

BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ORINDA

In the Matter of:

Designation of the railroad trestle remnant at	)	Ordinance No. 16-06
20 Irwin Way as a Historic Landmark	)	
(Municipal Code Section 17.25)	)	
_____	)	

The City Council of the City of Orinda does ordain as follows:

SECTION 1.                      Introduction.

- a. Chapter 17.25 of the Orinda Municipal Code authorizes the City Council to designate by ordinance a site, building, structure, monument, tree, work of art or other object as a historical landmark.
- b. On June 21, 2016, Tania DeGroot, President of the Orinda Senior Village Board of Directors, submitted an application to designate the railroad trestle at 20 Irwin Way as a historic landmark. The underlying property at 20 Irwin Way was not proposed for designation.
- c. On October 25, 2016, the Planning Commission held a noticed public hearing on the proposed designation and voted unanimously to recommend to the City Council that the designation be approved and submitted a written recommendation to the Council (Planning Commission Resolution 16-04).
- d. On November 15, 2016, the City Council held a noticed public hearing on the proposed designation.

SECTION 2.                      The Landmark.

- a. Description. The landmark shall be known as The California and Nevada Railroad Train Trestle. It is a wooden post which was originally part of a railroad trestle spanning Lauterwasser Creek between the Orinda Park and DeLaveaga stations. The post measures one foot wide by one foot deep and extends out of the ground approximately seven to eight feet tall. The post consists of partially deteriorated natural wood, with some evidence of blue paint which was applied in the past.
- b. Owner. The current owner of the property is Orinda Senior Village.
- c. Historical Background. The California and Nevada Railroad was in operation at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and carried both freight and passengers from Emeryville, north around the east bay hills, and south along San Pablo Creek to Orinda, terminating at Bryant station in what is now the Theatre Square area. This railroad helped to catalyze the area's expansion.

### SECTION 3.

### Findings.

- a. The City Council finds that the railroad trestle at 20 Irwin Way is consistent with criteria A, C and G of Chapter 17.25 of the Orinda Municipal Code in that:

- A. The character, interest or value is part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of Orinda, the state of California, the United States of America or Native Americans.

The California and Nevada Railroad was a three-foot narrow gauge steam railroad and telegraph line which was incorporated in 1881 with the purpose of linking San Francisco to Nevada and eventually to Colorado. This grand plan was not realized due to revenue and competition issues, but 23 miles of track was constructed between Emeryville and what would become Orinda. The railroad route ran north from Emeryville through Berkeley, then east around the east bay hills and south along San Pablo Creek to Orinda. By 1891, trains were running regularly and there were three Orinda stations: Orinda Park, DeLaveaga Station, and Bryant Station (the terminus of the line). This railroad was primarily built to transport agricultural freight, but the Sunday passenger excursion service from Oakland to rural Orinda was its main revenue source, with the first revenue train running in 1885. At that time, the San Pablo and Rancho El Sobrante Valley had a population of only 250; by contrast, the population of Oakland was 50,000, and Berkeley was 5,000. Although trains stopped running and the railroad ceased operation in 1903 when the cross-country right of way was sold to the Santa Fe Railroad, the California and Nevada Railroad brought attention to the Orinda area and helped to generate development, culturally and economically, for decades to come.

- C. The proposed landmark is associated with a person who significantly contributed to the culture, history and development of the city.

Edward Ignacio de Laveaga is responsible for early development in Orinda and was also involved in the development of the California and Nevada railroad. He was the son of San Franciscan Miguel de Laveaga, who built a family estate in 1888 in what is now central Orinda and later purchased about 1,200 acres in the surrounding area. This included what is now western and central Orinda: the area between Telegraph Road (today's Highway 24) to the south, from Charles Hill Road on the east, the El Toyonal western slope of the San Pablo Valley on the west, and Wagner Ranch to the north. De Laveaga began development of the Orinda Village commercial area and the surrounding residential neighborhoods in the 1920s with the Hacienda Homes real estate development company.

Edward de Laveaga built one of the three railroad stations in Orinda to serve passengers who traveled to the De Laveaga estate on weekends for picnics and vacations. A designated City Historic Landmark, this station was preserved by his family and is now owned by the City of Orinda and has been re-located to the corner of Bates Boulevard and Davis Road in downtown Orinda, near the former Bryant Station.

- G. It is associated with important religious, cultural, governmental or social factors in the development of the city; or it exemplifies the cultural, educational, economic, patriotic, social or historic heritage of the city.

The trestle remnant proposed for dedication was part of a bridge that spanned Lauterwasser Creek between the Orinda Park and De Laveaga train stations. A trestle bridge is composed of a number of short spans supported by triangular trestle frames. Timber and iron trestles were extensively used in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the former making up from one to three percent of the total length of the average railroad. They were needed to cross areas with deep valleys, either dry or carrying water. Most were built of soft wood, treated in creosote, and did not survive more than a few decades. However, they marked the beginning of the industrial era in the United States, where goods, as well as passengers, were transported more quickly and easily to their desired destinations. The then rural town of Orinda was happy to embrace this advancement, and Orinda Park Station, which led to beautiful gardens and a large dance floor on a farm owned by then Mayor Andrew J. Bryant of San Francisco, was the local railroad's main attraction. The Bryant and De Laveaga Stations were also popular attractions for trips to the countryside. The post at 20 Irwin Way is the last vestige of the trestle bridge which allowed visitors to gather in this inviting and popular community.

#### SECTION 4.                    Designation.

The trestle remnant is designated as a historic landmark. The underlying property at 20 Irwin Way is not designated as a historic landmark, but the trestle must remain in its current location as part of the designation. The property owner, in consultation with the Historic Landmarks Committee and Planning Department, may in the future propose preservation activities to the trestle itself or the area immediately surrounding the trestle. A five-foot diameter area around the trestle is designated in addition to the trestle itself in order to allow for future preservation activities. A change to the trestle itself or the five foot diameter around the trestle will be subject to regulation under the Historic Landmarks Ordinance, Municipal Code Section 17.25.17.

The Planning Department is directed to add The California and Nevada Railroad Train Trestle to its list of designated landmarks. (Section 17.25.11).

The City Clerk is directed to (1) send a copy of this ordinance within 10 days of its adoption to the applicant and the property owner, and (2) file a copy of the ordinance in the office of the County Recorder. (Section 17.25.7)

#### SECTION 5.                    California Environmental Quality Act.

This ordinance is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act per Exemption 15331: Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation.

#### SECTION 6.                    Publication.

The City Clerk shall either (1) have this ordinance published once within fifteen (15) days after adoption in a newspaper of general circulation, or (2) have a summary of this ordinance published twice in a newspaper of general circulation once five (5) days before its adoption

and again within fifteen (15) days after adoption.

SECTION 7.                      Effective Date.

This ordinance becomes effective 30 days after adoption.

The foregoing ordinance was introduced at a meeting of the City Council of the City of Orinda at a meeting held on November 15, 2016, and was adopted and ordered published at a meeting of the Council held on December 20, 2016 by the following vote:

AYES:            COUNCILMEMBERS: Gee, Miller, Phillips, Worth

NOES:           COUNCILMEMBERS: None

ABSENT:        COUNCILMEMBERS: Orr

\_\_\_\_\_  
Eve Phillips, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sheri Spediacci, City Clerk