



Staff Report and Recommendations Agenda of August 29, 2022, Item 10a

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency

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I. APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER:

Applicant: Neal Subic
Subic & Assoc., Inc.
2353 E. Main Street
Ventura, CA 93003

Property Owner: Amlap Circle Properties
5450 Telegraph Rd. #104
Ventura, CA 93003

II. REQUEST:

A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) (Cultural Heritage Ordinance (CHO) §1366) for the demolition of an existing 1,200 square foot (sq. ft.) residence, a 2,160 sq. ft. storage/garage building, and a 2,000 sq. ft. paved parking area at a property addressed as 1057 Briggs Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060. (Case No. CH22-0009).

III. LOCATION AND PROPERTY INFORMATION:

1057 Briggs Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060 (unincorporated Ventura County)
Assessor's Parcel Number (APN): 090-0-210-030
Historic Designation: Site of Merit
Common/Historic Name: E.E. Gerry Residence

Zoning (split): AE-40 ac
General Plan Designation (split): Agricultural

The subject property consists of a 43.86-acre parcel containing a principal dwelling of 4,700 sq. ft., a second dwelling unit of 1,200 sq. ft., a detached garage of 1,300 sq. ft., a 2,160 sq. ft. storage/garage building, and a 340 sq. ft. agricultural storage structure. Several mature trees surround the property in addition to approximately 44 acres of citrus trees.

IV. PROJECT SCOPE:

The applicant is requesting to demolish the existing 1,200 sq. ft. E.E. Gerry Residence, demolish an existing 2,160 sq. ft. storage/garage building, and demolish an existing 2,000 sq. ft. paved parking area (Exhibit 1).

V. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The subject property was documented in the Western Santa Clara Valley Historic Resources Survey (Phase V, July 1996) prepared by Judith Triem of San Buenaventura Research Associates (Exhibit 2). The historic survey identified a National Register-eligible rural historic landscape district within the survey area, which the subject property is a contributor to. National Register Bulletin 30 (*Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes*, 1999) defines a rural historic landscape as “a geographical area that historically has been used by people, or shaped or modified by human activity, occupancy, or intervention, and that possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of areas of land use, vegetation, buildings and structures, roads and waterways, and natural features.” According to the historic survey, the western Santa Clara Valley is unified by the visual evidence of its historic agricultural land uses, and is regionally significant as perhaps the best remaining example of a Southern California "citrus belt" historic landscape.

In 2000, the County Board of Supervisors established that properties documented in the Western Santa Clara Valley Historic Resources Survey that were assigned status codes of 1 through 5 (including the subject property) were also to be designated Ventura County Sites of Merit.

According to the historic survey, the E.E. Gerry Residence was built in 1892 and was described as follows:

This modest folk Victorian cottage has maintained its original appearance since its 1892 construction, It is one story in height with a rectangular plan and medium hipped gable roof with closed eaves. A small louvered vent is located under the gable peak, The symmetrical facade contains a centered projecting porch flanked by a single narrow double hung window. The porch has a hipped roof supported by two square posts and a spindlework frieze. The house is covered with wide horizontal siding. The tall narrow windows are one-over-one sash with wood casings. The house rests on a concrete perimeter foundation and is in excellent condition. The house faces onto Briggs Road, with a concrete sidewalk leading up to the front door from the road. Several mature trees surround the property, in addition to the 44 acres of citrus trees.

The E.E. Gerry residence and ranch are historically important for the role they played in the development of agriculture in the Santa Clara Valley. Ellsworth Gerry, trained as a teacher, purchased this land and had the house built for his new family in 1892. The family raised apricots, walnuts, olives, lemons and oranges on their 44 acre ranch. The house is also architecturally significant because it was designed by well known Ventura carpenter builder/architect, Selwyn Shaw, who designed and built the Dudley ranch house, Methodist Episcopal Church and the Bard Hospital, among others. This house is a rare surviving example of a modest ranch house built for a young family. It has retained its original integrity, although the original barn is gone.

To the rear and to the south of the residence is a long corrugated metal shed. Exposed rafters are located under the asymmetrical gable roof. In addition there is a small gable roofed board-and-batten building with a corrugated metal roof and single door. West of the residence is an open-sided storage shed with corrugated metal roof and wood siding.

VI. CHO ANALYSIS AND STAFF CONCLUSIONS:

The Ventura County Cultural Heritage Ordinance (CHO) Section 1366 requires that the Cultural Heritage Board issue a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) in the case of proposed demolition activities at a Site of Merit. The applicant proposes to demolish the E.E. Gerry Residence, storage/garage building, and adjacent paved parking area. No new construction plans have been submitted to CHB Staff.

The applicant seeks to demonstrate through contemporary photography that the existing residence and storage/garage building are considerably physically deteriorated and beyond repair (Exhibit 3). CHB Staff could not determine whether the structures appear to be neglected beyond repair without additional architectural or engineering evaluation. CHB Staff considers the property to have retained its integrity as a Site of Merit as a contributor to an agricultural historic district because the majority of the site is still in agricultural production.

Per CHO Section 1366-3(d), the CHB may conditionally approve a COA, even though it does not meet the standards set forth in the CHO, if it can be demonstrated that failure to approve the COA will cause a hardship because of conditions peculiar to the structure or other feature involved, or damage to the property owner is unreasonable in comparison to the benefit conferred to the community. If, based on its evaluation, the CHB concurs with the factors identified above, they CHB may approve the COA pursuant to CHO Section 1366-3(d). Staff recommends inclusion of the following recommendation in order to better conform to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines (SOI Standards)*:

- 1. Recommendation #1: HABS/HAER/HALS Photo Documentation.** Prior to demolition activities, the project applicant should submit photographic documentation of the property prepared to the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS)/Historic American Engineering Record (HAER)/ Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) standards by a qualified professional familiar with HABS/HAER/HALS guidelines. A digital proof of the photo documentation should be provided to CHB Staff for approval and determination of consistency with *The Secretary of Interior's Guidelines for Architectural and Engineering Documentation*. The photo documentation should consist of the following:
 - As determined by the HABS/HAER/HALS professional, a sufficient number of photographic views so as to convey the property and its identified historic

contributors following clearance of overgrowth and debris and removal of plywood coverings/obstructions;

- Photographs should include character-defining features. The historic consultant may assist in identifying features and views to be included in the photo documentation;
 - HABS/HAER/HALS standards will require the original negatives having a minimum size of 4"x5" and production of one set of large-format, black-and-white, film photography on 8.5 x 11 inkjet mount cards;
 - Photographs must include a photo key index and photo key map.
- Submission of one set of digital scans in PDF digital form to CHB Staff;
 - Donation of final film negatives and prints to both the Library of Congress and Museum of Ventura County accompanied by the photo key index, photo key map, and written data report (historic resources report); and
 - Provide to CHB Staff a letter from the library/museum acknowledging receipt of the photo documentation.

VII. OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW HARDSHIP:

At the CHB public hearing on this matter, if desired, the property owner is provided the opportunity to present facts and evidence demonstrating a failure to grant the requested COA would cause an economic hardship as provided by CHO Section 1366-3(d).

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No public comment regarding this item has been received to date.

IX. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

Pursuant to CHO Section 1366, the CHB may identify project modifications for the applicant's review and consideration. Staff is recommending the CHB take the following actions regarding the request:

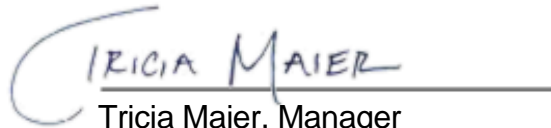
1. **CONDUCT** public hearing, **RECEIVE** oral and written testimony, and **CONSIDER** the Planning Division Staff report and all exhibits and attachments hereto;
2. **FIND** whether the proposed project meets the requirements of the Ventura County Cultural Heritage Ordinance Section 1366-3(d); and
3. If the requisite finding can be made based on the preceding evidence and analysis, **APPROVE** the Certificate of Appropriateness (Cultural Heritage Ordinance [CHO] § 1366) with any Cultural Heritage Board or Staff recommendations determined necessary to better conform to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*.

Prepared by:



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Reviewed by:



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Exhibits:

- Exhibit 1: Demolition Plan
- Exhibit 2: Historic Survey DPR Form 523
- Exhibit 3: Site Photos