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From: **Debi Howell-Ardila** <DHowell@swca.com>

Date: Tue, May 31, 2016 at 5:05 PM

Subject: hermosa

To: "debihowell@gmail.com" <debihowell@gmail.com>

Debi Howell-Ardila. I'm senior architectural historian with SWCA and vice-chair of the CHC in South Pasadena. I hold a Bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley and a Masters of Historic Preservation from USC. I have 11 years of experience in historic preservation.

In my opinion, and based on the dozens of schools I've surveyed throughout SoCal, North Elementary appears eligible for the City of Hermosa Beach Register under local criteria A ("It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the city's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, or architectural history") C ("It embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction"), and D ("it is representative of the notable work of a builder, designer or architect," in this case, renowned architects Samuel Lunden and Marsh, Smith and Powell).

In terms of the California Register, it appears eligible under Criteria 1, as a highly representative example of a 1930's school, as well as Criteria 3, as an outstanding example of a WPA-era Art Deco institutional building.

School design is an area of specialty for me.

My recent project work has included writing a districtwide Historic Context Statement for the Los Angeles Unified School District. As I mentioned, I've evaluated numerous schools throughout Southern California, including 55 campuses for LAUSD alone. In 2014 and 2015, my LAUSD Historic Context Statement won awards from the California Preservation Foundation and the Los Angeles Conservancy. This is an area of particular interest to me.

Given the school's eligibility for the California Register and Hermosa Beach Register, it qualifies as a historical resource under the California Environmental Quality Act.

I understand that the City's schools need additional classroom space.

It would be a shame and loss if this school were demolished. Its scale, design, and character tell a unique story about the history of school design in Hermosa Beach

and Southern California. If the building is demolished, you'll lose an important reflection of that history and story that can't be replaced.

In addition, CEQA requires the consideration of feasible alternatives when a historical resource is involved.

So, given the significance of North Elementary, I urge the City to explore options for classroom expansion that will preserve the school, in keeping with the stated purpose of your own historic preservation ordinance: to "safeguard the City's heritage by encouraging the protection of landmarks representing significant elements of its history," "to foster civic and neighborhood pride and a sense of identity based on an appreciation of the City's past and the recognition and use of historic resources," and "to enhance the visual character of the City by preserving diverse architectural styles reflecting phases of the City's history," among others.

Thank you.

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