



Agenda Report

October 27, 2014

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Planning & Community Development Department
SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF 377 ARROYO TERRACE AS A LANDMARK

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends 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 377 Arroyo Terrace (Kenneth Newell Avery Studio) meets Criteria "A" and "C" for designation as a landmark (P.M.C. §17.62.040) because the building has a significant association with the context of the Arroyo Culture and is a locally significant example of a structure from the Arts and Crafts period built specifically for use as an art studio that retains its integrity;
3. Approve the designation of the property at 377 Arroyo Terrace as a landmark;
4. Adopt the attached resolution approving a Declaration of Landmark Designation for 377 Arroyo Terrace, Pasadena, California;
5. Authorize the Mayor to execute the attached Declaration of Landmark Designation for 377 Arroyo Terrace, Pasadena, California; and
6. Direct the City Clerk to record the declaration with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

At its regular meeting of August 5, 2014, the Historic Preservation Commission recommended that the City Council approve the designation of 377 Arroyo Terrace as a landmark under Criteria "A" and "C" of PMC §17.62.040.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The property at 377 Arroyo Terrace qualifies for designation as a landmark under Criteria "A" and "C" as a locally significant example of an art studio from the Arts and Crafts period associated with the Arroyo Culture.

The Kenneth Newell Avery Studio is the most noteworthy building built specifically as an art studio because of its size (it is the largest), location (the most prominent, with views of the Arroyo), its setting (has not been compromised), and design (it has features specifically well suited to an art studio: the large north-facing window and skylight assembly, and comparatively few windows on other elevations to provide the proper light conditions).

The art studio building retains its most significant character-defining features. Alterations, many designed by architect Donald Hensman, are compatible with the original structure's Arts and Crafts aesthetic.

BACKGROUND:

On May 6, 2014, the property owner Don Hahn submitted an application for landmark designation of the property. The staff evaluated the property according to the landmark criteria in Title 17 of the P.M.C. and determined that the structure qualifies for landmark designation. Concurrent with this application, the applicant also submitted an application for Historic Property Contract (Mills Act).

Property Data

- Historical Name: Kenneth Newell Avery Studio
- Address: 377 Arroyo Terrace, Pasadena, CA 91103
- Location: West side of Scott Place, north of Arroyo Terrace
- Date of Construction: 1908 (documented by building permit)
- Original Architect: None
- Original Contractor: August C. Brandt
- Original / Present Use: Art studio / Single-family residence
- Original / Present Owner: Kenneth Newell Avery / Don Hahn
- Lot size: 19,290 square feet
- House size: 1,696 square feet

Setting & Site Description

The site is a 0.44-acre interior lot in a hillside setting overlooking the Lower Arroyo Seco in the Arroyo Terrace neighborhood. The site was originally part of a larger property, subdivided in 1950, that included the house at 371 Arroyo Terrace. The irregularly shaped lot slopes downward from the street and from the south property line, and is approximately 78 feet in width and 165 feet in depth. The main building is set back approximately 70 feet from the front property line and two feet from the south side property line. At the southeast corner of the property, with access to the street through the adjacent property, is an uncovered two-car wood plank parking deck.

Building Features

Built in 1908, this two-story rectangular structure with basement was identified as an art studio in the 1910 Sanborn map. The main entry, consisting of a pair of French doors, is located on the east-facing elevation, which opens to a brick landing and steps flanked by concrete-capped clinker brick and river rock pilasters. The original foundation is concrete, faced on the front elevation with a later application of clinker brick and stone veneer. The structure has the original board and batten siding and flat roof. On the west elevation, a large brick chimney is visible, attached to the exterior of the building wall. An addition of a bedroom was made to the south elevation in 1929. The most prominent feature of the north side elevation is a large multiple pane fixed wood window and downward sloping skylight assembly which is inset into the roof. A sliding glass door below the window provides access to a deck. Other windows include, on the west elevation, original double-hung and awning windows, and on the east elevation, non-original groupings of fixed and sliding windows (in non-original openings), and two casement windows, one of which appears to be original. A pergola, attached by brackets, extends across the front elevation. Below the main floor on the north, west, and east elevations, French doors and other openings provide views and access to the yard from the full height basement, which is exposed above grade, making the building appear taller in those locations.

Site Features

A wood plank fence runs along the south side property line and the inside edge of the parking deck at the southeast corner of the property. Flat stone steps and a metal railing leading down from the parking deck provide access to the street. Dry stacked arroyo stone retaining walls, connected with a set of arroyo stone steps, terrace the steeper slopes in the front yard. A man-made stream runs from the north-facing slope in the front yard to a lower lawn area at the northeast corner of the building. Mature eucalyptus trees dot the north and west sides of the property, and oak trees cover the east slope adjacent to the street. Although none of these site features, except for the dry stacked arroyo stone retaining walls and steps, date from the original construction, these features contribute to feeling of the Arts and Crafts era.

Documented Changes to the Property

Sanborn maps and early photos indicate that a number of features were removed from the building prior to it being subdivided in 1950. These removed features include a wood plank railing that enclosed the perimeter of the flat roof, a pergola that provided shade to the south side of the roof, and a bridge that connected the roof to the adjacent house at 371 Arroyo Terrace.

Other exterior alterations to the building include the south side addition of a bedroom in 1929, alterations to the front elevation including fixed and sliding windows, the entry doors, landing, and the pergola, addition of a sliding glass door leading to an expanded

north deck, addition and alteration of the parking platform in 1956 and 1983, addition of a wood property line fence, and the finishing of the basement in 2000. Interior alterations include the addition of a mezzanine level at the front (east) elevation, and the addition of a kitchen and bedroom within the front portion of the main level. These alterations do not significantly affect integrity because they are compatible with the structure's Arts and Crafts aesthetic and did not remove features that identify the building as an art studio.

All site features, except for the arroyo stone retaining walls and steps, appear to be relatively recent additions.

Current Conditions, Use, and Proposed Plans

The property, now used as a single family residence, is generally in good condition. Over the next ten years, a roof replacement with materials similar to the 1908 roofing material, restoration of an early entrance at the south side, copper repiping, restoration of the bathroom, concealment of exterior vent pipes, and restoration of the rooftop railing and pergola are proposed.

The Arts and Crafts Period

The Arts & Crafts movement began in England around the year 1860 as a response to industrialization and mass production of goods. Its focus was one of promoting manual craftsmanship rather than machine production, which was believed to result in a harmonious society where producers and consumers could take pride in their work and, thereby, enhance their lives. Works were simple and designed to show evidence of construction methods. William Morris is widely cited as being the movement's primary proponent in England, with his Red House being one of the earliest pieces of English Arts & Crafts architecture. The movement included many other forms of craft including printmaking, decorative objects, wallpaper, textiles, furniture and stained glass.

In America, Elbert Hubbard and Gustav Stickley, who both organized Arts & Crafts guilds, were the movement's primary proponents. Stickley's magazine *The Craftsman* was influential in spreading the ideals of the movement throughout the country. The American Arts & Crafts architectural movement was centered in three primary locations: Oak Park, Illinois; Berkeley and Pasadena, each drawing on local materials. In Pasadena, the primary architectural tenet of the movement was to enhance the connection between house and landscape. This was achieved through large roofed front porches, use of wood exterior cladding materials and other locally available materials such as stones from the Arroyo Seco, elimination of ornament, and planning of the house around natural features of the site (contours, trees, etc.). Architectural details were frequently handcrafted by local artisans.

Arroyo Culture

Pasadena's Arroyo Seco neighborhood is one of the distinctive legacies of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Attracted by cheap land, artists and writers settled on the eastern bank of the Arroyo Seco. Soon it became the heart of the city's Arts and Crafts movement. The "Arroyo Culture," as it was later called, included the artists Hanson Puthoff, Benjamin Chambers Brown, William Lees Judson and Jean Mannheim, the landscape architect Paul Theine, writer Mary Austin, the architect Louis B. Easton, and the designer Ernest Batchelder. The concentration of Arts and Crafts residences along the banks of the Arroyo Seco attests to the innovation, diversity, and high quality associated with Pasadena's Arts and Crafts movement.

Kenneth Newell Avery

Kenneth Newell Avery was a painter specializing in portraits and figure studies. Born in Bay City, Michigan in 1882, Avery spent many years in France before moving to southern California in 1906, and lived in Pasadena until the late 1930s. He died in Hemet, California in 1949.

ANALYSIS:

The Kenneth Newell Avery Studio at 377 Arroyo Terrace is eligible for designation under Criterion A, (PMC §17.62.040.C.2), which states:

[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.

Furthermore, it is eligible for designation under Criterion C, (PMC §17.62.040.C.2), which states:

[The property] embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, architectural style, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose work is of significance to the City or, to the region or possesses artistic values of significance to the City or to the region.

Under these criteria, 377 Arroyo Terrace is a significant building associated with the Arroyo Culture and is significant as the best representation in Pasadena of a structure from the Arts-and-Crafts period built specifically for use as an art studio. The building has a high level of architectural integrity (its ability to demonstrate why it is significant) through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, association, and feeling, as follows:

- Location: The building is in its original location.

- Design: Although altered, the building retains its most significant design characteristics: the large north-facing window and skylight assembly that was built specifically for its use as an art studio, its basic rectangular form with flat roof, the original chimney, and many of the original windows.
- Setting: The setting has not significantly changed from the time of the building's use as an art studio. Views of the mountains and the Arroyo Seco have been maintained.
- Materials: Although altered, the building has the original materials used in its construction, including original siding and windows.
- Workmanship: The building exhibits workmanship through the design of the north-facing window and skylight assembly.
- Association: The building is associated with several artists. Artist Kenneth Newell Avery was the original resident of the building. Subsequently, from the late 1920s to 1940s, the building was used by artists including Katherine Van Dyke (artist and interior decorator), Count Tamburini (an internationally known Italian portrait and landscape painter), and George Yphantis (painter, illustrator, and printmaker). None of these early residents, including Kenneth Newell Avery, are known to have produced work on the property that is significant in the history of the city, region, or state that would qualify the property for designation under Criterion B (association with a significant person's significant work). The property was owned by significant Pasadena architect Donald C. Hensman between 1985 and 1998, who made alterations including the buildout of a bedroom within the main level, but the property isn't directly associated with his significant work.

The studio is also associated with the Arroyo Culture, a pattern of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the City, by its location on the eastern side of the Arroyo Seco, which was the geographic center of the movement, and by its use by Kenneth Newell Avery, an artist who was active during the Arroyo Culture/Arts and Crafts movement. This association is significant in that the studio is a legacy of the Arroyo Culture, having been used by several artists during the first half of the twentieth century.

- Feeling: The property clearly expresses the characteristics of a simple Arts and Crafts-era art studio with northern light exposure and expansive views.

Other residences that have been used as studios have been individually designated as landmarks (the Jean Mannheim Residence and Studio at 492-500 S. Arroyo Boulevard, and the Batchelder House at 626 S. Arroyo Boulevard which has a detached studio at the rear). The Mannheim property was developed with individual dwellings with the ancillary use as art studio within the residence buildings. The studio building at the

Batchelder property is hidden at the rear of the property. Other freestanding art studios in Pasadena were found through a search of Sanborn maps and other sources, but are not as noteworthy as the building at 377 Arroyo Terrace. The building at 1153 Wotkyns (date unknown) is a modest Spanish Colonial whose original view of the arroyo is blocked by another building. The modest building at 800-1/2 Prospect Boulevard (1921) is similarly blocked by other buildings. The building at 511 Arbor Street (1906) is at the center of a large block without significant views, 676-1/2 La Loma Road is now gone, the Alson Clark studio at 790 N. Pasadena Avenue (1927), designed by Gordon Kaufman, does not have a view of the Arroyo and was built outside of the Arts and Crafts period, the modest studio at 333 E. Howard Street (1903) has been converted to a garage, and 610-1/2 S. Grand Avenue (1923), a modest structure without a view, has been converted to a garage.

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:

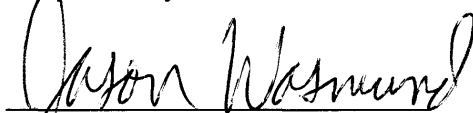
In some instances, owners of designated historic properties may apply to the City for a Historic Property Contract (Mills Act), which allows an alternative and often lower property tax assessment. The City Council reviewed the projected loss of property tax revenue from this program in 2002 when it adopted the local Mills Act ordinance. As a result of this program, the reduced property tax amount which comes out of the City's local share amount from the State is a small fraction of the City's overall property tax revenue.

Respectfully submitted,



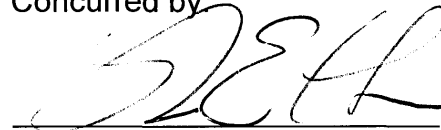
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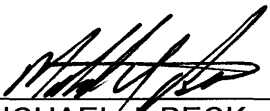
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Approved by:



MICHAEL J. BECK
City Manager

Attachments:

- Attachment A – Vicinity Map
- Attachment B – Application Materials
- Attachment C – Photographs
- Attachment D – Effects of Landmark Designation