
PLUMAS COUNTY
PLANNING DIRECTOR MEETING
Minutes of the Meeting of June 2, 2021

The Planning Director convenes a meeting on Wednesday, June 2, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. in the Permit Center Conference Room, Quincy. Planning Director, Tracey Ferguson, presiding. Assistant Planning Director, Rebecca Herrin, is in attendance.

I. AGENDA

The agenda is approved as submitted.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

No public comment presented.

III. IMPLEMENTATION OF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' DECISION ON APPEAL FROM FEBRUARY 13, 2007 - ITEM 2 - SIERRA PACIFIC INDUSTRIES; APN 113-030-013; T.24N/R.8E/S.11 MDM

The selection of the two most representative samples of the historic lifestyle of the area known as Spanish Ranch, with the following properties considered for designation and preservation located at 113 Tram Way, 470 Spanish Ranch Road, 584 Spanish Ranch Road, 622 Spanish Ranch Road, and 670 Spanish Ranch Road, Meadow Valley, is presented. Assistant Planning Director, Rebecca Herrin, gives a presentation as reflected in the staff report.

The public hearing is opened at 10:12 a.m.

A resident of Spanish Ranch states there are no storage facilities anywhere in Quincy and no houses for rent, adding that nothing in the eviction notice he received stated a reason for the eviction. The notice states the reason for the eviction is withdrawal of the property from the rental market. Planning Director, Tracey Ferguson, states that today's hearing is about the selection of two representative samples of the buildings on the Spanish Ranch property and her decision today has no bearing on the decision of the property owner as it relates to any of the tenants. Ferguson encourages the resident to file a public records request with the Building Department in order to obtain a copy of the inspection report from Code Enforcement as to what health and safety code violations have occurred on his residence.

Another resident of Spanish Ranch states she is looking at the human factor and the fact that a lot of the nine households that live in Spanish Ranch are made up of seniors and it takes two years to get into (senior) housing and there are no rentals available locally. She has been looking out of county as well, and there is nothing (available) with a senior income. The Spanish Ranch residents would like to get some kind of a timeline from the property owner in order to look for another place to live.

Another resident of Spanish Ranch questions why the County is only picking two houses, noting that it's a community out there with families and homes. He feels that in order to preserve the historical significance of the area you should save all the residences. In response, Herrin states that the Board of Supervisors decided in 2007 that two houses should be selected and the Planning Department is just carrying out what the Board directed. Herrin goes on to state it doesn't mean that more houses can't be saved (by the property owner).

Ferguson questions if today's decision can be appealed to the Board of Supervisors. Herrin responds that she doesn't think so because it's carrying out an appeal, which is not subject to appeal.

Comments received via email are read out loud by Ferguson, in addition to two written comments received at the public hearing.

Meadow Valley resident, Randy Hicks, questions if any demolition permits are active at this point. Herrin responds that there have been no demolition permits submitted and notes that today's decision is not about demolition.

A resident who previously commented adds that there are other issues that need to be resolved, so it could take a period of time.

A representative of the Meadow Valley Fire Department states the water system is very important to the fire department. It's the only hydrant they have in the valley and affects their rating. They want to make sure the water system isn't compromised. A representative of Sierra Pacific Industries responds that the water system and hydrant are being maintained by MountainCraft Landscaping. The representative of Sierra Pacific Industries clarifies that the tenants are not being evicted, rather their tenancy is being terminated (notice to vacate) as the rentals are being withdrawn from the rental market. The residents of four cabins were sent notices that their tenancy was to be terminated because the Building Department and Code Enforcement inspected and declared them uninhabitable and unsafe for various reasons.

The public hearing is closed at 10:38 a.m.

Ferguson reiterates that today's action to choose two residential structures for preservation is to implement the Board of Supervisors' decision on appeal from February 13, 2007, that is, to choose the two most representative samples of the historic lifestyle and character of the area. The five structures that are up for selection are displayed, with photographs, on the whiteboard in the conference room: 113 Tram Way, 470 Spanish Ranch Road, 584 Spanish Ranch Road, 622 Spanish Ranch Road, and 670 Spanish Ranch Road, in addition to 556 Spanish Ranch Road, or the Moss and Hammond Warehouse (what is called the main house now a residence), which was already determined to be preserved by the Board of Supervisors in 2007.

As directed by the Board of Supervisors' 2007 decision on appeal, Ferguson states an *Historical Evaluation of 19 Single-Family Residences Associated with the Spanish Peak Lumber Company and Meadow Valley Lumber Company, Spanish Ranch, Plumas County, California*, was prepared in 2012 (Trudy Vaughan and Barbara Woodrum, Coyote & Fox Enterprises), which includes the five structures that are up for selection today. Ferguson then notes what Herrin's staff report notes, that is, the authors of the *Historical Evaluation* concluded that none of the 19 structures are considered eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources. Based on this conclusion, the authors did not recommend any protection or preservation measures for any of the buildings.

Within the *Historical Evaluation* there is narrative about the time period in which the buildings were built. Some dates are not exactly known, others structures have exact dates, and some have date ranges. The understanding from the *Historical Evaluation* is the remaining residences would all be sawmill era cabins for mill workers built by Spanish Peak Lumber Company and Meadow Valley Lumber Company, with the exception of 584 Spanish Ranch Road, as it was built post-1948 by others.

Ferguson states the recommendation by staff is that the residence at 113 Tram Way be preserved as it is the oldest representative residence and the only remaining residence in that setting. Staff is also recommending that both residences at 622 Spanish Ranch Road and 670 Spanish Ranch Road be preserved due to the grouping and context in relation to the Moss and Hammond Warehouse at 556 Spanish Ranch Road.

Ferguson begins her evaluation of the five residences on the list for selection: 113 Tram Way, 470 Spanish Ranch Road, 584 Spanish Ranch Road, 622 Spanish Ranch Road, and 670 Spanish Ranch Road.

Ferguson states 584 Spanish Ranch Road is not being considered any further and is off her list because it's not a representative sample of the historic lifestyle (being from a later time period) and it is unknown who actually constructed it.

Ferguson states 470 Spanish Ranch Road was built later, around 1935-1948 by Meadow Valley Lumber Company, and while to a degree it is representative of the historic lifestyle of the area, 470 Spanish Ranch Road will not be selected because it was built at a later time and the structure is substandard based on the Building Official and Code Enforcement inspection report (i.e., health and safety issues concerning inadequate sanitation, structural hazards, and faulty weather protection) and a lesser fit for restoration.

The oldest remaining residence on the list for selection is 113 Tram Way, built in 1916-17 to 1920 by Spanish Peak Lumber Company. Ferguson goes on to say the history of the aerial tramway is well known and a number of cabins were built on the hillside closest to the mill. Ferguson notes information from the *Historical Evaluation*, as 113 Tram Way is a Craftsman style, board and batten construction with side-gabled architecture, where most of the Spanish Ranch residences remaining are front-gabled, so it's different in historic architectural style. Regarding the Building Official and Code Enforcement inspection report for 113 Tram Way, the structure was deemed habitable with only minor code violations to address. Ferguson states the structure does not have a foundation, but one can be built as part of a restoration process. Ferguson selects 113 Tram Way for preservation.

Ferguson states 670 Spanish Ranch Road and 622 Spanish Ranch Road are similar in that these structures were both built by Spanish Peak Lumber Company in the 1920s. Ferguson goes on to say she is assessing the physical character and integrity, the location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association of these similar properties to determine which of the two is the most representative sample of the historic lifestyle of Spanish Ranch. Continuing, Ferguson states the Board of Supervisors has directed the County to select two representative samples and it would be at her discretion to recommend the property owners preserve more, which would align with the staff recommendation. Herrin comments that Ferguson could leave it up to the property owners to choose between 670 Spanish Ranch Road and 622 Spanish Ranch Road. After some thought, Ferguson states she intends to fulfill the Board's strict direction of selecting two. Additionally, in consideration is the fact that 622 Spanish Ranch Road has issues with sanitation, wiring, and structural resulting in a determination that the structure is substandard based on the Building Official and Code Enforcement inspection report and so the ability to restore is questionable. 670 Spanish Ranch Road was not requested by the property owner to be inspected by the Building Official and Code Enforcement as the property is vacant. It is known that 622 Spanish Ranch Road has a foundation and 670 Spanish Ranch Road does not have a foundation. Hicks points out that it appears 622 Spanish Ranch Road was added on to in the front as most of the residences are simple gable ends. Also, there's a 3' x 3' window in the front which was likely not part of the original building. Ferguson states that even though a porch has been added on to 670 Spanish Ranch Road, it looks more viable as an original example. Continuing, Ferguson reiterates it is at the property owner's discretion whether or not more residences, in addition to the two selected by the County, are preserved. It's noted that based on the Board of Supervisors' 2007 decision, any of the buildings not selected may be demolished if they become vacant and are determined by the property owner uneconomical to bring up to present-day code standards. In response to a question by a resident, Herrin states there is no requirement for bringing the buildings up to code. The buildings can remain in a state of "arrested decay." Herrin goes on to say when you have an historic building, you can leave it there as long as it doesn't harm anybody as it relates to public health and safety. Ferguson selects 670 Spanish Ranch Road for preservation.

DECISION

Planning Director, Tracey Ferguson, selects 670 Spanish Ranch Road and 113 Tram Way as the two most representative samples of the historic lifestyle of the area known as Spanish Ranch to be preserved, noting the Board of Supervisors' 2007 decision on appeal states the following: upon selection of the two most representative samples the property owner shall make those buildings, in the event they become vacant, available for restoration by the appropriate scientific, educational, or cultural agency. Buildings not selected may be demolished in the event they become vacant and are determined by the property owner uneconomical to bring up to present-day code standards. Further, the 2007 decision states, this action serves to allow preservation of the most representative samples of the historic character of Spanish Ranch consistent with the General Plan, while balancing the necessity to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourns at 10:51 a.m.



Heidi Wightman, Department Fiscal Officer II



Tracey Ferguson, AICP, Planning Director