

Neighbors argue against demolishing Palm Springs home

Some neighbors are speaking out against the planned demolition of a home near Sunset Way and Tahquitz Canyon in Palm Springs. The homeowner wants to build a new house on the property, but neighbors say, 'not so fast' as they argue it would remove a piece of history.

Seats are filled at the Historic Site Preservation Board meeting in [#PalmSprings](#). Some neighbors are opposed to a demolition of a home. pic.twitter.com/f2uAAXKriT— Jeremy Chen (@JeremyChenKESQ) July 11, 2017

KESQ News Channel 3 and CBS Local 2's Jeremy Chen learned more about the ongoing debate.

The house is located in the Sunmor Enchanted Estates Tract and it's at the center of the debate of whether it should be demolished or not. Neighbors say if it's gone, it would put a dent in the historic significance of the community.

Seats were filled for the Historic Site Preservation Board meeting in Palm Springs Tuesday morning. About 30 people showed up — a pretty large turnout for such a meeting. The locals in the neighborhood are mobilized and passionate about preserving the historic architecture.

Jim Gazan with the Sunmor Neighborhood Organization said, "We value these mid-century homes that we have here in Palm Springs, and losing just one home, we start to chip away at the soul of our community."

The property owners, the Vanderzandens of Seattle, are planning to replace the house with a slightly larger house to make it a retirement home. Neighbors feared it would set a precedent of other homes being demolished and replaced in the area.

The board heard their concerns and eventually voted unanimously to put a stay on the demolition for 120 days. It gave neighbors the opportunity to conduct a study to eventually submit an application for the Sunmor/Enchanted Estates Tract to become a historic district.

A representative for the Vanderzandens, Sean Gaines, said he was disappointed with the board's decision. He said the family respects mid-century architecture and the history of the neighborhood — and the design of the new house reflected that.

Gaines said, "There's room for new adjacent to the old. And it can work beautifully. Our design...it's not a quote on quote McMansion by any means. At all."

It's a debate that both sides say is not done yet.

Jeremy Chen learned the property owners say they plan on appealing the decision to the city council. Neighbors say they're going to make sure their voices are heard if it comes to that.

KESQ News Channel 3 and CBS Local 2 will keep you updated as the ongoing debate moves forward.