

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** JANUARY 28, 2008
FROM: CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF 1577 OLD HOUSE ROAD 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 under Class 8, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment (CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, §15308);
2. As recommended by the Historic Preservation Commission, find that the property at 1577 Old House Road is significant under Criteria A and C for designation as a landmark (P.M.C. §17.62.40 C) because the house is the only existing structure associated with the Sierra Madre Villa Hotel (1877-1894) and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an early settlement farmhouse;
3. Approve the designation of the property at 1577 Old House Road as a landmark.
4. Adopt a resolution approving a Declaration of Landmark Designation for 1577 Old House Road, Pasadena, California;
5. Authorize the Mayor to execute the Declaration of Landmark Designation for 1577 Old House 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 December 3, 2007, at a noticed public hearing, the Historic Preservation Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of the designation of 1577 Old House Road as a landmark.

BACKGROUND

On October 2, 2007, property owners Michael and Marcia Coppess submitted an application for landmark designation of their house at 1577 Old House Rd. The staff evaluated the property according to the landmark criteria in Title 17 of the P.M.C., and the staff and the Historic Preservation Commission have concurred that the property should be designated as a landmark.

DESCRIPTION

The 0.6 acre property is located on Old House Road, east of Sierra Madre Villa Avenue, in the northeastern corner of the city. Old House Road is a winding street that connects with Sierra Madre Villa Avenue; the house is the only one of its age nestled into the wooded hillside. Built in 1877, the one-and-a-half story house is rectangular in plan, with a large front yard and oriented with its primary elevation facing southwest. According to historical stereographs, the house was part of an original grouping of structures on the hillside related to the Sierra Madre Villa Hotel, including the hotel itself and the owner's residence.

The 2,400 square-foot one-and-a-half story house at 1577 Old House Rd. exhibits many of the character-defining features of early settlement farmhouses including its symmetrical façade, its drop siding, and its covered front porch. The wood windows flanking the original wood front door have painted shutters and a six-over-six light pattern. The steeply pitched roof, covered with composition shingles, has boxed cornices. Twin dormers, built sometime after 1953 and set into the original roof, have wood windows that match the light pattern on the original first-story windows. A reconstructed front porch extends along the façade of the original structure, with spaced, detailed columns and a low wood-slatted balustrade with a gate.

The house has undergone several alterations and additions, most of which are non-contributing to the property. The landscaping, fencing, and stonework in the front yard were not part of the original design for the site, and the pool and auxiliary structure on the northwest portion of the property were built decades after the original house – none of these site features are considered contributing to the historic character of the property. There are additions to the side (northwest and southeast elevations), as well as a large addition to the rear (north elevation) of the house. These additions, as well as the dormers, are also non-contributing features because they were built well after the original construction and were not part of the plan for the house.

Both the original façade of the house and the reconstructed front porch have retained their architectural integrity, a required finding for historic designation.

HISTORY

The house is the only structure that remains from the Sierra Madre Villa Hotel. The Hotel was the first of its kind in Southern California.¹ In 1874, William Rhoades and William Cogswell purchased 473 acres of the old Rancho Santa Anita, eventually planting the hillsides with flowers and orange groves. In 1877, they built a 70-room hotel, with a glass veranda, on the property.

Newspaper articles, interviews, and photographs document the use of the house as a laundry and employee housing for the hotel. Around 1900, other hotels had been built nearer the center of the city, and the Sierra Madre Villa Hotel became obsolete in its remote location. The property was divided and sold off in the 1920's.² The "Old House" has been the only remaining structure from the hotel since the late 1940's.

ANALYSIS

The property at 1577 Old House Road is eligible for designation under Criterion A, (§17.62.040 PMC): "[The property] is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the City, region, or State."

Under this criterion, it is significant as the only remaining structure associated with the Sierra Madre Villa Hotel. Mentioned in a historic context report of the city, the hotel is recognized as the first of such structures built in Pasadena, and it contributed to the City's development as a tourist destination for Easterners.³

The property is also eligible for designation under Criterion C, (§17.62.040 PMC):

(The property) embodies the distinctive characteristics of a historic resource property type, period, architectural style or method of construction, or is an exceptional representation of the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose work is significant to the city, or that possesses high artistic values that are significant to the city.

Under this criterion, the house at 1577 Old House Road is significant as an intact example of the early settlement farmhouse style. It has architectural integrity (its ability to demonstrate why it is significant) through its location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship. "Through the whole of the [19th] century, the California farmhouse embodied the colonial tradition of a plain, clapboard frame

¹ Anne Scheid. *Pasadena: Crown of the Valley* (Northridge: Windsor, 1986)

² "The End of an Era." *The View From Sierra Madre* Sep. 1973.

³ "Architectural/Historic Development of the City of Pasadena." Historic Context/Property Type Report, 1993

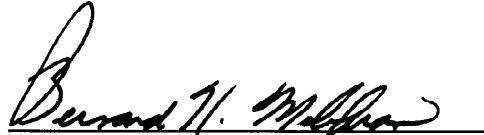
structure with a piazza along the front or at the side.”⁴ The original house is characteristic of this description with its prominent front porch, frame structure, and plain wood siding.

The house is a largely intact example of the early settlement farmhouse style. The rest of the site has been redeveloped over time from the orange groves of the original Hotel, to the grounds of a sanitarium, and finally subdivided for lots for individual residences. Although the house and its setting have been heavily altered, the property is still eligible for designation as one of few surviving structures of its age and style in the city.

FISCAL IMPACT

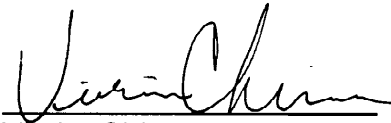
Designation of this property does not affect revenues to the City. In some instances, though, owners of designated properties may apply to the City for a Historic Property Contract, which allows an alternative and often lower property tax assessment. The City Council reviewed the projected loss of property tax revenue from this program in 2002 when it adopted a local Historic Property Contract (Mills Act) ordinance.

Respectfully submitted,



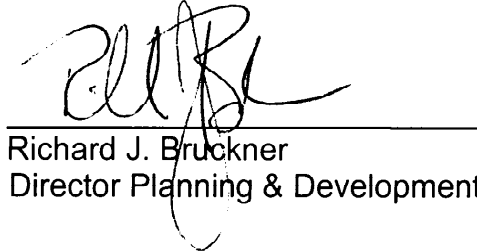
Bernard K. Melekian
City Manager

Prepared by:



Vicrim Chima
Assistant Planner

Approved by:



Richard J. Bruckner
Director Planning & Development

- ATTACHMENT A: Application
- ATTACHMENT B: Excerpts from Report on Property by Tim Gregory
- ATTACHMENT C: Photographs
- ATTACHMENT D: Effects of Landmark Designation

⁴ Kirker, Pg. 59

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASADENA ADOPTING A DECLARATION OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR 1577 OLD HOUSE ROAD, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission has found that 1577 Old House Road meets criterion c, as set forth in Section 17.62.040(C) of the Pasadena Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the house at 1577 Old House Road is significant under Criteria A and C for designation as a landmark (P.M.C. §17.62.40 C) because the house is the only extant structure associated with the Sierra Madre Villa Hotel (1877-1894) and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an early settlement farmhouse;

WHEREAS, the application for Landmark designation is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15331;

WHEREAS, the owners of the property, Michael and Marcia Coppess, nominated the property for Landmark 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 1577 Old House Road is hereby adopted.

Adopted at the _____ meeting of the City Council on the _____ day of _____, 2007 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Jane Rodriguez, City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Theresa Fuentes, City Attorney

DECLARATION OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR:

1577 OLD HOUSE 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 Exhibits "A" & "B")

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 Planning Director or City of Pasadena Historic Preservation Commission.

DATED: _____

ATTEST:

CITY OF PASADENA
A municipal corporation

By:

Jane Rodriguez, City Clerk

Bill Bogaard, Mayor

EXHIBIT "A"

PARCEL 1:

The westerly 157.65 feet of the southerly 181.87 feet of those portions of the Rancho Santa Anita, in the City of Pasadena, County of Los Angeles, State of California, as per map recorded in Book 1 Pages 97 and 98 of Patents, in the office of the County Recorder of said county, described as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the northerly line of Murray Hill Road as shown on Record of Surveys map filed in Book 59 Pages 1 and 2 of Record of Surveys, in the office of the County Recorder of said county, with the southwesterly prolongation of the southeasterly line of the land described in the deed of Iva A. Shirley, recorded in Book 31340 Page 76, Official Records, said intersection being distant along said northerly line and its northwesterly prolongation South 68 degrees 11 minutes 36 seconds East 338.44 feet; more or less, from the center line of Sierra Madre Villa Avenue, 40 feet wide, as shown on said record of survey map; thence along said southwesterly prolongation and southeasterly line, being a line which extends South 21 degrees 48 minutes 25 seconds West from the southwesterly terminus of that course described as "South 5 degrees 43 minutes 55 seconds" East 100 feet in the deed to Alfred T. Murray and wife, recorded in Book 21755 Page 416, Official Records, North 21 degrees 48 minutes 25 seconds East 295.12 feet to a point distant South 21 degrees 48 minutes 25 seconds West 30 feet thereon from said southwesterly terminus; thence South 65 degrees 11 minutes 35 seconds East 45 feet; thence South 47 degrees 46 minutes 00 seconds East 116.88 feet to the easterly line of the land described in said deed to Murray; thence along said easterly line South 5 degrees 43 minutes 55 seconds East 50 feet; thence South 21 degrees 48 minutes 25 seconds West 210 feet to the said northerly line of Murray Hill Road thence along said northerly line North 68 degrees 11 minutes 35 seconds West 177.65 feet to the Point of Beginning.

PARCEL 2:

The southerly 25 feet of that portion of Rancho Santa Anita, in the City of Pasadena, County of Los Angeles, State of California, as per map recorded in Book 1 Pages 97 and 98 of Patents, in the office of the County Recorder of said county, described as follows:

Beginning at a point that is South 21 degrees 48 minutes 25 seconds West 30 feet from the southeasterly corner of the land described in the deed to Mesa Mutual Water Company, recorded in Book 24785, Page 118, Official Records; thence South 68 degrees 11 minutes 35 seconds East 45 feet; thence South 47 degrees 46 minutes East 116.88 feet; thence South 5 degrees 43 minutes 55 seconds East 50 feet thence South 21 degrees 43 minutes 25 seconds West 231.73 feet to a line that is parallel with the southerly line of Lot 20 as shown on Record of Survey map filed in Book 59 Page 1, Record of Surveys, in the office of the County Recorder and 425 feet northerly from it, thence along said parallel line North 68 degrees 11 minutes 35 seconds West 25.49 feet to the beginning of a tangent curve concave to the south, having a radius of 40 feet and being tangent to the westerly line of said Lot 20; thence westerly along said curve to its intersection with a line that is parallel with the southerly line of lot 15 as shown on said map and 250 feet northerly from it, said land being the center line of Murray Hill Road, as shown on said

map; thence along said parallel line North 68 degrees 11 minutes 35 seconds West to a point that is South 21 degrees 48 minutes 25 seconds West from the point of beginning; thence North 21 degrees 48 minutes 25 seconds East 320.12 feet to the Point of Beginning.

A metes and bounds legal description for informational purposes is described as follows:

That portion of Lot 55 as shown on the Official Map of a portion of the City of Pasadena, in the City of Pasadena, County of Los Angeles, State of California, as per map recorded in Book 4, Pages 34 and 39 of Official Maps, in the office of the County Recorder of said county, described as follows:

BEGINNING at the most westerly corner of said Lot 55;

Thence northeasterly along the northwesterly line of said Lot 55 North 21°48'25" East, 206.87 feet to a line parallel with and 206.87 feet northeasterly of the southwesterly line of said Lot 55;

Thence southeasterly along said parallel line South 68°11'35" East, 157.65 feet to a line parallel with and 157.65 feet southeasterly of said northwesterly line of Lot 55;

Thence southwesterly along said parallel line South 21°48'25" West, 178.60 feet to the northerly line of Old House Road, 50 feet wide, as shown on said Official Map;

Thence westerly along said northerly line North 68°11'35" West, 5.49 feet to the beginning of a curve, concave southeasterly, having a radius of 65.00 feet;

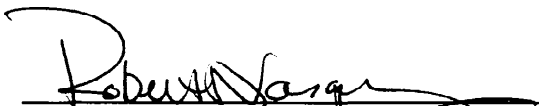
Thence westerly 63.07 feet along said curve through a central angle of 55°35'33" to the southwesterly line of said Lot 55;

Thence northwesterly along said southwesterly line North 68°11'35" West 98.53 feet to the **POINT OF BEGINNING**.

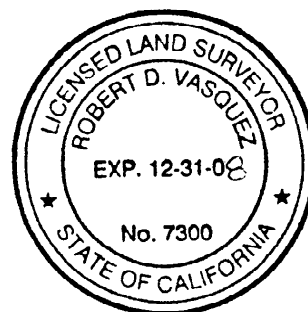
The above-described parcel of land contains approximately 31,393 square feet (0.721 acres) more or less.

As shown on Exhibit "B" attached herewith and made a part hereof.

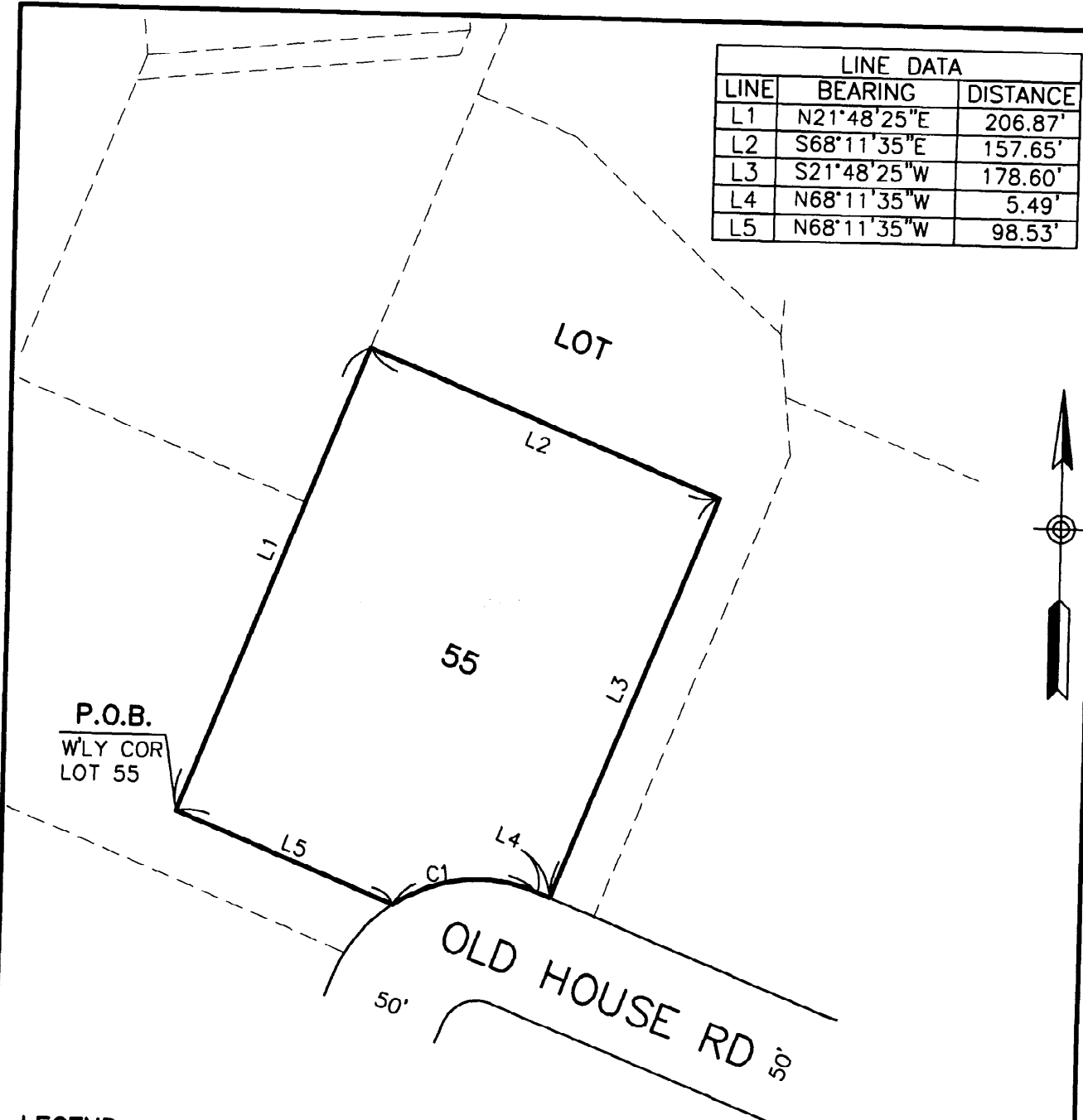
This real property description has been prepared by me,
or under my direction, in conformance with the Professional
Land Surveyors Act.


Robert D. Vasquez, P.L.S. 7300
Expires 12/31/08



Date: 12/10/07



LINE DATA		
LINE	BEARING	DISTANCE
L1	N21°48'25"E	206.87'
L2	S68°11'35"E	157.65'
L3	S21°48'25"W	178.60'
L4	N68°11'35"W	5.49'
L5	N68°11'35"W	98.53'



LEGEND

-  LIMITS OF PROPERTY
-  P.O.B. POINT OF BEGINNING
- AREA = 31,393 S.F.±

CURVE DATA			
CURVE	DELTA	RADIUS	LENGTH
C1	55°35'33"	65.00'	63.07'

DAVID EVANS AND ASSOCIATES INC.
 4200 Conours, Suite 200
 Ontario California 91764
 TEL:(909)481-5750 FAX:(909)481-5757

EXHIBIT "B"

1577 OLD HOUSE ROAD
 5759-002-016 & 018
 CITY OF PASADENA
 COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
 STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SHEET NO:
1 OF 1
 JOB NO:
PDAX0067
 DRAWN BY:
LKH
 DATE:
12/14/07
 SCALE:
1"=60'