



Ventura County Cultural Heritage Board April 27, 2026, Meeting Agenda

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency

800 S. Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009-1740 • (805) 654-2478 • rma.venturacounty.gov/divisions/planning/

Notice is hereby given that on Monday, April 27, 2026, at **1:15 p.m.** the Ventura County Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) will convene for a public meeting to be held at the Ventura County Government Center, Hall of Justice, 800 S. Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009, Pacific Conference Room. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

PROVIDING PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comments may be provided using the following options: (1) e-mail public comment in advance of the meeting; and/or (2) in-person public comment.

Option 1 – If you wish to make a comment on a specific item in advance of the meeting, please submit your comment for that item via email by 10:00 a.m. on the day of the hearing to Dillan Murray, staff, via email at Dillan.Murray@venturacounty.gov. Please indicate the Agenda Item Number on which you are commenting in the Subject Line of your email. Your comment will be provided to the Cultural Heritage Board and placed into the item's record at the Cultural Heritage Board hearing.

Option 2 – If you wish to make a comment in-person, you must be present at the meeting location and provide your comment prior to the close of the public comment period for the item you wish to speak on.

AGENDA

1. **1:15 P.M. CALL TO ORDER THE MEETING OF THE VENTURA COUNTY CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD**
2. **ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**
3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**
 - 3a. Vote to approve the April 27, 2026, Agenda
 - 3a. Vote to approve the April 13, 2026, Meeting Minutes
4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

This time is set aside for public comment on items not otherwise on this agenda which are within the purview of the Cultural Heritage Board. Speakers wishing to address the CHB shall be allowed a maximum of three minutes for their comments. The CHB is prohibited from taking action on any item that is not part of the printed and published agenda.

5. **CONTINUED ITEMS**

None

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

6a. **Action:** Adopt proposed resolutions to approve historic preservation awards recognizing the work of six different organizations. The awards are to be presented at a public hearing in May to coincide with National Historic Preservation Month.

7. **REPORTS**

7a. Board Member Reports

7b. CHB Program Updates from Staff

8. **NEXT MEETING**

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held May 11, 2026.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Dillan Murray, staff, at (805) 654-5042 or via email at Dillan.Murray@venturacounty.gov. Reasonable advance notification of the need for accommodation prior to the meeting (72 hours advance notice is preferable) will enable us to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.



Ventura County Cultural Heritage Board

April 13, 2026, **Draft Meeting Minutes**

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency

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Note: The following is a summary of actions taken by the Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) at their public hearing and not a verbatim transcription.

1. **1:17 P.M. CONVENE THE MEETING OF THE VENTURA COUNTY CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD**

2. **ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

CHB Members Present: Mike Winters (Chair), Tyson Cline, Herbert Gooch, Sylvia Schnopp, Gary Blum, and Miguel Fernandez

CHB Members Absent: Anthony Angelini

Staff Present:

Julianne Sutton, Intern, Ventura County Planning Division

Dillan Murray, Senior Planner, Ventura County Planning Division

Winston Wright, Ordinances & Implementation Section Manager, Ventura County Planning Division

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

3a. Vote to approve the April 13, 2026, Agenda

Board Member Fernandez made a motion to approve the April 13, 2026, Agenda. Board Member Schnopp seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

3b. Vote to approve the February 23, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Board Member Schnopp made a motion to approve the February 23, 2026, Meeting Minutes. Board Member Gooch seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0 (Board Member Cline abstained).

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

5. **CONTINUED ITEMS**

None

6. **NEW ITEMS**

6a. Location: The Thacher School, 5025 Thacher Road, Ojai, CA 93023 (Supervisory District 1 – LaVere)

Action: A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness (Cultural Heritage Ordinance §1371) for the demolition of four existing historic tennis courts and their replacement with a new approximately 5,300-square-foot Health & Wellness Center at the north portion of the existing court area at The Thacher School, located at 5025 Thacher Road, Ojai, CA 93023. The proposed project also includes the development of a new landscaped open space at the south portion of the site to support passive recreational uses for students, the construction of new stairs and pathways connecting the improvement area to existing buildings and outdoor use areas in the vicinity, and one new van-accessible/ambulance parking space off the existing service road at the north end of the project area. The request includes review and comment by the Cultural Heritage Board on the proposed project in accordance with the County of Ventura Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, Section 13 (Historical Resources), Section 13.3.2 (Impact Analysis). (Case No. CH26-0018).

Disclosures: None

Presentation: Dillan Murray, staff, presented a PowerPoint presentation outlining the property location, historical background, project scope, analysis, and recommendations. Staff recommended the CHB take the following actions on this item:

1. **CONDUCT** public hearing, **RECEIVE** oral and written testimony, and **CONSIDER** the Planning Division staff report and all exhibits and attachments hereto; and
2. **REVIEW** and **COMMENT** on the proposed project in accordance with the County of Ventura Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAGs) Section 13 (Historical Resources), Section 13.3.2 (Impact Analysis) (Exhibit 5), based on the preceding evidence and analysis;
3. **FIND** whether the proposed project meets the requirements of the Ventura County Cultural Heritage Ordinance Section 1371-4(b); and
4. If the requisite finding can be made based on the preceding evidence and analysis, **APPROVE** the Certificate of Appropriateness (Ordinance Section 1371-4) with any recommendations determined

necessary to better conform to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*.

Discussion:

The following members of the applicant team were in attendance:

Jeff Hooper, Thacher Head of School

Joel Kyle, Thacher Director of Facilities Operations

Paul Travis, Managing Principal, Historic Resources Group

Adam Sharkey, Architect, Blackbird Architects, Inc.

Ken Radtkey, President, Blackbird Architects, Inc.

Lisa Woodburn, Senior Planning Manager, Sanbell

Board Member Gooch asked whether tennis would continue at the school. Dillan Murray, staff, explained that tennis activities would remain at the courts on the western portion of the campus, which are considered non-contributing to the historic district.

Board Member Blum asked whether HABS photographic documentation had been completed for the previous removal of two tennis courts. Dillan Murray, staff, confirmed that HABS documentation was completed for the entire Upper Tennis Courts, along with the installation of interpretive signage.

Jeff Hooper, Thacher Head of School, gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the applicant team's approach to the project and the rationale for locating the proposed Health Center to support students' healthcare needs.

Lisa Woodburn, Senior Planning Manager at Sanbell, discussed the anticipated permitting pathway for the project and the next steps in the review process.

Adam Sharkey, architect at Blackbird Architects, Inc., described the evolution of Thacher School since 2019 and the design concept for the proposed Health Center.

Paul Travis, Managing Principal at Historic Resources Group, provided additional context on the history of the Upper Tennis Courts and noted that, because little original historic material remains, the courts derive most of their significance from their original setting and location, which

remain intact. Mr. Travis also explained his view that the project would not result in a significant impact on the Thacher School Historic District.

Board Member Cline asked how retaining walls would be addressed in the project given the historical importance of the site's contouring. Adam Sharkey, architect, noted that a portion of the historic stone retaining walls had been retained and reused on site as part of the previous Dining Hall project. He added that the remaining retaining walls in the Upper Tennis Courts proposed for removal are non-historic CMU blocks.

Board Member Fernandez asked whether the applicant team had considered any enhanced mitigation measures compared to what was done previously. Paul Travis, Managing Principal at Historic Resources Group, stated his view that the prior HABS photographic documentation and interpretive signage encompassed the entire Upper Tennis Courts and was therefore adequate.

Board Member Fernandez suggested that the historical location of the tennis courts be marked within the proposed landscaping or open space area through a mow strip or pavers, which could also serve as volleyball or badminton courts. Adam Sharkey, architect, commented that it was an interesting idea, although the outlines would be partial due to the current site plan.

Chair Winters suggested that the court boundaries could be superimposed on an aerial image and incorporated into the interpretive signage.

Board Member Fernandez suggested that the Upper Tennis Courts be digitally recorded prior to demolition for future interpretation and study.

Board Member Schnopp asked whether input had been gathered from students. Jeff Hooper, Thacher Head of School, stated that students are excited about that area of campus being fully utilized again and that the proposal is not controversial among alumni.

Chair Winters and Board Member Schnopp emphasized the importance of such a Health Center given that students live on campus 24/7.

Board Member Fernandez made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness with the following recommendations to better conform to

the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards* and comply with Cultural Heritage Ordinance Section 1371-4(b):

- **Recommendation #1: Nominate the Thacher School Historic District for listing as a Ventura County Historic District (Cumulative Impacts).** Prior to the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy, the permittee shall nominate the Thacher School Historic District for listing as a Ventura County Historic District to address adverse impacts from the new construction on a County-designated Site of Merit and the loss of a contributing resource to the National Register-listed District. Once designated, any future projects within the boundaries of the Ventura County Historic District would require a Certificate of Appropriateness, providing a mechanism to mitigate cumulative losses of integrity to the Historic District.
- **Recommendation #2: Historical Interpretation.** The applicant shall augment prior interpretive measures through the installation of a physical marker noting portions of the former location of the Upper Tennis Courts, as well as the completion of a modern digital interpretive component, to be recorded prior to demolition and developed by the applicant in coordination with staff. The interpretive effort may also include a contemporary photograph of the Upper Tennis Courts taken prior to demolition from the vantage point of an interpretive display, allowing viewers to compare past and current site conditions.

Board Member Gooch seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

- 6b. Action:** Review, provide comments, and direct staff to forward the County of Ventura Cultural Heritage Board Certified Local Government Annual Report for 2024–2025 to the California State Office of Historic Preservation.

Presentation: Dillan Murray, staff, presented a PowerPoint presentation outlining the item background and recommendations. Staff recommended the CHB take the following actions on this item:

1. **CONDUCT** public hearing, **RECEIVE** oral and written testimony, and **CONSIDER** the Planning Division staff report and all exhibits and attachments hereto; and
2. Based on the preceding evidence and analysis, **REVIEW, PROVIDE** comments, and **DIRECT** staff to forward the County of Ventura

Cultural Heritage Board Certified Local Government Annual Report for 2024–2025 to the California State Office of Historic Preservation.

Discussion:

Board Member Fernandez suggested adding community outreach events where the Cultural Heritage Board display booth was installed to the Annual Report.

Board Member Fernandez made a motion to adopt staff's recommended actions with this addition. Board Member Gooch seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

- 6c. Action:** Discuss and determine whether to form an ad hoc committee to coordinate the Cultural Heritage Board booth at the Ventura County Fair during summer 2026.

Presentation: Dillan Murray, staff, presented a PowerPoint presentation outlining the item background.

Discussion:

Board Member Fernandez stated that an ad hoc committee was not necessary this year because the recently updated Cultural Heritage Board display could be reused, and because aligning the display with the annual Fair theme is a relatively low-weighted award category.

Board Members Fernandez, Blum, and Schnopp expressed interest in assisting with the setup and takedown of the display.

By consensus, the Board agreed, and no action was taken on the item.

7. REPORTS

7a. Board Member Reports

Chair Winters reported that Moorpark will hold its Apricot Festival in May, which will include family-friendly activities on High Street. He also noted that he will be giving a presentation on the history of Moorpark.

Board Member Fernandez reported that he and Board Member Schnopp have been communicating with Henry Travers Newton and Georgia Pulos, descendants of Thomas and Mary Bard, regarding efforts to improve public

access to and landscaping at the Bard Memorial on Ventura Road in Port Hueneme. He stated that, based on a site visit, adding a crosswalk across Ventura Road to access parking on the opposite side would not be feasible. Instead, adding parking spaces along Ventura Road in front of the memorial may be more appropriate, though additional discussions with city staff would be needed.

Board Member Schnopp reported that she attended the County's ReFrame Arts and Culture Summit. She noted the economic importance of art in Ventura County and described her efforts to connect the art and creative economy with the work of the Cultural Heritage Board.

Board Member Blum reported that Oxnard launched Arts, Culture, and Creativity Month on April 1st. He also noted that the designation of Downtown Oxnard as a California Cultural District has brought renewed energy and interest to the area.

Board Member Cline reported that the Teddy Bear Cancer Foundation's Downtown Ventura Mini Golf Challenge will take place on Saturday, April 25th, and will feature teams of local creatives and businesses.

Board Member Gooch reported that he recently attended a behind-the-scenes tour at the Museum of Ventura County, which he found informative. He also provided an update on construction at the historic Timber School site in Newbury Park.

7b. CHB Program Updates from Staff

Dillan Murray, staff, reported that the Ventura County Plein Air Painters plan to debut their art show next May, coinciding with Historic Preservation Month, in the Hall of Administration. He invited any Cultural Heritage Board members who wish to participate in or attend the opening ceremony to contact him if they have not already done so.

Next, Mr. Murray reported that on May 12th the Board of Supervisors will acknowledge Historic Preservation Month with a proclamation. He invited any Cultural Heritage Board members who wish to attend that item or provide comments to let him know if they have not already.

Finally, Mr. Murray reported that Julianne Sutton, an intern with the Planning Division, has been conducting research on historic landmarks for new

webpages and expressed appreciation for her support of the Cultural Heritage Program.

Winston Wright, staff, provided an update on the process to fill the Planning Programs Section Manager position and noted that he will serve in the interim at Cultural Heritage Board meetings.

Julianne Sutton, intern, expressed appreciation for the role that Cultural Heritage Board Members serve.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled hearing was reported to be April 27, 2026.

9. ADJOURNMENT

At 2:45 p.m., the Cultural Heritage Board was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Dillan Murray, Secretary

Date