



County of Santa Barbara, California

HISTORIC LANDMARK AND PLACE OF HISTORIC MERIT INFORMATION SHEET

DEFINITIONS:

An Historic Landmark or a Place of Historic Merit, is any place, site, building, structure, or object having historical, aesthetic or other special character or interest and designated as an Historic Landmark or Place of Historic Merit under the provisions of County Code Chapter 18A.

ELIGIBILITY:

The Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission (HLAC) when considering a proposal to designate any place, site, building, structure, or object as an Historic Landmark or Place of Historic Merit, and the Board of Supervisors when considering a recommendation to designate an Historic Landmark, shall use criteria A – I, below. The HLAC may also consider a unique feature of special historic, aesthetic or cultural value when designating a Place of Historic Merit. Nominated buildings, etc., must retain their historic integrity despite changes to their design or materials, and are usually at least 50 years old.

- A) It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the County's cultural, social, economic, political, archaeological, aesthetic, engineering, architectural or natural history;
- B) It is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history;
- 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;
- D) It is representative of the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect;
- E) It contributes to the significance of a historic area, being a geographically definable area possessing a concentration of historic, prehistoric, archaeological, or scenic properties, or thematically related grouping of properties, which contribute to each other and are unified aesthetically by plan or physical development;
- F) It has a location with unique physical characteristics or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the County of Santa Barbara;
- G) It embodies elements of architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represent a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation;
- H) It reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, particularly transportation modes or distinctive examples of park or community planning;
- I) It is one of the few remaining examples in the County, region, state, or nation possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type or specimen.

PROCEDURE:

1. A proposal for designation as an Historic Landmark or Place of Historic Merit begins with an investigation by the HLAC or the submittal of a completed nomination form by the property's owner, an agent of the property owner, an interested person or the HLAC. Completed nomination forms are submitted to the HLAC through the Santa Barbara County Planning and Development Department. Nominations are peer-reviewed by the Chair of the HLAC or his / her designee.
2. Once the Chair deems a nomination complete, review and consideration of the designation is placed on the agenda of the HLAC. The owner and the applicant, if different from the owner, are notified of the public hearing at which the designation is considered by the HLAC.

3. The public hearing is held by the HLAC and oral and written comments are considered. The Commission determines whether a property meets the necessary criteria for designation as an Historic Landmark or a Place of Historic Merit. The HLAC may decide not to designate a property or continue consideration of the item to a future agenda. If the necessary requirements have been met, final action of the HLAC may be taken at this hearing.
4. Designation of a property as an Historic Landmark or a Place of Historic Merit requires the adoption of a resolution, and in the case of an Historic Landmark, special conditions may be adopted. Finalizing these details often involves subsequent hearings.
5. If the HLAC designates a property as an Historic Landmark that designation lapses after ninety days if the Board of Supervisors (BOS) has not confirmed the designation. Designation as a Place of Historic Merit is not temporary and BOS confirmation is not required.

BENEFITS:

Designated County Historic Landmarks are eligible for a variety of benefits under federal, state, and local programs:

- A) California law (the State Historical Building Code) may enable local building officials to permit alternatives to, or exemptions from, strict compliance with regular building code requirements in order to facilitate preservation of Historic Landmarks and Places of Historic Merit. The law also provides for use of equivalent methods to address accessibility requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- B) Under California law, historic properties may be assessed on a "present use" basis rather than the usual "highest and best use" basis for property taxes, under certain conditions. They may also be eligible for rehabilitation loan financing.
- C) Historic Landmarks are afforded protection through the County planning process. When a governmental agency or private entity prepares plans for an area which includes or is adjacent to an Historic Landmark, it is expected to take this into consideration, and to orient its studies and decisions accordingly.
- D) Under the County's Code Chapter 18A, an Historic Landmark is protected from demolition.

Designated County Historic Landmarks may be eligible for certain types of tax benefits and for grants and loans if they are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places or are eligible for such a listing.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND RESTRICTIONS:

- A) Demolition, relocation, removal, or destruction, partially or entirely of Historic Landmarks, may be prohibited except when prior written consent is obtained from the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission.
- B) Alterations, repairs, additions, or changes, other than normal maintenance and repair work of Historic Landmarks shall not be made unless and until all plans have been reviewed and approved or modified by the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission and reasonable conditions imposed as deemed necessary. All such work shall be done under the direction and control of the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission. Decisions of the County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission may be appealed to the County Board of Supervisors.
- C) Although Places of Historic Merit may not be subject to the same conditions and restrictions as Historic Landmarks, proposals for their demolition or alteration may be subject to County review due to potential impacts to historical resources.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

There are no restrictions on the sale of Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks. Designation as an Historic Landmark does not establish a requirement that the place, site, building, structure, or object be open to the public.

The Santa Barbara County website has further information about Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks and Places of Historic Merit, including complete lists, nomination forms, and instructions available at <http://sbcountyplanning.org/boards/hlac/index.cfm>. Forms may be downloaded and completed for submittal to the Planning and Development Department at 123 E. Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101 -2058. The Secretary of the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission may be reached at (805) 568-2000.