

For the consideration of the Mendocino Historical Review Board

The existence of the Mills Act was recently brought to my attention by one of my neighbors and, since we act as somewhat of a community information exchange, I thought it appropriate to bring it to the attention of this Board.

According to the California State Parks Office of Historic Preservation "the Mills Act is the single most important economic incentive program in California for the restoration and preservation of qualified historic buildings by private property owners".

The Act grants participating local governments the authority to enter into contracts with owners of qualified historic properties who actively participate in the restoration and maintenance of their historic properties while receiving property tax relief.

In this connection, I would note that a number of California cities and counties already participate in the Mills Act program.

Mills Act contracts are executed between the local government and the property owner for a minimum of 10 years.

Property owners agree to restore, maintain and protect the property in accordance with specific historic preservation standards and conditions identified in the contract.

A qualified historical property is defined in the Mills Act, among other things, as being located in a registered historic district, such as the Mendocino Historic Preservation District.

Mills Act participants may realize substantial property tax savings each year because valuations of properties under a Mills Act contract are determined by the Income Approach to Value rather than the standard Market Approach to Value.

For more information about the Mills Act I would recommend the California State Parks Office of Historic Preservation website.

I don't think that there is any direct action that we can take as a Board with regard to this matter other than bringing the Mills Act and its possible application to the members of this community to the attention of all.

In addition, perhaps we could express the Board's support for Mendocino County's participation in the Mills Act program.

Holm Kappler
Member, Mendocino Historical Review Board