

Appendix H.2 Historic Assessment

**3705 and 3719 Coldwater Canyon
Historic Resource Evaluation**

March 28, 2011

Submitted by:

**Kaplan Chen Kaplan
2526 Eighteenth Street
Santa Monica, CA 90405**

**David Kaplan, Historic Architect
Pam O'Connor, Architectural Historian**

Executive Summary

Kaplan Chen Kaplan conducted an historic resource assessment of the buildings located at 3705 and 3719 Coldwater Canyon in Los Angeles. The site consists of two residential buildings. These do not meet the threshold criteria for designation as a City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument nor are they eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources.

Brief History of the San Fernando Valley

In his history of the San Fernando Valley, *The San Fernando Valley*, Professor Jackson Mayers states that there was a “boom period of 1867-1870, with the railroads sparking the expansion” which stimulated the first stage of village development in the San Fernando Valley with land use shifting from ranches to towns. The cycles of drought continues to impact ranching and farming in the Valley.¹

Los Angeles experienced a real estate boom that began in 1887 and lasted a few years. Mayers notes that “up to 1886, growth of cities and towns, while slow, had kept pace with the shift to grain and citrus crops. Now a whole new stage was to be launched—to found towns everywhere.”² Towns including Burbank, Northridge, Pacoima, Porter Ranch, San Fernando, Sylmar and Tujunga were established. However, as Mayers states, “the great drought from 1892 to 1904 had placed a ceiling on Los Angeles’ growth.”³

A reliable source of water for the San Fernando Valley and Los Angeles was envisioned by William Mulholland, known as the “father of the Los Angeles water system.”⁴ Voters approved bonds to build the Owens Aqueduct in 1907 and land developers began land acquisition for subdivisions in the San Fernando Valley. In anticipation towns were incorporated and the year 1911, called “the great year of town platting” by Mayers, saw the first paved highway, Sherman Way.⁵

With the opening of the Owens Aqueduct in 1913, interest in annexation to its owner, the City of Los Angeles grew. Mayers observes that “major annexations of the Valley to Los Angeles began in 1915 and went on for decades.”⁶ Mayers observed that by the 1920s dozens of towns arose in the San Fernando Valley and “some were farm villages, one was an industrial center, another high-level residential community, and a third a specialized city around a new industry, film making. Colonies entered, too, but of different types than before. Industry crept up on farming.”⁷

The Great Depression increased migration to the west and the San Fernando Valley’s population reached 78,497 in 1930. The Depression also saw the Valley’s farm lands decline and subdivisions drove some growers to move their packing houses farther out.

¹ Mayers, p. 60.

² Mayers, p. 77.

³ Mayers, p. 90.

⁴ Mayers, p. 95.

⁵ Mayers, p. 101.

⁶ Mayers, p. 112.

⁷ Mayers, p. 126

Another indicator of the changing landscape was Warner Brothers plans for a “radio television plant” on the Valley. And by the 1930s the Valley had eight golf clubs operating. Mayers called the 1930s, “the last days of a farm empire” in the Valley and he observed that “aircraft, films and unions showed the San Fernando Valley’s powerful thrust to industrialization by 1937” resulted in “the steady shift from farming.”⁸

Development History of Buildings at 3705 and 3719 Coldwater Canyon

The aerial photographs show that in the 1920s Coldwater Canyon had been developed with a golf course, the Hollywood Country Club and Golf Course, on the east side. One of the subject houses, at 3705 Coldwater Canyon, was constructed in 1918 according to Los Angeles County Assessor records. Aerial photographs show that in 1928 there were two other buildings adjacent to the subject house. These three buildings were aligned perpendicular to Coldwater Canyon, running east to west. The three buildings remained into the 1950s, but the other two were since demolished.

The Harvard School was established in 1900 in central Los Angeles and moved to the Coldwater Canyon location in 1937, taking over the former Hollywood Country Club. In the late 1930s residential development in the area increased. The other subject building, the house to the north at 3719 Coldwater Canyon, was constructed in 1939. Van Noord Avenue and Galewood Street, to the north on the same side (west) of Coldwater Canyon, saw a number of houses constructed in the late 1930s. Another subdivision had been constructed to the north of the new school in that period. Residential development continued throughout the 20th Century in the area to the south of the subject properties. The more rugged topography to the east and north of the subject properties remains currently undeveloped.

Description of Buildings

The house at 3705 Coldwater Canyon is a simple, one-story building, rectangular in plan with a hipped roof with overhang and exposed rafter tails. The house is of frame construction and clad in clapboard siding with end corners. Constructed on a sloping grade, the front elevation reveals the foundation as the grad changes. The fenestration of the front façade is symmetrical with a centered entry door flanked on each side by a pair of double-hung windows with wood surrounds. The entry door is defined by a small porch which is supported by two columns capped with a hipped roof. The concrete porch has rails on each side with a set of steps leading up to it.

The house at 3719 Coldwater Canyon is one-story and “L” shaped in plan. The building is stucco clad with a gabled roof. Sets of windows, some jalousie, with shutters are arranged along the long, south elevation of the house. The entrance and garage are located on the inside of the “L” facing north. A small projecting porch area with hipped roof defines the entry wing that contains the door and a window. The perpendicular wing is the garage and contains a large garage door. Additions appear to have been added to each end of the building. At the east end a short brick extension was constructed and features brick laid in a diamond shape and contains a deep set window.

⁸ Mayers, p. 151.

Both houses are set to either side of a short entry road that curves up from Coldwater Canyon. A building pad for one of the former buildings is located behind the house at 3705 Coldwater Canyon. A small, flat, open area lies to the west of the houses but quickly turns into more rugged vegetated topography. There is no formal landscaping in the front of the house at 3705 Coldwater Canyon; overgrown vegetation exists in spots around the houses, but no formal or related landscaping schemes are apparent.

Eligibility Criteria

National Register of Historic Places

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 established the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) as an authoritative guide “used by Federal, State, and local governments, private groups and citizens to identify the Nation’s cultural resources and indicate what properties should be afforded protection from destruction or impairment.” (36 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 60.) Buildings, districts, sites and structures may be eligible for listing in the National Register if they possess significance at the national, state or local level in American history, culture, architecture or archeology, and in general, are over 50 years old. Significance is measured against the following established criteria (National Register Bulletin 16):

- A. Are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. Are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. Yield, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

In addition, a resource must retain enough integrity to “convey its significance” (*National Register Bulletin 15*). An analysis of integrity is based on: location, design, feeling, association, setting, workmanship and materials. Buildings may be eligible for inclusion on the National Register as an individual resource and/or as a contributor to a district. A resource which no longer reflects historic significance as a result of damage or alterations is not eligible for the National Register.

The National Register of Historic Places is administered by the National Park Service. Owner consent is required for privately owned resources to be individually listed in the National Register. However, a resource that meets National Register criteria but lacks owner consent may be given a formal “determination of eligibility.”

Listing in the National Register recognizes a historic resource’s significance to the nation, state, or community. Eligible resources are given consideration in the planning process for Federal or federally assisted projects and may apply for Federal tax incentives. When discretionary Federal funds are available (i.e., disaster response), National Register eligible resources qualify for Federal assistance for repair. Section 106 of the NHPA requires that federal agencies must take into account the effects of their undertakings (including funding) on historic properties (36 CFR 800.1(a)).

The California Register of Historical Resources

The State of California administers historic preservation programs through the Office of Historic Preservation in the Department of Parks and Recreation in the Resources Agency. State programs include the California Landmarks program that recognizes sites and structures of state-wide significance, and the Points of Historical Interest which recognize sites and structures of local or county-wide significance.

The California Register, adopted in 1992 (official regulations effective January 1, 1998), is the “authoritative guide to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify the state’s historical resources and indicate which properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change.” (*Title 14, State Historical Resources Commission, Regulations for the Nomination of Historical Resources to the California Register of Historical Resources.*) State and local agencies may also determine which resources are to be considered in order to comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements.

The California Register criteria are based on National Register criteria. California properties (individual buildings and contributors to districts) that meet these criteria may be listed in the California Register. If the owner of a historical resource objects to the nomination, the property is not listed in the California Register, but the State Commission may formally designate the resource as eligible for listing. Listing in the California Register does not protect the resource from demolition or alteration, but it does require environmental review for proposed projects. Some resources are listed automatically (such as resources already on the National Register); others may be nominated through an application and public hearing process administered by the State Office of Historic Preservation (SOHP).

The California Register automatically includes the following: California properties listed on the National Register and those formally determined eligible for the National Register; California Registered Historical Landmarks from No. 0770 onward; and Points of Historical Interest that have been evaluated by SOHP and State Historical Resources Commission. Resources which may be nominated for listing in the California Register include: historical resources with a significance rating of category 3 through 5 in the State Inventory (Categories 3 and 4 refer to potential National Register eligibility; Category 5 refers to properties with local significance); individual historical resources; historical resources contributing to historic districts; and historical resources designated or listed under a municipal or county ordinance.

To be eligible for inclusion on the California Register, one of the following criteria must be met:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States; or
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history; or
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method or construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values; or

4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

Additionally, a resource must retain historic architectural integrity in terms of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The California Register is based on the National Register of Historic Places. A resource is historically significant according to California Register of Historical Resources criterion 2 if it is “associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history.” National Register Criterion B states that properties are historic if they “are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.” Significant persons are “those whose activities have been important to the communities in which they are located, to the history of their state, or to the nation as a whole.”

The National Park Service provides technical guidance in the form of National Register Bulletins. *National Register Bulletin #32: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties Associated with Significant Persons* provides guidelines for applying association criteria. It states that in evaluating the significance of a person the “contributions of individuals must be compared to those of others who were active, successful, prosperous, or influential in the same field” in order to determine if the threshold for historic significance can be met:

1. Specific individuals must have made contributions or played a role that can be justified as significant within a defined area of American history or prehistory.
2. For properties associated with several community leaders or with a prominent family, it is necessary to identify specific individuals and to explain their significant accomplishments.
3. Contributions of individuals must be compared to those of others who were active, successful, prosperous, or influential in the same field.

Bulletin 32, states that “in order to determine how important the actions of an individual were in the evolution of any area of history in a community, state, or the United States, it is necessary to acquire background information on pertinent aspects of that area’s history.” It goes on to say that “it is necessary to research both the individuals and the area(s) of history in which they played important roles.” It notes that “the fact that we value certain professions or the contributions of certain groups historically does not mean that every property associated with or used by a member of that group is significant.”

Regarding contributions of a local individual, *Bulletin 32*, states that “it is not enough to show that an individual has acquired wealth, run a successful business, or held public office, unless any of these accomplishments, or their number or combination, is a significant achievement in the community in comparison with the activities and accomplishments of others. Otherwise, any property associated with any citizen who has attained the same level of success would meet National Register criteria. Unless that level can be demonstrated to have been distinctive, the concepts of leadership and significance have been lost.”

An evaluation of the property’s association with the individual must be made to determine if the property is “associated with the productive life of the individual in the field in which (s)he achieved significance” and “documentation must make clear how the

nominated property represents an individual's significant contributions." In addition, "each property associated with someone important should be compared with other properties associated with that individual to identify those resources that are good representatives of the person's historic contributions."

Bulletin 32 also notes that most properties nominated for associations with significant persons also are nominated for other reasons, as indicated by the fact that almost two-thirds of the properties nominated under the association criterion are also significant in the area of architecture or for the area in which the individual(s) achieved recognition.

City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument

The City of Los Angeles designates sites, buildings, or structures of particular historic or cultural significance to the City of Los Angeles as Historic-Cultural Monuments. A resource: may be a historic structure or site in which the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, state or community is reflected or exemplified. It may be identified with historic personages or with important events in the main currents of national, state or local history. It may embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for 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 or her age. (Ordinance 153.893, Section 22.130 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code)

The City of Los Angeles recognized historic districts as Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZ). The HPOZ is a planning tool that adds a level of protection to an area by creating a review board to evaluate proposals for alterations, demolitions or new construction.

Evaluation of Significance of 3705 and 3719 Coldwater Canyon

There are two buildings on the site that are over fifty years old. Both are single-family residential buildings. Neither house appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Places, or as a City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument.

The CEQA threshold for historic significance is eligibility to the California Register. The houses at 3705 and 3719 Coldwater Canyon do not meet the criteria for inclusion on the California Register based on the following findings:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.

The houses at 3705 and 3719 Coldwater Canyon did not contribute to the history of the San Fernando Valley and foothill area. Neither of the buildings set the development pattern for that area nor did they spur its development. Neither building was associated with the Harvard School.

2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history; or

There is no evidence that either 3705 or 3719 Coldwater Canyon are associated with historic persons.

3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.

The building at 3705 Coldwater Canyon is a simple structure, unremarkable for its era of construction. Such houses were constructed throughout the Los Angeles basin and the San Fernando Valley during the early 20th century. The building at 3705 does not exhibit any particular style or quality of craftsmanship. The building at 3705 Coldwater Canyon does not embody distinctive characteristics of style or workmanship, nor is it the work of a master.

The house at 3719 Coldwater Canyon is a simple stucco-clad structure, also unremarkable for its era of construction. It is one of a number of houses that were built in the area in the later 1930s-early 1940s. The building has undergone alteration including additions at both ends.

4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

This criterion does not apply as both buildings were constructed in the 20th century historic period (and are not pre-history).

For the same reasons, the two houses would not meet criteria for designation as a City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument.

References

Environmental Data Sources, Inc. Aerial Photographs.

Gebhard, David, and Robert Winter. *Los Angeles: An Architectural Guide*. Salt Lake City: Gibbs-Smith. 2003.

Los Angeles County Tax Assessor records.

Los Angeles Riordan Central Library, California Index, Photographic Collection.

Mayers, Jackson. *The San Fernando Valley*. Walnut: John D. McIntyre. 1976

McAllester, Virginia and Lee McAllester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1984.

National Register Bulletin #15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, National Park Service, www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/

National Register Bulletin #32, Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties Associated with Significant Persons, National Park Service, <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb32/>

Roderick, Kevin. *The San Fernando Valley: America's Suburb*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times Books. 2001

Aerial Photographs



Aerial Photo, 1928



Aerial Photo, 1938



Aerial Photo, 1940



Aerial Photo, 1956



Aerial Photo, 1994

Photographs



1. 3705 Coldwater Canyon from street



2. 3705 Coldwater Canyon



3. 3705 Coldwater Canyon front façade



4. 3705 Coldwater Canyon rear



5. 3705 Coldwater Canyon north elevation



6. 3719 Coldwater Canyon street façade



7. 3719 Coldwater Canyon south and east elevations



8. 3719 Coldwater Canyon