

Agenda Report

January 14, 2013

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Planning & Community Development Department
SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF 500 S. EL MOLINO AVENUE AS A LANDMARK

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Find that the designation of a historic resource 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 Cornish Manor Court at 500 S. El Molino Avenue meets criterion C in P.M.C. §17.62.040(C)(2)(c) because it is a locally significant, intact example of a bungalow court;
3. Approve the designation of the property at 500 S. El Molino Avenue as a Landmark;
4. Adopt the attached resolution approving a Declaration of Landmark Designation for 500 S. El Molino Avenue, Pasadena, California;
5. Authorize the Mayor to execute the attached Declaration of Landmark Designation for 500 S. El Molino Avenue, Pasadena, California; and
6. Direct the City Clerk to record the declaration with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

On Monday, October 1, 2012, the Historic Preservation Commission recommended that the City Council approve the designation of 500 S. El Molino Avenue as a Landmark under criterion C of PMC §17.62.040(C)(2)(c).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The property at 500 S. El Molino Avenue is eligible for designation as a Landmark because it is a locally significant, intact example of a bungalow court.

BACKGROUND:

On July 10, 2012 property owner Ronnie Garofalo submitted an application for designation of the property as a landmark. The staff evaluated the property according to the criteria in Title 17 of the P.M.C. and determined that the property qualifies for designation as a landmark.

Description

Property Data

- Address: 500 South El Molino Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101
- Location: East side of South El Molino Avenue five lots north of California Boulevard
- Date of Construction: 1923 (source: County Assessor)
- Original Owner: Charles Cornish Williams (source: original building permit)
- Builder: Fred L. Petrequin (source: November 14, 1912 issue of Los Angeles Builder and Contractor cited in Pasadena Houses of the Craftsman Era by John Ripley.)
- Original/Present Use: Multi-Family Residence
- Property Size: 0.65 acres (source: County Assessor)
- Building Size: 9,496 square feet (source: County Assessor; likely the total square footage of all buildings on the site)

Architectural Description

The Site

The property is a flat lot and includes eight one-story single-unit bungalows and one two-story fourplex arranged in a U-shape around a central lawn. The property has two driveways, one at each of the north and south property lines, each accessing a detached three-car carport. A pair of brick walls with terminating pilasters defines the edge of the semi-private courtyard space for the residents, separating the space from a more public lawn area adjacent to the sidewalk. The more public lawn is bisected by a concrete path leading into the courtyard, which splits as it passes into the courtyard and circumnavigates the central lawn.

Exterior Features of the Buildings

The individual bungalows are roughly square in plan and have steep hipped roofs with a gabled projecting volume on the front. One side of each gable has a curving extension that covers a small front porch with shallow ogee-arched openings. The roofs have very shallow eaves with small projecting rafter tails and, on the gable ends, fasciae with pointed ends. The buildings are all coated in smooth-finish cement plaster with false half-timbering in the gable ends. On the gabled volumes, a wood beam divides the first

floor from the gabled second floor above. The bungalows all have groupings of wood casement windows with square divided lights, except that the windows in the gable-ends have diamond-patterned muntins. The floor and steps of the front porches are concrete, except that there is a strip of brick at the edge of the porch floor.

The two-story fourplex at the rear of the court has similar design features and detailing. The façade is symmetrical and has two projecting gabled bays at the upper floor with a small balcony between. Centered on the ground floor is a single front door that accesses a common hall and stairwell for entry into the individual units. The front porch posts are brick, as is the edge of the porch floor.

Garage & Site Features

The two detached three-car carports at the rear of the site have simplified Mission Revival characteristics, including flat roofs with stepped parapets and barrel tile coping and smooth plaster walls. Each carport opening is framed in wood.

Pathways and driveways are concrete and landscaping consists of lawn in the common courtyard with trees and shrubs immediately in front of and between the bungalows.

Documented Changes to the Property

Permit records do not indicate any exterior changes to the buildings. Upon review of Sanborn Maps, it appears that there were two small one-story buildings, likely for storage, attached to and extending from the sides of the two carports which are no longer extant.

Current Condition, Use, and Proposed Plans

The property is intact and in excellent condition. The owner has submitted an application for Historic Property Contract (Mills Act) to assist with ongoing maintenance and minor rehabilitation work that is needed on the property.

ANALYSIS:

Cornish Manor Court at 500 S. El Molino Avenue is eligible for designation under Criterion C, (PMC §17.62.040(C)(2)(c)), which states:

[The property] 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.

Cornish Manor Court is significant because it is a locally significant, intact example of bungalow court. The registration requirements in the City's 1994 study of bungalow courts indicate that "a bungalow court should present a clear example, in site plan," of one of the forms illustrated and described in the report. A bungalow court must retain integrity and "must have been designed, planned and built as a bungalow court within the period of significance (1909-1944)...Location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling and association should remain essentially unaltered...Architectural style is not a factor when considering the significance and National Register eligibility of a bungalow court as an example of the court form."

Cornish Manor Court is an example of a detached wide court (enclosed). The plan view of the site is an exact match to the diagram of this bungalow court form, including the placement of the two carports. The property is approximately 123 feet wide with detached bungalows sited at the extreme north and south sides, with a larger terminating structure at the end of the court. The property has architectural integrity (its ability to demonstrate why it is significant) through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and feeling.

The property was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in the City's 1983 study of bungalow courts and was nominated for such listing; however, the owner at that time objected to the designation and it was not listed.

Contributing structures to this designation include all of the individual bungalows, the two-story fourplex and the two carport structures. In addition, the arrangement of the buildings, paving and landscaping on the site is a character-defining feature of the property.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The General Plan – Objective 6: Promote preservation of historically and architecturally significant buildings and revitalization of traditional neighborhoods and commercial areas.

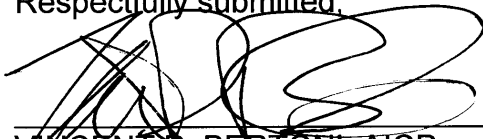
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

Class 8 exemptions consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for the protection of the environment.

FISCAL IMPACT:

In some instances, 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,



VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP
Director of Planning & Community
Development Department

Prepared by:



Kevin Johnson
Planner

Approved by:



MICHAEL J. BECK
City Manager

Attachments (2):

Attachment A – Application Materials
Attachment B – Photographs

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASADENA
ADOPTING A DECLARATION OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF 500 S. EL
MOLINO AVENUE, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA**

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission has found that 500 S. El Molino Avenue meets criterion "C", as set forth in Section 17.62.040(C)(2)(c) of the Pasadena Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the property at 500 S. El Molino Avenue is significant because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a property type of significance to the City; and

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

WHEREAS, the property owner, Ronnie Garofalo, submitted the application 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 500 S. El Molino Avenue is hereby adopted.

Adopted at the _____ meeting of the City Council on the _____ day of _____, 2013 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

MARK JOMSKY, CMC, City Clerk

Approved as to form:



Theresa E. Fuentes
Assistant City Attorney

DECLARATION OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR:

**500 S. EL MOLINO AVENUE
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA**

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 17.62.050 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:

Lots 56 and 57 of Samuel Stratton's Subdivision of Lots 11 and 12 in Block "K" of the Lake Vineyard Land and Water Association Lands, as per Map recorded in Book 28, Page 8 of Miscellaneous Records in the Office of the County Recorder of said County.

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 City of Pasadena.

DATED: _____

ATTEST:

CITY OF PASADENA
A municipal corporation

Mark Jomsky, City Clerk

By: _____
Bill Bogaard, Mayor