

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL **DATE: APRIL 23, 2001**

FROM: CITY MANAGER

**SUBJECT: NOMINATION OF FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH FOR
DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK
808 NORTH LOS ROBLES AVENUE (Council District No. 5)**

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Acknowledge that the application for designation of the First Lutheran Church at 808 North Los Robles Avenue as a landmark is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (Class 31);
2. Find that the First Lutheran Church meets criteria C, D, & G for designation as a landmark in PMC Sec. 2.75.130, as recommended by the Cultural Heritage Commission;
3. Acknowledge the attached written consent to the proposed designation by the church's representative (ATTACHMENT 1);
4. Approve the attached resolution designating the First Lutheran Church as a landmark (ATTACHMENT 2);
5. Authorize the Mayor to execute the attached declaration of designation (ATTACHMENT 3); and
6. Direct the City Clerk to record the declaration with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

The Commission voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council find that the First Lutheran Church meets the criteria for designation as a landmark and approve the designation.

BACKGROUND

In September, 2000, the Garfield Heights representative on the Cultural Heritage Commission submitted a nomination to designate the First Lutheran Church, which is just east of this neighborhood, as a landmark. The Church subsequently submitted a letter of consent on November 2, 2000. On November 2, 2000, and February 20, 2001, following notification of surrounding property owners, the Cultural Heritage Commission held a public hearing to consider the request and recommended approval to the City Council.

DISCUSSION

The First Lutheran Church was built in 1936 on the northeast corner of N. Los Robles Avenue and Buckeye Street, north of Mountain Avenue. Expansions in 1940 (the Parish Hall) and in 1948 (Koch Hall) are in the same style. All three buildings are intact and comprise the proposed designation. The Commission found that the Church is a significant historic resource for three reasons:

1. for its exemplification of Mission Revival architecture (Criterion D, §2.75.130, "exemplification of a particular architectural style...");
2. for its identification as the work of two, prominent local architects, Frederick Kennedy, Jr., who designed several other major churches (including the First Baptist Church) and National Register-listed commercial buildings in Pasadena, and David Ogilvie, who designed large houses in Pasadena and a significant commercial building in the Pasadena Playhouse National Register District (Criterion C, §2.75.130, "identification with...persons...who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city ..."); and
3. for its embodiment of outstanding attention to craftsmanship, design and detailing. (Criterion G, §2.75.130,)

For more detailed information on the Church's history and architectural significance, the staff report to the Cultural Heritage Commission is attached (ATTACHMENT 4).

To date, Pasadena has designated 49 historic landmarks and treasures. The last designation was in 1997. If a property is declared a landmark, or if it is merely found to meet the criteria for landmark designation, exterior alterations or proposals for demolition are reviewed by the staff or the Commission for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Proposals that do not meet these Standards can be delayed for a maximum of 405 days while preservation efforts are considered. Proposals for alterations that meet the Standards are approved.

The proposed designation complies with a recent California State Supreme Court decision concerning landmark designations of properties owned by religious institutions. In that decision, the Court decided that these properties may only be designated with the consent of the property owners. In this case, the senior pastor of the First Lutheran Church has consented in writing to the designation.

As demonstrated in its publications and outreach, the church considers its history and its historic buildings to be two of its strengths. The City's official recognition of its historic significance will serve to increase their pride in their facilities.

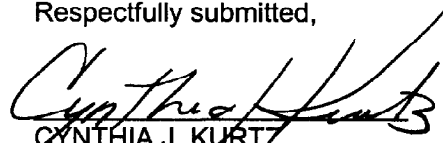
The designation has no legal effect on zoning, land use, or the sale of the property.

FISCAL IMPACT

A decision on the designation will have a negligible effect on revenues to the City. The General Fee Schedule exempts designated landmarks from fees for Certificates of

Appropriateness (permits) from the Cultural Heritage Commission (except for applications to demolish a building). The City does not, however, waive any other fees (e.g., plan check, construction tax) for projects affecting designated landmarks. Some staff time may be needed if church expansion or alteration is proposed in the future.


Respectfully submitted,


CYNTHIA J. KURTZ
City Manager

Written by:


Darrell Cozen
Planner

Approved by:


Richard Bruckner, Director
Planning & Permitting Department

Attachments:

1. Letter from Reverend Christopher Schaar (November 2, 2000)
2. Resolution
3. Declaration of Designation
4. Staff report dated November 2, 2000

W:\Design-hp\StaffReports\2001 Staff Reports\Los Robles_N808_042301_des.doc