

ATTACHMENT A

MEMORANDUM

To: Vicrim Chima
From: Teresa Grimes
Date: July 9, 2009
Subject: 499-523 Arroyo Parkway

Pursuant to your request, I reviewed the staff report dated June 22, 2009 and associated materials related to the evaluation of unreinforced masonry buildings at 499, 501, 503 & 523 South Arroyo Parkway. It is my understanding that the owner is seeking to demolish the buildings instead of retrofitting them, and that the Design Commission cannot deny such a request unless the buildings are "qualified historic buildings." "Qualified historic buildings" are those that are designated at the national, state, or local levels, or are determined to be eligible for such designation in a historic resources survey. Two of the buildings, 499 and 503 South Arroyo Parkway, are not designated as landmarks at any level and were not included in the Central District Historic Resources Survey. The remaining two buildings, 501 and 523 South Arroyo Parkway, were included in the Central District Historic Resources Survey, but were assigned a California Register Status Code of 6L, meaning that they are ineligible for designation at the national, state, or local levels, but need special consideration in local planning. It is my understanding that the Design Commission is seeking further evaluation of these two buildings.

The City of Pasadena Historic Preservation Ordinance is codified in Chapter 17.62 of the Pasadena Zoning Code. The City has two categories of individual resources - historic monuments and landmarks. Monuments are resources that are significant at the national or state levels, while landmarks are locally significant resources. The criteria for both designations are modeled on the National Register criteria.

17.62.040 - Criteria for Designation of Historic Resources

Evaluation of Historic Resources. *When considering applications to designate a historic monument, landmark, historic sign, landmark tree or landmark district, the Historic Preservation Commission shall apply the criteria below according to applicable National Register of Historic Places Bulletins for evaluating historic properties, including the seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association (National Register of Historic Places Bulletin #15: "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation").*

Historic Monuments.

1. *A historic monument shall include all historic resources previously designated as historic treasures before adoption of this Chapter, historic resources that are listed in the National Register at the State-wide or Federal level of significance (including National Historic Landmarks) and any historic resource that is significant at a regional, State, or Federal level, and is an exemplary representation of a particular type of historic resource and meets one or more of the following criteria:*

- a. *It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the*

history of the region, State, or nation.

b. It is associated with the lives of persons who are significant in the history of the region, State, or nation.

c. 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.

d. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history of the region, State, or nation.

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

Landmarks.

1. A landmark shall include all properties previously designated a landmark before adoption of this Chapter and any historic resource that is of a local level of significance and meets one or more of the criteria listed in Subparagraph 2., below.

2. A landmark may be the best representation in the City of a type of historic resource or it may be one of several historic resources in the City that have common architectural attributes that represent a particular type of historic resource. A landmark shall meet one or more of the following criteria:

a. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the City, region, or State.

b. It is associated with the lives of persons who are significant in the history of the City, region, or State.

c. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, architectural style, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose work is of significance to the City or, to the region or possesses artistic values of significance to the City or to the region.

d. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important locally in prehistory or history.

523 South Arroyo Parkway

This building was constructed in 1922 for the Lewis Iron Company. It has been found ineligible for designation at any level largely due to a lack of integrity. Because the prominent local architectural firm of Marston and Van Pelt designed it, the building was evaluated as having local interest.

A physical examination of the building indicates that abrasive sand blasting has damaged the brick. This is an irreversible alteration, but not unusual. Many of the masonry buildings in the Old Pasadena National Register District have experienced abrasive sand blasting. The difference is that they were evaluated for their contributing to the district, rather than for individual significance. The building permit record indicates that the parapet was lowered in 1956. However, without a historic photograph of the building, there is no way of knowing what the parapet looked like originally. Therefore, it is difficult to assess its loss. The staff report states that the original window in the arched opening has been replaced. Once again, without a historic photograph, there is no way of knowing what the window looked like originally. However, the thin wooden stops (instead of glazing compound and the lack of horned stiles are indications that it is not original. Therefore in my estimation, the building is lacking the integrity of materials due to the abrasive sand blasting, and the integrity of design has been diminished

by the reduction of the parapet and alteration of the window. Otherwise, the building retains the other aspects of integrity including location, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The first question is whether or not the building is significant. It is only then that you can determine which aspects of integrity are important. If the building is historically significant, the lack of integrity of materials or design may not matter that much. It is only when I can demonstrate or know by experience that a building has been completely obliterated by alterations that I do not even bother evaluating significance. That leads me to ask whether or not the building appears to meet any of the criteria in the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance. Yes, the building was designed by a master architecture firm, but it is a minor example of their work. A quick look through Tuttle's book on Marston indicates that the firm was extremely busy during the early 1920s and there are many, far better examples of their commercial work still standing. The building was most likely simple in design considering the purpose. It is best described as a commercial brick vernacular building. Evaluating it in terms of style does not even seem warranted. The building may be historically significant as a reflection of the industrial and commercial businesses that were clustered between Arroyo Parkway (formerly Broadway) and Raymond Avenue on the east and west, and between Green Street and Glenarm Avenue on the north and south. When the railroad arrived to Pasadena in 1885, the residences in this area were replaced by industrial and commercial businesses. South of California Boulevard most of these buildings are gone. North of Del Mar Avenue, these buildings are included in the Old Pasadena National Register District.

As previously stated, the building was designed for the Lewis Iron Company in 1922. C.E. Millsapaugh is identified as the original owner in the tax assessor records. No biographical information could be found on Millsapaugh; therefore, it can be presumed that he was not a historic personage. Furthermore, the building is not strongly associated with any particular businesses. By 1924, the building was occupied by the Underground Construction Company, which was an electrical contracting company. But by 1926, the building was vacant. From 1927-32 it was occupied by A.E. Lang, Wholesale Plumbing Supply; from 1935-41 it was occupied by R.O. Penn Cleaners. In between these periods and thereafter it was occupied by a variety of businesses or vacant. In conclusion, the building does not seem to represent any broad patterns of history and does not seem to be significant in the context of commercial or industrial businesses that congregated around the railroad tracks. As such, the current evaluation of 6L is valid.

501 South Arroyo Parkway

This building was designed in 1940 by the important local architectural firm of Van Pelt and Lind. It functioned as the office building for the Market Basket Warehouse. It has been found ineligible for designation at any level due to a lack of significance. However, it was evaluated as having local interest as an example of World War II era Modern commercial architecture.

Once again, this building should be evaluated in the context of the industrial and commercial development in Pasadena related to the railroad. With regard to its architectural significance, it appears to be only a representative example of the Moderne style. But upon further consideration it may warrant a higher evaluation. It is by an important firm, and I do not know that there are many examples of their commercial work. There were very few buildings constructed during the period for obvious reasons, and it actually compares favorably. If the small Art Deco buildings on Fair Oaks (512-14 and 527) have been evaluated as 5S3, why not the subject building? They are modest examples of the Art Deco style, but evaluated as eligible for local listing because there are few intact examples. The Cornet Building has been evaluated as 7N, meaning it may be eligible as an example of World War II era industrial architecture. How is it different than the subject building other than its size? Constructed in 1938, 544 South Arroyo Parkway is clearly more Streamline Moderne, than simply Moderne. It is evaluated as 5S3 as a local example of vernacular Streamline Moderne. I'm not sure what "vernacular" means, other than "representative." Once again, is the subject building not a local example of vernacular Moderne?

Yes, the building is a modest example of its type and style. Yes, there are more exceptional examples. But there are not many examples, this one is very intact, and it is by an important firm. More importantly, I think that if the City strives for consistency in evaluations, this one should be changed to 5S3.

ATTACHMENT B

Definitions:

"Qualified historic building" is any building or structure which meets one of the following criteria:

1. A landmark or Pasadena historic [monument] designated according to the provision of Section 17.62.040 of the Pasadena Municipal Code; or
2. A building or structure than contributes to a designated landmark or district; or
3. A building or structure that is listed in the National Register of historic places, either individually or as a contributing element to a district or to a thematic category designation; or
4. **A building or structure that is eligible for designation as a landmark or as a Pasadena historic [monument] or appears to be contributing element to a potential landmark district;** or
5. A building or structure that is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as a contributing element to a district or to a thematic category designation.¹

Integrity: Integrity is the authenticity of a historic resource's physical identity as evidenced by the survival of characteristics or historic fabric that existed during the resource's period of significance. The essential physical features are those features that define both why a property is significant and when it was significant. Resources must retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance.

California Register Historical Resource Codes: Status codes reflect the application of California Register and local criteria to the identification, evaluation, and understanding of the significance of historic properties. In an abbreviated form, they communicate the eligibility or ineligibility of a resource. They also represent at what level a resource is significant (local, state, national) and what method was employed in identifying the resource (survey evaluation, section 106).

Status codes are broad indicators which, in most cases, serve as a starting place for further consideration and evaluations. The assigned status code reflects an opinion or action taken at a specific point in time, the assigned status code may not accurately reflect the resource's eligibility for the National Register, California Register, or local listing or designation at some later time.

¹ Pasadena Municipal Code: §14.06.090

ATTACHMENT C

P2. Location: 501 South Arroyo Parkway

B10. Significance:

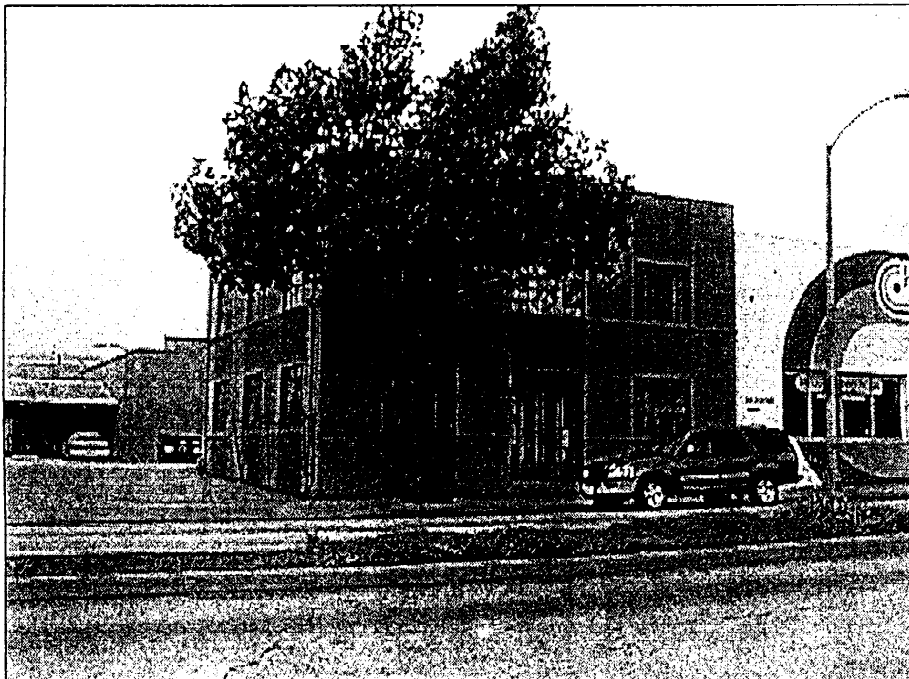
The former Market Basket Warehouse Offices was determined to be ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and was recorded in the State Historic Resources Inventory database as a 6X1. However, it is of local interest as an example of World War II era Modern vernacular commercial design.

Year of Construction: 1940

Architect: ~~unknown~~ VAN PELT + LIND

Builder: unknown

P5b. Description/Date of Photo: View of the east elevation/May 12, 1998



P8. Recorded by: Leslie Heumann, PCR, 233 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 130, Santa Monica, CA 90401

P9. Date Recorded: August 30, 2000

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Resource Name or #: Lewis Iron Building

Continuation Update

P2. Location: 517-523 South Arroyo Parkway

B10. Significance:

The former Lewis Iron Building was determined to be ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and was recorded in the State Historic Resources Inventory database as a 6X1. However, it is of local interest as an example of a commercial design by the prominent local architectural firm of Marston and Van Pelt.

Year of Construction: 1922

Architect: Marston & Van Pelt

Builder: unknown

P5b. Description/Date of Photo: View of the east elevation/May 12, 1998



P8. Recorded by: Leslie Heumann, PCR, 233 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 130, Santa Monica, CA 90401

P9. Date Recorded: August 30, 2000