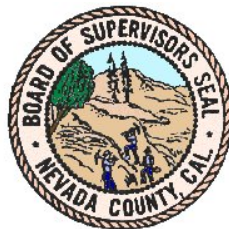


# COUNTY OF NEVADA

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



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Julie Patterson Hunter,  
Clerk of the Board

## NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

### Board Agenda Memo

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**MEETING DATE:** June 22, 2021

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Julie Patterson Hunter

**SUBJECT:** Resolution endorsing and certifying the Grass Valley African Methodist Episcopal Church & School Site, formerly located at 319 and 321 South Church Street, Grass Valley, CA 95945 (APN 008-405-014-000 and APN 008-405-014-000) as Nevada County Historical Landmark NEV 21-02.

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**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt the attached resolution.

**FUNDING:** N/A

**BACKGROUND:** The Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission (NCHLC) submitted a letter to the Board of Supervisors on April 16, 2021, requesting that the Board approve the designation of the Grass Valley African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church as a Nevada County Historical Landmark. On February 23, 2021, the City of Grass Valley City Council authorized the historical designation and the placement of a plaque commemorating the former church across the street from the historic site on a city-owned railing that runs along the sidewalk at approximately 328 South Church Street. Moreover, the City received twenty-four (24) letters of support for the designation (included with supporting documents).

The AME Church grew out of the Free African Society (FAS), a benevolent organization founded by Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, and others in Philadelphia in 1787. The Society provided mutual aid for "free Africans and their descendants." The denomination reached the Pacific Coast in the early 1850s. In Northern California churches were established in Sacramento, Stockton, San Francisco, Marysville, Nevada City and Grass Valley. The Grass Valley AME Church was erected in 1854. In addition to holding religious services, the church was also an important center for cultural, political and civil rights events. In 1865 a schoolhouse was added to provide educational opportunities to the community in response to segregation. Over time and with decreased use, the church was sold at public auction on November 2, 1893.

The property owners located at 319 and 321 S. Church St. acknowledged and expressed support for this designation. As such, staff recommends the designation of the two properties located at 319 and 321 South Church Street while also acknowledging the two adjacent properties – 315 and 323 South Church Street – that were part of this historic site. At the request of the NCHLC, local non-profit advocacy organization, Color Me Human, reviewed and provided supportive comments on this historical designation. Therefore, the Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors designate this site as a Nevada County Historical Landmark.

**Item Initiated by:** Sarah Holyhead, Administrative Analyst II

**Item Approved by:** Julie Patterson Hunter, Clerk of the Board  
**Submittal Date:** June 10, 2021  
**Revision Date:** June 10, 2021