

**CITY OF CALISTOGA  
STAFF REPORT**

**TO: CHAIRMAN MANFREDI AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS**

**FROM: KEN MACNAB, SENIOR PLANNER**

**MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 9, 2009**

**SUBJECT: EXTENSION OF TIME FOR PREVIOUSLY APPROVED DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION (DR 2008-08) TO PERFORM LIMITED DEMOLITION AND EMERGENCY STABLIZATION WORK AT FRANCIS HOUSE PROPERTY**

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2 **REQUEST**  
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4 **DR 2008-08(E).** Consideration of an extension of time for a previously approved Design  
5 Review application (DR 2008-08) to: (1) demolish an existing residential structure (“Yellow  
6 House”) and detached shed located at 1409 Myrtle Street (APN 011-242-004); (2) demolish  
7 an existing residential structure (“White House”) located at 1007 Spring Street (APN 011-242-  
8 015); (3) demolish the “hospital additions” to the Francis House located at 1403 Myrtle Street  
9 (APN 011-242-015); and (4) perform emergency interior stabilization work on the Francis  
10 House, including interior deconstruction and structural stabilization, removal of destroyed  
11 interior materials, and interim weatherization, at 1403 Myrtle Street (APN 011-242-015). All of  
12 the subject properties are located within the “R-3”, Residential/Professional Office Zoning  
13 District. This proposed action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act  
14 (CEQA) under Sections 15301(l) and 15331 of the CEQA Guidelines.  
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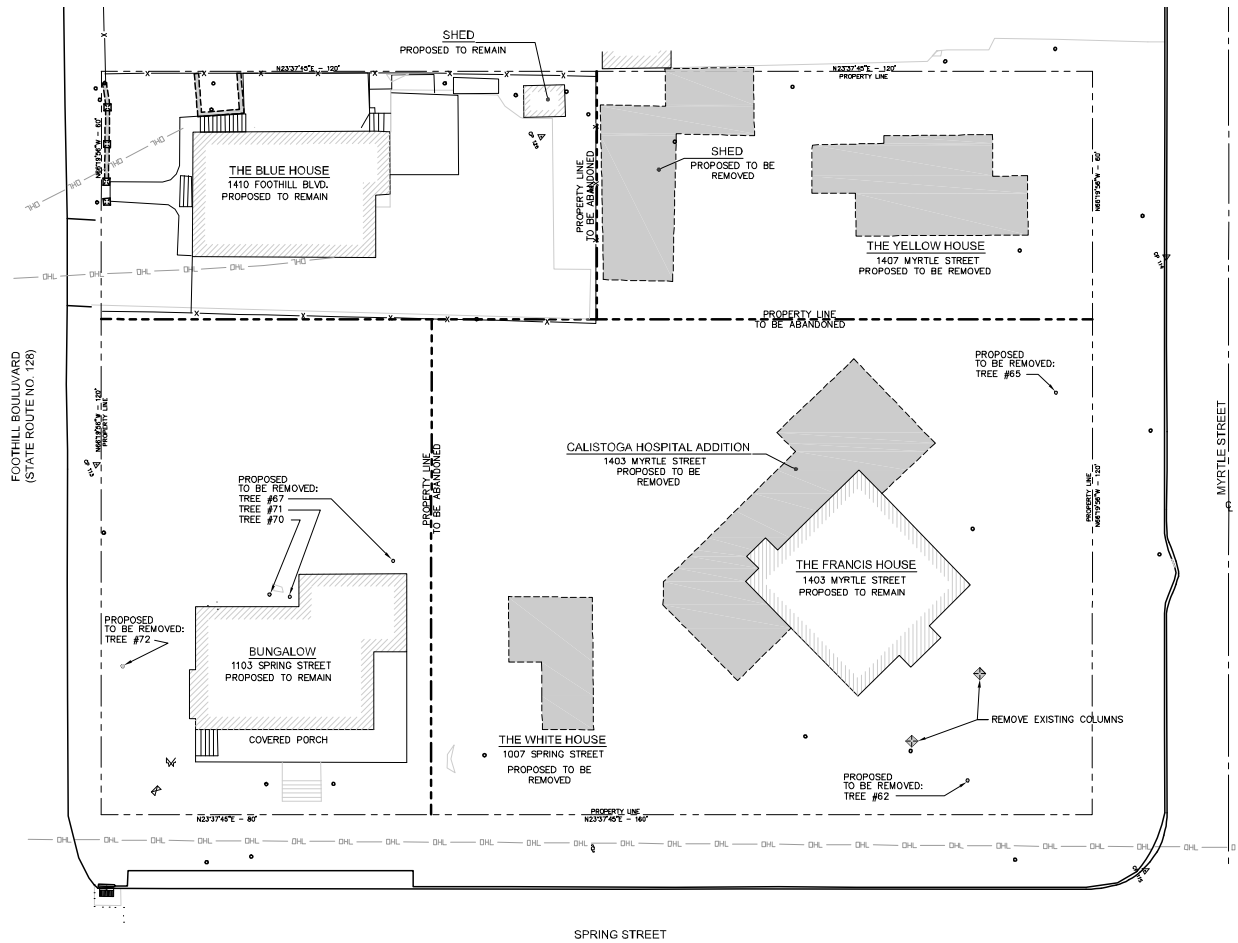
16 **BACKGROUND**  
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18 Chapter 17.06 Design Review of the City’s Zoning Ordinance requires Design Review for  
19 alterations to any structure listed or eligible for inclusion on a federal, state or local inventory of  
20 historic or cultural resources, or to a structure that is at least 50 years of age or older. The  
21 subject site contains the historic Francis House, which is identified as a “Category A” historic  
22 resource in the Community Identity Element of the General Plan. The Francis House is also  
23 listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural significance (Second  
24 Empire style).  
25

26 On August 13, 2008, the Planning Commission reviewed Design Review application DR 2008-  
27 08 to allow demolition of two dilapidated single-family dwellings and the “hospital additions” to  
28 the Francis House. The application also requested approval to perform emergency stabilization  
29 work in the interior of the Francis House. The impetus for this application was to stem further  
30 deterioration of the historic Francis House and remove attractive nuisances created by the  
31 presence of vacant buildings on the site. The work proposed in the application is independent  
32 of plans to redevelop the property into a luxury inn and spa and would not result in  
33 improvements that would specifically advance that project.  
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 36

FIGURE 1 – PROPOSED DEMOLITION WORK



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 39

As part of the application materials, the owner submitted a Historic Resources Evaluation detailing the historic significance of the Francis House and assesses the eligibility of the other existing structures for listing on a historic inventory. At the request of staff, the Napa County Landmarks Preservation Action Committee (PAC) reviewed the submitted plans and materials for consistency with the **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation and Guidelines for Preserving Historic Buildings**. The PAC concluded that the proposed demolition and stabilization work was in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's standards (Attachment 4).

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Based on the need to stem further deterioration of the historic Francis House and the fact that the work being proposed was consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, the Planning Commission passed Resolution PC 2008-37 approving DR 2008-08 (Attachment 3) in advance of plans to redevelop the property. Pursuant to Section 17.06.070 of the Zoning Ordinance (Design Review - Time Limits), a condition was imposed limiting the duration of the approval for one year – expiring on August 13, 2009.

54 On September 25, 2008, a building permit was issued for carrying out the approved demolition  
55 and emergency stabilization work. On April 27, 2009, due to non-activity, a six month  
56 extension of the approved building permit was granted. As of the writing of this report, none of  
57 the approved demolition and emergency stabilization work has been performed. If no work is  
58 performed by November 1, 2009, the approved building permit will expire.

59  
60 On July 24, 2009, the Planning and Building Department received a request from the owner to  
61 extend Design Review approval DR 2008-08 for an additional year (Attachment 5). The basis  
62 for the request is that the ability to commence demolition and emergency stabilization work has  
63 been delayed due to current economic conditions.

## 64 **DISCUSSION**

65  
66  
67 Preservation of the historic Francis House has been a long-standing interest of the City.  
68 The 2003 General Plan establishes a Planned Development Overlay for the subject property that  
69 encourages preservation and re-use of the Francis House.

70  
71 Goals and policies in the Community Identity Element recognize that the City's historic resources  
72 are worthy of preservation both for their aesthetic and cultural importance and because they  
73 support Calistoga's viability as a visitor destination. The following is summary of the most  
74 pertinent objectives and policies related to historic preservation.

75  
76 GOAL CI-3: Conserve Calistoga's historic, architectural and cultural resources.

- 77
- 78 • Objective CI-3.1: Protect historic properties as representatives of Calistoga's rich  
79 and varied heritage.
    - 80 ○ Policy P1: The preservation of historic properties shall be encouraged  
81 through restoration, sensitive renovation and adaptive re-use.  
82
    - 83 ○ Policy P2: All properties listed as Category A – Primary Historic Resources  
84 shall be preserved and protected.  
85
- 86

87 Interim protection and stabilization of the Francis House is necessary to prevent further  
88 deterioration of the building. The interior of the Francis House has been decimated by water  
89 intrusion from lack of roof maintenance. As a result, the interior plaster has completely failed.  
90 During periods of rain, wet fallen plaster has lain on the existing floors, causing structural failure  
91 of floor joists. Extending Design Review approval will allow the owner to dismantle and remove  
92 destroyed interior materials and install bracing and stabilization measures that will be required  
93 to protect and preserve the building until permanent improvements can be made.

94  
95 Staff is very concerned about the prospect of the Francis House remaining exposed to another  
96 rainy season and to vandalism. Two new conditions are being recommended that will require  
97 the owner to replace and/or install weatherization measures to adequately protect the Francis  
98 House from exposure to rain and to better secure the Francis House from unwanted entry prior  
99 to October 31, 2009 (see Condition Nos. 4 and 5 in Attachment 2).

101 **FINDINGS:**

102  
103 ***The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for***  
104 ***Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*** provide guidance for alterations to buildings listed on the  
105 National Register of Historic Places and have been used to evaluate the proposed stabilization  
106 plans for the Francis House. There are eight basic guidelines that the proposed stabilization  
107 plan was evaluated against. The following section summarizes findings of project consistency  
108 with each guideline.

109  
110 **Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Preserving Historic Buildings**

- 111  
112 1. *A property will be used as it was historically, or be given a new use that maximizes the*  
113 *retention of distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships. Where a*  
114 *treatment and use have not been identified, a property will be protected and, if*  
115 *necessary, stabilized until additional work may be undertaken.*

116  
117 **FINDING:**

118 Interim protection and stabilization of the Francis House is necessary to prevent further  
119 deterioration of the building. The interior of the Francis House has been decimated by  
120 water intrusion from lack of roof maintenance. As a result, the interior plaster has  
121 completely failed. During periods of rain, wet fallen plaster has lain on the existing  
122 floors, causing structural failure of floor joists. The owner is proposing to dismantle and  
123 remove destroyed interior materials. Removal of these materials (plaster, walls and  
124 floor) would leave the exterior walls vulnerable to collapse. Therefore, bracing and  
125 stabilization is required to protect and preserve the building until permanent  
126 improvements can be made.

- 127  
128 2. *The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement of*  
129 *intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial*  
130 *relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*

131  
132 **FINDING:**

133 Removal of intact or repairable historic materials is not proposed, except as required for  
134 structural repairs. Historic fabric to be removed will be documented, stored, replaced or  
135 replicated as required in the preservation plan.

- 136  
137 3. *Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Work*  
138 *needed to stabilize, consolidate, and conserve existing historic materials and features*  
139 *will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and*  
140 *properly documented for future research.*

141  
142 **FINDING:**

143 The stabilization plan includes an extensive assessment and documentation of existing  
144 conditions and materials. Some materials are too damaged to remain, but have been  
145 documented for purposes of future replacement or restoration.

- 146  
147 4. *Changes to properties that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be*  
148 *retained and preserved.*

149 FINDING:  
150 Non-historic additions to the rear of the Francis House will be removed. These  
151 additions have no historic significance and do not contribute to the National Register  
152 listed property, either in the initial nomination or in the current re-evaluation of  
153 significance.

154  
155 5. *Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of*  
156 *craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

157 FINDING:  
158 Some interior woodwork will be removed as part of the proposed stabilization work.  
159 Since the floor system has failed, these finishes will be documented, stored and either  
160 re-installed or replaced using the guidelines.

161  
162 6. *The existing condition of historic features will be evaluated to determine the appropriate*  
163 *level of intervention needed. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or*  
164 *limited replacement of a distinctive feature, the new material will match the old in*  
165 *composition, design, color and texture.*

166  
167 FINDING:  
168 Documentation of existing materials has been completed. The preservation plan  
169 provides for storage or replication of original materials depending on condition during the  
170 stabilization work.

171  
172 7. *Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest*  
173 *means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.*

174  
175 FINDING:  
176 Inappropriate chemical or physical treatments are not proposed as part of the  
177 stabilization work.

178  
179 8. *Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources*  
180 *must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*

181  
182 FINDING:  
183 Conditions of project approval require that work be halted upon discovery of any  
184 archaeological/historical materials or concentrations of bone of any type be uncovered,  
185 until a qualified archaeologist has inspected the discovery and has had the opportunity  
186 to assess its significance before a plan for the mitigation of impacts to it can be  
187 submitted to the City of Calistoga for approval.

188  
189 The Napa County Landmarks PAC and City staff have found that the stabilization plan complies  
190 with the ***Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation and Guidelines for***  
191 ***Preserving Historic Buildings*** and that the proposed plan will not negatively impact the  
192 architectural significance of the Francis House or its listed status on the National Register of  
193 Historic Places.

194  
195  
196

197 Findings for Design Review Approval

198  
199 In addition to the findings above, the analysis of this project includes reference to the Findings  
200 for Design Review Approval (CMC 17.06.040). These are discussed generally as follows:

201  
202 A. *The extent to which the proposal is compatible with the existing development pattern*  
203 *with regard to massing, scale, setbacks, color, textures, materials, etc.;*

204  
205 Response: The proposed project will result in the demolition of vacant dilapidated  
206 structures on the subject site and stabilization measures intended to protect and  
207 preserve the historic Francis House from further deterioration. No new structures or  
208 changes to the façades of the remaining structures are proposed as part of the project.

209  
210 B. *Site layout, orientation, location of structures, relationship to one another, open spaces*  
211 *and topography;*

212  
213 Response: No construction is proposed as part of the project. Demolition of the White  
214 House, Yellow House and Shed and hospital additions to the Francis House is likely to  
215 create a more open feeling in the area, particularly on Myrtle Street (if only temporary).  
216 The proposed stabilization work will not change the location or orientation of remaining  
217 structures.

218  
219 C. *Harmonious relationship of character and scale with existing and proposed adjoining*  
220 *development, achieving complementary style while avoiding both excessive variety and*  
221 *monotonous repetition;*

222  
223 Response: Demolition of existing dilapidated structures on the site will improve the  
224 quality of the neighborhood. No change to the relationship, character or scale of the  
225 remaining structures is proposed as part of the project.

226  
227 D. *Building design, materials, colors and textures that are compatible and appropriate to*  
228 *Calistoga. Whether the architectural design of structures and their materials and colors*  
229 *are appropriate to the function of the project;*

230  
231 Response: No new buildings are proposed as part of the project. No change to the  
232 materials, colors and textures of the remaining structures is being proposed as part of  
233 this project.

234  
235 E. *Harmony of materials, colors, and composition of those sides of a structure, which are*  
236 *visible simultaneously;*

237  
238 Response: See previous response D.

239  
240 F. *Consistency of composition and treatment;*

241  
242 Response: The proposed demolition and stabilization work is compatible with the  
243 surrounding neighborhood.

244

245 G. *Location and type of planting with regard to valley conditions. Preservation of specimen*  
246 *and landmark trees upon a site, with proper irrigation to insure water conservation and*  
247 *maintenance of all plant materials;*  
248

249 Response: No installation of landscaping is proposed and no trees will be removed as  
250 part of the project. A condition of approval requiring a Tree Protection Plan be prepared  
251 and implemented during work activities is being recommended to ensure the protection  
252 of existing trees on the site.  
253

254 H. *Whether exterior lighting, design signs and graphics are compatible with the overall*  
255 *design approach and appropriate for the setting;*  
256

257 Response: No new permanent exterior lighting or signage is proposed to be installed as  
258 part of this project.  
259

260 I. *The need for improvement of existing site conditions including but not limited to signage,*  
261 *landscaping, lighting, etc., to achieve closer compliance with current standards;*  
262

263 Response: No construction is proposed as part of this project.  
264

265 J. *Whether the design promotes a high design standard and utilizes quality materials*  
266 *compatible with the surrounding development consistent with and appropriate for the*  
267 *nature of the proposed use;*  
268

269 Response: The proposed demolition and stabilization plan will retain the historic  
270 integrity, significance and condition of the hospital property and is consistent with the  
271 **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation and Guidelines for**  
272 **Preserving Historic Buildings.**  
273

274 K. *Responsible use of natural and reclaimed resources.*  
275

276 Response: No new construction is proposed. Some undamaged materials will be  
277 removed from the Francis House, stored, refurbished (if/as necessary), and re-installed  
278 at the time of rehabilitation.  
279

## 280 **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

281

282 Staff has determined that the proposed project is Categorically Exempt from the requirements of  
283 the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15301(l) and 15331 of  
284 the CEQA Guidelines.  
285

### 286 Section 15301(l)

287 Under the provisions of Section 15301(l), Existing Facilities – Demolition and Removal of Small  
288 Structures, of the State Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality  
289 Act (CEQA) as stated below, this project is found to be exempt from the environmental review  
290 requirements of Chapter 19.10 of the Calistoga Municipal Code, implementing the California  
291 Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended in that; 1) the project involves demolition and  
292 removal of individual small structures in an urbanized area; and (2) the number of single-family

293 residences that will be removed as part of the project does not exceed the allowed maximum of  
294 three dwellings.  
295

296 Section 15331

297 Under the provisions of Section 15331, Historic Resource Restoration / Rehabilitation, of the  
298 State Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as  
299 stated below, this project is found to be exempt from the environmental review requirements of  
300 Chapter 19.10 of the Calistoga Municipal Code, implementing the California Environmental  
301 Quality Act of 1970, as amended in that proposed project involves stabilization of a historic  
302 resource and will be carried out in a manner that is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's  
303 Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating,  
304 Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.  
305

306 **CORRESPONDENCE**

307  
308 As of the writing of this report, one letter has been received by staff requesting that (1) the site  
309 be regularly watered down during demolition, and (2) an exterminator be retained to deal with  
310 the vermin and insects that will be displaced as a result of the demolition work (Attachment 6).  
311

312 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 313  
314 Staff recommends that the Planning Commission:
- 315  
316 A. File a Notice of Exemption for the Design Review pursuant to Sections 15301(l) and  
317 15331 of the CEQA Guidelines.  
318
  - 319 B. Approve a one year extension of Design Review approval DR 2008-08 (DR 2008-08(E))  
320 to: (1) allow the demolition of the White House, Yellow House and Shed, and hospital  
321 additions to the Francis House; and (2) allow for emergency interior stabilization work on  
322 the Francis House, including interior deconstruction and structural stabilization, removal of  
323 destroyed interior materials, and interim weatherization, subject to conditions of approval,  
324 as amended.  
325

326 **SUGGESTED MOTIONS**

- 327
- 328 A. I move that the Planning Commission direct Staff to file a Notice of Exemption for the  
329 Project pursuant to Sections 15301(l) and 15331 of the CEQA Guidelines.  
330
  - 331 B. I move that the Planning Commission adopt PC Resolution 2009-22 approving a one year  
332 extension of Design Review approval DR 2008-08 (DR 2008-08(E)) to allow for the (1)  
333 demolition of the Yellow House and detached shed located at 1409 Myrtle Street (APN  
334 011-242-004); (2) demolition of the an White House located at 1007 Spring Street (APN  
335 011-242-015); (3) demolition of the "hospital additions" to the Francis House located at  
336 1403 Myrtle Street (APN 011-242-015); and (4) performance of emergency interior  
337 stabilization work on the Francis House, including interior deconstruction and structural  
338 stabilization, removal of destroyed interior materials, and interim weatherization, at 1403  
339 Myrtle Street (APN 011-242-015), within the "R-3", Residential/Professional Office Zoning



340 District, subject to the findings presented in the Staff Report and the conditions of  
341 approval, as amended.  
342

343 **ATTACHMENTS**  
344

- 345 1. Vicinity Map
- 346 2. Draft PC Resolution 2009-22 approving a one year extension of Design Review DR  
347 2008-08.
- 348 3. Resolution PC 2008-37
- 349 4. Correspondence from Napa County Landmarks dated July 28, 2008.
- 350 5. Correspondence from Neil Schafer date July 24, 2009 requesting a one year extension  
351 of DR 2008-08.
- 352 6. Correspondence from Dana Hemberger dated September 2, 2009.  
353  
354

355 **AVAILABLE RESOURCES** (Upon Request or from City Web Site)  
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- 357 7. Demolition, Stabilization and Preservation Plans
- 358 8. Historic Resources Evaluation, Architectural Resources Group (June, 2008)  
359