



DATE: June 29, 2020

AGENDA ITEM # 4

## AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Historical Commission  
**FROM:** Sean K. Gallegos, Staff Liaison  
**SUBJECT:** Historic Preservation Award

### RECOMMENDATION:

Consider nominations for the 2020 Los Altos Historical Preservation Award

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### BACKGROUND

The Los Altos Historic Preservation Award was adopted by City Council Resolution on March 13, 2012. The intent of the award is to recognize exemplary rehabilitation and preservation of historic properties, and individuals, groups or organizations in the community that exemplify the spirit of historic preservation in Los Altos. Nominees should demonstrate a dedication to historic preservation within at least one of the following criteria:

1. Demonstration of pioneering or innovative efforts in historic preservation or education;
2. Conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation;
3. Public benefit received (educational, beautification, advocacy, etc.); and/or
4. Impact to the City of Los Altos.

The purpose of the award is to encourage public knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the City's past, and foster civic and neighborhood pride and sense of identity based upon the recognition and use of the City's historic resources. If the Historical Commission finds that none of the nominees meet the above criteria, the Commission is not obligated to grant the Preservation award.

### DISCUSSION

Staff received one nomination for the Historic Preservation Award. A nomination was received for Jane Reed, nominated by Gary Hedden (Attachments A).

The Commission should consider the written evidence and oral testimony from members of the public before voting on the award recipient. The award recipient or their designee will be recognized with a Mayor's Proclamation at a future City Council Meeting.

**Attachments:**

A. Jane Reed, Nominations



City of Los Altos

### 2020 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD NOMINATION

I am nominating JANE REED for the 2020 Historic Preservation Award.

Describe the reasons why the nominee should receive the Historic Preservation Award and how the nominee meets the following criteria:

1. Demonstration of pioneering or innovative efforts in historic preservation or education.
2. Conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation.
3. Public Benefit received (educational, beautification, advocacy, etc.).
4. Impact to the City of Los Altos.

*See attached document.*

*If applicable, submit copies of letters of commendation or any other supporting documentation (not required). Attach additional sheets as needed.*

Nominated by: Gary Hedden Date: 8 June 2020

In order to officially submit a nomination for the 2020 Historic Preservation Award, please submit one copy of all necessary documentation to the Historical Commission staff liaison Sean Gallegos. Materials can be submitted at City Hall, 1 North San Antonio Road, Los Altos, CA 94022. All nominations must be submitted by **Tuesday, June 9, 2020 at 5:00 pm.**

At the June 22, 2020 meeting, the Historical Commission will hold a vote to determine the recipient of the 2020 Historic Preservation Award. The 2020 Historic Preservation Award winner is tentatively scheduled to be recognized by the City Council with a proclamation at their meeting on July 14, 2020.

Historic Preservation Award  
June 8, 2020

Honored Historical Commissioners,

It is with great pleasure that I nominate Jane Reed for the 2020 Historic Preservation Award.

Jane has been and continues to be one of the key people working on behalf of the Los Altos History Museum. She joined the History House Auxiliary in the 80s, worked on the plans for the new Museum in the 90s and helped with the clever family-tree design of the upstairs gallery. She was on the Board of Directors for many years, twice serving as Board President! She has chaired many fundraising benefits and worked on many exhibitions. She is now involved with planning and fundraising for a major upgrade to the Museum's upstairs gallery.

Jane loves working on exhibitions. I met her and worked with her in 2011 as we worked with Linda Gass on the award-winning exhibition *Shaped By Water: Past, Present and Future*. Jane always has good ideas, but in addition she will pitch in and get her hands dirty. She is not shy about picking up a paint brush and helping out, or finding just the right spot to hang a picture.

I really valued her help when I put together the exhibition *Pedal Power: From Wacky to Workhorse* with my friends from GreenTown Los Altos. Jane handed me a book with the unpretentious title, "Exhibit Labels," and said, "Read this." Turns out, it was a very good little book about creating an impactful exhibition. One message I took to heart, "Keep the text short" as most people want to look at the objects and not spend a lot of time reading. Thank you Jane for the good advice.

Please read the many supporting letters that recognize Jane's exemplary and truly remarkable work over many years with the Museum, with Redwood Grove and with her many civic activities. Then, please select Jane Reed for the well-deserved 2020 Historic Preservation Award.

Sincerely yours,

*Gary Hedden*

## 2020 Historic Preservation Award

I support the nomination of Jane Reed for the Historic Preservation Award. It is my opinion that Jane exemplifies the spirit of historic preservation in the City of Los Altos.

Jane joined the History House Auxiliary when she was serving on the Los Altos City Council in the 1980s. When members of the Auxiliary began making plans for a museum, Jane joined the permanent exhibit committee at the urging of Nan Geschke. She worked with The Donald Sibbett Group on the design of historical displays, and was instrumental in arranging for the fabrication of boxes housing photos of important community members and organizations for the family tree. She was also instrumental in the hugely important effort of building our membership base when the museum opened in 2001.

Jane spent the better part of 15 years serving in a number of important roles. These include exhibit manager and producer, and volunteer coordinator for the History Museum's changing exhibits.

She applied to the John F. Kennedy University Museum Studies Program in Berkeley, CA and was accepted into their two-year graduate school program. While enrolled in this program, she learned a great deal about museum programming and exhibit production, and in the process realized how much she loved what she was already doing at the Los Altos History Museum. She truly was the perfect fit. She has noted that, had she known about museum studies as a curriculum earlier, she would have chosen it as her major in college.

Jane has held many board positions at the Los Altos History Museum Association. She has held the positions of President and Vice President, and served two 4-year terms on the board. She also has been instrumental with evaluation, hiring, and nominating committees.

She is currently volunteering on the content and fundraising committees for the revamping of our permanent exhibit.

Jane's motto is "know your skills and build relationships".

There are many people who have been instrumental in the History Museum's development, and Jane has, and continues to be, one that stands out.

Marie Backs

Long time volunteer at the Los Altos History Museum

Edward A. Taft

10655 Eloise Circle

Los Altos Hills, CA 94024

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June 1, 2020

Los Altos Historical Commission  
1 N San Antonio Road  
Los Altos, CA 94022

Dear Commissioners:

It is my pleasure to support the nomination of Jane Reed for the Historic Preservation Award.

Jane has volunteered at the Los Altos History Museum since its inception. She has served the museum in many capacities, one of which is overseeing and helping to create many historically focused exhibits at the museum. She was on the committees responsible for many of the changing exhibits, including the award-winning *Shaped by Water* and *Eichler Homes* exhibits, as well as upgrades to the museum's permanent exhibits.

Additionally, Jane organized many historically focused benefit events for the museum. She managed the project to produce the Arcadia book, *Early Los Altos and Los Altos Hills*. As chair of the collections and exhibitions committees, she has been a tireless advocate for the preservation and presentation of the museum's historical collection.

Jane has served Friends of Historic Redwood Grove in its many years' effort to rescue and rehabilitate Halsey House.

In recognition of her service to the Los Altos community over many decades, Jane is eminently worthy of this award.

Sincerely,



Edward A. Taft

June 1, 2020

Historic Preservation Award Committee:

It is my pleasure to support the nomination of Jane Reed for the Historic Preservation Award. As a Past President and longtime member of the Los Altos History Museum Board of Directors, Jane worked tirelessly to develop activities and exhibitions that preserved the stories of Los Altos/Los Altos Hills. She also chaired a number of Gala fundraisers that featured local historic homes and raised funds for Museum programs.

Jane returned to school to complete a Masters in Museum Studies to prepare her to develop stronger Museum exhibitions and programs. Her natural sense of design, attention to detail, and skill in developing partnerships helped the Museum produce a number of outstanding exhibitions ranging from the stories of the Duvenecks, the Packards, and Joseph Eichler to the popular *Shaped by Water* Exhibition which educated the community – young and old - about the importance of conserving water.

The *Paint the Town* series was also extremely popular. The shows featured new work from local artists whose art depicted historic Los Altos sites, buildings, memorials, and homes that showcased the story of our community's rich history.

As a past Mayor of Los Altos, Jane Reed has also been involved with many collaborative efforts to preserve historic sites and the spirit of Los Altos. She served on the Friends of Redwood Grove committee to raise funds toward restoration of the historic Halsey House; facilitated discussions of the Los Altos Community Coalition whose twenty organizational members were charged to help develop a plan and vision for the future of civic life in Los Altos; and member of the Los Altos Women's Caucus which encouraged civic engagement in planning a well-designed new Community Center.

Jane Reed's commitment to the historic preservation of our community has set a high bar and has inspired so many to support the cause. She is richly deserving of recognition.

Regards,

Eleanor Watanabe  
Past President, Los Altos History Museum



51 South San Antonio Road  
Los Altos, California 94022  
www.LosAltosHistory.org  
650.948.9427

*The Los Altos History Museum gathers and presents compelling stories and artifacts that bridge the past and the present by fostering the creative energy of staff and volunteers to challenge established narratives and produce engaging educational programs and exhibits for the community.*

#### Board of Directors

Julia Lovin, President  
Gary Hedden, 1st Vice President  
Julie Rose, 2nd Vice President  
John Beman, Treasurer  
Carole Flores, Secretary  
Eleanor Watanabe, Co-Past President  
Linda Eckols, Co-Past President  
Marcia Adams      Nicole Andrews  
Janis Ahmadjian-Baer, PhD  
Ginny Badros      Vicki Holman  
Janet Klinke      Larry Lang

#### Staff

Dr. Elisabeth Ward, Executive Director  
Dr. Amy Ellison, Exhibition Curator  
Diane Holcomb, Outreach Coordinator  
Dianne Shen, Collection Strategist  
Andrew Mendoza, Office Administrator

The Los Altos History Museum's legal name is the Association of the Los Altos Historical Museum; tax i.d. number 94-2542813. We are a 501(c)(3) organization and your gifts are tax deductible.

Historical Commission  
City of Los Altos

June 8, 2020

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing in support of the nomination of Jane Reed as the 2020 recipient of the Historical Award.

While Jane Reed herself is a part of Los Altos history—as a former Mayor of Los Altos who initiated our Public Arts and recycling projects in the 1980s—it is her work behind the scenes at the Los Altos History Museum since then that has truly made her a champion of local history.

As the Executive Director of the Los Altos History Museum, I have seen first-hand what a tremendous source of energy and inspiration Jane has been, and continues to be. Her passion for telling the Los Altos story has led to countless hours of volunteer work. She served on the Board of the Museum from 2002 to 2008, and again from 2012 to 2018, including twice as Board President. She also has served as the chair of the Collection Committee and later as chair of the Exhibits Committee, both during and after Board service. In these capacities, Jane has shaped the Los Altos History Museum to be the premier local cultural organization it is. It was her vision that made the Museum a place not just for exhibits about local historic figures, but also one that encompassed the role of the art community in our local culture.

Jane Reed's vision also expanded our understanding of history. In her role on the Board, she helped craft a mission statement very unique for local history museums: "History inspires imagination, stimulates thought, and transforms society. The Los Altos History Museum preserves and shares our local history to enrich our community and to shape a more informed future." It was Jane's leadership that led the Museum to embrace the idea that we are more than a historical association holding on to nostalgia for the past; she pushed the organization to see all the ways we could be addressing contemporary issues today and for the future by bringing to bear the perspective of the past.

The Museum is deeply indebted to Jane Reed's extraordinary capacity to see wide trends and to make connections both intellectual and personal between them. She has made the museum a sophisticated, engaged organization that does credit to the status and role of history in our local community. By forging connections between art, history, and contemporary issues, Jane Reed made the Los Altos History Museum, and local history itself, relevant for our community. For that, she definitely deserves recognition, thanks, and the 2020 award.

Thank you,

Dr. Elisabeth I. Ward, Executive Director



June 4, 2020

Members of the Historical Commission:

Jane Reed has been and is a great asset to the Los Altos History Museum. She has done everything from serving and chairing on Boards and important committees to painting museum walls and cleaning out sheds. No matter the task one can always call on Jane.

She particularly excels at forming committees. She's a master of organization and detail while making it all look easy. She has the rare talent of listening to her co-members' ideas and suggestions and being flexible enough to incorporate them into her well thought out plan. She turns a committee into a team!

Jane is and has always been an asset to the Museum and our community.

Sincerely,

Diane Simmons

Linda Eckols  
709 Glenborough Drive  
Mountain View, CA 94041  
[lindaeckols@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lindaeckols@sbcglobal.net)

June 3, 2020

Dear Historical Commissioners,

It is my pleasure to nominate Mrs. Jane Reed for the 2020 City of Los Altos Historic Preservation Award. I believe that Jane's commitment to the City of Los Altos, her commitment to the community, and her commitment to the historic and present day betterment of Los Altos makes her a logical and qualified recipient for this prestigious award!

Whenever anyone mentions Jane Reed's name, there is always an instant recognition. Whether it be by those who observed her in action while serving as Mayor of Los Altos for two terms, 1982-1983 and 1987-88, or whether by those who served on the many city committees dedicated to improving businesses in Los Altos, or by those helping to preserve the Halsey House, or by those committed to building a History Museum for the City of Los Altos or by those needing support as they ran for public office or by those seeking to improve the lives of women and children in our community. Jane Reed was there, she actively participated, and she has continued to do so on a daily basis. Some people commit to helping for the short term, but Jane Reed exemplifies someone who has dedicated their life to helping improve the life and the community of Los Altos.

I first became acquainted with Jane Reed while she was serving as President of the Board of the Los Altos History Museum. I had been asked to join the Board and was thrilled to think that I would be working with and serving on the same Board as Jane. However, I soon learned that Jane was terming off the Board and that we wouldn't be serving together at the same time. However, what I also learned was that Jane Reed couldn't, wouldn't, and didn't leave the Los Altos History Museum for this was a place she had been so instrumental in launching.

In the late 1990's Jane Reed, along with several other grass roots organizers and community volunteers, came together to fundraise, to design, and to build Los Altos' first History Museum. While the original History House Museum was opened in December 1977 in the J. Gilbert Smith House, it took the vision and desire of members of the community to dream big and to create a larger and better facility to showcase the history of Los Altos and its surrounding communities. Jane Reed was instrumental in the design and the content development for the upstairs permanent exhibit and the other Museum spaces within the brand new 8,000 square foot museum. The new Los Altos History Museum was completed and dedicated in 2001.

While continuing her involvement in civic duties, Jane returned to college in 2006-2008 to pursue a MA Certificate in Museum Studies. Using her experience and education about museums, Jane continued her involvement with the Los Altos History Museum. She remained active on several Museum committees, she chaired many major fundraisers including the Annual Crab Feed, tours of historical homes, and she provided guidance for a five-year Strategic Plan, besides serving on the selection committee for most new Museum staff.

Jane also shared her expertise in planning; designing and coordinating, well over 10 of the Museum's major exhibits. A few of those changing exhibits included "**Spirits Return**: Cultural Traditions Keeping Memories Alive," "**Over Here**: A Centennial Observation of the US Involvement in WWI," "**Right Here**: A Follow-Up exhibit showcasing the stories of our local Los Altos Community," and "**Eichler Homes**: Modernism for the Masses." Ironically, "masses" of visitors came to the Museum to share their stories of living in Eichler Homes and learn more about Joseph Eichler's affordable contemporary homes build from 1949-1974. It was one of our most successful exhibits!

The Los Altos History Museum is fortunate to have the support of many dedicated and committed volunteers who serve as Museum Docents, who sort and label the items in our Collections Archive, who lead and serve on Museum committees, but only a few remain as dedicated to the preservation of the history and the betterment of our community, like Jane Reed.

Jane Reed is the kind of individual that all communities and organizations want and need to keep their vision, their mission, and their goals alive, vibrant, and moving forward. Jane has dedicated her life to our community. We are grateful for her service, for her commitment, and for her dedication to Los Altos, its history, and its people!

Sincerely,

Linda Eckols,  
Former Los Altos History Museum Co-President, 2017-2019  
Current Museum Board Member

June 1, 2020

Mr. Gary Hedden:

It's with great pleasure I respond to your request about Jane's being nominated for the Historic Preservation Award! I can't think of anyone more deserving!

Jane Reed has been a friend of mine since working with her on the Board of the Los Altos History Museum. She was President, for the second time, in 2013, which means she had served 6 years prior.

She has served on the Exhibits Committee FOREVER - including being the Exhibits Chair during the time between Directors! Jane had gone back to school which helped her fulfill this huge role. She is an ongoing fountain of knowledge in matters about 'Our Town' and its Museum! When the rest of us don't know - we go to Jane!!

I have seen Jane in several rolls: Exhibits Curator, Fundraiser, Marketing Management, Artistic Advisor, Business Management, and Community Communications. She has the ability to analyze a problem, organize a plan, and make it work all the while being very pleasant!!!

I only regret I could never get Jane to sign up as a docent!! She has spent much of her life being one of Los Altos' best docents!

As I write this, thinking of her, I know of no one with such a broad and thorough understanding of our community and its assets with the abilities she has to make 'it happen!'

GO JANE!!

Marilyn Henderson  
Past President, Los Altos History Museum

June 7, 2020

Dear Honored Historical Commissioners,

My name is Jan Davis, a Los Altos resident. I write to you to nominate Jane Reed for the 2020 Historic Preservation Award.

I have had the honor and privileged to have worked with Jane Reed on numerous temporary exhibits for the Los Altos History Museum these past five years. I was drawn to her passion and vision for history and presenting local stories in engaging ways. As Exhibition Chair, she has been the guiding force behind award-winning exhibits with supporting programs like: *Shaped by Water*, *Eichler Homes*, *Paint the Town*, *WWI: Right Here*, *Reflect + Create*, just to name a few.

There are many qualities I admire about Jane; her warm and energetic personality; her strong commitment to the community; and her creative spirit to navigate challenges to make a project happen. She combines her decades of history museum and leadership experiences and her relationships to achieve extraordinary exhibits and programs that not only benefits our community, but the broader general public.

Jane's influences are strongly felt in our community; as a former mayor of Los Altos, member of the Women's Caucus, former president of the Los Altos History museum and member of the board, Advisory Board Member of Pilgrim Haven, Project Itzaes, and the start of the Los Altos Community Coalition. She never stops looking for opportunities for connecting people and further a cause or to shape the future of our city and preserving the history. I highly recommend Jane Reed for the prestigious Historic Preservation Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jan Davis', written in a cursive style.

Jan Davis  
1423 Ranchita Drive  
Los Altos, CA 94024

jan@jandavisdesign.com  
650.961.1673

6/7/2020

**Dear Historic Preservation Judges**

I'm writing to support the nomination of Jane Reed for the 2020 Historic Preservation Award. I met Jane when I joined the Board of the Los Altos History museum. She was also a Board member and a very active one. For many years the museum didn't have a staff exhibition curator and Jane stepped into the role. She was instrumental to the success of so many exhibits, including "Shaped by Water", which won a Silicon Valley Water Conservation award, "Eichler Homes", and "Paint the Town II". She organized numerous fund raisers and did whatever was needed to make them successful. Although no longer a Board member, she continues to be active with the museum as we work on expanding its permanent exhibit.

Jane has also worked extensively with the Friends of the Historic Redwood Grove and Halsey House.

I admire Jane's energy, versatility, and talent. I think of her as a mentor, someone from whom I can seek advice in community matters. She helped me develop a love for the history of our area. She would be a wonderful addition to the roster of Historic Preservation honorees.

**Thank you very much for considering my recommendation,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julia Lovin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Julia Lovin  
President, Los Altos History Museum  
Los Altos resident

May 31, 2020

Dear Historical Commissioners,

I am writing to you in support of Gary Hedden's nomination of Jane Reed for the Historic Preservation award. I have worked with Jane for over 25 years on projects for the Los Altos History Museum. She was instrumental in the building of the museum and its opening in 2001. She was part of a committee I led in putting together the permanent exhibit on the second floor of the museum. She chaired the Exhibits committee for the museum for many years, putting together a legion of interesting and timely exhibits.

Jane has also served on the board of the museum and has been part of many committees that have brought changes to the museum. She was part of the hiring committee that hired Elisabeth Ward as the museum's Executive Director. Currently she is on the Fundraising committee for the advancement of the revamping of the permanent exhibit. She is also part of the Content Committee for the revamping of the permanent exhibit.

Jane has been a tireless supporter of the Los Altos History Museum and has been a great contributor to its success in the last 20 years. I highly recommend her for the Historic Preservation Award.

Sincerely,

Nan Geschke