



## Council Agenda Report

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Item 6c

**Department:** Community Development  
**Cost Center:** 4003  
**For Agenda of:** 6/15/2021  
**Placement:** Consent  
**Estimated Time:** N/A

**FROM:** Michael Codron, Community Development Director  
**Prepared By:** Walter Oetzell, Assistant Planner

**SUBJECT:** A REQUEST TO INCLUDE THE PROPERTY AT 531 DANA STREET IN THE CITY'S INVENTORY OF HISTORIC RESOURCES AS A MASTER LIST RESOURCE (DANA/BARNEBERG HOUSE)

### RECOMMENDATION

As recommended by the Cultural Heritage Committee, adopt a Resolution entitled, "A Resolution of the City Council of the City of San Luis Obispo, California, adding the property located at 531 Dana Street to the Master List of Historic Resources as "The Dana/Barneberg House" (HIST-0091-2021)."

### DISCUSSION

#### Background

Brian Tuohy has requested that the property at 531 Dana Street be designated as a Master List Resource in the City's Inventory of Historic Resources as the Dana/Barneberg House. The property is currently designated as a Contributing List Resource and is located within the Downtown Historic District.

#### Previous Council or Advisory Body Action

On April 26, 2021 the Cultural Heritage Committee considered this request and found that the property meets eligibility criteria for historical listing to a degree that qualifies it for designation as a Master List Resource and recommended that the City Council designate the property as such in the City's Inventory of Historic Resources.

#### Site and Setting

The property is on the south side of Dana Street, about 400 feet west of Nipomo Street, within a smaller residential section of the Downtown Historic District that includes a spectrum of settlement from the mid-19th century to the 1920s. The applicant has provided an evaluation of the property and its eligibility for historic listing prepared by Betsey Bertrando of Bertrando & Bertrando Associates (Attachment B).

The dwelling that is the subject of this evaluation was originally constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, from about 1887, on property across Dana Street (at 550), and moved to the subject site in 1914.<sup>1</sup> The property (531 Dana) appears as a “Contributing Property” on the listing of historic properties adopted by the City Council in 1988 (by Resolution No. 6424).

### Building Architecture

As described in the applicant’s Historic Resource Evaluation, the dwelling reflects Victorian vernacular architecture,<sup>2</sup> sheathed in shiplap siding, with several distinctive elements:

- Unusual mix of roof lines, including flat front and gable with two-patterned shingle
- Square bays on front façade, with ins-set columns at corners and continuous sill
- Recessed porch with flat sawn balusters, wood railing, and saw cut border of circles above



*Figure 1: 531 Dana (1995 View)*

The City’s Historic Context Statement describes the growing prevalence of wood frame construction in the City’s late 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Residential Development, noting representative forms and styles of the era that include cottages and Folk Victorian. The specific architectural and historical characteristics of the building are more fully discussed in the Historic Resource Evaluation submitted with this application, and summarized in the Evaluation section of this report, below.

### John Wesley Barneberg and Grace Barneberg

The applicant’s Historic Resource Evaluation also provides biographical details about John Wesley Barneberg and his daughter Grace, who are most closely associated with the property. John Wesley Barneberg, born in Iowa, had been farming in Arroyo Grande and relocated to Dana Street after marrying Sarah Elizabeth Anderson in 1873. As more fully described in the Historic Resource Evaluation, he was active in the community, running a foundry and machine shop and a hardware store, serving as City Tax Collector, and involved in many civic committees, later becoming president of two local banks, and having some success in exploration and development of oil resources in the region.

<sup>1</sup> See description of building history, from page 17 of the Bertrando Historic Resource Evaluation (Attachment B)

<sup>2</sup> Bertrando, Historic Resource Evaluation (Attachment B), from pg. 23.

His daughter Grace lived much of her life in the house, up until the time of her death. She taught high school, having been educated at Stanford and Berkeley, was one of the founders of the Monday Club, and was active in several local organizations and boards. She also helped her parents raise her brother's two children, Helen Maxine and Jack Barneberg, grandchildren of Charles William Dana, who, in turn, was the son of William Goodwin Dana.

Further detail, including discussion of the intertwined relationship between the Dana and Barneberg families, is provided from page 11 of the applicant's Historic Resource Evaluation (Attachment B).

### **Evaluation of Eligibility**

To be eligible for listing as an historic or cultural resource, the resource must exhibit a high level of historic integrity, be at least 50 years old, and meet one or more of the eligibility criteria described in § 14.01.070 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (see Attachment C). As provided in § 14.01.050 of the Ordinance, the most unique and important resources and properties in terms of age, architectural or historical significance, rarity, or association with important persons or events in the City's past may be designated as "Master List Resources."

#### **1. Architectural Criteria**

As described in the applicant's Historic Resource Evaluation, the dwelling exhibits many characteristic features of Victorian vernacular examples from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, in a manner that expresses interesting details with notable attractiveness, consistent with listing criteria for "Style" and for "Design":

*The 1880s architectural style of the Dana/Barneberg House used an abundance of elements that were popular with the prominent citizens of San Luis Obispo at that time. Using elements found on Queen Anne cottages such as the squared bay, panels under the windows, and shingle work under the gables, it also represents a composite of borrowed elements. The saw cut balustrades and scroll sawn border under a narrow front facing gable behind a shed roof belie other aspects of design. [...] (pg. 26)*

#### **2. Historic Criteria**

The Historic Resource Evaluation provides a summary (pp. 26 & 27) of the local activities in which John Wesley Barneberg and his daughter Grace were engaged, illuminating their contributions to the local community, and notes the association of the Barnebergs with the Dana family, to demonstrate the association of this property with the lives of persons important to local history, as described by listing criteria for "History – Person."

### 3. Integrity

To demonstrate satisfaction of listing criteria for “Integrity,” the Historic Resource Evaluation notes the retention of the original design, footprint, and character-defining elements of the home intact in moving to its current site from its original site across Dana Street, the lack of significant alteration of the building, and its sensitive restoration in 2006, overseen by Darryl Joseph “Joe” Shauerman, a local glazer and craftsman (pp. 20-21, pg. 28).

*Overall, the house retains more than enough of its character to communicate its significance as an innovative, abstracted example of Minimal Traditional architecture with some extraordinary interior features. (pg. 24).*

### **Conclusion**

The information in the Historic Resource Evaluation prepared for this application, documenting the architectural character and integrity of the house, and describing the people associated with the property, provides a basis for the Council to find that the dwelling satisfies Architectural Criteria for Style and Design (§§ 14.01.070 (A) (1) & (2)), Historic Criteria for “History-Person” (§14.01.070 (B) (2)), and Criteria for Integrity (§§ 14.01.070 (C) (1) & (2)), to a degree that qualifies the property for designation as a Master List Historic Resource.

### **Policy Context**

The recommended action on this item is supported by historical preservation policies set out in § 3.0 of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the City’s General Plan, and with procedures and standards for listing of historic resources set out in the City’s Historic Preservation Ordinance §§ 14.01.060 & 14.01.070.

### **Public Engagement**

Public notice of this hearing has been provided to owners and occupants of property near the subject site, and published in a widely circulated local newspaper, and hearing agendas for this meeting have been posted at City Hall, consistent with adopted notification procedures. Public notice was also previously provided for the Cultural Heritage Committee meeting of April 26, 2021.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Inclusion of the subject properties on the City’s Inventory of Historic Resources does not have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment, and so is covered by the general rule described in § 15061 (b) (3) of the CEQA Guidelines.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Budgeted: No  
Funding Identified: No

Budget Year: 2021

**Fiscal Analysis:**

<b>Funding Sources</b>	<b>Total Budget Available</b>	<b>Current Funding Request</b>	<b>Remaining Balance</b>	<b>Annual Ongoing Cost</b>
General Fund	N/A	\$	\$	\$
State				
Federal				
Fees				
Other:				
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**ALTERNATIVES**

1. ***Decline to designate the property as a Master List Resource in the Inventory of Historic Resources.*** This decision would be based on finding that the Property is not considered to be sufficiently unique or important, or found to satisfy Evaluation Criteria for listing to a degree warranting such designation. The Property would remain in the Inventory as a Contributing List Resource.
2. ***Continue consideration of the request for additional information or discussion.***

**ATTACHMENTS**

- A – Draft Resolution  
B – Historic Resource Evaluation (Bertrando & Bertrando)  
C – Evaluation Criteria