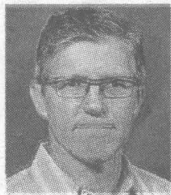


Villa Monterey considered for historic status

Young Scottsdale is poised to recognize one of its oldest neighborhoods.

Residents are pushing for the city to create a historic district in Villa Monterey, a downtown neighborhood of well-kept townhouses with design elements that have endured for a half century.



Real Estate

PETER CORBETT
The Arizona Republic

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The Scottsdale Historic Preservation Commission last month recommended that the first seven of nine phases at Villa Monterey be included in a historic overlay zoning for the neighborhood, generally between the Arizona Canal and

79th Street, and Chaparral to Camelback roads. Villa Monterey is age-restricted. At least one resident must be 55 or older.

A survey of 620 homeowners had near unanimous support for the historic district.

The Planning Commission will consider the designation at 5 p.m. April 27 in the City Hall Kiva, 3939 N. Drinkwater Blvd.

In this case, historic is a relative term. Scottsdale was incorporated in 1951 and few of its neighborhoods are older than 50 years, a benchmark for historic designation at the state and national level.

Villa Monterey dates to 1961 when David Friedman of Butler Homes started building townhouses, a new category for Scottsdale of single-family attached homes that shared a common wall. He called it a casita colony, drawing from a Spanish territorial style common in the Southwest.

Designs linked to California

Friedman was influenced by emerging



Scottsdale is considering a historic neighborhood designation for about 750 townhouses. COURTESY OF SCOTTSDALE

housing styles in Carmel, Monterey and Santa Barbara, Calif., and used a variety of designs for the Villa Monterey facades, said Don Meserve, Scottsdale historic preservation officer.

A year after the launch of Sun City, Friedman had a hit at Villa Monterey with 180 units sold in the first six

months. By 1969, Butler Homes had completed more than 750 townhouses in seven phases. The final two phases, built in the early 1970s north of Chaparral, are not included in the historic district.

Villa Monterey's timelessness is among its charms.

"There's been no major face lifts," said Meserve, adding that most of the townhouses have a high level of architectural integrity.

One- and two-story townhouses in the neighborhood include pastel colors and design styles accented with ornamental brick, tiles and ironwork.

"You walk by the homes and you're not seeing cookie cutters," said Feld, a Villa Monterey resident for 28 years.

Each home has its private backyard and residents share swimming pools and clubhouses, depending on what phase they live.

A close-knit neighborhood

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It's the kind of community where neighbors keep an eye on each other's houses and exchange front-door keys, said Randall Edgar, a Metro Realty Professionals sales agent.

He praised Friedman's forward-thinking home designs at Villa Monterey, which included three-bedroom, three-bath models that were unheard of at the time.

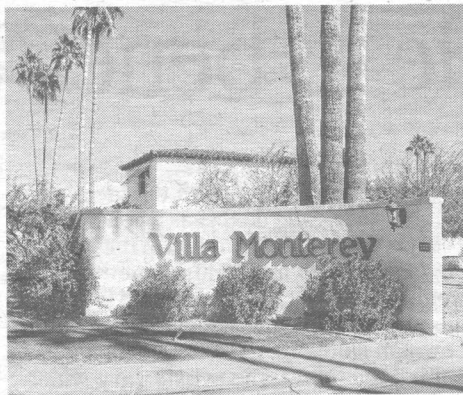
"The man was a genius," he said.

Prices generally range from \$150,000 to \$250,000 for 1,300 to 2,100 square feet, said Edgar, who has sold close to 100 Villa Monterey homes over the past 15 years.

"They've lost a little value but not as much as other areas," he said.

Historic designation could create some tax advantages if the neighborhood is eventually added to the state and national registers of historic homes, Meserve said.

Any exterior alterations requiring a building permit would have to be approved by the city using guidelines aimed at protecting the historic character of the townhouses, he said. The Villa Monterey Homeowners Association



Builder David Friedman's Villa Monterey was influenced by emerging housing styles in California. COURTESY OF SCOTTSDALE

would also have to approve the alterations, just as they do now.

There are no plans to widen Chaparral Road through Villa Monterey, but if that topic resurfaced, then an historic designation for the neighborhood is a factor that the Scottsdale City Council would likely consider, Meserve said.

The council is expected to decide on the historic designation in June.

*Send real-estate news to
peter.corbett@arizonarepublic.com.*