

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM DESERT DESIGNATING THE SANDPIPER CIRCLE 4 CONDOMINIUMS, LOCATED SOUTH OF EL PASEO DRIVE, AS A HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT PURSUANT TO CRITERIA A AND E IN PALM DESERT MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 29.50.010 (ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBERS 640-230-002 THROUGH 640-230-027)
CASE NOS. CRPC24-0005

WHEREAS, Chapter 29.50.090 of the Palm Desert Municipal Code (PDMC) allows for the designation of historic districts by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, on Kerry Stern ("Applicant"), on behalf of the Sandpiper residential development ("Owner"), filed an application, including a statement of significance, with the City pursuant to the requirements of Title 29 of the PDMC to designate "Sandpiper Circle 4 Condominiums" located south of El Paseo Drive (Assessor's Parcel Number 640-230-002 THROUGH 640-230-027) ("Property") as a local historic district; and

WHEREAS, the historic landmark designation request 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 and Section 15060(c)(3) the activity is not considered as a project as it has no potential for resulting in any indirect or direct physical changes to the environment; and

WHEREAS, on February 26, 2025, a noticed public hearing of the Palm Desert Cultural Resource Preservation Committee (CRPC) was held to consider the Historic Designation under case CRPC24-0005 and recommended the City Council adopt a resolution designating Sandpiper Circle 4 as a historic district based off Palm Desert Municipal Code 29.50.010 Criteria A and E; and

WHEREAS, on April 24, 2025, a noticed public hearing of the Palm Desert City Council was held to consider the Historic Designation under case CRPC24-0005; and

WHEREAS, the City Council reviewed the application materials and considered all public testimony and comments provided prior to and during the meeting, and made the following findings pursuant to PDMC Section 29.50.010:

1. Criteria A: Sandpiper Circle 4 exemplifies excellent examples of Mid-Century Modern aesthetics, engineering and architecture.

The project exemplifies special elements of culture, social, economic, aesthetic, and architecture, as outlined in the Application. Circle 4 represents an excellent intact example of American Modernist architecture. Sandpiper Condominium Circle 4, completed in 1960 by the Los Angeles-based architectural firm of Palmer & Krisel, exhibits numerous stylistic markers that place them directly in the historic context of Palm Desert's Modern Period. Circle 4 has horizontal lines, flat roofs, expansive amounts of glass, clerestory windows, and other characterizing features of mid-

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century modern architecture that is consistent with the rest of the Complex. The Circle layout, complete with a centralized pool and a “pin-wheel” green belt configuration is a critical theme of Circle 4 and the rest of the Complex, which is a concept derived from 19th century British planner Ebenezer Howard.

As noted, 11 other Circles within Sandpiper have previously been approved as historic districts based off Criteria A, and Circle #4 has all of the same architectural and design components as those previously approved.

2. Criteria E: The concept of a condominium, where the ownership of a building or property is a shared entity is a relatively modern phenomenon, although communal living is not. The first “condominium” was built in the United States in 1960 in Salt Lake City, Utah. The concept grew in popularity and by the end of the decade condominiums were present in all 50 states.

The site planning at Sandpiper is a pin-wheel configuration around a central hub (in this case the pool) and its greenbelt concept draws from 19th century British planner Ebenezer Howard’s Garden City. Howard’s concept envisioned a world where the best of city and rural life is combined to create a utopian environment. He espoused the need for green belts, in an effort to reduce congestion and to create a healthy environment in which to live. Palmer & Krisel expands this idea by creating an environment free from cars, a popular symbol of urban distress. Their site planning re-examines not only urban but suburban living. Palmer & Krisel deftly sited all vehicular roads and carports on the perimeter of each circle. Their buildings turn their “fronts” away from the street. The “front porch” no longer faces the street but is moved to look onto the green belt. In this, the pool becomes the “new street scape”: the new social gathering place for the complex.

Beginning in 1956 with their first Palm Springs tract, Twin Palms, Krisel, the firm's lead designer for desert houses, and Alexander Homes, the home developer used variation of orientation and roofline, integration of indoor and outdoor living, and careful use of standardized elements to make modernist design affordable enabling an affordable 2nd home for the escape from the city. This popularized this post-and-beam architectural style in the Coachella Valley. Alexander houses and similar homes feature low-pitched roofs, wide eaves, open-beamed ceilings, and floor-to-ceiling windows. The houses facilitated indoor-outdoor living in the desert with sheltered patios and pools and in some cases breezeways clerestory windows improved air circulation while bringing light into the house. The interior designs included flexible room dividers to adapt the floor plan to the owners' preferences.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Palm Desert, California, as follows:

SECTION 1. Recitals. The City Council hereby finds that the foregoing recitals are true and correct and are incorporated herein as substantive findings of this Resolution.

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SECTION 2. That Section 29.50.090 of the PDMC requires that the City Council adopt a resolution designating a historic district based upon facts and findings on the criteria outlined in Chapter 29.50 Historic District.

SECTION 3. Based upon the foregoing findings and facts incorporated herein, the Property, located at Sandpiper Circle 4, is hereby designated as a local historic district.

ADOPTED ON _____.

JAN C. HARNIK
MAYOR

ATTEST:

ANTHONY J. MEJIA
CITY CLERK

I, Anthony J. Mejia, City Clerk of the City of Palm Desert, hereby certify that Resolution No. 2025-__ is a full, true, and correct copy, and was duly adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Palm Desert on _____, by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:
RECUSED:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of the City of Palm Desert, California, on _____, 2025.

ANTHONY J. MEJIA
CITY CLERK