



April 5, 2021

City of Pasadena Historic Preservation Commission
Attn: Michi Takeda
Hale Building
175 N. Garfield Ave., 2nd Floor
Pasadena, CA 91101

Re: Pasadena Avenue Historic District

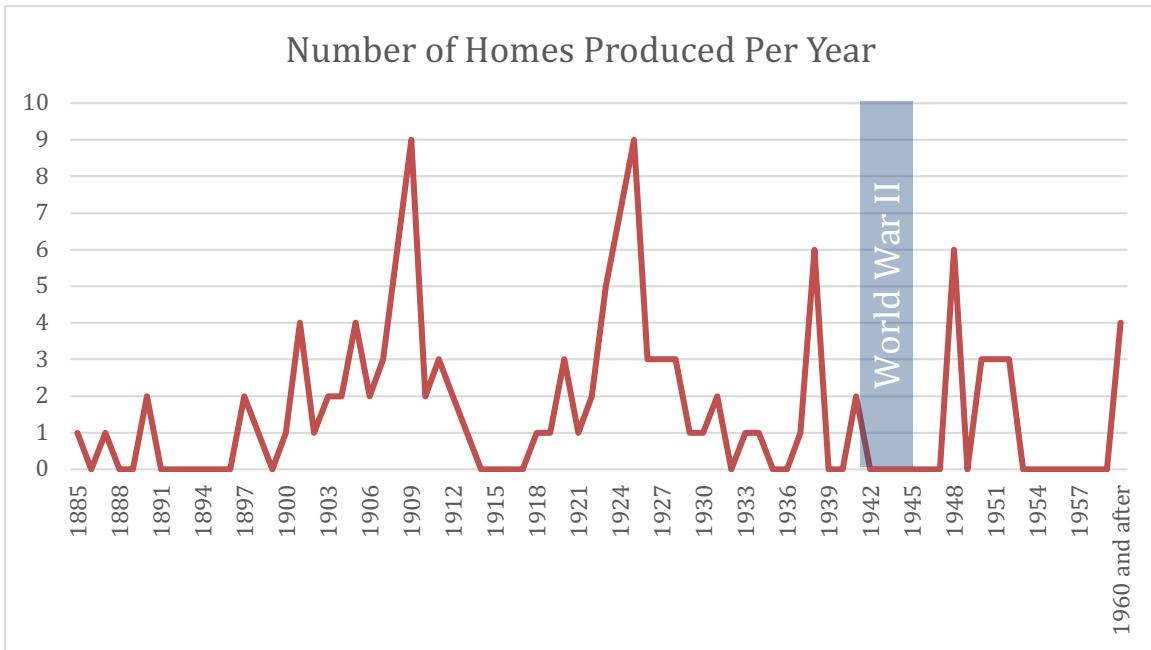
Dear Members of the Historic Preservation Commission:

We are pleased you will be reviewing the Pasadena Avenue Historic District at this meeting, and hope you will support our nomination. Our consultant, Shannon Papin, has been working hard on this document since 2019, and though COVID delayed the State's schedule, we are happy it is moving forward. We thank Kevin Johnson for the comments and suggestions, and we agree with his recommendations. We will incorporate them into the document. We want the nomination to be as accurate as possible. Shannon has also been working closely with John Ripley, who has provided additional edits, some of which are not reflected in the version of the document which is publicly available.

It is important to note that once the District is listed, the southern portion of the 710 Corridor in Pasadena will be granted preservation protections and incentives. The northern portion, the Markham Place History District, was nominated by Pasadena Heritage several years ago and is now listed, so the Pasadena Avenue nomination completes the process. We also draw your attention to the fact that both of these Districts were determined eligible at least twice in the past, during the long review process for the 710 Freeway. The nomination before you will preserve the aesthetics of a district that has been virtually unchanged since the 1950s. It will open up powerful tools like the Mills Act and the State Historic Building Code to homeowners looking to restore Caltrans homes. Independent of the nomination, we are working with Caltrans to get several historic covenants, essentially easements, in place to preserve additional interior features.

We did want to address one issue that is raised in the Staff Report and provide a simple explanation for the 1938 Period of Significance cutoff. This date marked the end of a pre-WWII pattern of development, which includes the majority of the contributing homes in the district. There are several Minimal Traditional homes built in the 1930s, with plans that would influence the later Ranch homes, but with traditional details derived from Period Revival Styles. Between 1939 and 1948, there is a lull in new construction, followed by a Postwar boom between 1948 and 1952 in particular. There is a marked change in style

between the Prewar and Postwar homes, as technologies, attitudes, and the economy changed, and the quality of construction in the Postwar homes in the District is significantly inferior, especially in comparison to the series of 1930s Period Revival homes on Wigmore Drive. Additionally, more of these Postwar homes have been altered in the years since, with only a handful that would remain as contributing resources to the district. With this information in hand, the decision was made to end the Period of Significance at 1938. We have provided a chart below to help demonstrate this, and we will be sure to elucidate further on this topic within the body of the nomination.



We believe the chosen period of significance captures the most historically significant buildings and captures two separate waves of development, the Craftsman Era peak in 1909 and the Revival Era peak in 1925. We believe the six homes built in 1938 should be categorized with and are a culmination of the broader Revival movement. We have worked closely with the State Office on setting the 1938 date, which they accepted.

We look forward to a discussion of the District, and thank you for your careful review.

Sincerely,

Susan N. Mossman
Executive Director

Andrew Salimian
Preservation Director