



P.O. Box 4173 Glendale CA 91202
www.GlendaleHistorical.org

February 4, 2022

Chair Donne Brownsey and Members of the California Coastal Commissioners
California Coastal Commission
via email

Re: Agenda Item 9b - City of Laguna Beach LCP Amendment No. LCP-5-LGB-20-0053-1 (Historic Preservation).

Dear Chair Brownsey and Commissioners:

The Glendale Historical Society writes to urge you to deny Laguna Beach's request to amend its Local Coastal Program and weaken its historic preservation ordinance, which has for decades helped preserve this historic beach town.

Ordinarily we would not comment on a project outside Glendale, let alone in Orange County, but we do so in this case based on the bad precedent that approval of these changes would make. Several cities in California have historic preservation programs that protect historic resources, whether or not the owner consents that their property should qualify as historic. Unsurprisingly, not all owners are thrilled with this state of affairs. Allowing Laguna Beach to change its program and reduce its protections for historic resources throughout the city would provide a temptation to other cities likewise facing development pressure to follow suit.

In Glendale, as in Laguna Beach at present, the City acknowledges that properties that are eligible for the local Register of Historic Resources *are* historic resources, whether or not they are formally designated on that list. Of course they are historic. Properties are not historic because they are on a register; they belong on a register because they are historic. Any change that would make owner preference rather than objective, expert analysis and evaluation the key to historic status should not be permitted.

The Glendale Historical Society (TGHS) advocates for the preservation of important Glendale landmarks, supports maintaining the historic character of Glendale's neighborhoods, educates the public about and engages the community in celebrating and preserving Glendale's history and architectural heritage, and operates the Doctors House Museum. TGHS is a tax-exempt, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, and donations to TGHS are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

We ask you please to reject the proposed changes to the Laguna's Local Coastal Program, both to preserve the city's remarkable historic built environment but also to help preserve the integrity of an objective historic preservation process for other communities as well.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Schwab-Sims", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Schwab-Sims
VP Preservation
The Glendale Historical Society