

Dear Council:

The proposed ordinance on historic resources 27.66.020 recognizes the concept of a structure that contributes to a historic district even when it does not qualify for registration on its own. This is proper recognition. However, the proposed ordinance limits the applicability of contributing houses to the Downtown Historic Zone. This does not support any other zone that may be designated as historical in the future. Given that San Mateo is rich in historic buildings, it would seem appropriate to include any future historic zones with the Downtown Historic zone in this ordinance so contributors in other parts of the city can be treated in an appropriate manner.

Regards,

Michael Nash

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[REDACTED]

From: Keith Weber < >

Sent: Monday, September 19, 2022 2:10 PM

To: Amourence Lee <alee@cityofsanmateo.org>; Eric Rodriguez <erodriguez@cityofsanmateo.org>; Rick Bonilla <RBonilla@cityofsanmateo.org>; Joe Goethals <jgoethals@cityofsanmateo.org>; Diane Papan <dpapan@cityofsanmateo.org>

Cc: Drew Corbett <dcorbett@cityofsanmateo.org>; Laura Richstone <lrichstone@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: Agenda Item 29: Ordinance Introduction SB9

Members of the City Council:

Senate Bill 9 was written with one exemption. It does not apply to legitimately documented residential historic districts. The author of the Bill included this exemption for a reason: the understanding that historic districts not only add to the quality of life in California, but are important to understanding our history and are protected under the California Environmental Quality Act.

The amendments to Chapter 27.66.020 Historic Preservation Applicability ignore the potential for additional districts to be designated as historic. As you are aware, San Mateo is rich in historic resources that have never been studied or registered due to the inaction of the city since the 1989 County Historical Association survey pointed this out and called for additional work. Citizens groups are now taking up the challenge.

I suggest that you modify the language of this amendment to include the possibility that there may be more than one historic district in San Mateo. Limiting the designation of a contributing building to those in the Downtown Historic District does not recognize the city's extensive inventory of historic buildings. Adding words that state "or any other district that is designated as historic" is a simple fix for this problem.

Senate Bill 9 was written with the intent of protecting historic resources in residential historic districts throughout the state. Why would San Mateo not include that protection?

Sincerely,
Keith Weber

From: [Lisa Vande Voorde](#)
To: [City Council \(San Mateo\)](#)
Subject: City Council Meeting 9/19/22 Agenda Item #29 -- Ordinance Introduction SB9
Date: Monday, September 19, 2022 4:00:45 PM

Dear San Mateo City Council Members,

As a 30-year resident of San Mateo, with a keen interest in preservation of our historic architecture, I took a closer look at the proposal to amend Chapter 27.66 "Historic Preservation" to update the definition of "Individually Eligible Buildings". What popped out to me was this section, specifically what I have highlighted in yellow:

Section 3. Subsection (c) of Section 27.66.020 of the San Mateo Municipal Code is amended as follows: Individually Eligible and Contributor Buildings. For the purposes of this chapter, the terms "individually eligible building" shall mean those buildings as identified in the City of San Mateo General Plan, buildings which are on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or California Register of Historical Resources (CRHP), or buildings determined to be individually eligible for listing on the NRHP or CRHP through documentation contained in a historic resources report. "Contributor building" shall mean those buildings identified as such and located within the Downtown Historic District as adopted by resolution of the City Council and identified in the City of San Mateo General Plan.

Surely this is an oversight? "Contributor buildings" should mean buildings identified THROUGHOUT San Mateo, not just in the Downtown Historic District. I hope you amend the highlighted sentence so that it reads:

*"Contributor building" shall mean those buildings identified as such and located within the Downtown Historic District, **or any other district that is deemed to be historic**, by resolution of the City Council and identified in the City of San Mateo General Plan.*

Thank you for your attention and consideration to this very important matter.

Respectfully yours,
Lisa Vande Voorde

From: [Laurie Hietter](#)
To: [City Council \(San Mateo\)](#); [Diane Papan](#); [Rick Bonilla](#); [Eric Rodriguez](#); [Amourance Lee](#); [Joe Goethals](#); [Patrice Olds](#)
Subject: Reach Codes and SB 9
Date: Monday, September 19, 2022 4:00:22 PM

Dear Mayor Bonilla and Council Members,

I urge the City to be cautious in approving Reach Codes. We do not have enough electricity or infrastructure to mandate electrification. Very little new generation is proposed, and the desert is locked up so little to no wind or solar will be constructed there due to the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan. Power plants require 5-10 years for permitting and environmental review. Even fast-track projects can barely be permitted in one year. Rooftop solar is not enough. Very few transmission upgrades are currently proposed, according to the California Public Utilities Commission website. The push for electric cars alone will vastly expand the need for electricity. Each electric car requires 4 MW per year. We should not be relying only on one source of power until we have a plan for additional power supply and transmission.

The City is doing a lot by requiring new homes to be electric. Don't push this on small remodeling projects. Please do not approve any more reach codes.

SB 9 Ordinance

The public routinely has expressed opposition to excessive growth in San Mateo. I agree with the staff's approach to generally not increase allowances under SB 9 beyond state requirements, and disagree with the Planning Commission recommendation to allow 3-4 units on each split lot.

Historic Definitions

I agree with and support Keith Weber's comments on the historic language. The City should not be arbitrarily defining what is and is not historic. We have state and federal laws that have definitions. The City would be in violation of state historic preservation law and CEQA if an applicant is allowed to demolish up to 50% of an eligible property without preparing a Historic Resource Evaluation for structures more than 45 years old. At a minimum, that demolition should not be in front of a building that may be historic or in a historic district, of which we have many in San Mateo.

The new language in the ordinance seems to indicate that only the existing identified historic buildings qualify as historic. The language does not adequately address historic districts. The State Historic Preservation Office indicates historic surveys have a shelf life. The Downtown Historic District was designated over 30 years ago and should be revisited.

The following statement in the ordinance inappropriately limits contributors to only those buildings previously identified, and only in the Downtown District:

"Contributor building" shall mean those buildings identified as such and located within the Downtown Historic District as adopted by resolution of the City Council and identified in the City of San Mateo General Plan.

Case law shows the courts err on the side of the preservation of historic resources. Why is the City inviting litigation by trying to narrow the definition of historic resources and ignore all the historic districts in our City?

Public Notice

I support the public notice requirement and request that the distance for noticing be increased to 1,200 ft or the entire neighborhood.

Access

I support the staff's recommendation to maintain the 10-foot access corridor on newly created lots to minimize safety issues, especially in our most vulnerable neighborhoods where streets are very narrow.

Interim Objective Design Standards

I agree the City needs objective design standards, especially in historic neighborhoods that have not been evaluated. San Mateo is known for its charming neighborhoods. Let's work to maintain that charm through specific design standards. The standards should be defined by architects and historians working together with the City planners.

I support the list of prohibited exterior finishes in the ordinance. The prohibition of some exterior finishes such as plywood and vinyl outlined in the interim objective design standards is to ensure development consists of high-quality and durable materials. A prohibited exterior material **SHOULD NOT** be allowed through the discretionary review process where staff would review to ensure that the material would still result in a durable and high-quality structure.

Front setbacks of 20 feet are not adequate in some neighborhoods, such as Baywood, Aragon, and San Mateo Park. Structures at 20 feet from the street are out of place when most homes in the neighborhood are 30-35 feet from the street (it varies).

Windows are critically important elements in architecture. Replacement windows should be of the same as the other windows on the house and of the same character as the majority of homes in the area.

Discretionary Review

The staff report seems to indicate that if units are subject to discretionary review then all rules and standards are up for negotiation (e.g., exterior finishes). The purpose of having standards is to ensure the rules are followed.

Public Comments and Outreach

This is a good opportunity to present my concerns about summarizing public comments. Every City meeting I have attended in the last year or so has last-minute commenters who call in to support growth and more housing with no restrictions. The callers often do not live in San Mateo or appear to be paid activists (YIMBY Law and others). The City has had an unprecedented number of high-rise development applications, along with the General Plan update meetings, reach codes, and meetings about SB 9 and 10. It is difficult to devote enough time to review all materials (this packet is 712 pages) and present informed comments. The City should resume the practice of asking for the address or at least the neighborhood where commenters reside.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Laurie

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Laurie