



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number:

Submitted on:
(COB Stamp)

Department Name: Planning and Development
Department No.: 053
For Agenda Of: Set hearing on December 10, 2024 for January 7, 2025
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Time: 10 Minutes on January 7, 2025
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Director(s) Lisa Plowman, Director, (805) 568-2086
Contact Info: Travis Seawards, Deputy Director, Development Review Division (805) 568-2518
SUBJECT: Hearing to Consider the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission’s Designation of Cold Spring Canyon Bridge as a County Historic Landmark, Third Supervisorial District

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) On December 10, 2024, set a public hearing for January 7, 2025, to consider the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission’s designation of Cold Spring Canyon Bridge as a County Historic Landmark.
- b) On January 7, 2025, consider taking one of the following actions:
 - i. Approve the designation by, and confirm the action of, the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission and the conditions to be imposed, and adopt a resolution with conditions, designating Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, located on State Route No. 154, Postmile 22.95-23.19, as a County Historic Landmark, and determine that the project is exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15308;
 - ii. Modify the designation by the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission, and adopt the modified resolution with conditions to be imposed, designating Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, located on State Route No. 154, Postmile 22.95-23.19, as a County Historic Landmark, and determine that the project is exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15308; or

- iii. Disapprove the designation of the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission designating Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, located on State Route No. 154, Postmile 22.95-23.19, as a County Historic Landmark and the conditions to be imposed, and determine that the project is exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15270.

Summary Text:

On October 14, 2024, the County’s Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission (HLAC) initiated and adopted a resolution (Attachment 4) conferring landmark status on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge. HLAC found that Cold Spring Canyon Bridge meets the eligibility requirements for a County Historic Landmark as described in County Code Chapter 18A, Section 18A-3, and is worthy of protection. Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is located on State Route No. 154, Postmile 22.95-23.19, in the third Supervisorial District.

HLAC Resolution No. 2024-05 will expire 90 days after it was adopted by HLAC unless the Board passes a resolution designating the property a County Historic Landmark. Section 18A-2 of the County Code states: “... *Such designation as a landmark shall remain and be in effect for a period of ninety days only and thereafter shall be of no force and effect, unless prior to the expiration of such period of ninety days the Board of Supervisors shall have set a date for a public hearing . . . and either at such public hearing or after such public hearing, and within such ninety-day period shall have confirmed the action of the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission.*” Section 18A-5 of the County Code grants the Board of Supervisors discretion to approve, modify or disapprove the designation by HLAC and the conditions to be imposed. The proposed conditions are included within Attachments 1 and 4.

The ninety-day period for HLAC Resolution No. 2024-05 ends on January 12, 2025. Therefore, the Board must act to confirm the action of HLAC on or before January 12, 2025, or the designation will expire. The Board Resolution and CEQA Notice of Exemption confirming the action of the HLAC are included as Attachments 1 and 2, respectively. The HLAC resolution is included as Attachment 4, and the nomination for designation of Cold Spring Canyon Bridge as a historic landmark is included as Attachment 5.

The HLAC Resolution and the draft Board Resolution are conditioned to allow normal maintenance and repair without HLAC review, but require HLAC review and comment on any proposed partial or full demolition, removal, or destruction of the bridge resulting in loss of integrity, as well as any proposed alterations or additions to the bridge (Attachments 1 and 4). The HLAC Resolution and the draft Board Resolution exempt normal repair and maintenance and removal of the non-historic suicide barrier from these requirements. The resolutions state that the conditions shall not be imposed in such a way as to infringe upon the right of the owners of Cold Spring Canyon Bridge (Caltrans) to make any and all reasonable use of the property that is not in conflict with County Code Chapter 18A, including all routine maintenance activities for operational and functional purposes. The property owner, Caltrans, is aware of the HLAC’s nomination and is not opposed to the nomination. Caltrans District 5 Director Scott Eades has signed the HLAC Resolution (Attachment 4) on behalf of Caltrans.

Background:

On October 14, 2024, the County’s Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission (HLAC) adopted a resolution (Attachment 4) conferring landmark status on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge. HLAC found that Cold Spring Canyon Bridge meets the eligibility requirements for a County Historic Landmark as described in County Code Chapter 18A, Section 18A-3, and is worthy of protection. In addition, HLAC determined that this action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15308 of the CEQA Guidelines [Actions by Regulatory Agencies for the Protection of the Environment], which allows for “*actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance,*

restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment.”

The following analysis of Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is included in the HLAC resolution, included as Attachment 4 to this Board Agenda Letter.

The Commission finds that Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is historically significant because:

- 1. It is representative of the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect. The bridge, completed in 1964, was designed by the California Division of Highways Bridge Department, which is renowned for its exceptional bridge designs that proved both functionally enduring and aesthetically pleasing. Its builder, the American Bridge Division of US Steel, is recognized nationally for its superior construction methods and procedures and has a long history of building major bridges in California; and*
- 2. It has a location with unique physical characteristics or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the County of Santa Barbara. The location of the bridge on State Route No. 154 provides expansive vistas of the Santa Ynez Valley that are recognizable to local motorists and impactful to visitors. The view of the bridge itself from Stagecoach Road below it is an established visual feature of the community; and*
- 3. It embodies elements of architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship that represent a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation. The bridge is both an engineering and design achievement. It represents a maturation of steel arch bridge design and welded steel technology and it illustrates contemporary Modern-era architectural principles that extolled the virtues of unadorned and efficient designs along with material and functional honesty. At the time of its construction, the bridge was twice as long as any existing steel arch bridge in California, and it remains the largest steel arch bridge in the state.*

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

Staff time to process the historic landmark designation and supporting documents is estimated to be 9 hours, which equates to \$2,628.00. Funding for the Historic Landmarks Advisory Committee (HLAC) is budgeted \$6,800.00 for P&D staff including administrative staff support in the Planning and Development Permitting Budget Program on Page 317 of the County of Santa Barbara Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 Adopted Budget. For historic landmark determination requests initiated by property owners, planner staff time is recovered from fees; no fees are collected for determinations initiated by the HLAC, including this proposal. At this time, HLAC is expected to exceed their approved 24-25 budget. Per County Code, HLAC may petition the Board of Supervisors for additional funds.

Special Instructions:

The Planning and Development Department will complete all noticing requirements.

A minute order of the hearing and a certified Board of Supervisor’s Resolution shall be forwarded to the Planning and Development Department, Hearing Support, Attention: Jonathan Martin.

In addition, authorize the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to mail a copy of the executed resolution to:

Krista Kiaha, M.S.
Senior Environmental Scientist
Branch Chief, Central Coast Cultural Resources
Caltrans District 5 - 50 Higuera Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Jonathan Martin, Secretary
Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission
123 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

David Billesbach, Planner
Planning and Development
123 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Attachments:

1. Draft Board of Supervisors Resolution 2025-
2. CEQA Notice of Exemption for Approval of Designation
3. CEQA Notice of Exemption for Disapproval of Designation
4. HLAC Resolution 2024-05
5. HLAC Nomination Application
6. State Historic Resource Record

Authored by:

David Billesbach, Planner, (805) 568-3319