



**PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED FOR
Thursday, July 25, 2019
HRB Meeting**

From: Rebecca Sanders <rebsanders@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2019 5:43 PM
To: Historic Resources Board
Subject: Preserving our History at Mayfield Cannery

Dear Historic Resources Board members:

Please honor the historic significance of the Fry's site to all of Palo Alto. The Cannery's owner Thomas Foon Chew founded Mayfield's first industrial site and helped put "Palo Alto" on the map. He made significant contributions to the canning industry and was a cultural hero for refusing to be limited by the pressures of the Chinese exclusion act. Preserving as much of the buildings as possible and incorporating them into the new design will honor this rich heritage while creating a new development that we can all be proud of.

Other cities do this all the time. Rather than tear down and build from scratch, we can reuse so much of what is there already and in doing so, contribute as well to Palo Alto's environmental values by reducing waste and reducing what ends up in landfill.

Please insist upon a meaningful CEQA analysis so that we don't lose this valuable historic asset. Please consider adaptive reuse as an alternative to the demolition of a site that has been identified by consultant Page & Turnbull as eligible for the CA Register of Historic Resources, which means it is probably eligible for inclusion in the National Register.

I have hours of research around this topic, meeting with City Historian Steve Steiger, Palo Alto Historical Association's Brian George, and the Cannery founder's granddaughter Gloria Hom to name just a few. I have read about CEQA and I have researched the history of the Fry's site. But rather than put in pages and pages of documentation, I decided to keep my email short. I believe that a thorough CEQA review is called for and that this wonderful community resource deserves preservation.

Thank you.
Becky Sanders
Ventura Neighborhood

From: Karen Holman <kcholman@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2019 2:10 PM
To: Elena Lee
Subject: Historic Resources Board Meeting

Hi.

I am asking for the following questions to be answered at the HRB meeting tomorrow morning, and thank you in advance.

"The NVCAP is intended to strengthen the neighborhood fabric...."

Yet, a map distributed to the Working Group shows essentially a complete redevelopment of the Ventura Plan Area.

For those reasons and more I have the following questions and requests:

- What specifically is the purpose/scope of the HRB meeting on July 25?
- Will the HRB have a later and separate meeting to review any plans coming forward for the Ventura Area Plan?
- Was the scope of work for Page & Turnbull limited to determine eligibility for the CA Register for CEQA purposes only or did their work scope include determination of eligibility for the National Register, as well? This seems especially important given the Alviso site listed on the National Register, as I understand it, is in peril of survival, and the Palo Alto cannery, also developed and run by Thomas Foon Chew, is part of a significant but disappearing vestige of the Valley of Hearts Delight including our own Chinese cultural history.
- Will or has the HRB been provided the Working Group planning map showing the CA Reg office building site to be redeveloped and only two small portions of the cannery building to be preserved? I think this was provided at the last Working Group meeting for break out sessions.
- On what basis was the color overlay on that planning map showing demo of the buildings as described in the prior bullet made? How does either satisfy CEQA and Sec of Int Standards?
- I am not aware of any information provided to either the HRB or the Working Group to explore adaptive reuse for any buildings in the Ventura planning area including these two determined CA Register buildings. If any exploration has been examined, can that please be provided.
- The rail spur is identifiable currently as a paved-over route. Has any exploration been done to determine if the rail is still existing under the pavement? This goes to the setting of the cannery building.
- Can the HRB please be provided information about the other buildings in the Ventura area as the attached HRE only speaks to a windshield survey, and there are numerous buildings in the Plan Area that are industrial in character. This is relevant not only because of the role of the HRB to review evaluations but also a core purpose of the Plan: "The NVCAP is intended to strengthen the neighborhood fabric...."

- What consideration has been given to honoring Thomas Foon Chew and the cannery operation? This is aside from the CA Register eligible buildings, properties.

As stated in the HRE, this was one of the largest employers in the mid-peninsula and the third largest cannery in the world behind only Heinz and Del Monte.

Thank you.

Karen

From: Elaine Johnson <elaine@swagman.com>

Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2019 9:22:33 PM

To: Lee, Elena <Elena.Lee@CityofPaloAlto.org>

Subject: Feedback for the Historic Resources Board meeting on July 25

Dear Ms. Lee,

Thanks for taking comments for the Historic Resources Board meeting. I'm not able to attend but would like to share my thoughts.

As background, I'm a Ventura homeowner on Chestnut Avenue and our family has lived here for 22 years.

I have a huge appreciation for history and was very interested to read about the history of the cannery in our part of Palo Alto and about the role that a Chinese American had to play in California's canning industry.

That said, I think the city would be better served not saving the Fry's building and honoring the history of the building and the individual in another way (perhaps a plaque on site, or a section for the Palo Alto history museum?).

The building itself is not particularly noteworthy and takes up a large footprint. There are many competing needs and interests for the overall site, all of which, in my opinion, trump saving the building:

- We have critical need for more housing, particularly for affordable housing.
- We have a unique opportunity to restore creek habitat, which will require some space within the overall site.
- We are short of open space to support the needs of the proposed housing. (Boulware Park is very small.)
- Though it pains me to devote space to parking, the discussions I have attended seem unrealistic about the need for it within the development. Getting around by public transportation and bicycles sounds great, but we will have families and old people and disabled people living in the new housing who will rely on their cars. If they can't park near their homes, they will clog the surrounding streets, which

seems unfair.

Again, my appreciation for noting my comments.

Sincerely,
Elaine Johnson
251 Chestnut Ave.

From: Winter Dellenbach [<mailto:winterdell@earthlink.net>]

Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2019 12:19 PM

To: Historic Resources Board <hrb@CityofPaloAlto.org>

Subject: Fry's building

Dear Commissioners - I am too often disheartened by loss of historically significant homes and buildings in our town due to carelessness, recklessness (Eichler building, Edgewood Plaza), neglect or intentional destruction (Juana Briones home). Sometimes it is due to not applying the laws, State or local, that were created to analyze, evaluate and protect qualified historical resources before they are lost forever.

One of the most important laws in our State is the California Environmental Quality Act, CEQA, which is critical to apply to the WHOLE of the Fry's building, not part of it given its size and history as a cannery in this fruit growing area, and who own it.

See: <https://www.losaltoshistory.org/2019/04/history-museum-explores-the-life-of-cannery-pioneer-thomas-foon-chew/>

Please make sure you are very careful with this building. Take time to seek independent advice if needed, and do your own research as needed, outside of city staff. It is important.

Winter Dellenbach

Barron Park, Palo Alto

From: Kimberley Wong <sheepgirl1@yahoo.com>

Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2019 3:23 PM

To: Historic Resources Board <hrb@CityofPaloAlto.org>

Subject: Save the Historic Fry's site

Dear HRB members:

As the granddaughter of Sam Ying Mock of famed City Cafe, the first legally owned Chinese restaurant which was established at 166 University Avenue in 1905, I have great interest in Chinese history of Palo

Alto. It has come to my attention that developers are hoping to raze the building which was once the Historic Cannery owned by the Chews, another well known Chinese family from Palo Alto.

Please honor the historic significance of the Fry's site to all of Palo Alto. The Cannery's owner Thomas Foon Chew founded Mayfield's first industrial site and helped put "Palo Alto" on the map. He made significant contributions to the canning industry and was a cultural hero for refusing to be limited by the pressures of the Chinese exclusion act. Preserving as much of the buildings as possible and incorporating them into the new design will honor this rich heritage while creating a new development that we can all be proud of.

Other cities do this all the time. Rather than tear down and build from scratch, we can reuse so much of what is there already and in doing so, contribute as well to Palo Alto's environmental values by reducing waste and reducing what ends up in landfill.

My favorite example is the San Francisco Pier 1 Ferry building, which in 1898 was the major train hub in San Francisco. By 1950 it was pretty much abandoned but back in 2003 reopened and is now a first class food market with office space, retail shops, restaurants and a farmers market! The same can be done for the Fry's building, which can become a vibrant hub of shops, art studios, restaurants and perhaps small housing units which can be built above the main floor. This transformed space can be the hub of locals as well as visitors to the area, aptly named perhaps as the "Mayfield Marketplace"? And I would suggest to build at least one old time saloon to pay homage to Mayfield's "colorful" past. It would be fitting to incorporate some of Fry's Wild West decor into the new space, also.

Please insist upon a meaningful CEQA analysis so that we don't lose this valuable historic asset. Please consider adaptive reuse as an alternative to the demolition of a site that has been identified by consultant Page & Turnbull as eligible for the CA Register of Historic Resources, which means it is probably eligible for inclusion in the National Register.

Kimberley Wong of Palo Alto since 1970,

Granddaughter of Sam Ying Mock, co-owner of City Cafe (est 1905)

From: Jon Kinyon <jon@kinyon.org>

Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2019 2:03 PM

To: Historic Resources Board

Subject: HRE - 340 Portage Ave - comment for public hearing on 7/25/2019

To the Palo Alto Historic Resources Board (HRB), re: the former cannery property located at 340 Portage Avenue (currently occupied by Fry's Electronics and other tenants). hrb@cityofpaloalto.org

My family stretches back five generations in Palo Alto, the first to arrive came in 1900. I reluctantly left town in 1997 for Los Angeles, as work in my field of film and TV production dried up in the S.F. Bay. It was at this time that others I know in the arts; musicians, artists, and craftsmen, were also slowly being driven out of town by rising rents and the loss of work and retail space.

Despite moving away so long ago, I am still very connected to my hometown. I do graphic design and layout for the Tall Tree publication of the Palo Alto Historical Society, as well as running and contributing daily to the largest Palo Alto group on Facebook, which has over 10,500 members currently.

As a history buff, I believe the old cannery is extremely significant to Chinese-American history in California, as well as Bay Area and Palo Alto history, of which I'm certain you're aware. The structure is the oldest surviving industrial building in Palo Alto and is tied to the small, embattled (and long forgotten) Chinatown that once existed in Mayfield. The cannery represents a perfect metaphor for the transformation of agriculture center to the technological center of the world. Workers on the assembly lines of the cannery business, 2 migrated to the assembly lines in TV and radio manufacturing, then to the assembly lines of early Silicon Valley, and now the coding factories of companies like Facebook and Google. When I was growing up in Palo Alto in the 1960s and 1970s, the town was bursting at the seams with art and live music. Not so much today. The Artifactory artist cooperative on Hamilton was a wonderful space for artists and craftsmen to sell their wares. I remember artisans and craftsmen set up in old warehouses on Urban Lane. Allied Arts Guild was the last to go, thankfully they found a home in Menlo Park. But everything else is gone without a trace, I think, to the city's detriment.

I see the old cannery as an opportunity for a clever development company or entrepreneurial group, supported by the City, to recapture and revive the "soul" of Palo Alto — to encourage and support local artists to pursue their dreams and in turn to enrich us all. Many cities have transformed and repurposed similar building sites into vibrant and prosperous hubs of culture and art.

ARTIST COLONY: The project could be called "Mayfield Cannery" or simply "The Cannery." It could include lofts; live-work spaces for artists and craftsmen, art galleries, art museums (satellite for Canter or larger museum), restaurants, cafes, brewery, convention rooms, classrooms, or variation on this theme. I have ideas of how to open it up and bring lots of natural light in. I think it could a beautiful and exciting place for the community to enjoy. The proximity to the railroad station could draw tourists down from San Francisco and up from San Jose. As well as giving those who come to visit Stanford University another nearby destination.

Please take a look at these sites in other cities and perhaps you'll get a better idea of what I'm proposing.

TANNERY ARTS CENTER in Santa Cruz

www.tanneryartscenter.org

THE BREWERY ART COLONY in Los Angeles

www.kcet.org/history-society/the-brewery-art-colony-from-craft-beersto-arts-and-crafts

BERGAMOT STATION in Santa Monica

<https://bergamotstation.com/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bergamot_\(arts_center\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bergamot_(arts_center))

STANLEY MARKETPLACE in Colorado

<http://stanleymarketplace.com>

STORY: TOP 40 MOST VIBRANT ARTS COMMUNITIES IN AMERICA

<http://mcs.smu.edu/artsresearch2014/arts-vibrancy-2018>

Thank you for your time.

Jon Kinyon

From: Lessa Bouchard <lessabouchard@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2019 6:36 PM
To: Historic Resources Board
Subject: Please insist upon a meaningful CEQA analysis of The Cannery/Fry's site

Dear HRB members:

I agree wholeheartedly with Becky Sanders, and the research supporting these suggestions that combine multiple goals and values of the city. Palo Alto is a leader in this kind of visionary thinking and hopefully will continue to challenge and set new standards for sustainability, preservation of heritage and quality of life. Here's what she says.

"Please honor the historic significance of the Fry's site to all of Palo Alto. The Cannery's owner Thomas Foon Chew founded Mayfield's first industrial site and helped put "Palo Alto" on the map. He made significant contributions to the canning industry and was a cultural hero for refusing to be limited by the pressures of the Chinese exclusion act. Preserving as much of the buildings as possible and incorporating them into the new design will honor this rich heritage while creating a new development that we can all be proud of.

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Thank you, Becky and the neighborhood organizations that work hard to keep us all informed!

Lessa Bouchard

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Lessa Bouchard

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Art is exactitude winged by intuition.~ Paul Klee