THE CITY OF EUREKA
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

HISTORTIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Title:	Eureka Woman's Club ADA Accessibility, Window, and Fence Alterations
Project:	Historic Preservation HP-26-3
Location:	1531 J Street
APN:	005-111-018
Applicant:	DJ Cleek
Property Owner:	Eureka Woman's Club
Purpose/Use:	Replacement of an existing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible ramp and other ADA improvements serving the primary entrance, alteration to the south-facing façade to remove and replace wood windows, and construction of new flatwork and a new six-foot-tall wood fence near the south-facing façade.
Complete Application:	September 4, 2026
Deadline for Action:	December 3, 2026
General Plan:	HDR – High Density Residential
Zoning:	R3 – Residential High
California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):	Exempt under CEQA Guidelines §15331, Class 31 Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation
Staff Contact:	Alexandra Gonzalez, Associate Planner
Recommendation:	Hold a public hearing; and adopt a resolution finding the project is exempt from CEQA and conditionally approving
Motion:	"I move the Historic Preservation Commission adopt a resolution finding the project exempt from CEQA and conditionally approving the ADA accessibility, window, and fence alterations at 1531 J Street."

Figure 1: Location Map

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Applicant, Dj Cleek, on behalf of the property owner, proposes to make improvements to the Eureka Woman's Club (EWC) building (project site), including replacing the existing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible ramp, landing, and stairs, as well as adding a new push-button automatic door opener at the primary entrance facing J Street. The Applicant also proposes to alter the rear portion of the south-facing façade by removing and infilling two wood windows and installing four new fiberglass-exterior and wood-interior clerestory windows. Other improvements include removing and replacing an existing deteriorated six-foot(ft)-tall wood fence along the southern property line and adding a minor concrete slab to improve the trash area (project). The project will remain within the existing development footprint, except for the new fence, which will extend approximately 20 ft north toward J Street from the existing fence location.

The site was listed on the Local Register of Historic Places (LRHP) in 2011; therefore, under Eureka Municipal Code (EMC) §157.003(A)(1), the project must be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Figure 2: Area Map (yellow = historic property/project site)

Background

The project site is a Craftsman-style building originally commissioned for construction by the Eureka Monday Club, which later became the EWC. The Eureka Heritage Society, Inc.'s "Green Book" (Eureka, An Architectural View) dates the construction of building to 1916. The Green Book describes the building as follows:

> "The Monday Club Association of Eureka commissioned Franklin Georgeson to design their club building on J Street. The California Craftsman shiplap and shingled elevations are divided into two pavilions between the recessed entry. The window frames are heavily molded, and the low hipped roof is supported by brackets and exposed rafter ends."

Figure 3: 1918 Photo of the EWC Building

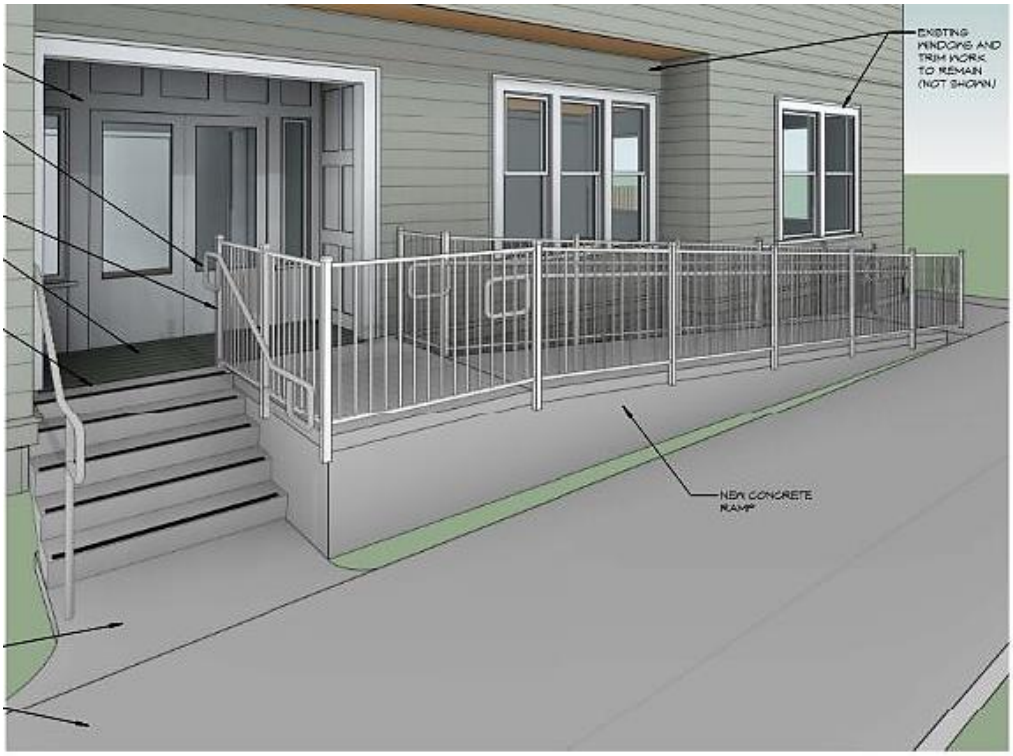
ADA Improvements

The project includes the replacement of an existing wood ADA ramp which was added in 2005 under Building Permit No. B05-0855 (Figure 4). As part of its construction, the property owner was required to sign a Hold Harmless Agreement with the City because a portion of the ADA ramp was constructed within the City's 12-ft right-of-way along J Street. Per the City's Engineering Department, since the ADA ramp will be a permanent installation in the public right-of-way, a Grant of Covenant will be required as part of the Building Permit process. A condition of approval has been added to ensure the Applicant is aware of this requirement.

The new ADA ramp will include decorative steel railing with heavy duty posts directly buried into the ground where bolting to the face of the concrete ramp is not feasible. Per the Applicants site plans, it does not appear that the posts will be directly bolted to the facia other than possibly at one point near the entrance doors (See Attachment 2, Page 2 for more details). The concrete stairs will include the extension of the existing landing at the top and bottom of the new stairs. Per the Applicant, neither the construction of the new stairs or landing will alter the existing wood porch or entrance doors. Lastly, the proposed push-button will be mounted to the trim board with wood screws and per the Applicant, will not impact the surrounding siding.

Figure 4: Existing ADA Ramp

Figure 5: Rendering of Proposed Ramp (See Attachment 2, page 2 for a detailed plan set)



Wood Windows

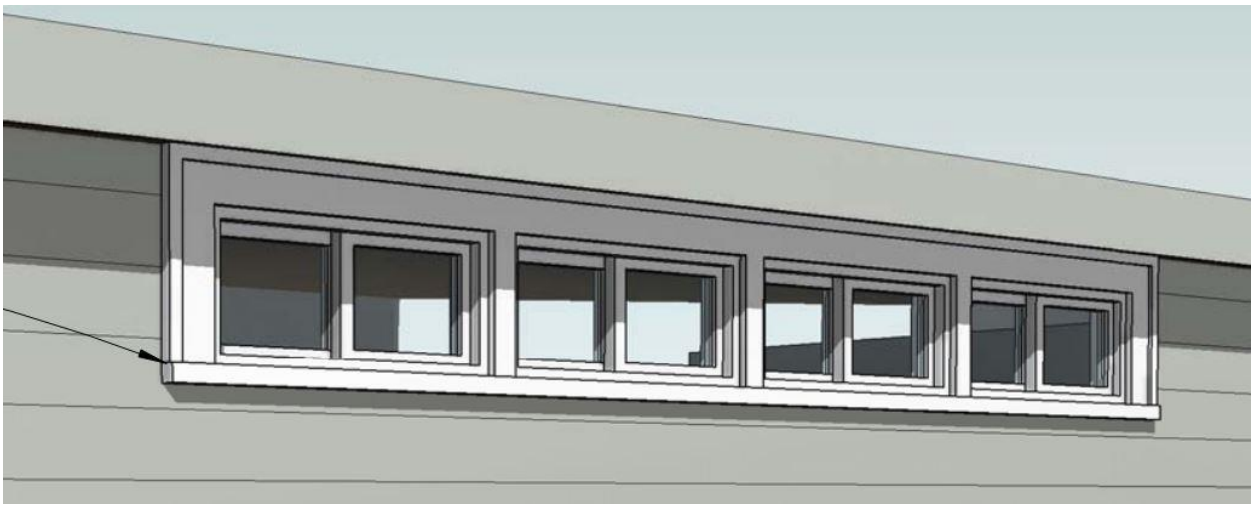
As seen in the historic 1918 photo above (Figure 3), the rear portion of the south-facing façade was altered when compared to its current form (Figure 6). From City records, an alteration to the south-facing façade occurred in 1957 under Building Permit No. 23949. This alteration included a kitchen addition, containing the existing wood windows proposed for replacement, as well as a staircase serving as a fire escape to the rear (not shown in the photo below). Since this alteration occurred prior to 2011, when the project site was listed on the LRHP, no HPC approval was required.

Figure 6: Existing South-facing Façade (red arrows = windows to be replaced)

The replacement of the two wood windows (Figure 7) is proposed to provide additional interior wall space as part of an ongoing kitchen remodel, which the EWC has been fundraising for over many years. The two wood windows will be replaced with white fiberglass-exterior and wood-interior Marvin-brand clerestory windows (Figure 8) that are similar in appearance, but different in material, to the existing transom windows found on other portions of the project site's ground floor (Figure 9). Per the Applicant, any salvageable siding removed as part of the project will be reused to infill the areas where the existing windows are removed, whereas any remaining areas will be infilled with new custom redwood siding that will match the existing dimensions, profile, and shadow lines of the existing siding.

Figure 7: Existing Wood Windows for Replacement

Figure 8: Proposed Windows



Exterior View (please note the new windows will be white)

Interior View

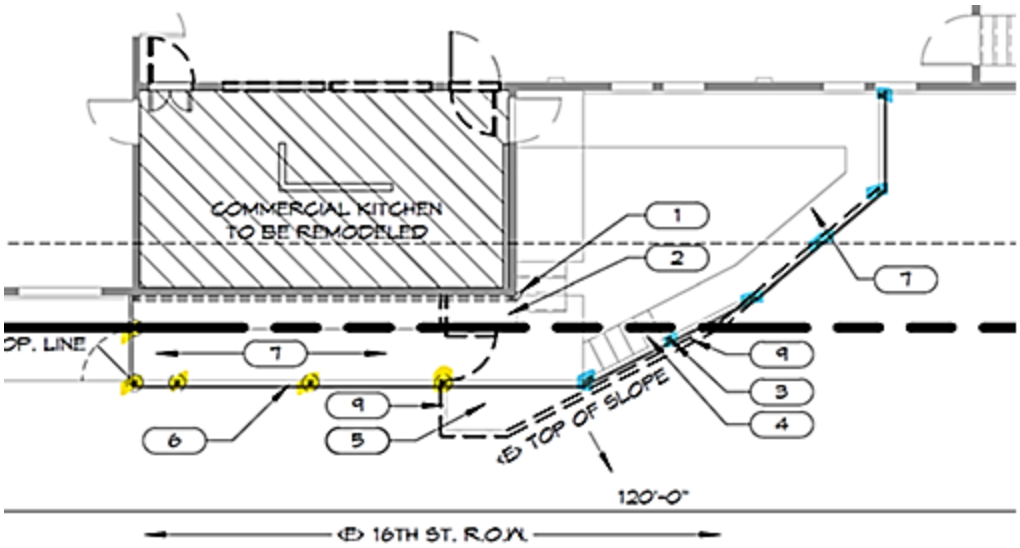
Figure 9: Example of Existing Transom Windows on EWC's Ground-floor

Wood Fence and Concrete Slab

The new six-ft-tall fence will be made of redwood over brown pressure-treated framing. It will

extend approximately 20 ft north of where the existing fence currently ends and will be located approximately five ft from the project site's south-facing façade, with approximately three ft extending beyond the property line into the City's undeveloped right-of-way for 16th Street (Figure 10). Where the fence runs parallel to the building, the fence posts will be dug into the ground along the existing concrete walkway; and, from the point where the existing concrete walkway changes angle, the fence posts will be bolted into the side of the walkway. Per the Engineering Department, because the proposed fence will be located within the City's right-of-way, a Grant of Covenant will be required as part of the Building Permit process, similar to the ADA ramp. It was noted that the ADA ramp and proposed fence can be included in the same Grant of Covenant. A condition of approval has been added to ensure the Applicant is aware of this requirement.

Figure 10: Proposed Fence (yellow = new fence posts set in the ground, blue = new fence posts bolted into existing concrete).


COMMERCIAL KITCHEN
TO BE REMODELED
1
2
7
7
9
3
4
9
5
6
℄ TOP OF SLOPE
120'-0"
℄ 16TH ST. R.O.W.

In areas where the fence abuts the steep slope on the adjacent property, the Applicant proposes to move the fence approximately one to two ft inwards to reduce slumping. By moving the fence inward, the existing trash area will need to be relocated (Figure 11), and the Applicant proposes a new concrete slab near the southern façade to accommodate the new trash area.

Figure 11: Existing Trash Area

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ANALYSIS

Title XV, Chapter 157, of EMC §157.006(C), specifies that for properties listed on the LRHP, any proposed replacement or alteration must be evaluated based on its effect on the existing historical character of the affected structure as it relates to the streetscape. Also, as provided in Chapter 157, the Historic Preservation Commission has adopted the **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties** (Standards) to guide alterations to historic properties and support the HPC's historic preservation responsibilities.

The Standards identify four treatment approaches for historic properties: Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction. For this project, **Rehabilitation** is the most appropriate standard. Rehabilitation recognizes the need to alter or add to a historic property to accommodate continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character as it has evolved over time. Staff has selected this standard because the proposed project involves alterations to a historic structure for a new sign to support an existing retail business while aiming to preserve its original historic character.

Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural significance when possible. There are ten standards that

apply to a property undergoing rehabilitation, taking into consideration the economic and technical feasibility of each project.

1. **A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.**
2. **The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.**
3. **Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.**
4. **Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.**
5. **Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.**
6. **Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.**
7. **Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.**
8. **Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.**
9. **New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.**
10. **New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.**

The project site has historically and is currently used as a gathering place for the EWC's various cultural, educational, and social programs. The use of the project site will not change as a result of the project (Standard 1).

As mentioned in the Background section, the addition of the ADA improvements will not physically remove or alter distinctive features, including the existing wood porch, entrance doors, or surrounding siding. The two wood windows proposed for removal may not contribute to the project sites overall distinctive architectural character because they were installed as part of a later alteration and are inconsistent with the established style and configuration of the surrounding historic windows. Their replacement with new clerestory windows that are more compatible with

the established transom window pattern, together with the use of salvaged and like-for-like redwood siding to infill the openings, will preserve the project site's distinctive materials and architectural character. Similarly, the existing fence was not part of the original construction and due to its low visual prominence, it therefore does not contribute to the property's distinctive architectural character. The replacement fence will be constructed of redwood, a material compatible with the historic building, and will maintain the existing fence height while extending approximately 20 ft north toward J Street. The fence will also be installed along the existing concrete walkway and will be constructed to avoid damage to the building's historic materials. Lastly, the proposed concrete slab will provide an improved surface for the existing trash area without altering the building's spatial relationships or historic materials. Overall, the project will preserve the property's distinctive materials, features, finishes, construction techniques, and examples of craftsmanship, while the new construction will be differentiated from the old and remain compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the property. For these reasons, the project will retain and preserve the historic character of the property (Standards 2, 5, and 9).

No conjectural features or elements from other historic properties are proposed (Standard 3). The existing ADA ramp was a required accessibility feature added to meet a state-mandated Building Code requirement and does not contribute to the property's historic significance or character-defining features; therefore, it is unlikely to have acquired historic significance over time. The existing wood windows proposed for replacement date to a 1957 alteration and could be considered historic; however, they are not consistent with the style of the surrounding historic windows and were added as part of an alteration not made by the original and well-known architect, Franklin Georgeson. According to guidance from the National Park Service on the Standards, these factors indicate that the existing windows do not contribute to the property's overall historic significance and may not have acquired significance in their own right. Similarly, the six-ft-tall wood fence and concrete slab are utilitarian site improvements. For these reasons, the project does not propose the removal of changes to the property that have acquired historic significance in their own right (Standard 4).

The project will result in the removal of limited areas of existing redwood siding associated with the window infill; however, the siding is not deteriorated and will be replaced with salvaged siding where feasible and new custom like-for-like redwood siding matching the existing dimensions, profile, and shadow lines where necessary. The existing fence is the only deteriorated feature proposed for replacement. Although its exact construction date is unclear, the fence was not part of the original construction and is constructed of standard cedar rather than redwood. As mentioned above, the new fence will be constructed of compatible material and similar appearance to the existing fence. Therefore, the project will preserve existing historic materials where feasible and replace removed materials with compatible, like-for-like materials, while the deteriorated fence will be replaced in a manner that is compatible with the historic character of the property (Standard 6).

The project does not involve chemical or physical treatments that could damage surrounding historic materials (Standard 7). Ground disturbance is proposed for the placement of fence posts and ground preparation for the installation of the ADA ramp and concrete slab. A condition of approval has been added requiring the Applicant to follow the City's standard inadvertent discovery protocol. Therefore, archaeological resources will be protected and preserved in place, and if such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken (Standard 8).

The ADA improvements can be removed without damaging historic siding or other character-defining features, while the window infill will use salvaged siding where feasible and like-for-like redwood siding where necessary, allowing the openings to be restored with substantially the same materials. Similarly, the proposed concrete slab and fence can be removed without adversely affecting the historic property or its character-defining features. For these reasons, the proposed improvements will not impair the essential form and integrity of the historic property if removed in the future (Standard 10). Based on the discussion for each standard above, Staff believes the alteration can be found to comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

CONCLUSION

As proposed, the project meets the Standards. If the Commission agrees with Staff's analysis, it may approve the application as submitted. If the Commission wishes to impose additional conditions, it must adopt specific findings related to the Standards to support its decision and include conditions of approval that clearly specify the required design, architectural style, and exterior appearance of the project.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This project is subject to environmental review in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A project that complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties qualifies for a Class 31 exemption from the preparation of environmental documents. Because the project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of the historical resource, this project is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and qualifies for a Class 31 exemption from CEQA.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Public notification consisted of notification by mail of property owners within a 300-ft radius of the site on or before September 25, 2026. In addition, the notice was posted on the City's website and bulletin boards. A public hearing notice sign was posted on the site on or before September 25, 2026.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED

Attachment 1: Resolution 2026-XX

Attachment 2: Applicant Submitted Material