

2/5/18

To: John Kegebein, CEO, and Board of Directors,

Agricultural History Project of Santa Cruz County

From: Carolyn Swift, HRC commissioner

Re: Salvageable wood from the Redman-Hirahara House barn

Santa Cruz County Historical Resources Commission (HRC) is appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. For many years, commissioners have observed the slow deterioration of the Redman-Hirahara house and nearby barn. Last winter, the barn collapsed and the remains will soon be demolished by the property owners.

The main house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but the barn was left out when the designation was given. An archaeological team led by Rob Edwards more recently performed a study at the barn and discovered its importance to many Japanese Americans who returned to California and lived there after internment during World War II.

Because the wood can potentially be used to help tell the story of the local Japanese-American community experience, as well as the history of agriculture in the Pajaro Valley, the HRC has formed a subcommittee to see if the owner would be willing to allow timbers to be removed, and if there is an organization able and willing to help preserve them.

The Tut family has said the barn wood can be made available. We hope the Agricultural History Project will consider the task of moving and using the wood. Suzi Merriam and I are subcommittee members willing to assist coordination between interested parties.

Thank you for discussing our request, and for all the numerous, ongoing accomplishments of the Agricultural History Project.

Feb. 6, 2018

Response from John Kegebein regarding the Agricultural History Project and potential use of wood from the Hirahara barn:

Yes, I got the e-mail and also went to look at the barn. I brought this up to the Board tonight and I did not get any interest from them as far as saving any of the wood. I even tried to suggest some other ideas and got no response, I am sorry, but the Agricultural History project has no interest in the structure or the wood. Thank you for thinking of us. John