

Agenda Report

October 17, 2011

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Planning Department
SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF 1232 NORTH LOS ROBLES AVENUE AS A LANDMARK

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the designation of a historic resource is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA Guidelines §15308: Class 8 - Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment);
2. Find that the property at 1232 North Los Robles Avenue is significant under Criterion "C" for designation as a landmark (P.M.C. §17.62.040) because it is a locally significant example of an Arts and Crafts period house from the early twentieth century with Colonial Revival and Italian Revival features designed by David M. Renton and retains a substantial level of integrity;
3. Approve the designation of the property at 1232 North Los Robles Avenue as a landmark;
4. Adopt the attached resolution approving a Declaration of Landmark Designation for 1232 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, California;
5. Authorize the Mayor to execute the attached Declaration of Landmark Designation for 1232 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, California; and
6. Direct the City Clerk to record the declaration with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

On Monday, September 19, 2011, the Historic Preservation Commission recommended that the City Council approve the designation of 1232 North Los Robles Avenue as a landmark under criterion C of PMC §17.62.040.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The house at 1232 North Los Robles Avenue qualifies for designation as a landmark under Criterion "C" as an intact, locally significant example of an Arts and Crafts period house from the early twentieth century with Colonial Revival and Italian Revival features.

BACKGROUND:

On May 5, 2011, Tim Mayworm of Journey House, Inc., the property owner, submitted an application for designation of 1232 N. Los Robles Avenue as a landmark. The staff evaluated the property according to the landmark criteria in Title 17 of the Pasadena Municipal Code and determined that the house qualifies for designation.

Property Data

- Address: 1232 N. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91104
- Location: Northeast corner of Los Robles Avenue and Claremont Street
- Date of Construction: 1912, documented by building permit
- Original Architect/Designer: David M. Renton
- Original Contractor: David M. Renton
- Original / Present Use: Single-family residence/ Residential care
- Original/Present Owner: Charles & Martha Lindley/ Journey House, Inc.
- Property Size: 11,796 square feet
- Building Size: 3,384 square feet

The Site

The site, an 11,796 square foot corner lot, is at the northeast corner of Los Robles Avenue and Claremont Street. The house, near the center of the lot, is set back approximately 50 feet from the front property line and 10 feet from the side property line. A detached one-car garage is located in the northeast corner of the property.

The Building Structure and Exterior Features

Built in 1912, this two-story, 3,384 square-foot house is rectangular in plan with a concrete foundation, wood shingle walls, and a shallow pitched hipped roof with wide boxed eaves. A balcony over the entry, one-third the width of the house and supported by two square posts and a cross-beam, is at the center of the mostly symmetrical west-facing front elevation. The balcony has a wooden balustrade with two square corner posts with recessed panels and flat wooden pickets shaped to resemble Italian balusters. The concrete front porch deck, accessed by two concrete steps, extends north of the entry to the side of the house beneath a pergola supported by a third square post. The pergola beams have ends carved in a curve with a notch and match the rafter tails on the house. The entry consists of a single door flanked by two operable 12-light sidelights with hinged wood-framed screens. The flat-surfaced wood door has three vertical columns of glass lights in a three-four-three pattern. A single red-brick chimney is at the south side elevation. Fenestration consists of individual and pairs of double-hung windows (with nine or six-light upper sashes), and transomed fixed windows flanked by double hung windows at the first floor of the front elevation. A pair of twelve-light French doors flanked by smaller six-light casement windows provides access to the front balcony. A rectangular bay with a shed roof and fixed multiple-light window projects from the north side elevation. The low-pitched hipped roof has wide boxed eaves with carved brackets.

Garage & Site Features

A detached one-car garage with a gabled roof, shingle siding that matches the house, a gable vent, extended beams, and an up-swinging garage door is in the northeast corner of the property, with the door facing Claremont Street. The garage appears to have been built near the time of the house, originally on the east adjacent property. The subject property was later expanded in size to include the garage. The garage is a contributing feature.

A two-foot high Arroyo stone retaining wall with concrete cap is adjacent to the sidewalk at both streets. A driveway provides access to the garage from Claremont Street, and at Los Robles Avenue near the intersection, concrete steps and a curved concrete walkway provide access to the front entry. An additional short concrete block retaining wall is set back a few feet from the stone retaining wall at Claremont Street. A two-foot high white picket fence partially encloses the front and street side yards. The Arroyo stone retaining wall is a contributing feature.

Documented Changes to the Property

After 1930, a one-story addition, distinguished by shallow eaves and rows of double-hung and casement windows without muntins, was made to the rear (east) elevation. At an unknown date, fixed shutters were added to many of the windows on the front elevation. After 1979, square posts replaced the previous Tuscan columns that support the front balcony and pergola. At an unknown date, an up-swinging garage door replaced the original garage door. After 1979, stucco was removed from the chimney to expose the red brick. In 1999, a white picket fence was installed in the front and street side yards.

Current Conditions, Use, and Proposed Plans

The house exterior is currently in average condition and it is used as a residential care facility.

David M. Renton

David M. Renton, born on February 8, 1878 in Georgetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada, worked as a carpenter in Massachusetts and Connecticut before emigrating to Pasadena after the turn of the century to work as a contractor. His first large job was the telescope building and other associated buildings at Mount Wilson. Between 1904 and 1918, he built more than 100 houses in Pasadena, including several in the Orange Heights and Bungalow Heaven Historic Districts, some constructed for architects such as Greene and Greene and Myron Hunt, and one landmark Craftsman house at 949 N. Oakland Avenue. Between 1919 and 1936, Renton worked for William Wrigley, Jr. as the general manager of Santa Catalina Island Co.

ANALYSIS:

The property at 1232 North Los Robles Avenue is eligible for landmark 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 represents the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose work is significant to the City or to the region, or that possesses high artistic values that are significant to the City or to the region.

Under this criterion, the main house at 1232 North Los Robles Avenue is significant as a unique example of an Arts and Crafts period house with Colonial Revival and Italian Revival features. Overall, the house has a substantial level of architectural integrity in its design, materials, and workmanship. Character-defining Arts and Crafts design features include horizontal lines, horizontal groupings of windows, the low-pitched roof, shingle siding, carved rafter tails and pergola beams, and the flat-surfaced front door with a custom three-four-three light pattern. Colonial Revival features which convey a classical character include the mostly symmetrical two-story front elevation with regularly placed tripartite and double-hung windows with nine-light upper sashes, the front door with sidelights, and the front pergola. Italian-influenced features include the low-pitched hipped roof without dormers, the large overhanging boxed eaves with carved brackets, and the front balcony with balustrade. The combination of Arts and Crafts, Colonial Revival and Italian Revival design elements create a harmonious design. Workmanship is exemplified by the custom front door, carved rafter tails and pergola ends, carved eave brackets, and shaped wooden balcony balusters. The property retains nearly all of its original materials. One notable alteration is the replacement of former Tuscan columns with square posts, which is a subtle shift from Colonial Revival towards a Craftsman character. Another likely alteration is the installation of wood shutters to some of the windows on the front elevation. Together these alterations do not significantly harm the overall integrity of the house.

The house is a harmonious combination of Arts and Crafts, Colonial Revival, and Italian Revival design elements with substantial integrity, designed by a significant architect/builder from the period. The garage, although it was originally on an adjacent property and the property line was later moved to include it on the subject property, is a contributing feature because it has a Craftsman design that is compatible with the house. The house is not associated with significant events or with the lives of persons who are significant in the history of the City, region, or State.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The General Plan – Objective 6: Promote preservation of historically and architecturally significant buildings and revitalization of traditional neighborhoods and commercial areas.

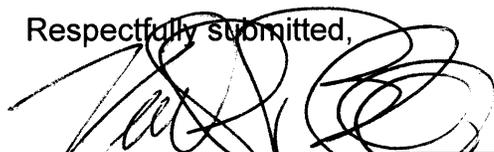
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

Class 8 exemptions consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for the protection of the environment.

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 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,



VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP
Director of Planning

Prepared by:



Jason Wasmund
Assistant Planner

Approved by:



MICHAEL J. BECK
City Manager

Attachments:

- Attachment A – Detailed Description
- Attachment B – Application Materials
- Attachment C – Photographs

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASADENA
ADOPTING A DECLARATION OF HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF
1232 NORTH LOS ROBLES AVENUE, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA**

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission has found that 1232 North Los Robles Avenue meets criterion "C", as set forth in Section 17.62.040(c) of the Pasadena Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the property at 1232 North Los Robles Avenue is significant because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a historic resource property type, period, architectural style or method of construction, or represents the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose work is significant to the City or to the region, or that possesses high artistic values that are significant to the City or to the region; and

WHEREAS, the application for Historic Landmark designation is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15308; and

WHEREAS, Journey House, Inc., the property owner, submitted the application for landmark designation; and

WHEREAS, the City Council may approve a recommendation from the Historic Preservation Commission to designate a Historic 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 Historic Landmark designation for 1232 North Los Robles Avenue is hereby adopted.

Adopted at the _____ meeting of the City Council on the _____ day of _____, 2011 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

MARK JOMSKY, CMC, City Clerk

Approved as to form:



Theresa E. Fuentes
Assistant City Attorney

DECLARATION OF HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION FOR:

**1232 NORTH LOS ROBLES AVENUE
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA**

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 17.62.050 of the Pasadena Municipal Code, the City Council of the City of Pasadena by this declaration hereby designates as a Historic Landmark certain real property described as:

THE SOUTH 64 FEET OF LOT 1, THE SOUTH 64 FEET OF THE WEST 60 FEET OF LOT 2 AND THE EAST 30 FEET OF THE NORTH 52 FEET OF THE SOUTH 116 FEET OF THE WEST 60 FEET OF LOT 2 OF THE CLAREMONT TRACT, IN THE CITY OF PASADENA, IN THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AS PER MAP RECORDED IN BOOK 19 PAGE 49 OF MAPS, IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAID COUNTY.

APN: 5730-003-003

Under Pasadena Municipal Code Section 17.62.090, all work affecting designated Historic 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.

DATED: _____

ATTEST:

CITY OF PASADENA
A municipal corporation

Mark Jomsky, City Clerk

By: _____
Bill Bogaard, Mayor