARACTERISTICS

In considering a recommendation for historic resource designation it is important to distinguish those physical elements that are original or from the period of significance that contribute to the resource’s historic significance from alterations, additions or features that were added at a later time that may be sympathetic to the original character, but which may create a false sense of historicity. Distinguishing original character-defining features from non-original elements aids the HSPB when it is tasked with evaluating future alterations to the historic resource.

The physical character-defining historic features of this resource include the following:

1. Its Modern interpretation of a California Ranch style home.
2. The low-profile roofline with cantilevered eaves, thin fascia detail, and sloped roof section over the living room area.
3. The entry porch “cut out” detail and sloping wall on the left side.
4. The planter wall by the bedroom wing.
5. Original doors and windows found in the master bedroom, kitchen, door adjacent to the master bedroom window, and the living room windows facing the pool.
6. Sand finish stucco exterior walls.

The non-contributing features include the following:

1. The front door knob hardware.

2. Outside lighting.
3. Aluminum frame picture window in the living room (NE side) w/adjacent glass door.
4. Glass sliding doors, guest bedroom / office.
5. Glass sliding doors, garage.
6. Landscape and swimming pool.
7. Roof-mounted mechanical equipment and associated screening.
8. Concrete block screen wall adjacent to garage.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The proposed historic resource designation is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical changes to the environment, directly or indirectly.

NOTIFICATION

Pursuant to section 8.05.140 of the Municipal Code of Palm Springs, All residents within five hundred (500) feet of the subject property have been notified and notice was made in a newspaper of general circulation.

CONCLUSION:

The Lawrence Welk residence meets the definition of a historic resource based on Criteria 2, 3, 4, and 5 and retains a high degree of historic integrity. Staff has concluded that the resource qualifies as a Class 1 historic site.



Ken Lyon, RA, Associate Planner
Historic Preservation Officer



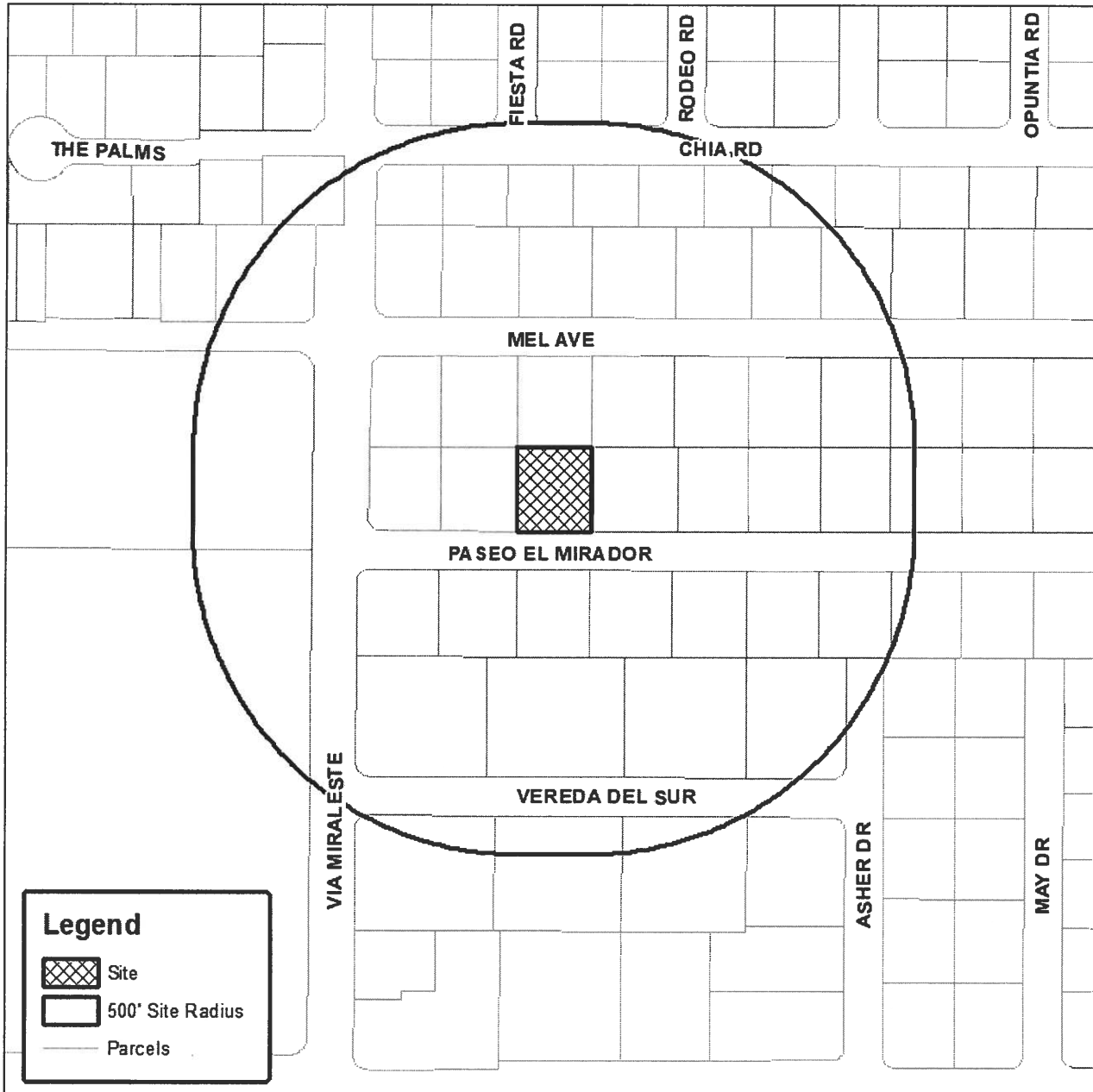
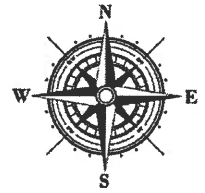
Plinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services

Attachments:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Draft Resolution
3. Application, related background materials, photos (under separate cover).



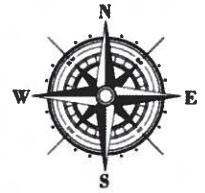
Department of Planning Services Notification Map



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
"The Lawrence Welk Residence"
730 East Paseo El Mirador



Department of Planning Services Vicinity Map



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
730 East Paseo El Mirador

RESOLUTION NO. HSPB 126

A RESOLUTION OF THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL DESIGNATE "THE LAWRENCE WELK RESIDENCE" LOCATED AT 730 PASEO EL MIRADOR, A CLASS 1 HISTORIC RESOURCE, (HSPB #126), APN# 507-082-020.

THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD ("HSPB") FINDS AND DETERMINES AS FOLLOWS:

- A. Chapter 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code allows for the designation of historic sites and districts.
- B. On October 17, 2019, J.R Roberts, owner and applicant, filed an application with the City pursuant to Article III, Section 8.05.070 (*Procedure for Designation of Historic Sites and Historic Districts*) of the Palm Springs Municipal Code requesting Class 1 historic resource designation for the parcel located at 730 East Paseo El Mirador #507-082-020). The application included a historic resources report ("the report") prepared by Melissa Riche, dated September, 2019.
- C. In November, 2019, members of the Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) conducted site inspections of the proposed historic resource, accompanied by City staff.
- D. On December 10, 2019, a noticed public hearing of the Palm Springs Historic Site Preservation Board ("HSPB") to consider Case HSPB #126 was held in accordance with applicable law.
- E. The HSPB carefully reviewed and considered all of the evidence presented in connection with the hearing on the project, including, but not limited to, the staff report and all written and oral testimony presented.

THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS RESOLVES:

SECTION 1: FINDINGS – PART "A", CRITERIA FOR HISTORIC RESOURCES.

Evaluation of the Application. Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 8.05.070 (C), in considering a recommendation to designate the site as a Class 1 or 2 historic resource the HSPB shall evaluate the application and make findings for conformance with the following criteria:

Criteria for the Designation of Class 1 Historic Resources. A site, structure, building or object may be designated as a Class 1 historic resource, provided both of the following findings are met:

a. The site, structure, building or object exhibits exceptional historic significance and meets one or more of the criteria listed below:

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SECTION 2: FINDINGS – PART "B" – ANALYSIS OF INTEGRITY.

Analysis of Integrity. (PSMC 8.05.070 (C,1,b). The site, structure, building or object retains one or more of the following aspects of integrity, as established in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards: integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, setting, feeling, or association.

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7. Association:

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SECTION 3: DEFINING HISTORIC CHARACTERISTICS AND NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES.

In considering a recommendation for historic resource designation it is important to distinguish those physical elements that are original or from the period of significance that contribute to the resource’s historic significance from alterations, additions or features that were added at a later time that may be sympathetic to the original character, but which may create a false sense of historicity. Distinguishing original

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4. Glass sliding doors, guest bedroom / office.
5. Glass sliding doors, garage.
6. Landscape and swimming pool.
7. Roof-mounted mechanical equipment and associated screening.
8. Concrete block screen wall adjacent to garage.

SECTION 4: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The proposed historic resource designation is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical changes to the environment, directly or indirectly.

SECTION 5: 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 Resource:

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 following the procedures outlined in Municipal Code Section 8.05.110 “Demolition or Alteration of Class 1 and Class 2 Historic Resources – Certificate of Appropriateness”.
5. A marker explaining the historic nature of the site may be installed at the site in a location viewable from the public way.
6. Compliance with all rules and regulations for Historic Sites and Historic Districts under Chapter 8.05 of the Municipal Code shall be required.
7. The site shall not be further subdivided.
8. The City Clerk shall submit the Council Resolution to the County recorder for recordation within 90 days of the effective date of the Council’s resolution.

Based upon the foregoing, the Historic Site Preservation Board recommends that the City Council designate “The Lawrence Welk Residence located at 730 East Paseo El Mirador, a Class 1 Historic Resource (Case HSPB #126).

ADOPTED THIS TENTH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2019.

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

ATTEST:

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

Flinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services