ATTACHMENT C:
Lamanda Park Substation
Description, Photographs & Documentation

160-162 N. ALTADENA DRIVE

Description

The Lamanda Park Substation is located on a 2-acre property on the east side of North Altadena Drive between East Walnut Street and East Foothill Boulevard and was built in 1933. The rear of the property has frontage on N. Virginia Avenue. The substation building itself is situated at the west end of the property with a small landscaped yard between the building and the street. The remainder of the property consists of unenclosed power-generating infrastructure (e.g., transformers, transmission lines) and a surface parking lot surrounded by landscaping.

The two-story building is generally rectangular in plan and designed in a Mediterranean eclectic style, combining elements from Romanesque, Spanish Colonial and Second Renaissance Revival Styles. The western end of the building has a hipped roof with terra-cotta barrel tiles, a boxed cornice and cast-stone frieze. The street-facing elevation is symmetrical with a single pair of steel casement windows centered on the second story and a three-tiered arched arcade with Corinthian columns. The northwestern and southwestern corners of the building have cast-stone pilasters. Within the arcade are a recessed storefront entry with wooden doors and leaded glass transom flanked by storefront display windows. The storefront has a ceramic tile bulkhead. At the northern end of the building is an exterior tile staircase leading to the second floor entry, which served as a caretaker's apartment.

Exterior character-defining features include, but are not limited to: the roof form (including cornice and frieze), symmetrical façade, decorative pilasters, storefront proportions and glazing, window placement and material and exterior coating.

Robert Ainsworth, Architect

Robert Ainsworth (1895-1970) began practicing architecture in Pasadena in 1927 and continued into the 1960's. He is primarily known for residential buildings built in the 1930's and 1940's and designed in Period Revival styles. Examples of his work include courtyard apartments on West California Boulevard, the Pasadena Humane Society and Grover Cleveland Elementary School.

State of California • The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

Ser. No. 1109 - ____ - ____
National Register status 3S
Local designation ____

IDENTIFICATION AND LOCATION

1. Historic name Lamanda Park Sub-Station, Municipal Light & Power Dept.
*2. Common or current name None
*3. Number & Street 160-62 N. Altadena Drive Cross - corridor ____
City Pasadena Vicinity only ____ Zip 91107 County Los Angeles
4. UTM zone 11 A ____ B ____ C ____ D ____
5. Quad map No. 1102 Parcel No. 5748-003-900 Other ____

DESCRIPTION

6. Property category Building If district, number of documented resources ____
*7. Briefly describe the present physical appearance of the property, including condition, boundaries, related features, surroundings, and (if appropriate) architectural style

This 1933 building has an elegantly detailed two story section, rectangular in plan and fronting on Altadena Drive, which contains ground-floor offices with caretaker's quarters above. This section is attached to the lengthy, one story plain and functional sub-station at the rear of the site. The design incorporates details from the Mediterranean, Romanesque, Spanish Colonial and Second Renaissance Revival styles. A hipped tile roof with a plain boxed cornice and frieze of cast concrete cap the front stucco portion, with its symmetrically balanced front facade. A metal casement window, with cast concrete trim and dentilled sill, is centered directly below the frieze, upon which is incised "MUNICIPAL LIGHT AND POWER." At the first floor, an open arcade with three arches supported by Corinthian columns extends across the front, anchored at each end by a tall cast concrete pilaster which wraps around the corner of the building. The recessed entry, a pair of glazed wood doors with wrought iron grilles and a transom with leaded glass lozenges, is flanked on each side by a storefront bay with ceramic tile bulkhead. Dark stained wood and leaded glass panels (similar to the transom) divide the bays from the interior of the building. Metal casement windows with wood and cast concrete trim, as well as copper downspouts, are found throughout the building. (See continuation sheet.)

8. Planning Agency
Urban Conservation/Pasadena

9. Owner & address
City of Pasadena
Water & Power Department
100 N. Garfield
Pasadena, CA 91109

10. Type of Ownership Municipal
11. Present Use Vacant
12. Zoning CG/1G (HL-65)
13. Threats Inappropriate Alterations; Vacant; Vandalism

Send a copy of this form to: State Office of Historic Preservation, P.O. Box 942896, Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

*Complete these items for historic preservation compliance projects under Section 106 (36 CFR 800). All items must be completed for historical

CONTINUATION SHEET (1)
Lamanda Park Sub-Station, Municipal Light & Power Dept.
160-62 N. Altadena Drive

7. Description

Quarry tile stairs on the north side of the building lead to an apartment on the second floor, which was built as living quarters for the caretaker. The stairs have a solid, stepped railing on one side, and a bronze railing attached to the building. A small balcony is at the southwest corner of the second floor.

The building is located in a primarily commercial/industrial area and has a paved parking lot to both the north and south. As seen in a historic photo of unknown date, the south parking lot was originally an expansive lawn. However, some of the original landscaping survives, and the site is landscaped with lawn, shrubs and mature trees, most notably: Eucalyptus and Bottle Brush in front; California Live Oak and Magnolia on the south side; and Sycamores at the rear. Vintage 1920s street lights along Altadena Drive (originally North Santa Anita Drive, changed in 1972) complete the setting.

The residents of East Pasadena paid their utility bills and taxes at the sub-station, which was originally equipped with a counter and cashier cages in the office area. At the rear of the office is a repair shop and stock room. In the sub-station proper is a control room (29' x 36') and a switch room (48' x 88'), containing metal switch gear, induction voltage and regulators. There is a basement under the entire building containing rooms for batteries, cable compartments and for storage purposes. Transformers and high tension switches are located outside at the rear of the building. The integrity of the sub-station is intact, with alterations occurring only to the interior and site.

19. Significance

The sub-station was developed as a branch of the Pasadena Municipal Light & Power Department, born in 1907 with the operation of a steam electric generating unit used primarily to feed the City's street lighting system. The Department continued to grow as the City did, even through the Depression years. The consumption of electricity in Pasadena did not decline during the Depression, but remained steady until 1936 when the upward trend was resumed. Department management believed that instead of calling a halt to construction plans at the beginning of the Depression they should be accelerated, deriving two benefits: first, providing employment to many in need of work; and second, providing installations for future expansion at low cost. Personnel used in the construction were citizens working two weeks at a time, earning enough money for food and housing.

The Lamanda Park Sub-Station was regarded as one of the most essential improvements that the Department had planned at the time. It replaced the old plant on Morningside Street, with its undersized and obsolete feeders and cables. The new station served the district between North Lake Avenue and the east city limits and East Washington Street and the south city limits, which in 1933 was called "a fast growing territory."

The Department's expanded construction program of the 1930s paid off, for there was a shortage of materials critical for energy production during the Second World War. Due to this program the Department was able to supply all of the requests placed upon it during the period with very little expenditure of critical materials.

From 1976 to 1993 the first floor housed the offices of the International Institute of Municipal Clerks. The offices are currently vacant. At the time of this survey, the apartment was occupied.