

Appendix E

Tree Aging Report

MEMORANDUM

To: Kristopher Forsythe
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Project: 86 South Fair Oaks, Hotel Green Apartments

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Project No: 09190

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Date: June 7, 2013

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Remarks:

ARG has reviewed the findings of the draft Tree Aging study by Jan C. Scow Consulting Arborists, LLC dated June 3, 2013. The study was commissioned by Goldrich & Kest Industries in order to provide an assessment of the ages of the trees on the Hotel Green Apartments project site, which lies within the historic property of the Hotel Green. As a part of this review, ARG examined historic photos in our research collection about the site with special attention to the project site. We reviewed the findings of the study and compared it to what we know about the historic character of the project site. We also estimated a period of significance for the historic Hotel Green property based on our prior research in order to put the estimated ages of the trees in the context of the project site's historical period.

No period of significance has yet been determined for the property. The National Register nomination was written before this became an obligatory part of a nomination. Our historic context report didn't make a call either. However, based on our research the period would begin in 1899 with the opening of the "West Annex," now the Castle Green. We believe that most qualified interpreters would place the end of the period of significance at end of the resort hotel era. We would argue for 1924, the year that the Castle Green became individually-owned apartment units and was no longer a hotel; this was presumably the year that the property was subdivided, though the date on the subdivision map we have is not legible. Trees that are more than 85 years old would then fall within the period of significance.

This age category would include six trees from the study's list:

5	Camphor	90-110 years old
13	Canary Island Date Palm	100-110 years old
11	California Fan Palm	75-85 years old
6	California Fan Palm	75-85 years old
35	Mexican Fan Palm	75-95 years old
37	Mexican Fan Palm	80-90 years old

In addition, four are close in age to this category at approximately 75 (range: 70 to 80) years old. These trees, it should be noted, are highly unlikely to be a part of any historic designed landscape from the prime resort era, and therefore from the period of significance, because they appear to the arborist to date to the 1930s. We have included them due to what the arborist has noted is the inexact nature of tree-dating (these specimens were noted to have an age class reliability of plus or minus 5%, or 3 to 4 years).

28	Mexican Fan Palm	70 to 80 years old
29	Mexican Fan Palm	70 to 80 years old
30	Mexican Fan Palm	70 to 80 years old
31	Mexican Fan Palm	70 to 80 years old

The study, then, identifies one broad-canopy, non-deciduous tree (the Camphor), six Mexican Fan Palms, two California Fan Palms, and one Canary Island Date Palm as being of or near an age that ARG determines could fall within the period of significance for the site.

The open area to the south of the Hotel Green (now the project site) was a historic planned landscape and can be seen in many historic images with paths, low plantings, trees, and other such features laid out according to the conventions of the day. This design worked in concert with that of Central Park, just across the street to the south. Although we have not done a thorough analysis, a review of the appearance of the garden in the historic images that we have seems to indicate that there are many features that there is no longer a trace within the project site. The trees that remain from the period do appear to be remnants of this design, but they are not significant enough on their own to give information about the overall design of the garden and they alone are not enough evidence of the design and (plant) material of the garden.

The remaining trees do not seem to be representative or typical of the range of trees that characterized the garden, given that all but one are palm trees, and palm trees do not dominate the historic photographs. One reason for this may be that the palms were very small and less visible when they were first planted, but many images show mature trees throughout the garden and relatively little sign of palm trees (which were present in early photos of Central Park, however).

The ages of the trees is certainly one issue, for it does appear that a number of them (some on the project site, and presumably some on the adjacent portion of the Castle Green property to the east) date to the property's period of significance. These trees would be considered historic features of the property. However, many of the trees that survive may not be from the period of significance but still do contribute to the historic character of the property.

The difference between these two categories of trees is that the former are presumed to be remnants of a historic designed landscape that is mostly gone from the site, as it has been altered over time and subject to different uses over time, including (particularly on the south half of the project site) a tennis court, a parking lot, and the site of a house; the latter category consists of trees that were not planted during the period of significance. They do, however, contribute to the setting of the historic buildings. One cannot expect a site whose period of significance is 110 to 85 years ago to have the same plants or even same replacement plants



(i.e., same species) that it had during that time in order to be considered significant. In this case, however, the hardscape, layout, and other more durable features of the garden that existed on the project site are also gone. Castle Green residents have noted that some of these remnants existed in the recent past, but that alterations and improvements to the landscaping on the project site in recent years resulted in their disappearance.

Our opinion, however, is summed up thus:

- 1) The historic trees and the trees of similar species are all contributing to the historic setting of the building, whether they were planted during the resort era or not. Historic setting is one of the seven aspects of historic integrity defined by the National Park Service in *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (pp. 44-45).
- 2) Although the trees that are older than 80-85 years old (noted in red and pink on the diagram) do appear to be remnants of the original garden design of this portion of the hotel property, the original garden design does not appear to be intact enough to merit an argument that the trees cannot be moved to other parts of the property for fear of destroying an intact historic designed landscape, or that constructing a building on the site will destroy a historic designed landscape (we do not believe that the garden or its design has high enough historic integrity (is intact enough) to merit that level of consideration).

In ARG's opinion, the removal of the trees and the construction of the building may be an issue for its potential impact to the historic setting of the Hotel Green and Castle Green. The EIR consultant will determine whether those impacts are significant per the CEQA guidelines. In ARG's opinion, the historic setting of the Castle Green is well served in its preservation by the buffer of its own property, on the east and west sides, and the vegetation thereon. The Hotel Green has long been served by a garden on its south-facing side, and this relationship will be effectively eliminated once the new building is constructed (even if Hotel Green residents have access to the small amount of public space that will be provided for the new apartments). However, we do not believe that the impact of this change is so great as to threaten or compromise the National Register eligibility of the property. ARG's design for the new building has been predicated on meeting the Standards in order to avoid such an impact.

Please see following page for an illustration of the older trees that Jan Scow identified in his study.



For reference, the above diagram shows trees over 70 years old on the project site, per the arborist's study. The color categories correspond to the same in the study:

Pink: oldest trees, at approximately 100-105 years of age

Red: next-oldest trees, at approximately 75 to 85 years of age

Yellow: Most likely not historic; appear to post-date the resort hotel era at approximately 70-75 years of age.

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Date: 6/3/13 rev 6/7/13
 To: Kristopher Forsythe
 From: Jan Scow
 Subject: Tree aging: 86 S. Fair Oaks

DRAFT

Tree #	Species	Status ¹	Cohort	Est. Age	~ Year	Range (years)	Reliability
1	Camphor	Protected specimen	C	70	1943	65-75 (10)	2b
2	Camphor	Protected specimen	C	70	1943	65-75 (10)	2b
3	Canary Island pine	Protected mature	E	50	1963	47-53 (6)	2a
4	Canary Island pine	Protected mature	E	50	1963	47-53 (6)	2a
5	Camphor	Protected specimen	A	100	1913	90-110 (20)	2b
6	California fan palm	Protected specimen	C	80	1933	75-85 (10)	1
7	Camphor	Protected specimen	E	45	1968	40-50 (10)	2b
9	Magnolia	Non-protected	E	40	1963	35-45 (10)	2b
10	Elm	Non-protected	E	40	1963	35-45 (10)	2b
11	California fan palm	Protected specimen	C	80	1933	75-85 (10)	1
12	Indian laurel fig	Protected specimen	D	65	1948	58-72 (14)	2b
13	Canary Isl date palm	Protected specimen	A	105	1908	100-110 (10)	1
14	Canary Isl date palm	Protected mature	F	20	1993	17-23 (6)	3
22	Queen palm	Protected street tree	F	11	2002	9-13 (4)	3
Tree #	Species	Status ²	Cohort	age	~ Year	Range (years)	Reliability
23	Queen palm	Protected street tree	F	11	2002	9-13 (4)	3
28	Mexican fan palm	Non-protected	C	75	1938	70-80 (10)	1

¹ As per sheet A1.16 "Protected Tree & Non-Protected Tree Mitigation Analysis"

² As per sheet A1.16 "Protected Tree & Non-Protected Tree Mitigation Analysis"

29	Mexican fan palm	Non-protected	C	75	1938	70-80 (10)	1
30	Mexican fan palm	Non-protected	C	75	1938	70-80 (10)	1
31	Mexican fan palm	Non-protected	C	75	1938	70-80 (10)	1
35	X Mexican fan palm	Protected mature	B	85	1928	75-95 (10)	4
36	X Mexican fan palm	Protected mature	E	45	1968	40-50 (10)	4
37	Mexican fan palm	Non-protected	B	85	1928	80-90 (10)	1
38	Mexican fan palm	Non-protected	D	65	1948	61-68 (7)	1

Age classes (years)
A = 100+
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60-69
E = 40-59
F = < 20

Reliability	
1	plus or minus 5%
2a	plus or minus 5%
2b	plus or minus 10%
3	plus or minus 3 years
4	plus or minus 10%

Reliability

1 Believed to be very reliable, based on palm growth rates. Within plus or minus 5%.

2a Believed to be very reliable, based on ring count vs. trunk diameter of same species from previous locations. Within plus or minus 5%.

2b Believed to be reliable, based on known approximate growth rates of woody trees. Within plus or minus 10%.

3 Believed to be reliable, based on palm growth rates, but some variables make dating less certain, including uncertain growth rates and very rapid growth rates of young palms. Within plus or minus 2-3 years.

4 Believed to be fairly reliable, based on palm growth rates, but some variables make dating less certain, including uncertainty about growth rates for hybridized Washingtonia palms. Within plus or minus 10%.