

HOW A PROPERTY BECOMES AN HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION
CULTURAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
ROOM 1500, CITY HALL
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

- I. WHEN SHOULD A PROPERTY BE SUBMITTED FOR DECLARATION OR CONSIDERATION?
At any time, but preferably before it is endangered.
- II. WHO MAY NOMINATE A PROPERTY?
Owner
Individual
Group
- III. WHAT MAY BE DECLARED?
An historical or cultural monument is any site (including significant trees or other plant life located thereon), building or structure of particular historic or cultural significance to the City of Los Angeles, such as historic structures or sites in which the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, state or community is reflected or exemplified, or which are identified with historic personages or with important events in the main currents of national, state or local history, or which embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural-type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period style or method of construction, or a notable work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age.
- IV. WHAT STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN?
Research your proposed monument and complete application forms, providing all information and photographs as requested.
- V-A. WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE NOMINATION IF IT IS BASED ON ARCHITECTURE

Architect	Photos
Location	Date of original construction
Owner	Date of additions or remodeling
Style	Outstanding features-exterior and interior
- B. HISTORIC PRESERVATION OVERLAY ZONE
Same criteria apply, but may include other properties which contribute to the integrity of the whole district.
- VI. WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE NOMINATION IF IT IS BASED ON HISTORIC GROUNDS?
Documentation showing that an historically important person(s) was born in or occupied this property.
You must be certain of your facts and able to substantiate them.
It may be the site of an historic event.
See Sec. 22.130 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code for further definition.
- VII. WHAT PROPERTIES MAY NOT BE DECLARED?
Owned by school district, County, State or Federal government.
Located outside the Los Angeles City limits.
- VIII. WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER THE NOMINATION IS SUBMITTED?
Nomination will be considered by the Cultural Heritage Commission which will decide, on the basis of information and pictures submitted, to either:
1—Take the nomination under consideration or
2—Decline to do so

IX. WHAT THE CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION CAN DO

Make A Decision About Declaration Based Solely on Merit, Consistent With Sec. 22.130 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code.

Declare as an Historic-Cultural Monument—subject to approval of City Council—any property qualifying under Sec. 22.130 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code.

This Means That—

If the property is declared, the Commission may file an objection to issuance of a permit for demolition—major alteration or removal in accordance with Sec. 22.133 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code.

This Action Means—

A public hearing will be held within 30 days to allow all concerned parties to present arguments pro and con.

The Commission may decide to suspend any of the aforementioned permits for a minimum of 30 days and a maximum of 180 days.

If no reasonable prospect for preservation or adaptive use exists at the end of the suspension period, the Commission shall reluctantly withdraw its objection and the permit will be issued.

At the End of 100 Days—

The Commission may ask for an extension, not to exceed an additional 180 days, with the approval of the City Council.

X. WHAT THE CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION CANNOT DO

Apply any restrictions on the use of property by the owner.

Require property to be open to the public.

Become involved in tenant/owner disputes.

Declare a property an Historic-Cultural Monument on its own initiative.

Help reduce your taxes.

Give City mailing lists to groups.

Become involved in preservation group/owner disputes.

2/14/85

Cultural Heritage Commission
Cultural Affairs Department
Room 1500, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The formation of what is now the Cultural Heritage Commission was proposed by the Preservation of Historic Buildings Committee, Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Following two years of extensive work, the Commission's function was established by ordinance approved by the Los Angeles City Council in May, 1962. At that time, the Commission's action in declaring Historic-Cultural Monuments was unilateral. However, as of July 1, 1980 an amendment to the Administrative Code requires that the City Council confirm the Commission's action before a property is included in the list of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

The criteria for declaring a Historic-Cultural Monument are spelled out in Section 22.130 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code.

The jurisdiction of the five member Cultural Heritage Commission over a declared Historic-Cultural Monument is limited to a maximum of 360 days from the date the Commission files objection to the issuance of a permit for demolition, major alteration or removal of said monument. During the "grace period" the Commission endeavors to arouse the interest of local citizens, private organizations, historical societies, etc. to make efforts towards the preservation of the endangered historic property. All city departments, particularly the departments of Building and Safety and City Planning, extend full cooperation to the Cultural Heritage Commission.

Many of the Historic-Cultural Monuments declared by the Cultural Heritage Commission were well known and self-evident, i.e., Bradbury Building, Watts Towers, Old Plaza Church. Others were simply "discovered" by interested parties and brought to the attention of the Commission. As a result of a citywide architectural and historical resource survey, the Commission is identifying and declaring many more significant buildings and structures for preservation.

It should be noted that the Commission has no authority over property owned by the School District, County, State or Federal government - nor over property located outside of the Los Angeles City limits. The Commission may not apply restrictions on the use of property by the owner nor require that private property be open to the public.

As of May, 1979, the City amended the Municipal Code to provide for the creation of Historic Preservation Overlay Zones. It is now possible to identify certain areas as "historic districts," thus protecting and enhancing structures and features that are reminders of the city's history, are unique and irreplaceable assets to our city and its neighborhoods or are worthy examples of past architectural styles.

The effectiveness of the Commission has been evidenced in numerous instances, the best example being the Leonis Adobe in Calabasas, Historic-Cultural Monument No. 1. Due to suspension of the permit to demolish this structure, the Leonis Adobe Association was successful in acquiring the adobe for preservation and restoration. In May of 1966 the Leonis Adobe was opened for the enjoyment of the public, fully restored and housing artifacts and furnishings of the period of 1879.

Other buildings saved through the Commission's intervention are the Pellissier Building (with the Wiltern Theatre) the Hale House, Bolton Hall, Loyola Theatre and the Janes House.

It is not for the purpose of living in the past, but for keeping a permanent record of historic, cultural, aesthetically beautiful or architecturally important sites that the Cultural Heritage Commission endeavors to preserve certain structures and makes an effort to blend them with the modern environment. It is hoped that important works being created today may also be preserved for posterity, so that future generations will have a chronological "living" record of the beauty and history of their surroundings.

An ordinance, declarative of existing law, authorizing the Department of Building and Safety to withhold permits for the demolition of historical and cultural monuments.

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the City of Los Angeles to preserve sites, buildings and structures which have historical or cultural significance, and

WHEREAS, the City has, in furtherance of that policy, enacted Los Angeles Administrative Code Sections 22.120 et seq., providing for the designation and preservation of historical and cultural monuments; and

WHEREAS, said sections provide for delaying the issuance of permits to demolish, alter or remove buildings which have been designated as historical or cultural monuments, and grant to the Cultural Heritage Board discretion in determining whether to delay the issuance of such permits and in finding ways to preserve such buildings; and

WHEREAS, the City of Los Angeles presently requires that the issuance of permits to demolish designated historical and cultural monuments be preceded by environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act; and

WHEREAS, a dispute has arisen concerning whether the issuance of such permits is subject to environmental review; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Council to eliminate any dispute in this regard; NOW THEREFORE,

THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Sec. 1. Chapter IX of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is hereby amended by adding a new Section 91.0203.2 to read:

SEC. 91.0203.2. DEMOLITION PERMITS FOR HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL BUILDINGS.

The Department shall not issue a permit to demolish, alter or remove a building or structure of historical, archaeological or architectural consequence, if such building or structure has been officially designated, or has been determined by state or federal action to be eligible for designation, on the National Register of Historic Places, or has been included on the City of Los Angeles list of Historic-Cultural Monuments, without the Department having first determined whether the demolition, alteration or removal may result in the loss of or serious damage to a significant historical or cultural asset. If the Department determines that such loss or damage may occur, an environmental impact report must be prepared. If the environmental impact report identifies the historical or cultural asset as significant, the permit shall not be issued without the Department first finding that specific economic, social, or other considerations make infeasible the preservation of the building or structure.

Sec. 2. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage of this ordinance and cause the same to be published in some daily newspaper printed and published in the City of Los Angeles.

I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance was passed by the Council of the City of Los Angeles, at its meeting of April 17, 1984

ELIAS MARTINEZ, City Clerk,

By

(signed) EDWARD A. ASHDOWN, Deputy.

Approved April 18, 1984

(signed) TOM BRADLEY, Mayor.

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