



PALM SPRINGS PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

October 26, 2009

Historic Site Preservation Board (All members)
3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Subject: Historic District Status for Royal Hawaiian Estates

Dear HSPB Member:

We strongly and enthusiastically support the application of Mr. Bill Lewallen to have the Wexler/Harrison-designed Royal Hawaiian Estates (RHE) (1960) designated the city's first residential historic district under Chapter 8.05 of the city's municipal code. Additionally, we would like to reiterate some important points we hope you will consider during your upcoming hearing on this subject:

- The RHE is an architecturally significant collection of intact Polynesian-inspired modernist structures with multiple owners.
- The applicant has repeatedly stated verbally and in writing his desire that the RHE be considered an historic district rather than a Class 1 historic site.
- The city's planning director stated that an historic district seemed "to make more sense" versus a Class 1 historic site (September 2009 HSPB meeting).
- There is support for historic district status by 75+% of the affected homeowners.
- There is the necessary "complexity" for an historic district by virtue of the number of structures (12) and number of individual homeowners (40+) (see attachment).
- RHE is similar in scaling to other smaller California historic districts (e.g., the Lowena Drive and Linden Avenue Historic Districts in Long Beach).
- The historic district designation of RHE is consistent with the guidance given by city council during its February 2009 joint study session with the HSPB.

Recognizing that the HSPB has considerable latitude in this determination, we would encourage you to seize this opportunity to recommend to the city council the creation of the city's first residential historic district.

If you have any questions, please contact the foundation at (760) 837-7117 or via email at info@pspreservationfoundation.org.

Sincerely,

Ron Marshall
President

Attachment: Structures vs. Ownership "Complexity" Graph