

Agenda Report

October 17, 2011

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Planning Department
SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF 901 S. SAN RAFAEL AVENUE AS A HISTORIC MONUMENT

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 901 S. San Rafael Avenue is significant under Criterion "C" for designation as a historic monument (P.M.C. §17.62.040) because it is an exceptional representation of Tudor Revival residential architecture and of the combined work of architect David Ogilvie, builder Peter Hall and landscape architect Katherine Bashford;
3. Approve the designation of the property at 901 S. San Rafael Avenue as a historic monument;
4. Adopt the attached resolution approving a Declaration of Historic Monument Designation for 901 S. San Rafael Avenue, Pasadena, California;
5. Authorize the Mayor to execute the attached Declaration of Historic Monument Designation for 901 S. San Rafael 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 901 S. San Rafael Avenue as a historic monument under criterion C of PMC §17.62.040.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The house at 901 S. San Rafael Avenue is eligible for designation as a historic monument because it is an exceptional representation of Tudor Revival residential architecture and of the combined work of architect David Ogilvie, builder Peter Hall and landscape architect Katherine Bashford.

BACKGROUND:

On May 3, 2011, the current property owners, Kent and Nicole Sokolow, submitted an application for historic monument designation of the property. The staff evaluated the property according to the historic monument criteria in Title 17 of the P.M.C. and determined that the house qualifies for designation.

DESCRIPTION:

The steeply sloping site includes the three-story (plus partially subterranean basement) main house, six-car garage/guest house building and a lath house. The remainder of the site has landscape and hardscape features organized into a formal composition, with the rear portion sloping substantially downward from the street in a terraced configuration.

The house has a roughly T-shaped plan with a steeply pitched cross-gabled roof oriented to face the apex of the acute-angled corner of Hillside Terrace and South San Rafael Avenue. The roof has no eaves, with the exception of the rear elevation which has a shallow eave with a cut-out barge board. The majority of the house is clad in a stone veneer with cut stone window headers and door surrounds; the upper portion of the rear elevation is coated in smooth-finish cement plaster with false half-timbering (a recent addition that is compatible with the style of the house). A major element of the primary façade is a wide stone-and-brick chimney with a tripartite decorative cap. The primary gable also has a dovecote at the peak and the primary entrance lintel has a relief scroll engraved with the word “Kencott” and an intersecting counter-relief shield with relief year 1928 above and letters “A.D.” below. Asymmetrical fenestration consists of multi-light wood casement windows, many with leaded glass. On the rear is a projecting oriel with carved wood brackets below.

The current detached garage/guest house building was built at the same time as the house and was expanded in 1940 (also designed by Ogilvie). The building has a similar, but simplified roof form to the main house and is two, rather than three stories high. The existing stone veneer, although a close match to the main house, is not original. It was originally a more simple, plaster exterior, which would be more appropriate to its original subordinate use.

The property also has three small accessory structures: a potting shed, a lath house and a brick incinerator.

Documented Changes to the Property

Several changes to the interior layout of the house have occurred over time, the earliest being in 1929, soon after the house was built. A conversion of the attic space in 1972 resulted in a new window opening, which is compatible with the house. Because interior features are not considered in the review of historic designation or of alterations to designated historic properties, the interior changes are not significant. There are no

records of additions, with the exception of the 1940 garage addition mentioned above. A swimming pool was added in 1956. When purchased by the current owners, much of the original stone terracing and pathways in the garden were buried and extensive rehabilitation work was done to expose and rebuild these features. Some compatible additions of pathways and railings were also made at that time. Historical photographs from Reynolds' autobiography and a published article in *Architectural Digest* were used to guide this work.

David A. Ogilvie (1885-1954)

Architect David A. Ogilvie was born in Scotland and moved to Los Angeles in 1922. He worked in the office of Reginald Johnson before starting his own practice in 1928. Ogilvie opened his own practice in Pasadena at 100 E. Colorado in 1928 and built/designed his residence in Altadena the same year. His work was recognized by many architectural organizations, including New York Architectural Forum, Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and an honorable mention at the Pan-American Exposition in Buenos Aires. His work is largely residential and in period revival styles including Spanish Colonial Revival, French Eclectic, Italian Renaissance Revival and English Cottage/Tudor Revival and can be found throughout the region. Other houses he designed in the region are depicted in the photograph exhibit in Attachment C.

Peter Hall (1867-1939)

Builder Peter Hall was born in Sweden, came to America at age four, and to Pasadena at age 19. He is most known for his association with Greene & Greene, having become their contractor soon after meeting them in 1904. He built many of their most significant works, including the Gamble and Blacker Houses. In his book *Greene & Greene*, Ted Bosley speculates that Hall probably learned woodworking in the Swedish tradition known as *sloyd*, a "tradition of home instruction whereby children would learn from their elders how to carve wood into useful objects, sitting around the hearth during the long winter evenings." Bosley goes on to state that Hall's work with the Greens produced "some of the finest achievements of the American Arts and Crafts movement." At Kencott, Hall's influence can be seen in the rich interior woodwork and in the rich attention to detail throughout the house.

Katherine Bashford (1885-1953)

Landscape architect Katherine Bashford was born in Arizona and came to California with her family in 1894. She was not formally trained in landscape architecture but apprenticed with Florence Yoch for two years prior to opening her own office in 1923. Travels in Europe informed her designs, which tended to be formal European-themed gardens for large estates. Many of her works were published in *California Southland*, for which she also wrote articles on landscape design. In 1935 Bashford began a partnership with Fred Barlow, Jr. that resulted in designs for large-scale housing projects for the United States Housing Authority. She worked frequently with Reginald Johnson on individual projects as well as on Baldwin Hills Village, a 64-acre multi-family residential community in Los Angeles. She was nominated for a fellowship in the American Society of Landscape Architects in 1936. Staff was unable to find an archive

of drawings or photos of her work at any local institutions; however, the historic features of the garden are consistent with other images of her work that staff has found (see Attachment C for photographs).

ANALYSIS:

The property at 901 S. San Rafael Avenue is eligible for designation under Criterion C, (PMC §17.62.040(C)(2)), which states:

[The property] 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..

Under criterion C, the property at 901 S. San Rafael Avenue is regionally significant as an exceptional example of Tudor Revival residential architecture and design and as an important representation of the synthesis of the work of architect David A. Ogilvie, builder Peter Hall and landscape architect Katherine Bashford. The house was informed by the European travels and/or upbringing of the owner, architect and landscape architect and the craft of the builder. The synergy of their experience and talent resulted in a property that clearly expresses the intended design of an English country estate.

The application also cites the presence of intact 1920's-era Heinz Slab Shingle Roof material as a contributing factor to the eligibility of the house for designation as a historic monument. The property is largely intact and exhibits all of the character-defining features of its style and subtype. It has architectural integrity (its ability to demonstrate why it is significant) through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and feeling.

Contributing structures to this designation include the main house and garage/guest house, accessory structures and garden features including retaining walls, paths, steps, statuary, fountains, mature trees and configuration of plantings.

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:

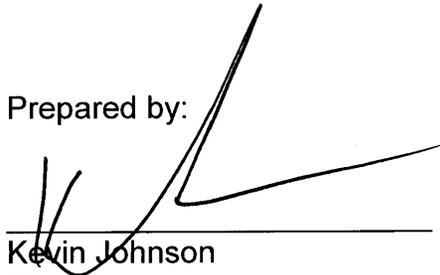
There is no fiscal impact as a result of this action and will not have any indirect or support cost requirements. The anticipated impact to other operational programs or capital projects as a result of this action will be minimal. In some instances, owners of designated properties may apply to the City 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:



Kevin Johnson
Planner

Approved by:



MICHAEL J. BECK
City Manager

Attachments:

- Attachment A – Application Materials
- Attachment B – Historical Documentation
- Attachment C – Photographs
- Attachment D – Effects of Landmark Designation

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASADENA
ADOPTING A DECLARATION OF HISTORIC MONUMENT DESIGNATION OF
901 S. SAN RAFAEL AVENUE, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA**

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission has found that 901 S. San Rafael Avenue meets criterion "C", as set forth in Section 17.62.040(b) of the Pasadena Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the property at 901 S. San Rafael Avenue is significant because it 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; and

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

WHEREAS, Kent Sokolow, the property owner, submitted the application for historic monument designation; and

WHEREAS, the City Council may approve a recommendation from the Historic Preservation Commission to designate a Historic Monument 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 Monument designation for 901 S. San Rafael Avenue is hereby adopted.

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

AYES:

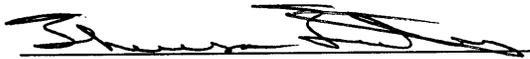
NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

MARK JOMSKY, CMC, City Clerk

Approved as to form:



Theresa E. Fuentes
Assistant City Attorney

DECLARATION OF HISTORIC MONUMENT DESIGNATION FOR:

901 S. San Rafael 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 Monument certain real property described as:

All that certain real property situated in the County of Los Angeles, State of California, described as follows:

PARCEL 1:

A PORTION OF LOT 1 OF TRACT NO. 61, IN THE CITY OF PASADENA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AS PER MAP RECORDED IN BOOK 13 PAGE(S) 13 OF MAPS, IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAID COUNTY, AND A PORTION OF SAN RAFAEL AVENUE VACATED AND ADJOINING SAID LOT ON THE EAST, ALL IN THE CITY OF PASADENA, DESCRIBED AS A WHOLE AS FOLLOWS:

BEGINNING AT THE MOST NORTHERLY CORNER OF SAID LOT 1; THENCE ALONG THE NORTHWESTERLY LINE OF SAID LOT, SOUTH 20° 25' 00" WEST, 340.00 FEET, THENCE LEAVING SAID NORTHWESTERLY LINE SOUTH 57° 10' 05" EAST 71.94 FEET; THENCE 89° 08' 10" EAST 80.57 FEET; THENCE NORTH 72° 11' 50" EAST 61.18 FEET, MORE OR LESS TO A POINT ON THE WESTERLY LINE OF SAN RAFAEL AVENUE, AS ESTABLISHED BY SAID VACATION THENCE NORTHERLY ALONG SAID WESTERLY LINE OF SAID AVENUE, NORTH 14° 18' 00" WEST 178.02 FEET; THENCE NORTH 11° 15' 00" WEST 168.42 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 80° 50' 00" WEST 3.00 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

PARCEL 2:

AN EASEMENT TO DRAIN WATER FROM PARCEL 1, OVER, IN, UPON AND UNDER THAT PORTION OF LOT 1 NOT INCLUDED WITHIN PARCEL 1, AND OVER LOT 3 OF SAID TRACT, THROUGH AND IN THE MANNER WHICH GRANTOR OR HIS PREDECESSOR IN TITLE, KENYON L. REYNOLDS, HERETOFORE HAS DRAINED WATER FROM SAID PARCEL 1, OVER THE REMAINDER OF SAID LOT 1 AND OVER SAID LOT 3, TOGETHER WITH THE RIGHT (BUT WITHOUT OBLIGATION SO TO DO) TO GO UPON REMAINING PORTION OF SAID LOT 1 TO REPAIR THE PIPES AND DITCHES THEREIN AND THEREON USED FOR THE PURPOSES OF SUCH DRAINAGE, AS GRANTED TO JAMES L. BEEBS, ET UX., RECORDED IN BOOK 23134 PAGE 149, OFFICIAL RECORDS, IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAID COUNTY.

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER: 5717-023-001

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