



## Agenda Report

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**File #:** 19-0754

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### **PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

**DATE:** 8/26/2019

**TO:** Honorable Chair and Commissioners

**FROM:** Community Development Department

#### **APPLICATION REQUEST:**

**HRLM2019-0002:** Application to nominate a Victorian Hipped Roof Cottage residence built in 1900 located at 506 E. Seventh Street in the Single Family District of the Downtown Corona Revitalization Specific Plan (SP98-01) as a landmark on the Corona Register of Historic Resource. (Applicant: Robert and Angela Montanez).

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

That the Planning and Housing Commission recommend APPROVAL of HRLM2019-0002 to the City Council based on the satisfaction of the listing criteria contained in the staff report.

#### **PROJECT SUMMARY**

HRLM2019-0002 is an application from property owners Robert and Angela Montanez to nominate their home at 506 E. Seventh Street to be listed as a Historic Landmark-049 (HL-049) on the Corona Register of Historic Resources. The home is a Victorian Hipped Roof Cottage built in 1900 and sits on a 5,000 square foot lot located on the south side of East Seventh Street. The property contains an 816 square foot home without a garage and two freestanding metal sheds at the rear of the property. The metal sheds are not historic buildings and the construction materials are not at parity with the main structure, and therefore, cannot be included as part of the landmark.

The home is currently listed on the Corona Heritage Inventory. Properties that are on the Corona Heritage Inventory are potential resources that may qualify as a historic landmark on the Register by virtue of age (50+ years) or by having significant cultural, historical or architectural value to the City. Heritage properties are given a ranking of high, moderate or low as to their potential. The subject home as a high ranking.

#### **BACKGROUND**

According to the materials accompanying this nomination, the subject home was originally built for Benton Lincoln Shepherd. Mr. Shepherd was one of Corona's earliest settlers, coming to Corona in June 1888 from Cathlamet, Washington. Only two years after the city was founded at the beginning

of the Southern California citrus bloom. He purchased ten acres of land in the area and planted oranges, soon to be one of the city's biggest industries. He was successful, but then sold his land to C.T. Zintz and retired in May of 1903. A news article describes Mr. Shepherd as one of the earliest grove owners in the vicinity. In addition, Mr. Shepherd served as a juror (only men were able to serve as jurors at this time) on multiple court cases in Corona and in 1902 was listed as a Judge for Corona No. 1.

The Victorian Hipped Roof Cottage home consists of a one-story hipped roof structure which retains its original footprint on the original lot and sits on a high stucco brick foundation. The hipped roof is clad with composition shingles, shiplap siding walls edged with corner boards, a four-paneled wood door with a four-lite framed window at the top, the front door is protected by a small gable roof set on triangular braces, with double-hung sash windows on each side of the front door, the east and west walls also have two double hung windows on each side; however, the east side also has a small bathroom window. Photographs of the home are attached as Exhibits B1-B14.

According to the materials accompanying this nomination, a room addition with a shed roof is attached at the rear. The ship-lap siding on the addition was applied with great craftsmanship and matches up well with the original structure. The addition contains double-hung sash windows constructed out of wood and a modern six-panel door. The date of the addition is unknown, but it was clearly built prior to 1987. Photographs of the addition are attached as Exhibits B10-B14.

If HRLM2019-0002 is approved, the owners intend to enter into a property preservation contract (Mills Act) with the city to enable them to obtain a property tax reduction through the Riverside County Assessor's Office. Participation in this program will allow the owners to reinvest the savings into maintaining and preserving the home. Per the city's Mills Act contract, *the owners shall not be permitted to block the view corridor with any new structure, such as walls, fences or shrubbery, so as to prevent the viewing of the Historic Property from the public right-of-way.* Therefore, staff would like to bring to the commissioner's attention and the applicant's attention that before the property can enter into the Mills Act contract the fruit trees at the front of the property need to be pruned so that the home is easily visible from Seventh Street. Photographs of the front of home are attached as Exhibit B1.

## **SATISFACTION OF LISTING CRITERIA**

Section 17.63.050 of the Corona Municipal Code (CMC) delineates the criteria that must be satisfied for a landmark to be listed on the Register. Shown below is how the proposed landmark meets these requirements. The data were gathered from independent staff research and documents provided by the applicant.

1. *The historic resource has been in existence for a period of at least 50 years, or if less than 50 years old, is of exceptional importance to the community.*

Based on independent research prepared regarding the property by the applicant, the home was built in 1900, making it 119 years old. The home was built for Benton Lincoln Shepherd and his family, one of the earliest grove owners in the vicinity.

2. *The historic resource has significant historic, cultural, or architectural value, and its designation as a landmark is reasonable, appropriate and necessary to promote, preserve and further the purposes and intent of this Chapter.*

The Victorian Hipped Roof Cottage home consist of a one-story hipped roof structure, sitting on a high stucco brick foundation. The exterior of the home includes a composition shingle roof, shiplap siding walls edged with corner boards, a four-paneled wood door, a small gable roof above the front door on triangular braces, and double-hung sash windows throughout the home. The subject home has been restored to retain much of its original Victorian Hipped Roof Cottage architectural character, and its preservation promotes the city's cultural heritage.

3. *The historic resource exhibits the following characteristics:*

*a. It embodies a distinctive characteristic of a style, type, period or method of construction or a valuable example of the use of materials or craftsmanship.*

The home displays several key characteristics of a Victorian Hipped Roof Cottage style. Architectural details of the home include a clad hipped roof with composition shingles, shiplap siding walls, a four-paneled wood door with four windows on top, a small gable roof above the front door, and double-hung sash windows throughout.

The home is one of 30 of the oldest homes in the City of Corona retaining similarity in style and appearance to how it was originally constructed. In the early part of the twentieth century, stone and wooden bungalows and vernacular wood-framed structures in Corona were designed with the use of excellent materials and craftsmanship. This Victorian Hipped Roof Cottage does reflect the historic fabric of inside-the-circle residences of more than 100 years ago.

As previously noted, a room addition with a shed roof is was added to the rear of the home. The date of the addition is unknown. The ship-lap siding on the addition was applied with great craftsmanship and matches up well with the original structure. The addition contains wood double-hung sash windows.

If HRLM2019-0002 is approved, the owners intend to enter into a property tax preservation contract (Mills Act) with the City to enable them to obtain a property tax reduction through the Riverside County Assessor's office. Participation in this program will allow the owners to reinvest the savings into maintaining and preserving their home.

4. *The historic resource has integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.*

By maintaining many of its original architectural features and materials, the proposed landmark has retained its historic integrity, which CMC Chapter 17.63 defines as "the authenticity of a resource's physical identity as evidence by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance."

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

In accordance with Section 3.20 of the City's local CEQA guidelines, HRLM2019-0002 is considered a Class 31 Categorical Exemption (Exhibit C). HRLM2019-0002 promotes the preservation of historic resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing

Historic Buildings, as applied by CMC Chapter 17.63.

### **PUBLIC NOTICING**

In accordance with Chapter 17.63, the application for HRLM2019-0002 was distributed for comment to the Heritage Room of the Corona City Library, to the Corona Historic Preservation Society (CHPS), and to the Corona History Association (CHA). Additionally, the public hearing notice regarding this nomination was published in *The Sentinel Weekly* newspaper. Staff received a letter from CHPS stating the property meets the minimum criteria for a local historic landmark nomination based on the criteria listed in the municipal code. However, CHPS further commented that the house has minimal appearance from Seventh Street due to the mature growth of the citrus trees at the front of the property and the curb side appearance of the home should be considered when making the decision to list the home as a local landmark (Exhibit C). Lastly, as of the preparation of the staff report, staff has not received any comments from the public regarding the nomination.

### **STAFF ANALYSIS**

The application has met the requirements for placement as a historic landmark on the Corona Register of Historic Resources in accordance with Corona Municipal Code Chapter 17.63; however, before the Historic Property Preservation application (Mills Act) goes to the City Council, the front fruit trees need to be pruned so that the home is easily visible from Seventh Street as required by the Mills Act contract. Staff recommends that the Planning and Housing Commission recommend approval of HRLM2019-0002 to the City Council.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The applicant paid \$432.00 in application processing fees for the Historic Resources Nomination application.

**PREPARED BY:** LUPITA GARCIA, ASSISTANT PLANNER

**SUBMITTED BY:** JOANNE COLETTA, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

### **EXHIBITS**

1. Locational and Zoning Map
2. Exhibit A - Statement of architectural and historical significance
3. Exhibits B1-B14 - Photographs of property
4. Exhibit C - CHPS letter dated August 4, 2019
5. Exhibit D - Environmental Documentation
6. Exhibit E - Aerial map of property

Case Planner: Lupita Garcia (951) 736-2293