

James Feenan

Mendocino County

From: Kathleen Cameron <kcameron@mcn.org>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2023 11:36 AM
To: pbscommissions; Liam Crowley
Subject: MHRB - October 2023 Meeting

SEP 27 2023

Planning & Building Services

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September 26, 2023
Regarding: MHRB #2023-0014

Dear Review Board Members,

The Mendosa's Warehouse is a Category IIa structure which means it is an historically significant building with only minor alterations. It is in a "holding place" where further research could result in moving its status to a Category I structure.

The proposed modifications to this 1909 building are excessive. Nine double hung windows under nine fixed windows on the south elevation, the loss of barn doors, and a new entryway will change the existing architectural design from a warehouse to a retail store. Storefront architecture includes display windows and entryways to attract visual attention to a business and its merchandise. That is the antithesis of a warehouse design.

Comments like "that will be an improvement to a nondescript building" or "the change will make the building more attractive" or "the design will fit into the commercial zone" are counter to historic preservation. Retaining original features and maintaining that which exists is historic preservation. This building has had a useful purpose for 114 years. The proposed bank of windows on the south elevation are excessive even for an adaptive reuse project. Is the owner willing to scale back that wall of windows?

Corrugated metal was a popular material used to roof many utilitarian buildings throughout Mendocino. The old Shell station on Lansing Street, as well as a couple of garages and sheds are exiting examples. Unfortunately, there are only a few left.

Half of the metal roof on the Mendosa's Warehouse was removed without Review Board approval a few years ago. The existing corrugated metal roof on the north elevation should remain or be replaced with like-kind roofing. "Tin roofing" contributes to the historic character of the town. Please alter Condition #12.

I do not see how an historic preservation board can sanction all the changes proposed for this turn of the century building.

Finding A:

The proposed exterior work is not in harmony with that of the existing subject structure.

Finding C:

The proposed exterior alterations will unnecessarily damage a structure of historical, architectural or cultural significance.

It must be very difficult to uphold the mandate to protect and preserve the architecture and character of the historic district, especially when a fellow board member is requesting these modifications to his property. Yours is a challenging role and I thank you for your volunteer service.

Kathleen Cameron