

National Trust Says Carmel Is a "National Treasure"

By Isabelle Hall

A group of trainees in the National Trust for Historic Preservation spent a week looking at Carmel-by-the-Sea and concluded it is a "national treasure" that needs leadership and vision to keep it preserved for history.

The wide-ranging recommendations of the four separate teams of the 32 participants in the leadership training session were presented orally Sunday at a reception at the Carmel Woman's Club. They dealt squarely with the residents versus tourist schism that has divided the city virtually since its inception in 1916, citing, "A lack of realistic dealing with tourism in the planning process."

A breakdown of communications between local groups was cited as a problem by many of the Carmel people interviewed during the study, participants said, to the point where one team recommended that the city hire an outside consultant to hold a series of community meetings between the warring factions somewhat like a marriage counselor.

Among suggestions were creation of a Post Office substation at the opposite end of the commercial residential zone, a farmer's market, city-subsidized stores where residents could buy their basic needs at competitive prices and perimeter parking and shuttle service with a fee for non-residents and parking for residents only in the residential areas.

"You need to take a look at your General Plan and your 2016 plan and decide how you want tourism to interact with the community. Until then, it is impossible to deal with parking and other problems. Historic preservation can be one of the fires that helps Carmel to grow," said Richard Patenaude of Palm Springs, listing the conclusions of his team. "But none of these recommendations will take place like magic."

He said historic preservation brings rehabilitation which leads to more construction and retail jobs. "It will bring more resident serving businesses, and that's one thing we



MAYOR KEN WHITE made members of the National Trust for Historic Preservation all honorary members of the Carmel Fire Department after a presentation at the

Woman's Club Sunday. He said it was so they could help him "put out the fires."
Sun photo by Isabelle Hall

feel you really want in your downtown."

As Rob Hanford of Chico put it, "Preservation's got to be economical. You've got to make some money."

But without strong leadership, Patenaude said, "Your City Council, Planning Commission and staff don't have any idea how to handle these problems. You need a city government truly representative of one vision."

The group said it took a cursory look at Carmel's zoning ordinance and concluded the city had made "some very great steps in policies to protect the village" but that "strong leadership" was needed to "educate the residents on what's expected to keep the community the way you want to keep it."

Kathryn Burns, director of the Western Regional Office of the National Trust, said the trainees talked to Neil Kruse, chairman of the 2016 Committee; Mayor Ken White; Councilwoman Barbara Brooks; Planning

Director Brian Roseth; David Maradei, president of the Carmel Residents Association; Toni Jepson, executive director of the Carmel Business Association; Gary Luce, head of the Carmel Innkeepers Association and Noel Van Bibber, president of the Northeast Carmel Neighbors Association. Also, Kay Prine, president of Carmel Heritage; Bruce Kibby, chairman of the Architectural Preservation Committee; Judy McClelland, associate planner for Pacific Grove; Enid Sales, head of the Carmel Architectural and Historical Survey; Brian Congleton, vice chairman of the Planning Commission; and Kent Seavy, an architectural historian and preservation consultant, of Pacific Grove.

She said they did not talk to members of the Voice of Carmel, Carmel Citizens for Good Government, the Carmel Foundation, Friends of Sunset Center or Friends of Carmel Forest.

Stressing that all of the proposals were suggested over a long term basis, members of the group said:

- No serious action plans for preservation can take place until the "city leadership exhibits a unified vision combining the

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Planning Takes Sharp Drop

The number of applications made for various permits at the Carmel Planning Department dropped by one-third in 1992, officials reported.

A total of 208 applications were filed in 1992, compared with 293 in 1991 and 347 in 1990.

The bulk of the applications, 65, were for signs. There were 54 requests for use permits, 25 for design review of proposed residential construction, 24 for commercial design review and 19 for design study.



MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC Preservation told Carmel officials and residents Sunday the city was "a national treasure."

Sun photo by Isabelle Hall

Carmel's a "National Treasure"

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General Plan goals with those of the 2016 Committee."

- The city needs to deal realistically with tourism in the planning process.

- It should make mandatory rather than voluntary compliance with the newly adopted Historic Preservation Ordinance.

- There should be an investigation of economic incentives for property tax relief of historic properties.

- In order to reinforce the residential area, Carmel should have a parking plan with a shuttle service like Beaver Creek, Colo.

- The city should nominate itself to the National Register of Historic Places, an honorary status that does not restrict development and can help it, to bolster the economic future.

- A preservation planner should be hired.

- The survey of 2,500 properties done by the Architectural and Historical Survey under Sales' direction should be completed, analyzed and evaluated.

- The city should establish an independent design review board with discretionary powers and should make the design review process "less imposing" between the community and the developer.

- All the present design review standards should be made mandatory.

- Incentives should be created to encourage low cost housing to establish a base for creating resident-serving businesses such as was done in Aspen, Colo., for that city's service industry.

at the First Murphy House and create an historical archive.

- The city should seek joint funding between the commercial and non-profit sectors for its preservation projects because "there's a variety of funds out there."

During a question and answer period, Congleton asked why one team suggested mass marketing for tourism. "Why would it be desirable to promote tourism rather than restrict it and promote cultural events for tourists?"

"Carmel-by-the-Sea is a national treasure," replied Karita Hummer of San Jose. "A public relations campaign would be educational. Carmel almost requires a certain care when visiting and when one comes to live in it to protect the character of the community."

Sharon Lawrence, a resident, asked what were the top historical places the group found in Carmel. None were cited because participants said they didn't look at the community "in that depth." Rather they were impressed by the "stylistic distinctiveness of the cottages and the great diversity of architecture."

Matthew Sugarman of Coloma said, "You're not telling your history. You have a unique background but I only saw two signs—for City Hall and parking. As a visitor, I'd appreciate knowing more about the city. I'd love to see an interpretation of your town. You can show it to your own residents and the visitors because they're going to come."

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Column one continued

- Carmel should establish a city-operated resident serving store for basic needs with competitive prices guaranteed by the city.

- There should be a 10 to 15 percent discount program for village residents.

- Carmel should establish a farmer's market and more community-oriented events.

- Carmel needs to take a leadership role in planning on the entire Monterey Peninsula.

- The city should mount an education and public awareness program on preservation of its natural, architectural and cultural assets.

- To further protect the upper tree canopy, the city should strengthen and broaden its tree ordinance and continue reforestation along with a public education program.

- A landscape component should be added to the design review ordinance with specific regulations on what kind of plant species would be appropriate for the area.


- Carmel should encourage fostering and investing in the arts, supplementing music festivals with literary festivals, for example.

- There should be more Town Meetings.

- The city should establish an historically oriented public relations campaign, targeting regional and national audiences of both tourists and potential residents.

- Carmel must halt the incremental loss of features that have given it its unique character, primarily the residential area.

- It should establish a community gathering place, perhaps near the post office or



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