CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION COMMITTEE CITY OF PALM DESERT MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, April 23, 2025 9:00 a.m. Administrative Conference Room, City Hall 73-510 Fred Waring Drive Palm Desert, CA 92260

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 2449, this meeting will be conducted as a hybrid meeting and there will be in-person access to this location.

- To participate via Zoom, use the following link: <u>https://palmdesert.zoom.us/j/82890728644</u> or call (213) 338-8477, Zoom Meeting ID: 828 9072 8644
- Written public comment may also be submitted to <u>cityclerk@palmdesert.gov</u>. E-mails received by 5:00 p.m. the day prior to the meeting will be distributed to the Committee. Any correspondence received during or after the meeting will be distributed to the Committee as soon as practicable and retained for the official record. Emails will not be read aloud except as an ADA accommodation.

Pages

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENTS

This time has been set aside for the public to address the Cultural Resources Preservation Committee on issues that are not on the agenda for up to three minutes. Because the Brown Act does not allow the Committee to act on items not listed on the agenda, members may briefly respond or refer the matter to staff for a report and recommendation at a future meeting.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

All matters listed on the Consent Calendar are considered routine and may be approved by one motion. The public may comment on any items on the Consent Agenda within the three-minute time limit. Individual items may be removed by the Cultural Resources Preservation Committee for a separate discussion.

RECOMMENDATION:

To approve the consent calendar as presented.

4.a APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the Minutes of March 26, 2025.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

None.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

6.a CONSIDERATION OF A RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL TO DESIGNATE AN EXISTING SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE AT 73411 WILLOW STREET AS A HISTORIC LANDMARK

RECOMMENDATION:

Make findings and recommend the City of Palm Desert City Council adopt a resolution to designate the existing single-family house at 73411 Willow Street (Assessor's Parcel Number 630-082-007) as a historic landmark based off Criteria C and F from Palm Desert Municipal Code 29.40.010 (Case number: CRPC25-0001)

7. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

7.a CITY COUNCIL LIAISON

The liaison provides updates to facilitate communication between the City Council and the Committee. This is an informational item with no formal action.

7.b CITY STAFF

City staff will provide updates on relevant projects, activities, and other matters within the Committee's scope. These are informational items with no formal action.

7.b.1 UPDATES TO CRPC MEETING SCHEDULE

Memorandum provided; no action taken on this item.

7.b.2 ATTENDANCE REPORT

8. REQUESTS FOR ACTION

Committee Members may propose future agenda items within the Committee's scope. Items that receive support from at least one other member may be placed on a future agenda for discussion and possible action. No formal action will be taken at this time.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The next Regular Meeting will be held on June 25, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

9

5

Cultural Resources Preservation Committee Meeting April 23, 2025

10. PUBLIC NOTICES

Agenda Related Materials: Pursuant to Government Code §54957.5(b)(2) the designated office for inspection of records in connection with this meeting is the Office of the City Clerk, Palm Desert Civic Center, 73-510 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert. Staff reports for all agenda items considered in open session, and documents provided to a majority of the legislative bodies are available for public inspection at City Hall and on the City's website at <u>www.palmdesert.gov</u>.

Americans with Disabilities Act: It is the intention of the City of Palm Desert to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in all respects. If, as an attendee or a participant at this meeting, or in meetings on a regular basis, you will need special assistance beyond what is normally provided, the City will attempt to accommodate you in every reasonable manner. Please contact the Office of the City Clerk, (760) 346-0611, at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to inform us of your needs and to determine if accommodation is feasible.

AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

I hereby certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing agenda for the Cultural Resources Preservation Committee was posted on the City Hall bulletin board and City website not less than 72 hours prior to the meeting.

<u>/S/ Monique M. Lomeli, CMC</u> Senior Deputy Clerk

CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION COMMITTEE CITY OF PALM DESERT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

March 26, 2025, 9:00 a.m.

Present: Committee Member Paul Clark, Committee Member Don Graybill, Committee Member Kim Housken, Committee Member Thomas Mortensen, Committee Member David Toltzmann, Vice-Chair Linda Vassalli**, Chair Rochelle McCune

Staff Present: Principal Planner Nick Melloni, Principal Planner Carlos Flores, Recording Secretary Monique Lomeli

**Left the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the Cultural Resources Preservation Committee was called to order by Chair McCune on Wednesday, March 26, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in the Administrative Conference Room, City Hall, located at 73-510 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, California.

2. ROLL CALL

3. NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion by: Committee Member Vassalli Seconded by: Committee Member Toltzmann

To approve the consent calendar as presented.

Motion Carried (7 to 0)

4.a APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by: Committee Member Vassalli Seconded by: Committee Member Toltzmann

Approve the Minutes of February 26, 2025.

Motion Carried (7 to 0)

Cultural Resources Preservation Committee Regular Meeting Minutes March 26, 2025

5. ACTION CALENDAR

5.a CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATION FOR CITY COUNCIL TO APPROVE THE HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT AND CERTIFY THE CITYWIDE HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY

Mary Ringhoff, Architectural Resource Group Consultant, narrated a PowerPoint presentation.

Luke Leuschner, Architectural Resource Group Consultant, narrated a PowerPoint presentation and responded to Committee Member inquiries.

Motion by: Chair McCune Seconded by: Committee Member Clark

Recommend the City Council accept the Historic Context Statement and certify the City-wide Historic Resource Survey pursuant to edits, clarifications, and final review by staff.

Motion Carried (6 to 0)

5.b CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION COMMITTEE WORK PLAN PRIORITY RANKING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026

Principal Planner Flores provided a staff report and responded to Committee Member inquiries.

Motion by: Chair McCune Seconded by: Committee Member Mortensen

Recommend the City Council approve the Cultural Resources Preservation Committee (CRPC) Work Plan for the 2025/2026 Fiscal Year, as amended to include the development of a public outreach plan to publicize website updates under the "Education" priority.

Motion Carried (6 to 0)

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

7. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS & COMMENTS

7.a CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

In response to Committee Member inquiries, Recording Secretary Lomeli provided information regarding the board, commission, and committee application process.

7.b CITY COUNCIL LIAISON

City Council Liaison Trubee expressed appreciation to staff and the committee.

Cultural Resources Preservation Committee Regular Meeting Minutes March 26, 2025

7.c CITY STAFF

Principal Planner Flores provided information regarding an upcoming City Council Study Session to review objective design standards for the hillside area.

7.d ATTENDANCE REPORT

Report provided; no action taken on this item.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The Cultural Resources Preservation Committee adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

9. PUBLIC NOTICES

Monique Lomeli, CMC, Senior Deputy Clerk Recording Secretary

Carlos Flores, Principal Planner

Secretary

DATE APPROVED BY CRPC:

CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION COMMITTEE CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: April 23, 2025

PREPARED BY: Carlos Flores, AICP, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF A RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL TO DESIGNATE AN EXISTING SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE AT 73411 WILLOW STREET AS A HISTORIC LANDMARK

RECOMMENDATION:

Make findings and recommend the City of Palm Desert City Council adopt a resolution to designate the existing single-family house at 73411 Willow Street (Assessor's Parcel Number 630-082-007) as a historic landmark based off Criteria C and F from Palm Desert Municipal Code 29.40.010 (Case number: CRPC25-0001)

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

The proposal is a request by Todd Blake Verwers, AIA (Owner/Applicant) to designate an existing single-family house located at 73411 Willow Street (Property) as a historic landmark, pursuant to Palm Desert Municipal Code (PDMC) Section 29.40.010. Per PDMC Chapter 29.40 Landmarks, the Cultural Resources Preservation Committee (CRPC) shall review a proposed designation at a public hearing and make a recommendation of approval or denial of a landmark designation based on findings in PDMC 29.40.010. The Applicant submitted a Project Application (Attachment 1) that provides a detailed analysis of the Property background, architectural description, alterations, and statement of significance.

Property Description/Context

The Property is a 0.35-acre property on Willow Street, a public street. The Property is improved and complete with a one-story, 4 bed/4 bath (including two (2) casitas), 2,799 square foot singlefamily house (House) that is estimated to have been constructed in 1958 The Property is surrounded by existing single-family homes. The City's Historic Resources Reconnaissance Survey identifies several homes on Willow Street designed and constructed by Patten & Wild as potentially historically significant based off age and architectural style

(continued on next page)



Site Plan

The House is built with an "L"-shape design, as shown in Exhibit 2 below. Nearly all living spaces have access to the rear yard and the House provides integration of indoor and outdoor spaces.

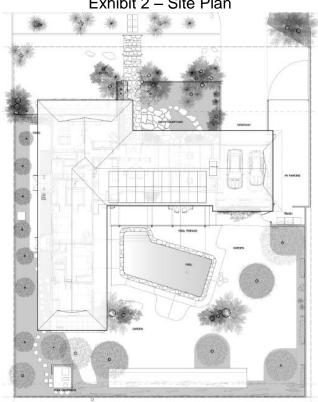


Exhibit 2 – Site Plan

Architectural Description

The House is designed in the modern/mid-century ranch style. It was designed by "Patten & Wild", a Palm Desert based design-build firm that constructed numerous homes and commercial buildings in the 1950's. Page 22 of the Application provides a biography of "Patten & Wild", including an overview of their influence in Palm Desert. The Application includes images of an original 1958 brochure marketing the unique aesthetic of the House, including Asian-inspired décor, furniture, and furnishings, most of which have since disappeared with exception to the entry door hardware detail and cabinet door pulls. The House includes components typical of the modern/mid-century ranch style including a hipped, low-sloped roof, deep eaves, and wood sidings. Page 8 of the Application provides character-defining features of the exterior and interior in support of the Application including the roof, deep roof eaves, and window shutters.

Exhibit 3 – View of Home from Willow Street



The Project has a great sense of entry, highlighted by the entry courtyard and original stone steps at the entry, shown in Exhibit 4.



Exhibit 4 – Original Entry Stone Steps

Landscaping

The Home includes "lush landscaping", per the Application, which includes twenty-one (21) palm trees, fourteen (14) fruit trees, several of which are original palms and fruit trees, and a variety of grass and shrubs in both the front and rear yard. Exhibit 5 provides an aerial view highlighting the trees and overall landscaping.



Exhibit 5 -North Elevation

Figure 3 - NORTH ELEVATION (aerial view)

ANALYSIS

Pursuant to PDMC Title 29, a landmark means any cultural resource representative of the historical, archaeological, cultural, architectural, community aesthetic or artistic heritage of the City. The CRPC must make findings that the structure retains integrity, meaning the structure contains most of the aspects that closely relate to the resource's significance, including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and is eligible based on at least one (1) of the following criteria established under PDMC Section 29.40.010:

- A. Is associated with an event or events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history; or
- B. Is associated with the lives of persons significant in the past; or
- C. Embodies distinctive characteristics, or is one of the few remaining examples of a style, type, period or method of construction or possesses high artistic value; or
- D. Represents the work of a master builder, designer or architect; or
- E. Is an archaeological, paleontological, botanical, geological, topographical, ecological, or geographical resource that has yielded or has the potential to yield important information in history or prehistory; or
- F. Reflects distinctive examples of community planning or significant development patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, agriculture, or transportation.

The Applicant has provided justification for approval of the landmark designation based off Criteria C and F, for CRPC consideration. Staff is recommending approval of the proposed designation based off Criteria C and F. A summary of analysis is listed below:

Criteria C:

Applicant response: The House "is a distinctive example of a unique, custom home in the desert ranch style, and an unique house from the portfolio of Patten & Wild's early projects in Palm Desert. Further, as mentioned above, this home exhibits features which foreshadowed the Desert Modern movement of the decade after its erection, and in this respect this residence was a transitional project for both Patten & Wild and the evolving architectural aesthetic of Palm Desert. While the Asian-inspired detailing and furnishings are arguably largely superficial, even "gimmicky", they reflect Californians' post-war interest in The Orient, not unlike the Polynesianthemed Tiki movement as a subculture and form-driver for midcentury Desert Modern architecture. The pagoda-like corners of the low-slung ranch style roof of the house are clearly a distinctive architectural characteristic, which can only be found on one other house in the neighborhood."

City staff concurs with the Applicant's response and to supplement this analysis, the City's Historical Resources Reconnaissance Survey identifies houses on Willow Street, including this House, as contributing to a potentially historically significant district.

Criteria F:

Applicant response: The House "epitomizes the community planning of south Palm Desert, and moreover its tradition for impressive single family architecture. The Palm Desert Corporation and Shadow Mountain Park Inc. sought out well-designed homes in their subdivisions and the excellence of the Gracious Oriental house reflects this focus. Houses of this era in this neighborhood were generally custom or semi-custom modern designs with considered landscaping and grounds, centered around poolside leisure in close proximity to the historic Shadow Mountain Club, and signaled the trendsetting nature of these neighborhoods. The Gracious Oriental house was and is all of those things."

City staff concurs with the Applicant's response and to supplement this analysis, the City's Historical Resources Reconnaissance Survey identifies houses on Willow Street, including this House, as contributing to a potentially historically significant district.

Public Input

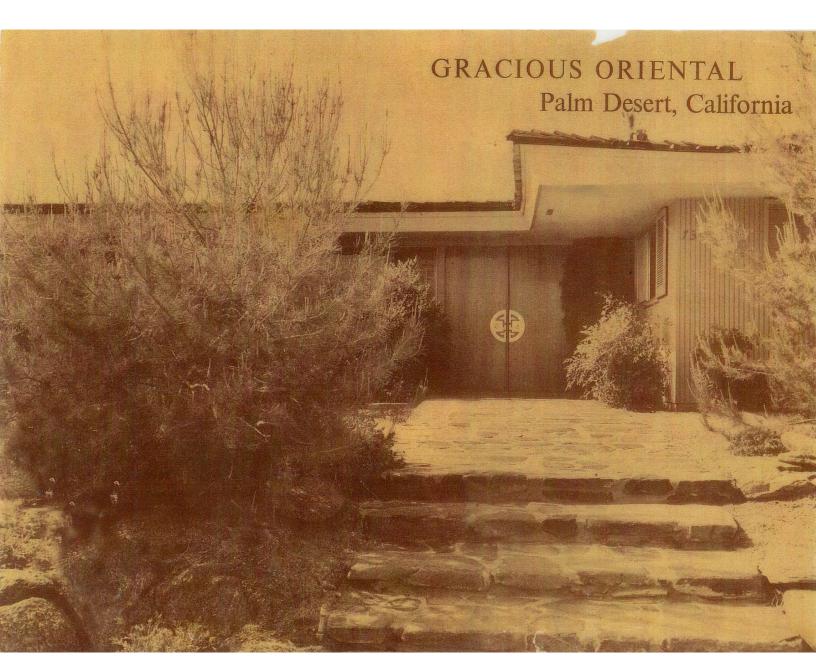
Pursuant to the requirements of PDMC Section 25.40.060, a 10-day notice of this hearing was posted in the Desert Sun on April 11, 2025 and mailed to all property owners within a five-hundred-foot radius of the subject property. At the time of preparation of this report, no comments have been received.

Environment Review:

Designation of the existing single-family residence as a local historic landmark is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15060(c)(2), the general exemption rule, of the CEQA Guidelines as the proposed project will not result in any foreseeable indirect change in the environment. The project is 15060(c)(3); the activity is not considered a project as it has no potential for resulting in any indirect or direct physical changes to the environment.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1. Project Application
- 2. Public Hearing



LANDMARK DESIGNATION APPLICATION 73411 Willow Street, Palm Desert, California

February 12, 2025



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INTRODUCTION

This is an application for the nomination of our home at 73411 Willow Street in Palm Desert, California for Landmark designation by the City of Palm Desert. My wife and I recently purchased this reasonably intact 1957 home, and hope to qualify for Mills Act status with the goal of preserving the unique architecture of the home, and to fund through property tax savings the restoration of specific insensitive alterations within the home back to original condition.

For the purpose of this application, the name "Gracious Oriental" for the house originates from the assumed original 1958 sales brochure (featured herein), and seems to capture the essence of the house, and well as its symbiotic relationship to the pool terrace and garden. The house exudes an elegance and strong connection to the landscaped grounds and surrounding mountains.

Apart from a few job cards provided by the Historical Society of Palm Desert, my research with the County of Riverside and the City of Palm Desert have not yielded any original drawing material or an original building permit. Original photographs are limited to those featured in the presumably initial sales brochure, which is included in this application.

As a licensed California architect, I have been involved in a variety of historical preservation projects in Europe and the United States, including the ongoing restoration of the William Krisel - designed Ocotillo Lodge in Palm Springs, where I currently serve on the design review committee, and a historically significant courtyard house at Cody Court in Rancho Mirage, designed by William Cody.

Tom Car

Todd Verwers AIA MAA Todd Verwers Architects Inc. Director - American Institute of Architects California Desert Chapter

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The "Gracious Oriental" house (1957) is situated at 73411 Willow Street in Palm Desert, California approximately one mile south of El Paseo Drive. The property is a one-story, 2,799 sq. ft. (building area per the public record) single-family residence with 4 bedrooms and 4 bathrooms, including two attached casitas. The house is designed in the modern/mid-century ranch style based on a unique theme, as noted below. With reference to the sales brochure featured herein, the house was sold fully-furnished by Holiday Realty Corporation, likely to the initial owner, for a listed price of \$94,500 - indeed a costly luxury home at the time.

The sales brochure is undated, but assumed to be he original marketing of the property following completion and landscaping. It has not been possible to verify this assumption.

The house was designed by local design-build firm of Patten & Wild, and construction was completed in 1958. Patten & Wild were based in Palm Desert, where they designed a number of fine homes, as well as notable homes and commercial structures in the Coachella Valley.

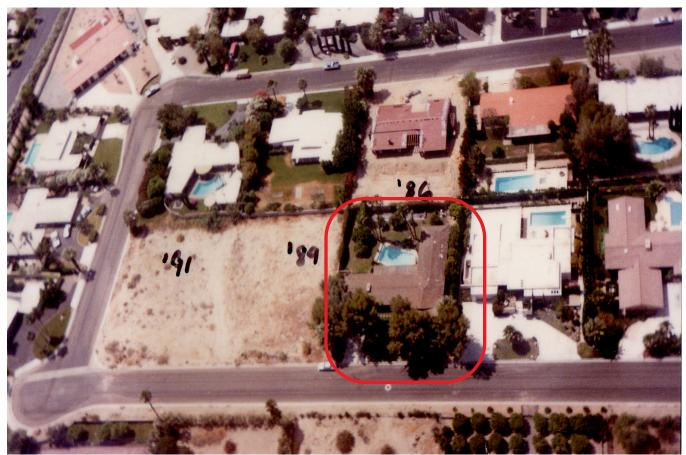


Figure 1 - Aerial view of the subject property (circa 1986)



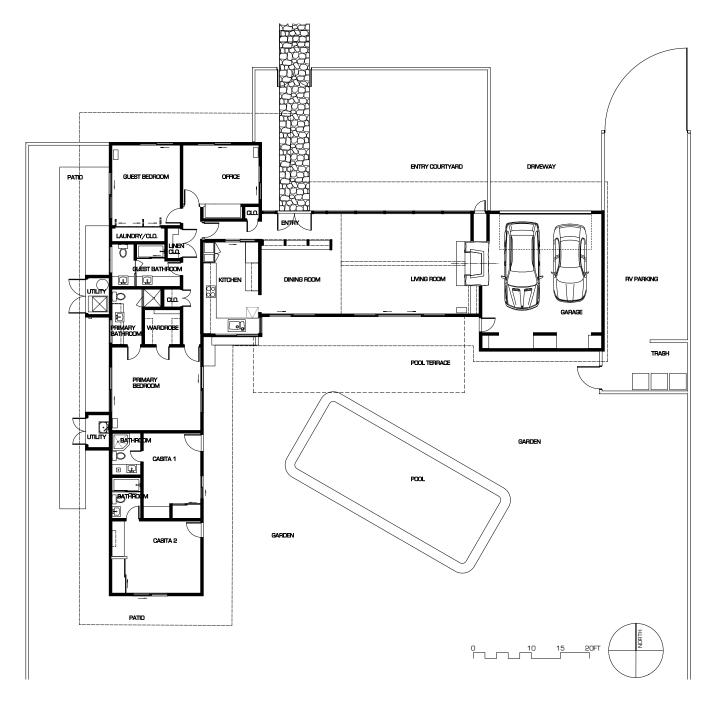
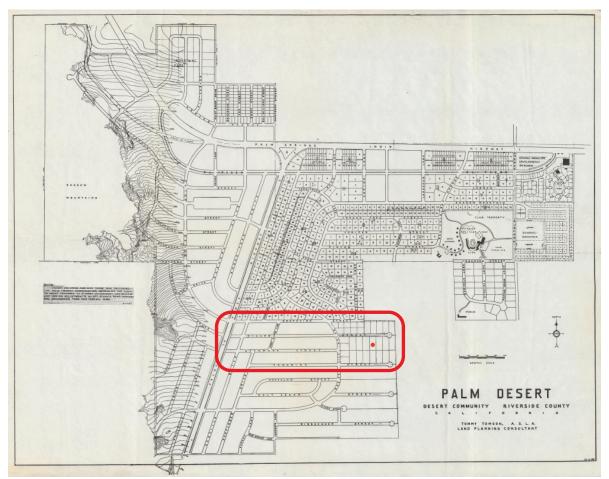


Figure 2 - Floor plan of existing conditions (courtesy of Todd Verwers Architects)

Context

The immediate neighborhood in which the property is located, south of and approximately one mile uphill from the El Paseo shopping district in Palm Desert, is characterized by a large number of architecturally significant properties on relatively large lots. Willow Street alone has several significant homes erected by Patten & Wild, of which 73411 Willow Street is the oldest. Grapevine Street, an adjacent collector street just north of and parallel with Willow Street, is the northern boundary of a series of east-west oriented streets with larger lots than those closer to El Paseo. The eastern end of Willow Street, where the subject property is located, features several large, one acre parcels directly across from the subject project, each with frontages on both Grapevine and Willow. Some of the large homes on these unique lots were designed by notable midcentury architects, including Walter White.

In short, this neighborhood along Willow Street and Grapevine Street between Highway 74 and the Marrakesh Country Club in south Palm Desert forms a key part in the city's midcentury architectural history.



Map 1- Palm Desert Community Map (1946 / pre-incorporation)



Condition

The house has been very well maintained, and has many original components, including all exterior doors and windows, interior doors, bathroom fixtures, air conditioning vents and diffusers, built-in casework, etc.

Layout

Characteristically "L"-shaped in plan, the longer wing is oriented toward the street, and the shorter bedroom wing creates an intimate and private pool terrace oriented to the south. Nearly all living spaces have direct access to the rear yard terrace and gardens, essentially integrating the indoor and outdoor spaces.

Two casitas, each with a private bathroom, are contiguous with the main house and accessed from the pool terrace. The casitas were not air-conditioned originally, reflecting their intended seasonal use as guest rooms.

The swimming pool is uniquely skewed in relation to the orthogonal geometry of the house, and surrounded by palm trees and boulders.

Architectural Aesthetic

With reference to the sales brochure below, the unique architectural aesthetic of the home features a number of asian influences, hence the original marketing of the house as "Gracious Oriental". The house was sold "turn-key", and was fully-furnished with Asian-inspired décor, furniture, China, and linens. There are specific surviving details, especially door hardware, which underscore the Asian-inspired theme and marketing of the property. While the décor of the home may have supported the "oriental" theme, these features are largely token and symbolic, and reflective of a growing post-war fascination in the United States with the Orient, and in the case of this house a unique marketing opportunity.

The house is essentially a "modern ranch" residence, with its simple L-shaped floor plan and an architectural aesthetic with quintessential ranch style elements - a hipped, low-slope roof profile, deep eaves, transparency between indoor and outdoor space with large windows, wood siding, a cathedral ceiling, and extensive use of sliding glass doors providing access to a variety of patio spaces. As original photos from the sales brochure confirm, the house originally had a shake cedar shingle roof, which further reinforced this ranch aesthetic.

California Ranch houses were well-suited to the warm climate of the desert, and evoked a



western building vernacular and lifestyle more locally rooted than earlier Spanish style influences. Smoke Tree Ranch, founded in the 1930s, epitomized this romantic notion of authentic western living.

The ranch homes architecturally bridged a transition to the more overtly modern Desert Modern aesthetic of the 1950s and 1960s, although with some historical overlap. This house exhibits certain qualities common to later midcentury desert modern architecture of the 1960s, including an expansive window wall along the street facade. In this respect the property is a hybrid - indeed a transitional project for Patten & Wild, who later built homes more aligned with the Desert Modern aesthetic.

Character-defining Features

While none of the original furnishings remain, several of the original character-defining architectural features are intact, including:

Exterior

- upturned corners of the low-slope hipped roof, common to asian pagodas
- very deep (5 feet) roof eaves on all sides of the house
- expressed horizontal building profile
- low-profile pitched roof
- window shutters (non-functional)
- a large, circular ornamental brass decorative entry door plate with an asian-influenced pattern
- verdant landscaping

Interior

- asian-inspired cabinet door pulls
- strong visual and functional connection between interior and landscaped exterior spaces
- original bathroom casework, fixtures and finishes
- original intercom, electrical devices, and lighting controls
- original wall heaters



Landscaping

A key component of the magic and experience of this property is the lushly landscaped grounds, which were also a selling point in the original marketing of the property for sale. There are currently 21 palm trees (Washingtonian and California Fan palms) as well as 14 fruit trees on the property, primarily varieties of grapefruit and orange trees. Several of these original palm and fruit trees have survived to this day.

As described in the historic sales brochure below, the original landscaping included two water features - a small waterfall on the south side of the pool, and a small waterfall adjacent to the private patio to the guest bedroom. Both features are no longer existing.



Figure 3 - NORTH ELEVATION (aerial view)





Figure 4 - NORTH ELEVATION (front yard - compiled)



Figure 5 - SOUTH ELEVATION (rear yard - compiled)



Figure 6 - EAST ELEVATION (side yard - compiled)



Figure 7 - WEST ELEVATION (side yard - compiled)



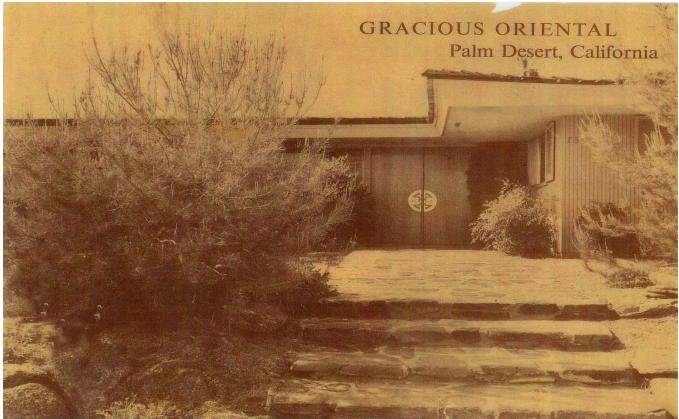


Figure 8 - 1958 Sales Brochure (cover)



Figure 9 - 1958 Sales Brochure (page 2)





PICK your own fruit from one of the various citrus trees including grapefruit and lemon, lime, etc. Each tree has it's own bubble fountain so that the care and feeding of the many plants and trees is as easy as getting a glass of water for yourself. Located in a sheltered cove assures the owner of full protection from winds and dust.

THE PRICE includes all furnishings, even linens and dishes, etc. The beds are all equipped with electric blankets and lovely spreads. China and glassware for every occasion—Silverware for everyday use and Sterling for special use. Of course a complete inventory can be supplied to any interested and qualified party. One of the bedrooms is situated apart from the main house so that it would make, in addition to excellent guest quarters, a fine unit for the buyer who has a servant and needs separate housing. The large lot is situated above the Shadow Mountain Golf Club in Palm Desert and is surrounded with the finest homes in the area. A home designed for the gay party giver or the sun lover or the person who just wants a quiet place to "get away from it all". The golfing enthusiast will be happy with a dozen fine clubs within minutes of the door. An ample amount of decorative exterior lighting has been artistically located in both front and rear garden areas. *

* The home is fully refrigerated and entirely insulated to assure year 'round comfort.

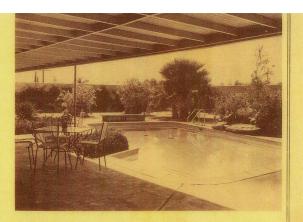
HOLIDAY REALTY CORPORATION ... Exclusive Agents 73-671 Hiway 111, Palm Desert, California P.O. Box 745... FIreside 6-6168

Listing does not provide for selling on an unfurnished basis but an offer to purchase on that basis will be submitted. Holiday Realty will be glad to cooperate with any broker.

Figure 10 - 1958 Sales Brochure (page 3)



OF COURSE, you'd expect a heated swimming pool and you will not be disappointed as this lovely desert home has not only the conventional pool but also a water fall which trickles water into a pool, which can be so restful when you are relaxing in the ever present sunshine. Extra deep overhang provides an abundance of shade so that you will not get too much sun and provides a wonderful spot for pool-side entertaining. The high concrete wall assures the privacy without loss of view. Lush landscaping and shuffleboard complete the picture of desert elegance.



THREE bedrooms have separate entrances to the pool and patio area. The fourth bedroom has its own private patio with lush plantings and waterfall. The den is easily converted to the fifth bedroom. The four bathrooms are fully tiled and all qualify as glamour baths.



Figure 11 - 1958 Sales Brochure (page 4)

Price \$94,500.00 furnished Free and Clear Taxes.

..\$800.00

73-671 Hiway 111, Palm Desert, California HOLIDAY REALTY CORPORATION P.O. Box 745 ... Flreside 6-6168 ... Exclusive Agents



ALTERATIONS

The house is reasonably intact, having only been altered superficially. There have been no additions to the house as well, although there is some evidence that the two attached casitas were added during the end of the initial construction phase, or shortly thereafter. The following is an overview of known alterations to the original 1957 design, many of which have been confirmed by photographs and descriptive text from the historic sales brochure.

Carport Enclosure (estimated completion 2000)

Like many mid-century properties in the Coachella Valley, this house originally featured an integrated carport, which was later enclosed as a garage. The rear side of the original stone fireplace is still exposed inside the garage, and the original finely-grooved wood siding, since replaced with board and batten on the street facade, is still present on the storage room walls at the rear of the garage. This long, narrow storage space formed a visual screen from the carport to the private yard and pool terrace behind the house, and had two sets of double doors, likely also clad with the same grooved siding. The doors are no longer existing.



Figure 12 - Garage (former carport)

Figure 13 - Original stone fireplace wall (former carport)

Entry & RV Courtyards (estimated completion 2000)

The original sales brochure reveals that the front approach to the house up a stone stair and pathway to the double front door was without the existing entry gate and masonry courtyard walls located at the top of the steps from the street. The stone stair and walkway to the entry of the home are intact. An intimate entry courtyard and gated parking area for recreational vehicles has been created by the previous owner, which block the aesthetic continuity of the house when viewed from the street.





Figure 14 - Existing entry courtyard

Figure 15 - Existing RV parking area

Facade Siding (estimated completion 2000)

As mentioned above, the original vertically-oriented grooved wood siding along the front of the house, and visible on the cover photograph of the sales brochure, was covered by a typical board and batten cladding. I have confirmed that the original siding is still intact under the board and batten cladding, and looks to be in restorable condition.



Figure 16 - Original house corner and wood siding

Figure 17 - Existing house corner and wood siding

East Roof Eave (estimated completion 2000)

In connection with the establishment of a recreational vehicle parking spot on the east side of the house, the original roof overhang along the east wall was cut back to the garage wall, creating an unattractive, truncated profile at this gable.





Figure 18 - Existing east facade wall after removal of roof overhang

Terrace Shade Structure *(estimated completion 1980)*

The simple and aesthetically light shade structure pictured in the original sales brochure has been replaced with a much heavier wood structure with panels of horizontal wood slats above.



Figure 19 - Original rear yard and shade structure

Figure 20 - Existing rear yard and shade structure

Pool Waterfall

The waterfall feature mentioned and pictured in the original sales brochure has been removed, although there is evidence that the boulders constituting the waterfall were moved to create the existing decorative landscape around the palm trees at each end of the pool.

Private Patio Waterfall

The small waterfall feature mentioned and pictured in the original sales brochure has been removed without trace.



Fireplace Surround (estimated completion 2020)

The original fireplace featured exposed stone cladding over masonry block, as well as a stone hearth extension, which has relatively recently been covered with drywall. The hearth extension has been clad with white floor tile to match the current ceramic til flooring throughout most of the house. A faux-wood mantel has also been added.



Figure 21 - Original living room and fireplace surround Figure 22 - Existing living room and fireplace surround

Living Room Ceiling (estimated completion 2020)

The original acoustic (popcorn) ceiling above the living room, which is the only vaulted ceiling in the house originally featured a single ridge beam. A wood board cladding over the acoustic ceiling and faux rafters have been added concurrently with the covering of the stone fireplace mentioned above.



Figure 23 - Existing living room ceiling



Kitchen Pop-out (estimated completion 2000)

While it has not been possible to locate original floor plans to confirm this alteration, I suspect that the terrace-side wall of the kitchen has been moved out toward the roof eave, creating approximately 14sf of extra kitchen space. Newer aluminum frame windows were installed from countertop to ceiling on both sides of this pop-out, further enhancing the indoor-outdoor spatial relationship.

While the original wall ovens remain, other appliances have been replaced as would be expected. An under-counter 1970s-era Nutone Food Center blender is currently installed and functional.



Figure 24 - Existing kitchen "pop'-out"

Figure 25 - Existing kitchen "pop'-out"

Interior Finishes (estimated 1960-2010)

Many rooms, including the living room, were originally carpeted. Floors in all rooms are now tiled with a mix of ceramic tile types and formats. It is assumed that the original ceilings were acoustical, textured ceilings, the last of which may be concealed under the wood ceiling boards in the living room, as noted above.

Grounds

The parcel was originally developed with an extensive lawn and several palm and fruit trees, of which several have survived to this day. The property is still very verdant, with expanses of grass in the front and rear yards. While the unique waterfall features are gone, the pool is original. Two original concrete patios remain, and the configuration of the pool terrace flatwork has changed. Very little exterior landscape lighting exists, although there are traces of earlier electrical installations for lighting at the base of original palm trees in the rear yard.





Figure 26 - Entry Courtyard



Figure 27 - Ficus hedge along rear property line with original shuffleboard court



Figure 28 - Hedge along front facade"

Figure 29 - Planter along rear garage wall



Figure 30 - Plants along side property line



Figure 31 - Original palm grouping in rear yard

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The character-defining features of this property and home, as noted above, are still reasonably intact, having only been altered superficially. As the owner of the home and a licensed California architect, I feel that the property is historically significant.

Based on the history and findings outlined by this report, the Gracious Oriental residence meets criteria **C**, **D**, and **F** for the designation as a Palm Desert landmark. The criteria and justifications are outlined as follows:

Criteria A is associated with an event or events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history.

While Gracious Oriental is associated with the general growth and settlement of south Palm Desert, it is not to my knowledge associated with an event that made a "significant" contribution to history. The house was built relatively soon after the establishment of the nearby Shadow Mountain Club, but prior to the addition of the golf course at the club, so it was a part of the early development of Palm Desert.

Criteria B is associated with the lives of persons significant in the past.

It has not been possible to ascertain whether there have been significant persons owning or residing in the house in the past. The house is associated with Patten & Wild, as noted below.

Criteria C embodies distinctive characteristics, or is one of the few remaining examples of a style, type, period or method of construction or possesses high artistic value.

Gracious Oriental is a distinctive example of a unique, custom home in the desert ranch style, and an unique house from the portfolio of Patten & Wild's early projects in Palm Desert. Further, as mentioned above, this home exhibits features which foreshadowed the Desert Modern movement¹ of the decade after its erection, and in this respect this residence was a transitional project for both Patten & Wild and the evolving architectural aesthetic of Palm Desert. While the Asian-inspired detailing and furnishings are arguably largely superficial, even "gimmicky", they reflect Californians' post-war interest in The Orient, not unlike the Polynesian-

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palm_Springs_School_of_Architecture

themed Tiki movement as a subculture and form-driver for midcentury Desert Modern architecture.² The pagoda-like corners of the low-slung ranch style roof of the house are clearly a distinctive architectural characteristic, which can only be found on one other house in the neighborhood.

Criteria D represents the work of a master builder, designer or architect.

The Gracious Oriental house is the design of Patten & Wild, a local designer-contractor partnership whose residential work in the 1950s and 1960s garnered and especially in south Palm Desert, where most of their notable projects are located. The Gracious Oriental house, whose Asian-inspired detailing and marketing makes it truly unique and reasonably well-preserved example of their early work within the midcentury architectural context of Palm Desert.

Criteria E is an archaeological, paleontological, botanical, geological, topographical, ecological, or geographical resource that has yielded or has the potential to yield important information in history or prehistory.

The Gracious Oriental house does not yield any important information in history or prehistory as it relates to these guidelines, but is recognized as a significant architectural resource by the Historical Society of Palm Desert.

Criteria F reflects distinctive examples of community planning or significant development patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, agriculture, or transportation.

The Gracious Oriental house epitomizes the community planning of south Palm Desert, and moreover its tradition for impressive single family architecture. The Palm Desert Corporation and Shadow Mountain Park Inc. sought out well-designed homes in their subdivisions and the excellence of the Gracious Oriental house reflects this focus. Houses of this era in this neighborhood were generally custom or semi-custom modern designs with considered landscaping and grounds, centered around poolside leisure in close proximity to the historic Shadow Mountain Club, and signaled the trendsetting nature of these neighborhoods. The Gracious Oriental house was and is all of those things.

² https://nonsite.org/asian-influences-and-the-rise-of-southern-california-modernism/

BIOGRAPHIES



Patten & Wild

Marvin "Ross" Patten (1922-1996), designer/contractor, and Albert "Duke" Wild (1924-1987), general contractor, formed a Palm Desert based design-build firm. They designed and built numerous residential homes and commercial buildings in Palm Springs and Palm Desert. Their work evolved from the modern ranch style homes in the late 1950s to the clean lines of a more more rigorous midcentury modern architecture in the 1960s.

Ross Patten was highly influential in the transformation of the city of Palm Desert and other communities. He also designed and built homes on Southridge Drive in Palm Springs, alongside other notable homes from the period. He was not formally trained as an architect, and is not believed to have apprenticed under a notable architect, so we must surmise that his design sensitivities were derived from his own studies, as well as his observations of the work of known architects in the desert region at the time, as well as the pioneering work of ranch style architect Cliff May. Born in 1922, in Los Angeles, he married Phyllis Marie Stange in 1945. They were the parents of one son. Ross died on 11 June 1996, in Palm Springs at the age of 73, and was buried in Riverside, California.¹

The partners had an office located at 73-730 Highway 111 in Palm Desert. Ross Patten was very active in the community, and was president of the Palm Desert Rotary Club, secretary of Palm Desert's Architecture Committee, and a member of the Shadow Mountain Country Club architecture and tennis committees.²

Patten & Wild's residential projects were characterized by low profile, flat, or very low-pitched roofs, vaulted wood ceilings, large glass areas, stucco, masonry or stone wall finishes, and aluminum windows and sliding glass doors. Through their typically open floor plans with an emphasis on indoor-outdoor living, their designs epitomized the midcentury architectural aesthetic in the desert.

¹ https://ancestors.familysearch.org

² Historical Society of Palm Desert informational brochure

NOTABLE WORKS



Patten & Wild

Representative chronological projects in Palm Desert:

73411 Willow Street	1957	subject property
45906 Shadow Mountain Drive	1958	
46230 Shadow Mountain Drive	1959	
46254 Shadow Mountain Drive	1958	
72707 Hedgehog	1960	
72957 Bursera Way	1961	
74855 Fairway Drive	1963	
73307 Willow Street	1965	

Other notable projects:

The Stoffel House, Palm Springs	1962
41915 Tonopah, Rancho Mirage	1970
70300 San Lorenzo Road, Pinyon Crest	1970
73730 Highway 111, Palm Desert	1975

located in the neighborhood of Southridge in collaboration with Arthur Elrod Frank Sinatra's "Villa Maggio" (partial construction) commercial office building and Patten & Wild offices



APPENDIX

City of Palm Desert Landmark Application Form Site Plan - Existing Conditions Floor Plan - Existing Conditions List of References Job Card History Exterior Photographs Interior Photographs Property Owner Letter





City of Palm Desert Department of Building and Safety 73-510 Fred Waring Dr., Palm Desert, CA 92260 (760) 776-6420 Fax (760) 776-6392

Landmark Cultural Resources Nomination Application

IDENTIFICATION

1. Common name: Patton & Wilde Oriental House 2. Historic Name: Gracious Oriental House 3. Street address: 73411 Willow Street City Palm Desert State City Palm Desert State City Palm Desert 630082007 4. Assessor Parcel number: 630082007 5. Legal Owner: Todd Blake Verwers AIA & Mette Krebs Petersen City Palm Desert State CA Zip 92260 6. Present Use: Single family residence 7. Original Use: Single family residence Pattor Blake Verwers AIA (tel. 858.866.4146 / todd@toddverwers.com) ponsoring Organization (if any): Historical Society of Palm Desert graddress: 73411 Willow Street CA Zip: 92260	DENTIFICATION				
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	ate property size (in feet): Street Frontage Depth
	Mid-century Ranch / Modern Ranch
10. Construction	Date: Estimated 1957-1958 Factual 1957
Source of Informa	ation: 🗹 Assessor's Records 🛛 Building Permit 🔲 Sanborn Map
	Publications Oral Interviews
11. Architect's Na	ame: Patten & Wilde Inc Builder's Name:
12. Condition:	Excellent 🗹 Good 🗖 Fair 🛛 Deteriorated
	□ No longer in existence (for site of)
13. Alterations: ^c	See attached Landmark Designation Application
14. Use type:	
(F 7)	□ Industrial □ Commercial □Civic □ Other
Residential	□ Industrial □ Commercial □Civic □ Other re on its original site?
 ☑ Residential 15. Is the structure ☑ Yes □ No 	re on its original site? □ Unknown If moved, approximate year
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SIGNIFICANCE See attached Landmark Designation Application

18. Statement of Significance

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION See attached Landmark Designation Application

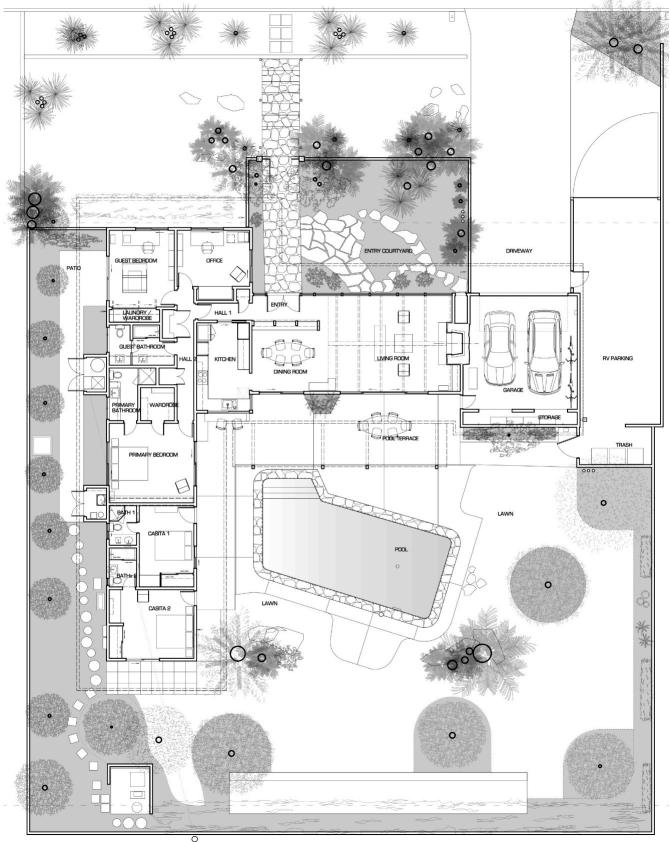
- 19. References used
- 20. Photographs
- 21. Letter from property owner

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SITE PLAN – EXISTING CONDITIONS



FLOOR PLAN - EXISTING CONDITIONS





LIST OF SOURCES / REFERENCES

Palm Desert: An Architectural Tour into Modernism *Jim West / 2016*

Patten & Wild Designer Profile Series - Historical Society of Palm Desert / 2020

Ms. Rochelle McCune Historian, Historical Society of Palm Desert

City of Palm Desert Department of Building & Safety

County of Riverside Department of Building & Safety



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EXTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS



1957 Aerial view looking south



Entry courtyard)





Entry courtyard



Original stone steps at entry approach





Entry courtyard looking west



Original asian-inspired solid brass door hardware detail





Rear yard garden looking north



Rear yard garden looking north through living room





Rear yard garden looking west toward attached casitas



Rear yard building corner detail





Rear yard facade looking south



Rear yard view under sun shade structure





Rear yard view under sun shade structure looking east



Rear yard kitchen window detail





East facade wall at RV parking area



Detail of original wood siding at rear of original carport





West facade wall



Citrus trees along west property line



INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS



View of dining room toward living room



View of living room toward rear yard





View of dining room toward entry



View of entry hallway





Original asian-inspired door pulls in living room



View of kitchen toward rear yard





View of kitchen toward rear yard



Built-in Nutone Food Center in kitchen





View of guest bathroom



View of guest bathroom



View of primary bathroom





Original bathroom sink and stainless steel faucets



View of primary bedroom





Original intercom station



Original master lighting control panel





Original ceiling air diffuser



Original wall heater

Original wall heater



OWNER LETTER

1/1

December 15, 2024

City of Palm Desert Department of Building and Safety 73-510 Fred Waring Dr., Palm Desert, CA 92260

Re: Owner Letter - Landmark Application 73411 Willow Street Palm Desert, CA 92260

Dear city historical planner,

As the joint owners of the property noted above, we fully support the submittal of this Landmark Designation Application to the City of Palm Desert, and concur that the property may be listed as a historic landmark.

Best regards,

-

Todd Verwers AIA MAA

Note by 12

Mette Krebs Petersen

TODD VERWERS ARCHITECTS

73411 WILLOW STREET PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA 92260 858.866.4146 info@toddverwers.com www.toddverwers.com



CITY OF PALM

73-510 Fred Waring Drive Palm Desert, California 92260-2578 Tel: 760-776-6483 Planning@palmdesert.gov

CITY OF PALM DESERT PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE CASE NO. CRPC25-0001

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE HELD BEFORE THE CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA, TO CONSIDER A RECOMMENDATION TO THE PALM DESERT CITY COUNCIL FOR THE DESIGNATION OF 73411 WILLOW STREET AS A HISTORIC LANDMARK

The City of Palm Desert (City), in its capacity as the Lead Agency for this project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has determined that the proposed historic landmark district designation is not subject to CEQA pursuant to Guidelines Section 15060(C)(2) and 15060(C)(3) as the project will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment and is not a Project as defined by Section 15378.

PROJECT LOCATION: 73411 Willow Street (APN: 630-082-007)

<u>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</u>: The project is a request to designate 73411 Willow Street ("The Patton & Wilde Oriental House"), as a historic landmark. The Cultural Resources Preservation Committee will make a recommendation to the Palm Desert City Council.

PUBLIC HEARING: NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Cultural Resources Preservation Committee of the City of Palm Desert, California, will hold a Public Hearing at its meeting on April 23, 2025. The Cultural Resources Preservation Committee meeting begins at 9:00 a.m. in the Administrative Conference Room at 73510 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, California. Pursuant to Assembly Bill 2449, this meeting may be conducted as a hybrid meeting allowing public access via teleconference or in person. Options for remote participation will be listed on the Posted Agenda for the meeting at https://www.palmdesert.gov/departments/city-manager-s-office/city-clerk/committee-calendar.

PUBLIC REVIEW: The plans and related documents are available for public review Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. by contacting the project planner, Carlos Flores. Please submit written comments to the Planning division. If any group challenges the action in court, issues raised may be limited to only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice or in written correspondence at or prior to the Cultural Resources Preservation Committee hearing. All comments and any questions should be directed to:

Carlos Flores, Principal Planner City of Palm Desert 73-510 Fred Waring Drive Palm Desert, CA 92260 (760) 776-6478 cflores@palmdesert.gov

PUBLISH: THE DESERT SUN APRIL 11, 2025 RICHARD D. CANNONE, AICP, SECRETARY CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION COMMITTEE



CITY OF PALM DESERT

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

MEMORANDUM

From: Anthony J. Mejia, City Clerk
To: Cultural Resources Preservation Committee
Date: March 21, 2025
Subject: Updates to Cultural Resources Preservation Committee Meeting Schedule

The City Council recently adopted updates to the Palm Desert Municipal Code affecting all boards, commissions, committees, and task forces, including the Cultural Resources Preservation Committee (CRPC). These changes were made to ensure that appointed bodies remain aligned with City priorities, operate efficiently, and serve their intended purpose effectively. If you have any questions or need further clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Anthony J. Mejia, City Clerk amejia@palmdesert.gov Office: 760-776-6304

Changes to Meeting Schedule

Previously, the CRPC met monthly. Under the new ordinance, CRPC will now meet every other month. This change was implemented to ensure that meetings occur when necessary while maintaining transparency and community engagement.

Calling a Special Meeting

The City's standard practice is to provide approximately one week's advance notice for meetings to ensure members have sufficient time to plan for their participation and to provide the public with adequate notice. A special meeting may be called in one of two ways:

- 1. **By the Chairperson** The chairperson may request a special meeting by contacting the staff liaison.
- 2. By a Majority of Appointed Members A majority of the committee may request a special meeting, but members must do so individually and without discussing or coordinating their requests with each other.

To ensure compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act, members may not discuss amongst themselves whether to call a special meeting. Additionally, members may not ask staff to poll other members or relay messages regarding their interest in holding a meeting.

Process for Requesting a Special Meeting:

- Members who believe a special meeting is needed must submit their request individually to the staff liaison.
- The staff liaison will not act on a request from a single member but will track requests.
- If requests from a majority of appointed members are received, the staff liaison will notify the chairperson and proceed with scheduling.
- The agenda will be set by the staff liaison in consultation with the chairperson and will be strictly limited to the topics requested.

Important Note: Special meetings will only be held when there is a clear and appropriate purpose that aligns with CRPC's established mission and responsibilities. Requests for meetings that fall outside the committee's scope will not be accommodated. Meetings should occur only when City business warrants committee input—not for personal projects, advocacy, or general discussions.

Cultural Resource Preservation Committee

Year	2025	2025	2025	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	Total A	osences
Month	Mar	Feb	Jan	Dec	Nov	Oct	Sep	Aug	Jul	Jun	May	Apr		
Day	26	26	22	25	27	23	25	28	24	26	22	24	Unexcused	Excused
Clark, Paul	Р	Р	-	-	-	Р	Е	Р	-	Р	-	-	0	1
Graybill, Don	Р	Е	-	-	-	Р	А	Р	-	Р	-	-	1	1
Housken, Kim	Р	Е	-	-	-	Р	Р	Е	-	Р	-	-	0	2
McCune, Rochelle	Р	Р	-	-	-	Р	Р	Р	-	Р	-	-	0	0
Mortensen, Thomas	Р	Р	-	-	-	А	Р	Р	-	Р	-	-	1	0
Toltzmann, David	Р	Р	-	-	-	Р	Р	Р	-	Р	-	-	0	0
Vassalli, Linda	Р	Р	-	-	-	А	Р	Р	-	Р	-	-	1	0

Palm Desert Municipal Code 2.34.010

Monthly: Three unexcused absences from regular meeting in any twelve-month period shall constitute an automatic resignation of members holding office on boards that meet bimonthly.

Please contact the Recording Secretary to discuss any attendance concerns.

- P Present
- P Remote
- A Absent
- E Excused
- No Meeting

