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"SINCE THE BEGINNING"
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Kieulan Pham
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1871 The Alameda
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January 15, 2014

Dear Ms. Pham:

RE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE SKYPORT PLAZA HOTEL PROJECT, SAN JOSE, SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

On January 12, 2014 this author completed an archaeological literature review for the above referenced project area located in San Jose, Santa Clara County, California. Records on file at the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) located in Rohnert Park suggest that the property probably contains an extension of a recorded archaeological site, Scl-478 which had been previously recorded across Technology Drive from the current project area. This report contains a summary of information gained to date along with recommendations for further research.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project consists of the construction of an hotel and offices located on the irregularly shaped parcel of land 5.29 acres in size located between Technology Drive and Highway 87. Located on the San Jose West U.S.G.S. map, the borders of the property are Highway 87 on the west, existing development on the north, Technology Drive on the east and an existing park and Sonora Avenue on the south. Currently the parcel is open and partially paved.

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

An archaeological literature review was conducted by this author utilizing the files of Holman & Associates and by a personal visit to the NWIC on January 12, 2014 (file no. 13-1046). The NWIC literature review was done to search for any archaeological studies which might have been done on or directly adjacent to the project area since 2002, when Randy Wiberg of Holman & Associates completed his archaeological study of the Skyport Plaza Phase I project, which is to be found directly across Technology Drive from the current project area.

There have been no new archaeological studies of the current project area, but the files

did yield an archaeological report done by Lisa Pesnichak and Sally Evans of the Avignon Housing development, also across Technology Drive from the current project area. Completed in 2005, this report contains a summary of information gained during archaeological monitoring activities completed by ARS Inc. In 2002 and 2004.

The first comprehensive archaeological study of Scl-478 was completed by Randy Wiberg in 2000. Surface indications of this archaeological site had been discovered earlier; Holman & Associates subsequently conducted a limited program of mechanical subsurface presence/absence testing on the property, and then monitored construction related activities during the summer of 2000. This work led to the discovery of a complex prehistoric archaeological site:

> "Archaeological investigations at SCL-478 recovered 90 Native American burials, 34 discrete features, and an array of prehistoric artifacts and dietary constituents. Despite the recovery of numerous features and Native American burials, excavations produced only a modest collection of artifacts: 372 catalogued items, including individual artifacts and lots of faunal bone and shell.
>
> Early to Early/Middle Transition Period occupation is registered by 15 carbon dates between 2730 and 2020 B.P., or B.C. 780 to B.C. 70. Prehistoric occupation marks possible intrusion of the Meganos Aspect into northern Santa Clara County. This unique archaeological culture is registered by a regionally dissimilar mortuary complex, primarily extended burial posture and placement of graves on elevated sand mounds. The occupation sequence is marked by evidence of social conflict and unique mortuary treatment-i.e., perimortem dismemberment of skeletons to acquire "trophy" limbs." (Wiberg 2002:ii).

Based upon observations during the monitoring phase, Wiberg was able to product a map showing the approximate extent of the village site which places it directly across Technology Drive from the current project area. Dashed lines show it extending across the roadway, suggesting that it continued into the proposed Hotel site. In a phone anticipation with this author on January 10, Mr. Wiberg confirmed his opinion that the archaeological site in fact extended over Technology Drive in the direction of Highway 87.

It was also clear from Wiberg's work that the archaeological site continued southeast into a proposed housing site planned for the 6.3 acre parcel located at the intersection of Technology Drive and Sonora Avenue. Based on the 2002 work, Bayrock Residential Company contracted with ARS to provide archaeological monitoring services during construction planned for the parcel:

> "Archaeological monitoring and data recovery for the Avignon housing development took place from August 6, 2002 to May 3, 2004. The plans of the development required 3-6 foot deep excavation of nearly the entire project area for an underground parking garage.
>
> In order to maximize the efficiency of the archaeological data recovery program and the development project as a whole, an excavator was retained for the sole purpose of exposing the site CA-SCL-478 in the northwestern corner of the property prior to the commencement of the overall project.
>
> Excavation continued with an archaeological monitor to expose the existing burials and features. ARS archaeologists were brought onto the site for the hand excavations and data recovery of both burials and features. In total, 15 burials and 43 features (36 prehistoric, 6 geologic and 1 indeterminate were encountered during the process. A total of 1106 artifacts were collected and cataloged, the majority of which consisted of shell, faunal remains, chipped stone, groundstone, soil samples and charcoal samples. Very few formed tool artifacts were recovered." (Pesnichak and Evans 2005:4).

The 2005 ARS report is a brief summary of the findings of the monitoring activities and did not attempt to replicate the findings of the mor exhaustive 2002 report done by Wiberg. The findings in terms of human burials, cultural features and ecofactual and artifactual materials were identical to those reported by Wiberg. It had been hoped by this author that the 2005 report would supply additional mapping information regarding the archaeological site borders. Unfortunately the 2005 report only contains a map showing the logical extension of the archaeological site into the Avignon property, extending the borders farther to the southeast, which make a strong argument that the site extends into the Skyport hotel project along its entire border with Technology Drive. The authors did comment that monitoring of utilities into Technology Drive did not turn up any signs of archaeological deposit, but they warned that these shallow excavations could very likely have missed the actual archaeological deposit which might have been covered by alluvial materials as it extended towards Highway 87.

DISCUSSION

The 2002 and 2005 reports demonstrated that Scl-478 was a complex archaeological site containing a unique set of human burials and other forms of archaeological information which made it eligible for placement on the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR). Based upon work done in advance of the construction inside Phase I in 2000, the City of San Jose agreed that a data recovery program should be undertaken to mitigate impacts to the site. A similar program of data recovery was undertaken next door at the Avignon project area in 2002, leading to the discovery of additional human burials and other forms of archaeological information and materials.

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FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the opinion of this author that the Skyport Hotel/Office site probably does contain an extension of Scl-478 which will require further mitigation through a program of data recovery.
SKYPORT PLAZA HOTEL ARCHAEOLOGICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

It is the recommendation of this report that the nature and extent of the data recovery program which may be needed not be determined until a program of mechanical subsurface presence/absence testing is completed inside the project borders. Since the property is currently open, it is possible to conduct sufficient subsurface testing to determine both the aerial extent and depth below the surface of the site.

Depending on the size and depth of the deposit which may be found there, a targeted data recovery plan can be developed and implemented as a condition of approval for the proposed project. As stated in the 2005 ARS report, development of a focused mitigation plan can streamline the process of data recovery, providing sufficient time in advance of mass grading to allow for efficient data recovery by the archaeological team. Completion of data recovery ahead of construction activities also serves to limit or eliminate costly delays caused by the accidental discovery of significant archaeological materials, as happened during the development of Phase I.

Sincerely,

Miley Paul Holman
Holman & Associates

REFERENCES

Pesnichak, Lisa and Sally Evans
2005 RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND BURIAL RECOVERY: AVIGNON HOUSING DEVELOPMENT (CA-SCL-478) SAN JOSE, SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA. On file, Northwest Information Center (NWIC) file no. S-29838

Wiberg, Randy
2002 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS: SKYPORT PLAZA PHASE I (CA-SCL-478) SAN JOSE, SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA. On file, NWIC and Holman & Associates

2014 Personal communication with Randy Wiberg about extensions of Scl-478