

Fillmore Cultural Heritage Board

Staff Report and Recommendations

Agenda of September 20, 2021, Item 12a

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency • Planning Division

800 S. Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009-1740 • (805) 654-5042 • vcrma.org/divisions/planning

I. APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER:

Applicant/Architect:

Dave Anderson
Anderson Kulwiec Appleby Architects
854 E. Main Street, Suite #100
Santa Paula, CA 93060

Property Owner Contact:

Devi Nallamala, Professional Engineer
Project Manager
Engineering Services
Ventura County Public Works Agency
800 S. Victoria Avenue #1670
Ventura, CA 93009

II. REQUEST:

A request for a Certificate of Review (COR) (Cultural Heritage Ordinance (CHO) §1364-12) and Section 106 environmental review for the construction of a 2,494-square-foot, one-story addition to the Fillmore Library to accommodate a new meeting room/innovation lab, classroom, reading room, computer room, study rooms, and toilet rooms. The scope of work includes construction of a decorative metal fence at the front entry, new paved areas, and various structural upgrades and site improvements. Further, the applicant proposes to remove an existing rear courtyard area and surrounding concrete block wall, various concrete curbs, steps, a portion of the existing sidewalk on site, and five existing trees. (Supervisory District 3 – Long) (Case No. CH21-0025).

III. LOCATION AND PARCEL INFORMATION:

502 Second Street, Fillmore, CA 93015
Assessor's Parcel Number (APN): 050-0-182-070
Historic Designation: undesignated

The Fillmore Library is a 2,960-square-foot, one-story, public library building located on an approximately 0.46-acre parcel in the City of Fillmore. The building, constructed from 1954 to 1955, was designed by master architect Roy C. Wilson and exhibits elements of Mid-Century Modern-style architecture. Figure 1 depicts the location of the project site in the broader vicinity, Figure 2 provides a closer image of the project site, Figure 3 provides a view of the library's south and east elevations, and Figure 4 provides a view of the building's north and east elevations.

Figure 1 – Regional Vicinity



Figure 2 – Aerial View of Site

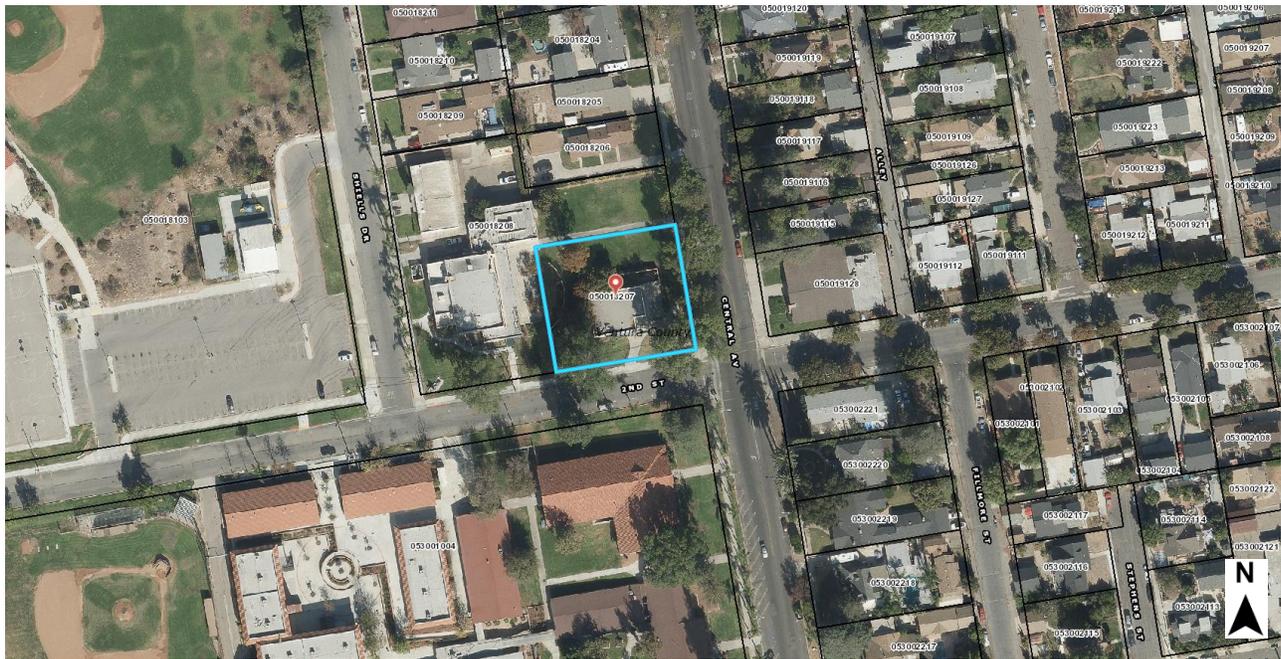


Figure 3 – Fillmore Library, South and East Elevations (looking northwest)



Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc, 2020

Figure 4 – Fillmore Library, North and East Elevations (looking southwest)



Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc, 2020

IV. PROJECT SCOPE:

The applicant requests the Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) approve a COR and provide Section 106 environmental review for the construction of a 2,494-square-foot, one-story addition to the Fillmore Library to accommodate a new meeting room/innovation lab, classroom, reading room, computer room, study rooms, and toilet rooms. The scope of work includes construction of a decorative metal fence at the front entry, new paved areas, and various structural upgrades and site improvements. Further, the applicant proposes to remove an existing rear courtyard area and surrounding concrete block wall, various concrete curbs, steps, a portion of the existing sidewalk on site, and five existing trees. The building would be upgraded to meet current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility and safety requirements and all systems would be addressed, including mechanical, electrical, plumbing, fire protection, and structural systems.

The existing library building's west, south, and east elevations would be retained in place and the proposed addition would connect to the existing building off its north elevation. The one-story addition would include a flat, bi-level roofline with a maximum height of approximately 17 feet. The addition would have a stucco-clad exterior, new doors would be aluminum-frame with transoms on the east and north elevations, and windows would be fixed and aluminum-frame, oriented in a grid pattern. The decorative steel fence and gate proposed at the front entry would match the existing fence on the building's side yard. Following implementation of site improvements, the property would be re-landscaped. The proposed project is further described across the site plans, elevations, and section views included in Exhibit 1 – Architectural Plans.

Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is necessary because the County of Ventura is seeking to use federal funding approved by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Therefore, the proposed project is a federal undertaking that could potentially affect historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA).

V. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

In October 2020, the property owner's consultant, Rincon Consultants, Inc, evaluated the Fillmore Library building, in addition to the adjacent Fillmore-Piru Veterans Memorial Building at 511 Second Street, in a Historic Properties Assessment ("historic assessment") (refer to Exhibit 2 – Historic Properties Assessment).¹

¹ Rincon Consultants, Inc., *Historic Properties Assessment and Finding of No Historic Properties Affected for*

According to the historic assessment, the Fillmore Library building was designed by Santa Paula-based master architect Roy C. Wilson and constructed from 1954 to 1955.² In or around 1915, Wilson established the first architectural practice in Ventura County and designed a number of County Landmark-eligible buildings over the course of his career. The library building exhibits elements of Mid-Century Modern-style architecture, including a horizontal emphasis, projecting overhangs, expansive rear windows, fieldstone cladding, and overall lack of ornament.³ The property was evaluated in the historic assessment against the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) and determined ineligible for listing.⁴ However, the property was not evaluated against the criteria for listing as a Ventura County Cultural Heritage Site.

The existing building has a flat, bi-level roof with rolled composition sheeting and is built of concrete block construction with limited cladding consisting of two expanses of fieldstone veneer at the building's main entrance.⁵ The main entrance includes a non-original, glazed metal door surrounded by fixed metal-framed lights.⁶ Windows are placed irregularly on all elevations and include steel casements, a wood-sash picture window on the east elevation, a rear (north) window wall, and glass block clerestories.⁷ A shoulder-height concrete-block wall encloses a patio on the west elevation. Alterations are limited but include a non-original public entry door.⁸ Approached via concrete paths, the building is set back considerably from the public right-of-way. Outside the walkways and building footprint, the level corner lot is landscaped with a lawn, mature trees, and ornamental shrubs.⁹

VI. CHO ANALYSIS AND STAFF CONCLUSIONS:

The proposed project is currently undesignated but appears potentially eligible as a Ventura County Cultural Heritage Site due to its Mid-Century Modern-style design by master architect Roy C. Wilson. Pursuant to CHO § 1364-12, the CHB is required to review, comment, and provide advice on proposed projects for permits to construct, change, alter, modify, remodel, remove or significantly affect any Designated Cultural Heritage Sites or those potentially eligible for

the Fillmore Library Expansion Project, City of Fillmore, Ventura County, California, Rincon Consultants Project No. 20-10248, October 2020.

² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid.
⁵ Ibid.
⁶ Ibid.
⁷ Ibid.
⁸ Ibid.
⁹ Ibid.

such designation. The CHB’s purview in this matter involves review of the proposed project and the provision of comment and advice on proposed actions. In addition, the CHB’s purview as part of Section 106 environmental review involves determining whether the proposed project would have an adverse effect to a historic resource.

CHB Staff determined the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (SOI Standards)¹⁰ may be helpful to the CHB in conducting its analysis of the subject property. Additionally, the National Park Service’s *Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Building: Preservation Concerns*¹¹ may be of use during the CHB’s review. A comprehensive evaluation of the proposed project’s conformance to the SOI Standards is not included as part of the COR evaluation, which involves provision of comment and advice on proposed actions. However, Rehabilitation Standard 9 and 10 apply specifically to new additions:

(9) “New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.”

(10) “New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.”

CHB Staff determined the proposed addition appears consistent with the SOI Standards and NPS guidance. Namely, the existing library building would be maintained and most character-defining features would be maintained, including its horizontal emphasis, projecting overhangs, fieldstone cladding, and overall lack of ornament. Further, the proposed addition is of a scale and massing consistent with the current library building. The design of the addition sets the addition back from the wall plane of the existing building and avoids any unification of the two volumes into a single architectural whole. In addition, the addition respects the architectural character associated with the existing building through its proposed flat, bi-level roofline and use of building materials in the same color range and value as those of the existing building.

¹⁰ National Park Service, *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>.

¹¹ National Park Service, *Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Building: Preservation Concerns*, August 2010, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/14-exterior-additions.htm>.

As summarized in the historic assessment, the property was determined ineligible for listing in the National Register and, therefore, does not qualify as a historic property under Section 106 of the NHPA. Therefore, a finding of no historic properties affected was recommended in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.4(d)(1). As a result, the proposed undertaking would not result in an effect or significant impact and no further management practices are recommended for built environment resources. There appears to be no reason to disagree with the historic consultant's recommendation that the proposed undertaking would not result in an adverse effect to a historic property. The proposed undertaking appears consistent with the SOI Standards and NPS guidance based on the above considerations.

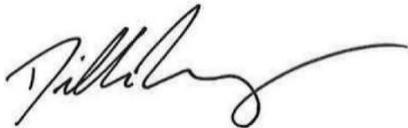
VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No public comment regarding this item has been received to date.

VIII. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

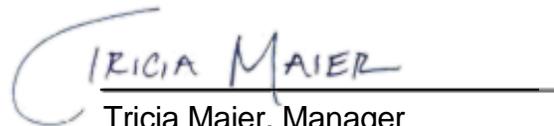
1. **CONDUCT** public hearing, **RECEIVE** oral and written testimony, and **CONSIDER** the Planning Division staff report and all exhibits and attachments hereto;
2. **FIND** by motion based on the evidence presented to agree with the Finding of No Adverse Effect for the proposed undertaking; and
3. **REVIEW** and **COMMENT** on the proposed project in accordance with CHO §1364-12 based on the preceding evidence and analysis.

Prepared by:



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Reviewed by:



Tricia Maier, Manager
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(805) 654-2685

Exhibits:

- Exhibit 1 – Architectural Plans
- Exhibit 2 – Historic Properties Assessment