

**HEARING SCRIPT  
FOR THE  
PUBLIC HEARING OF THE  
CITY COUNCIL**

**DATE:** September 11, 2006

**SUBJECT:** PUBLIC HEARING: DESIGNATION OF 810 HILLSIDE DRIVE AS A LANDMARK

---

**MAYOR BOGAARD:** "This is the time and place for the public hearing on  
Designation of 810 Hillside Drive as a Landmark"

1. City Clerk reports on publication of public hearing notice and any correspondence.
2. Hear from City Manager and staff presentation.
3. Hear from member of the public.
4. Close the hearing.
5. After the public hearing has been closed, the City Council may:
  - A. Approve Staff recommendation and (1) acknowledge that the designation of a historic resource is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under Class 8, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment (CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, §15308); (2) as recommended by the Historic Preservation Commission, find that the house at 810 Hillside Drive is significant under Criterion C for designation as a landmark (P.M.C. §17.62.40 B) because it is an unique example of a Japanese-influenced California Modern house; (3) approve the

designation of the property at 810 Hillside Drive as a landmark; (4) adopt the attached resolution approving a Declaration of Landmark Designation for 810 Hillside Drive, Pasadena, California; (5) authorize the Mayor to execute the attached Declaration of Landmark Designation for 810 Hillside Drive, Pasadena, California; and (6) direct the City Clerk to record the declaration with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

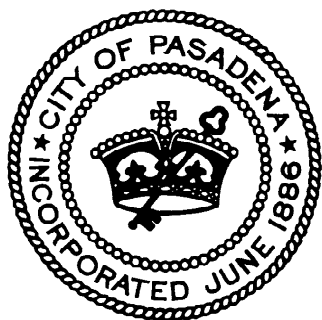
- B. Approve the Staff recommendation, with revisions; or
- C. Reject the Staff recommendation, with the appropriate findings, based on information received at the hearing.

Approved as to form:



9/7/06

*So* Theresa E. Fuentes  
Deputy City Attorney



# Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: September 11, 2006

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF 810 HILLSIDE DRIVE AS A LANDMARK

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Acknowledge that the designation of a historic resource is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under Class 8, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment (CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, §15308);
2. As recommended by the Historic Preservation Commission, find that the house at 810 Hillside Drive is significant under Criterion C for designation as a landmark (P.M.C. §17.62.40 B) because it is a unique example of a Japanese-influenced California Modern house.
3. Approve the designation of the property at 810 Hillside Drive as a landmark.
4. Adopt the attached resolution approving a Declaration of Landmark Designation for 810 Hillside Drive, Pasadena, California;
5. Authorize the Mayor to execute the attached Declaration of Landmark Designation for 810 Hillside Drive, Pasadena, California; and
6. Direct the City Clerk to record the declaration with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

## **RECOMMENDATION FROM THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

On July 17, 2006, at a noticed public hearing, the Historic Preservation Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of the designation of 810 Hillside Drive as a landmark.

## **BACKGROUND**

Property owner Tadashi Shoji submitted the application for designation of 810 Hillside Drive. Because the property is a unique example of a Japanese-influenced California Modern house, the staff and the Historic Preservation

Commission have concurred that the property should be designated as a landmark.

## **DESCRIPTION**

The house at 810 Hillside Terrace is a mid-century single-family residence terraced into a heavily wooded ridge in Lower San Rafael with distant views overlooking the Arroyo Seco and San Gabriel Mountains. Constructed in 1954, the two-story, Japanese-influenced California Modern house has an irregular plan. The exterior walls are clad with redwood plank siding. The horizontal planks have a deep concave profile that aligns with the main framing members of the ground floor window screens and Moderne influenced railings and trellis along the south elevation of the house. The 4,474 square-foot house has a gently sloping hipped roof with cross gables, and has no exposed rafters. The same wood siding used to clad the structure is used to finish and enclose the deep eaves. An attached, enclosed carport (originally open-air with a pergola) is located at the front of the property with the house built into the hillside above. The ground floor windows are situated behind exterior wooden fretwork screens designed with a bold Asian motif. The street-facing windows on the second floor have teak fretwork screens placed behind jalousie windows.

The alterations to the original profile and massing of the house are most apparent at the rear, where second-floor balconies/terraces/patios have been enclosed for more living areas. A second-floor terrace at the front of the house has been enclosed and is visible from the street. The roof line of the new addition is flat and differentiated from the original hipped roof form. At the north elevation, a second-floor stepback under the roof line was filled in to expand a second floor bedroom. The addition did not alter the roof line, but did change the massing along this elevation. This addition is partially visible from the street and minor in the context of the whole facade. The c. 1963 swimming pool was recently reconstructed to include a rock water fall and faux boulders placed at various points along the coping. The original color of the residence was sage green and has since been painted white sometime during the life of the structure. The original color scheme was softer and harmonized better with landscaping. However, the additions complement in scale and in detailing the 1954 design without mimicry.

## **ANALYSIS**

The property at 810 Hillside Terrace meets criterion C for historic landmark designation: *The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a unique architectural style and method of construction and possesses artistic values of significance to the City.*

The property at 810 Hillside Terrace is a unique example of a Japanese-influenced California Modern house designed by architect Harry Simms Bent that embodies the principles of modern residential design and elements of traditional

Japanese architecture. The architectural design of the house has influences of Shoin-style dwellings, notably the asymmetrical arrangement of the building volumes. The extensive use of glazing at the rear elevation breaks down the separation between inside and outside. The glazing, in this case, is used in lieu of shoji screens of the traditional Japanese house.

In addition to the traditional Japanese architecture, the subject property is a hybrid that embodies the modern design principles of its day. California Modern residential design is known for emphasis of functionalism, environmental integration, and the dismissal of decorative, rather than functional, elements of the structure. The post-and-beam structural system associated with both traditions is most apparent on the building elevations facing private areas of the property. Residences in the Modern Style, such as the Clark or Perkins Residences, have open, informal floor plans. The same concept in space planning is exhibited in the Hillside property where the primary living spaces on the ground floor (the living and dining rooms) are part of the same interior volume. Decorative elements of the house, such as the window screens, are also functional elements. The screens provide privacy by obscuring views into the curtainless interior or balconies on the second floor.

The property at 810 Hillside Terrace exhibits the strongest imprint of Japanese design. It has character, interest, and value to the heritage of the City because it exhibits a unique architectural expression of Japanese design principles applied with creativity to a single-family mid-century residence.

### **Harry Sims Bent (1896-1959), Architect/Landscape Architect**


Harry Sims Bent began his career in the office of Bertram Goodhue where he contributed to buildings in Los Angeles (Central Library), Pasadena (Caltech--Master Plan, the Physics Building, Dabney Hall, and other buildings for the campus of the California Institute of Technology (Caltech), and Oahu College and Kamehameha School, Honolulu, Hawaii, 1915-20. Bent was part of the office contingent that accompanied Goodhue to Hawaii to work on the Honolulu Academy of Art and other high profile projects.

Bent maintained an office in Hawaii where he designed over 150 residential and other structures. During the 1930's, he served as the architect to the Honolulu Park Board. It was during this time that Bent designed the Pineapple Research Institute at the University of Hawaii (Manoa Campus), one of his most highly regarded projects for expressing a native Hawaiian design aesthetic. Bent returned to the U.S. mainland after WWII settling in Pasadena. His best-known work during these years was in landscape design. In 1948, for example, he prepared the landscape plan for Hancock Park, now the site of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the George C. Page Museum. In 1950, he created the Master Plan for the Los Angeles County Arboretum in Arcadia which outlined restoration work for the Hugo Reid Adobe and the Lucky Baldwin Cottage.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Designation of this property does not affect revenues to the City. In some instances, though, owners of designated properties may apply to the City for Historic Property Contract, which allows an alternative and often lower property tax assessment. The City Council reviewed the projected loss of property tax revenue from this program in 2002 when it adopted a local Historic Property Contract (Mills Act) ordinance.

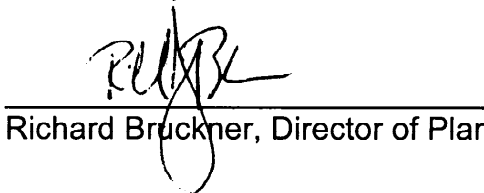
Respectfully submitted,

  
CYNTHIA KURTZ, City Manager

Prepared by:

  
Robert Avila

Approved by:

JRP   
Richard Bruckner, Director of Planning & Development

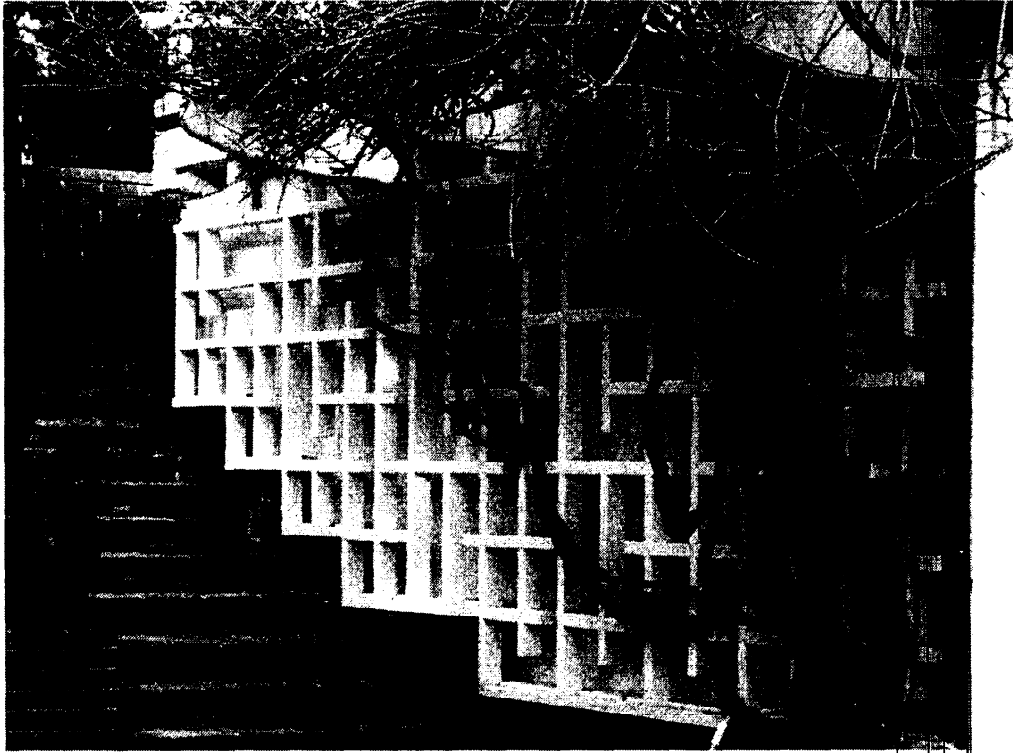
- ATTACHMENT A: Photographs
- ATTACHMENT B: Application & Taxpayer Protection Form
- ATTACHMENT C: Effects of Landmark Designation



Figure 1--Overview of street elevation.



Figure 2--Front elevation, note the two different window screen types.

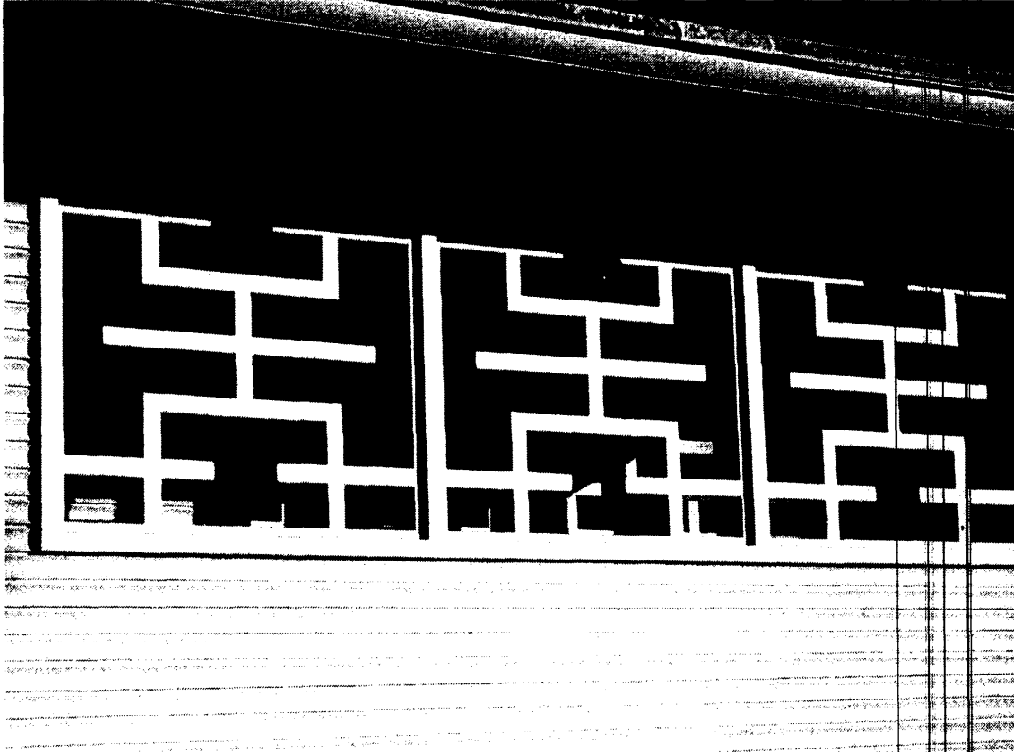


**Figure 3--Wood screen of carport, originally open to the street.**



**Figure 4--Detail of eaves showing workmanship of wood siding.**





**Figure 5--Wood screens are a dominant feature of the facade.**



**Figure 6--Rear elevation.**





**CITY OF PASADENA  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**APPLICATION TO DESIGNATE A HISTORIC RESOURCE AS  
A HISTORIC MONUMENT OR LANDMARK**

§17.52.050 of the Pasadena Municipal Code sets forth a procedure for designating any historic resource in the City as a historic monument or landmark. 1) The process begins with a preliminary evaluation by staff to determine if the nominated property meets the applicable criteria and is eligible for designation. 2) If staff determines that the nominated property is eligible for designation, the nomination is scheduled for a public hearing before the Historic Preservation Commission. 3) The Historic Preservation Commission determines if the historic resource meets the criteria for designation as a historic monument or landmark. If the Commission finds that the nominated resource qualifies for designation, it forwards a recommendation on the designation to the City Council. 4) At a noticed public hearing, the Council then determines whether to approve or deny the request for designation.

**PART I. PROPERTY PROPOSED FOR DESIGNATION**

1. Name of Property:	
2. Property Address:	810 Hillside Drive, Pasadena, CA 91105
3. Date of Original Construction	1954
4. Architect / Builder:	HARRY SIMMS BENT
5. Present Owner: (Name)	TADASHI SHOJI
(Address)	810 Hillside Drive
(State/ZIP)	Pasadena, CA 91105
(Phone/FAX)	213-627-745(W) 323-588-5266(F)
(E-mail)	tadashi@tadashicollection.com

**PART II. APPLICANT**

Applicant: (if not property owner)	
(Address)	
(State/ZIP)	
(Phone/FAX)	
(E-mail)	

Date 2-3-06

Signature Tadashi Shoji

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Planner: \_\_\_\_\_

## CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

<b>CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING A HISTORIC MONUMENT</b>
---

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the region, state or nation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. It is associated with the lives of persons who are significant in the history of the region, state or nation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. It is exceptional in the embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a historic resource property type, period, architectural style or method of construction, or that is an exceptional representation of the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose work is significant to the region, state or nation, or that possesses high artistic values that are of regional, state-wide or national significance.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history of the region, state or nation.

A historic monument designation may include significant public or semi-public interior spaces and features.

<b>CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING A HISTORIC LANDMARK</b>
---

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the city.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2. It is associated with the lives of persons who are significant in the history of the city.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a locally significant historic resource property type, architectural style, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder who is locally significant, or that possesses high artistic values that are locally significant.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important locally in prehistory or history.

**PART III: TYPE OF DESIGNATION**

**PROPERTY TO BE DESIGNATED AS A:**

<b>HISTORIC MONUMENT</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>LANDMARK</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>A historic monument means any historic resource that is significant at a regional, state or national level, and is an exemplary representation of a particular type of historic resource.</i>	<i>A landmark means any historic resource that is significant at a local level, and is an exemplary representation of a particular type of historic resource.</i>

**PART IV: BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY**

Briefly describe the property proposed for designation, indicating whether the entire site or a portion of the site is the subject of the nomination (e.g., how many buildings on the site). A map may be used for the description. Please also submit recent photographs. Use continuation sheet if necessary.

Refer to continuation sheet, site plan and recent photographs.

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED.

**PART V: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION ON SIGNIFICANCE OF PROPERTY.**

With this application, please attach information that will assist staff with the preparation of a designation report. Books, photographs, articles, and other archival information will all be useful to document the significance of the historic resource.

Refer to bibliography, historical photographs, chronology, and other supporting information.

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED.

CITY OF PASADENA  
Historic Preservation Commission

PART IV: BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

The property proposed for designation is one building located at 810 Hillside Drive in the city of Pasadena. This two-story structure is the sole building on this site.

Built in 1954, the building has always served as a private residence which blends elements of ancient Japanese architecture with the defining mid-century modern elements of the time it was built. The dominant Asian elements of the structure are much different from the Case Study Houses built from 1945-1962. During this period, the height of the Modernist era, Case Study Houses, which were experimental, streamlined dwellings in the area designed by Charles Eames and other well-known architects, were the norm. This home served as a unique example of how some strayed from the trend and paid homage to the past.

The home, with its extensive use of concrete and masonry, is a perfect example of the style of mid-century construction. All the details of how the house was built and the defining characteristics are the hallmarks of contemporary homes. In fact, according to the Los Angeles Times, Frank Lloyd Wright, the Greene brothers, R.M. Schindler and other progressive architects say that contemporary home design is based on those of the ancient Japanese. This structure reflects the design and construction techniques that the Japanese had mastered by the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The original architect of this structure was Harry Simms Bent, who later designed public buildings in Honolulu, including the renowned Kraus Hall, the oldest building at the John Young Museum of Art. Bent incorporated obvious Japanese elements to modern design, making this structure worthy of study that reflected specific sensibilities and the future of homebuilding, in general. His incorporation of open spaces and fluid floor plans, with rustic and refined materials are all defining Japanese design elements. A perfect example is a distinctive Japanese symbol for good luck is embedded in the plaster in the living room ceiling.

This is truly one of the few houses in Pasadena that were built in the 1950s and still more than 80% the same as when originally constructed, making it a perfect candidate for a landmark in the area.

PART V: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION ON SIGNIFICANCE OF PROPERTY

Please see attached articles.



**Disclosure Pursuant to the  
City of Pasadena Taxpayer Protection Amendment of 2000  
Pasadena City Charter, Article XVII**

- I. The value of this application \_\_\_ has the potential to /  does not have the potential to exceed \$25,000. [Applicant must check one blank.]
  
- II. Applicant hereby discloses its trustees, directors, partners, officers, and those with more than a 10% equity, participation, or revenue interest in Applicant, as follows:

Applicant Name: <u>TADASHI SHOJI</u>		
Trustees, directors, partners, officers of Applicant: (use additional sheets as necessary)		
<u>TADASHI SHOJI</u>		

Those with more than a 10% equity, participation or revenue interest in Applicant:  
(use additional sheets as necessary)

For office use only

Application No. PLN 2006-10386

## EFFECTS OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION

Identifying and designating properties of major significance encourages the preservation and protection of Pasadena's historic resources. The City of Pasadena's Historic Preservation Ordinance provides a process to recognize and protect individual sites and historic districts.

### Designation Process

A property may be nominated for historic designation by any person. Design & Historic Preservation staff then evaluates the property to determine if it meets the criteria for designation. If it appears that the criteria have been met, the staff will prepare a designation report, which describes the property and how it meets the criteria for designation. Once the designation report is complete, the HPC will conduct a public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council may then designate the property as a historic site.

### Alterations/Demolition

Designated historic structures are protected by the Municipal Code. A Certificate of Appropriateness (permit) is required for work to modify the exterior appearance of a designated historic property that is open to public view. A certificate is also required for alterations, additions, new construction, or demolition. This review ensures that any proposed changes are compatible with the character of the individual property and/or historic district. Decisions on proposed alterations are based on the proposed project's compliance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the City's adopted *Design Guidelines for Historic Districts*, which is based on the Standards.

The Historic Preservation Commission is the decision-maker for major projects affecting designated historic resources, except in the Central District where the Design Commission is the decision-maker for such projects. Staff is the decision-maker for minor projects affecting designated historic resources. Major projects are defined as demolition, relocation, removal of significant features, significant alteration of front or side elevations, additions to street-facing elevations, and new fences or walls in landmark districts. Minor projects are defined as removal of insignificant exterior features, re-roofing, matching replacement doors and windows, demolition of garages, small side/front additions, most rear additions that are not taller than the original building or replacement of exterior cladding with the same cladding material. Projects affecting non-contributing buildings on a site or in a district, or the environmental setting of a site, are reviewed by staff but are subject to the less stringent requirements than contributing buildings.

Staff-level decisions may be appealed to the Historic Preservation Commission, and decisions by the Commission may be appealed to the City Council. The City Council may also "call for review" all decisions by the staff or Commission.

### Incentives

Designated historic properties are eligible for the following incentives, which are evaluated on a case-by-case basis:

- A Mills Act historic property contract to reduce property taxes in exchange for agreeing to maintain the historic character of the property in accordance with established guidelines.
- Use of more flexible provisions in the State Historical Building Code when making modifications,
- Waiver of covered parking requirements, and
- Potential variances from modern development standards for historic properties undergoing adaptive use or relocation.