

Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board
Oakland, California.

Agenda item:

41 Tunnel Road / Claremont Hotel Property
Case File Number: PLN 16053;ERI6010
Staff Report
May 8th, 2017 Landmark Preservation Advisory Board.

Action : to receive public review and comment on the Historic Resource Evaluation
And supplemental memorandum to HRE.

We are here today to support the finding by the United States Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation that the property The Claremont Hotel and surrounding twelve acres (as outlined in the June 26, 2003 document and map), are listed on the California Register of Historical Resources, pursuant to Section 4851(1) of the Public Resources Code and also eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. This is a fact.

We are most impressed by the Historic Resource Evaluation prepared by Carey & Co, Inc., and find ourselves totally inadequate with such short notice to possibly respond to it item by item. This has been worked on by Carey and Company for many, many months and it would seem an impossibility that the city is expecting the public to review and comment in a manner worthy of this magnificent document in the space of approximately one week.

We would suggest that this matter be postponed to a later date to enable the public to sufficiently review and comment. It would appear to us that the spirit of the law is not being upheld in this less that adequate noticing the public.

That being said, it is the finding of the United States Department of Parks and Recreation that we wish to impart to the Landmark Preservation Advisory Board and not what the Berkeley Oakland Neighbors of the Claremont note. Whatever the Historic Resource Evaluation discovers it cannot in any way take away the fact that without the surrounding space afforded by the grounds the major resource in the form of the building itself would lose much of its significance. It is not the condition of the space that counts in this case – it is the space itself. Crowding in of the grounds would diminish the historic resource.

Further, if the purpose of this meeting is to consider draft technical materials prior to preparation and consideration of draft environmental documents we cannot believe that these were made available only on May 3rd, to the public for comment. We hate to say it but it occurs to us that the City staff appears to give to the entity proposing the changes to this historic resource far more assistance than is afforded, offered, or suggested to the public. As a member of the public we need your assistance and guidance to be able to offer constructive and helpful comments and opinions.

In closing, some of us here are proud to say we were part of the BONC group that worked with the City and the Landmark Preservation Board to make the Claremont Hotel a city landmark. Now we are here again and do not want our work to be in vain.

Sincerely,

Wendy P. Markel
Ellen MacKaskle

May 8, 2017