



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Joseph Horwedel

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: January 24, 2007

Approved Deanna Adams Date 1/27/07

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 3
SNI AREA: Delmas Park

SUBJECT

City Council resolution nominating a portion of the Delmas Park Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) Area for designation as a City Landmark Historic District and directing the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement to initiate the required process and proceedings to establish the City Landmark Historic District.

RECOMMENDATION

The City Council adopt a resolution nominating a portion of the Delmas Park SNI Area for designation as a City Landmark Historic District and directing the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement to initiate the required process and proceedings to establish the City Landmark Historic District, including necessary outreach to community members and property owners.

OUTCOME

Adoption of the Council Resolution will initiate the process to consider establishment of a City Landmark Historic District in the Delmas Park SNI area.

BACKGROUND

The Delmas Park SNI Planning Area is bordered by West Santa Clara Street on the north, Interstate 280 on the south, State Route 87 and downtown on the east, and Bird Avenue on the west. The proposed City Landmark Historic District is located in the Lake House neighborhood, which is in the northern section of the Delmas Park SNI Planning Area.

This area is comprised of single-family homes, single-family homes converted to multi-family use, and the Parkside condominium development. Most of the structures have distinctive characteristics that are typical of architecture in the early 1900's. A number have been identified by the City as historically significant.

Through the SNI process, the Delmas Park Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) identified as a key concern the preservation of existing single-family residential areas. The NAC has identified the northern portion of the SNI area as one of two main areas to be the focus of conservation and improvement efforts and where infill densities should remain lower than 25 dwelling units per acre.

Designation of the Lake House neighborhood as a local City Landmark Historic District has been a priority of the City of San Jose Historic Landmarks Commission since the early 1990's. During the preparation of the Environmental Impact Report for the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Agency's Vasona Light Rail extension, historians Ward Hill and Glory Anne Laffey found portions of the neighborhood to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district. This area has a large number of late nineteenth and early twentieth century residential structures; most built originally as single-family homes. The neighborhood has a continuity of architectural style and scale, and has a high level of integrity to its original neighborhood character. The neighborhood developed between 1885 and 1925, and is comprised of predominantly Victorian-era styled buildings of the Queen Anne period with some Craftsman and Period Revival styles found both within and surrounding the 1891 Lake House Tract. Within this neighborhood are buildings designed by local architects J. O. McKee, Jacob Lenzen, Charles F. Carto, and Wolfe and McKenzie, some of San Jose's most prominent residential designers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

In 2005 the City of San Jose hired Archives and Architecture to: (1) conduct additional historic research in the Lake House area of the Delmas Park SNI planning area; (2) determine whether the area would qualify as a City of San Jose City Landmark Historic District; and (3) determine the boundaries of the potential City Landmark Historic District.

The study by Archives and Architecture, entitled *Historic District Study* concludes that an area identified within the Delmas Park SNI Area, and designated on the attached map, would meet the City's criteria for designation as a City Landmark Historic District due to its existing historic neighborhood character. Although there are some properties within the proposed district area that do not contribute to the historic fabric of the neighborhood, the historic district area as a whole possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The *Historic District Study* was distributed to the Delmas Park Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC), and presented and discussed at its January 18, 2007 meeting. At this meeting, the Delmas Park NAC unanimously recommended that the City initiate the process to designate the portion of the Delmas Park SNI Planning Area identified in the study as a City Landmark Historic District.

The next step to establish a City Landmark Historic District within the Delmas Park SNI Area is for Council to nominate the area for designation as a City Landmark Historic District in accordance with the process set forth in Section 13.48.120 of the San Jose Municipal Code and to direct Planning staff to initiate the City Landmark Historic District designation process. As part of this designation process, the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement has notified all property owners within the proposed City Landmark Historic District of the proposed change. Furthermore, these property owners were invited to a meeting on January 22, 2007, to discuss and answer questions on the proposed Historic District. All property owners within the proposed City Landmark Historic District were invited. Two property owners and one additional community member attended. Questions were raised about the permitting process required should a Historic District be

established. Staff described the process. All public outreach on this proposal has been coordinated with the Delmas Park NAC.

Once the public outreach on the proposed City Landmark Historic District is completed, the Historic District Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 13.48.120) requires the proposal to first be referred to the Historic Landmarks Commission and then to the Planning Commission for reports and recommendations to the City Council. The Landmarks Commission, Planning Commission and subsequent City Council meetings are public hearings requiring public notice (300 feet) and publication in a newspaper of general circulation. Finally, the City Council will hold a public hearing and by written resolution approve, conditionally approve, modify and approve, or deny the designation. In order to designate a Landmark Historic District, Sections 13.48.020.B and 13.48.120.H of the Municipal Code require the City Council to make a finding that said proposed historic district is a geographically definable area of urban or rural character, possessing a significant concentration or continuity of site, buildings, structures or objects unified by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development. The proposed Lake House Historic District satisfies this requirement.

CONCLUSION

The community identified the preservation of existing single-family residential neighborhoods as a key concern in the Delmas Park SNI area. The NAC has identified the northern area, in which the proposed Lake House City Landmark Historic District is located, as one of two main areas to be the focus of conservation and improvement efforts and where infill densities should remain lower than 25 dwelling units per acre. The next step towards accomplishing the community's goal for preservation is for the City Council to adopt a resolution nominating the proposed portion of the Delmas Park SNI Area for designation as a City Landmark Historic District and directing the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement to initiate the required process and proceedings to establish the City Landmark Historic District.

ANALYSIS

The proposed Lake House City Landmark Historic District is consistent with several General Plan policies intended to support historic preservation. The proposal would promote a greater sense of historic awareness and community identity and enhance the quality of urban living in the Delmas Park SNI area and the City as a whole.

POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Not applicable.

PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST

- Criteria 1:** Requires Council action on the use of public funds equal to \$1 million or greater. **(Required: Website Posting)**
- Criteria 2:** Adoption of a new or revised policy that may have implications for public health, safety, quality of life, or financial/economic vitality of the City. **(Required: E-mail and Website Posting)**

- Criteria 3:** Consideration of proposed changes to service delivery, programs, staffing that may have impacts to community services and have been identified by staff, Council or a Community group that requires special outreach. **(Required: E-mail, Website Posting, Community Meetings, Notice in appropriate newspapers)**

Although this item does not meet any of the above criteria, staff followed Council Policy 6-30: Public Outreach Policy. The project was presented at the Delmas Park NAC meeting on January 18, 2007. The Delmas Park NAC expressed unanimous support for the project. Also, a property owners' meeting was held on January 22, 2007. All property owners within the proposed City Landmark Historic District were invited. Two property owners and one additional community member attended. Questions were raised about the permitting process should a Historic District be established. Staff described the process. All public outreach has been coordinated with the Delmas Park NAC.

State of California Tribal Consultation Guidelines:

Not applicable.

COORDINATION

This project was coordinated with the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, and Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services in addition to other City departments.

FISCAL/POLICY ALIGNMENT

This project is consistent with applicable General Plan policies.

COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

BUDGET REFERENCE

Not applicable.

CEQA

Under the provisions of Section 15307 of the State Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), historic district nominations are exempt from environmental review.


for JOSEPH HORWEDEL, DIRECTOR
Planning, Building and Code Enforcement

For questions please contact Principal Planner, Stan Ketchum at 535-7876.

