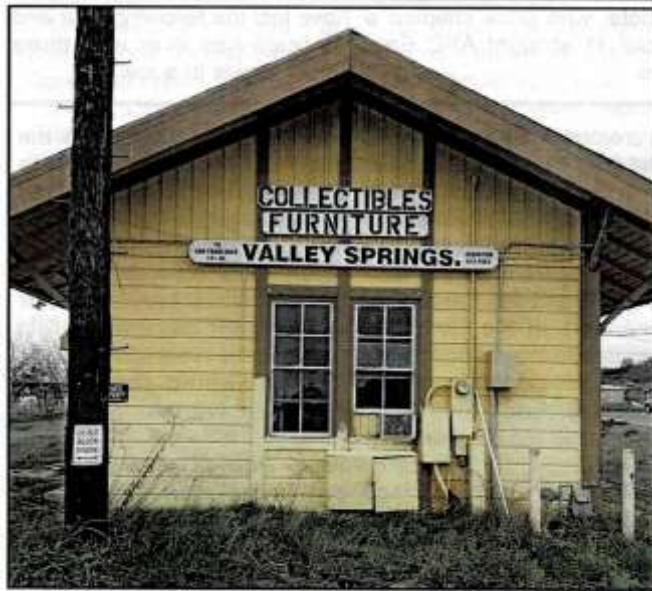


Supervisors will consider urgency ordinance to save historic buildings

Train station on brink of tear downtown

By Nick Baptista / The Valley Springs News / February 9, 2024



Fate of the old Valley Springs train depot is in the hands of the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday.

A downtown Valley Springs landmark on the verge of being demolished might get a reprieve Tuesday from the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors.

Several weeks ago a permit was pulled to tear down the former Valley Springs train depot located on the southwest corner of State Routes 12 and 26.

The structure was built around 1888-89, according to author and historian Sal Manna.

The California Office of Historical Preservation and California Department of Transportation consider the old train station historical. In addition, it is on the list of California Historical Resources and deemed eligible for the National Register of Historical Places.

However, Calaveras County has nothing in code to preserve its historical sites.

When word got out that a demolition permit had been issued, “a number of people in the county had concerns about the status of the building and went to the county to see what alternatives we had in saving the building,” said Manna, who is a contributing editor for The Valley Springs News and pens a column that appears the first Wednesday of each month in the newspaper titled “Something from Nothing: The Early History of West Calaveras.”

County officials temporarily rescinded the permit and started to draft an interim urgency ordinance to protect historical structures while a “permanent cultural resources management ordinance” is prepared and added to the county’s General Plan.

The board at its 9 a.m. meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 13, will hold a public hearing on the matter and consider adoption of the urgency ordinance.

The permanent ordinance has been in the works for some time, Manna said, and the interim ordinance will “tide us over until that is completed and adopted.”

Although the Valley Springs train station was the genesis of the urgency ordinance, it will apply to a number of other historical buildings in the county with uncertain futures, such as the Old Murphys Schoolhouse, Manna added.