

Guidelines for Historic Assessments

A historic assessment is a survey and evaluation that is used to determine the significance of a building, site, object or structure. The survey contains a description of the building, site, object or structure as well as information about its historical background and surrounding area.

The RMA - Planning Department will require an applicant to hire a qualified historic consultant to prepare a Phase One Assessment when a project has the potential to affect a building, site, object or structure over 50 years old. The assessment will determine if a resource is historic by using criteria from the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources and Monterey County's Register of Historic Resources. If it is determined that a resource is eligible for listing on one or more of these Registers, then a Phase Two Assessment is triggered.

A Phase Two Assessment, prepared by a qualified historic consultant, provides a more detailed evaluation of the resource and examines how a project will affect its significance. In addition, a Phase Two Assessment should provide potential mitigation measures for consideration by the County to reduce impacts to a level of insignificance, if possible, or a clear statement that the proposal will cause a significant impact to the resource which cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance.

If a property is listed or has been determined eligible for listing on the National or California Registers, then a Phase Two Assessment is automatically required. If a property is listed on Monterey County's Register or if it has been identified as potentially eligible through a Cultural Resources survey, then a Phase Two Assessment is required.

Uses of a Historic Assessment

The RMA - Planning Department will use a historic assessment as a resource to complete an Initial Study (IS) to determine whether a project will have a significant affect on a historic resource as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), government Code Section 15300.2(f). A project will have a significant affect on a historic resource if it demolishes, or substantially alters a resource listed or eligible for listing on the National Register, California Register or Monterey County Register. If a project will not have a significant affect on the environment, the RMA - Planning Department will prepare a Negative Declaration for consideration and approval by the appropriate hearing body. If a project will have a significant affect on the environment, mitigation measures may be implemented to reduce the impacts to the resource to a level that is considered less than significant. The RMA – Planning Department will then prepare a Mitigated Negative Declaration for consideration and approval by the appropriate hearing body. In the event that impacts are so great that mitigation measures cannot be implemented to reduce the impact to a less than significant level, RMA – Planning Department will require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Professional Qualifications

The RMA – Planning Department maintains a list of qualified historic consultants. It can be found on the Department's web site, at www.co.monterey.ca.us/planning or call 831-755-5025.

General Requirements

Phase One Assessment

An applicant must submit three (3) administrative draft copies of a Phase One Historic Assessment to RMA – Planning Department. A Phase One Assessment consists of completed DPR 523a and DPR 523b (Primary Record and Building, Structure, Object Record). Forms are available at the California Office of Historic Preservation’s web site at <http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/>. In addition to the DPR, the consultant must attach a letter stating whether or not the property has historic significance.

Phase Two Requirements

An applicant must submit three (3) administrative draft copies of a Phase Two Historic Assessment to RMA – Planning Department. The assessment should be written in a narrative tone. It must be checked for typographical errors and proof-read for syntax. All material facts, such as the date of construction, must contain references to sources of information. The assessment must contain subheadings and page numbers for clarity and organization. Maps, photographs and figures should be labeled and integrated with the text of the assessment or assembled in an appendix. The RMA - PLANNING DEPARTMENT will review the administrative draft copies and forward comments to the consultant. The consultant must address the Department’s comments before the historic assessment will be accepted and used for environmental review.

Format Requirements

A Phase Two Historic Assessment prepared for Monterey County must conform to the following format:

A. Title Page

A title page is required that contains the (1) name and address of the property, (2) the name and address of the applicant, (3) the name and address of the consultant and (4) the completion date of the report.

B. Table of Contents

A table of contents is required that indicates the page numbers of each of the items from Section C through I below.

C. Introduction

The introduction should include, but not be limited to, the (1) name of proposed project, (2) name of developer, (3) description of the proposed project, (4) address, nearest cross streets, acreage and Assessor’s Parcel Numbers (APN) of the property, (5) current use of the property, (6) names of the firm, principal and staff preparing the assessment and each of their professional qualifications, (7) beginning and completion dates of the assessment, (8) description of the research procedures used to prepare the assessment , and (9) current

listing of the property on the National Register, California Register or Monterey County Register.

D. Historical Background

The historical background should contain, but not be limited to, the (1) location map of the property drawn to scale with a north arrow, (2) historical context of the study area, and (3) historical development of the property including facts concerning ownership, subdivision, construction dates, occupants and uses of the property. The assessment should concisely describe the historical background of the resource from the Spanish Period (1777-1822) to the present. Omission of facts during major periods is not acceptable.

E. Description of the Historic Resource

The description of the historic resource should concisely describe (1) the physical appearance and condition of the buildings, structures, objects and natural features on the subject site, and (2) the architectural style and defining features of the exterior of the historic resource. Photographs of each facade of the resources are required.

F. Evaluation for Significance

The evaluation for significance must include completed historic evaluations using the following criteria:

- (1) National Register of Historic Places
- (2) California Register of Historic Resources
- (3) Monterey County Register of Historic Resources

For each set of criteria, the assessment should analyze the historic background and description of the resource to determine if it qualifies for listing on the above registers. In addition, the assessment must evaluate the resource's potential to contribute to a district comprised of similar resources in the area. A district is composed of a significant concentration of sites or buildings conveying a visual sense of the overall historic environment or an arrangement of historically or functionally related properties. Conclusions should be based on an objective analysis of the information presented in the assessment.

G. Impacts of the Proposed Project

The impacts of the proposed project should describe how the project would affect the historic resource. It should contain a (1) project description, (2) site plan and floor plans, and (3) an analysis of the affects of the proposed project on the historic resource. If the resource is part of a district, the analysis should also discuss impacts to other contributing properties in the district.

H. Mitigation

Mitigation should include feasible measures that would either avoid or reduce the affects of the proposed project. Mitigation may include, but is not limited to, use of (1) the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic

Structures, (2) the State Historic Building Code, (3) project alternatives, (4) documentation using the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) or alternative standards, (5) an educational exhibit for public use, (6) salvage of building elements, and (7) relocation of the structure.

I. Appendices

The appendices must contain (1) bibliography of the literature cited and persons consulted, (2) documents related to the history of the subject property such as historic photos, articles, letters and diagrams, and (3) a completed State Historic Resources Evaluation Forms (DPR 523a & b).

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