

Los Altos

Halsey House



September 21, 2021

Purpose of Tonight's Meeting

To obtain City Council direction for the future treatment option(s) of the Halsey House located in Redwood Grove.



Background

- Current condition of the building
- Past public meetings
- City Council May 25, 2021, identified four options for consideration and provided direction to secure additional information on the project
- Four options included:
 - Total rehabilitation of the Halsey House
 - Partial rehabilitation and partial demolition of the building
 - Complete demolition of the structure
 - The mothballing of the Halsey House



Background Continued

- Page & Turnbull completed the Historic Resource Evaluation on the structure and the families who have lived there in the past.
- David J. Powers and Associates prepared a memo addressing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) considerations for Council deliberation.
- The Architectural Resources Group developed a feasibility study noting specific rehabilitation elements and a cost estimate for each of the four options Council requested at its May 25, 2021, meeting.
- City Planning staff have prepared a memo addressing possible floodplain considerations at the site.



Key Observations

- The Halsey House is a local historic landmark which is eligible for State recognition as a historic resource
- Any demolition of all or a portion of the structure will trigger the requirement for an Environmental Impact Report
- Restoration and or mothballing of the house in full compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards would be exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Exemption Category 31 assuming no other environmental impacts are identified during the planning process

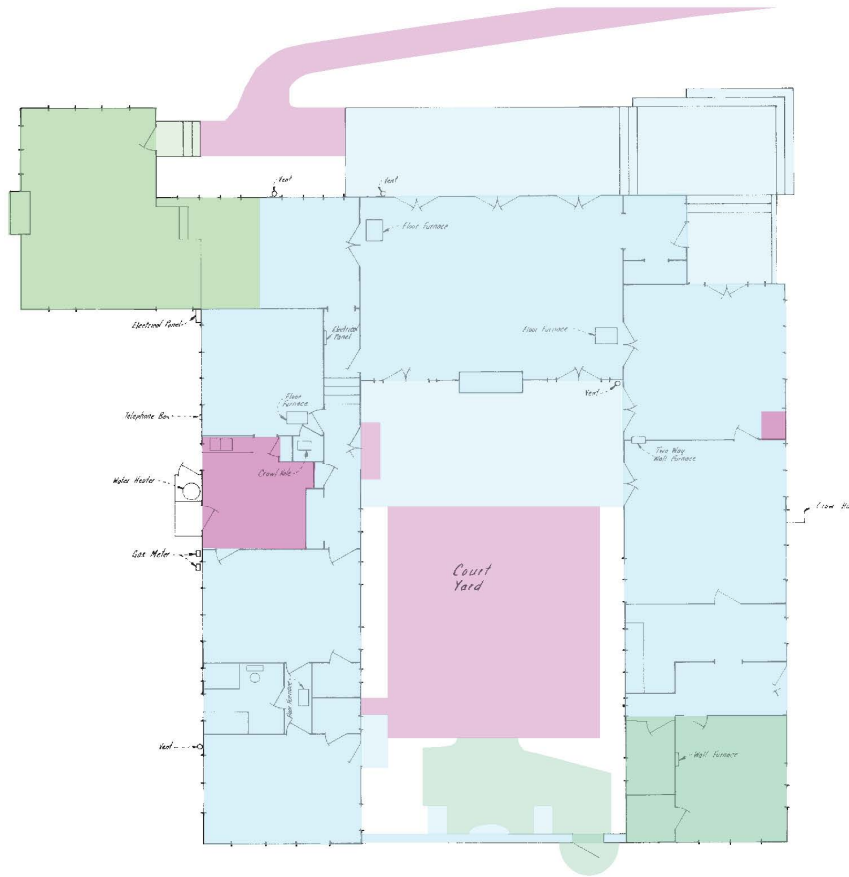


Key Observations Continued

- A phased approach to the full rehabilitation of the Halsey House would allow for the preservation of the historic resource, the rehabilitation of the main portion of the house, the mothballing of the two side bedroom wings, and for possible fundraising efforts to continue for the rehabilitation of the remaining bedroom wings.
- Actual use of the building did not impact the requirement of the need for an EIR should structural changes occur to the building.



Halsey House Historical Elements



CONSTRUCTION CHRONOLOGY

ORIGINAL 1923 CONSTRUCTION
Features that date to the original construction of the residence in 1923.

ALTERATIONS BY THE HALSEY FAMILY
Early alterations and additions to the Halsey House were completed by the Halsey family in 1928 and at an unknown date circa the 1930s.

1928 Addition

Circa 1930s Addition/Alterations

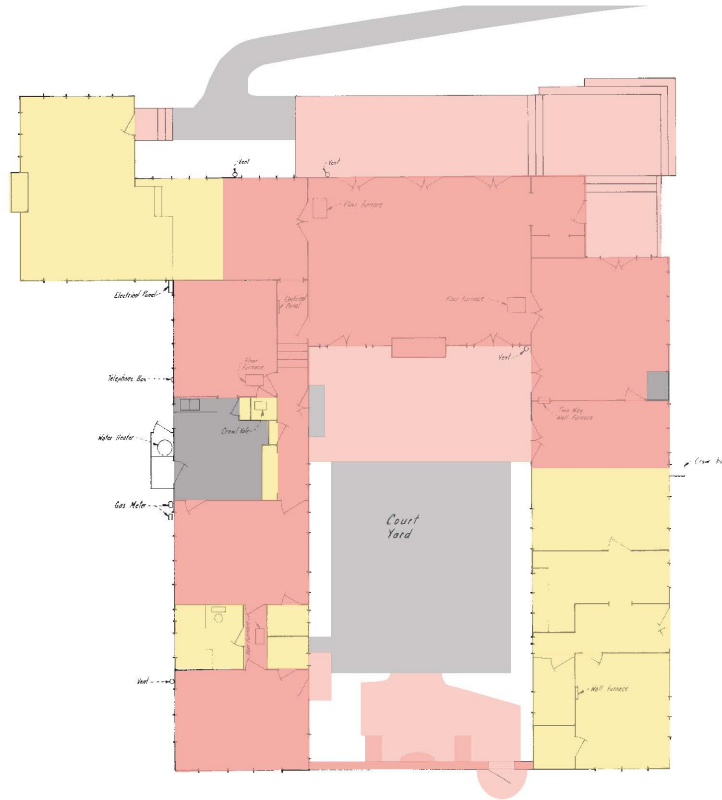
ALTERATIONS POST-1945
Alterations that have taken place since the end of the Halsey family's ownership of the house and the period of significance.



Notes:
Lighter hues of chronology categories show built features of the courtyard and landscape.

White space within diagrams denotes planting areas and dirt areas without built features.

Significance Diagram - Overview



CATEGORIES OF SIGNIFICANCE

- SIGNIFICANT/HISTORIC**
Features or spaces that date to the period of significance (1923-1945) and are the most historically significant components of the building.
- CONTRIBUTING**
Features or spaces that date to the period of significance (1923-1945) and are characterized by a lesser degree of significance (such as service spaces, closets, etc.) or are slightly altered or replaced elements. They cumulatively contribute to the overall historic character of the building.
- NON-CONTRIBUTING**
Features or spaces that were constructed after the period of significance (post-1945), have been significantly altered, or do not contribute to the overall historic character of the building. These features are not considered historic.



Notes:
Lighter hues of significance categories show built features of the courtyard and landscape.
White space within diagrams denotes planting and dirt areas without built features.

Significance Diagrams

HALSEY HOUSE - LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA

Base drawings: Floor plan dated April 1978 provided by the City of Los Altos. Minor revisions were made by Page & Turnbull to reflect the existing building in 2021. Drawings are not to scale and may contain some inaccuracies.

PAGE&TURNBULL



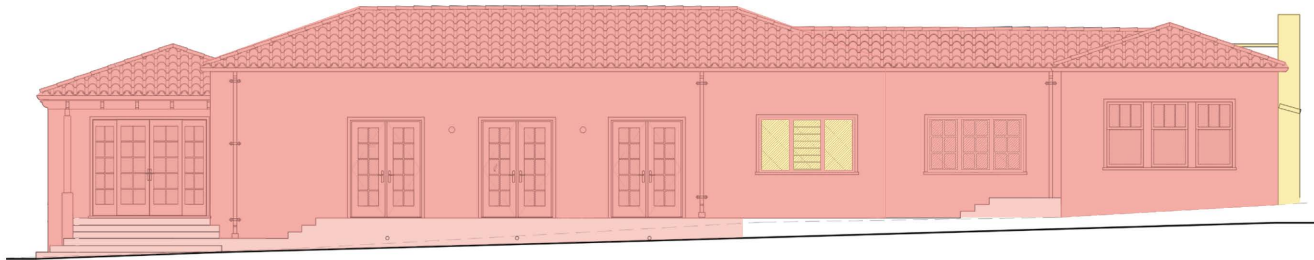
Significance Diagram – North/South View

CATEGORIES OF SIGNIFICANCE

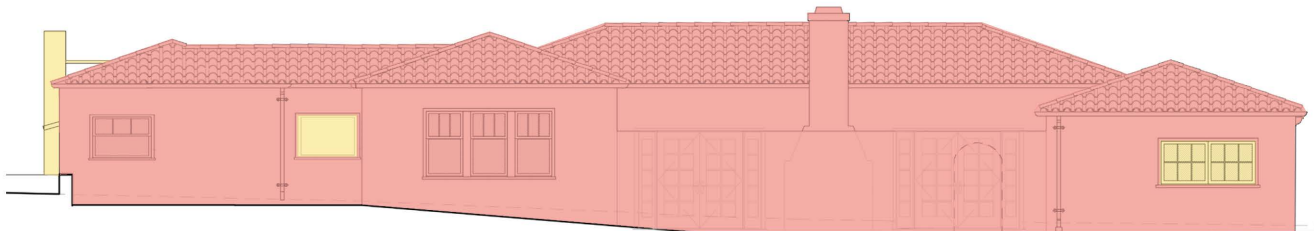
■ SIGNIFICANT/HISTORIC

■ CONTRIBUTING

■ NON-CONTRIBUTING



PRIMARY (NORTH) FACADE



SOUTH FACADE

Significance Diagrams

HALSEY HOUSE - LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA

Base drawings based on the 2015 proposed project drawings by M. Sandoval Architects, altered to reflect the existing building by Page & Turnbull, 2021. Drawings are not to scale and may contain some inaccuracies.

PAGE&TURNBULL



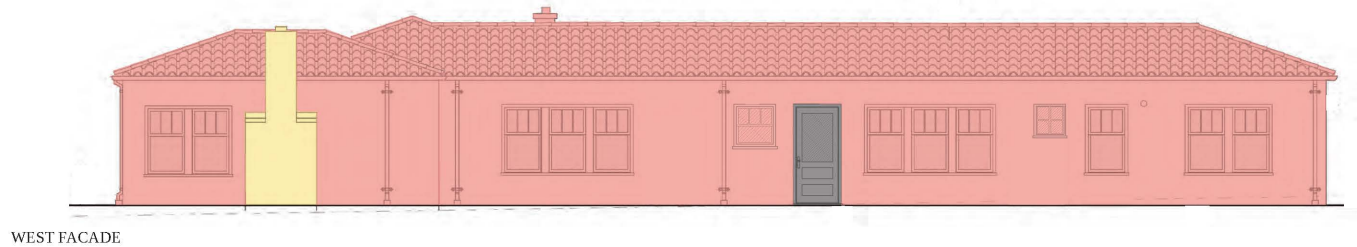
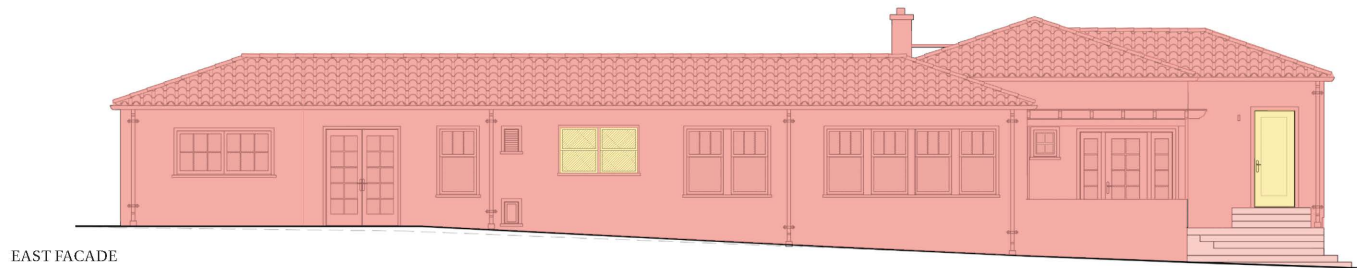
Significance Diagram – East/West View

CATEGORIES OF SIGNIFICANCE

■ SIGNIFICANT/HISTORIC

■ CONTRIBUTING

■ NON-CONTRIBUTING



Significance Diagrams

HALSEY HOUSE - LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA

Base drawings based on the 2015 proposed project drawings by M. Sandoval Architects, altered to reflect the existing building by Page & Turnbull, 2021. Drawings are not to scale and may contain some inaccuracies.

PAGE&TURNBULL



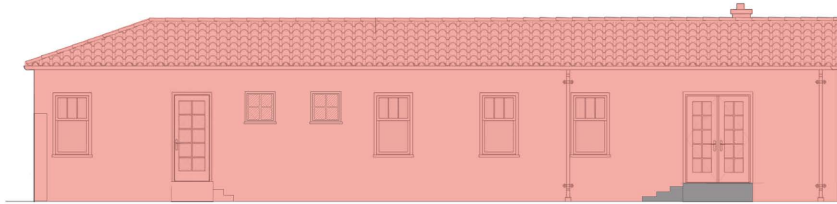
Significance Diagram - Courtyard

CATEGORIES OF SIGNIFICANCE

■ SIGNIFICANT/HISTORIC

■ CONTRIBUTING

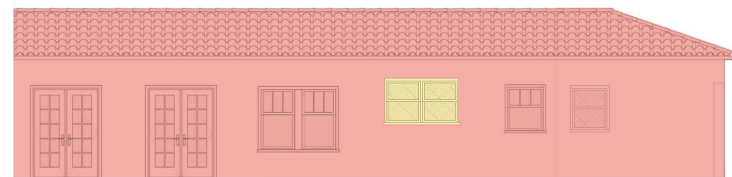
■ NON-CONTRIBUTING



EAST-FACING WALL OF REAR COURTYARD



SOUTH-FACING WALL OF REAR COURTYARD



WEST-FACING WALL OF REAR COURTYARD

Significance Diagrams

HALSEY HOUSE - LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA

Base drawings based on the 2015 proposed project drawings by M. Sandoval Architects, altered to reflect the existing building by Page & Turnbull, 2021. Drawings are not to scale and may contain some inaccuracies.

PAGE&TURNBULL



Options for Halsey House Structure

- **Option 1. Full Rehabilitation of the Halsey House (at once or phased)**
- Description: This option completes full rehabilitation work on the house structure, minor interior modifications to allow for the new restroom, kitchen, accessibility upgrades both within and to the site itself.
- CEQA Consideration: This option is Categorically Exempt under CEQA Section 15331 Class 31 and would not result in any delay in the project process assuming no other environmental impacts are identified in the project planning stage.
- Pros: This option allows for the preservation and use of the historic resource and future recreation program use of the structure.
- Cons: The total rehabilitation of the Halsey House may take several years to complete and would likely require private or grant funds. Additionally, there would be possible project cost increases due to inflation or other factors if the construction is delayed or completed in phases.
- Additional Information: The total known costs to rehabilitate the Halsey House in this manner are \$4,666,456*.



Options for Halsey House Structure Cont.

- **Option 2. Partial Rehabilitation and Partial Demolition of the Halsey House.**
- Description: This option rehabilitates the main section of the Halsey House and demolishes the two-bedroom wings.
- CEQA Consideration: This option would cause substantial alterations to the historic structure and would require the development of an Environmental Impact Report including possible project alternatives and require all feasible mitigation measures to reduce the impact on the historic structure prior to proceeding with a construction project.
- Pros: Allows retention of a portion of the historic Halsey House while allowing for alternative use of the space surrounding the house itself.
- Cons: This option eliminates several of the character features which contribute to the structure's historic value. It adds cost and possible time delays due to the EIR requirements. Requires Council to develop a list of findings/determinations to be outlined in the EIR document.
- Additional Information: The total known costs of this option are \$3,260,842*.



Options for Halsey House Structure Cont.

- **Option 3. Full Demolition of the Halsey House**
- Description: This option would demolish the historic Halsey House in its entirety.
- CEQA Consideration: Similar to Option 2, this option would cause substantial alterations to the historic structure and require the development of an Environmental Impact Report including possible project alternatives prior to the development of a construction project.
- Pros: Removes the Halsey House structure from Redwood Grove and allows for alternative site use.
- Cons: This option would permanently remove an historic resource from Los Altos and eliminate the possibility of future generations from utilizing the resource.
- Additional information: The total known cost of this option is \$288,990*.



Options for Halsey House Structure Cont.

Option 4 Mothballing of the Halsey House

Description: This option would stabilize the existing condition of the Halsey House to prevent further deterioration of the structure itself.

CEQA Consideration: This option is Categorically Exempt under CEQA Section 15331 Class 31 and would not result in any delay in the project process assuming no other environmental impacts are identified in the project planning process.

Pros: Stabilizes the existing historic structure and allows for possible rehabilitation efforts to occur at some point in the future.

Cons: This option does not address current opportunities nor the long-term plan for the historic Halsey House. The structure would still require on-going maintenance and incur costs, meaning an annual appropriation for upkeep would be necessary.

Additional information: The total known costs for this option are \$246,750*..



Council Question Responses

1. What would trigger a “delisting” process?

Response: The following section of the Los Altos Municipal Code addresses terminating the designation of a historic resource or historic landmark: 12.44.090 - Termination of designation.

The only legitimate reason for terminating the designation of a historic resource or historic landmark is when clear evidence is presented that shows the resource no longer meets the criteria of Section 12.44.040 due to loss of integrity and/or historic significance.

It should be noted that, even if it were possible, delisting the Halsey House from the City’s list of Historic Landmarks would not change any requirements under CEQA. Because the structure has been deemed eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR), it qualifies as a historic resource under CEQA regardless of whether it is officially listed in the CRHR or the City’s list of Historic Landmarks. DJP&A



Council Question Responses Cont.

- 6. What would be the impact on the redwood grove with each of the four options?

Response: Page & Turnbull's August 2021 Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) determined that the Halsey House and Redwood Grove are individually eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources. The impact to the historic integrity and character defining features of the Redwood Grove resulting from the potential removal of the Halsey House has not been analyzed. A qualified historian would need to complete an impact assessment to determine whether the removal or partial demolition of the Halsey House would alter the historic status of the Redwood Grove. – DJP&A



Council Question Responses Cont.

7. What does “adaptive reuse” mean with each option?

Response: The term “adaptive reuse” is commonly defined as “the process of reusing an existing building for a purpose other than which it was originally built.” Only options 1 (Full Rehabilitation) and Option 2 (Partial Rehabilitation) would be considered adaptive reuse, where the residential structure is being repurposed for general recreation programming. – ARG

8. Does “adaptive reuse” meet the Secretary of the Interior requirements?

Response: It depends. According to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Standards), the term “rehabilitation” is “the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values.”



Council Question Responses Cont.

Thus, rehabilitation acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses. Whether adaptive reuse meets the Standards does not necessarily depend upon the nature of the new use to which a property is put. Rather, the adaptive reuse meets the standards if “those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values” are preserved. Frequently, adaptive reuse is done in a manner that does not meet the Standards, for example, because full rehabilitation is cost prohibitive. However, adaptive reuse can be done in manner that meets the Standards. -ARG



Council Question Responses Cont.

- 13. Does the contemplation of a new structure, regardless of what it is, change the CEQA or legal risk analysis for a full or partial demolition?
- Response: Contemplation of a new structure would not alter the CEQA risk analysis in the sense that full or partial demolition would result in a significant unavoidable CEQA impact regardless of whether a new structure is proposed. However, the impacts of constructing and operating the new structure would also need to be considered in the CEQA document prepared for the project. The CEQA analysis would need to include an assessment from a historian regarding potential impacts of the new structure on the historic status of the Redwood Grove. - DJP&A
- Further, if the City does not follow the CEQA requirements outlined by DJP&A for the four options, then the City may be exposed to legal risk. – JH



Questions and Answers

Consultants with us tonight include:

Barret Reiter and Christina Dikas from Page & Turnbull

Mike Lisenbee from David J. Powers & Associates

Lisa Yergovich from The Architectural Resources Group

Staff available tonight include:

City Attorney Jolie Houston

Community Development Director Jon Biggs

Assistant City Manager Jon Maginot

Associate Planner Sean Gallegos

Special Projects Manager Dave Brees



Discussion and Direction

