

**PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT****STAFF REPORT**

DATE: SEPTEMBER 3, 2024

TO: HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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

SUBJECT: APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK
400 WEST COLORADO BOULEVARD - PASADENA ELKS LODGE NO. 672
BPOE (DHP2024-00112)

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 Pasadena Elks Lodge building, located at 400 West Colorado Boulevard, 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 historic resource property type, period and architectural style and represents the work of an architect whose work is significant to the City. It is a locally significant example of a Neoclassical Revival style building of the clubhouse lodge type, and designed by locally significant architect Myron Hunt, with a latter addition by locally significant architects Cyril Bennett and Fitch Haskell; and
3. Recommend that the City Council approve the designation of the property at 400 West Colorado Boulevard as a landmark.

BACKGROUND:

On April 17, 2024, property representative, Sean Lorenzini, submitted an application for Landmark designation of the Pasadena Elks Lodge building at 400 West Colorado Boulevard. City staff evaluated the property according to the criteria in Section 17.62.040.D.2 of the P.M.C. and determined that the building qualifies for designation as a landmark because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a historic resource property type, period and architectural style

and represents the work of an architect whose work is significant to the City. It is a locally significant example of a Neoclassical Revival style building of the clubhouse lodge type, and designed by locally significant architect Myron Hunt, with a latter addition by locally significant architects Cyril Bennett and Fitch Haskell.

DESCRIPTION:

Property Data

- Address: 400 West Colorado Boulevard, Pasadena
- Location: between the south side of West Colorado Boulevard, the north side of West Green Street, the east side of South Orange Grove Boulevard, and the west side of Terrace Drive
- Date of Construction Completion: 1912
- Original Architect: Myron Hunt
- Original Builder: unknown
- Original Owner: Pasadena Elks Club, No. 672 BPOE
- Original / Present Use: private membership lodge
- Property size: 155,193 square-feet (source: County Assessor)
- Building size: 103,543 square-feet (source: County Assessor)

Architectural Description:

The Neighborhood:

The surrounding context is reflective of Post-War II development of West Colorado Boulevard with a mixture of historic buildings, and larger Post Modern developments that ensued through redevelopment in response to the nearby 210 and 710 freeway interchange that was constructed beginning in the 1970s. Sanborn maps indicate the site was historically surrounded by housing, but has since given way to the current conditions described below, primarily surface parking. Immediate adjacencies include the following:

- Immediate west: a vacant City-owned property, part of the Defenders Parkway, located at the southeast corner of South Orange Grove Boulevard, and West Colorado Boulevard (450 W. Colorado Blvd.)
- Immediate east: a developed privately-owned parcel with a five-story commercial building constructed in 1985 (350 W. Colorado Blvd.)
- Immediate southeast, on subject property: The Montessori Academy, a special learning school established and constructed in 1956 (355 W. Green St.)

Existing surrounding context for the subject property includes the following:

- North, across West Colorado Boulevard: Norton Simon Museum, constructed in 1968 (411 W. Colorado Blvd.)
- East, across Terrace Drive: Ralphs grocery store, constructed in 1980 (320 W. Colorado Blvd.)

- South, across West Green Street: the Ambassador Gardens condominium development, constructed in 2018 (382 W. Green St.)
- West, across South Orange Grove Boulevard: Condominium development, constructed in 1980 (1 S. Orange Grove Blvd.)

The Site:

The site is located on an irregularly-shaped lot, with street frontages along West Colorado Boulevard to the north, South Orange Grove Boulevard to the west, West Green Street to the south, and Terrace Drive to the east. A majority of the subject property is utilized as paved surface parking with the Elks Lodge building located along the West Colorado Boulevard frontage with West Green Street treated as the rear.

The lodge building was constructed on the south side of West Colorado Boulevard. The front setback of the lodge was originally a sloping lawn, which is extant today, along with the original front retaining walls and concrete steps. The front retaining walls feature inverted corners at the centralized concrete steps and the drive approach entry for the porte-cochere. The entry points once supported light posts, which have been removed. Located immediately south of the porte-cochere is an outdoor barbeque area that also functions as a retaining wall, both constructed in the 1950s. Also constructed in the 1950s was the Montessori School, which is located downslope, at the property's southeast corner. The Montessori School is part of a land lease with the Lodge and is not a part of the Lodge's operations.

Exterior Features of the Building:

The Pasadena Elks Lodge building is an example of Classical Colonial Revival style architecture, specifically the Neoclassical Revival style, originally designed by Myron Hunt. A new ballroom addition was constructed in 1928 and designed by Cyril Bennett and Fitch Haskell (Bennett and Haskell). The building is two stories in height from the exterior, however on the interior, there are several intermediate floor levels including a basement, and a full-height attic space with dormer windows. Character-defining features of the building include the following:

- A symmetrical front façade
- A centralized full-height projecting front porch that nearly spans the full-width of the front façade
- Rounded full-height non-fluted Tuscan columns with Doric capitals
- A third-floor terrace at the flat roof of the front porch with iron railing
- Wooden shutters
- Double-hung wood windows with divided lites and a simple projecting header crown
- A centralized single-swing front door with full transom and simple projecting frame
- An entablature consisting of a simple architrave and frieze with a dentil cornice
- Doric pilasters at the flanking façade planes of the projecting front porch
- An inset porte-cochere and side entry at the west elevation
- A hipped primary roof with gabled attic dormers

Notable features of the building include the full-height windows at the front elevation of the first floor, that align with the patterning of the terracotta pavers of the front porch. Hunt designed the

front façade to have a rational cadence of equally spaced columns with a clear view of the windows and centralized entry behind. The side porte-cochere is roofed by the building's second-floor, with a ground-floor side entrance centrally located beneath the porte-cochere. The side entrance is characterized by a single-swing paneled door with flanking sidelites and full transom, inset with a stepped bullnose surround. An original double-height clubroom volume is located at the southwestly rear portion of the lodge house with plaster walls, fully engaged doric pilasters, and an unadorned cornice. In 1928 an additional double-height clubroom space was added to the rear of the lodge house, directly east of the original clubroom space. The addition was designed with a gable roof, stucco façade, and square clerestory windows.

Documented Changes to the Property:

While the interior of the building has undergone generational remodeling, the building remains significantly intact with minimal exterior alterations. Building permit records show that a new 47' x 70' clubroom was constructed in 1928, designed by Bennett and Haskell. The permit also indicates alterations to the existing building, but there is no indication if those alterations included exterior work to the original structure.

As mentioned earlier, changes to the site have occurred, primarily with the surrounding land uses and development context as the surrounding area has transitioned from single-family housing to surface parking and commercial and institutional buildings.

Current Conditions, Use, and Proposed Plans:

The building was originally constructed as the clubhouse of the Pasadena Elks Lodge No. 672 BPOE (Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks) and has remained under the same ownership and use to this day. The Lodge intends to continue in the ownership and operation of the building as the clubhouse for the Pasadena Elks Lodge members. Portions of the interior were recently remodeled, including the main floor lobby and restrooms, and additional interior remodeling of support spaces is planned.

Historical Overview:

The Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks and Pasadena Lodge

The Order of the Elks was originally founded as the "Jolly Corks" in 1868 in New York City by a group of 15 theatrical entertainers as a fraternal organization, "to promote and practice the four cardinal virtues of Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity; to promote the welfare and enhance the happiness of its members; to quicken the spirit of American Patriotism and cultivate good fellowship." The Order promotes acts of charity and community-minded programs including scholarships, drug awareness, supportive programs for veterans and patriotic endeavors. There are currently over 2,000 lodges in the country, with a membership in the hundreds of thousands spanning its over 150-year history.¹ The Grand Lodge, was originally located in New York City, and was approved by the New York Legislature in allowing the Order to establish charter clubs

¹ <https://www.elks.org/who/missionStatement.cfm>; accessed 8/15/2024

throughout the country.² The Pasadena chapter of the BPOE was established in 1908 and retained the services of Myron Hunt to design their clubhouse which remains in existence today.

Colonial Revival and Neoclassical Style:

Colonial Revival was an architectural movement that began in earnest after a renewed sense of patriotism brought on by the U.S. Centennial Exposition of 1876, which brought a renewed interest in the American Colonial period and American Colonial architecture which itself was centered on European idealism of both easily accessible vernacular styles and the high-style symbolic architecture that conveyed ancient democratic precedence and monumentality for the burgeoning republic of the United States. The Neoclassical Revival style, or Classical Colonial Revival style, was a style based on the combined elements of early Colonial Revival and Greek Revival styles. This style, popular beginning in the 1900s through the 1950s, is noted for its common features of full-height porches, classical columns, and symmetrical and monumental front facades.³

Earlier examples often featured Roman detailing of Tuscan columns, and a narrower, less detailed entablature and cornice in comparison to the more detailed Greek style. A secondary upper balcony, independent of the porch columns, or engaged with them is a common feature on Neoclassical buildings.⁴ Greek stylistic features often included detailed door surrounds, often with a rectangular transom and sidelites, and simplified window surrounds.⁵

Additional character-defining features of this style can include the following:⁶

- Shallow gabled or hipped roofs; sometimes featuring domed roofs or dormers
- Prominent pedimented porticos or porch covers either of full height or less than full height supported by rounded or square columns
- Greek or Roman columns and pilasters of the classical orders including Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, or composite
- Secondary porch balcony either inset or engaged with the porch support columns
- Multi-layered cornice lines featuring classical bands of, egg and darts, or other details
- Prominent centered front entry with a classical trim surround
- Symmetrical front façade and rectangular massing; sometimes featuring polygonal forms
- Rectangular divided lite windows including clerestory windows, with a simplified trim surround; sometimes Palladian windows can be found
- Wooden window shutters
- Raised or plinth-style construction
- Brick, stucco, or stone exterior finishes

Myron Hunt, FAIA (1868 – 1952):

Myron Hubbard Hunt was one of the most influential architects in Southern California prior to World War II. He was born in Massachusetts in 1868 and received his education at

² <https://www.elks.org/who/ourHistory.cfm>; accessed 8/15/2024

³ Residential Period Revival Architecture and Development in Pasadena 1915-1942; pp. 26, 28

⁴ A Field Guide to American Houses; McAlester, Virginia Savage; 2015; pp. 235-238

⁵ A Field Guide to American Houses; McAlester, Virginia Savage; 2015; pp. 247-252

⁶ A Field Guide to American Houses; McAlester, Virginia Savage; 2015; pp. 235-238; 247-252

Northwestern University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1893 he married Harriette Hollond Boardman. They spent two years abroad while Hunt studied architecture in Europe. After returning from Europe, Hunt joined the architectural firm of Hartwell & Richardson in Boston, before going to Chicago with Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. Early in his career he also briefly worked for and studied under Frank Lloyd Wright, as they shared an office space in Chicago. In 1903, the Hunts moved to California hoping the climate would help Harriette's health. Hunt entered a partnership with the leading architect, Elmer Grey, from 1903 to 1908, had his own office from 1908 to 1920, and then joined H. C. Chambers from 1920-1947. The important role that Myron Hunt played in the development of Southern California can be seen in the list of a few of the buildings he designed: The Huntington Library, the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, the Rose Bowl, the Pasadena Public Library, the Huntington Hospital, buildings at Caltech, Occidental College and Pomona College, in addition to many other public buildings and private residences. In 1928, the City of Pasadena awarded him the Arthur Noble Medal for outstanding civic service. The Architecture and Design Collection of the University Museum of the University of California, Santa Barbara, and the Huntington Library in San Marino maintain archival documents and collections of his work.

Bennett and Haskell⁷:

J. Cyril Bennett (1891-1957) was born in England, spent his young childhood in Chicago, and moved with his family to Pasadena in 1903, where he became a graduate of Pasadena High School. Bennett began his architecture career as an apprentice with Greene and Greene, eventually establishing his own office in 1914, where he specialized in residential bungalows in the Colonial Revival style. American born, Fitch Haskell (1883-1962) was an architect that established a partnership with Bennett in 1923, and together, they designed notable commercial and civic buildings. These buildings include the Pasadena Masonic Temple, the Raymond Theatre, the Pasadena Civic Auditorium (with Bergstrom), and a majority of the commercial building facades along Colorado Boulevard when the city widened the street in 1929. The partnership ended in 1936, when Bennett primarily focused on civic endeavors which included serving as the head of the Federal Housing Bureau in Pasadena, and president of the Tournament of Roses Parade Association.

ANALYSIS:

The Pasadena Elks Lodge building located at 400 West Colorado Boulevard is eligible for designation as a landmark under Criterion C of PMC Section 17.62.040.D.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 possesses artistic values of significance to the City.

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

⁷ Residential Period Revival Architecture and Development in Pasadena 1915-1942; pp. 12-13.

alteration over time, these alterations should not significantly change the historic appearance of the building.

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 a 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.

Under Criterion C, the building at 400 West Colorado Boulevard is significant because it is a locally significant, intact example of a Neoclassical Revival style building, initially designed by Myron Hunt, with later additions by Bennett and Haskell. The building has a high level of architectural integrity (its ability to demonstrate why it is significant) through its location, design, materials, workmanship and feeling, as follows:

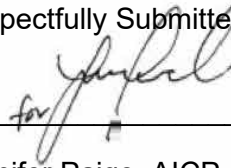
- Location: The building and other site features are in their original locations.
- Design: The building retains the majority of its structural and architectural form, plan, and style, particularly its symmetrical front façade, and use as a clubhouse lodge with its associated interior spaces and programming.
- Materials: The building retains a majority of its original exterior materials including its windows.
- Workmanship: The building retains the majority of its exterior materials and features that reflect the design talents of Myron Hunt and the classical architectural style and its construction of an extant clubhouse lodge type structure, and therefore retains integrity of workmanship.
- Feeling: The property clearly expresses the characteristics of the Neoclassical architectural style and evokes the turn of the century lodge house construction due to the growth and establishment of fraternal organizations in the City.
- Association: The property retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship and feeling, and therefore continues to convey its association with the establishment and growth of fraternal organizations at the beginning of the 20th century 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 symmetrical front façade, original windows, full-height and nearly full-width front porch, exterior finishes, porte-cochere, original site retaining walls, and original use as the club house lodge for the Pasadena Elks. All known exterior alterations have occurred with site elements such as the setting, landscape, the parking lot, and outdoor barbeque area, which have minimal impact on the integrity of the structure and do no impact its character-defining features. Although the building has lost integrity of setting, pursuant to National Register Bulletin #15, this aspect of integrity is not essential for conveying significance under Criterion C. The additional known alteration was the addition of a new clubroom by Bennett and Haskell in 1928, which is considered a contributing feature, along with the original structure, and its front yard retaining walls.

CONCLUSION:

The Pasadena Elks Lodge building located 400 West Colorado Boulevard qualifies for designation as a landmark under Criterion C as an intact, locally significant example of a Neoclassical Revival style clubhouse lodge building, designed by locally significant architect, Myron Hunt, with an addition designed by locally significant architects, Bennett and Haskell.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jennifer Paige, AICP
Director of Planning & Community
Development Department

Prepared by:



Edwar Sissi
Planner

Reviewed by:



Kevin Johnson
Principal Planner

Attachments:

- A. Vicinity Maps and Subdivision Maps
- B. Application
- C. Historical Documentation (Building Description Blanks) and Archived Permits and
- D. Sanborn Maps
- E. Historical Photographs
- F. Current Photographs
- G. Effects of Historic Designation