



June 3, 2016

Mayor Tornek And Members Of the Pasadena City Council
City Of Pasadena
100 N. Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91101

Appeal of Design Commission Decision regarding Pinney House at 180 S. Euclid

Dear Honorable Mayor Tornek and Councilmembers,

We continue to firmly conclude that this 1906 house designed by C.W. Buchanan meets Pasadena's landmark designation criteria and we ask the Council to vote to uphold the Design Commission's recommendation.

We cannot concur with Staff's conclusion that the house has lost its integrity.

Pasadena Heritage asks the Council to seriously consider these critical points:

1. Several previous professional surveys found, despite its age, that the house retained its historic architectural integrity. Surveys are completed (repeatedly over the years) to identify historic properties for the City's as well as property owners' sake. The City of Pasadena extends protections to properties identified as eligible historic landmarks because it is understood that these properties remain vital to the character of our City. The protections bestowed upon eligible-but-undesignated properties do not prevent changes, but manage the degree of change allowed in order to not compromise the historic integrity of the building while allowing the property to remain in use and of benefit to the public.
2. Some change and repairs are to be expected in any building of this age. The alterations observable on the Pinney House (real, documented changes, not the alleged) are alterations typical of a 120+ year old building. None of them negate the building's historic integrity, contrary to claims of consultants hired by the appellant.
3. Retention of the front facade as referenced in the Staff Report amounts to a "façadectomy" and is not sound preservation practice.

We urge the Council not to endorse this concept though it may be well-meaning. A new, much larger building with a few token remnants of the original building would NOT constitute a preservation solution nor likely a good design. As directed by the Council,

Staff asked for input and recommendations from Pasadena Heritage, which were as follows:

- Retain the house in place
- Remove the rear additions
- Convert the house to 3-4 residential units and construct new units in the back
- Reduce overall size of the project to fewer units, thus reducing parking needs, inclusionary fees, etc.
- Moving the house forward on the property would be an acceptable alternative; some form of reconstruction is expected in rehabilitation and repair projects

We note that neither the Staff Report nor any of its Attachments refer to this option or consider this possibility. Pasadena Heritage believes this option deserves consideration and is disappointed to see no consideration given nor mention of such an option.

Where the City has in recent years acted consistently in matters of preservation, the reversal of findings in this case is a shocking departure. Staff's conclusions constitute a worrisome deviation from the usual upstanding application of preservation best practices. Pasadena Heritage strongly believes that where the City's own historic resource surveys conflict with the appellant's consultants AND when a property has been identified as eligible for the California Register of Historic Places, an environmental impact assessment is the legally correct process to evaluate the impact of demolition on historic resources.

Thank you for your ongoing consideration of this matter – and the precedent it sets in our beautiful city.

Sincerely,



Susan N. Mossman
Executive Director



Jesse Lattig
Preservation Director

CC: Lucinda Over, Board Chair, Pasadena Heritage
Steve Madison, City of Pasadena District 6 Councilmember

581 Garden Lane
Pasadena, CA 91105

6 June 2016

RE: The Pinney House at 180 South Euclid

Dear Mayor Tornek and Members of the Pasadena City Council:

I regret that I will not be able to attend the City Council meeting this evening and to comment on the Pinney House, which is located at 180 S. Euclid. I have attended earlier public meetings regarding the Pinney House at both the Design Commission and at the City Council. I am familiar with the house, its setting, and the surrounding neighborhood.

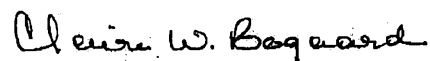
For a number of years, I served on the California State Historical Resources Commission. As Commissioners, we spent most of our time reviewing nominations of properties (in California) to the National Register of Historic Places. With that background and my experiences with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and other historic preservation organizations, I can safely say that the Pinney House IS an historic resource and has NOT lost its integrity. About every building on the National Register has had changes made over the years.

In the City of Pasadena, we have been generally successful in avoiding :
Facadectomies. Our prior City Councils and planning staffs have been strong in opposing such practices. Please do NOT allow the retention of only the front façade and the loss of the remaining portions of the building. THAT is NOT historic preservation. Surely - this City can do better!

I respectfully request that you send the plans for the Pinney House back to the developer for further discussions with the preservation community. The developer is an experienced builder and he should be able to identify several options for the site, which will protect the historic Pinney House and still allow him the right to add additional units to the site.

Thank you all for your hard work!

Sincerely,



Claire Bogaard

06/06/2016
Item 17