

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

June 9, 2008

**To:** City Council  
**From:** City Manager  
**Subject:** Designation of 1000 E. Cordova as a Landmark

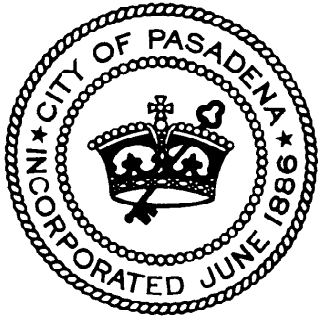
On November 5, 2007, the attached report was reviewed by City Council. The public hearing was continued to allow time for a meeting between City staff and members of the Whispering Waters Homeowners' Association in order to clarify the landmark designation process and to explain the consequences of landmark designation. At the request of the applicant, the meeting was postponed awaiting the outcome of an election of the homeowners' association leadership. After this election, staff requested a meeting and the president of the homeowners' association declined the request. The applicant then hosted a meeting on April 8, 2008 with seven (of the 30) owners in attendance. At that meeting, City staff as well as representatives from Pasadena Heritage, the Los Angeles Conservancy and the Castle Green Homeowners' Association were present.

City staff held a meeting in the Permit Center on June 2, 2008. Notices were mailed to all 30 property owners, eight owners participated. Staff explained the process and the impacts of designation. Based on attendance at the meeting, it is not clear that a majority of residents support designation.

One of the issues discussed at the November 5, 2007 public hearing and again on June 2, 2008 was the future of the water features that define the buildings and are no longer in operation. If the landmark designation is granted, any proposed exterior modifications would be evaluated for conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Staff reiterated that the City cannot require restoration of the original water feature. For example, if the association proposes infilling the basins of the reflecting pool with landscaping, staff could recommend approval if it were detailed so that it could be removed in the future and the original form, finishes, and detailing of the original reflecting pool could be restored.

BERNARD K. MELEKIAN  
City Manager

BKM:efs



# Agenda Report

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** NOVEMBER 5, 2007  
**FROM:** CITY MANAGER  
**SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING:** DESIGNATION OF 1000 EAST CORDOVA STREET AS A LANDMARK

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council, following a public hearing:

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. Find that the multi-family condominium complex located at 1000 East Cordova Street, known as Whispering Waters, is significant under Criterion "C" for designation as a landmark (P.M.C. §17.62.040) because the property is a good intact example of the work of developer Lionel V. Mayell (under the title Lionel Mayell Enterprises), who pioneered the development of own-your-own apartments in California during the mid-twentieth century, and because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the modern garden-apartment property type as applied to a modified mid-rise apartment building, and because of the incorporation of the unique water feature as a landscape element;
3. Approve the designation of the property at 1000 East Cordova Street as a landmark;
4. Adopt a resolution approving a Declaration of Landmark Designation for 1000 East Cordova Street, Pasadena, California;
5. Authorize the Mayor to execute the attached Declaration of Landmark Designation for 1000 East Cordova 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 1000 East Cordova Street as a landmark under criterion C of PMC §17.62.040 C.

## **BACKGROUND**

On June 28, 2007, applicant, Marion K. White, submitted the application for designation of 1000 East Cordova Street. The staff evaluated the property according to the landmark criteria in Title 17 of the P.M.C., and determined that it qualifies for landmark designation under Criterion C, and referred the application to the Historic Preservation Commission. At a noticed public hearing, the Historic Preservation Commission concurred that the property should be designated as a landmark because it retains a high level of integrity, and because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a post-World War II, modern garden-apartment property type, and because of the incorporation of a unique water feature as a landscape element.

The owner of the property is the Whispering Waters Home Owners Association. As a group, the Association has not registered their opinion on landmark designation, with members who are both in support of the designation, and in opposition to it.

## **DESCRIPTION**

The property, located on the south side of E. Cordova Street between S. Mentor and S. Catalina Avenues, and is shallow in depth but runs east-west the length of the block creating a narrow irregular parcel. The Whispering Waters complex consists of two three-story and penthouse-level buildings laid out along the east-west axis facing Cordova Street. Construction consists of a reinforced poured-concrete basement and foundation, with upper walls of wood frame finished in medium-dash stucco. The roofs of both buildings and their penthouse units are flat with composition or rock roofing, and an elastomeric promenade decking material for the roof deck areas. The east and west buildings are interconnected at the center by a four-story decorative concrete-block screen, and open-shaft exterior elevator, with glass cab. Immediately adjacent to the elevator, an open steel-framed stairwell leads to the upper floors. The central entry is accessed from the sidewalk on Cordova Street by a concrete path and series of low broad concrete steps that lead over the pool to the stairwell and elevator. A modest yet prominently displayed sign, mounted to the concrete screen, spells out "Whispering Waters" in fanciful script lettering. Entry to the first through third floor units is from the south elevation, which is dominated by continuous projecting balcony decks with horizontal metal railings.

The property retains a high level of integrity and is generally in good condition, with the exception of the front pool which is currently dry. It appears that the pool could be rehabilitated and put back into use in the future. There are no other apparent alterations.

### Lionel V. Mayell

Lionel V. Mayell (1897-1978) is attributed to have been the first developer of co-operatively owned apartments on the west coast. Mayell's first co-op apartment building was built in Long Beach in 1922. Mayell built five other multi-family coop apartments in the City of Pasadena in addition to Whispering Waters, they include: Orange Grove Manor at 164-180 South Orange Grove Blvd. (1949), apartments at 707 South Orange Grove Blvd. (1950), the Capri Aire at 660 South Orange Grove Blvd. (1951), Plaza del Arroyo at 101 N. Grand Ave. (1955) and Villa San Pasqual at 1000 East San Pasqual (1954), which was designated a City of Pasadena landmark in 2005. Whispering Waters is the last project known to be built by Lionel Mayell Enterprises in Pasadena.

### ANALYSIS

The property at 1000 East Cordova Street is eligible for landmark designation under Criterion C, (§17.62.040 PMC) which states:

(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 city, or that possesses high artistic values that are significant to the city.

Under this criterion, Whispering Waters located at 1000 East Cordova Street is significant as an intact and important example of the work of developer Lionel V. Mayell, who pioneered the development of own-your-own apartments in California during the mid-twentieth century. In addition, it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the modern garden-apartment property type as applied to a modified mid-rise apartment building, and because of the incorporation of the unique water feature as a landscape element, which also served the dual purpose of cooling the buildings air conditioning system. The building exhibits a high level of architectural integrity (its ability to demonstrate why it is significant) through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

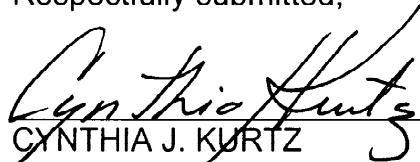
Character-defining features include lush subtropical landscaping lining the property at the sidewalk, and island planters within the pond, cantilevered balcony floors (that double as canopies), large sliding glass doors with gold-anodized aluminum frames, decorative open-metal railings, prominent decorative "Empress" concrete screen wall, open stairwell, and an exterior open shaft glass-enclosed elevator. At Whispering Waters Mayell included a unique water feature from which the development derived its distinctive name. It consists of an extensive pond that surrounds the entire front elevation of the property, setting the complex in a virtual moat of water. Originally the pond featured a series of six ring fountains at the center of the pond, and a fine spray of 1,600 jets of water

lining the outer edge of the pool, all illuminated by a brightly lit multi-colored lighting scheme. The pond also served the dual purpose of cooling the building's air-conditioning system by recirculation through equipment originally housed in an equipment room in the building's basement.

**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.

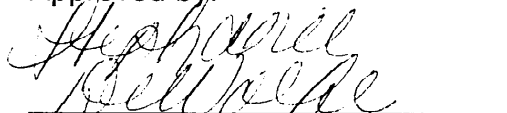
Respectfully submitted,

  
CYNTHIA J. KURTZ  
City Manager

Prepared by:

  
John English  
Acting Senior Planner

Approved by:

  
for Richard J. Bruckner  
Director of Planning & Development

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASADENA ADOPTING A DECLARATION OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR 1000 East Cordova Street, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission has found that 1000 East Cordova Street meets criterion c, as set forth in Section 17.62.040(C) of the Pasadena Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the multi-family complex at 1000 East Cordova Street is significant because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the modern garden-apartment property type as applied to a modified mid-rise apartment building, and because of the incorporation of the unique water feature as a landscape element;

WHEREAS, the application for Landmark designation is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15308;

WHEREAS, the City Council may approve a recommendation from the Historic Preservation Commission to designate a Landmark and evidence such approval by adopting a declaration executed by the Mayor pursuant to Subsection 17.62.050 (C) of the Pasadena Municipal Code;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Pasadena that the attached declaration of Landmark designation for 1000 East Cordova Street is hereby adopted.

Adopted at the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting of the City Council on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2007 by the following vote:

AYES:

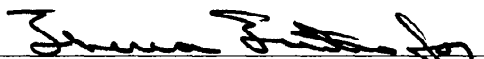
NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jane Rodriguez, City Clerk

Approved as to form:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michele Beal Bagneris, City Attorney

**DECLARATION OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR:**

1000 East Cordova Street  
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 17.62.070 of the Pasadena Municipal Code, the City Council of the City of Pasadena by this declaration hereby designates as a Landmark certain real property described as:

(See attached Exhibits "A" & "B")

Under Pasadena Municipal Code Section 17.62.090, all work affecting designated Landmarks, except ordinary maintenance and repair, such as but not limited to new construction and additions, exterior alterations, relocation, and demolition, is subject to approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

DATED: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

CITY OF PASADENA  
A municipal corporation

Jane Rodriguez, City Clerk

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Bogaard, Mayor

**EXHIBIT 'A'**  
**1000 CORDOVA STREET**

That portion of Lots 12 and 13 of Lyman, Rice and Giles Subdivision, in the City of Pasadena, County of Los Angeles, State of California, as per map recorded in Book 11, Page(s) 98 of Miscellaneous Records, in the office of the County Recorder of said county, and that portion of Lot 19 of the Abbott, Glass and Keese Subdivision as per map recorded in Book 17, Page(s) 60 of Miscellaneous Records, in the office of the County Recorder of said county, and that portion of Lot 3 of J.W. Hartley Tract as per map recorded in Book 59, Page(s) 25 of Miscellaneous Records, in the office of the County Recorder of said county, described as a whole as follows:

**Beginning** at a point in the westerly line of said Lot 13, distant southerly thereon 19.87 feet from the northwesterly corner of said Lot 13, said point also being the beginning of a tangent curve concave southeasterly and having a radius of 10 feet; thence northeasterly along said curve through a central angle of  $73^{\circ}56'00''$  an arc distance of 12.90 feet; thence easterly, tangent to said curve, North  $73^{\circ}59'15''$  East 37.04 feet to a point in the northerly line of said Lot 13, distant easterly thereon 42.82 feet from said northwesterly corner; thence continuing tangent to said curve North  $73^{\circ}59'15''$  East 151.96 feet to the beginning of a tangent curve concave southerly and having a radius of 660 feet; thence easterly along said curve through a central angle of  $01^{\circ}00'18''$  an arc distance of 11.58 feet to the easterly line of said Lot 12, distant southerly thereon 14.80 feet from the northeasterly corner of said Lot 12; thence continuing easterly along said last mentioned curve having a radius of 660 feet, through a central angle of  $08^{\circ}04'13''$ , an arc distance of 92.96 feet to the northerly line of said Lot 19, distant easterly thereon 91.15 feet from the northwest corner of said Lot 19; thence continuing easterly along the said last mentioned curve having a radius of 660 feet, through a central angle of  $06^{\circ}12'59''$ , an arc distance of 73.74 feet to the beginning of a compound curve concave southerly and having a radius of 10 feet; thence southerly along said curve through a central angle of  $59^{\circ}55'19''$  an arc distance of 10.46 feet to a point in the southerly line of said Lot 3, distant westerly thereon 1.41 feet from the southeasterly corner of said Lot 3, a radial line to said curve at said intersection bears North  $59^{\circ}21'04''$  East; thence continuing southeasterly along said last mentioned curve having a radius of 10 feet, through a central angle of  $30^{\circ}46'49''$ , an arc distance of 5.37 feet to a point in the easterly line of said Lot 19, distant southerly thereon 5.12 feet from the northeast corner of said Lot 19; thence along said easterly line of said Lot 19, 54.88 feet to the southeast corner of said Lot 19; thence Westerly along the southerly line of said Lot 19, 174.40 feet to a point in the easterly line of said Lot 12; thence southerly along the easterly line of Lots 12 and 13 to the southeasterly corner of said Lot 13; thence westerly along the southerly line of said Lot 13, a distance of 200 feet to the southwest corner of said Lot 13; thence northerly along the westerly line of said Lot 13, 40.13 feet to the **Point of Beginning**.

A metes and bounds legal description for informational purposes is described as follows:

That portion of Lots 12 and 13 of Lyman, Rice and Giles Subdivision, in the City of Pasadena, County of Los Angeles, State of California, as per map recorded in Book 11, Page(s) 98 of Miscellaneous Records, in the office of the County Recorder of said county and that portion of Lot 19 of the Abbott, Glass and Keese Subdivision, in the City of Pasadena, County of Los Angeles, State of California, as per map Recorded in Book 17, Pages 60 of Miscellaneous Records, in the office of the County Recorder of said county, and that portion of Lot 3 of J.W. Hartley Tract, in the City of Pasadena, County of Los Angeles, State of California, as per map recorded in Book 59,



Page 25 of Miscellaneous Records, in the office of the County Recorder of said county, described as a whole as follows:

**Beginning** at a point in the westerly line of said Lot 13, distant South 00°03'15" West 19.87 feet from the northwesterly line of said Lot 13, said point being the beginning of a curve, concave southeasterly and having a radius of 10 feet, said curve being tangent to the southerly line of Cordova Street (80 feet wide);

Thence northeasterly 12.90 feet along said curve through a central angle of 73°56'00" to the southerly line of said Cordova Street;

Thence along said southerly line the following courses: North 73°59' 15" East, 189.00 feet to the beginning of a curve, concave southerly and having a radius of 660.00 feet and easterly 176.15 feet along said curve through a central angle of 15°17'30" to the beginning of a curve, concave southerly and having a radius of 10.00 feet, said curve being tangent to the easterly line of said Lot 19;

Thence southerly 15.83 feet along said curve through a central angle of 90°42'08" to the easterly line of said Lot 19;

Thence along said easterly line South 00°01'07" East 54.88' to the southeast corner of said Lot 19;

Thence along the southerly line of said Lot 19 North 89°55'53" West 172.79 feet to the easterly line of said Lot 12;

Thence along said easterly line and the easterly line of said Lot 13 South 00°04'01" West 62.99 feet to the southeast corner of said Lot 13;

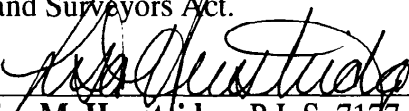
Thence along the southerly line of said Lot 13 North 89°55'56" West 199.98 feet to the southwest corner of said Lot 13;

Thence along said westerly line North 00°03'15" East 40.13 feet to the **Point of Beginning**.

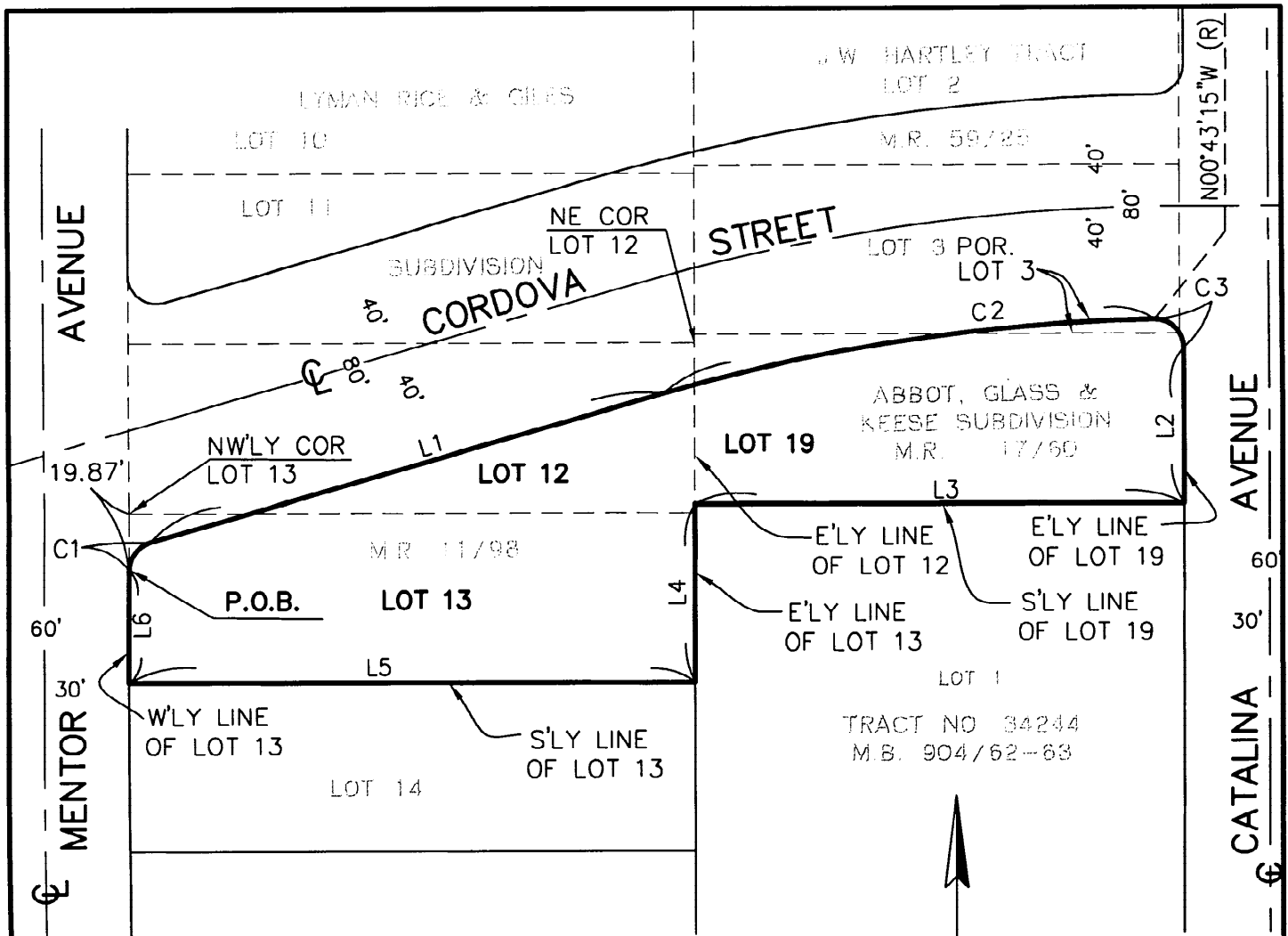
The above-described parcel of land contains approximately 25,187 square feet (0.578 acres).

As shown on Exhibit "B" attached herewith and made a part hereof.

This real property description has been prepared by me,  
or under my direction, in conformance with the Professional  
Land Surveyors Act.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa M. Henstridge, P.L.S. 7177  
Expires 12/31/09






CURVE DATA			
CURVE	DELTA	RADIUS	LENGTH
C1	73°56'00"	10.00'	12.90'
C2	15°17'30"	660.00'	176.15'
C3	90°42'08"	10.00'	15.83'

LINE DATA		
LINE	BEARING	DISTANCE
L1	N73°59'15"E	189.00'
L2	S00°01'07"E	54.88'
L3	N89°55'53"W	172.79'
L4	S00°04'01"W	62.99'
L5	N89°55'56"W	199.98'
L6	N00°03'15"E	40.13'

**LEGEND**

-  LIMITS OF PROPERTY
- P.O.B.** POINT OF BEGINNING  
AREA =25,187 S.F.



THIS PLAT IS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY BASED UPON A METES AND BOUNDS LEGAL DESCRIPTION



**DAVID EVANS AND ASSOCIATES INC.**

4200 Conours, Suite 200  
Ontario California 91764

TEL:(909)481-5750 FAX:(909)481-5757

EXHIBIT  
"B"

1000 CORDOVA STREET  
APN: 5735-028-131

CITY OF PASADENA  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SHEET NO:	1 OF 1
JOB NO:	PDAX0067
DRAWN BY:	LKH
DATE:	11/12/07
SCALE:	1"=60'

## **ATTACHMENTS**

ATTACHMENT A: Application & Taxpayer Protection Form

ATTACHMENT B: Effects of Historic Designation