



**CITY OF LOS ALTOS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
January 12, 2016**

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Agenda Item # 6

SUBJECT: Approve request for waiver of the application fee for an overlay rezoning for a Historic District for Fallen Leaf Park

BACKGROUND

The City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 12.44) outlines the required process for establishing a historic district. Historic districts are established through the creation of an overlay zone that retains the underlying zoning. As part of the process to establish a Historic District, the Historical Commission, Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council need to find that the historic district has a sufficient level of physical integrity and historical significance to merit designation.

The process of designating districts may be initiated by property owners, the City Council, the Planning and Transportation Commission, the Historical Commission or the Community Development Director. Property owners may initiate the designation of a historic district by collecting signatures of at least 25% of the property owners along the frontage of all recorded lots abutting a specific geographic section of the City.

The Fallen Leaf Park Preservation neighborhood group is pursuing a historic district designation for 37 homes located in the Fallen Leaf Park Unit No. 2 tract along Clay Drive, Alexander Way and Fallen Leaf Lane (Attachment 1). The proposed district contains a high concentration of single-family homes built in the late 1960s in the mid-century Eichler style. Attachment 2 provides a map of the proposed historic district.

EXISTING POLICY

None

PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

None

DISCUSSION

As indicated in the attached petition, the neighborhood group has collected signatures from 75% of the property owners to petition for the overlay zone. The neighborhood group is requesting a waiver of the application fee required for a historic district application (Attachment 1).

The City has not previously adopted an overlay zone for a historic district; therefore, the proposed application may result in the first historic district for the City. The City has adopted single-story overlay zones for eight neighborhoods and adopted one overlay district related to land use for the Loyola Corners Neighborhood Commercial Center Specific Plan.

An application for a historic district with a zoning overlay district is required to be accompanied with the fee set by City Council resolution. The Fee Schedule authorizes a single-story overlay

rezoning application fee of \$4,500. Since a historic district application requires an overlay rezoning, the single-story overlay fee is the most comparable fee in the Fee Schedule.

Approval of a fee waiver request is consistent with the City's practice to encourage historic preservation in the community. This policy was codified under Section 12.44.190 of the Los Altos Municipal Code, which does not charge fees for the filing, processing or public noticing of any application for designation, historic alteration permits or advisory reviews of historic properties. Due to the public benefit associated with the potential project, waiver of the fees will be offset by community benefit if the project results in preservation of the houses within the proposed historic district. Therefore, the City Council may approve waiving fees associated with these permits or reviews as further incentive and assistance for property owners to pursue and support the designation of historic districts.

PUBLIC CONTACT

A copy of this report has been sent to the Fallen Leaf Park Preservation Project Leaders.

Posting of the meeting agenda serves as notice to the general public.

FISCAL/RESOURCE IMPACT

Approval of the fee waiver will result in the loss of \$4,500 in fees collected to offset City costs of processing the application.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

Approve request for waiver of the application fee for an overlay rezoning for a Historic District for Fallen Leaf Park

ALTERNATIVES

1. Do not waive the \$4,500 rezoning application fee
2. Waive a portion of the \$4,500 rezoning application fee

Prepared by: Sean K. Gallegos, Assistant Planner

Reviewed by: Steve Piasecki, Community Development Director (Interim)

Approved by: Marcia Somers, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Fee Waiver request submitted by the Fallen Leaf Park Preservation neighborhood group dated November 30, 2015
2. Map of proposed Eichler Historic District
3. Petitions for Historic District Designation

Approve request for waiver of the application fee for an overlay rezoning for a Historic District for Fallen Leaf Park

FALLEN LEAF PARK PRESERVATION

1674 CLAY DRIVE LOS ALTOS, CA 94024



To Whom it May Concern:

We write on behalf of Fallen Leaf Park Preservation, a neighborhood group in South Los Altos that is working to protect the architectural integrity of a neighborhood of mid-century homes. We've secured support from more than 70% of the 37 homes in the designated neighborhood and continue to work with the Los Altos Planning Department to move our application forward. With that process well underway, we are writing to formally request that City Council waives the \$4,500 application fee for a Historic District Designation.

Background

Few styles of architecture are as uniquely Californian as the Eichler design. With open floor plans, interior courtyards, and walls of glass that embrace the backyard, the Eichler is as iconic as any house found in the Bay Area. Their timeless mid-century design is highly sought after, typically resulting in Eichlers rarely lasting on the housing market for more than a few days. Those real estate agents who specialize in Eichlers have long lists of interested buyers, and many Eichlers are sold even before they hit the open market.

With the recent wave of wealth in Silicon Valley, however, more and more ranch homes are being torn down and replaced with two-story homes that stretch closer to lot lines. It is because of this concern that we feel the urgency to designate Fallen Leaf Park as historic, making it difficult for prospective renovators to build two-story—and therefore, non-complementary—homes in the neighborhood.

The Neighborhood

Fallen Leaf Park comprises 37 Eichler homes built in the mid-1960s and is the larger of two Eichler tracts in Los Altos. The tract is situated in South Los Altos near the intersection of Fallen Leaf Lane and Fremont Avenue. The homes are located on Clay Drive, Alexander Way, and Fallen Leaf Lane. Joseph Eichler himself actually lived in a home on Clay Drive for a time. It is considered by mid-century architecture experts to be one of the few remaining completely "intact" Eichler neighborhoods, meaning no individual house has been rebuilt to no longer stay within the architectural tenor of the original design.

Status

We have been working on the preservation project since February 2015:

- We have met many times with staff members of the Planning Department, who are helping us navigate and in some cases define the process. Note that this is the first time an entire neighborhood has applied for a historic designation.
- We have also petitioned the neighborhood for support, and more than 70% of homeowners have agreed to support the initiative. Note that only 10% declined to sign; the other 20% were not reached or were not responsive.
- We have built our team, including an architectural historian from Pacific Grove (PAST Consulting) and a mid-century expert (Steven Eichler, architect and grandson of Joseph).
- We have attended a Historic Commission meeting to introduce ourselves and our project. Members of the commission were very supportive of our efforts.
- We have met/will meet with three members of City Council to introduce ourselves and our project.

PROJECT LEADERS

Tracy Gibbons | tracy@coastwiseconsulting.com | 650.969.8778 Nate Johnson | natejohn98@gmail.com | 408.410.9681

ATTACHMENT 1

- Next steps for us include fundraising, completing the application, and presenting to the Historic Commission, Planning Commission, and City Council for approval.
- We estimate the remainder of the process will take 9-12 months.

Precedent

Note that there is local precedent for both designating Eichler neighborhoods as historic as well as waiving application fees. In the case of the former, both Sunnyvale and Cupertino have established architectural modification guidelines and single story overlays for Eichler owners in neighborhoods that are far less intact than Fallen Leaf Park. As for the latter, the city council of Palo Alto recently waived the application fees for single story overlay districts to help several Eichler neighborhoods in that city address the growing problem of tear-downs and non-conforming infills that we hope to avoid. Two Eichler neighborhoods in Palo Alto and one in Los Angeles have received Historic Designations from the National Register of Historic Places and the City, respectively, thereby establishing the historic and architectural significance of Eichler homes and subdivisions.

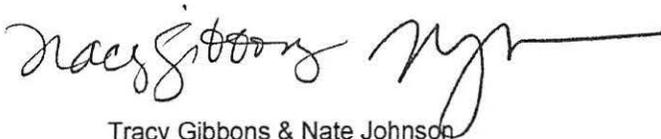
Total Cost

The process requires that our neighborhood come up with the application fee as well as consulting costs for a report and application authored by a "historic professional." The total cost, including the fee, is therefore estimated to be between \$12,500 and \$15,000. For a neighborhood of only 37 homes, the financial burden is considerable. We also have a relatively high percentage of original Eichler owners, many of whom are into their 80s and are living on tight fixed incomes. Waiving the application fee will make the requested donation amount much more realistic for everyone in the neighborhood. As our goal is to have as many homeowners contribute as possible, bringing the overall dollar amount down is important. Bluntly, the fee has emerged as a "show-stopper."

Please let us know which City Council meeting would be best for us to attend to discuss and come to a decision on the fee waiver request.

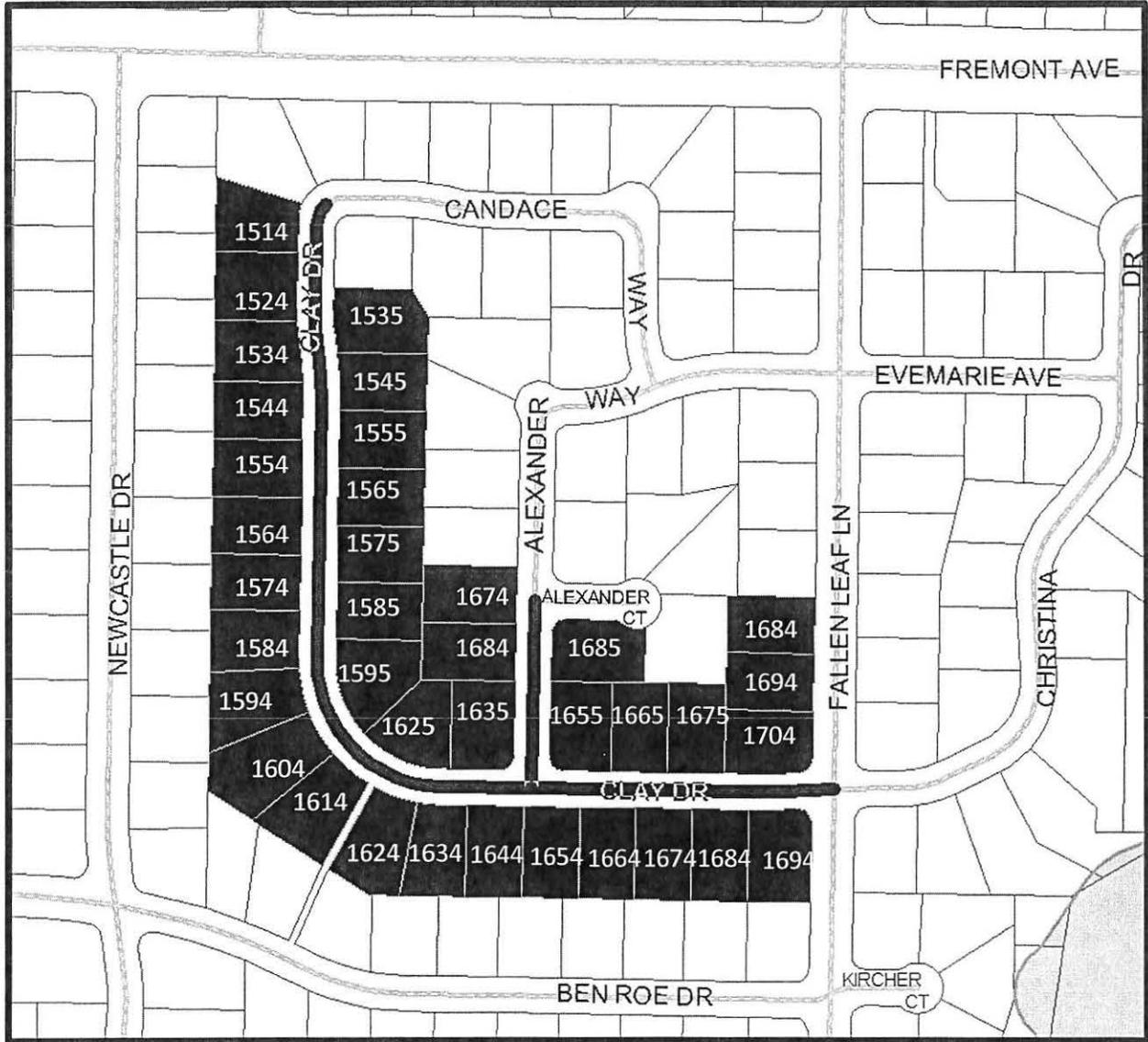
We thank you in advance for your support in this endeavor. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any feedback or questions.

Respectfully,



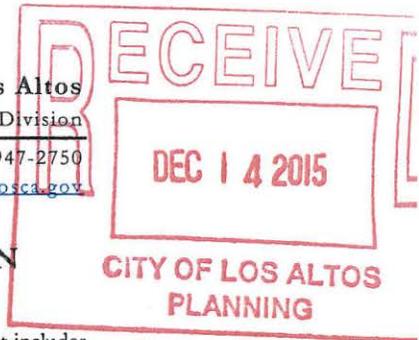
Tracy Gibbons & Nate Johnson
Project Leaders

Proposed Eichler Historic District





City of Los Altos
 Planning Division
 (650) 947-2750
Planning@losaltosca.gov



PETITION FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

I/we the undersigned hereby support the filing of an application for a historic district that includes our property. This petition is only needed to file an application for the historic district designation. Signatures from owners of at least 25 percent of all recorded lots within the specific geographic area that is requesting the historic district designation are required in order to initiate the application. After the application is filed, the proposed historic district designation will be considered by the Historical Commission, Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council at publically noticed meetings. Approval by the City Council is required in order to establish a historic district.

I/we understand that should the historic district be approved by the City Council, that all properties within the district boundaries will be subject to the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 12.44) and any specific design regulations set forth in the historic district designating ordinance.

Property Address: 1614 Clay Drive, Los Altos 94024

Property Owner(s): Sue Trautman Sue Trautman
 Print Signature

Property Address: 1614 Clay Drive 94024

Property Owner(s): Jay Trautman J Trautman
 Print Signature

Property Address: 1574 Clay Dr. Los Altos 94024

Property Owner(s): Allen J. Wolman [Signature]
 Print Signature

Property Address: 1574 Clay Dr, Los Altos 94024

Property Owner(s): Jean Wolman Jean Wolman
 Print Signature

Property Address: _____

Property Owner(s): _____
 Print Signature

Please note: Any alteration of this petition will invalidate the petition. Photocopies of this petition are acceptable; however, all signatures must be originals. Questions regarding the historic district designation process or the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance can be directed to the Planning Division at (650) 947-2750.



PETITION FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

I/we the undersigned hereby support the filing of an application for a historic district that includes our property. This petition is only needed to file an application for the historic district designation. Signatures from owners of at least 25 percent of all recorded lots within the specific geographic area that is requesting the historic district designation are required in order to initiate the application. After the application is filed, the proposed historic district designation will be considered by the Historical Commission, Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council at publically noticed meetings. Approval by the City Council is required in order to establish a historic district.

I/we understand that should the historic district be approved by the City Council, that all properties within the district boundaries will be subject to the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 12.44) and any specific design regulations set forth in the historic district designating ordinance.

Property Address: 1664 Clay Drive
Property Owner(s): Eimei Onaga [Signature]
Print Signature

Property Address: 1664 Clay Drive
Property Owner(s): Yoko ONAGA [Signature]
Print Signature

Property Address: _____

Property Owner(s): _____
Print Signature

Please note: Any alteration of this petition will invalidate the petition. Photocopies of this petition are acceptable; however, all signatures must be originals. Questions regarding the historic district designation process or the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance can be directed to the Planning Division at (650) 947-2750.



PETITION FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

I/we the undersigned hereby support the filing of an application for a historic district that includes our property. This petition is only needed to file an application for the historic district designation. Signatures from owners of at least 25 percent of all recorded lots within the specific geographic area that is requesting the historic district designation are required in order to initiate the application. After the application is filed, the proposed historic district designation will be considered by the Historical Commission, Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council at publically noticed meetings. Approval by the City Council is required in order to establish a historic district.

I/we understand that should the historic district be approved by the City Council, that all properties within the district boundaries will be subject to the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 12.44) and any specific design regulations set forth in the historic district designating ordinance.

Property Address: 1644 CLAY DRIVE

Property Owner(s): David Nixon & Diane Wingfield
Print Signature

Property Address: [Signature] Diane Wingfield

Property Owner(s): Print Signature

Property Address:

Property Owner(s): Print Signature

Please note: Any alteration of this petition will invalidate the petition. Photocopies of this petition are acceptable; however, all signatures must be originals. Questions regarding the historic district designation process or the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance can be directed to the Planning Division at (650) 947-2750.



PETITION FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

I/we the undersigned hereby support the filing of an application for a historic district that includes our property. This petition is only needed to file an application for the historic district designation. Signatures from owners of at least 25 percent of all recorded lots within the specific geographic area that is requesting the historic district designation are required in order to initiate the application. After the application is filed, the proposed historic district designation will be considered by the Historical Commission, Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council at publically noticed meetings. Approval by the City Council is required in order to establish a historic district.

I/we understand that should the historic district be approved by the City Council, that all properties within the district boundaries will be subject to the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 12.44) and any specific design regulations set forth in the historic district designating ordinance.

Property Address: 1185 Alexander way

Property Owner(s): Brenda Borovoy / Brenda R Borovoy
Print Signature

Property Address: 1685 Alexander way

Property Owner(s): Roger Borovoy / [Signature]
Print Signature

Property Address: 1635 Clay Dr.

Property Owner(s): DUNCAN JOHNSON / [Signature]
Print Signature

Property Address: 1635 CLAY DR

Property Owner(s): SIDNEY JOHNSON
Print Signature

Property Address: 1555 CLAY DRIVE

Property Owner(s): Cheryl Thomas / [Signature]
Print Signature

Property Address: 1694 FALLEN LEAF LN.

Property Owner(s): KARTIK CHANBRAIN / [Signature]
Print Signature

Property Address: 1694 FALLEN LEAF LN

Property Owner(s): SUMAN SUNDARESH / [Signature]
Print Signature

Property Address: 1554 Clay Drive

Property Owner(s): VIRGINIE VERBONE / [Signature]
Print Signature

Please note: Any alteration of this petition will invalidate the petition. Photocopies of this petition are acceptable; however, all signatures must be originals. Questions regarding the historic district designation process or the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance can be directed to the Planning Division at (650) 947-2750.



PETITION FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

I/we the undersigned hereby support the filing of an application for a historic district that includes our property. This petition is only needed to file an application for the historic district designation. Signatures from owners of at least 25 percent of all recorded lots within the specific geographic area that is requesting the historic district designation are required in order to initiate the application. After the application is filed, the proposed historic district designation will be considered by the Historical Commission, Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council at publically noticed meetings. Approval by the City Council is required in order to establish a historic district.

I/we understand that should the historic district be approved by the City Council, that all properties within the district boundaries will be subject to the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 12.44) and any specific design regulations set forth in the historic district designating ordinance.

Property Address: 1625 CLAY DR
Property Owner(s): Michael Deneberg (Print), Michael Deneberg (Signature)

Property Address: Bernadine + 1625 Clay Drive
Property Owner(s): Bernadine Deneberg Bernadine Deneberg (Print), Bernadine Deneberg (Signature)

Property Address: 1684 CLAY DRIVE
Property Owner(s): Louis Fries, Louis Fries (Print), Louis Fries (Signature)

Property Address: 1684 CLAY DR.
Property Owner(s): Robin Fries, Robin Fries (Print), Robin Fries (Signature)

Property Address: 1704 Fallen Leaf Lane
Property Owner(s): George M. Mulhern, George M. Mulhern (Print), George M. Mulhern (Signature)

Property Address: 1575 CLAY DR
Property Owner(s): JUNE L. CAUDLE, June L. Caudle (Print), June L. Caudle (Signature)

Property Address: 1674 Alexander Way
Property Owner(s): MARK VETTLER, Mark Vettler (Print), Mark Vettler (Signature)

Property Address:
Property Owner(s):
Print Signature

Please note: Any alteration of this petition will invalidate the petition. Photocopies of this petition are acceptable; however, all signatures must be originals. Questions regarding the historic district designation process or the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance can be directed to the Planning Division at (650) 947-2750.



PETITION FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

I/we the undersigned hereby support the filing of an application for a historic district that includes our property. This petition is only needed to file an application for the historic district designation. Signatures from owners of at least 25 percent of all recorded lots within the specific geographic area that is requesting the historic district designation are required in order to initiate the application. After the application is filed, the proposed historic district designation will be considered by the Historical Commission, Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council at publically noticed meetings. Approval by the City Council is required in order to establish a historic district.

I/we understand that should the historic district be approved by the City Council, that all properties within the district boundaries will be subject to the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 12.44) and any specific design regulations set forth in the historic district designating ordinance.

Property Address: 1564 Clay Drive

Property Owner(s): Gábor Bartha [Signature]
Print Signature

Property Address: 1634 Clay Drive

Property Owner(s): Nancy Daggett Jensen [Signature]
Print Executrix Signature
Daniel Daggett estate

Property Address: _____

Property Owner(s): _____
Print Signature

Please note: Any alteration of this petition will invalidate the petition. Photocopies of this petition are acceptable; however, all signatures must be originals. Questions regarding the historic district designation process or the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance can be directed to the Planning Division at (650) 947-2750.



PETITION FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

I/we the undersigned hereby support the filing of an application for a historic district that includes our property. This petition is only needed to file an application for the historic district designation. Signatures from owners of at least 25 percent of all recorded lots within the specific geographic area that is requesting the historic district designation are required in order to initiate the application. After the application is filed, the proposed historic district designation will be considered by the Historical Commission, Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council at publically noticed meetings. Approval by the City Council is required in order to establish a historic district.

I/we understand that should the historic district be approved by the City Council, that all properties within the district boundaries will be subject to the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 12.44) and any specific design regulations set forth in the historic district designating ordinance.

Property Address: 1595 Clay Drive
Property Owner(s): Mary Donne Mary Dunne
Print Signature

Property Address: 1544 Clay Drive
Property Owner(s): MIHIR NANAVATI [Signature]
Print Signature

Property Address: 1544 CLAY DRIVE
Property Owner(s): AVANI NANAVATI [Signature]
Print Signature

Property Address: 1565 Clay Dr
Property Owner(s): Jan Hestler [Signature]
Print Signature

Property Address: 1565 CLAY DR
Property Owner(s): JAMES HESTLER [Signature]
Print Signature

Property Address: _____
Property Owner(s): _____
Print Signature

Property Address: _____
Property Owner(s): _____
Print Signature

Property Address: _____
Property Owner(s): _____
Print Signature

Please note: Any alteration of this petition will invalidate the petition. Photocopies of this petition are acceptable; however, all signatures must be originals. Questions regarding the historic district designation process or the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance can be directed to the Planning Division at (650) 947-2750.



PETITION FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

I/we the undersigned hereby support the filing of an application for a historic district that includes our property. This petition is only needed to file an application for the historic district designation. Signatures from owners of at least 25 percent of all recorded lots within the specific geographic area that is requesting the historic district designation are required in order to initiate the application. After the application is filed, the proposed historic district designation will be considered by the Historical Commission, Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council at publically noticed meetings. Approval by the City Council is required in order to establish a historic district.

I/we understand that should the historic district be approved by the City Council, that all properties within the district boundaries will be subject to the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 12.44) and any specific design regulations set forth in the historic district designating ordinance.

Property Address: 1634 Clay Drive, Los Altos, CA 94024

Property Owner(s): Daniel T. Daggett Daniel T. Daggett
Print Signature

Property Address: 1604 Clay Dr., Los Altos, CA 94024

Property Owner(s): Margot Gordon Margot Gordon
Print Signature

Property Address: 1594 Clay Dr. Los Altos, CA 94024

Property Owner(s): Ursula Shultz Ursula Shultz
Print Signature

Property Address: 1654 Clay Dr. Los Altos, CA 94024

Property Owner(s): James Ewan James Ewan
Print Signature

Property Address: 1654 Clay Dr. Los Altos, CA 94024

Property Owner(s): Mary Helen Ewan Mary Helen Ewan
Print Signature

Property Address: 1674 Alexander Way Los CA 94024

Property Owner(s): Deborah Settle Deborah Settle
Print Signature

Property Address: Marcia 1684 Alexander way

Property Owner(s): Marcia K. Campbell Marcia K. Campbell
Print Signature

Property Address: 1684 Alexander Way

Property Owner(s): Richard B. Clappell Richard B. Clappell
Print Signature

Please note: Any alteration of this petition will invalidate the petition. Photocopies of this petition are acceptable; however, all signatures must be originals. Questions regarding the historic district designation process or the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance can be directed to the Planning Division at (650) 947-2750.



PETITION FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

I/we the undersigned hereby support the filing of an application for a historic district that includes our property. This petition is only needed to file an application for the historic district designation. Signatures from owners of at least 25 percent of all recorded lots within the specific geographic area that is requesting the historic district designation are required in order to initiate the application. After the application is filed, the proposed historic district designation will be considered by the Historical Commission, Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council at publically noticed meetings. Approval by the City Council is required in order to establish a historic district.

I/we understand that should the historic district be approved by the City Council, that all properties within the district boundaries will be subject to the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 12.44) and any specific design regulations set forth in the historic district designating ordinance.

Property Address: 1674 Clay Drive, Los Altos, CA 94024

Property Owner(s): Nathan Johnson [Signature]

Property Address: 1665 Clay Dr. Los Altos 94024

Property Owner(s): Tracy Gibbons [Signature]

Property Address: 1655 Clay Drive, Los Altos, CA 94024

Property Owner(s): Nancy Daggett Jensen [Signature]

Property Address: 1655 Clay Drive, Los Altos, CA 94024

Property Owner(s): Sven O. Jensen [Signature]

Property Address: 1675 CLAY DRIVE, LOS ALTOS CA 94024

Property Owner(s): DAVID HORINE [Signature]

Property Address: 1675 Clay Drive, Los Altos, CA 94024

Property Owner(s): Angela Horine [Signature]

Property Address: 1534 CLAY DRIVE, LOS ALTOS, CA 94024

Property Owner(s): ROBERTO CASTANEDA [Signature]

Property Address: 1534 CLAY DRIVE, LOS ALTOS CA 94024

Property Owner(s): AIMEE CASTANEDA [Signature]

Please note: Any alteration of this petition will invalidate the petition. Photocopies of this petition are acceptable; however, all signatures must be originals. Questions regarding the historic district designation process or the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance can be directed to the Planning Division at (650) 947-2750.