

City of Las Vegas

AGENDA MEMO

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATE: DECEMBER 6, 2007

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

**ITEM DESCRIPTION: DIR-24411 - APPLICANT: CITY OF LAS VEGAS - OWNER:
CITY OF LAS VEGAS**

**** CONDITIONS ****

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL

**** STAFF REPORT ****

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This request is to designate the Tule Springs Ranch at Floyd Lamb Park as an Historic District within the City of Las Vegas on 697.78 acres at 9200 Tule Springs Road, (APN 125-04-301-005), R-E (Residence Estates), U (PROS) (Undeveloped, Parks Recreation Open Space), U (PF) (Undeveloped, Public Facility) Zone, Ward 6 (ROSS). The Historic Preservation Commission voted to approve the nomination for designation as an Historic District based on the districts ability to meet the requirements for historic designation as listed in Title 19.06.090 I. Designation of Landmarks, Historic Properties and Historic Districts. The designation of a Landmark, Historic Property or Historic District shall be indicated by the H symbol on the zoning maps of the City. The use and development of property affected by a designation shall be governed by [19.06.090 H HISTORIC DESIGNATION] and applicable Design Guidelines adopted thereunder, as well as by the regulations pertaining to the underlying zoning classification(s) for the property, other provisions of the Zoning Code, the Citys subdivision regulations and the General Plan. Therefore, whenever it is proposed to alter, remodel, build, or otherwise develop or landscape property that is designated as a Landmark or Historic Property, or that is located within a designated Historic District, and a building permit or other development or zoning permit is required for such work, the applicant must first obtain the approval of the HPC.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

<i>Related Relevant City Actions by P&D, Fire, Bldg., etc.</i>	
4/1/92	City Council adopted the General Plan with Historic Preservation Plan component.
2/22/92	City Council adopted an amendment to the Municipal Code of the City of Las Vegas which added an historic preservation ordinance, and established the Historic Preservation Commission. Today, the City of Las Vegas Historic Preservation Ordinance is found in the Zoning Code, Title 19.06.090 H HISTORIC DESIGNATION.
9/5/07	City Council adopted the Historic Properties Preservation Plan Element by ordinance as a component of the Master Plan 2020.
7/1/07	The ownership of Tule Springs Ranch at Floyd Lamb Park was officially transferred to the city of Las Vegas from the State of Nevada.
9/26/07	Historic Preservation Commission held a public hearing for historic designation of the Tule Springs Ranch at Floyd Lamb Park to the City of Las Vegas Historic Property Register. Historic Preservation Commission approved designation as an historic district.

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APPLICATION REQUEST

Request to designate Tule Springs Ranch as an Historic District within the City of Las Vegas on 697.78 acres at 9200 Tule Springs Road (125-04-301-005). Ward 6.

ANALYSIS

The Tule Springs Ranch at Floyd Lamb Park, located at 9200 Tule Springs Road, has been determined eligible for listing on the City of Las Vegas Historic Property Register as an Historic District by the Historic Preservation Commission.

The property meets the following requirements for Historic District designation, as stated in the City of Las Vegas Title 19.06.090, Designation of Landmarks, Historic Properties and Historic Districts, section I: Subsections (1) and (3):

- (1).** An individual property, building, structure or archeological site may be designated as a Landmark if it demonstrates exceptional importance by qualifying under Subparagraphs (a) or (b) below:
 - a.** It meets the criteria for listing on the State or National Register of Historic Places.
 - b.** It is determined to be of exceptional significance and expresses a distinctive character because:
 - (i)** A significant portion of it is at least fifty (50) years old;
 - (ii)** It is reflective of the City's cultural, social, political or economic past; and
 - (iii)** Either:
 - A.** It is associated with a person or event significant in local, state or national history; or
 - B.** It represents an established and familiar visual feature of an area of the City because of its location or singular physical appearance.
- (3).** An area may be designated as an Historic District if:
 - a.** The area:

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- i) Includes a substantial concentration of properties, buildings or structures which individually meet the criteria in Subsection (1) of this Section, as well as other properties, buildings or structures which contribute generally to the overall distinctive character of the area and are united historically or visually by plan or physical development;
 - ii) Is bounded by documented historic boundaries such as early roadways, canals, subdivision plats or property lines, or by boundaries which coincide with logical physical or man-made features and reflect recognized neighborhood or area boundaries; and
 - iii) Includes non-contributing properties or vacant parcels only to the extent necessary to establish appropriate, logical or convenient boundaries; or
- b. The area includes or is composed of one or more archeological sites.

The City of Las Vegas supports the preservation of historic resources with the following documents:

1) The City of Las Vegas *Priorities*:

- Revitalize and invigorate our mature areas and the urban core
- Support and encourage sustainability, livability, and pride in our neighborhoods

2) The *City of Las Vegas Master Plan 2020*:

Reurbanization

OBJECTIVE 1.4: To retain, where viable, historical structures which represent the architectural, cultural and social legacy of the City of Las Vegas.

Neighborhood Revitalization Area

GOAL 2: Mature neighborhoods will be sustained and improved through appropriate and selective high quality redevelopment and preservation.

Cultural Enhancement

OBJECTIVE 5.2: To promote cultural awareness and pride within the city.

3) The City of Las Vegas *Historic Properties Preservation Plan Element*:

Goal: Promote the educational, cultural, economic, and general welfare of the public through the preservation, maintenance and protection of structures, sites and districts of significant historic, architectural, and archaeological interest within Las Vegas.

Objective 1: Promote the preservation, maintenance and protection of structures, sites and districts of historic interest within Las Vegas.

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Objective 3: Promote and encourage the rehabilitation and reuse of historic resources.

Objective 4: Promote and encourage the stability of designated historic neighborhoods, sites and landmarks by preserving their historical and architectural integrity.

Historic Significance of the Tule Springs Ranch at Floyd Lamb Park:

History

From the *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Report for Tule Springs Ranch*, 1981:

The Tule Springs Ranch is of importance due to its association with a significant phase of Nevada history (that of the divorce ranch era) and its integrity of architectural and environmental setting. Although not 50 years of age, the ranch is felt to be of exceptional significance.

The social/humanitarian significance of the Tule Springs Ranch revolves around its development and use as a working and divorce ranch. This is of primary significance. The liberalization of divorce laws in Nevada had a profound effect on the State and ultimately the Nation. A divorce industry developed in Nevada that included as one element the divorce ranch phenomenon.

The Tule Springs Ranch is felt to be of exceptional significance in that it is the best example of a divorce ranch remaining in Nevada (and hence the Nation) that is intact and retains its architectural and environmental integrity.

Summarized from *Interpretive Prospectus: Floyd Lamb State Park*, 1992:

Tule Springs was named for the thick growth of tules, or cattails, at the springs. This was not the only springs in the area, and other, larger springs drew more attention until the early 1900s when the Rhyolite and Bullfrog Mining Districts developed. The springs became a stop on the stage line connecting Las Vegas and the Bullfrog District.

John Herbert (Bert) Nay, the son of Mormon pioneers, first filed for water rights to the springs in 1916. He built a small house and adobe hut on the property, though his family lived in Las Vegas during the winters so the children could attend school. The adobe hut is the only remaining structure from the period; the house burned in the mid-1930s. May owned the property for twelve years before selling it and moving to California.

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In 1928, Gilbert Hefner purchased the forty acres for \$2,100. He never lived there, but rented it to bootleggers, who operated from the ranch for several years. After Prohibition ended, the ranch was dormant until Gene Ward bought it in 1941, selling it again the same year to Prosper Jacob Goumond.

P.J. Goumond enlarged the ranch to 880 acres. The Goumond family built most of the historically significant aspects of the ranch. Prosper Goumond owned the Boulder Club in downtown Las Vegas, and obtained the first gaming license ever granted in that city. His working ranch also served as a retreat for Goumond and his friends.

The ranch was known for breeding Brangus, a special crossbreed of cattle. Other farm animals included milk cows, chickens, turkeys, peacocks, pigs, and horses. Crops included alfalfa, a fruit orchard, and a large garden. The alfalfa was grown as a cash crop and supplied, among others, the Bar Nothing Ranch, now Spring Mountain Ranch State Park.

Goumond himself did not operate the ranch. His sons wife Pat, her second husband Cliff DeVaney, and Pats daughter Margo managed the day-to-day operations. The ranch at this time consisted of various farm buildings, a cookhouse, the main residence, water tower, and generator to provide power. In the late 1940s, fifteen miles from Las Vegas was far enough to isolate the property and require a self-sufficient operation.

By 1949, Goumond began to attract paying guests by adding several features to enhance the ranchs image, increase visitor comfort, add to the areas attractiveness, and promote the rustic ranch experience. They include the extension bridge and fish pond, the water wheel, the guest houses, the tennis courts, and the swimming pool.

The ranch could accommodate ten-to-twelve guests at one time. Most were soon-to-be divorcees, spending the required six weeks in Nevada until their divorces became final. The starlet Terry Moore often stayed at the ranch during her affair with Howard Hughes.

Tule Springs Ranch offered a variety of activities for the guests. Skeet shooting, horseback riding, barbecues, hayrides, swimming, and tennis were all available. The promotional brochure stated, No expense has been spared in developing the luxury of modern living in this romantic background of the Old West. Management billed it as Nevadas most beautiful guest ranch. One added attraction was the thrill of sharing and seeing an atomic bomb test when the Atomic Energy Commission conducts nuclear experiments at the Nevada Test Site, just 40 miles north of the ranch.

When P.J. Goumond died in 1954, his granddaughter Margo inherited the property. In 1959, she sold it to a group of Las Vegas businessmen, who leased it for a time, then sold it to the City of Las Vegas.

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The City bought it in 1964, primarily for the water rights. It was renamed Tule Springs Park and developed as a typical city park, with playgrounds and picnic areas. During the next thirteen years, several additional uses were developed. The Sahara-Nevada Corporation (through the Mint Sahara Casino) leased a portion as a trap-shooting gun club. Frank Dillion developed a horseback riding concession with alfalfa fields, stables, corrals, and horses for trail rides. The Nevada Zoological Society leased the hay barn and surrounding area and operated a small zoo. As costs rose during the 1970s, the City offered the property to the State, for use as a state park.

During the negotiations, the Las Vegas City Council changed the name from Tule Springs Park to Floyd Lamb Park, in honor of the long-time [1956-1984] state senator, who was chairman of the powerful Finance Committee during many of those years. His tenure in office ended abruptly in 1984, when he entered prison for three years, guilty of violating Federal conspiracy and extortion laws.

With the passage of S.B. 314 in 1977, the Nevada Legislature accepted 680 acres, to be known as Floyd Lamb State Park. In addition, the legislature allowed application for lease of the BLM lands that currently compose the R&PP lands managed by the Division of State Parks. The park is now owned by the City of Las Vegas and the name has changed to Tule Springs Ranch at Floyd Lamb.

Architecture

From the *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Report for Tule Springs Ranch*, 1981:

Architectural and environmental significance derives primarily from the visual quality and sense of place created by the collection or aggregation of [the] original structures, both those involved in the operation of a working ranch and those [that were] involved primarily in guest housing and recreation.

Generally, the architectural style of the ranch complex buildings combines what is essentially a vernacular ranch style with Colonial Revival influences. Characteristically, the buildings are constructed of concrete masonry block with wood framed gable roofs. The size of block and the manner in which its laid creates a pleasant rustic quality and adobe-like texture after it is painted.

Roofs are either shingled or tiled. Early buildings generally seem to use a narrower block and sometimes, wood sash windows rather than metal. Over the windows, the masonry courses are vertical.

Decorative elements are simple and consist of tin roofed, faceted cupolas with louvered openings, wood insets in the gable ends, either vertical boards rounded at the ends, or horizontal ones with various wavy patterns, and outlooker beams with rounded ends that support roof overhangs. In series, the beams create a pleasant and rustic decorative pattern.

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The complex of ranch buildings can be divided into two groups, stable row and the core area. The buildings along stable row once formed the working or functional unit of the ranch operation. Except for power sources, they housed the ranch workers, cowboys and their machines, tools, vehicles, ranch animals and the equipment necessary to maintain them.

The core area is quite different than the linear stable row. More residential and guest-oriented, the buildings in this area are in an apparently random placement around a low hill that stands in the center of the complex. Atop this small knoll is the picturesque water tower. The random, almost accidental scattering of core area buildings heightens an informal atmosphere already created by the hill, expanses of lawn and numerous trees.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS NOTIFIED 0

NOTICES MAILED N/A

APPROVALS 46

PROTESTS 2