



# Administrative Report

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J.1., File # PREZ22-4003

Meeting Date: 4/18/2022

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**To:** PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
**From:** STACEY KINSELLA, ASSOCIATE PLANNER

## **TITLE**

A PUBLIC HEARING FOR CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT FORMATION, REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR MODIFICATIONS TO EXISTING POTENTIAL HISTORIC RESOURCES, FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF 30 NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS ADJACENT TO AND BEHIND THE POTENTIAL HISTORIC RESOURCES, AND FOR THE REMOVAL OF A STRUCTURE WITHIN A POTENTIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT, AND CONSIDERATION OF A RECOMMENDATION TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION REGARDING A REQUEST FOR A HISTORIC VARIANCE FOR REDUCED COMMERCIAL PARKING FOR THE POTENTIALLY HISTORIC PROPERTIES LOCATED WITHIN A LOW-DENSITY, MULTIPLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-3A) ZONE AT **100-132 N. CATALINA AVENUE**, PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 4, TITLE 10 OF THE REDONDO BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Open public hearing, administer oath, take testimony from staff, the applicant and other interested parties, and deliberate;
2. Close the public hearing; and
3. Adopt seven (7) resolutions by title only approving the entitlements subject to each set of findings and conditions contained therein.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The applicant is requesting that the Preservation Commission grant Historic District Designation for the potentially historic properties located at 112, 124, 126, and 132 N. Catalina Avenue. The applicant is also requesting that the Preservation Commission grant Certificate of Appropriateness for the following actions: 1) Various modifications to the potentially historic properties located at 112, 124, 126, and 132 N. Catalina Avenue; 2) The removal of the building at 116 N. Catalina Avenue; and 3) The appropriateness of 30 new residential units adjacent to and behind the requested Historic District. Lastly, the applicant requests a Historic Variance for reduced commercial parking serving the commercial buildings within the proposed Historic District. The review of the Historic Variance will result in a recommendation by the Preservation Commission, which will be forwarded to the Planning Commission for final review and determination.

## **BACKGROUND**

The project site consists of six parcels located on the east side of North Catalina Avenue, just north of Emerald Street. The site is approximately 1.2 acres and currently includes 15,682 square feet of

commercial space. There are two existing surface parking lots, one between 126 and 132 N. Catalina Avenue and one at the corner of Catalina and Emerald. The property immediately to the south and east located at 305 Emerald Street, known as the Oklahoma Apartments, is locally designated as a historic landmark. The properties to the rear (east) of the project site are developed with multiple-story residential buildings as well as industrial and institutional structures (i.e. storage facility, church building, etc.). The property immediately to the north at 136 N. Catalina Avenue is developed with a commercial building that is currently occupied by a retailer.

Because the project site was previously zoned for commercial uses (C-2/C-3) but is now residentially zoned (R-3A), the commercial structures and related uses are considered legal non-conforming.

While the Preservation Commission will focus on the application requests pertaining to the historic status of the existing properties, the project requires several other applications that the Planning Commission will consider at a future meeting. The proposed project also requires a Coastal Development Permit, Conditional Use Permits (density bonus, outdoor dining, tasting room, and multiple dwelling units), Planning Commission Design Review, and Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 82561. An Environmental impact Report (EIR) was prepared which includes a Statement of Overriding Considerations and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

The Preservation Commission has the purview to act upon the Historic District Formation and the various Certificate of Appropriateness requests. The Preservation Commission will review and make a recommendation regarding the Historic Variance, which will then be forwarded to the Planning Commission for review along with the other applications listed above.

### **HISTORIC DISTRICT FORMATION**

The applicant is requesting Historic District Formation for four of the existing buildings including 112, 124, 126, and 132 N. Catalina Avenue. Per Municipal Code Section 10-4.201, the properties need to meet one or more of the following criteria to be eligible as individual landmarks and/or form a historic district:

- (a) It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, or architectural history; or
- (b) It is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history; or
- (c) It embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship; or
- (d) It is representative of the notable work of a builder, designer, or architect; or
- (e) Its unique location or singular physical characteristic(s) represents an established and familiar visual feature or landmark of a neighborhood, community, or the City.

### ***Background***

The subject properties are located within the Original Townsite of the City of Redondo Beach. The Sanborn maps reflect development on this block as early as 1895 (see pages 24-25 of the attached Historic Resource Evaluation "HRE" prepared by Kaplan Chen Kaplan). The HRE was peer reviewed by Rincon Consultants for conformity and compliance with professional standards in accordance with

the California Environmental Quality Act and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings. There are several locally designated landmarks near the project site including the Oklahoma Apartments at 305 Emerald Street (1908), the Diamond Apartments/Redondo Van and Storage at 321 Diamond Street (1913), the Vincent Apartments at 133 N. Broadway (1913), and the small historic district located at 216 and 218 N. Catalina Avenue (pre-1895).

Per the HRE, Henry E. Huntington's financial investments in the Redondo Beach Improvement Company and railways inspired others to invest in the early growth of Redondo Beach. In fact, the Redondo Railroad track angled through these properties from Broadway (north-east of the site) and traveled down to South Catalina Avenue towards the train depot. Development along Catalina Avenue steadily grew as beachfront and pier activities flourished. Promotion of Redondo Beach as a desirable residential community by community organizations and boosters resulted in great population growth between 1900 and 1930, which was only slowed after the Great Depression. The property at 112 N. Catalina Avenue played an important role as a meeting space for those early organizations. The next section will discuss a brief history of each building and its potential significance.

### *The Nominated Properties*

The property at 112 N. Catalina Avenue was constructed in 1904 by the fraternal order of the Masons. This building represents the first fraternal lodge in Redondo Beach and it was utilized by at least 16 different local groups. Per the HRE, "[t]hese organizations contributed to and built civic engagement and volunteerism in the early decades of the City. The building continued to be used by fraternal orders, philanthropic societies and non-profit organizations throughout the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century" (HRE, page 52). The property is listed in the City's Historical Resources Inventory with a C+ rating and is reference as "Altered Commercial". The two-story masonry building maintains its original massing and form, but its façade was remodeled in 1993. While not architecturally significant, the building is eligible for designation because it "exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, or architectural history". Please note that the HRE indicates that this building is eligible not only for local designation, but also for designation within the California and National Registers.

The property at 124 N. Catalina Avenue was developed in 1946 with a small one-story commercial building, which included both retail and dry-cleaning services. Per the HRE, the structure is a "typical example of a mid-century vernacular storefront" (HRE, page 61). The property does not appear to be connected to significant people, events, or workmanship. The property is not included in the City's Historical Resources Inventory because it was less than 50 years old when the survey was completed. However, the HRE indicates that the property most likely merits a "C" rating and would be a good candidate as a contributing member of a historic district.

The property at 126 N. Catalina Avenue was developed in 1949 with a one-story commercial building. Similar to the business at 124, this property also included retail and dry-cleaning services. In 1994, the building was converted to a coffee shop and bookstore. This property was not included in the City's Historical Resources Inventory because it was less than 50 years old when the survey was completed. That said, the front elevation clearly exhibits the Mid-Century Modern architectural style with the curved Googie-style canopy. The HRE notes that the property most likely merits a "C" rating and is locally eligible for designation as a good example of the Mid-Century Modern architectural

style (HRE, page 68).

The property at 132 N. Catalina Avenue was originally developed with a blacksmith shop in 1905. Over the years, this industrial building was modified with various additions accommodating other uses such as woodworking. The front façade maintains its original shape, though the building is modified both on the interior and the exterior with various materials. Some of the original machinery is still in place and highly visible inside the structure (currently a boutique retail shop). The City's Historical Resources Inventory includes this property with a C+ rating. The HRE notes that the building is not eligible as a standalone resource, but it is associated with the "early industrial and transportation history" (HRE, page 74). Thus, it is considered a good candidate as a contributing member of a historic district.

### *Conclusion*

The Historic Resource Evaluation prepared by Kaplan Chen Kaplan concludes that these four buildings "exemplify and reflect special elements of the City's social, commercial and transportation history as well as its architectural history" (page 74). While the buildings are each visually different, the structures at 112 and 132 relate to the earliest years of development including rail service, and the buildings located at 124 and 126 represent the shift from industrial to resident-serving commercial uses. Thus, the four structures are eligible to collectively form a local Historic District. Please see the attached draft Resolution for Historic District Formation.

## **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

### *112 N. Catalina Avenue*

As already noted within this report, the property is eligible for designation based upon its use for early civic engagement. The front elevation includes a plaster façade with tall aluminum windows and etched geometric patterns. The side elevations have very little fenestration with no particular adornment except for thin, vertical pilasters. The rear elevation exhibits arched windows, primarily located along the eastern side of the second floor assembly room, which still exists inside the structure today. Aside from the original assembly room, the original cornerstone for the building is still visible along the lower left-hand corner of the front elevation.

The two-story masonry building is 4,621 square feet (SF) in size and approximately 32 feet in overall height. Approximately 20% of the rear of this building would be removed (928 SF) as part of the proposed project. This will include the removal of the original assembly room. The interior would be adaptively re-used for residential purposes as reflected in the attached architectural drawings. The residential development would also expand southward beyond the lodge building and connect with a new structure located where the existing surface parking lot sits today. The expanded residential building would be at the corner of N. Catalina Avenue and Emerald Street, immediately adjacent to the designated Oklahoma Apartments.

The attached Historic Preservation Plan ("HPP") prepared by Kaplan Chen Kaplan details how each of the structures will be treated within the project setting. For this building, the original cornice would be constructed as well as the horizontal banding along the second floor street-facing windows (HPP, page 5). Old photos reflect a centered window above the main entry doors. Thus, a new centered window is proposed. Several new double-hung windows are proposed along the north elevation to

serve the new interior residential uses. The south elevation of the building would be blocked by the new residential structure to the south. The rear elevation would have new windows as well as doors leading to outdoor decks facing east.

#### *116 N. Catalina Avenue*

The property at 116 N. Catalina Avenue is proposed to be demolished as part of the project. The building is 2,086 SF and is currently utilized for a custom cabinetry business. The removal of this building would provide driveway access to the level one parking at 112 N. Catalina Avenue as well as provide access to the residential units behind the proposed historic district.

This site was originally developed in 1921 with a small commercial building. The City Historical Resources Inventory lists the building with a C+ rating and identifies the structure as Period Revival. A duplex residence was added to the site in 1925 and years later, the building was modified again to remove the residential component. The alterations over the years have removed its original character, leaving the building with very little architectural integrity (HRE, page 60). Furthermore, the building does not appear to be connected to significant people, events, or workmanship. Lastly, the HRE notes that the building is not a significant visual feature of this block face. For all the reasons noted above and in the HRE, this property is not eligible for local landmark designation.

#### *124 N. Catalina Avenue*

As previously noted, the property at 124 N. Catalina Avenue was developed in 1946 as a small retail building with dry cleaning services. The HRE indicates that the building would be a good candidate as a contributing member of a historic district. The proposed project retains the original shape and design of the front elevation which is noted to be in "satisfactory condition" per the attached HPP (page 7). The existing windows, doors, and stacked stone bulkhead would be retained. The south elevation would be modified to include two new sets of windows, similar in style but with additional mullions. There would also be stacked stone below each set of windows. The stonework would be similar to the stacked stone along the base of the front elevation, but differentiated in that it would not be contiguous. The majority of the rear of the structure would be removed as part of the project, maintaining only the front storefront space to be adaptively re-used for a new coffee/snack shop business.

#### *126 N. Catalina Avenue*

The property at 126 N. Catalina was developed in 1949 as a retail shop with dry cleaning services like its neighbor to the south (124). The Mid-Century Modern character-defining features along the front elevation, most notably the curved canopy, the angled pillars, and the blade sign above the canopy would be retained (HPP, page 12). There is a non-original office space on the right-hand side of the front elevation which would be removed as part of this project. New windows would be provided in its place, along with the continuation of the stacked stone bulkhead reflected underneath the other existing street-facing windows. The majority of the rear of the structure would be removed and the remaining storefront space would be adaptively re-used, in conjunction with the building at 124, as a new coffee/snack shop business. The existing surface parking lot to the north of this building would become outdoor dining. The rear portion of the surface parking lot towards the east would become part of the new residential development behind the proposed Historic District.

This building and the building at 124 are jointly 5,364 SF in total area. The project proposes the removal of the rear 3,580 SF, which means approximately 66% of the rear of these two structures would be demolished.

### *132 N. Catalina Avenue*

The blacksmith shop at 132 N. Catalina Avenue was originally constructed in 1905, though the property has seen many additions as well as changes to the exterior materials over the years. The building is utilitarian in design with very little architectural integrity. As noted previously, its significance is tied to the building's use and the connection to early development and transportation. In general, the location and front elevation massing would be retained as part of the project. The shed located long the north side of the building would be removed in order to create a new driveway for access to the rear residential units. The project proposes a painted mural along this newly exposed north elevation. Transom windows are proposed above the street-facing entry and the non-original siding would be removed and replaced with horizontal wood siding. New openings are proposed along the south elevation, which would face the proposed outdoor dining positioned between this structure and the building located at 126 N. Catalina Avenue.

This building is 2,510 SF and approximately 49% of the structure would be removed, leaving 1,276 SF for the new commercial use. The industrial machinery and pulleys are still visible and intact inside the building. The HPP notes that "[t]he assembly of machine elements is a historic feature of the space" and would be retained as part of this project (page 15). While it is unclear how the machinery would be displayed, it would be required to be a key component of the new commercial space. The structure is proposed to be adaptively re-used from an industrial/office use to a tasting room.

### *The Residential Structures*

The project proposes 30 new residential units adjacent to and behind the proposed Historic District. The majority of the units (22) would be located on the eastern side of the project site. The lodge building at 112 N. Catalina Avenue is proposed to be adaptively re-used to accommodate four of the residential units with four more units extending over the existing corner parking lot at Catalina and Emerald. The residential units behind the proposed Historic District would be accessible via a new driveway just north of the blacksmith shop at 132 and another driveway located where the building at 116 would be removed. The units inside and adjacent to the lodge building at 112 would have driveway access from both Emerald and Catalina.

The proposed project uses a contemporary style of residential architecture referred to as California Coastal. The exterior materials consist of varying horizontal and vertical cladding that emulates horizontal wood and board and batten siding. Windows are emphasized with the use of decorative shutters and awnings. The roof form uses both sections of flat roofs with a parapet and hipped roofs with eaves and exposed rafters. While the height of the residential buildings varies, they are proposed to be three stories and approximately 32 to 35 feet in maximum height. The blacksmith shop (132 N. Catalina Ave.) is approximately 19 feet in height, the dry-cleaning shops (124/126 N. Catalina Ave.) are approximately 15 feet in height, and the lodge building (112 N. Catalina Ave.) is approximately 32 feet in height.

### SECRETARY OF INTERIOR'S STANDARDS

To review the proposed changes and determine if eligible for Certificate of Appropriateness, the Commission must consider the adopted Design Guidelines for historic structures. The Guidelines rely on and include the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (SISR), which are the broad guidelines published by the National Park Service for the purpose of preservation. The ten standards that must be followed are part of the contractual requirement under the Mills Act Contract. The Secretary of Interior's Standards include the following ten guidelines:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The Preservation Commission will need to utilize the ten standards shown above to determination if the changes reflected within the proposed architectural drawings, and discussed further within the Preservation Plan, are appropriate for each of the structures. Please see the attached draft Resolutions for Certificate of Appropriateness for the changes proposed to each building, for the removal of the structure located at 116 N. Catalina Avenue, and for the new residential units adjacent to and behind the proposed Historic District.

## **HISTORIC VARIANCE**

The buildings located at 124 and 126 N. Catalina Avenue are proposed to be combined and used as a coffee shop (each originally utilized for retail and dry-cleaning facilities). The building located at 132 N. Catalina Avenue would be adaptively reused as a tasting room (the old blacksmith shop). An outdoor dining area would be created in place of the surface parking lot in between these structures. The existing surface parking lot at the corner of Catalina and Emerald will be utilized for new residential units. A parking variance is necessary to allow the buildings to be adaptively reused with reduced parking. The criteria for approval include a finding that the proposed changes enhance the utility of the buildings, does not prevent adequate functionality of the site, and does not adversely impact the other structures that are contributors to the potential historic district.

The property is considered a legal non-conforming use, and use changes that require a greater amount of parking and require structural alterations are not permitted by right and are subject to review by the Planning Commission. The project includes a density bonus with four proposed affordable units. As such, allowing the historic buildings to be adaptively re-used with new commercial uses is a concession and incentive allowed through density bonus law.

Below is a chart illustrating the required parking for the new tasting room, coffee shop, and outdoor dining:

Land Use	SF/Seats	Ratio	Required
Tasting Room	919 (Seating / Dining Area)	1/50 SF	18
Coffee Shop	1,784	1/250 SF	7
Outdoor Dining	82 seats – 12 = 70	1/6 seats	12
			37

The proposed tasting room has a higher parking ratio than the current boutique retail shop, which results in a requirement of 18 spaces. The adaptive reuse of the blacksmith shop would otherwise require only five parking spaces. The coffee shop is considered a snack shop and thereby requires 7 parking spaces. Based upon the proposed plans, the outdoor dining area requires 12 parking spaces. A total of 37 parking spaces are required for the commercial uses within the proposed Historic District. Only five parking spaces are provided to serve the new commercial uses.

The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) proposes various transportation demand management (TDM) measures that may assist with traffic and parking. These include, but are not limited to, transit subsidies for project residents, pedestrian-oriented design features, commuter incentives for project employees, a bikeshare system and subsidies, and local hire considerations. The MMRP can be found online as an attachment to the Final EIR located on the City's Catalina Village Project webpage.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

This report has documented the historical significance of the structures within the proposed Historic District, the modifications requested to each of the potential historic resources (including the removal of one structure), the proposed residential structures adjacent to and behind the proposed Historic District, and the request for reduced parking serving the commercial uses within the Historic District.

Staff recommends that the Preservation Commission review the proposed applications and



related materials, open the public hearing and take public testimony, close the public hearing, make a determination regarding the request for the formation of a Historic District and the requests for Certificate of Appropriateness, and make a recommendation to the Planning Commission regarding the Historic Variance for reduced parking.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS**

The Final Environmental Impact Report comprehensively evaluates the potential impacts of the project and was prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and State CEQA Guidelines. The Final EIR determines that most of the potential project impacts can be reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of the measures identified in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. However, the Final EIR also determines that the proposed project will have a significant transportation (Vehicle Miles Traveled) effect on the environment even with the implementation of mitigation measures. The approval of the project by the City is contingent upon the review and certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report by the Planning Commission.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

#### Draft Resolutions:

- Historic District Formation
- Certificate of Appropriateness - COA-2022-05 (112)
- Certificate of Appropriateness - COA-2022-06 (116)
- Certificate of Appropriateness - COA-2022-07 (124)
- Certificate of Appropriateness - COA-2022-08 (126)
- Certificate of Appropriateness - COA-2022-09 (132)
- Certificate of Appropriateness - COA-2022-10 (Residential)

#### Applications

#### Proposed Drawings

Historic Resource Evaluation by Kaplan Chen Kaplan ("HRE")

Preservation Plan by Kaplan Chen Kaplan ("HPP")

Environmental Documents Online: [www.redondo.org/CatalinaVillage](http://www.redondo.org/CatalinaVillage)