



The voice of our community

A-21

April 14, 2014



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Steve Lavagnino
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: Pearl Chase Society Appeal of the Historic Landmarks Advisory
Commission Approval of Demolition of the Juarez/Hosmer Adobe,
Board Agenda of May 6, 2014

Chair Lavagnino and Supervisors:

The Juarez/Hosmer Adobe is an important piece of Montecito and Santa Barbara County history and warrants protection to the maximum extent feasible. We ask that you protect this resource by granting the appeal and requiring appropriate investigation of adobe rehabilitation techniques.

The Juarez/Hosmer Adobe and property are designated as a County Historic Landmark. Further, the Montecito Community Plan calls for the adobe's preservation and prohibits its removal or damage. We agree with the Pearl Chase Society that HLAC erred in approving demolition of the adobe in the absence of appropriate peer review of the structural engineering report by an individual qualified in adobe restoration. Had the project been properly noticed, perhaps this due diligence would have been conducted without the need for an appeal.

We are also concerned about the process that placed consideration of demolition of the adobe before HLAC without appropriate review and analysis having taken place. It is unclear whether the HLAC had the necessary information and expertise to make the finding that the adobe could be reconstructed in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. This resulted in the failure to conduct appropriate environmental review of impacts to a significant historic resource as mandated by the State CEQA Guidelines and the County's Environmental Thresholds.

Granting the appeal will give the property owner the opportunity to work with qualified personnel to evaluate all available avenues for protecting and restoring this important Montecito historic landmark.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Ted Urschel, President