

Agenda Report

June 13, 2022

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Planning & Community Development Department
SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF THE JOSEPHINE P. EVERETT
HOUSE/SHAKESPEARE CLUB OF PASADENA AT 171 SOUTH
GRAND AVENUE AS A HISTORIC MONUMENT

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) pursuant to Section 15308, Class 8 of the CEQA Guidelines pertaining to Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment and there are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class and, therefore, there are no unusual circumstances;
2. Find that the building at 171 South Grand Avenue meets Criteria 2 and 3 for designation as a Historic Monument pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code (PMC) Section 17.62.040.C.1.c.(2) and (3) because it is associated with the life of a person who is significant to the history of the region and beyond, Josephine P. Everett, and is an exceptional representation of the work of an architect whose work is significant to the region, Marston & Maybury;
3. Adopt the attached resolution approving a Declaration of Historic Monument Designation for 171 South Grand Avenue, Pasadena, California;
4. Authorize the Mayor to execute the Declaration of Historic Monument Designation for 171 South Grand Avenue, Pasadena, California (attached to the resolution); and
5. Direct the City Clerk to record the declaration with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

At its regular meeting of March 15, 2022, the Historic Preservation Commission recommended that the City Council approve the designation of the Josephine P. Everett House/Shakespeare Club of Pasadena at 171 South Grand Avenue as a Historic Monument under Criteria 2 and 3 of PMC Section 17.62.040.

BACKGROUND:

On December 10, 2021, the Shakespeare Club of Pasadena submitted an application for designation of the building at 171 South Grand Avenue as a Historic Monument. The subject building, constructed as a single-family residence in 1928 and originally occupied by Josephine P. Everett, is presently owned and operated by the Shakespeare Club of Pasadena. City staff evaluated the property according to the criteria in Title 17 of the PMC and determined that the building qualifies for designation as a Historic Monument. The subject property is presently designated as Landmark, following completion of the landmark designation process in 2018.

Property Data

- Address: 171 South Grand Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91105
- Location: West side of South Grand Avenue, at the intersection of Maylin Street
- Date of Construction Completion: 1928 (source: Building Description Blank)
- Original Owner: Josephine P. Everett (source: Original Building Permit)
- Original Architect: Sylvanus Marston and Edgar Maybury (source: Original Building Permit)
- Original Builder: W.C. Crowell (source: Original Building Permit)
- Original Use: Single-Family Residence
- Present Use: Clubhouse
- Property Size: 40,749 square feet (source: Los Angeles County Assessor)
- Building Size: 8,580 square feet (source: Los Angeles County Assessor)

Site Features

The property is located on a flag-shaped lot on the west side of South Grand Avenue, opposite from its intersection with Maylin Street. The subject building is set back from the street and situated along the southerly boundary of the historic Vista Del Arroyo Hotel (now US District Court of Appeals) which was also designed by Sylvanus Marston. Between the building and the street is a paved surface parking lot. A low stucco-coated wall with a precast cap and finials at driveway openings lines the street edge, in addition to a solid hedge. Other walls of similar design exist in various locations on the property.

Exterior Features of the Building

The form of the building is composed of a two-story rectangular mass with one-story wings projecting from each end of the south elevation to form a U-shape floor plan. The building is clad in stucco and covered by a shallow hipped roof with clay tiles. The roof eaves extend moderately with exposed, sculpted-wood rafters. Elaborate classical cast stone detailing around the door entrance and first-story window along the easterly side of the building contrast with the unadorned walls. The two-story wall plane along the north elevation is articulated by an arcade framing three door openings and a series of asymmetrically composed recessed windows on the first and second stories. The one-story west elevation is composed of a blank wall relieved by a cornice, a door opening, and a row of semi-circular windows with sculptural surrounds. The south side of the building opens out to a raised patio enclosed by the two wings of the building, a balustrade with sculptural detailing, and a fountain. A second-story loggia faces south to the patio below. Two stucco-clad chimneys project from the east and west ends of the two-story mass. Two other chimneys located at the south ends of the one-story wings extend significantly above the roof.

Documented Changes to the Property

The property has undergone minimal exterior alterations since it was originally built in 1928. In 1981, the original clay tile on the roof was removed and re-installed in order to install weather-protective felt. Photographic documentation also shows windows had wood shutters at some point in time and the chimney at the westerly wing had a decorative hood. Both features are no longer extant. In addition, the windows, doors, and exterior walls have been painted.

Current Conditions, Use, and Proposed Plans

The exterior of the building is currently in good condition and it is used for member gatherings and events of the Shakespeare Club of Pasadena. No changes to the property are proposed at this time.

Historical Overview

Josephine P. Everett (1866-1937)

The applicants have provided an extensive study of the life of the original owner and occupant of 171 South Grand Avenue, Josephine P. Everett. This biography, which examines her specific contributions to the visual arts, as a book collector, and as a patron of music, is included in Attachment B. The house on the subject property is directly associated with her life and contributions to the field of arts and culture, which extend far beyond Pasadena. She lived at the property after completion of the house in 1928 until her death in 1937.

Sylvanus Marston (1883-1946) and Edgar Maybury (1889-1969)

Refer to Attachment B for an extensive overview provided by the applicant regarding the regional contributions of architects Sylvanus Marston and Edgar Maybury within the context of Period Revival architecture. Marston, in particular, is credited for designing as many as 1,000 projects in Southern California with various professional partners during his more than three-decade career. In partnership between 1923 and 1941, the Marston & Maybury firm developed numerous regionally significant Period Revival buildings.

Period Revival Architecture in Pasadena

The subject property is a unique example of a custom-designed, Period Revival-era residence, in that it reflects the cultural and artistic interests of its original owner in its design and configuration, which accommodates both performance and domestic use. Specifically, the residence incorporates many elements of the Italian Renaissance Revival style.

In the 1915-1942 era of Period Revival design, an affluent population, rapid growth and the presence of highly trained and skilled architects ensured that Pasadena would be a center for current trends in California architecture. In Pasadena, these architects produced designs that interpreted both national and regional precedents. After 1915, it became increasingly fashionable to create new designs based on the older, classical elements to meet contemporary needs. New England and Southern Colonial and English vernacular residential designs were a major influence in residential architecture in Pasadena during the early part of the period (1915 through the early 1920s). Beginning in the mid-1920s, the revivals were predominantly influenced by Italian, Spanish and California Colonial styles. Period Revival houses appeared in residential neighborhoods in existing annexed tracts in the second decade of the 20th century where, in some cases, houses replaced orange orchards, or in others, filled a vacant parcel in an established neighborhood of Arts and Crafts period houses. Development of newly annexed lands along transit lines expanded the city's boundaries to include new tracts of land west of the original city. This pattern continued with additional annexations, beginning in the 1920s, to the east and northeast. By 1929, most of the current city, except sections of the northeastern part, had been annexed.

Italian Renaissance Revival Style

The character-defining features of Italian Renaissance Revival-style single-family residences are:

- Asymmetrical form with rectangular U-plan
- Two stories with a shallow hip roof and clay tile
- Smooth, modulated or textured stucco walls
- Prominent, entry bay with column or pilaster surrounds and distinctive classical detailing
- Recessed, heavy front door with heavy hardware

- Arched opening at porte cocheres, side wings, loggias
- Recessed windows that are small in relation to the wall surface (often with heavy shutters)
- Stucco chimneys (plain, hooded, or with chimney pots)
- Use of quoins and other classical detailing

Character-defining features are those visual aspects and physical features or elements constructed during the property's period of significance that give the building its character. In general, a property that retains its character-defining features continues to convey its significance and therefore retains integrity as an historic resource. Removal or alteration of just one character-defining feature does not necessarily alter the integrity of an historic resource. Impacts to historic integrity can result from a single major change or from many incremental changes over time.

ANALYSIS:

The subject property was designated as a Landmark in 2018 for its significance as a work of Marston & Maybury, its architects, and for its association with Josephine P. Everett, a prominent patron of the arts who commissioned the house. Everett was a significant person in the history of Pasadena, as the prior nomination for the property established, but the impact of her work extended beyond Pasadena to a regional impact and was felt in the County of Los Angeles, San Diego, and as far away as her native Cleveland, Ohio. Likewise, while Sylvanus Marston and Edgar Maybury are widely known for their work in Pasadena, their design influence is visible throughout Southern California.

The property at 171 South Grand Avenue is eligible for Historic Monument designation under Criterion 2, (PMC Section 17.62.040.C.1.c.(2)) which states:

[The property] is associated with the lives of persons who are significant in the history of the region, State, or nation.

The property is also eligible for Historic Monument designation under Criterion 3 (PMC Section 17.62.040. C.1.c.(3)), 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 2, the subject property is significant because it is associated with Josephine P. Everett, a patron of arts, culture, and other philanthropic causes whose contributions extend to Pasadena, Southern California, and her native Cleveland, Ohio. Under Criterion 3, it is an exceptional example of a custom-designed Italian

Renaissance Revival-style residence designed by regionally significant architects Sylvanus Marston and Edgar Maybury. The property retains historical integrity as follows:

- Location: The building and other site features are in their original locations.
- Design: The building retains its original form, plan, structure, and style, including its exterior stucco cladding, original fenestration, roof form, and entryway.
- Setting: The building retains its setting adjacent to the historic Vista Del Arroyo Hotel (now US District Court of Appeals). Many other extant building in the surrounding neighborhood date to the same period as the subject property. Although the construction of parking lots and driveways have slightly diminished the integrity of the immediate setting, the courtyard on the property remains the primary focus of exterior space and use.
- Materials: The building retains its original exterior materials.
- Workmanship: The building retains the majority of its exterior materials and features that reflect the craftsmanship of early 20th century single-family residential design and construction, and therefore retains integrity of workmanship.
- Feeling: The property clearly expresses the characteristics of the Italian Renaissance Revival architectural style and evokes the feeling of the early Period Revival neighborhood character based history of Pasadena.
- Association: Although the building no longer serves as a single-family residence, its change in use under the ownership of the Shakespeare Club of Pasadena required little physical adaptation. Per Everett's instruction, Marston & Maybury designed the residence to include a conservatory with seating to accommodate 200 people. As the clubhouse for the Shakespeare Club of Pasadena, the building continues to be used as a performance and gathering space

Based on the above, the property retains sufficient integrity to qualify for designation as a Historic Monument under Criteria 2 and 3. The building retains all of its original character-defining features, including two-story configuration with a basement, simple geometric forms, shallowly pitched roof with red clay tile, exposed sculpted-wood rafters, stucco cladding, recessed wood windows, second-story loggia, enclosed patio, and elaborately detailed entryway. All alterations to the building, including exterior paint, removal of shutters, and removal of chimney hood are compatible with the original structure.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The General Plan Land Use Element – Guiding Principle 2: "Pasadena's historic resources will be preserved. Citywide, new development will be in harmony with and enhance Pasadena's unique character and sense of place. New construction that could affect the integrity of historic resources will be compatible with, and differentiated from, the existing resource;" and Goal 8: "Preservation and enhancement of Pasadena's cultural and historic buildings, landscapes, streets and districts as valued assets and

important representations of its past and a source of community identity, and social, ecological, and economic vitality.”

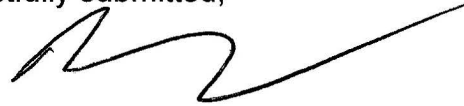
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

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,



DAVID M. REYES
Director of Planning & Community
Development Department

Prepared by:



MICHELLE VAN METER
Contract Planner

Reviewed by:



KEVIN JOHNSON
Principal Planner

Approved by:


CYNTHIA J. KURTZ
Interim City Manager

Attachments (5):

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Application & Historical Documentation
- C. Current Photographs
- D. Effects of Historic Designation
- E. Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report Dated March 15, 2022 (without attachments)