

**CITY OF BELVEDERE**  
**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-32**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELVEDERE  
DESIGNATING THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 246 BEACH ROAD A CITY OF  
BELVEDERE HISTORIC PROPERTY**

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**WHEREAS**, a proper application for Historical Status Designation pursuant to Belvedere Municipal Code Chapter 21.20 for the property located at 246 Beach Road has been submitted; and

**WHEREAS**, the project has been determined to be categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because it can be seen with certainty that the Historical Designation of the property will not cause a significant adverse impact on the environment; and

**WHEREAS**, a home may be designated as an Historic Belvedere Property if three or more of the following findings or facts per Belvedere Municipal Code Section 21.70.070(A) can be made; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Belvedere Historic Preservation Committee made a favorable recommendation to the Planning Commission on the Historical Designation application on April 11, 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission held duly a noticed public hearing on the Historical Designation application on July 18, 2023, and approved a motion recommending that the City Council designate the property at 246 Beach Road a City of Belvedere Historic Property; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council held a duly noticed public hearing on the Historical Designation application on August 14, 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, at the City Council made the following findings of fact pursuant to Section 21.20.070(A) 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the Belvedere Municipal Code for the property at 246 Beach Road:

*1. Architecture: It is an outstanding example of a particular style, construction method or material.*

The house is an example of "Storybook" architecture which is a niche building style created in Los Angeles at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and spread throughout the United States. "Storybook-style houses (also called Fairytale, Hansel and Gretel, or the more formal Provincial Revivalism) riff on traditional medieval European cottage architecture as reinterpreted through a Hollywood set design lens.

Storybook Architecture emerged in the 1920's and 1930's by Hollywood art directors, who used their set building skills to create what would become landmark buildings for wealthy clients with Hollywood money. "These scene-stealing structures made news across the country, and Storybook architecture spread north to Berkeley, CA. and across the U.S. However, Storybook architecture was ultimately a short-lived architectural style stifled by the Great-Depression". (*The Spruce* "What is a Story House" by Karen Hohenadel).

Storybook houses were constructed from simple materials such as stucco, brick, and half-timbers. The exterior is built to create a faux distressed look, using aging techniques to lend it a sense of history and timelessness cobbled together. For the reasons stated above, 246 Beach Road qualifies as an outstanding example of a particular style, or construction method.

2. Architecture: *It is outstanding because of age.*

The 81-year-old home at 246 Beach Road is outstanding because of its age. It was built in 1942, almost 50 years after the very first homes on Belvedere Island were built around 1893.

3. Architecture: *It is outstanding because it is the work of a significant architect or builder.*

Not applicable

4. Architecture: *It is outstanding because it is the first, last, only, or most significant architectural property of its type in the city.*

Built in 1942, the 246 Beach Road residence is one of the four Heidelberg "Storybook" houses on Belvedere Island. 246 Beach Road is one of the most significant houses of its type in the city.

5. Design: *It has a unique or original design or demonstrates outstanding craftsmanship*

The "Hansel and Gretel or Storybook" type is an example of non-traditional architecture that would qualify as a unique design. The architecture of this house appears to have original decorative materials inside and outside including the wood floors and ceilings, and built ins.

6. History: *It is associated with a person, group, or event significant to the city, state, or nation, or shows broad cultural, political, social, or economic patterns, or embodies and expresses the history of the city.*

First, Jack Heidelberg (1905 -1986) was significant to the history of Belvedere. He was the Designer of the iconic (Heidelberg / "Gingerbread" Houses on Belvedere Island. In the early 1930's Jack Heidelberg was active in the insurance business. At the age of 29 he left insurance, began a career in real estate, moved to Belvedere and opened his own brokerage business. In 1934 he acquired the vacant double lot at 250 Beach Road on the east side of Belvedere Island and commissioned Donnell Jaekle, a "fashionable architect of the day" to design a house in the "English Country" style (but with an Art Deco interior) as a wedding present for his wife Lurline ("Bobbie").

As plans for the new house progressed, "Jack started putting his own fingerprints on the design". The house was completed in May 1935 attracting wide interest. "In the late 1930's fJack and Lurline Matson Heidelberg were able to acquire three adjacent lots to the north (now 246 Beach Road and 242 Beach Road) on which remained the foundations of a large house demolished in the late 1920's or early

1930's following a fire." (Note, the garden and waterfront for 250 extended into the immediately adjacent lot at 246 Beach. The gardens were (and are) an important feature of the 250 and 246 properties.

In 1942 Jack built the house with a crooked chimney at 246 Beach Road (adjacent to his house at 250 Beach Road). This house was intended for his mother, Lotta Heidelberg, but she would not move from the City and it became a rental property.

*7. Environment: It contributes to the character of the street or neighborhood area or has significance as a visual landmark owing to its unique location.*

246 Beach Road contributes to the character of the street and neighborhood. 246 Beach Road is located in Belvedere's Historic Resource Sensitivity Map as a parcel of Medium Historic Sensitivity. Perched over Beach Road, near the middle of the Island, 246 Beach Road is visible from Belvedere Cove as well as from Corinthian Island and parts of the Bay.

The house is highly visible and imageable from Beach Road. It is a contributing piece of architecture in this historic neighborhood. This house contributes to the unity and diversity of the Island. In fact, the image of the house from Beach Road is so compelling that if the house was not there it would be greatly missed.

*8. Integrity: It retains most of its original materials and design features*

The Heidelberg (Gingerbread) Houses including 246 Beach Road retain most of their original materials and design features although the three properties underwent extensive renovations in 1992-1993 including plumbing and electrical upgrades; the structures were tied to foundations and roofs were replaced in 2007 with heavy shake shingles. The original house has not been compromised with additions and is of outstanding craftsmanship. However, there are a number of areas of the house that the owner will need to repair and restore.

*9. National Register of Historic Places: It is a site or structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places.*

Not applicable

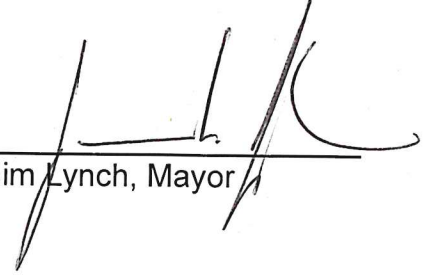
**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council of the City of Belvedere does hereby grant approval of Historical Designation status to the residence located at 246 Beach Road pursuant to the findings stated above and incorporated herein.:

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** at a public hearing of the City Council of the City of Belvedere on August 14, 2023 by the following vote:


**AYES:** Cooper, Kemnitzer, Mark, Lynch  
**NOES:** None  
**ABSTAIN:** None  
**ABSENT:** Wilkinson

Resolution 2023-32  
246 Beach Road  
August 14, 2023  
Page 4

APPROVED:

  
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Jim Lynch, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Beth Haener, City Clerk