

Los Angeles Department of City Planning

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CASE NO.: CHC-2011-909-HCM
ENV-2011-910-CE

HEARING DATE: June 16, 2011
TIME: 10:00 AM
PLACE: City Hall, Room 1010
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA
90012

Location: 220 South Wilton Place
Council District: 4
Community Plan Area: Wilshire
Area Planning Commission: Central
Neighborhood Council: Greater Wilshire
Legal Description: Lot 4, Block A, Ridgewood Park Tract

PROJECT: Historic-Cultural Monument Application for the
CATALINA BRENT PICO HOUSE

REQUEST: Declare the property a Historic-Cultural Monument

**APPLICANT/
OWNER:** Mary Sheehan Rajswing and Marc Rajswing
220 South Wilton Place
Los Angeles, CA 90004

**OWNER'S
REPRESENTATIVE:** Historic Preservation Partners
Vanessa Withers
419 Concord Ave
Monrovia, CA 91016

RECOMMENDATION **That the Cultural Heritage Commission:**

1. **Declare** the property a Historic-Cultural Monument per Los Angeles Administrative Code Chapter 9, Division 22, Article 1, Section 22.171.7
2. **Adopt** the report findings.

MICHAEL J. LOGRANDE
Director of Planning
[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Ken Bernstein, AICP, Manager
Office of Historic Resources

Prepared by:
[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Edgar Garcia, Preservation Planner
Office of Historic Resources

Attachments: Historic-Cultural Monument Application

FINDINGS

1. The building “embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period style or method of construction” as an example of Craftsman style residential architecture.
2. The property is identified with historic personages Romulo Pico, adopted son of General Don Andres Pico, and his wife, Catalina Brent Pico.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (“CEQA”) FINDINGS

The Commission hereby recommends that Council find the proposed designation of the Catalina Brent Pico House as a Historic-Cultural Monument to be exempt from further analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, Sections 15308 (Class 8) and 15331 (Class 31).

CRITERIA

The criterion is the Cultural Heritage Ordinance which defines a historical or cultural monument as 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, 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.

SUMMARY

Built in 1912, this two-story single-family residence exhibits character-defining features of Craftsman-style architecture along with elements of Tudor, Swiss, Chalet, and Japanese styles. The subject building is square in plan with a cross-gable roof with multiple roof planes covered in composition shingles. The subject building’s roofline has decorative braces and exposed rafters. The primary façade is asymmetric with two half timbered cross gabled overhangs. A full-length porch on the main façade extends beyond the building to form a port-cochere on the northern portion of the property. A front-facing half gable with wood trimmed fascia bisects the porch and frames the off-centered entrance. This porch is supported by cast stone pillars. The entrance has a large wooden door with wooden decorated pilasters and pediment. The second-story features an off-center turret on the southern side of the primary façade with a bay window. Windows are fixed pane windows, double-hung wood windows with diamond pane upper sashes, and multi-paned casement windows. The exterior walls are clad in wood clapboard on the ground floor and wood shingle and half timbering on the second story. Other ornamental features are decorative verge boards with mission inspired cut-work dentil moldings, half timbering and brackets, and rough stone pillars. Significant interior spaces include a rough stone fireplace, boxed-beam ceiling with pendant lighting, wood moldings, and built-in cabinets. Secondary buildings include a single car garage located on the north-east corner of the lot.

The building was constructed as the residence of Catalina Brent Pico and her husband Romulo Pico. Edward J. Harper purchased the two adjoining lots on Wilton Place and sold the lot at 220 S. Wilton to Jay M. Decker. Grant deed records indicate Catalina Pico as the original owner of

the property. She resided in the residence until 1918, a few years after the passing of her husband. Catalina Brent Pico, the daughter of General Brent, married into one of the most influential families in California when she married Romulo Pico, adopted son of General Don Andres Pico. Don Andres and his brother Pico were awarded missions in southern California and given the task of secularizing them. Although Pio Pico is credited as the last Mexican governor of California, a treaty document ending the Mexican-American War records Andres as the last governor.

Permit records for the subject house are not complete and do not include original building permits. Research on the home indicates the house was once used as a boarding house. It was at this time that the front porch was enclosed and an exterior staircase existed on the rear façade; however, these changes have since been removed. The secondary building in the rear and the additions to the back of the subject building appear to not be original but were designed to be compatible with the Craftsman design of the house.

DISCUSSION

The Catalina Brent Pico House property successfully meets two of the specified Historic-Cultural Monument criteria: 1) “embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period style or method of construction,” and 2) is associated with historic personages. As a residential building designed in the Craftsman style and for its association with Romulo Pico and his wife Catalina Brent Pico, the property qualifies for designation as a Historic-Cultural Monument based on these criteria.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting of April 21, 2011, the Cultural Heritage Commission voted to take the application under consideration. On May 26, 2011, the Cultural Heritage Commission toured the subject property.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (“CEQA”) REVIEW

State of California CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 “*consists 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 protection of the environment.*”

State of California CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 “*consists of projects limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic buildings.*”

The designation of the Catalina Brent Pico House property as a Historic-Cultural Monument in accordance with Chapter 9, Article 1, of The City of Los Angeles Administrative Code (“LAAC”) will ensure that future construction activities involving the subject property are regulated in accordance with Section 22.171.14 of the LAAC. The purpose of the designation is to prevent significant impacts to a Historic-Cultural Monument through the application of the standards set forth in the LAAC. Without the regulation imposed by way of the pending designation, the historic significance and integrity of the subject property could be lost through incompatible alterations and new construction and the demolition of irreplaceable historic structures. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards of Rehabilitation are expressly incorporated into the LAAC

and provide standards concerning the historically appropriate construction activities which will ensure the continued preservation of the subject property.

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 8 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals of maintaining, restoring, enhancing, and protecting the environment through the imposition of regulations designed to prevent the degradation of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 31 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals relating to the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of Historic buildings in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.

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419 Concord Ave
Monrovia, CA 91016

RECOMMENDATION That the Cultural Heritage Commission:

1. **Take the property under consideration** as a Historic-Cultural Monument per Los Angeles Administrative Code Chapter 9, Division 22, Article 1, Section 22.171.10 because the application and accompanying photo documentation suggest the submittal warrants further investigation.
2. **Adopt** the report findings.

MICHAEL J. LOGRANDE
Director of Planning

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Lambert M. Giessinger, Preservation Architect
Office of Historic Resources

Prepared by:
[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Edgar Garcia, Preservation Planner
Office of Historic Resources

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FINDINGS

Based on the facts set forth in the summary and application, the Commission determines that the application is complete and that the property may be significant enough to warrant further investigation as a potential Historic-Cultural Monument.