

County's historic preservation code moves closer to adoption

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Calaveras County is closing in on having a permanent historical preservation ordinance.

The Calaveras County Planning Commission last week spent more than two hours fine-tuning the proposed ordinance prepared by the county Planning Department and passed a resolution recommending the Board of Supervisor adopt the document.

The vote on Dec. 10 was 4-0 with one member of the planning panel absent.

The movement of the historical preservation ordinance began earlier this year in January when there was a permit pulled to demolish the former Valley Springs train station located on the southwest corner of State Routes 12 and 26.

The yellow structure dates back to the late 1880s and was the genesis of commercial and residential development in what we know as present day Valley Springs. 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.

When word got out that the permit had been issued a number of people voiced their concerns to the county and the Board of Supervisors passed an urgency ordinance in early February temporarily blocking demolition of any historic building in the unincorporated parts of the county.

The board in late February adopted an extension of the urgency ordinance giving county staff a one-year period to develop a permanent historical preservation ordinance for consideration by the planning panel and supervisors.

The current urgency ordinance is applicable to buildings 75 years or older and either listed or have been deemed by the State Historical Resources Commission to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historic Places.