



County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

Agenda Item Submittal

From: Community Development and Infrastructure

Subject: Schedule a public hearing to consider delisting of the Redman-Hirahara House from the County's Historic Inventory

Meeting Date: June 24, 2025

Formal Title: Schedule a public hearing on August 5, 2025, to consider a proposed resolution to delist the Redman-Hirahara House from the County's Historic Inventory, and take related actions

Recommended Actions

1. Schedule a public hearing for Tuesday, August 5, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. or thereafter, to review the proposed delisting of the Redman-Hirahara House per Santa Cruz County Code (SCCC) Section 16.42.060(B);
2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to publish a notice of the date and time for the scheduled hearing in the newspaper at least 10 days prior to the hearing date, as required by SCCC Chapter 18.10; and
3. Direct Community Development and Infrastructure staff to mail notice of the date and time for the scheduled hearing to those required by SCCC 18.10.118.

Executive Summary

Since 2004, the Redman-Hirahara House has been designated a National Register – 1 (NR-1) structure and consequently placed on the National Register of Historic Places. However, no maintenance has occurred on the home since the last inhabitant of the house departed in 1986. The house has deteriorated to such an extent that restoration is not feasible due as a result of the decades of deferred maintenance, extended vacancy, vandalism and loss of its historic setting due to the closely adjacent commercial developments on Beach Street.

The Historic Resources Commission directed staff to submit a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to delist the Redman-Hirahara House from the County's Historic Resources Inventory and ultimately to delist from the National Register of Historic Places.

Discussion

The Redman-Hirahara House, located at 320 Lee Road outside of the City of Watsonville, is a two-story Queen Anne Style home built in 1897 by architect William Weeks for the Redman family. Mr. Weeks was a prominent architect and prolific in building large and expensive, stately homes in the Watsonville area, some of which still stand in the City of Watsonville. In 1937, the house was sold by the Redman's to Mr. Tao. It was later sold to the Hirahara family in 1940, who resided there until 1986. The Redman-Hirahara House is currently vacant and prominently visible on the west side of Highway 1. In 2004, the building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the Redman Foundation as an NR-1 property, which nullified the County's 1986 DPR Form 523 that classified this home as NR-4 (a lower level of historic significance). The

main purpose of the Redman Foundation's work was to place the home on the National Register for Historic Places and so to attract community attention to fund the restoration of the house. Restoration did not occur due to limited funding. There have been numerous attempts to generate interest in the restoration for the past 30 years without success.

Because of its significant deteriorated condition and safety hazard, combined with the lack of commitment to restore the building, the Historic Resources Commission determined that it would be best to delist the building using the protocols prescribed in SCCC Section 16.42.060(B), with possible future demolition. Delisting is a required prerequisite to demolition of this structure.

Financial Impact

There is no direct financial impact associated with the delisting of this structure.

Strategic Initiatives

N/A

Submitted By:

Matt Machado, Deputy CAO / Director of Community Development and Infrastructure

Recommended By:

Carlos J. Palacios, County Executive Officer

Artificial Intelligence Acknowledgment:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) did not significantly contribute to the development of this agenda item.