



PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE

The following is public correspondence received by the City Clerk's Office after the posting of the original agenda. Individual contact information has been redacted for privacy. This may *not* be a comprehensive collection of the public correspondence, but staff makes its best effort to include all correspondence received to date.

To send correspondence to the City Council, on matters listed on the agenda please email PublicComment@losaltosca.gov

From: [Julia](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Keep orchard, please
Date: Sunday, June 25, 2023 4:09:49 PM

Please do whatever it takes to keep the orchard intact. It is part of our town and needs to remain.

Thank you,

Julia Freda-Eskenazi
8 Alma Court

Timeline of Historic Designations of the Los Altos Civic Center Apricot Orchard

- 1952 Voters approve incorporation of City of Los Altos. Los Altos becomes first new city on the San Francisco Peninsula following World War II.
- 1954 On the advice of architect Frank Lloyd Wright (*Los Altos Town Crier*, November 30, 1977: "Pioneer Home Which Will House Los Altos History Will be Dedicated on City Birthday"), the City of Los Altos buys Gilbert Smith's apricot orchard for new Civic Center. Smith and his wife retain apricot crop rights and a life estate in their home on the property. Sale includes a covenant that there will continue to be an apricot orchard on the property, "in perpetuity."
- 1957 City of Los Altos retains Smith apricot orchard in Civic Center plans. "With the rapid disappearance of the apricot orchards in the area due to home building, it is planned to preserve a representative stand of this orchard in the eventual Civic Center development." (Joseph Salameda, 1957 Annual Report of the Los Altos Historical Association.)
- 1959 Los Altos Civic Center opens. Civic Center Apricot Orchard is retained, surrounding civic center's buildings.
- 1962 Los Altos Civic Center Apricot Orchard listed on the Santa Clara County Inventory of Historical Landmarks.
- 1970 Los Altos City Council votes to negotiate apricot crop rights from Mrs. Smith (after the death of Gilbert Smith in 1966) and to invest in restoring and preserving the Civic Center Apricot Orchard as a living memorial to Gilbert Smith. (*Los Altos Town Crier* 1/28/1970.)
- 1974 Los Altos City Council creates the seven-member Historical Commission to oversee the opening of the Smith History House and to draft the city's Historical Preservation ordinances to protect the Smith History House and the adjacent heritage Civic Center Apricot Orchard along with future landmarks.
- 1975 "Smith House and Apricot Grove" appear on Santa Clara County's Heritage Resource Inventory.
- 1977 Civic Center Apricot Orchard is given City of Los Altos, Historical Commission and the Association of the Los Altos Historical Museum landmark/recognition designation.
- 1978 City of Los Altos wins Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commission Award for Excellence for preserving the Smith house and the Civic Center Apricot Orchard.

- 1978 Los Altos City Council passes Ordinance 78-16 designating portions of the Civic Center Apricot Orchard a Historical Landmark. This establishes the process to be followed in designating portions of the Orchard as a Historical Landmark. The Los Altos Historical Commission is named the key provider of research and advice on all phases of the project, including any future alterations, if any, to the Orchard.
- 1979 Smith House and Civic Center Apricot Orchard again on the Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory.
- 1981 The Los Altos City Council approves Resolution 81-23. This action follows the process created in 1978 and re-designates the Civic Center Apricot Orchard area surrounding City Hall and the Los Altos Police Station as a Historical Landmark Orchard.
- 1982 Smith House and Civic Center Apricot Orchard again on the Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory.
- 1987 Civic Center Apricot Orchard at the Los Altos Civic Center appears on California State Parks Office of Historic Preservation, Points of Interest.
- 1990 The Los Altos City Council approves Ordinance 90-225, Chapter 8. This lists many details and descriptions regarding the preservation of the Civic Center Apricot Orchard as a designated landmark. The Historical Commission is again named the key provider of information and advice to the Planning Commission and the City Council on these matters. Also included in this ordinance are the criteria of what constitutes a historical landmark and how that designation can be altered or changed by the City Council.
- 1991 The City Council passes Resolution 91-31, operating within the constraints of Ordinance 90-225, which modifies the Civic Center Apricot Orchard (walkways were added and the front section of the orchard on San Antonio Road was added to the designation) to create the Civic Center Apricot Orchard as it appears today.
- 1999 The Civic Center Apricot Orchard is given the City of Los Altos, Historical Commission and the Association of the Los Altos Heritage Museum landmark/recognition.
- 2000 "Purchase agreement with Gilbert Smith was to keep apricot orchard in perpetuity according to Don McDonald," *Los Altos Town Crier*, October 4, 2000.
- 2011 The Los Altos Civic Center Apricot Orchard is honored by the City of Los Altos and the County of Santa Clara Parks & Recreation Department's Historical Heritage Grant Program.

(Summation of documents on file in the archives of the City of Los Altos and the Los Altos History Museum, the *Los Altos Town Crier*, and from files compiled by the late chair of the Los Altos Historical Commission, Lee Lynch.
Prepared by Robin Chapman, June 21, 2016)

From: [Catherine Nunes](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Fwd: Jun 27 Item 13 and 17: Planning and Resourcing Landmark Heritage Orchard
Date: Sunday, June 25, 2023 4:22:59 PM

Please include letter in public comment packet for June 27 meeting, dealing with Items 13 and 17. Thank you.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Catherine Nunes** <nunescath@gmail.com>
Date: Sat, Jun 24, 2023 at 12:14 PM
Subject: Jun 27 Item 13 and 17: Planning and Resourcing Landmark Heritage Orchard
To: Gabriel Engeland <gengeland@losaltosca.gov>, <council@losaltosca.gov>

For the last 30 years as a Los Altos resident, I have watched a steady stream of development proposals threaten to encroach on our most valuable historic landmark, the Los Altos Heritage Orchard. I was delighted to hear that the city is planning to restore this once-beautiful City Historic Landmark and designated county and state Historical Point of Interest.

I salute the city in these efforts as the Orchard has been sorely neglected and is in need of revitalization, City resources and re-education of staff and groups on just how its historic Landmark status protects the property boundaries, land use terms, appearance, etc requiring active City stewardship and preservation so as not to jeopardize the City's position in the state.

It has come to my attention that another group, the Santa Clara Library branch in Los Altos, is proposing a patio project expansion with preliminary drawings encroaching into the designated lands along with the removal of several of the trees in the Orchard. This seems premature without the benefit of an understanding of the landmark provisions, land use regulations, an orchard plan, and clarity on how the City and staff are at this point with an agenda item #13 asking the Council for approval involving the landmark property.

The Orchard's boundary has been modified only once since it was named a Historic Landmark in 1981. That was in 1991 and that required a public hearing and review and vote by the Historic Commission and a public hearing and review and vote by the Los Altos City Council and, because it is a Historic Landmark created under CEQA and so registered with the state, the state had to be informed as well.

If Santa Clara County and the Santa Clara County Library sitting on loaned City of Los Altos land, wants to take any portion or encroach upon the land deemed part of the landmark orchard or its trees, the state protocols under CEQA and historical landmarks have to be followed to be in compliance as a certified local government.

This isn't a deal where trees and boundaries can come and go willy-nilly, or sketches

can be used as proxies for the council's approval to greenlight. The steps and protocol for changing key elements and provisions of a landmark require additional land-use authority resources and public input, not mentioned in any staff report or planning docs.

The rules if not followed could jeopardize the city's status as a Certified Local Government under CEQA, a status which, if lost, would no longer allow the city to review and vote on its own Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs). This provision was included in the law because CEQA acknowledges that history is a key element in our environment that is worth saving for future generations.

I do salute the city's desire to restore our Landmark Heritage Orchard and step-up maintenance, watering and vermin/pest control, along with public beautification and education, another step to that effort included for approval with Item 17. Let's work together to improve this great asset.

Sincerely,

Catherine Nunes

64 Hillview Ave, Los Altos

Publisher, *Edible Silicon Valley*

regional food and lifestyle magazine and media

From: [Roberta Phillips](#)
To: [Public Comment](#); [City Council](#)
Subject: Historic Apricot Orchard Timeline for Historic Designation
Date: Sunday, June 25, 2023 2:03:42 PM
Attachments: [Timeline of Historic Designations for Civic Center Apricot Orchard.doc](#)

Drear Council Members

Please see the attached Timeline for Historic Designation for the Heritage Orchard in Los Altos

Sincerely

Riberta Phillips

650-941-6940