

# Agenda Report

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL

**DATE:** FEBRUARY 6, 2006

**FROM:** CITY MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** DESIGNATION OF 970 LAGUNA ROAD (BANCROFT HOUSE) AS A HISTORIC LANDMARK (COUNCIL DISTRICT 6)

## **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 single-family residence at 970 Laguna Road is significant under Criterion C for designation as a historic landmark (P.M.C. §17.62.40 A) because the property is an exceptional representation of the French Provincial Revival style designed by the architectural firm Van Pelt & Lind.
3. Approve the designation of the property at 970 Laguna Road as a historic landmark.
4. Adopt a resolution approving a Declaration of Historic Landmark Designation for 970 Laguna Road, Pasadena, California;
5. Authorize the Mayor to execute the Declaration of Historic Landmark Designation for 970 Laguna Road, Pasadena, California; and
6. Direct the City Clerk to record the declaration with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

## **RECOMMENDATION FROM THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

On November 7, 2005, at a noticed public hearing, the Historic Preservation Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of the designation of 970 Laguna Road as a historic landmark.

## **BACKGROUND**

On May 2, 2005, staff received an application submitted by owner Hatsue Ishizuka to designate this residence, designed by Garrett Van Pelt and George Lind, as a landmark.

Because of the property's integrity and its importance as an exceptional representation of French Provincial design by the firm of Van Pelt & Lind, this report provides evidence to justify the designation as a historic landmark. The property owners and the Commission have concurred that the property should be designated.

## **DESCRIPTION**

Set mid-block on a hillside parcel with mature trees on Laguna Road, the Bancroft House at 970 Laguna Road is a 1-1/2 story, hipped-roofed, French Provincial Style house originally with a rectangular building footprint. The formal main facade is characterized by a symmetrical arrangement of two pairs of French doors flanking a centered entry. A single gabled dormer over the entry gives prominence to the main door and functions as a decorative extension of its design. The brick façade is accented by a rusticated door surround constructed of wood, full-height window shutters, articulated brick cornice and formal plantings around a paved brick terrace. The original garage, now a studio, is attached to the north side of the house.

The 2,952 square foot house is set on a 12,197 square foot parcel planted with oak trees and California Sycamores. Low brick walls run along the perimeter of the backyard. A four car carport is located at the northeast corner of the property behind the house. The house is largely intact with the exception of some minor exterior alterations which have occurred at the rear of the property, out of view from the public right-of-way.

Non-contributing features include the family room, storage and new second bathroom which were added in 1961. The original garage was converted to studio space and a new covered carport was constructed to the northwest of the house in 1963. A swimming pool was added in 1977. A two car garage replaced the carport in 2005.

## **ANALYSIS**

The Bancroft House at 970 Laguna Road designed by Van Pelt & Lind is significant under criterion "C" because it is a representation of an important architectural style and is a major work by master architects. The architectural firm of Van Pelt & Lind was a talented office known for its skilled interpretations of the various Period Revival Styles popular during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The property at 970 Laguna Road demonstrates Van Pelt & Lind's ability to imbue a small house with the formality and elegance of a large mansion.

The subject property demonstrates that size does not bestow architectural significance. The principles of high style-design are evident in the floor plan and design of the subject property. Built in 1935, the house is a precursor to the development of the style during the early 1940s, when a more elegant one-story

version of the style emerged. These houses were essentially miniature versions of the Staats House (Marston & Van Pelt, 1928) with simple boxy like masses, steeply-pitched hipped roofs, and diamond paned casement windows.

Garrett Beekman Van Pelt is recognized as one of the foremost architects to practice in southern California during the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. He contributed greatly to the architecture of Pasadena individually and through his partnership with Sylvanus Marston, Edgar Maybury, and George Lind.

In the 1930s, Van Pelt formed the firm of Van Pelt and Lind with George Lind. This firm was responsible for much of the Santa Anita Oaks development in Arcadia in the 1930s. They also designed low-cost housing in Palm Springs. Jurgensen's Market in Pasadena was another of their projects. The firm of Van Pelt and Lind folded in 1941 due to the lack of architectural commissions during World War II.

The property at 970 Laguna Road is a significant example of the Period Revival French Provincial Style in Pasadena. The house exhibits fine articulated construction details. Furthermore, the emerging influence of Modernism moved architectural design toward minimalist expressions to traditional designs. Still, the house conveys the formal, elegant setting that would have been desired for the original owner, noted interior designer John Bancroft. The property at 970 Laguna Road provides a superb example of residential architecture and is part of Pasadena's legacy of master works by master architects. Along with the Staats' House, the Bancroft House is the best representative example of the French Provincial Style in Pasadena.

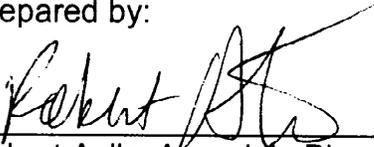
### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Designation of this property does not affect revenues to the City. In some instances, though, owners of designated properties may apply to the City for a 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:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Avila, Associate Planner

Approved by:

JRP   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Bruckner, Director of Planning & Development

ATTACHMENT A: Photographs  
ATTACHMENT B: Resolution / Declaration  
ATTACHMENT C: Nomination Application



**Figure 1--The street elevation of 970 Laguna Road.**

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASADENA  
ADOPTING A DECLARATION OF HISTORIC MONUMENT DESIGNATION  
FOR 970 LAGUNA ROAD, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA**

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission has found that 970 Laguna Road meets Criterion C, as set forth in Section 17.62.040(A) of the Pasadena Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the single-family residence at 970 Laguna Road is significant because the property is an exceptional representation of French Provincial architectural design by the architectural firm, Van Pelt & Lind;

WHEREAS, the owners of the property, Hatsue Ishizuka and Long Chiou, nominated the property for historic monument 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 970 Laguna Road is hereby adopted.

Adopted at the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting of the City Council on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2006 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jane Rodriguez, City Clerk

Approved as to form:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michele Beal Bagneris, City Attorney

**DECLARATION OF HISTORIC MONUMENT DESIGNATION FOR:**

970 LAGUNA ROAD  
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:

(See attached legal description)

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 Historic Preservation Commission.

DATED: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

CITY OF PASADENA  
A municipal corporation

Jane Rodriguez, City Clerk

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Bogaard, Mayor

RECEIVED MAY 0 2005



CITY OF PASADENA  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

APPLICATION TO DESIGNATE A HISTORIC RESOURCE AS  
A HISTORIC MONUMENT OR LANDMARK

§17.52.050 of the Pasadena Municipal Code sets forth a procedure for designating any historic resource in the City as a historic monument or landmark. 1) The process begins with a preliminary evaluation by staff to determine if the nominated property meets the applicable criteria and is eligible for designation. 2) If staff determines that the nominated property is eligible for designation, the nomination is scheduled for a public hearing before the Historic Preservation Commission. 3) The Historic Preservation Commission determines if the historic resource meets the criteria for designation as a historic monument or landmark. If the Commission finds that the nominated resource qualifies for designation, it forwards a recommendation on the designation to the City Council. 4) At a noticed public hearing, the Council then determines whether to approve or deny the request for designation.

PART I. PROPERTY PROPOSED FOR DESIGNATION

1. Name of Property:	
2. Property Address:	970 Laguna Road Pasadena Ca 91105
3. Date of Original Construction	5-29-35
4. Architect / Builder:	Garrett Beekman Van Pelt Jr. / P. J. Ausmus Cent.
5. Present Owner: (Name)	Hatsue Ishizuka, Long Chieu
(Address)	1891 Rockview Ct Menlo Park
(State/ZIP)	Ca. 91754
(Phone/FAX)	213 264-4500 Cell 213 500 2980 Fax 213 617 3988
(E-mail)	lhp@pacbell.net

PART II. APPLICANT

Applicant: (if not property owner)	
(Address)	
(State/ZIP)	
(Phone/FAX)	
(E-mail)	

Date

Signature

PN005-00492

Date received: 8/30/05

Planner: [Signature]

**PART III: TYPE OF DESIGNATION**

**PROPERTY TO BE DESIGNATED AS A:**

<b>HISTORIC MONUMENT</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>LANDMARK</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>A historic monument means any historic resource that is significant at a regional, state or national level, and is an exemplary representation of a particular type of historic resource.</i>	<i>A landmark means any historic resource that is significant at a local level, and is an exemplary representation of a particular type of historic resource.</i>

**PART IV: BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY**

Briefly describe the property proposed for designation, indicating whether the entire site or a portion of the site is the subject of the nomination (e.g., how many buildings on the site). A map may be used for the description. Please also submit recent photographs. Use continuation sheet if necessary.

Refer to continuation sheet, site plan and recent photographs.

French neo classical cottage, French period revival was built in 1935 by Garrett Beekman Van Pelt Jr.

Attached \* Blue print's copy

\* Photos

Assessor's Parcel No: 5717-024-006

**PART V: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION ON SIGNIFICANCE OF PROPERTY.**

With this application, please attach information that will assist staff with the preparation of a designation report. Books, photographs, articles, and other archival information will all be useful to document the significance of the historic resource.

Refer to bibliography, historical photographs, chronology, and other supporting information.

Attached \* Building histories

\* Cultural Resource Studies

\* Historic Resources Surveys

\* Local, State, and National Land marking

\* Historic Preservation and Archival Consulting

## CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

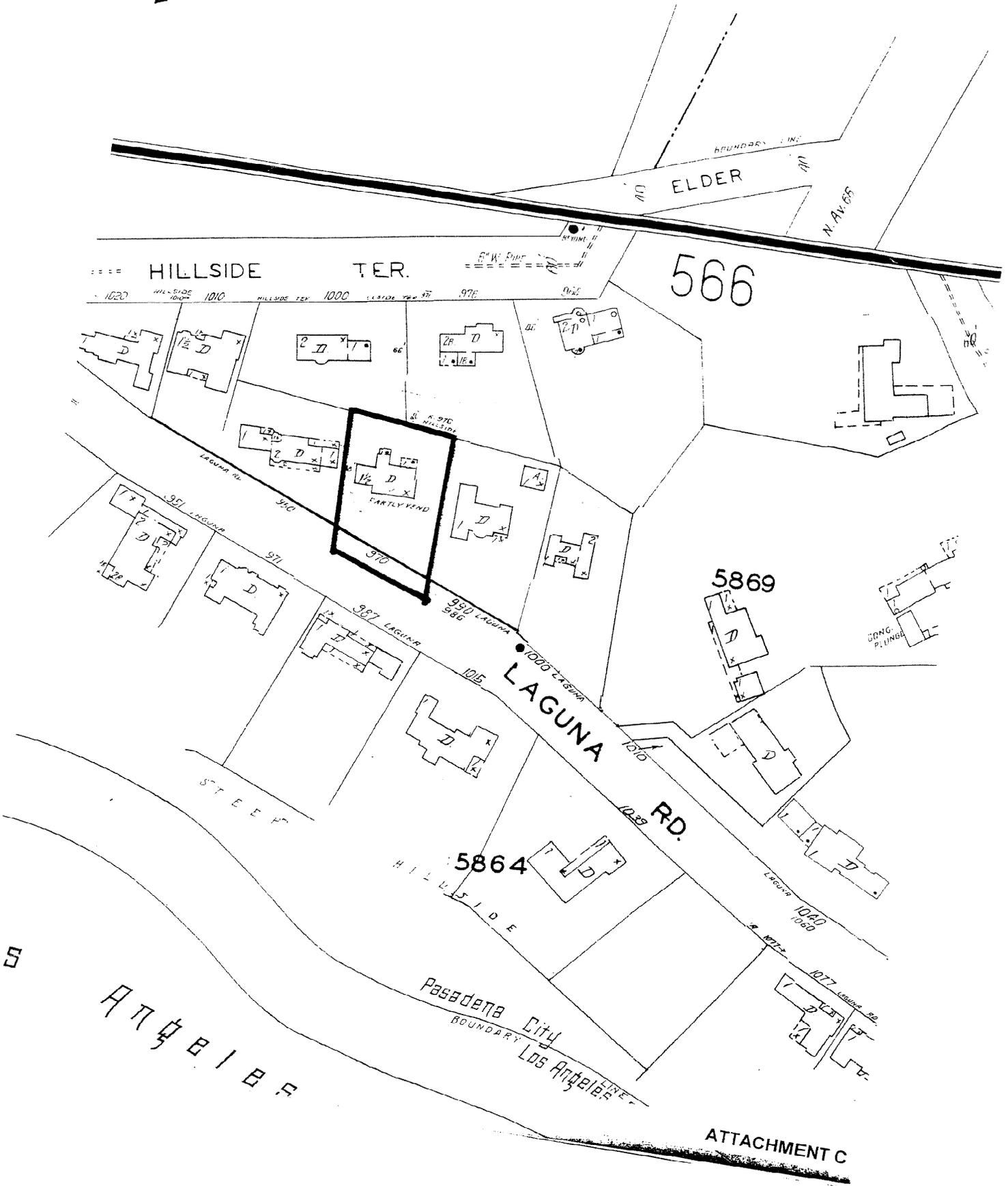
CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING A HISTORIC MONUMENT	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the region, state or nation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. It is associated with the lives of persons who are significant in the history of the region, state or nation.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3. It 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.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history of the region, state or nation.

A historic monument designation may include significant public or semi-public interior spaces and features.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING A HISTORIC LANDMARK	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the city.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. It is associated with the lives of persons who are significant in the history of the city.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a locally significant historic resource property type, architectural style, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder who is locally significant, or that possesses high artistic values that are locally significant.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important locally in prehistory or history.



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ATTACHMENT C