

REQUEST FOR HISTORIC AND SCENIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION ACTION

V.A. REDLANDS PALM INVESTMENT, LLC, APPLICANT

A review of the Cultural Resources Assessment/Historic Resource Evaluation related to Tentative Parcel Map No. 20185, Tentative Tract Map No. 20305, and Conditional Use Permit No. 1143 for the subdivision of an 8.8-acre parcel located at 301 W. Palm Avenue to develop a Planned Residential Development with a total of 30 new residential lots for new single-family development in the R-S, Suburban Residential District. The historic resources evaluation assessed the following extant features: the existing England/Attwood Estate house, Carriage House, Grove Barn, and England Cottage located at 301 W. Palm Ave.; the existing single-family residence located at 827 Alvarado St.; and associated remnant citrus grove, gravity irrigation system, and stone wall along a portion of the property boundary. The project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act, and an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared in accordance with Sections 15072, 15073, and 15074 of the CEQA Guidelines.

HISTORIC AND SCENIC PRESERVATION MEETING: OCTOBER 15, 2020

Planner: Sean Reilly, Senior Planner

SYNOPSIS

1. Historic Designation: The property is not designated as historic by the City of Redlands, the State of California, or the United States Government.
2. Existing Land Use: The site is approximately 8.8-acres and is occupied by two single-family residences, accessory structures and an orange grove.
3. Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission submittal dates:

(A) Date Submitted:	December 11, 2019
(B) Date Accepted as Complete:	June 24, 2020
(C) Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission Meeting:	October 1, 2020
(D) Continued Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission Meeting:	October 15, 2020
4. Attachments:
 - (A) Location Map
 - (B) Site Aerial Photograph
 - (C) October 1, 2020 HSPC Staff Report
 - (D) Cultural Resources Assessment and Historical Resources Evaluation
 - (E) Initial Study/MND
 - (F) Complete Project Landscape Plans

(G) Project Architecture

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant, Redlands Palm Investment, LLC, is proposing to subdivide an 8.8-acre parcel located at 301 W. Palm Avenue to develop a planned residential development. Referred to as the England/Attwood Estate, the subject property is located at the southeast corner of Palm Avenue and Alvarado Street in the southern portion of the City (Attachments A and B). Currently the project site is occupied by an orange grove, two single-family homes, and accessory structures associated with the homes and the operation of the grove.

BACKGROUND

On October 1, 2020, the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) prepared by LSA Associates, and the Cultural Resources Assessment and Historical Resources Evaluation (CRA) prepared by BCR Consulting for the project, were presented to the Commission. A copy of the previous Staff Report, CRA and IS/MND are included as Attachments C, D, and E, respectively. During the meeting, several issues were raised by the Commission related to the Project's impacts and proposed mitigation measures. A summary of the discussion is included below.

Summary of the Commission's Discussion:

- a) The Commission made several comments regarding the grove which is listed as a contributor to the potential historic district (as described in the CRA). Commissioners raised concerns that the project would remove a majority of the existing citrus grove, and one commissioner noted that the project would remove approximately three-quarters ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the existing grove. A Commissioner commented that the citrus grove is the most critical component necessary to define the property as a "Citrus Estate." Further, several Commissioners commented that the removal of the grove would significantly change the historic setting and that the significance of the property begins with the citrus grove. It was noted that there would be significant visual impacts due to the Project, which would completely change the visual setting from the adjacent streets. The England/Attwood Estate property was noted as a rare example of a citrus estate, and that the removal of most of the grove would significantly impact the historic integrity of the setting and feel of the citrus estate. Similarly, it was stated that the project significantly altered the relationship of the structures to the grove. The Commission felt that the removal of most of the citrus grove as proposed would create a change to the visual setting, creating a substantial adverse change. One Commissioner suggested provided suggestions to reduce this impact. It was

stated that retaining several rows of citrus trees along the Project's Palm Ave frontage and placing homes within the grove without changing the view or setting from Palm Ave. would be helpful. Additionally, it was suggested that the project access could be taken from Alvarado Street to reduce the number of trees removed on the Palm Ave. side of the site.

- b) There were several comments on the information included in the CRA. Several Commissioners asked why the property was analyzed as a district rather than an individual resource, and asked for more careful consideration of whether analyzing it as a district was appropriate.
- c) Related to the content of the CRA, one Commissioner stated that the features to be impacted were identified, however, the actual impacts were not fully detailed and that there was not adequate mitigation identified for those features that would be impacted. Several Commissioners commented that it appears as though impacts are not fully addressed or mitigated, and that the current IS/MND is not sufficient.
- d) The irrigation features on the property are proposed to be removed by the Project. The Commission felt that because the irrigation feature is considered to be a contributor to the potential historic district (based on the CRA analysis), more documentation of its structure and mapping would be beneficial. It was stated that mitigation measures should be provided related to its removal.
- e) There were questions about the significance of the grove barn that is proposed to be removed by the Project. The CRA states that the grove barn is not a contributor to the potential historic district; however, the Commission felt that the CRA did not substantiate this finding and asked for more information within the CRA. The Commission stated that the historical construction of the grove barn falls within the period of significance and it is possibly contributor to the potential historic district.
- f) There was a discussion of the walls and fences proposed as a perimeter to the housing development, and would create a new private community which is not typical of the period or to this type of property (citrus estate) in Redlands' history. Commissioners expressed that adding these elements to the estate creates substantial visual impacts that affect the historic setting of the potential district and its contributing elements.

(Note: For reference, full landscaping plans for the project are included as Attachment F, and include the proposed wall and fence plan as well as views into the proposed development from the adjacent rights-of-way.)

- g) Commissioners provided some design comments concerning the context of the historic setting of the property. The Commission felt that smaller homes surrounding the resource changed the setting of citrus estate. The Commission presented concerns regarding the proposed lot sizes and the pattern of development. It was noted that the new development in relationship to the existing estate features and historic development surrounding the project is not similar which creates a significant change in the setting of the Citrus Estate. It was stated that the proposed housing for the project is far more dense than other housing in Redlands from the subject time period, particularly in the immediate vicinity. Even if overlooking the removal of most of the citrus trees necessary to make way for this construction, the new housing would further diminish the historic setting of this potential district.

- h) Addition of the park surrounding the resource is not a feature that would be found adjacent to a grove estate, and therefore this changes the historical significance of the setting. The proposed park does not appear to match anything particularly contemporaneous to the property's period in Redlands history, nor is it typical for citrus estates in Redlands. The removal of most of the citrus trees and the addition of the park features would diminish the character of the property as a citrus estate and would result in a potentially significant impact.

Following the discussion as summarized above, members of the Commission felt that a fair argument could be made based on substantial evidence in the record that there are potentially significant impacts that are not properly mitigated. The Commission encouraged the applicant to propose design solutions to avoid or reduce the significant impacts. A motion to recommend the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report was made by Chair Heidelberg and seconded by Vice Chair Keller.

Before a vote was taken on the motion, Mr. Pitassi (applicant's representative) requested a continuance to a subsequent special meeting of the Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission. He expressed that that the additional time would provide a chance to work with staff to discuss the issues raised by the Commission, and potential changes to the Project.

Chairman Heidelberg withdrew the motion, and the item was continued to a special meeting (date to be determined) to give the applicant time to work with City staff to address the Commission's concerns and to present their solutions.

Staff Discussion with the Applicant

On Monday, October 5, 2020, Planning staff met with Mr. Pete Pitassi and Mr. Nolan Leggio (the applicant's representatives) to discuss the HSPC meeting and possible changes to the project. The applicant stated that they would prepare materials in

response to the comments provided by the HSPC. However, they indicated that they do not intend to make any significant changes to the currently proposed project and wish to proceed as planned. They stated that they will provide additional information to the Commission (i.e., more details regarding the project plans, landscape plans, and proposed trees around the historical buildings), but that their intent was to accept the HSPC's comments or a recommendation, and move forward to a Planning Commission meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff requests that the HSPC review and discuss the IS/MND and the CRA prepared for the project and provide a response to the following question.

Does the evaluation of Cultural Resources in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, based on the Cultural Resources Assessment/Historic Resources Evaluation technical report, adequately:

- a) identify all impacts to cultural and historic resources by the proposed project; and,
- b) include adequate mitigation measures to mitigate all identified impacts to a level of less-than-significant.

MOTION:

No motion is required.

If it is the Commission's desire to make a formal statement to the Planning Commission regarding the impacts of the project, a detailed motion may be made stating the Commission's position. If the Commission would like to make this statement by resolution, a resolution with the Commission's findings will be prepared and brought back before the Commission for consideration at the next regularly scheduled meeting (November 5, 2020).