

Agenda Report

June 3, 2013

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Planning & Community Development Department
SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF 855 ROSALIND ROAD 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 the property at 855 Rosalind Road is significant under Criterion "C" for designation as a landmark (P.M.C. §17.62.040) because the house and garage are significant as an intact example of 1920's-era French Normandy Revival style residential architecture designed by architect Everett Phipps Babcock as his personal residence;
3. Approve the designation of the property at 855 Rosalind Road as a landmark;
4. Adopt the attached resolution approving a Declaration of Landmark Designation for 855 Rosalind Road, Pasadena, California;
5. Authorize the Mayor to execute the attached Declaration of Landmark Designation for 855 Rosalind Road, Pasadena, California; and
6. Direct the City Clerk to record the declaration with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

On Monday, April 15, 2013, the Historic Preservation Commission recommended that the City Council approve the designation of 855 Rosalind Road as a landmark under Criterion C of PMC §17.62.040.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The property at 855 Rosalind Road qualifies for designation as a landmark under Criterion "C". The house and garage appear to retain nearly all of the original French Normandy Revival style building materials and architectural features.

BACKGROUND:

On May 1, 2012, Pasadena Heritage submitted an application for landmark designation of the property. Designed by architect Everett Phipps Babcock for use as his primary residence, the single-family residence and detached garage were constructed in 1926.

The staff evaluated the property according to the landmark criteria in Title 17 of the P.M.C. and determined that the property qualifies for landmark designation. The applicant, Pasadena Heritage, was notified of staff's eligibility determination on May 25, 2012. The property owner, 855 Rosalind Road Trust (c/o Mr. John Schneider) was notified of staff's determination by a certified letter dated July 23, 2012. Subsequently, the property was sold to a new owner, Stephanie Flagg, who supports the nomination.

Property Data

- Historical Name: Everett Phipps Babcock House
- Address: 855 Rosalind Road, Pasadena, CA 91106
- Location: West side of Rosalind Road; south of Lombardy Road; north of Orlando Road.
- Date of Construction: 1926 (house and garage), documented by building permit
- Original Architect: Everett Phipps Babcock
- Original / Present Use: Single-family residence.
- Original / Present Owner: Everett Phipps Babcock / Stephanie Flagg
- Lot size: 20,206 square feet
- House size: 4,690 square feet

Site Features

The site, a 20,206 square foot interior lot, is located at the west side of Rosalind Road south of Lombardy Road and north of Orlando Road. The site is approximately 100 feet in width and 200 feet in depth and contains the house at the front. Located behind the house are a pond shaded by a tree, a swimming pool, and a detached garage. A driveway located on the north side of the lot leads to the detached garage at the rear of the property.

Building Features

Built in 1926, the house is two stories and has an L-shaped plan and a steeply pitched gable roof. The primary elevation is asymmetrical and is comprised of three bays: a two-story, cross-gabled bay with a projecting conical bay window; a central, two-story conical tower that encompasses the internal staircase; and a two-story, side-gabled bay with rectilinear massing and a cantilevered second floor. The fenestration is constructed entirely of wood. A variety of window types are used, including multi-pane casements and artistic leaded glass. The windows are varied in size, style, arrangement, and depth of recess within the wall planes. A covered patio with carved

posts, which is not visible from the street, extends the length of the rear wing and faces south into the rear yard.

The Babcock house exemplifies the French Normandy Revival style. The walls are clad with a combination of materials and finishes: hand-troweled stucco with gentle irregularities to provide subtle depth and shadow; cedar shingles; rustic wood lap siding; and irregular and weathered half timbers. The cantilevered second floors are accented with heavy timber beams and corbels. Heavy, custom-designed timbered shutters flank several of the windows. The roof is punctuated by a square, tapered, stucco chimney with round terra cotta flue caps.

The existing, original roof is one of the most uniquely crafted domestic roofs in Pasadena. The roof is comprised of long cedar shakes with only a 2"- 2 ½" exposure that are arranged in an irregular pattern to form a thatch-like roof. The shakes on the roof ends are gradually stacked, resulting gently flared roof ends. The ridges of the roof and conical towers are accented with terra cotta clay barrel roof tiles.

Garage

The detached garage was built at the same time of the house and has a flat roof with mansard-roofed parapet walls and a square tower with a four-sided pitched roof at the northeast corner. An original shed-roofed storage room is attached to the east side, and a non-original storage room is attached to the northwest corner. The garage currently does not have a garage door, but there is evidence that a vehicle door once existed. The garage is a contributing feature to the property.

Documented Changes to the Property

In 1953, a swimming pool was added to the property. As mentioned, the garage door is missing. A small shed was added to the northwest corner of the garage. There are aluminum windows in some of the stucco-latticed openings on elevations not visible from the street. In 1997, a permit was granted to replace louvered windows with double-hung windows to match existing. Recently, the red brick walkway to the front door was removed as part of a landscape replacement.

Current Conditions, Use, and Proposed Plans

The property is currently in good condition. The cedar roof is in its original condition, and it appears that it can be maintained with an occasional minor repair. No significant changes to the property are proposed.

Historical Overview

The French Normandy revival style is similar to English Tudor revival. Following World War I, American publications increasingly showed images of the typical French country

farmhouse with its thatched roof, half-timbered walls, and silo with conical roof attached to the main living quarters instead of separate barn. Known as French Normandy, this was one of the popular “romantic” styles of domestic architecture in the United States during the 1920s-1930s. Gebhard and Winter, authors of *Architecture in Los Angeles*, wrote:

“The difference between the Medievalism of the French Norman image and that of the English Tudor often narrows down to whether or not a round, conical tower is present. The specific sources for this style were the farm house and small manor houses of France, particularly those of Normandy and Brittany. Knowledge of this image developed in the teens, as an outcome of the First World War, and on into the 1920s through publications of numerous illustrative books and articles. The most typical form for the houses was an L shape with a tower placed in the middle of the L. The windows were often narrow, roofs were hipped and steep, walls were stuccoed, and half-timbering was often employed.”

Everett Phipps Babcock

A native of New York City, Babcock worked with Ambrose J. Russell (1857–1938) in Tacoma, Washington on distinguished residences in various styles. The firm completed the Washington Governor's Mansion in Olympia, Washington. Their work also included the Colonial Revival William Ross Rust House for W.R. Rust (William Ross Rust, then President of the Tacoma Smelter and Refining) in Tacoma, Washington, and the George Gower House (1906). He moved to Pasadena from Portland, Oregon in 1923 and associated briefly with prolific Pasadena architect Wallace Neff. While living in Pasadena, Babcock designed the residence of Mrs. Col. Herman Hall in Sierra Madre, the Casa Torre Garden Court (1925) at 611-627 East California Blvd., and the Singer Building (1926) at 16 S. Oakland Ave. Babcock designed and lived in the house at 855 Rosalind Road in Pasadena for two years until he died unexpectedly. His wife sold the house soon after his death.

ANALYSIS:

The Everett Phipps Babcock House and garage at 855 Rosalind Road is eligible for designation under Criterion C, (PMC §17.62.040.C.2), 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.

The house exhibits exemplary craftsmanship, creativity, and a brilliant combination of rustic simplicity and architectural sophistication. It appears to retain nearly all of its original character-defining features of the French Normandy Revival style. The building has a high level of architectural integrity (its ability to demonstrate why it is significant) through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and feeling, as follows:

- Location: The building is in its original location.
- Design: The building retains its form, plan, space, structure, and style, as described above.
- Setting: The residential neighborhood is intact.
- Materials: The building has the original materials used in its construction.
- Workmanship: The building demonstrates the defining characteristics of a distinct architectural movement and the design quality of the architect's work.
- Feeling: The property clearly expresses the characteristics of 1920's Period Revival, specifically the French Normandy Revival, residential architecture in Pasadena.

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:

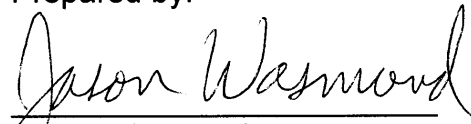
In some instances, owners of designated properties may apply to the City for Historic Property Contract, which allows an alternative and often lower property tax assessment. The City Council reviewed the projected loss of property tax revenue from this program in 2002 when it adopted a local Historic Property Contract (Mills Act) ordinance.

Respectfully submitted,



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

Prepared by:



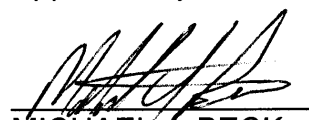
Jason Wasmund
Assistant Planner

Concurred by:



Leon E. White
Principal Planner

Approved by:



MICHAEL J. BECK
City Manager

Attachments:

- Attachment A – Vicinity Map
- Attachment B – Application Materials
- Attachment C – Photographs
- Attachment D – Effects of Landmark Designation

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASADENA
ADOPTING A DECLARATION OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR 855
ROSALIND ROAD, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA**

WHEREAS, the City Council has found that 855 Rosalind Road meets criterion "C", as set forth in Section 17.62.040(C) of the Pasadena Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the property at 855 Rosalind Road is significant because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a historic resource property type, period, architectural style or method of construction, or represents the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose work is significant to the City or to the region, or that possesses high artistic values that are significant to the City or to the region; 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, Pasadena Heritage submitted the application for landmark designation and Stephanie Flagg, the property owner, supports the nomination; and

WHEREAS, the City Council may 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 855 Rosalind Road 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

0000108528C031

DECLARATION OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR:

855 ROSALIND ROAD
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 7 and 8 of Tract No. 6528, in the City of Pasadena, County of Los Angeles, State of California, as per Map recorded in Book 70, Page 2 of Maps, in the Office of the County Recorder of said County and all that portion of Lot 6 of said Tract lying East of the West Line of Lot 7 of said Tract prolonged Northerly to a point in the North Line of said Lot 6.

APN: 5328-008-014

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