

# Agenda Report

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL

**DATE:** DECEMBER 3, 2007

**FROM:** CITY MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** ADOPTION OF A ZONE CHANGE TO DESIGNATE A LANDMARK DISTRICT OVERLAY FOR THE HISTORIC HIGHLANDS LANDMARK DISTRICT (LD-16)

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that, following a public hearing, the City Council:

1. Find that the application for a zone change to establish a landmark district is categorically exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act, (Class 8, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment).
2. Find that the proposed zone change is consistent with the General Plan and the purposes of the zoning ordinance.
3. Acknowledge the decision of the Historic Preservation Commission on October 1, 2007 that the proposed Historic Highlands Landmark District (Attachment A) meets the criteria for designation as a landmark district, (§17.62.040 E. P.M.C).
4. Acknowledge that the petition with signatures in support of the landmark overlay district petition exceeds the 51 percent requirement in P.M.C. §17.62.070 D.
5. Based on these findings, approve the landmark district and the zoning map overlay for the Historic Highlands Landmark District, LD-16.
6. Direct the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance within 60 days amending the official zoning map of the City of Pasadena established by Section 17.20.020 of the Pasadena Municipal Code to designate the landmark district with the LD-16 overlay zone.

## **RECOMMENDATION FROM HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

At a public hearing on October 1, 2006, the Historic Preservation Commission determined that the proposed landmark district meets the criteria for designation in §17.62.040 P.M.C. and unanimously recommended approval of the designation.

## **RECOMMENDATION FROM PLANNING COMMISSION**

Following a public hearing on October 24, 2007, the Planning Commission found that the proposed zone change to create a landmark district is consistent with the General Plan and the purposes of the zoning ordinance and voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council approve designation of the Historic Highlands Landmark District.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This application was initiated by area property owners, 63% of whom have signed a petition in support of landmark district designation. This application affects 483 properties roughly bound by North Lake Avenue, East Washington Boulevard, North Holliston Avenue and the northern city limit. The district has a locally significant collection of residential architectural styles from 1885 - 1953. Several of the houses in the district were designed by some of the City's most prominent architects of the era and 82% of the properties have houses from this era that are still intact on the exterior.

## **BACKGROUND**

Since 1989, the City has designated fifteen landmark districts: Bungalow Heaven, Garfield Heights, Banbury Oaks, Washington Square, South Oakland, Ross Grove, Normandie Heights, Crawfords Vista, Governor Markham, Holliston Avenue, South Madison Avenue, Bellefontaine, South Hudson Avenue, North Pasadena Heights and Tournament Fields. Amy Richards, representing the Historic Highlands Neighborhood Association, submitted this application for a landmark district designation.

If the City Council approves the designation, alterations to the exterior of houses, new construction visible from the public right-of-way and demolition will be subject to architectural review and compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings and with the City's *Design Guidelines for Historic Districts*.

## **ANALYSIS**

**Construction Dates:** The significant properties in the proposed district were constructed between 1885 and 1953. Thirteen buildings were constructed after 1953.

Architectural Styles: The representative styles are good-to-excellent examples of the period and include: Craftsman Bungalow, English vernacular, Colonial Revival, Prairie, Spanish Revival and Minimal Traditional as well as one example of Queen Anne.

Eligibility for Landmark District: With 82% of the properties documented as contributing, the district has a high level of architectural and historic integrity. This percentage of contributing properties exceeds the 60% threshold in the zoning code and satisfies the designation requirement for a grouping of properties “of citywide importance.”

Guidelines: The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings are used city-wide for all reviews affecting historic properties. In addition, the *Design Guidelines for Historic Districts*, adopted by the City Council in 2002, apply to reviews of all projects in residential historic districts. These guidelines, developed with the participation of local residents, are an elaboration of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, and they have examples and illustrations targeting local conditions.

Boundaries: This proposed district is roughly bound by North Lake Avenue on the west, East Washington Boulevard on the south, North Holliston Avenue on the east and the northern city limit.

## **GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING CONSISTENCY**

The majority of the area is designated as low-density residential. The proposed landmark designation is consistent with the General Plan and will advance the objectives of the Land Use Element, e.g., Objective 6, which “promotes preservation of historically and architecturally significant buildings and revitalization of traditional neighborhoods.” The district is immediately north of the Bungalow Heaven Landmark District.

The zoning of the area is largely RS-6 – Single-family residential. Properties on North Lake Avenue between Howard and Elizabeth Streets, as well as the properties on East Washington Boulevard, are in the North Lake Specific Plan. The properties on North Lake Avenue north of Elizabeth Street are zoned RM-16 – Multi-family residential. The LD-16 zone is proposed as an overlay over the current zoning. The application is consistent with the purposes of the zoning ordinance, which includes several goals to preserve residential neighborhoods.

## **PUBLIC MEETINGS**

All property owners inside the boundaries of the proposed district received notices of the public hearings before the Historic Preservation Commission, the Planning Commission, and the City Council.

**ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

This zone change application is categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act, (Class 8, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment).

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The City's General Fee Schedule exempts fees for design review in landmark and historic districts (a total of 24 districts). Fees will continue to be collected for all other entitlements, plan checks, permits, and taxes. Staff expects an average of 20 applications per year for a district of this size.

Properties in landmark districts are eligible for the City's Historic Property Contract program; however, the code limits city-wide the number of Historic Property Contracts that may be approved in a given year to 20 residential properties.

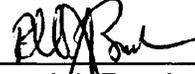
Respectfully submitted,

  
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City Manager

Prepared by:

  
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Planner

Approved by:

  
Richard J. Bruckner  
Director Planning and Development

Attachments:

- A. Map of Proposed Landmark District
- B. Map of Contributing/Non-Contributing Properties
- C. Map of Signatures
- D. Inventory of Properties