




DATE: July 26, 2022

TO: Honorable Chair and Members of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Terrill L. Tillman, Principal Planner 

SUBJECT: P20SP00002 RIVER HOUSE TRUST, ET AL. – N. CRAYCROFT ROAD SPECIFIC PLAN
AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT
August 2, 2022 Board of Supervisors Meeting, Agenda Item #31

On January 26, 2022, the Planning and Zoning Commission heard the above listed comprehensive plan amendment and specific plan rezoning also known as the Endeavour Specific Plan. During the public hearing, there were concerns related to the historical significance of the subject site and the Office of Sustainability and Conservation, Cultural Resources have provided some supplemental historical information as attached.

Endeavour Assisted Spirited Living Specific Plan P20SP00002

CULTURAL RESOURCES CONTEXT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Cultural Resources and the Subject Property

The revised Specific Plan encompasses Parcel A (21-acres including portions of parcels 109-26-004D, -003D, and all of -003H) and Parcel B (13.3-acres including all of parcels 109-26-005R and -005H). The subject property is located just west of Craycroft Road and is adjacent to the north bank of the Rillito River in a zone of high archaeological sensitivity as defined by the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan.

The subject property includes the original location of the historic Davidson Flume, AZ BB:9:302 (ASM) and the Schroeder's Well complex, which were recorded by Statistical Research Inc. (SRI) during a cultural resources survey in the 1990s as part of a Corps of Engineers bank protection project (*Schroeder's Well and the Davidson Flume* by Mathew A. Sterner, SRI, 1996). The Davidson Flume is a redwood flume that was buried within the channel of the Rillito channel with its headgate possibly located in Tanque Verde Wash. The Schroeder's Well complex is a cluster of four historic period water control devices associated with the agricultural development of the north bank of the Rillito. These historic features were part of a system of irrigation ditches that were built to run from the Rillito to farm fields and reservoirs west of Pantano Wash to Binghampton.

In the 1800s, the water and fertile soil associated with the Narrows (where Tanque Verde Creek and Pantano Wash join the Rillito River) drew Mexican-American settlers, European-American settlers, a U.S. Army regiment at Fort Lowell, and Binghampton to the west. The subject property was also included in the original Fort Lowell Military Reservation. See map Figure 1 to the right.

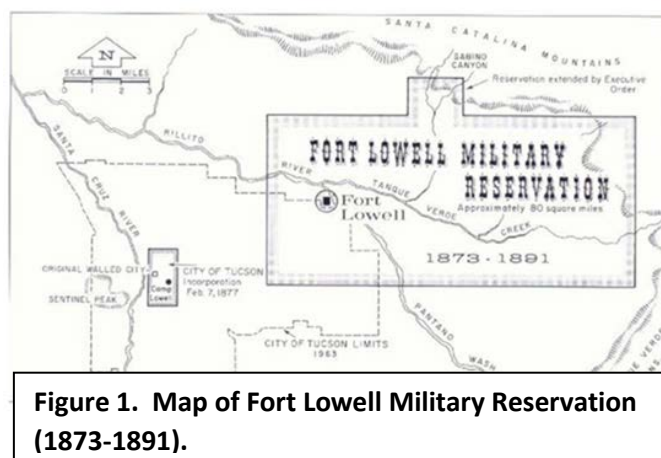


Figure 1. Map of Fort Lowell Military Reservation (1873-1891).

National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Listed Fort Lowell Multiple Resource Area (MRA) Located South of the Rillito River

The NRHP is the nation's inventory of cultural resources. It was established after the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 to promote the preservation and study of cultural resources. Crossing the Rillito River and approximately 1/3 mile to the south is the National Register of Historic Places-Listed Fort Lowell Multiple Resource Area (MRA). It was listed on the Register for its statewide significance in 1978. The historic district includes multiple contributing properties related to Fort Lowell and a Hohokam village, AZ BB:9:14(ASM)—also known as the Hardy Site.

The military post known as Fort Lowell was made permanent (officially named Camp Lowell in 1866 and later named Fort Lowell in 1879) and operated from 1873 through 1891. The Hohokam village within the Fort Lowell MRA was occupied at least as early as A.D. 650. Limited archaeological excavations of this Hohokam preservation area included the presence of

pithouses, storage areas, and a cemetery. Contributing properties to this NRHP listing also include residential structures.

Prior to 1977, certain historic Fort Lowell properties were owned by Pima County, which were also located within unincorporated Pima County. A Fort Lowell Historic District Advisory Board was formed in 1974, which in 1976, recommended the establishment of a Fort Lowell Historic Zone to the Pima County Planning and Zoning Commission. The Pima County Board of Supervisors approved an ordinance establishing a Fort Lowell Historic Zone in September 1976. In 1977, the Fort Lowell area was incorporated into City of Tucson limits.

Today, the 150-acre City of Tucson Fort Lowell Historic Preservation Zone overlaps the NRHP-Listed Fort Lowell MRA and extends to approximately 1,300 feet south of the southern boundary of Parcel A. As a consequence of HPZ zoning, any new development and construction proposed within the Fort Lowell Historic Preservation Zone is reviewed and approved by the Fort Lowell Historic District Advisory Board, the Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission (TPCHC), and the City of Tucson. For proposed construction nearby, but outside the defined boundaries of the historic district, a photographic image taken from within the district facing towards the subject property may help with assessing potential visual impacts of new construction on the historic district.

<https://www.tucsonaz.gov/files/preservation/fortlowell.pdf>

Although the subject Endeavor property is not located in the City Historic Preservation Zone (or within the NRHP—listed MRA), honoring the regional history and character of the Fort Lowell area is critical for preserving the area's sense of place. Several recommendations are offered here to help preserve the culture, history, character, and setting of Fort Lowell and the nearby historic neighborhood.



Figure 2. Map showing the Fort Lowell Historic Preservation Zone located south of the Rillito River

Cultural Resources Recommendations for Specific Plan Conditions

Given the presence of historical features that were originally located on the subject property and the close vicinity of other known cultural resources including the Hohokam village dating to at

least A.D. 650), the following two cultural resources conditions (previously requested of the developer) are recommended:

- It is recommended that the cultural resources map, published by SRI in 1996 be updated by a permitted archaeologist to reflect the presence or absence of historic features that previously existed and were recorded on the property.
- It is recommended that interpretive features, such as signage about Fort Lowell and the historic agricultural features, be installed as an amenity within the public use areas planned for the property. These interpretive signs should complement existing cultural resources signage developed by OSC for the RFCD public kiosks along the Chuck Huckelberry Loop that passes by Fort Lowell Park.

Cultural Resources Recommendations for Future Consideration During Building Design

The Cultural Resources & Historic Preservation Division of the Office of Sustainability and Conservation (OSC) will be available for voluntary consultation to the property owner and developer at the time of building design. Given the historical significance of the subject property itself and the historical relationship those cultural resources have had with contributing resources within the Fort Lowell Preservation Zone, it is recommended that future building design take into consideration the architectural character of the historic preservation zone. (For reference, see Fort Lowell HPZ Design Guidelines (PDF) and the excerpted City of Tucson Unified Development Code. Fort Lowell Historic Preservation Zone (HPZ)). Some of the following design ideas summarized below (adapted from the Fort Lowell HPZ guidelines) may be considered and worked into future building designs:

- The proposed buildings should reflect the surrounding and nearby context to the extent possible. Create visual interest and avoid flat monotonous facades and roof lines, especially in the proposed 3-story building.
- Buildings within the Fort Lowell Preservation Zone are greater in length than in height.
- Roof lines are irregular. For example, buildings in the Fort Lowell Historic Preservation Zone retain a simple, single-story vernacular style with parapet flat roofs that include Sonoran Military, Sonoran Ranch, Santa Fe-Sonoran Ranch, and Bungalow Vernacular).
- Symmetry is not an architectural characteristic among buildings; the historic zone reflects building and construction that followed a pattern considered more organic in nature.
- Colors are general light to medium, soft earth tones.
- The landscaping includes native desert plants in an informal way and stormwater runoff is used for irrigation.