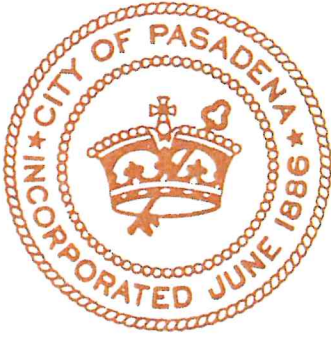




Agenda Report

November 17, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Planning & Community Development Department
SUBJECT: **APPROVE THE DESIGNATION OF THE WELSH HOUSE AT 1220 WYNN ROAD 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) 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 Welsh House at 1220 Wynn Road meets Criterion C as a landmark pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code (PMC) Section 17.62.040.D.2.c because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Mid-Century Modern architectural style designed by architect Harold B. Zook;
3. Adopt a resolution approving a Declaration of Landmark Designation for 1220 Wynn Road, Pasadena, California;
4. Authorize the Mayor to execute a Declaration of Landmark Designation for 1220 Wynn Road, Pasadena, California; and
5. Direct the City Clerk to record the declaration with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

On September 2, 2025, the Historic Preservation Commission recommended that the City Council approve the designation of the Welsh House at 1220 Wynn Road as a landmark under Criterion C of PMC Section 17.62.040.D.2.

BACKGROUND:

On May 28, 2025, property owners Melinda and Aaron Kiely submitted an application for landmark designation of the building at 1220 Wynn Road. City staff evaluated the property and determined that the building qualifies for designation as a landmark.

The Site

The property is located on a flag-shaped lot on the east side of the Wynn Road cul-de-sac. The property consists of a one-story single-family residential building with an attached garage. The building is not visible from the street due to heavy landscaping, the narrow street frontage at the cul-de-sac, and the building being sited on the flag portion of the lot. The rear (east) side of the property is a sloping ravine with dense landscaping bordering Sierra Madre Villa Avenue.

Exterior Features of the Building

The Welsh House is a single-family residence built in the Mid-Century Modern architectural style. The house has a simple rectangular, L-shape form creating a strong emphasis on horizontal lines. The tar and gravel finished roof is flat, with wide, overhanging eaves that emphasize the horizontal profile. All of the eaves have wood tongue-and-groove sheathing, exposed rafters, and angled fasciae. The exterior walls are unadorned stucco surfaces with areas of vertical tongue-and-groove siding on the front elevation of the house, which extends into fencing of the same design towards the south end of the property. The entrance is set back slightly from the front elevation of the house and includes a wide, solid panel wood front door with a wide jalousie sidelight. The house features large full-height window glazing and sliding-glass doors (some with jalousie transoms) on the north and east elevations and clerestory windows on the front. The garage is located closer to the street than the house, is attached to the house with a covered breezeway near the northwest corner of the house, and is similarly constructed in the Mid-Century Modern architectural style, with a flat roof, wide overhanging eaves, and similar exterior materials and treatments as the primary residence. There is minimal exterior ornamentation on the house.

Documented Changes to the Property

The property has not been substantially altered from its original appearance other than the in-kind replacement of original roofing materials in 1976.

Mid-Century Modern style¹

The development of Mid-century Modern architecture was fostered in part by Arts & Architecture magazine's pivotal Case Study Program (1945-1966). The program was conceived as a forum for experimentation in low-cost housing for middle-class families, in response to the post-war housing shortage. Mid-Century Modern is the term used to describe residences that retain their character defining features such as modular construction, industrial materials, rectilinear forms, glass curtain walls, open plans, and

¹ Architecture and Design Context of the City of Pasadena Historic Context Statement, Sub-Theme: Mid-Century Modern, 1945-1968.

a blurring of the distinction between indoor and outdoor space. The demarcation between public and private spaces was clearly defined, with the living spaces oriented toward a central, private garden and shielded from the street.

Harold B. Zook (1920 – Unknown)

Harold B. Zook was born in Chicago in 1920 and is the son of renown Chicago architect Roscoe Harold Zook. Harold B. Zook received his education at Cornell University. He was a draftsman for various firms in Chicago for a few years before working with architects John Porter Clark and Albert Frey, who are celebrated as founders of modernist designs in Palm Springs, California. He partnered with Harold J. Bissner to create the firm Bissner and Zook, before branching out on his own in 1948. His last known residence was in Corona del Mar, California in 1996. The important role that Harold B. Zook played in the development of Southern California can be seen in the list of buildings and houses he designed, which include The Saga Motor Hotel, a prime example of a Mid-Century Modern style building in Pasadena built in the 1950s, the Bungalows at the Joshua Tree Retreat Center, and many single-family residences on Mesita Road and Wynn Road.

Character-Defining Features of the House

- One-story, simple rectangular, L-shape configuration
- Tar and gravel finished roof with wide, overhanging eaves
- Wood tongue-and-groove sheathing, exposed rafters, and angled fasciae
- Unadorned stucco surfaces with areas of vertical tongue-and-groove siding
- Vertical tongue-and-groove fencing which extends from the front façade
- Wide, solid panel wood front door with a wide jalousie sidelight
- Full-height window glazing and sliding-glass doors (some with jalousie transoms)
- Partially attached garage with a covered breezeway
- Wide brick chimney exposed at the roofline near the main entrance

ANALYSIS:

The Welsh House at 1220 Wynn Road 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.

Under Criterion C, the Welsh House is significant because it is a distinctive, intact example of the Mid-Century Modern architectural style as applied to a single-family residential building. The building retains architectural integrity (its ability to demonstrate why it is significant) through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association as follows:

- Location: The building and other site features are in their original locations.

- Design: The building retains its form, plan, space, structure, and style, including its simple massing, exterior stucco and wood cladding, original fenestration, roof form, and entryway.
- Setting: The single-family residence, including the other single-family residences designed by Harold B. Zook on Mesita and Wynn Roads, are intact.
- Materials: The building retains a majority of its original exterior materials, other than the roof materials, which were replaced in-kind.
- Workmanship: The building retains the exterior materials and features that reflect the craftsmanship of the Mid-Century Modern style single-family residence design and construction, and therefore retains integrity of workmanship.
- Feeling: The property clearly expresses the characteristics of the Mid-Century Modern style and evokes the feeling of a simple and functional relationship between structure and nature.
- Association: The property at 1220 Wynn Road retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and feeling, and therefore continues to convey its association with the Mid-Century Modern style single-family residence in Pasadena.

Based on the above, the Welsh House exhibits many of the features often found in Mid-Century Modern architecture including its modular construction, industrial materials, rectilinear forms, open plans, and a blurring of the distinction between indoor and outdoor space. Designed by Harold B. Zook, the Welsh House retains sufficient integrity to qualify for designation as a landmark under Criterion C as a prime example of the Mid-Century Modern architectural style. The period of significance for the Welsh House is 1957, the date of construction. The contributing features to this designation include the main residential building, attached garage, and fence extending from the façade.

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:

The proposed designation qualifies for a categorical exemption pursuant to Section 15308, Class 8 of the CEQA Guidelines. Class 8 exemptions consist 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:

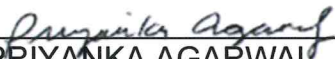
In some instances, owners of designated historic properties may apply to the City for a Historic Property Contract (Mills Act), which allows an alternative and often lower property tax assessment. The City Council reviewed the projected loss of property tax revenue from this program in 2002 when it adopted 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,



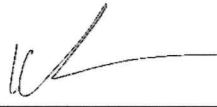
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City Manager

Attachments (5):

- A. Application & Supplemental Research
- B. Vicinity and Aerial Maps
- C. Current Photographs
- D. Effects of Historic Designation