

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: AUGUST 11, 2008

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF A ZONE CHANGE TO DESIGNATE A LANDMARK DISTRICT OVERLAY FOR THE MARENGO—PICO LANDMARK DISTRICT (LD-17)

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 that the proposed Marengo-Pico Landmark District (Attachment A) meets the criteria for designation as a landmark district, (§17.62.040 F. P.M.C) and the decision of the Planning Commission that the proposed district is consistent with the General Plan (Objective 6 of the Land-use Element, "to promote preservation of historically and architecturally significant buildings and revitalization of traditional neighborhoods.") and the purposes of the zoning ordinance (P.M.C. §17.04.030, "preserve the character and quality of residential neighborhoods");
4. Acknowledge that signatures from property owners in support of the landmark overlay district petition exceed the 51 percent requirement in P.M.C. §17.62.070 D;
5. Find that the number of contributing properties in the proposed Marengo-Pico Landmark District exceeds the 60% threshold in the zoning code and satisfies the designation requirement for a grouping of properties "of citywide importance" according to National Register Bulletin 15 for evaluating historic properties;

6. Find the proposed Marengo-Pico Landmark District meets the criteria for designation as a Landmark District and to approve the landmark district designation and the zoning map overlay for the Marengo—Pico Landmark District, LD-17; and
7. Direct the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance within 60 days amending the official zoning map of the City of Pasadena established by §17.20.020 of the Pasadena Municipal Code to designate the landmark district with the LD-17 overlay zone.

RECOMMENDATION FROM HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION:

At a public hearing on May 5, 2008, the Historic Preservation Commission determined that the proposed Marengo-Pico 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 June 25, 2008, 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 code and voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council approve designation of the Marengo-Pico landmark district.

BACKGROUND:

Since 1989, the City has designated sixteen 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 Tournament Fields, and Historic Highlands. On February 4, 2008, the City received three applications for landmark designation. Because the three properties are close to one another and owned by a single individual, staff determined that these properties, and three additional adjacent properties, could constitute a landmark district. Staff contacted property owners of the adjacent parcels, who expressed support for the designation. This application affects six properties bound by East California Boulevard, South Marengo Avenue, Pico Street and Pincher Alley. The district has a locally significant collection of residential architectural styles from 1908-1920. It also has one example of commercial architecture: the former studio of locally prominent architect Wallace Neff.

ANALYSIS

Construction Dates: The significant properties in the proposed district were constructed between 1908 and 1927.

Architectural Styles: The representative styles are good examples of the period and include: Craftsman Bungalow as well as one example of Monterey Colonial Revival.

Eligibility for Landmark District: With 83% 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.”

GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING CONSISTENCY

The proposed area is designated as medium-high 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 south of the South Marengo National Register District.

The zoning of the area is RM—32 (Multi—family Residential, 32 dwelling units per acre). The LD-17 zone is proposed as an overlay to the current zoning. The application is consistent with the purposes of the zoning ordinance, which includes several goals to preserve residential neighborhoods.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

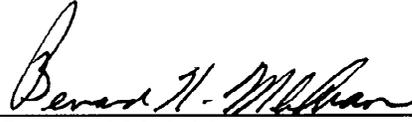
All property owners inside the boundaries of the proposed district received notices of the public hearings before the Historic Preservation Commission, the Planning Commission, and the City Council.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The City's General Fee Schedule exempts fees for design review in landmark and historic districts (a total of 26 districts). Fees will continue to be collected for all other entitlements, plan checks, permits, and taxes.

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,



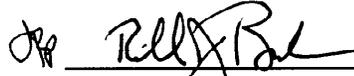
Bernard Melekian
City Manager

Prepared by:



Vicrim Chima
Assistant Planner

Approved by:



Richard J. Bruckner
Director Planning and Development

Attachments:

- A. Map of Proposed Landmark District
- B. Chart of Contributing/Non-Contributing Properties
- C. Letters of support