

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: JULY 25, 2005

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF 580 NORTH LAKE AVENUE AS A LANDMARK

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Acknowledge that the designation of a historic resource is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (§15308);
2. As recommended by the Historic Preservation Commission, find that the house at 580 North Lake Avenue is significant under Criterion b for designation as a landmark (P.M.C. §17.62.40 B) because the property has an important association with Charles F. Saunders who was an influential author and naturalist and lived in the house during his productive life.
3. Approve the attached resolution designating 580 North Lake Avenue as a landmark (ATTACHMENT A);
4. Authorize the Mayor to execute the attached declaration of designation (ATTACHMENT B); and
5. Direct the City Clerk to record the declaration with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

On May 16, 2005, at a noticed public hearing, the Historic Preservation Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of the designation of 580 North Lake Avenue as a landmark.

BACKGROUND

The application to designate the property as a landmark was submitted by Robert Kneisel and Dale Trader. The property owners were notified of the application and they appeared at the Historic Preservation Commission on May 16 and spoke in opposition to the designation.

ANALYSIS

SIGNIFICANCE

The Charles Francis Saunders House is significant under Criterion "b" for designation of a historic resource as a landmark because of its association with the life of a person who is significant in the history of Pasadena. Charles Saunders (1859-1941) moved to Pasadena in the early part of the 20th century. His contributions to history is as an author, naturalist, and collector who, as a citizen of Pasadena practiced and promoted ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement, which was a major influence that shaped the development of Pasadena in the early 20th century.

Charles Francis Saunders was born in Bucks County Village, Pennsylvania in 1859 and moved to California in 1906. While he was a resident of Pasadena he became a noted author and naturalist, writing numerous books on topics of the California missions, California and Southwestern U.S. flora and fauna, and Native Americans. His books were widely read, from his first book, "In a Poppy Garden," published in 1904 through the last, "Western Wild Flowers and Their Stories," published in the late 1930s. Many of his books were published in multiple editions. He collected Southwestern Native American pottery, basketry and other items donated by his wife, Mira Culin Saunders, which are a major collection of the Southwest Museum. Documentation of Saunders and his accomplishments are detailed in the landmark application package (Exhibit 1).

ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY

The National Register Bulletin #15 provides guidance for determining if a building has sufficient integrity to qualify for designation. This determination of integrity follows a process that starts with a study of why a property is significant (e.g., because of its design, association of an important person or event). Bulletin #15 states, "(I)ntegrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance." Further guidance in determining integrity is through an evaluation of whether a property possesses some or all seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Knowing which aspect or aspects is important to a property depends on the understanding of why it is significant.

Staff believes architectural integrity of the Saunders house is demonstrated in its *location*, because it is where Saunders lived and wrote; *design and workmanship*, because the house retains its quality of workmanship and bungalow characteristics of the Arts and Crafts movement of which Saunders life in Pasadena reflects; *setting* (not as obvious to determine due to the current Lake Avenue commercial environment), because the house retains its historic site plan and relationship to the street; *materials*, because the house retains most of its original building materials; *feeling*, because it continues to reflect the lifestyle of Saunders and his wife as documented in period photographs and Saunders writings; and *association*, because the property has a documented

direct link to Charles Francis Saunders. Significant character-defining features of the house are documented in the attached description (Exhibit 2).

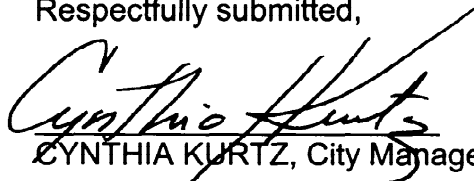
Although the house is unoccupied, fire damaged and in need of repair, staff believes that the property exhibits all the aspects that produce integrity that are required to determine significance. The property's condition and environment have changed over time (Exhibit 3); however, the house and rear yard continue to evoke the life and time of Saunders.

The Charles Francis Saunders House qualifies for landmark designation under Criterion "b" because of its association with the noted Arts and Crafts period author. The house is architecturally intact and is the only known historic resources that associated with Saunders. The property is significant because it was Saunder's residence at the time he was actively contributing to an important period in the history of Pasadena.


FISCAL IMPACT

Designation of a property does not affect revenues to the City. In some instances, though, 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,


CYNTHIA KURTZ, City Manager

Prepared by:


Mary Jo Winder, Senior Planner

Approved by:


Richard Bruckner, Director of Planning & Development

ATTACHMENT A: Resolution
ATTACHMENT B: Declaration
ATTACHMENT C: Photographs

ATTACHMENT A

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASADENA
ADOPTING A DECLARATION OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR 580
NORTH LAKE AVENUE, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA**

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission has found that 580 North Lake Avenue meets criterion b, as set forth in Section 17.62.040(B) of the Pasadena Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the single-family residence 580 North Lake Avenue is significant because it is associated with Charles F. Saunders whose contributions to the cultural history of the City's Arts and Crafts Movement are reflected in the property;

WHEREAS, the designation of the property was submitted by residents of the City, Robert Kneisel and Dale Trader; 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 580 North Lake Avenue is hereby adopted.

Adopted at the _____ meeting of the City Council on the _____ day of _____, 2005 by the following vote:

AYES:

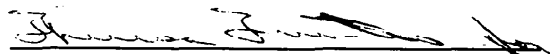
NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Jane Rodriguez, City Clerk

Approved as to form:



Michele Beal Bagneris, City Attorney

ATTACHMENT B

DECLARATION OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR:

**580 NORTH LAKE AVENUE
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA**

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 17.62.070 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:

As per Maps Records of Los Angeles County, WALTER MORROW TRACT LOT COM AT SE CORNER OF LOT TH N ON E LINE OF SD LOT 37.96 FT TH W PARALLEL W N LINE OF SD LOT 88 FT TH N 10 FT TH W PARALLEL W SD N . . . see map book for missing portion . . . beg part of lot 19.

Under Pasadena Municipal Code Section 17.62.090, all work affecting designated historic monuments, 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 Historic Preservation Commission.

DATED: _____

ATTEST:

CITY OF PASADENA
A municipal corporation

Jane Rodriguez, City Clerk

By: _____
Bill Bogaard, Mayor

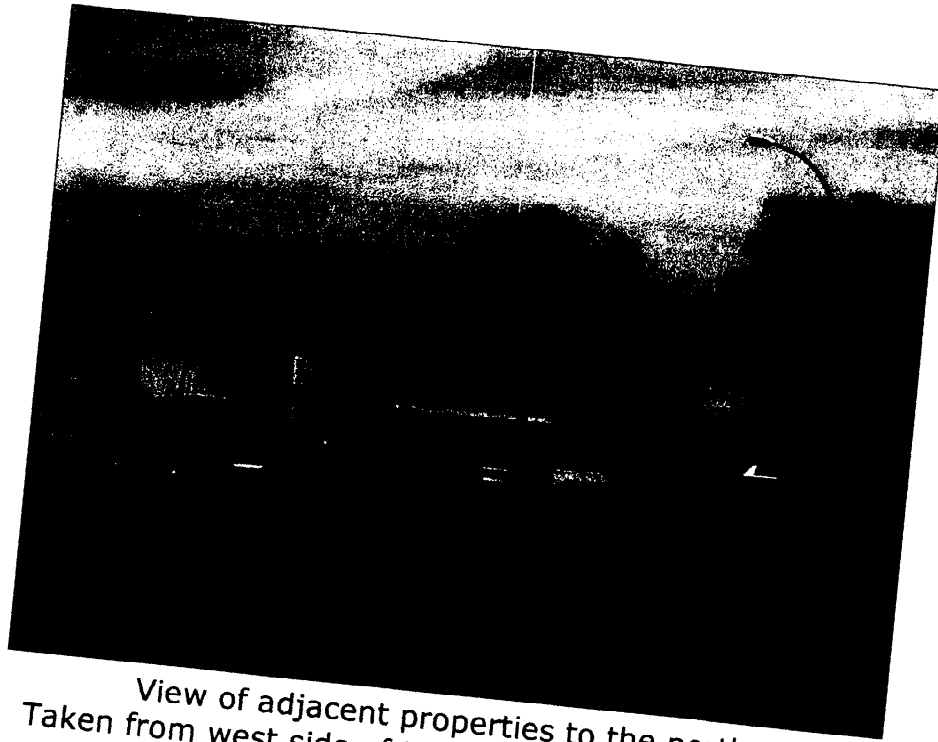
ATTACHMENT C



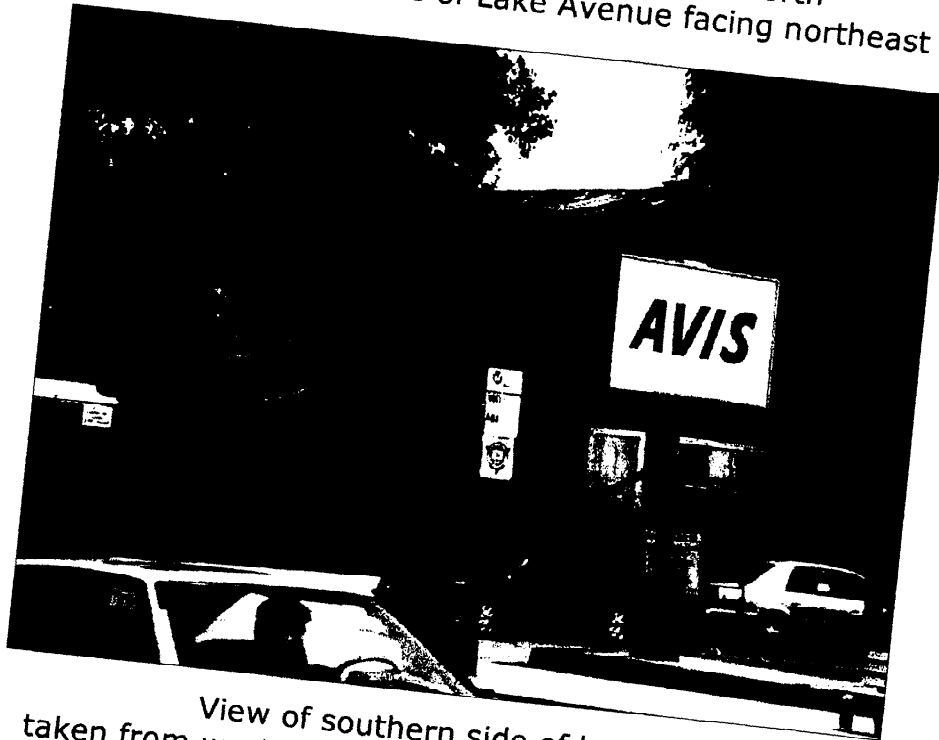
Front view of house from west side of Lake Avenue facing east



View of adjacent properties to the south
Taken from west side of Lake Avenue facing southeast



View of adjacent properties to the north
Taken from west side of Lake Avenue facing northeast



View of southern side of house
taken from west side of Lake Avenue facing northeast