

Agenda Report

November 9, 2020

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Planning & Community Development Department
SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF THE PROPERTY AT 1145 ARDEN ROAD AS A HISTORIC MONUMENT (“JEWETT ESTATE/ARDEN VILLA”)

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) pursuant to Section 15308, Class 8 of the CEQA Guidelines pertaining to Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment and that there are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class; therefore, there are no unusual circumstances;
2. Find that the Jewett Estate/Arden Villa at 1145 Arden Road meets Criterion “C” for designation as a historic monument pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code (PMC) Section 17.62.040.B.1 because it is exceptional in the embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a historic resource property type, period and architectural style and is an exceptional representation of the work of an architect whose work is significant to the region. The property is an exceptional example of an Italian Renaissance Revival style single-family residential estate designed by the regionally significant architectural firm of Marston & Van Pelt;
3. Adopt the attached resolution approving a Declaration of Historic Monument Designation for 1145 Arden Road, Pasadena, California;
4. Authorize the Mayor to execute the attached Declaration of Historic Monument Designation for 1145 Arden Road, Pasadena, California; and
5. Direct the City Clerk to record the declaration with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

At its regular meeting of August 18, 2020, the Historic Preservation Commission recommended that the City Council approve the designation of the property at 1145 Arden Road as a Landmark under Criterion “C” of PMC Section 17.62.040.B.1.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Jewett Estate/Arden Villa at 1145 Arden Road qualifies for designation as a Landmark under Criterion “C” because it is exceptional in the embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a historic resource property type, period and architectural style and is an exceptional representation of the work of an architect whose work is significant to the region. The property is an exceptional example of an Italian Renaissance Revival style single-family residential estate designed by the regionally significant architectural firm of Marston & Van Pelt.

BACKGROUND:

On May 28, 2020, Teresa Grimes of GPA Consulting, on behalf of the property owners, submitted an application for historic monument designation of the house and site located at 1145 Arden Road. City staff evaluated the property according to the criteria in Title 17 of the PMC and determined that the property qualifies for designation as a historic monument.

Property Data

- Address: 1145 Arden Road, Pasadena
- Location: Flag lot with access driveway located on the north side of Arden Road between Rosalind Road and Cameron Drive
- Date of Construction Completion: 1916 (source: Original Building Permit & Building Description Blank)
- Original Architect: Marston & Van Pelt (source: Original Building Permit)
- Original Builder: Owner-Builder (source: Original Building Permit)
- Original / Present Use: Single-family residence
- Property size: 2 acres (source: County Assessor)
- Building size: 10,290 square feet (source: County Assessor)

Site Features

The property is located on an irregularly-shaped flag lot with driveway access from the north side of Arden Road between Rosalind Road and Cameron Drive. The property contains the 10,290-square-foot, two-story main house as well as accessory structures within the grounds of the property, including entry pilasters and gates at the driveway entrance, a formal garden with a rectangular lily pond accessed by marble steps set into the landscape and marble balustrades defining the perimeter, a marble cistern, a covered koi pond, a tennis court, a swimming pool, an outdoor fireplace and a

freestanding pergola. A long concrete driveway flanked by lawn and dense tree plantings extends from the street to the house, opening to a circular motor court on the west side of the house. The motor court surrounds a circular planter containing a large, mature oak tree that was present at the original construction of the house.

Main House Features

The house is designed in the Italian Renaissance Revival architectural style. It has a hipped roof covered in clay barrel tiles, deep, open eaves with exposed sculpted rafters, smooth stucco walls, and a repeating pattern of wood double-hung windows with some paired casement windows and other groupings on the east and north sides, as well as French doors accessing the multiple outdoor terraces connected to the house. The house has extensive detailing throughout all elevations, including quoins at all corners, a painted wood frieze at the top of the exterior walls, copper gutters and downspouts with sculpted leaderheads, and projecting wood frames around all windows, some of which are pedimented and include framed wood panels below. The house has five matching rectangular stucco-clad chimneys with simple decorative hoods: three along the primary façade and one at each of the north and south side facades.

The primary elevation, which faces west, and the rear, east-facing elevation have generally symmetrical massing presentations, while the north and south side elevations have asymmetrical massing. The primary elevation has a projecting two-story volume accentuating the main entrance, with a pedimented gable roof and a flat-roofed projecting one-story front stoop spanning the width of a pair of windows with quoined detailing above. The gable-end features a relief plaster cartouche surrounding a deeply recessed circular window. The projecting stoop has an arched access opening with a keystone and half-timbering on the west, rectangular openings on the north and south sides and square primary support posts with intermediate Tuscan posts within each opening. Two small gabled dormers, each with a window below a plaster cartouche, flank the central gabled volume described above. Although the main façade is symmetrical, a long projecting wing extends from the north end and is separated from the rest of the façade by a slight recess in the wall plane, a roof break and a quoined engaged pilaster. The main entry, set within the covered stoop, has a framed and keystone arch panel of faux-painted marble, as well as half-timbering above double iron-and-glass doors with matching sidelights divided by engaged pilasters, which lead into an entry vestibule.

The south elevation has a projecting hipped-roof volume at the east with a flat-roofed one-story projection spanning its width and covering a ground-level patio with arched openings that match the design of the front stoop's arched opening. To the south of this elevation is a non-original swimming pool, and beyond that, set within the landscape, are the previously mentioned marble steps and non-original flanking balustrades leading down to a rectangular original lily pond with statuary and fountains surrounded by lawn and a perimeter of shrubs and trees.

The east (rear) elevation of the house is highly symmetrical in presentation. It has a central volume with a recessed wall plane at the second floor and a rounded flat-roofed projecting bay at the first floor flanked by flat, matching wall planes. Flanking the main volume of the house are two matching one-story flat-roofed open patios with arched openings. Adjacent to this side of the house is an uncovered terrace, on which is a relocated original marble cistern, that steps down in elevation to the east and is supported by a retaining wall and balustrade at its east end. Wide communicating stairs with heavy side walls provide access from the terrace to the adjoining lower yard area. Further east is a non-original tennis court and pergola.

The north elevation has a similar asymmetrical presentation and design features to the south elevation described above, except that the flat-roofed open patio is set against the recessed wall plane rather than projecting from the projecting volume. To the north of this façade is a non-original koi pond with a wire mesh domed cover supporting climbing vines.

Documented Changes to the Property

Based on historical photographs provided with the application, the house itself is remarkably intact on both the exterior and interior. The most noticeable alteration to the house is the lack of railings at the upper-level terraces, which occur on all four building elevations. The arched transoms within the rounded east bay and the roofing material also appear to be non-original, although the roofing is a compatible alteration. The overall site has been reduced in size over time; however, the remaining two-acre site retains the open feel of the original large estate grounds. Several new features have been added within the surrounding setting, including a pond within the motor court planter; a swimming pool, outdoor fireplace and balustrade to the south of the house; a tennis court and pergola to the east of the house; and a covered koi pond to the north of the house. An original marble cistern was relocated from the south side of the house to the east, likely when the swimming pool was constructed. The driveway leading to the house was wider in historical photographs and included a raised curb at the edge. In addition, the four freestanding pilasters flanking the entry to the site were originally open; a wrought iron gate was added in the early 1920's.

Current Conditions, Use, and Proposed Plans

The building is in relatively good condition and currently being prepared for occupancy by the recent owners after being vacant for an extended period of time, including waterproofing, repairs and building systems upgrades. No significant changes to the property are proposed at this time. The owners have applied for Historic Property Contract (Mills Act) concurrent with this application.

Historical Overview

Residential Period Revival Architecture & Development in Pasadena (1915–1942)

In 2004, the City conducted a study of Residential Period Revival Architecture and Development in Pasadena from 1915 and 1942, authored by City staff member Mary Jo Winder and architectural historian Teresa Grimes (who, incidentally, is the applicant representing the owner for this proposed designation). The study included the development of a Historic Context Report and a Citywide survey in which the most significant eight groupings of houses were identified as being eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as historic districts. Two of the historic districts that were identified in that study have since been designated by the City Council, including the western half of the Rose Villa-Oakdale Landmark District and the Wotkyns-Richland Landmark District, and one, Marguerita Lane, has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Individually eligible houses for further study were also identified.

The Historic Context Report for this period briefly outlines the development of Pasadena prior to 1915, including: the Spanish Mission period and subsequent land grants prior to 1974; land speculation and the railroad that caused a building boom in the late 1880s; the growth of industry, tourism and the arts in the 1890s; and the Arts and Crafts period in the early 1900's. A newer generation of architects began to come to prominence following the Arts & Crafts period and created new designs that referenced elements of classical American architectural styles in the early portion of the period, while the later portion of the period was more strongly influenced by "Italian, Spanish and California Colonial styles."

The "Development of Pasadena & Key Influences" section of the Cultural Resources of the Recent Past Historic Context Report describes the context in which Period Revival Architecture and the City Beautiful Movement gained in popularity:

"Following the First World War, as enthusiasm for the Arts & Crafts movement waned, Pasadenans turned to Period Revival styles for their homes and major civic buildings. The wealthy population continued to draw some of the most prominent architects of the period to work in Pasadena, ensuring that the City would continue to be a place where trends in California architecture happened. Along with Santa Barbara, Pasadena emerged as a major center of Mediterranean Revival design.

The use of architectural elements and designs indigenous to the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea first emerged in the late 19th century and played an important role in the search for a regional architecture for Southern California because of similarities in landscape and climate. Local residents were also attracted to the Mediterranean Revival as a way to identify with California's Spanish and Mexican past. This trend is exemplified by the 1915 San Diego Panama-California Exposition.

This resulted in a proliferation of the style by some of the period's most renowned architects, known loosely as the California school. Architects such as Gordon Kaufman, Myron Hunt, Reginald Johnson, Roland Coate, and Wallace Neff worked to capture the uniqueness of California as a place by using traditional influences in innovative ways. [Their's was] a prodigious output of graceful, picturesque structures with red tile roofs, thick walls, and plain stuccoed surfaces.”

Italian Renaissance Revival Style

The Period Revival Historic Context Report identifies the Italian Renaissance Revival Style as a significant architectural style from this period. As the name suggests, the style is “based on the architecture of Italy, with additional elements borrowed from Ancient Greek and Roman architecture.” The style was prevalent in Pasadena in two distinct phases: between 1890 and 1915, the style was applied to large estates that were highly decorated and from 1915 to 1930, the buildings became more refined in their detailing.

Early 20th Century Italian Renaissance Revival style single-family residences are found in four principal subtypes: simple hipped roof, hipped roof with projecting wing(s), asymmetrical and flat roof subtypes. The subtype represented by the Jewett Estate/Arden Villa is the hipped roof with projecting wings subtype. Character-defining features of this subtype are:

- Hipped roof form with clay tile
- Wide eaves supported by brackets
- Symmetrical front facades, less commonly with small central wing projecting from the front façade or two small wings at either end of the façade with a recessed central block in between
- Smooth, modulated or textured stucco walls
- Prominent entry bay with column or pilaster surrounds and distinctive classical detailing
- Round arches above doors, first-story windows or porches
- Recessed windows that are smaller and less elaborately detailed at the second floor
- Stucco chimneys (plain, hooded, or with chimney pots)
- Use of quoins and other classical detailing

Character-defining features are those visual aspects and physical features or elements constructed during the property's period of significance that give the building its character. In general, a property that retains its character-defining features continues to convey its significance and therefore retains integrity as an historic resource. Removal or alteration of just one character-defining feature does not necessarily alter the integrity of an historic resource. Impacts to historic integrity can result from a single major change or from many incremental changes over time.

Marston & Van Pelt, Architects

The partnership of Sylvanus Marston (1883-1946) and Garrett Van Pelt (1879-1972) was founded in 1914 and was highly influential in the region in the Period Revival era. Marston was schooled at Pomona College and Cornell University and started his own architectural firm in Pasadena in 1908 after training with another regionally significant architect, Myron Hunt. Van Pelt was trained at the Art Institute of Chicago and regularly visited Pasadena, moving permanently in 1913. He worked for Marston as a draftsman and then became a partner in the firm in 1914. Edgar Maybury (1889-1969) joined the firm in 1923 and Van Pelt left the firm in 1927. The firm in its various forms produced some of the most significant works of period revival architecture, in many of the significant architectural styles from the period, throughout the region. In Pasadena alone, 42 buildings by the firm are identified in the City's database, many of which have been designated historic or determined eligible for designation. These include three other houses on Arden Road within the recently designated Arden Road Landmark District; the Home Laundry at 432 S. Arroyo Parkway, the First Church of Christ Scientist at 550 E. Green Street, the Hill Avenue Library at 55 S. Hill Avenue, the Pasadena YMCA at 235 E. Holly Street, the Grace Nicholson Building (now Pacific Asia Museum) at 46 N. Los Robles Avenue, the American Legion Building at 123 N. Marengo Avenue, the Turner & Stevens Company Building at 95 N. Marengo Avenue and the Vista del Arroyo Hotel (now United States Court of Appeals) at 125 S. Grand Avenue. While most of Marston & Van Pelt's work occurred in Pasadena, a list of their work in Sylvanus Marston: Pasadena's Quintessential Architect by Kathleen Tuttle, 2001, includes works in South Pasadena, Altadena, Los Angeles, San Gabriel, San Dimas, San Marino, Inglewood, La Canada, Pomona, Sierra Madre, Beverly Hills, North Hollywood, Chino, Alhambra and Tustin.

William Kennon and Patty Stuart Jewett

The original owners that commissioned the design and construction of the house were William Kennon and Patty Stuart Jewett. The applicant's report in Attachment B provides extensive detail about the lives and histories of the original owners, who lived in Colorado and spent winters in Pasadena before moving here permanently in 1917. William Jewett was the heir to a railroad fortune and became a railroad and mining mogul himself in New York, Connecticut and, ultimately, Colorado. He was retired when he and his wife Patty, a collector of native American art, moved to Pasadena permanently. Jewett was a member of several local organizations and was also known as a philanthropist.

ANALYSIS:

The Jewett Estate/Arden Villa at 1145 Arden Road is eligible for designation as a historic monument under Criterion C of PMC Section 17.62.040.C.2, which states:

[The property] 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.

Generally, in order to qualify under Criterion C, a property would display most of the character-defining features of its property type or style. It must retain high integrity of design, materials and workmanship that convey its period of construction. While most buildings undergo alteration over time, these alterations should not significantly change the historic appearance of the building.

Under Criterion C, The Jewett Estate/Arden Villa is significant because it is an exceptional representation of the Italian Renaissance Revival architectural style. The property has architectural integrity (its ability to demonstrate why it is significant) through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and feeling as follows:

- Location: The house is in its original location.
- Design: The house retains its original form, plan, space, structure, and style, as described above including its exterior stucco cladding, original fenestration, roof forms, entry volume and architectural detailing.
- Setting: Although parts of the property have been subdivided and developed for single-family housing, the large two-acre lot that remains retains a strong sense of the original expansive estate grounds. In addition, several of the original site features within the estate's setting remain intact including the entry progression of pilasters/gates and long driveway, the circular motor court surrounding a planter with a mature tree and a formal garden with lily pond, statuary and access stairs.
- Materials: The building retains the vast majority of its original exterior materials.
- Workmanship: The building retains the majority of its exterior materials and features that reflect the craftsmanship of early-20th century single-family residential design and construction, and therefore retains integrity of workmanship.
- Feeling: The property clearly expresses the characteristics of the Italian Renaissance Revival architectural style and evokes the feeling of the early Period Revival architectural history of Pasadena.

The property lacks integrity of association as described below:

- Association: "Association" is defined as "the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property." This aspect of integrity does not apply to the property because it is not significant as the location of a historical event or person.

The property is also significant under this Criterion as an exceptional example of the work of Marston & Van Pelt, an architectural firm that is significant to the region.

Based on the above, staff finds that the property retains sufficient integrity to qualify for designation as a historic monument under Criterion C.

Contributing structures to this designation include: the main house; open setting surrounding the house; entry progression including pilasters, gates, driveway, motor court, circular planter and mature tree; the formal garden including lily pond, steps and statuary; the relocated cistern and the east terrace.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The General Plan Land Use Element – Guiding Principle 2: “Pasadena’s historic resources will be preserved. Citywide, new development will be in harmony with and enhance Pasadena’s unique character and sense of place. New construction that could affect the integrity of historic resources will be compatible with, and differentiated from, the existing resource;” and Goal 8: “Preservation and enhancement of Pasadena’s cultural and historic buildings, landscapes, streets and districts as valued assets and important representations of its past and a source of community identity, and social, ecological, and economic vitality.”

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The proposed designation qualifies for a categorical exemption pursuant to Section 15308, Class 8 of the CEQA Guidelines. Class 8 exemptions consist 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 historic properties may apply to the City for a Historic Property Contract (Mills Act), 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 the local Mills Act ordinance. As a result of this program, the reduced property tax amount which comes out of the City's local share amount from the State, is a small fraction of the City's overall property tax revenue.

Respectfully submitted,




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STEVE MERMELL
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Attachments (4):

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Application & Supplemental Information
- C. Current Photographs
- D. Effects of Historic Designation