

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: DECEMBER 17, 2007

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF 72 E. GLENARM STREET AS A HISTORIC MONUMENT

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Acknowledge that the designation of historic resources is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA Guidelines §15308: Class 8 - Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment);
2. Find that the Glenarm Power Plant at 72 E. Glenarm Street, including the interior of the turbine room in the 1928 building and the electric fountain, meets criterion C in P.M.C. §17.62.040 for designation of a historic monument because it is a significant representation of an electrical power-generating plant in the Moderne and Georgian Revival styles and because of its associations with the architectural firm of Bennett & Haskell;
3. Approve the designation of the Glenarm Power Plant property at 72 E. Glenarm Street—including the interior of the turbine hall and the electric fountain—as a historic monument, while recognizing the need for flexibility in regulating changes to the interior spaces to accommodate future uses of the building;
4. Adopt a resolution approving a declaration of Historic Monument Designation for 72 E. Glenarm Street, Pasadena, California;
5. Authorize the Mayor to execute the attached Declaration of Historic Monument Designation for 72 E. Glenarm Street, 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 September 17, 2007, at a noticed public hearing, the Historic Preservation Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of the designation of 72 E. Glenarm Street as a historic monument. The Commission also provided the following additional recommendation: the Historic Preservation consultant retained by the City should continue to monitor the current seismic-retrofitting work at the Glenarm Power Plant. Staff concurs with this recommendation. The current work at the Glenarm Power Plant is being monitored by a Historic Preservation consultant and the monitoring will continue until the project is complete.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides background information and analysis to the City Council concerning an application for designation of a City-owned building as a historic monument. A detailed architectural description, including identification of character-defining features, is attached in ATTACHMENT B. Pasadena Heritage filed the application for designation of the property.

BACKGROUND

On May 22, 2007, Pasadena Heritage submitted an application for historic monument designation of the City-owned property at 72 E. Glenarm Street. Following the procedures in the code, City staff evaluated the property according to the criteria in Title 17 of the P.M.C., determined that the property qualifies for designation, and referred the application to the Historic Preservation Commission.

ANALYSIS

The property at 72 E. Glenarm Street is eligible for designation under criterion C (§17.62.040 PMC):

[The property] embodies the distinctive characteristics of a historic resource property type, period, architectural style or method of construction, or 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 significant to the region, state or nation.

Under this criterion, the Glenarm Power Plant is regionally significant as an example of a monumental electrical power-generating plant, executed in Georgian Revival and Moderne architectural styles, with an adjoining electric fountain. The property has added significance because of its intact interior, which retains its open plan, its tile wainscoting and flooring, its streamlined turbines and control panels, and its bracketed lamps. This property is an

exceptional representation in the metropolitan Los Angeles area of an industrial property from the Moderne era. The electric fountain, one of three in the Los Angeles region and the only one associated with the operations of a power plant, and the interior of the monumental turbine hall are regionally significant.

The building, associated with a period of rapid growth in the City and in the use of electrical power, has a period of significance from 1928 – 1949, which encompasses the oldest existing portion of the building through the last installation of power-generating equipment in the building.

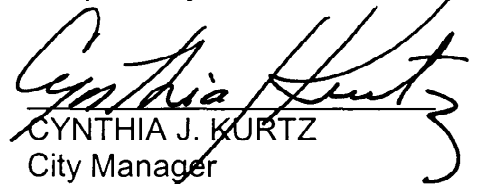
Other elements of the property are not included in this designation, including tanks, towers and other exterior power-generating equipment, all of which were installed after the period of significance.

The designation of a historic monument may include significant interior portions of public or semi-public buildings. This application includes designation of significant character-defining interior features (listed in ATTACHMENT B). As plans for use of this building are explored, it will be necessary to remain flexible in the application of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards to allow for future use of the building.

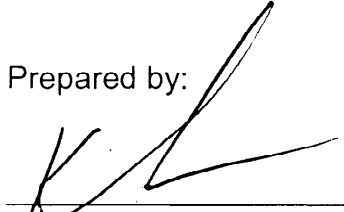
FISCAL IMPACT

Designation of these properties does not affect revenues to the City. With a historic designation, the properties may be in an advantageous position to compete for rehabilitation and restoration grants from private, State, and federal sources. The designations do not restrict future uses of the buildings—including leasing of the turbine room at the Glenarm Power Plant—or future sales of the properties. They also do not impose added costs on normal maintenance and operation of the buildings.

Respectfully submitted,

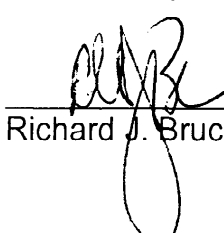

CYNTHIA J. KURTZ
City Manager

Prepared by:



Kevin Johnson, Planner

Approved by:



Richard J. Bruckner, Director of Planning & Development

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Applications & Taxpayer Protection Form
- B. Architectural Description, Photographs and Documentation
- C. Effects of Landmark Designation