



BUNGALOW HEAVEN™ NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Mr. Kevin Johnson
Design & Historic Preservation Section
City of Pasadena Planning & Community Development Department

August 3, 2020

Dear Mr. Johnson,

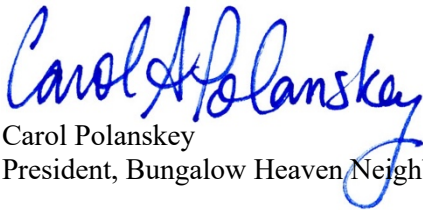
Thank you for considering the recommendations to the Historic Preservation Ordinance (HPO) update submitted by the Bungalow Heaven Neighborhood Association (BHNA) Board on July 8, 2020. We have reviewed the subsequent staff report prepared for the Historic Preservation Commission meeting on August 4, 2020 and have the following response:

1. **APPEALS AND CALLS FOR REVIEW IN LANDMARK DISTRICTS WITH CONSERVATION PLANS. Affected Current Code Section: 17.62.030.A.8.** We thank staff for proposing an amendment to the HPO to allow appeals and calls for review by the three neighborhoods that have Conservation Plans.
2. **CRITERIA FOR RESCISSION OF OR AMENDMENT TO A LANDMARK DISTRICT OR CONSERVATION PLAN Affected Current Code Section 17.62.070.H).** We continue to challenge the 51% written support requirement proposed in the staff report. This proposal holds neighborhoods with Conservation Plans to a higher standard than modifications to the HPO itself. The current HPO update involves notices to the community and a public process, but does not require 51% of the homeowners of all affected landmark districts to provide written approval. BHNA was advocating for a process for our Conservation Plan update, on a neighborhood scale, equivalent to what is being followed with the HPO. Again, we note that in 1993, the Bungalow Heaven Conservation Plan was amended at the city's request without 51% of the homeowners voting. While we offered one version of what an amendment process might look like, we were prepared to have a dialog with the city as to the final form that process would take. With regard to the proposed amendment, we also seek clarification as to what is meant by "written support". In the days of COVID-19 where door to door canvassing is no longer an option and electronic signatures have become commonplace in commerce, some flexibility seems warranted. The city has seen the wisdom in updating the HPO four times since 2002, yet the Conservation Plans are decades old because of the difficulty of canvassing the neighborhood for signatures. BHNA requests the opportunity to meet with Design & Historic Preservation staff to discuss possible options prior to finalization of the HPO update.
3. **MODIFICATION OF CONTRIBUTING/NON-CONTRIBUTING STATUS AFTER LANDMARK DISTRICT DESIGNATION Affected Current Code Section: 17.62.020 – Table 6-5.** The proposed amendments are an improvement on the existing HPO; however, we request that the final bullet be modified to include physical evidence from homes built by the same builder to the list of qualified documentation. It is very difficult to find direct documentation on many historic homes and we have found that referencing sister-homes or other homes from the same builder in the era as valuable references for restoration. We appreciate that you highlighted that the individual Conservation Plans have less stringent COA review thresholds than the HPO and this is one of the areas we would like to amend in the BH Conservation Plan to bring it more in line with the HPO (item 2 above) The staff report does not acknowledge the offer that BHNA has made to provide a list of contributing homes based on current conditions. We would like to continue to pursue this option with staff. An "Altered Contributor" category would help inform owners of the potential of their property, encourage restoration, and prevent further nonreversible alterations.

4. **PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE**
Affected Current Code Section: 17.62.120. While it is encouraging that staff is recommending the potential of monetary fines, that statement alone is an insufficient deterrent. We dispute the assertion that this is a rare occurrence, having had two homes demolished within Bungalow Heaven. We recommend a penalty that is some significant fraction of the cost of the project in order to have an impact on the behavior of homeowners and contractors considering unpermitted and inappropriate alterations or demolitions. We see such financial incentive employed to encourage compliance in other departments of the city such as parking enforcement, which, unlike a demolition, is reversible. We appreciate that staff will work with the Pasadena-Foothill Association of Realtors to develop appropriate disclosure forms; however, we encourage staff to include this in the HPO to at least reference the relevant civil code so that it is clear to anyone reading the HPO that notification is a requirement.
5. **FINDINGS FOR DEMOLITION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES** **Affected Current Code Section: 17.62.090.E.4.** We recommend that the proposed amendment be modified to include the stipulation that the two qualified professionals are independent and objective, and are supplied by the city and paid with fees that are included as part of the process for permitting.

While we understand that staff is still working on the document, it would be easier for the public to review the proposed updates if they were provided in context with the rest of the ordinance. We request that a draft of the ordinance be provided as soon as practical and at least two weeks prior to presentation to the City Council.

Best regards,



Carol Polansky
President, Bungalow Heaven Neighborhood Association