



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

DATE: JULY 20, 2021

TO: HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

FROM: DAVID M. REYES, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: APPEAL OF DIRECTOR DECISION: HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION OF 249-255 SOUTH CATALINA AVENUE/SOUTH CATALINA AVENUE LANDMARK DISTRICT

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Uphold the Director's May 24, 2021 determination that the identified properties on South Catalina Avenue meet the criteria in PMC Section 17.62.040 and are therefore eligible for designation as a landmark district.

BACKGROUND:

On May 24, 2021, the Director, acting under the provisions of Section 17.62.040 of the Pasadena Municipal Code (PMC), issued a decision on an application for Historic Resource Evaluation for the property at 249-255 South Catalina Avenue. As described in the Notice of Determination letter in Attachment A, the subject property was determined to be ineligible for individual historical designation; however, it was determined to be a contributing property to an eligible landmark district of five properties on South Catalina Avenue. On June 2, 2021, the applicant, John Poindexter of Envirotecture, Inc., appealed the Director's decision. Attachment B includes the appeal application that was submitted, as well as additional appeal arguments provided by the appellant subsequent to the filing of the appeal application.

ANALYSIS:

As stated in the decision letter in Attachment A, the determination of landmark district eligibility was based on the criteria in PMC Section 17.62.040.G. These criteria, along with staff's further analysis of each criterion, are listed below:

1. "A landmark district shall include all landmark districts previously designated before adoption of this Chapter in 2002 and any grouping of contiguous properties that also meet the following criteria:
 - a. Within its boundaries, a minimum of 60 percent of the properties qualify as contributing;"

As stated in the decision letter in Attachment A, the eligible landmark district consists of 11 buildings with nine contributing buildings and two non-contributing buildings. Based on this evaluation, 82% of the properties qualify as contributing; therefore, this criterion is met.

- b. "A simple majority (51%) of property owners support the designation at the time of designation by the City Council; and"

This criterion does not apply to a determination of eligibility, as it specifically states that it applies "at the time of designation by the City Council." At this time, the district is not under consideration for formal designation by the City Council.

- c. "The grouping represents a significant and distinguishable entity of Citywide importance and one or more of a defined historic, cultural, development and/or architectural context(s) (e.g., 1991 Citywide historic context, as amended, historic context prepared in an intensive-level survey or historic context prepared specifically for the nominated landmark district)."

As stated in the decision letter in Attachment A, the eligible landmark district represents three historic contexts: Late 19th/Early 20th Century Development & Architecture, the Arts & Crafts Movement, and Bungalow Courts. Each of these historic contexts has been fully developed and described in historic context reports prepared by qualified professionals on behalf of the City and the determination of the landmark district's eligibility for designation is based on the identification of historically significant property types and architectural features contained within these reports. By virtue of the representation of significant property types identified within three historic context reports, the grouping represents a significant and distinguishable entity of Citywide importance. In addition, by virtue of allowing landmark districts to represent multiple historic contexts, the designation criteria in the Zoning Code acknowledge the diversity of Pasadena's neighborhoods, which rarely represent a single architectural period of the City's history. While there are examples of small landmark districts that have relatively short periods of significance, these are relatively rare and this criterion recognizes that groupings of buildings that represent multiple historic contexts are common throughout the City. It should also be noted that the criteria do not establish a minimum number of properties that may constitute a landmark district, nor a criterion that smaller landmark districts represent fewer historic contexts.

- 2. When determining the boundaries of a landmark district, the Director, Historic Preservation Commission, Planning Commission and City Council shall use the National Register of Historic Places Bulletin #21: "Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties."

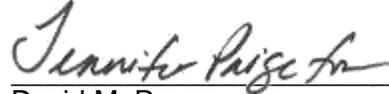
National Register Bulletin 21 states that appropriate natural or cultural features should be identified to define the boundaries of eligible historic resources. Such features include distribution of resources, current legal boundaries, historic boundaries, natural features and cultural features. It also lists other factors to consider such as integrity, setting and landscape features, use and research potential. In this instance, the boundaries are based on existing property lines, historical integrity of the resources, and the distribution of resources within the

neighborhood. Properties outside the boundaries are clearly from later periods of the City's historical development and do not represent identified historical property types in any of the City's historic context reports and the properties in the identified boundaries represent this identified historic contexts noted above and retain integrity.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the analysis above and in Attachment A, staff recommends that the Commission uphold the Director's May 24, 2021 determination that the identified properties on South Catalina Avenue meet the criteria in PMC Section 17.62.040 and are therefore eligible for designation as a landmark district.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Attachments:

- A. Decision letter dated May 24, 2021 (with attachments)
- B. Appeal application and additional arguments from the appellant