

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

860



**FROM:** Parks Department

**SUBMITTAL DATE:**

8/4/09

**SUBJECT:** County Historic Landmark Designation of the North Shore Yacht Club—District IV

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** that the Board approves the designation of the North Shore Yacht Club as a Riverside County Historical Landmark.

**BACKGROUND:** At its regular meeting on July 16, 2009, the Riverside County Historical Commission recommended that your Honorable Board approve the designation of the North Shore Yacht Club as a Riverside County Historical Landmark.

The North Shore Yacht Club was constructed in 1958 along the northeast shore of the Salton Sea. It is located on Sea View Drive at the intersection with Marina Drive in the unincorporated community of North Shore. The building was designed by Albert Frey, widely considered the father of Mid-Century Modern in greater Palm Springs. Frey became a permanent resident of the Coachella Valley and looked to the desert for inspiration. His design occurred at the height of the recreational use of the Salton Sea. The building's life as a popular recreational facility, its modern design, and the nautical imagery of a steamship on the desert together make the building a remarkable symbol of the past, the geographic context, and the modern architecture movement of the region.

*(continued on page 2)*

739-North Shore Yacht Club County His Landmark Designation

Scott Bangle, Parks Director

**FINANCIAL DATA** n/a

Current F.Y. Total Cost: \$  
Current F.Y. Net County Cost: \$  
Annual Net County Cost: \$

In Current Year Budget:  
Budget Adjustment:  
For Fiscal Year:

**SOURCE OF FUNDS:**

Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Requires 4/5 Vote	<input type="checkbox"/>

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:**

APPROVE

BY:   
Alex Gann

County Executive Office Signature

FORM APPROVED COUNTY COUNSEL  
BY:   
LARISA R-MCKENNA  
DATE: 8/11/09  
Departmental Concurrence

Dept't Recomm.:  Consent  Policy  
Per Exec. Ofc.:  Consent  Policy

Prev. Agn. Ref.: 2009-08-0001: 11

District: IV

Agenda Number:

3.88

**SUBJECT:** County Historic Landmark Designation of the North Shore Yacht Club—  
District IV

The club was developed by Ray Ryan and Trav Rogers. Ryan once owned the El Mirador Hotel and also developed the Bermuda Dunes Country Club. The Yacht Club was once frequented by such Hollywood stars as Frank Sinatra, Jerry Lewis, and the Marx Brothers. This lively, wonderful building will soon undergo a restoration and rehabilitation that will reinvigorate it and hopefully the recreational and economic life that centered on it.



RIVERSIDE COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
HISTORIC LANDMARK APPLICATION FORM

*For Historical Commission Use Only*

Date Reviewed: 7-16-09

*Commission Recommendation:*

Recommend Approval     Eligible but Not Listed     Disapproved

This form must be used to nominate any pre-historic or historic site in Riverside County for designation as a County Historic Landmark. Information provided will serve as the basis for Historical Commission evaluation and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. All nominations for this designation must be approved by the Board.

*Please fill out and send to:*

Riverside County Historical Commission, c/o County Historic Preservation Officer, Riverside County Parks District, 4600 Crestmore Road, Riverside, CA 92509-6858.

*Please type your answers. An e-mail version of this form is available upon request. (951) 955-4310.*

1. SITE NAME:

Historic North Shore Yacht Club

Common proposed new North Shore Community Center

2. LOCATION:

(a) Address 99155 Sea View Drive City/Town North Shore

(b) Vicinity of Salton Sea



## APPLICATION FORM (CONTINUED)

**3. LEGAL OWNER:**

(a) Name County of Riverside

(b) Address 3133 Mission Inn Avenue City/Town Riverside Zip 92507

(c) Contact Number(s) if known: 951-955-4250

(d) Letter of Consent Enclosed:  Yes  No

**4. PRESENT USE:**

The building is presently unoccupied.

**5. ORIGINAL USE:**

The facility served as a boating resort for tourists and local communities.

**6. OTHER PAST USES:**

The building was converted in to a bar and restaurant after the Yacht Club closed down.

**7. YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION:** 1958

(a) Builder: Ray Ryan and Trav Rogers

(b) Architect: Albert Frey

**8. CLASSIFICATION (Check appropriate spaces):**

Category:  Site (Historic)  Site (Archaeological)  Building(s)

Structure(s)  Object(s)

Ownership:  Public  Private  Both

Status:  Occupied  Unoccupied

Accessibility:  Yes: Restricted  Yes: Unrestricted  No

Condition:  Good  Fair  Deteriorated  Unexposed

Demolished (just for site applications)



## APPLICATION FORM (CONTINUED)

### 9. ARCHITECTURAL STYLE (for buildings & structures):

Modern architecture.

### 10. IF ALTERED, PLEASE DESCRIBE:

Building will be rehabilitated with minimal alterations - primarily for code compliance and new interior functions. Some interior walls are being added and what was once a full-service kitchen will be converted to a community center style food preparation and serving facility. The swimming pool is deteriorated and would pose a liability issue. Therefore, it will be removed and replaced with an outdoor open space.

### 11. LEGAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

That portion of the south half of the northeast quarter of Section 34, Township 7 South, Range 10 East, and Lot 1 of Tract No. 3069, Map Book 54, page 76, County of Riverside, California.

Include approximate property size in feet:

(a) Frontage approx 1,500 ft (b) Depth approx 800 ft or Approximate Acreage approx 10.9 acres

### 12. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF SITE/STRUCTURE:

Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated

### 13. PRIMARY STRUCTURAL MATERIALS:

Stone     Adobe     Wood     Stucco     Brick     Other:

Primary: concrete masonry; Secondary: wood framing

### 14. RELATED FEATURES OR OUTBUILDINGS (list here, describe in No. 15):

There is an approximately 600 square foot locker, shower, and restroom outhouse that served the pool recreation area. The masonry walls of the locker room building and the enclosure for the service court exhibit the same careful linear detailing as the main clubhouse. The joint work has the same raking used in the main building. The walls have 8"x8" openings below the top course, similar to a feature used in the masonry walls at the dining terrace.

### 15. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (please attach a 1-2 page statement):

Please see attached statement.



APPLICATION FORM (CONTINUED)

16. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION (for buildings and structures):

Please attach your description on a separate page.

17. REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Please attach separate page.

18. THREATS TO THE SITE (if any; use separate page if needed):

Vandalism, infestation, trespassing,

19. PHOTOGRAGHS ENCLOSED:  Yes  NO

20. FORM PREPARED BY:

Name: Rizaldy Baluyot

Address 3133 Mission Inn Avenue City Riverside Zip 92507

Telephone(s) 951-955-4889

21. Organization: County of Riverside Department of Facilities Management

Signature of Authorizing Official (s): (Name & Title)

Charles Waltman - Deputy Director of Design & Construction

## INTRODUCTION

The County of Riverside, through the Department of Facilities Management, is in the process of rehabilitating the former North Shore Yacht Club building and converting it into a new community center for the North Shore Community.

The design phase for the project is complete and Facilities Management is presently soliciting bids for the rehabilitation. As part of the building and architectural analysis, a copy of the original plans and specifications were obtained by the Department of Facilities Management from the University of California Santa Barbara, who retains ownership of said documents. Early photographs of the North Shore Yacht Club were also referenced as part of the effort in putting together the construction documents.

The building is presently not listed on any local, state or federal historic landmark registry, but it has been determined as a cultural resource through the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) evaluation process. Pursuant to mitigation requirements as determined in the CEQA documents for the project, the County of Riverside acquired services from an architectural historian, Environmental Science Associates (ESA), to oversee the design and rehabilitation process for the new North Shore Community Center. The completed construction documents for the rehabilitation have been determined by ESA as compliant with the U.S. Secretary of the Interiors Standard as required by CEQA.

It is the County of Riverside's intent to preserve the integrity, as well as the historical and architectural value, of the former North Shore Yacht Club building through rehabilitation efforts, proper maintenance, and pursuit of legal protection by acquiring designation of the building as a historic landmark.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Building age:

- The North Shore Yacht Club is over 45 years old and was built in 1958.

### Significance as a Historic resource:

- The North Shore Yacht Club was developed by Ray Ryan & Trav Rogers. Ray Ryan was a charismatic oilman, gambler, and developer from Evansville, Indiana. For many years he owned the El Mirador Hotel, and he developed Bermuda Dunes Country Club, housing tracts throughout the Coachella Valley, and the North Shore Yacht Club on the Salton Sea. Trav Rogers was an affable businessman who ran the Old Ranch Club in Palm Springs, along with a bar called the Mink and Manure Riding Club (women in mink coats danced with Palm Springs dudes).
- Notable individuals and groups including Frank Sinatra, Jerry Lewis, the Beach Boys, Marx Brothers, Guy Lombardo, Ish Kabibble, and others have spent time at the North Shore Yacht Club.
- The North Shore Yacht Club hosted many Hollywood personalities who kept boats and also entertained at the club. Jerry Lewis and his rat pack, the Beach Boys and the Marx Brothers all kept boats at the Yacht Club. Ish Kabibble is included in the list of notable celebrities who entertained regularly at this facility.
- The North Shore Yacht Club was designed by renowned architect, Albert Frey. Born in Zurich, Switzerland, Albert Frey (1903-1998) is widely recognized as the father of Mid-Century Modern in Greater Palm Springs.
- The building possesses high artistic and architectural values. The exterior of the building still has an architectural quality far beyond the humble nature of its materials. The simple materials were assembled to give the club an appropriate nautical theme – a steamer docked in the California desert.

### Integrity:

- Architectural historian, Environmental Science Associates (ESA), has determined the rehabilitation project as compliant with the U.S. Secretary of Interiors Standards.

### Reconstructed Buildings:

- Not applicable. The building is over 45 years old, embodies traditional building methods and techniques, and exhibits high artistic values. However, the building will undergo rehabilitation and not reconstruction.

## SUMMARY

Originally constructed in 1958 at the water's edge adjacent to a sheltered marina, the building remained in use until the 1990's. Since that time it has been left abandoned, looted and rests in a state of disrepair, graffiti-covered and boarded up.

As part of the effort to evaluate the potential for rehabilitation, the structural, architectural, mechanical, plumbing and electrical components of the building were examined. A special section of this report deals specifically with the structural integrity of the building.

Other factors, such as site work, pavement, landscaping and infrastructure were also examined and considered. Since the design and construction of the North Shore Yacht Club occurred during a time of substantially different building codes and planning standards, a wide array of conventional agency conditions were analyzed and their appropriateness determined in the light of the historical significance of this project.

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Along the northeast shore of the Salton Sea, the North Shore Yacht Club is located on Sea View Drive at the intersection with Marina Drive. Southwest of the club, breakwaters protect a former marina from southwesterly winds. The footprint of the building trends northwest to southeast with an angle point, concave to the southwest, where the projection of the Marina Drive centerline would intersect with the building. The club's main entrance is located on the parking lot side of the building, service and locker room areas are to the northwest, the recreation areas, additional parking are to the southeast and the former location of marina dock access, restaurant terraces and pool area are to the southwest.

The exterior of the building still has an architectural quality far beyond the humble nature of its materials. The simple materials were assembled to give the club an appropriate nautical theme – a steamer docked in the California desert. The base of the building is of concrete masonry units with a "salmon" integral color. The horizontal mortar joints are raked to emphasize the length of the structure and dogtooth coursing at the angle point adds decorative relief. Cantilevered over the entrance, the aft side of the ship shades the entrance. Its curved walls are clad in a reflective corrugated metal which continues to wrap the second floor. The nautical theme is enhanced by steamship-inspired ventilation intakes and exhausts for the second-floor mechanical room. Curved equipment screens fashioned from fiberglass panels complete the club's dramatic street façade. Most of the roof is multi-ply built-up roofing, but a small structural standing seam roof is used at the loading dock, as well as over the door on the southeast wing.

The active parts of the club face the marina. There is a dining terrace with access from the building's public rooms and pathways leading to the pool, marina and locker rooms. Just southwest of the dining terrace is a flagpole with both a gaff and yard. The metaphorical steamship of the club has a second floor "bridge" facing the sea which cantilevers seaward over the banded masonry of the ground floor.

The bridge is flanked to the port and starboard by sun decks partially shaded by simple canopies. In its original condition corrugated metal siding gleamed in the afternoon sunshine. The bridges of seaworthy ships have broad windows providing a wide vista of the sea, but the intense rays of the desert sun made porthole windows with round metal awnings a more reasonable choice.

The fascias on the sea elevation make extensive use of pipe handrails with corrugated plastic panels in lieu of balusters. The panels also project below the decks and skirt the bridge to provide sun-shading to ground floor picture windows. Originally, a stairway with treads anchored at the block wall and suspended by metal rods on the sea side descended from behind the panels to a small terrace.

The masonry walls of the locker room building and the enclosure for the service court exhibit the same careful linear detailing as the main clubhouse. The joint work has the same raking used in the main building. The walls have 8"x 8" openings below the top course, similar to a feature used in the masonry walls at the dining terrace. Some of the openings at the service court originally contained incandescent lights.

The design of the roofing on the locker room building is a major departure from that on the main building. Vertical steel "C" channels with irregular spacing, provide support for structural standing seam planking. The channels are either embedded in the masonry walls or sit on pipe columns. On the marina side a "C" channel supports a substantial cantilever. Unlike the other supports, this channel continues beyond the edge of the roof to round steel columns at the privacy screens for the locker room entries.

Patrons and members arrived through the main doors into an entry alcove with a low ceiling flanked by service functions – an office to the right and restrooms to the left. The entry walls, like many of the other interior rooms, use the same masonry techniques found on the exterior. The interior side of the entry is flanked by masonry walls with decorative dogtooth corner coursing at 45° angle.

The low entrance hall opens into a two-story foyer. During daylight hours a circular skylight functions as an oculus, illuminating the space with natural daylight. At the two-story masonry wall opposite the entry a polished metal stairway originally projected into the foyer. The treads were suspended by chrome or stainless steel rods connected to the ceiling following the subtle curve of the masonry wall. The stairway provided access to a balcony with a straightforward pipe handrail with translucent corrugated plastic balustrades, a feature carried inside from the roof decks.

The public rooms all have interior access from the foyer. The doorway to the club's lounge is to the port side (left), dining room to the starboard (right) and the bar is forward. The rooms share several standard features. The ground floor walls are masonry with the same joint work as on the exterior. Most of the ceiling material is square, glue-direct acoustical tile, significantly larger than the more common 12"x 12" tile. The fore and starboard rooms have suspended soffit features.

The dining room appears to be the most conventional of the public rooms. There are no special ceiling features. The design uses natural daylight from northeast and southwest windows. Just beyond the

dining room is the former kitchen, designed with both refrigerated and dry storage, staff restrooms and a loading dock. The kitchen was placed for efficient access to the exterior dining terrace, the pool area and the exterior stairway to the roof deck. The port side of the building contains the general use rooms. The lounge is currently distinguished by a ceiling designed to conceal ductwork. A large circular recess with a lighting cove is the room's unique feature. The lounge also functions as an anteroom to the Commodore Room and also provides access to the dining terrace. Originally a wall separated the Commodore room from the lounge but they are presently joined as one large space. The Commodore Room has a boat shaped drop soffit. The soffit has a cove for up lights and recessed incandescent fixtures in the soffit itself.

The barroom is the most intimate of the ground floor rooms. The soffit brings the ceiling down to the window head and provides a cove for indirect lighting over the patrons. Access to the back bar is from the dining room and the floor is recessed so the barkeep is at eye level with seated patrons. Bar patrons were given the best view of the marina and sea beyond as is appropriate to the traditional profit center of a club.

The foyer stairway was positioned to provide access to an upper level lounge designated as the Compass Room. Located where a ship's bridge would be, the porthole windows frame views of the sea beyond. The ceiling was dropped to provide mechanical duct space and had cove lighting in the interior. Each side of the room was given access to the sun decks with the starboard side providing access to the exterior stairway and the terraces beyond. As originally constructed, the room had the atmosphere of a large stateroom on a 1950's era ocean liner.

## **BUILDING ANALYSIS**

The exterior walls of the complex's ground floor are reinforced masonry construction, with grouted cores. Originally the masonry was exposed with a naturally variegated salmon color which blended nicely in to the colors of the desert and surrounding mountains. Although most of the masonry is hidden under the many ill-conceived paint jobs of the last 50 years, the original color of the masonry is still visible in some places. It is possible to restore the original color using a sandblast/water-blast technique. The condition of the masonry walls is quite good with minimal shear or "stair-stepped" cracking. Located within a half-mile or so from the San Andreas Fault, the building stands as a testament to the skill of the original designer and contractors.

There are remaining sections of the corrugated plastic panels, but they are cracked and have been repainted. The plastic material may be installed to be routinely replaced, similar to canvas awnings and water heaters. The corrugated metal siding has been in place beyond the life space of any siding material used in the 1950's. It has become cracked as well and age and paint has dulled its luster. The metal frames which held the plastic panels in place have deteriorated and will not support replacement panels.

The existing built-up roof has actually served the building quite well during its period of abandonment. The interior shows far less water damage than would be expected and can be directly attributed to the

roofing system. The roof has served well beyond its rated life span and must be removed and replaced. The pads or planks which created the roof deck cannot be found on-site.

The wood-frame portion of the building cannot be used in its current condition. Many of the structural members would have deteriorated in a more humid climate, but the arid conditions in North Shore have most likely spared the building from other than superficial damage. While the floor and roof joists appear to be in acceptable condition, the gypsum board, furring and insulation will need to be removed for further structural inspection and remedial work. The existing floor and roof deck may also have been deteriorated by years of water damage, and the years of use as a pigeon aviary makes inspection difficult and unpleasant.

The interior finishes not requiring removal for structural inspection and remediation have been damaged by years of unfortunate management and remodeling. The years of abandonment and the resulting layer of pigeon droppings and organisms that thrive therein will require the removal of all odor-absorbent materials. The graffiti and vandalism marring all other remaining surfaces require removal and replacement of most existing finishes.

The few doors and window frames which remain have not been left in a salvageable condition. The building will require the installation of new doors and windows to provide a secure, weatherproof enclosure. Interior cabinetry has been abused or removed, leaving no usable casework. All of the pipe rails have been damaged or destroyed by abuse and possible metal theft requiring replacement on both the interior and exterior.

One of the more disheartening events during the vandalism of the building has been the removal of the cantilevered and suspended stairway. The diamond plate treads have vanished, as have the hand rails. The handrails that were clamped to the rods may no longer be commercially available due to new code requirements. The suspension rods that remain cannot be reused for a replacement stairway and will therefore be replaced.

The primary components of the heating, ventilation and air-conditioning system are either damaged beyond repair or have been removed. The existing air distribution system cannot be reused and must be removed and replaced. The existing ductwork will not provide adequate air distribution and latent heat control, therefore new distribution lines will need to be concealed within the existing structures and soffits. Major equipment and controls will need to be installed and their design will need to consider year-round usage and masonry walls with high thermal mass but low R values.

The on-site electrical distribution as well as the transformer and communications service equipment will need to be replaced prior to utility reactivation. The existing interior wiring and electrical distribution system will also need to be removed and replaced. All the power outlets appear to have been abused over the years and the light fixtures have been vandalized or deteriorated over time. The lighting system needs to be re-engineered to restore the original intent of the lighting design and provide a more efficient lumens-to-watt ratio. The building will also require a modern signalization and alarm system.

No plumbing fixtures remain within the building; however the waste system may still function – with the reactivation of the sewer lift facility. The domestic water piping will need to be replaced with materials which meet current plumbing and health codes. Reuse of the building will require the installation of an approved fire sprinkler system for life safety and to insure against the loss of a major work of architecture. The simple replacement of the original fixtures will not meet current accessibility standards. The restrooms themselves will not meet the geometric requirements of the latest accessibility guidelines, and alternative restroom locations may need to be considered to avoid destroying the integrity of the original design.

ADA accessibility to and within the site will need to be addressed. The second level cannot be made acceptable without the addition of an elevator, so the Compass Room may be reduced to office or storage use. There may be some exceptions available through the historic building code, but many of the exceptions may not be appropriate to the desired building use.

Fortunately, the architect chose materials which, with few exceptions, are still available today and remain economical. The negative tone of this basic analysis does not convey the ease with which much of the reconstruction and refurbishment may be achieved. The condition of the structural elements and building envelope appears to be adequate to warrant the remedial measures required to bring the building into substantial compliance and a serviceable condition. All infrastructure reconstruction, finish replacement, door and window retrofitting, and roofing upgrades required are extensive, but not far above what would be expected to upgrade a building which had actually been maintained over the last 50 years. Furthermore, the simplicity and elegance of the original design will allow the building to be reconditioned to a state which will have a strong resemblance to the original Yacht Club.

## **HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Born in Zurich, Switzerland, Albert Frey (1903-1998) is widely recognized as the father of Mid-Century Modern in Greater Palm Springs. While other European émigrés practiced in the Coachella Valley, perhaps most notably Richard Neutra, Frey became a permanent resident of the valley and looked to the desert for direct inspiration.

Frey cut his teeth in The International Style or what we now know more simply as Modern Architecture. His mentor was the Franco-Swiss architect Le Corbusier (Charles-Eduard Jeanerette-Gris), but his desert work was his own creation. Frey's work combined nature and simple, humble materials into elegant works of architecture.

Frey grew beyond plaster boxes of the 1930's to embrace structural steel, masonry and corrugated metal and plastics. The box-on-stilts of Corbusier was no longer in his repertoire. He employed intersecting planes, broad cantilevers and thin roof profiles. Under the cantilevers solid walls were replaced by glazing, removing the visual barrier between the interior and exterior. The privacy of his clients was maintained by the fluid curves of masonry or metal screens.

Corrugated materials were one of Frey's trademarks. The materials added horizontality to vertical panels which in turn created a boundary between public and private areas of a home. He used simple concrete masonry units as a structural material. His use of integral block color and raking the horizontal mortar joints elevated the material from utilitarian to decorative. Structural metal framing allowed roof planes to have slender profiles and deep cantilevers. Metal tubing or pipes provided support where structural rigidity was not at issue. When he designed on rugged mountainsides or boulder-strewn upper reaches of alluvial fans, the rock became part of the architecture. The harsh nature of the desert climate demanded materials which would remain dimensionally stable. Wood's tendency to warp and split in the dry desert heat, limited its use on the exterior.

The North Shore Yacht Club uses of many materials he originally explored at his first Palm Springs residence. The round awnings on the club's second floor can be found at his home's second floor sleeping loft. The home also used a stairway suspended by metal rods and cantilevered from the wall similar to the staircase in the club's foyer. Corrugated metal siding is a preferred material throughout his post-war residential projects, but is seldom used in his commercial designs. Corrugated plastic is another favored residential material, especially in his multi-family design, usually for screening and balcony rails. The club seems to be the only location where these corrugated materials are used this extensively. His employment of plastic as solar screening for the large southwest windows is not found in his other published works.

The North Shore Yacht Club was designed at the height of the recreational use of the Salton Sea. The building's former life as a popular recreational facility, its modern design, and the nautical imagery of a steamship on the desert together makes this building a remarkable symbol of the past, its geographic context, and the modern architecture movement in the region. Frey's other commercial works may soar higher or express the democratic ideals of civic government. This building's significance rises from its expression of Frey's ideal; assembling humble materials to create a remarkable environment.

The building has fallen into disrepair as the use of the Salton Sea as a recreational resource has plummeted. But it remains a unique example of Frey's masterful manipulation of materials.

For further reading and excellent photography and illustrations see Joseph Rosa's book, *Albert Frey, Architect* as well as Michael Stern and Alan Hess' book *Julius Shulman: Palm Springs*.

## **SITE ANALYSIS**

The project site is located at 99-155 Sea View Drive within the unincorporated community of North Shore, in south-central Riverside County, California. The property is listed as Assessors Parcel Number 723-221-001-8 with a recorded lot size of 10.91 acres. The geological location is within 1/2 mile of the San Andreas Fault. With an elevation of -203 to -233 along the northeast shore of the Salton Sea, the site is located within a 100 year flood zone. The northeast boundary of the site follows Sea View Drive and the southwest boundary is the Salton Sea. Regional and local access to the neighborhood is provided by state route Highway 111. Marina Drive links Highway 111 to Sea View Drive and is on axis

with the Yacht Clubs main entrance. The northern shore of the Salton Sea is served by the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) which provides domestic water and wastewater services. CVWD is also the local flood control agency. The site is served by a 2" water meter off a 4" main in Sea View Drive. District records indicate the presence of a second meter but initial site surveys have not been able to determine its location. A sewer lift station is also located northeast of the building, but it is not in functioning order and will require a complete reconstruction. An existing 8" sewer main runs near the center line of Sea View Drive.

Electrical service to the site enters from an overhead line originating from a pole north of the parking lot and northeast of Sea View Drive. Telephone service lines also originate at that pole. All overhead utilities enter a small outbuilding containing the restrooms and locker rooms for the pool and marina as well as an electrical room and electrical transformer enclosure. Power poles within the transformer enclosure bring the overhead utilities into the site distribution center. The transformer has been removed from the enclosure. It appears the load centers in the club building are fed from this enclosure. The local electric utility is the Imperial Irrigation District, IID, and they have indicated the site can be provided with a renewed electrical service.

The local streets are asphalt paved with low-profile rolled concrete curbs. Vehicular access is from Sea View Drive to the northeast. A large asphalt parking area between Sea View Drive and the Club's main entry has not been maintained and has deteriorated to the point where the resurfacing is not an option. Since the existing grading provides adequate surface drainage, the existing paving may be recycled as base material for a new surface. The parking area does not meet current county standards for landscaping and shading. There is almost no delineation between vehicular and pedestrian circulation remaining with little vertical separation between the sidewalks and parking areas. The existence of an accessible path of travel from the building to the public way will need to be determined by a site survey to determine existing topographic conditions.

Most of the original concrete masonry site walls remain. Some modifications have been made over the life of the project, but may not be visible until the removal of the accumulated paint. The original retaining walls at the dining terrace appear to be intact, but only the posts remain of the original pipe rail fence which once supported a net similar to those used on sailboats. The terrace deck has been damaged over time suggesting all walls need to be examined for root and salt intrusions.

The sidewalks and other flatwork around the facility have been damaged due to settlement, root intrusion, salt spray and the high saline content of the soil. The exterior steps have also been damaged by the site conditions. All should be demolished and replaced by new concrete reinforced and formulated to resist decay and cracking.

At the west corner of the Club is a terrace containing a large kidney-shaped pool. The terrace ends at water's edge and the deck adjacent to the marina has been destroyed by erosion or human activity. Partially enclosed by a crooked chain link fence the long-empty pool has become chipped, cracked and thoroughly vandalized. The concrete shell and surrounding deck show signs of structural degradation and the fence posts along the south side may have been placed in subsidence cracks. Rehabilitation of

the pool for public use may be impractical. The location is difficult to access under current ADA and Title 24 standards, whatever filtration equipment remains will not meet current health department standards, and rehabilitating the failing gunnite in the pool shell is cost-prohibitive, especially since a new skimmer and supply system is required to assure safety and sanitary compliance.

The area shows signs of erosion and land shift. It may be wisest to remove the pool and regrade the area for another use. The existing landscaping has not been properly maintained for what appears to be several decades. Any landscaping shown in the original photos will be referenced to determine which existing vegetation are the original landscaping materials. Many of the palms are overgrown and the trunk bases are intruding into the existing hardscape. The palms have become dominant landscape material. The Washingtonia Filifera palms (the native, thick-trunked California Fan palm) and some of the overgrown decorative species may be trimmed, properly irrigated, and preserved. The wind-beaten Washingtonia Robusta palms also be evaluated to determine if they can be preserved.

The level in the Salton Sea over the last 50 years has risen significantly. A seawall protected the slope between the marina and the club. The water has inundated the original wall and allowed the slope to slump toward the sea. A new wall was constructed at the marina service facility but did not extend to the club area. A new seawall at the present sea level would serve to stabilize the slope. The wall would also serve as a retaining wall should the projected inflow reductions lower sea levels as predicted.

Fortunately, the basic wastewater, domestic water and electrical infrastructure requires repair and reactivation only. No costly and expensive off-site linear infrastructure extensions will be required. The renovation of the sewer lift station, reactivation of the water system and the repair and electrification of the power system can be accomplished at a reasonable cost representing a small percentage of the total project cost. While the parking lot is in a deteriorated condition, the original grading appears adequate for project drainage. Following the completion of a geotechnical report, the existing pavement can be pulverized in place and recycled as a sub-grade material as part of the repaving of the parking areas. Any site accessibility challenges can be easily resolved on this parcel and the embankment on the marina side of the club appears to have the stability to maintain the structural integrity of the Yacht Club itself. It is our opinion that the site and utility work necessary to renovate the facility can be completed in a timely and effective manner.

## **HISTORICAL ANALYSIS**

Before WWII the architecture of the Coachella Valley tended to be gabled stucco boxes, simplified Italianate commercial storefronts Spanish Colonial public buildings. The more successful citrus and winter produce Ranchers built Veranda wrapped ranch houses and resorts such as the La Quinta Inn or the Estates in Palm Springs could indulge in detailed Spanish revivals influence by the Elsie Des Beaus Arts – educated California Architect Julia Morgan. Art Deco can still be found at the remnants of the Oasis Hotel and the Moorish Bell Tower at Desert Hospital. The majority of buildings in the valley during the period were wrapping in the Romance of early California.

Albert Frey (1903-1998) was born into a Europe that lacked the quaint conformity of California. While his native Switzerland remained neutral through World War I, the economic and social upheaval that followed reached throughout the continent. The architectural community was moving from the more imperial style of the Beaux Arts to a more socialist style of the International (Modern) style. Technology took precedence over ornamentation and men were made equal by the industrial nature of materials. Frey had two advantages when he entered this new world of Architecture; a technical education and the opportunity to work in the studio of fellow Swiss Architect Charles Edouard Jeannerette-Gris, more popularly known as the Modern Master LeCorbusier.

The resurgence of social unrest in 1930's Europe brought many of the international style Architects, including Albert Frey, to America. This eventually led Frey to southern California and Palm Springs. European modernism was taking hold in the southwest and Frey was ready to bring it to Palm Springs.

While his early southern California work is firmly rooted in the white plaster boxes of the International style, he soon incorporated materials and construction techniques adapted to the American West. In the California Desert concrete masonry units were readily available and performed well in the heat. Ranching and warehousing used corrugated metal instead of wood siding and could also be used as a roofing material. The corrugated fiberglass sheeting used for window material in many service buildings transformed the intense sunlight into soft pastels.

While his early work in North America shows his background in European Modernism, Southern California Hills and Mountains and pine covered hills were unlike the raw desert beauty of California. The North Shore Yacht Club is an amazing example of both European Modernism, combined with design elements responsive to local environments and demographics.



May 14, 2009

County of Riverside  
Riverside County Regional Park & Open District  
4600 Crestmore Road  
Riverside, CA 92509

Subject: Letter of Consent for Historic Landmark Designation

Project & Site: Rehabilitation of the former North Shore Yacht Club

Dear Mr. Keith Herron:

Please acknowledge this letter as the formal consent to designate the proposed North Shore Community Center, formerly known as the North Shore Yacht Club, as a historic landmark. The County of Riverside, through the Department of Facilities Management, is in the process of rehabilitating this building in compliance with the U.S. Secretary of Interiors Standards. Included in this are the completed Riverside County Historic Landmark application form, pertinent information on this facility, overview of the rehabilitation project for your review and consideration. It is our sincerest intent to preserve the integrity as well as the historical and architectural value of this building.

We thank you for your support and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Should you have any questions regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Chuck Waltman  
Deputy Director  
Design & Construction Division