



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

DATE: MARCH 21, 2023

TO: HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

FROM: JENNIFER PAIGE, AICP, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK
420 SOUTH GREENWOOD AVENUE

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission:

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 pertaining to Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment such as designation of historic resources.
2. Find that the single-family residence located at 420 South Greenwood Avenue meets Criterion "C" for designation as a landmark pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code (PMC) Section 17.62.040 because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a locally significant property type, architectural style and period. It is a locally significant example of a Dutch Colonial Revival style single-family residence of the post-World War I era; and,
3. Recommend that the City Council approve the designation of the property at 420 South Greenwood Avenue as a landmark.

BACKGROUND:

On December 20, 2022, Jeff Prince, the owner of the property, submitted an application for Landmark designation of the building at 420 South Greenwood Avenue. City staff evaluated the property according to the criteria in Title 17 of the P.M.C. and determined that the building qualifies for designation as a landmark.

DESCRIPTION:

Property Data

- Address: 420 South Greenwood Avenue
- Location: East side of South Greenwood Avenue, north of San Pasqual Street
- Date of Construction Completion: 1926 (source: County Assessor)
- Original Architect: Unidentified
- Original Builder: Unidentified
- Original / Present Use: Single-family residence
- Property size: 8,908 square feet (source: County Assessor)
- Building size: 2,888 square feet (source: County Assessor)

Architectural Description:

The Site:

The property is located on a rectangular shaped lot on the east side of South Greenwood Avenue, north of San Pasqual Street. The surrounding single-family neighborhood features a variety of one- and two-story houses in a variety of architectural styles. The building is set approximately 35 feet from the front, west property line and adjacent single-family homes are located on separate lots to the north and south. The property also includes a two-story detached garage at the southeast corner. The rear, east property line is located along the eastern boundary of the City. The area was annexed by the City of Pasadena in 1946. Before that time, and at the time of construction, the site was under the jurisdiction of the County of Los Angeles.

Exterior Features of the Building:

The primary building is a two-story, single-family house built in the Dutch Colonial Revival style. The house features a side-facing gambrel roof with composite shake shingles and a brick chimney on the north side wall. The primary, west elevation has a symmetrical presentation of three dormers with shed roofs and paired wood-casement divided-lite windows, a central covered entry portico supported by Tuscan columns with a solid paneled door and side lites set below an arched fanlite and flanked by two pairs of double-hung windows with upper-sash muntins and shutters. The walls are clad in wood shakes. The side elevations each have attic vents and an arrangement of wood double-hung windows with muntins. The rear, east elevation has an asymmetrical presentation featuring a partial-width, two-story, projecting volume with a hipped roof and second-story balcony with railing constructed of vertical posts and horizontal rails, set above ground-floor French doors that open onto a deck with a railing to match the second floor. Two pairs of French doors are installed on the ground floor of the primary, recessed volume of the rear elevation which also features a variety of wood casement and hung windows, with and without muntins.

The primary, west elevation of the one-to-two story garage features a front-facing gambrel roof with composite shake shingles and a centered punched opening with a pair of casement multi-lite windows with shutters set above a non-original roll-up paneled garage door and a solid-paneled pedestrian door. The walls are clad in wood shakes. The secondary, north elevation of

the garage features a dormer with a shed roof and a pair of small casement multi-lite windows and a non-original pedestrian door. The rear, east elevation abuts the rear property line and features horizontal wood siding, a small casement multi-lite window, and an attic vent. Lastly, the secondary, south elevation abuts the south property line and features wood shakes.

Documented Changes to the Property:

The property has undergone few major exterior changes since it was originally built in 1926. A permit was issued by Los Angeles County in August 1934 to add a 72 square-foot bathroom at the rear of the first floor. The house was re-roofed with No. 1 Perfect Shingles in August 1944. An electric range was installed in October 1949. Fire damage to the roof was repaired in January 1957. Sixty-one linear feet of six-foot-tall redwood fencing was installed at the rear of the lot in May 1962. The garage was re-roofed in September 1966. The house was re-roofed again in August 1983 with GAF Timberline Class A fiberglass shingles. Electrical service was upgraded to 200 amps in May 1985. In August 1987, a deck was added to the house and a closet was converted into a bathroom. The chimney was repaired in May 1988.

Current Conditions, Use, and Proposed Plans:

The exterior of the building is currently in good condition and it is used as a single-family residence. No changes to the property are proposed at this time.

Historical Overview:

Dutch Colonial Revival Style:

According to the Historic Context/Property Type Report entitled “Architectural/Historical Development of the City of Pasadena” prepared by the City of Pasadena in 1993, Dutch Colonial Period Revival architecture was popularized during a brief period in the 1920s as part of the larger wave of twentieth century Period Revival architecture that was popular between 1920 and 1940:

“After World War I, period revival styles for houses grew in popularity. Changes in building technology, such as inexpensive methods to apply brick, stone veneer or stucco to the exterior of the traditional wood-framed house, facilitated the popularity of period revivals. European influences from England, Spain, and France predominated in the design of both humble and elaborate dwellings. Also included in the period form, Dutch Colonial Period Revival was particularly influential for a short time in the early 1920s.”

The character-defining features of a twentieth century Dutch Colonial Revival single-family residence are:

- Rectangular plan
- Symmetrical façade
- Double-hung multi-pane or multi-pane casement windows
- Side gable roof (clipped gable or gambrel on Dutch Colonial)
- Classically inspired entry (usually with hood that reflects primary roof style)

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 building at 420 South Greenwood Avenue is eligible for designation as a landmark under Criterion C of PMC Section 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.

Generally, in order to qualify under Criterion C, a property type would display most of the character-defining features of its style. It must retain high integrity of design, materials and workmanship that convey its period of construction. While most buildings undergo alteration over time, these alterations should not significantly change the historic appearance of the building.

Under Criterion C, the building at 420 South Greenwood Avenue is significant because it is a locally significant, intact example of a Dutch Colonial Revival style single-family residence. The building has a high level of architectural integrity (its ability to demonstrate why it is significant) through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and feeling, as follows:

- Location: The building and other site features are in their original locations.
- Design: The building retains the majority of its form, plan, space, structure, and style, including its massing, exterior cladding, original fenestration and exterior materials, roof form, and entryway.
- Setting: The single-family residential neighborhood is intact.
- Materials: The building retains a majority of 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 construction, and therefore retains integrity of workmanship.
- Feeling: The property clearly expresses the characteristics of the Dutch Colonial Revival architectural style and evokes the feeling of the early residential development of Pasadena.
- Association: The property at 420 South Greenwood Avenue retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and feeling, and therefore continues to convey its association with early-20th century single-family residential development in Pasadena.

Based on the above, the property retains sufficient integrity to qualify for designation as a landmark under Criterion C. The building retains all of its original character-defining features, including a two-story configuration, simple geometric forms, a moderately-pitched gambrel roof with shingles, shake siding, a symmetrical presentation of multi-paned windows and an elevated, covered Classical entry. All alterations to the building are compatible with the original structure. Contributing structures to this designation include the main house and the original detached garage.

CONCLUSION:

The building at 420 South Greenwood Avenue qualifies for designation as a landmark under Criterion C as an intact, locally significant example of a Dutch Colonial Revival style single-family residence.

Respectfully Submitted,



for Jennifer Paige, AICP
Director of Planning & Community
Development

Prepared by:



Robert W. Keatinge
Assistant Planner

Reviewed by:



Kevin Johnson
Principal Planner

Attachments:

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Application & Historical Documentation (Building Description Blank; Sanborn Map)
- C. Current Photographs
- D. Effects of Historic Designation
- E. Comment Letters Received Prior to Staff Report Publication