



SAN MATEO
HERITAGE ALLIANCE

Newsletter

JULY 2024

Good News for San Mateo!

Historic Preservation Ordinance Update

The San Mateo Heritage Alliance is excited that the City Council directed staff at the June 17 study session to create a **citywide local historic resources program**. Staff is to update the historic preservation ordinance, define the program to address effects to historic resources, and prepare a context statement to guide future historic resource survey efforts to identify individually eligible resources and historic districts. Staff will prepare a Request for Proposal for historic consultant support and report back to the Council in December, when the program is expected to begin.

San Mateo Heritage Alliance is 100% supportive of this direction! It will remove uncertainty about projects that affect historic resources, including individual buildings and districts. It also will provide for extensive community discussion and input so that community voices will help guide the development of this citywide historic resources program. We look forward to working with the City and the community to ensure this process is a success for San Mateo.

Baywood Historic District Update

The State Office of Historic Preservation provided comments on the Baywood Historic District nomination package in April. The State requested additional detail about the criteria for defining contributor and non-contributor properties in the district.

The Heritage Alliance will consult with the City to define a schedule for the nomination process that considers the Ordinance update. *Please email any questions to info@smheritage.org.*

“The National Register was established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The purposes of the Act are: to insure that properties significant in national, state, and local history are considered in the planning of federal undertakings; and to encourage historic preservation initiatives by state and local governments and the private sector.”

National Register of Historic Places Fact Sheet

National Register listing conveys a level of national regard and respect, while imposing no restrictions, regulations or demands on any property owner—that is the role of the City. Neither does it inhibit the City’s ability to craft an appropriate local ordinance.



San Mateo Downtown Historic District Walking Tour

Don't miss out!

Join us for the San Mateo County Historical Association Victorian Days San Mateo Downtown Historic Walking Tour on August 4, 2024 at 10 am. Explore the fascinating architecture of San Mateo’s National Register eligible Downtown Historic District on a tour led by the [San Mateo Heritage Alliance](#). The district’s eclectic mix of styles includes Art Deco, Colonial, Classical and Greek Revival, Spanish Colonial, Mission and Tudor Revival. Comfortable walking shoes are recommended.

Registration is required. For more information please visit <https://historysmc.org/victorian-days-walking-tours/>

“What a great tour! I learned so much about the buildings I walk by so often. I loved hearing the backstory on our beautiful downtown historic buildings.”

Yoshiko Yamanouchi House Historic District Tour a Success!

Celebrating Listing on the National Register

The San Mateo Heritage Alliance was delighted to celebrate the newest addition to the National Register of Historic Places in San Mateo: *The Yoshiko Yamanouchi House Historic District*.

A select group of San Mateo's current and former elected officials and San Mateo Heritage Alliance donors were invited to a celebration of the Yoshiko Yamanouchi House listing on the National Register on May 18th. Heritage Alliance Board Member, Ms. Laurie Watanuki, opened her home to guests to take a tour of her property, which includes a Mid-Century Modernist house, entrance gateway, walkway, a Japanese "hill and pond" garden, Katsura Building, Walkway, and Garden.

As shown in the photo to the right, Mayor Lisa Diaz Nash presented Ms. Watanuki with a City proclamation recognizing the historic district.

The Yoshiko Yamanouchi House is the third historic established in San Mateo. This National and State designation will remind the City and future planners of the significant contributions of Japanese Americans (Issei and Nissei) to the development of San Mateo.

We congratulate Laurie on her extraordinary effort to nominate her property for the National Register, her outstanding stewardship of the property, and thank her for generously opening her home for this event.



It's Time to Renew Your Membership!

Please renew your membership or donate to San Mateo Heritage Alliance to support our work. In addition to working to preserve our historic resources, we host events to help educate the community about historic preservation and participate in City processes that affect historic resources, such as the historic preservation ordinance update. Your donation will help to preserve our neighborhoods and historic downtown. Scan the QR Code to donate!





GLAZENWOOD SURVEY

Hot off the Press!

For some time now, Baywood residents have been plied with scary stories about the negative impact of historic designation on a community from a few vocal opponents of historic designation. It is interesting that the commentary has focused on cities in other parts of the country and not on San Mateo.

Regulation of historic resources is the responsibility of local government and only local government can create rules for historic resource protection.

For this reason, the San Mateo Heritage Alliance thought it would be useful to explore what residents of the Glazenwood Historic District in San Mateo have to say about their experience living in a local historic district. Glazenwood (a part of the Haywood Park neighborhood) was established as a local historic district in 1993. Since then, it has been subject to the historic preservation ordinance section of our municipal code ([Section 27.66](https://law.cityofsanmateo.org/us/ca/cities/san-mateo/code/27.66) <https://law.cityofsanmateo.org/us/ca/cities/san-mateo/code/27.66>).

The Heritage Alliance conducted a survey of all Glazenwood owners to understand what the residents have experienced as a result of historic designation and to elicit their opinions. Working with Chris Eckert, a Glazenwood realtor, and an independent market research consultant, the questionnaire asked every homeowner in Glazenwood how they felt about the designation when asked about how important a variety of characteristics are to the neighborhood: Here is what the respondents (46% responded) reported when asked about how important a variety of characteristics are to the neighborhood:

- 94% say Historic Designation is important or critical.
- 88% say maintaining exteriors visible from the street is absolutely critical or very important.
- 82% say authenticity of architecture is absolutely critical or very important.
- 88% say the preservation ordinance that protects the character of the neighborhood is critical or very important. 82% say renovation being subject to a historic preservation ordinance is absolutely critical or very important.
- 82% support street-facing regulations and legal protections for visual consistency in the area.



- 88% say new construction should adhere to local style, rating this as critical or very important.
- 59% say design guidelines sustain the character of the neighborhood.
- 47% are not concerned about historic regulations while 41% express concern.
- 70% of respondents noted their properties had significant remodeling projects, and 30% of these happened after historic designation.

Chris Eckert believes that Glazenwood's historic designation has benefitted homes in the district by increasing sales prices and desirability. His research shows that over the past ten years, homes in San Mateo's Glazenwood Historic District have sold for an average of 26% more per square foot and 41% more in average sales price than similar period homes in the rest of Haywood Park.

It is conclusive that the existing historic ordinance is a success with the Glazenwood community. There is no reason to assume similar rules would make historic designation less appealing in other neighborhoods that qualify for historic designation.

The details of the study are available on the San Mateo Heritage website (www.smheritage.org).



Why Your Neighbors Support Historic Baywood

Join your friends and neighbors in support

Preserves for future generations the fine homes that draw people to Baywood. It's the architectural detailing, high-quality materials, craftsmanship, historic character and charm that people love and most home buyers seek in historic neighborhoods like Baywood,

Protects Baywood's architectural and cultural heritage. A disturbing trend known as 'tear-downs' has spread across America's older neighborhoods. As fine historic homes and surrounding heritage landscape are destroyed to make way for larger new development, the architectural and cultural heritage of our communities is eroded and forever changed. The replacement homes often do not fit well in historic neighborhoods and threaten the very qualities that make neighborhoods like Baywood attractive and desirable.

Provides cost-effective design guidance. Design standards assist homeowners remodel, update and expand their homes while respectfully retaining the homes' historic character. By working with the home's architecture, design standards help avoid costly mistakes that diminish the value of your home. They provide certainty and encourage responsible and sustainable stewardship with long lasting benefits for the homeowner, neighborhood and community. Better design means greater cohesiveness with the surrounding neighborhood and greater public appeal.

Verify facts with credible sources

Protects homeowner investment. Insensitive or poorly planned remodels or development can make an area less attractive to homebuyers and thus undermine property value. In contrast, historic district designation encourages people to buy and rehabilitate properties because they know their investment is protected over time.

Enables property tax reductions. Properties within historic districts may qualify for reduced property taxes under California's Mills Act. Typically, property owners can expect a 20 to 70% tax savings on property taxes.

Tangible link to the past and brings meaning to history and to people's lives. Historic districts preserve the original character of buildings and streets, while welcoming growth and innovation. They are a living, active record of communities and their residents. By participating in the designation process, you can help ensure a proud future for Baywood.

