

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: NOVEMBER 24, 2008

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF 1155 NORTH HILL AVENUE AS A
LANDMARK

RECOMMENDATION

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

1. Find 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 property at 1155 North Hill Avenue is significant under Criterion C for designation as a landmark (P.M.C. §17.62.40 C) because it is an excellent example of Italian Renaissance Revival architecture, and for its association with a prominent local architect, John Cyril Bennett;
3. Approve the designation of the property at 1155 North Hill Avenue as a landmark;
4. Adopt the resolution approving a Declaration of Landmark Designation for 1155 North Hill Avenue, Pasadena, California;
5. Authorize the Mayor to execute the Declaration of Landmark Designation for 1155 North Hill Avenue, 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 15, 2008, at a noticed public hearing, the Historic Preservation Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of the designation of 1155 North Hill Avenue as a landmark.

BACKGROUND

An application for landmark designation was submitted by the property owners, Howard and Karen Ritter, and was received by Design and Historic Preservation Section of the Planning Division on June 5, 2008. On July 3, 2008 the staff determined that the property was eligible for landmark designation under criterion "C".

DESCRIPTION

The 0.3 acre-property is located on North Hill Avenue. Built in 1923, the 3,266 square-foot single-family house is two stories in height, rectangular in plan and comfortably set back from the street. A detached garage, laundry room and original redwood lath structure (gazebo) exist behind it. The house displays a number of characteristic features associated with the Italian Renaissance Revival style. It has a rectangular plan with a symmetrically organized three-bay façade, a centered recessed entry, a low hipped roof with open eaves and exposed rafters, wooden three-light casement windows, and cement-plastered exterior walls. The upper and lower stories are separated by a belt course separating the taller first floor from the shorter second floor. The detached garage, similar in design to the house, has a smooth stucco coating, a low-pitched hipped roof, a small recessed entry, an original wall-mounted sconce, and the original tongue-and-groove wooden doors in two bays. A redwood lath structure is an original site feature constructed in 1924, the year after the house and garage. It exists today in good condition as a redwood frame covered with redwood vertical slats. It is possible that it served as a potting shed. There is an example of a similar but larger structure designed by Greene & Greene, originally associated with the Culbertson House, at 875 Canon Drive.

John Cyril Bennett (1892-1957)

Bennett was educated in Pasadena and trained vocationally in the offices of Henry and Charles Greene and later in the offices of Sylvanus Marston and Garrett Van Pelt. He began his own architectural firm in Pasadena 1914.¹ Beginning in the twenties, Bennett gained notoriety for his Period Revival residential designs and for his design of the Raymond Theater. Bennett's most memorable and lasting contribution to architecture in Pasadena is his participation in the architectural collaborative that designed the Civic Auditorium (constructed in 1932).

ANALYSIS

The property at 1155 North Hill Avenue is eligible for designation under Criterion C, (§17.62.040 PMC):

¹ Teresa Grimes and Mary Jo Winder. "Residential Period Revival Architecture." City of Pasadena, Planning & Development Department. Pasadena: 2004.

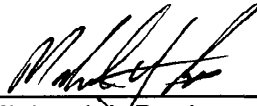
[The property] embodies the distinctive characteristics of a historic resource property type, period, architectural style or method of construction, or is an exceptional representation of the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose work is significant to the city, or that possesses high artistic values that are significant to the city.

Under this criterion, the house, garage, and gazebo at 1155 North Hill Avenue are significant as an intact and locally notable example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style and as a work of architect John Cyril Bennett, a noted architect who in a thirty-year career designed many residential and institutional buildings in the City and the region.

FISCAL IMPACT

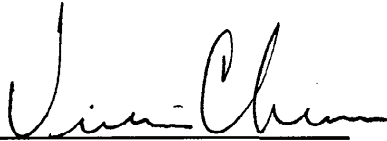
Designation of this property does not affect revenues to the City. In some instances, though, owners of designated properties may apply to the City for a Historic Property Contract, which allows an alternative and often lower property tax assessment. The City Council reviewed the projected loss of property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

Respectfully submitted,



Michael J. Beck
City Manager

Prepared by:



Vicrim Chima
Assistant Planner

Reviewed by:



Richard J. Bruckner
Director of Planning & Development

- ATTACHMENT A: Application
- ATTACHMENT B: Photographs
- ATTACHMENT C: Effects of Landmark Designation

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASADENA
ADOPTING A DECLARATION OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR 1155
NORTH HILL AVENUE, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA**

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission has found that 1155 North Hill Avenue meets criterion C, as set forth in Section 17.62.040(C) of the Pasadena Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the house, detached garage, and redwood lath structure at 1155 North Hill Avenue are significant under Criteria C for designation as a landmark (P.M.C. §17.62.40 C);

WHEREAS, the application for landmark designation is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15331;

WHEREAS, the owners of the property, Howard and Karen Ritter, nominated the property for landmark designation; and

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 1155 North Hill Avenue is hereby adopted.

Adopted at the _____ meeting of the City Council on the _____ day of _____, 2008 by the following vote:

AYES:

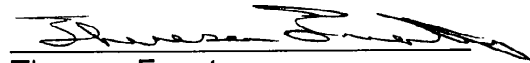
NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Mark Jomsky, CMC
City Clerk

Approved as to form:



Theresa Fuentes
Assistant City Attorney

DECLARATION OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR:

1155 NORTH HILL AVENUE
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 Exhibit "A")

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 review by the Planning Director or City of Pasadena Historic Preservation Commission for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

DATED: _____

ATTEST:

CITY OF PASADENA
A municipal corporation

Mark Jomsky, CMC, City Clerk

By: _____
Bill Bogaard, Mayor

EXHIBIT A

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF REAL PROPERTY
AT 1155 NORTH HILL AVENUE, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

LOT 16 OF TRACT NO. 1945, AS PER MAP RECORDED IN BOOK 24 PAGE 12 OF MAPS,
IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAID COUNTY

EXHIBIT A

INVESTORS TITLE COMPANY 89 293797

RECORDING REQUESTED BY

AND WHEN RECORDED MAIL THIS DEED AND, UNLESS OTHERWISE SHOWN BELOW, MAIL TAX STATEMENTS TO:

NAME MR. AND MRS. HOWARD L. RITTER
 STREET ADDRESS 1155 N. Hill Avenue
Pasadena, Ca. 91104
 CITY, STATE, ZIP

ESCROW NO. 2081

RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS
 OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CA
FEB 24 1989 AT 8 AM.
 Recorder's Office

SPACE ABOVE THIS LINE FOR RECORDER'S USE

| | | | |
|------|-----|-----|---|
| 5741 | 011 | 009 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALL <input type="checkbox"/> MIN |
|------|-----|-----|---|

Title Order No. 236777-20 FEE \$5 F
 ESCROW or LOAN No.

GRANT DEED 55

THE UNDERSIGNED GRANTOR(S) DECLARE(S) DOCUMENTARY TRANSFER TAX is \$ 511.50 CITY TAX \$ _____

computed on full value of property conveyed, or
 computed on full value less value of liens or encumbrances remaining at time of sale.
 Unincorporated area: City of _____ and _____

FOR A VALUABLE CONSIDERATION, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged,
LAWRENCE H. EVANS AND MARILYN J. EVANS, husband and wife

hereby GRANT(S) to
HOWARD L. RITTER AND KAREN / RITTER, husband and wife as joint tenants
LORHAM

the following described real property in the City of Pasadena
 County of Los Angeles State of California.

LOT 16 of Tract No. 1945, as per map recorded in Book 24 Page 12 of Maps, in the office of the County Recorder of said County.

Dated November 21, 1988

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
 COUNTY OF Los Angeles
 On January 14, 1989 before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for said State, personally appeared Lawrence H. Evans and Marilyn J. Evans

personally known to me (or proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence) to be the same whose name all subscribed to the within instrument and who, in fact, acknowledged the same to me in my hand and official seal.

Paul H. Stenbrook

OFFICIAL SEAL
 PAUL H. STENBROOK
 NOTARY PUBLIC - CALIFORNIA
 LOS ANGELES COUNTY
 My Comm. Expires DEC 31, 1991

(This area for official notarial seal)

MAIL TAX STATEMENTS AS DIRECTED ABOVE.