

P A S T  
CONSULTANTS LLC

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May 22, 2019

Barbara Mitchell, Executive Director  
Interim, Inc.  
PO Box 3222  
Monterey, CA 93942

Re: Peer Review, 439 Soledad St., Salinas, CA  
APN 002-354-027-000

Dear Ms. Mitchell:

This letter provides a peer review of a historic assessment report by others, for the property located at 439 Soledad Street, in Salinas, California. PAST Consultants, LLC (PAST) completed a site visit to the property on May 16, 2019 to view the property's existing conditions and to assess the historic integrity of the building on the subject property.

The subject property contains a highly altered, single-story (circa-1938) wood-framed residential building designed in the Colonial Revival style. Kent L. Seavey, architectural historian, prepared DPR523 forms in 1988 as part of a historic resources survey for the City of Salinas. Subsequently, Mr. Seavey revisited the property and prepared a historic evaluation of the property's existing conditions and historic integrity, summarized in a letter to you, dated March 28, 2019.

The subject property is not on the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, the Salinas Historic Resource Register, or the Monterey County Register of Historic Resources. The 1988 survey and DPR523 forms by Kent L. Seavey describe the circa-1938 Colonial Revival building as a potential contributor to a proposed City of Salinas, East End Historic District. However, this statement was written in 1988 and as of today, no historic district has been proposed or established in this area of Salinas.

We understand that your organization proposes demolition of the building on the subject property for construction of a modern facility to better serve the needs of your patients and residents. The following peer review presents a building description, construction chronology, summary history and a review of the March 28, 2019 Kent L. Seavey letter.

## **PAST Consultants, LLC: Firm Qualifications**

Seth Bergstein, Principal of PAST Consultants, LLC (PAST), began his technical career as a structural engineer inspecting historic bridges in the northeast. This experience created an appreciation for historic engineering and architectural structures and led him to architectural study at the University of Oregon, Eugene; and a Master of Arts in Historic Preservation Planning from Cornell University. After Cornell, Mr. Bergstein was an architectural historian, materials conservator, HABS photographer and project manager for Architectural Resources Group, where he managed projects for a diverse range of historic building types, including the Point Reyes Lighthouse, Bernard Maybeck's First Church of Christ, Scientist, Berkeley, the John Muir House, Pasadena City Hall and a number of historic bridges.

In 2004, Mr. Bergstein founded PAST Consultants, LLC, a historic preservation consulting firm specializing in architectural history, preservation planning, documentation, and conservation for historic and cultural resources. PAST's clients include the State of California, public agencies, architectural and engineering firms, museums, nonprofit organizations, preservation advocates and private property owners. PAST is represented on the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) list of qualified historic consultants sponsored by the California Office of Historic Preservation and is on numerous certified consultants lists for public agencies throughout California.

Mr. Bergstein has written numerous historic structure reports for public and private clients; historic context statements for the City of San Jose and Monterey County; prepared successful National Register nominations; evaluated buildings of all function types; prepared *SOI Standards*-compliance evaluations for public and private clients; and speaks regularly to public-agency historic and architectural commissions on behalf of his clients.

Mr. Bergstein has written articles on the preparation of historic context statements, spoken at preservation conferences and led architectural tours. In 2015 he was keynote speaker at the Western Association for Art Conservation's annual conference, held at the Asilomar Conference Grounds in Pacific Grove.

Mr. Bergstein has 30 years combined experience in civil and structural engineering, materials conservation, architectural history and historic preservation planning. Seth meets the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications* Standards in Architectural History and History.

## Existing Site Conditions

The building's existing conditions appear below (**Figures 1 - 4**).



**Figures 1 and 2.** Left image show the front (west) elevation with left side addition. Right image details the front elevation, with large, right side addition.

While the building retains examples of its Colonial Revival style on the front elevation, such as the front gable end with Georgian-revival door hoods, cornice returns and multiple-pane windows, the building has been altered substantially, with additions to both side elevations (**Figures 1 and 2**).

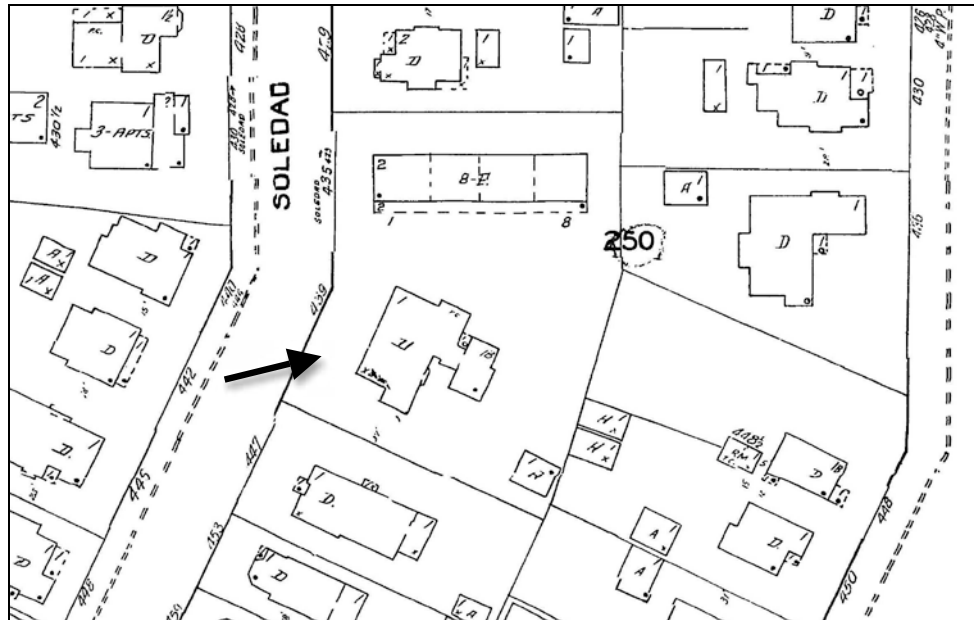


**Figures 3 and 4.** Left image details the right side addition. Right image shows the 1993 and 2000 additions to the rear (east) elevation.

The Seavey report correctly lists the additions to the building. In 1993, additional square footage was added to the building's east (rear) elevation, designed by architects Wald Ruhnke & Dost and provided in the Seavey report. Additional bedrooms were added in 2000 (**Figures 3 and 4**).

## Summary Property History and Building Chronology

The subject property first appears on the 1925 Sanborn map. On the 1962-updated Sanborn Map, the subject building looks unchanged from the 1925 footprint (**Figure 5**).



**Figure 5.** Cropped image of the 1925 (Updated 1962) Sanborn map, showing the subject property with an arrow. Note that the first rear addition appears by the time of the 1962 Sanborn map update.

While a rear addition was present by the issue of the 1962 Sanborn map update, the building grew substantially with the recent additions in 1980, 1993 and 2000. These additions have converted the original single-family residence into a multi-bedroom residential apartment building and have compromised historic integrity of the original residence substantially.

## Peer Review Conclusions

As explained in the Seavey report, for a resource to be historic according to National Register, California Register or any local register, a given resource must possess historic significance and historic integrity. While the original single-family residence may have achieved local historic significance for architecture as an example of late Colonial Revival-style design in the City of Salinas, alterations to the building have removed a substantial degree of historic integrity, making the building no longer able to communicate historic significance as an example of local architectural design. The Seavey report states:

As regards its historical integrity, defined by the National Register criterion for evaluation, the subject property retains its original location, but its contextual setting has been modified by modern (sic) development. The original 1938 Colonial Revival cottage design, has been greatly compromised by numerous inappropriate additions and alterations over time, that have

obscured and damaged original materials and workmanship, while lacking any architectural distinction. These changes, with the exception of the facade, have sufficiently diminished the historical and physical integrity of the property to preclude its consideration for listing as an historic resource.

Our site visit to the subject property and view of the surrounding neighborhood confirms the substantial loss of historic integrity of setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association discussed in the Seavey report. In our opinion, the loss of the property's historic integrity is the primary reason that the subject building is no longer eligible for National, California or local listing as a historic resource.

It should also be noted that the 1988 work by Mr. Seavey was intended to document and establish historic districts within the City of Salinas. While the 1988 survey remains as an integral documentation tool for citywide historic resources, the proposed historic districts were not adopted by the City of Salinas. The subject property is not considered a potential contributor to a historic district, as no district is present.

## Conclusions

Our investigation of the subject property confirms the March 28, 2019 Kent L. Seavey historic assessment report, and also concludes that the numerous changes to the building on the subject property at 439 Soledad Street have removed the historic integrity from the building. These changes render the subject property ineligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources or any local listing with the City of Salinas or Monterey County.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this evaluation.

Sincerely,



Seth A. Bergstein, Principal