



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SERVICES
MEMORANDUM

Date: 12 December 2017
To: Historic Site Preservation Board
From: Flinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services
Subject: Resolution – Amendment to PSMC

The Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) has issued a letter to the City Council, requesting amendments to the Palm Springs Municipal Code relative to the demolition permit process. In discussing the issue at a recent City Council meeting, the City Manager requested that the HSPB issue a resolution in support of the code amendments. The attached resolution is provided for approval by the HSPB.

Attachments:

1. Draft Resolution
2. HSPB Letter – November 14, 2017

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING INITIATION OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE PALM SPRINGS MUNICIPAL CODE RELATING TO THE DEMOLITION PERMIT PROCESS.

THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD FINDS AND DETERMINES AS FOLLOWS:

A. Chapter 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code requires the Historic Site Preservation Board to review demolition applications for any Class 3 historic site.

B. The issuance of demolition permits is not currently conditioned upon the issuance of building permits, resulting in parcels that remain vacant for extended periods of time and give the appearance of blight in established neighborhoods.

C. The Historic Site Preservation Board has a vested interest in the demolition permit review process, discussing the matter over the course of several public meetings, and has issued a letter to the City Council in support of amendments to the Palm Springs Municipal Code to revise the demolition permit process accordingly.

D. The Historic Site Preservation Board hereby finds the following relative to an amendment to the Municipal Code regarding the demolition permit process:

1. The amendment would provide a more comprehensive approach to the demolition process; and
2. The amendment would appropriately provide for demolition review as part of the entitlement process; and
3. The amendment may assist in reducing the number of vacant, undeveloped parcels within core commercial districts and neighborhoods; and
4. The amendment would support the City's sustainability goals in encouraging the adaptive reuse of structures, thereby reducing the environmental impacts associated with demolition.

THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS RESOLVES:

SECTION 1. The Historic Site Preservation Board requests that the City Council initiate an amendment to the Palm Springs Municipal Code to require that the demolition permit process be directly tied and conditioned upon the issuance of permits for new construction.

ADOPTED THIS 12th DAY OF DECEMBER, 2017.

ATTEST:

Flinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services



City of Palm Springs

Department of Planning Services

3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way • Palm Springs, California 92262
Tel: (760) 323-8245 • Fax: (760) 322-8360 • Web: www.ci.palm-springs.ca.us

14 November 2017

Mayor Robert Moon
Mayor Pro Tem Ginny Foat
Councilmember Geoff Kors
Councilmember Chris Mills
Councilmember JR Roberts

RE: Demolition Permits

Mayor Moon and Councilmembers:

Pursuant to Chapter 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code, the Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) is authorized to review demolition permits for all Class 3 historic sites in the City of Palm Springs. While we appreciate the process that is in place to protect structures and sites that may have historic value, we believe that a more comprehensive approach to the review of building demolition may be necessary.

One of the issues that is of great concern is situations where buildings are demolished prior to any entitlements being in place to construct a new structure. Not only does this result in the unnecessary demolition of a structure that may be repurposed as part of a redevelopment plan, but also results in a vacant parcel which has a negative impact to surrounding properties. Consequently, we would encourage the City Council to review the current process and require that timing and issuance of demolition permits be conditioned upon the issuance of building permits for new construction. A number of other California cities already have such requirements in place, including Santa Monica, West Hollywood, Glendale, St. Helena, and Sausalito; copies of their ordinances are available for your review.

Another consideration to take into account is that the adaptive reuse of existing structures reduces environmental impacts and helps to achieve the goals and policies of the City's adopted Sustainability Plan. We would encourage the City Council to consider the input of the Sustainability Commission in reviewing modifications to the demolition permit process.

We appreciate the support of the City Council in the preservation of historic sites and structures, and encourage a comprehensive approach to the reuse of existing structures.

Sincerely,

Gary Johns
HSPB Chair

Dick Burkett
HSPB Vice Chair

CC: David Ready
Jim Zicaro