

# LOS ANGELES CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION REPORT

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## CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

**DATE:** March 20, 2008  
**TIME:** 10:00 a.m.  
**PLACE:** **City Hall, Room 1010**  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**CASE NO. CPC-2007-5633-HPOZ**  
**CEQA: ENV-2007-5634-CE**  
**Council District: 2**  
**Community Plan Area:**  
Sun Valley - La Tuna Canyon  
**Area Planning Commission:** North Valley  
**Neighborhood Council:** Sun Valley Area

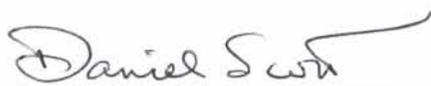
**PROJECT:** STONEHURST HISTORIC PRESERVATION OVERLAY ZONE

- REQUEST:**
- 1) Certify the Historic Resources Survey as to accuracy and completeness;
  - 2) Certify the establishment of the proposed Stonehurst HPOZ boundaries; and
  - 3) Find that the project is categorically exempt under the State CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 and Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 for the establishment of the Stonehurst HPOZ.
  - 4) Find that the structures within the preservation zone meet one or more of the following criteria:
    - Adds to the historic architectural qualities of Historic association for which a property is significant because it was present during the period of significance, and possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time; or
    - Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristics, represents an established feature of the neighborhood, community or city; or
    - Retaining the building, structure would contribute to the preservation and protection of a historic place or area of historic interest in the city.

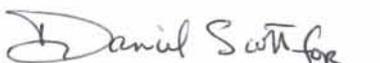
## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) CERTIFY the Historic Resources Survey;
- 2) CERTIFY the establishment of the HPOZ boundaries generally bounded by Sheldon Street on the north, Stonehurst Avenue on the east, Wicks Street on the south and Dronfield Avenue on the west.
- 3) FIND that the project is categorically exempt under the State CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 and Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 for the establishment of the Stonehurst HPOZ.
- 4) ADOPT the attached Finding: That the proposed historic preservation overlay zone meets one or more of the required criteria per Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 12.20.3 because the proposed district has a high concentration of contributing structures of the period of significance (1915-1930) exemplified by Stonemason Vernacular architecture in a cohesive neighborhood setting that retains much of its original, historic character; and
- 5) RECOMMEND that the City Planning Commission approve the establishment of the boundaries for the proposed Stonehurst HPOZ.

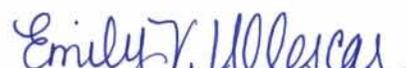
S. GAIL GOLDBERG, AICP  
Director of Planning



Dan Scott  
Principal City Planner



Robert Z. Dueñas  
Senior City Planner



Emily V. Yllescas  
Assistant City Planner

## BACKGROUND

Councilmember Wendy Greuel entered a Council Motion on October 21, 2003 instructing the Department of City Planning to initiate proceedings to establish an HPOZ for the Stonehurst community area.

Based on that motion, the Historic Resources Survey was conducted between April 2006 and March 2007 as a partnership between the Little Landers Historical Society and Jones & Stokes (the "Consultant"), with large contributions of work provided by neighborhood volunteers. A draft of the Survey was given to the Department of City Planning, Office of Historic Resources for review and comment. The Survey was revised to incorporate the comments provided by the Office of Historic Resources and was completed in August 2007. The Survey is under the jurisdiction of the Department of City Planning and the Cultural Heritage Commission and was completed in accordance with the procedures set forth in LAMC 12.20.3F.

## EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING:

Subject Properties: The parcels within the proposed Stonehurst HPOZ area encompass land use designations which include Very Low, Public Facilities and Open Space. The proposed HPOZ area is located within the Sun Valley - La Tuna Canyon Community Plan and the San Gabriel Verdugo Mountains Specific Plan and is contained within a K-Overlay Zone District.

Surrounding Properties: The areas immediately north and east of the proposed Stonehurst HPOZ boundary encompass land use designations of Neighborhood Commercial, Public Facilities, and Very Low Residential. The areas immediately south and west of the boundary encompass Very Low Residential, Public Facilities, and Open Space.

## HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY DISCUSSION

The Survey area was comprised of 92 parcels, containing mostly single-family residential structures. The area is roughly bounded by Sheldon Street to the north, Stonehurst Avenue to the east, Wicks Street to the south, and Dronfield Avenue to the west. The Consultant provided site-specific construction information and an assessment of the current building integrity, and provided a determination as to whether each resource was Contributing, Contributing-Altered, Non-Contributing, or a Vacant Lot.

As set forth in Subsection 12.20.3 E.5 of the LAMC, to be contributing, structures, landscaping, natural features or sites within the involved area or the area as a whole shall meet one or more of the following criteria and therefore are the sub-categories of Contributing in the Stonehurst Historic Resources Survey:

*Contributing 1:* Adds to the historic architectural qualities or historic associations for which a property is significant because it was present during the period of significance, and possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time;

*Contributing 2:* Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristics, represents an established feature of the neighborhood, community or city; or

*Contributing 3:* Retaining the structure would help preserve and protect an historic place or area of historic interest in the City.

The Department of City Planning utilized the Secretary of Interior's National Register Bulletin 15 and the Standards for Rehabilitation, used by all professional historians and architectural historians undertaking historic resource surveys, to determine whether alterations were reversible. The relevant text in National Register Bulletin 15<sup>1</sup> providing guidance for evaluating altered structures<sup>2</sup> is as follows:

"A property important for illustrating a particular architectural style or construction technique must retain most of the physical features that constitute that style or technique. A property that has lost some historic materials or details can be eligible [read: contributing] if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its style in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials, and ornamentation. The property is not eligible [read: non-contributing], however, if it retains some basic features conveying massing but has lost the majority of the features that once characterized its style...If the historic exterior building material is covered by non-historic material (such as modern siding), the property can still be [contributing] if the significant form, features, and detailing are not obscured."

Structures that are altered but still convey their historic architectural style according to the guidance set in National Register Bulletin 15 were assigned the evaluation code and criterion of "Contributing-Altered Structure 1 or 2" in the Stonehurst HPOZ Historic Resources Survey.

Essentially, there are two key components in determining reversibility: 1) does the structure still retain basic features that identify it with the Period of Significance and 2) have the alterations been undertaken in such a way that if removed in the future, the form and the integrity of the property still remains.

*Contributing-Altered Structure 1* is a building or structure with minor alterations, but contributes because it was built within the period of significance and the nature and extent of the alterations are deemed to be easily reversible by the Survey.

*Contributing-Altered Structure 2* is a building or structure with major alterations, but still contributes because it was built within the period of significance and the nature and extent of the alterations are deemed to be reversible by the Historic Resources Survey.

Examples of typical alterations to Contributing-Altered Structures include:

- Enclosed, in-filled, or altered porches, but the original form of the structure is still evident;
- Replaced windows, but the openings were not reconfigured; and/or
- One or more additions added to the property

Federal guidance has also been provided for ways to alter and rehabilitate historic buildings in an acceptable manner. Alterations that meet the relevant Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation [36 CFR '68.3(b)] would allow a building to contribute to the HPOZ. Alterations or additions that do not destroy important character defining features or that have been undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. Date of Publication: 1990, revised 1991, 1995, 1997, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Pages 47 and 48.

remains are considered reversible. The applicable Secretary's Standards regarding additions and alterations are as follows:

(9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, and proportion and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

(10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired."

As set forth in Subsection 12.20.3 E.5 of the LAMC a Non-Contributing element is any building, structure, natural feature, lot or landscaping designated as such in the Survey. For the purposes of the Stonehurst Historic Resources Survey, a resource was designated as Non-Contributing if it was built after the Period of Significance, if it lacks integrity, or if it's character is incompatible with respect to the massing, scale and materials used.

A *Vacant Lot* was considered to be any parcel that does not contain a clearly identifiable Contributing or Non-Contributing Element and does not appear to be associated with a contributing structure on another parcel.

## SURVEY RESULTS

A breakdown of the designations provided in the Survey submitted to the Department of City Planning in August 2007 is as follows:

Number of Resources	Survey Designation
45	Contributing 1 Structures
3	Contributing 2 Structures
5	Contributing 3 Structures
4	Contributing-Altered 1 Structures
4	Contributing-Altered 2 Structures
30	Non-Contributing Structures
4	Vacant Parcels

After a detailed review of the Survey, the Department of City Planning re-evaluated the designation of 18 structures. Staff visited the proposed Stonehurst HPOZ in order to take a closer look at and re-photograph the structures in question. A summary of the changes made based on the re-evaluation is as follows:

Number of Structures	Survey Designation	New Designation
6	Contributing 1	Contributing-Altered 1
6	Contributing 1	Contributing-Altered 2
1	Contributing 2	Non-Contributing
3	Contributing 3	Contributing-Altered 2
1	Contributing 3	Non-Contributing
1	Non-Contributing	Contributing-Altered 1

Based on the re-evaluation of the Survey, the designation breakdown of the structures in the revised Survey is as follows:

<b>Number of Resources</b>	<b>Survey Designation</b>
31	Contributing 1 Structures
2	Contributing 2 Structures
0	Contributing 3 Structures
8	Contributing-Altered 1 Structures
18	Contributing-Altered 2 Structures
31	Non-Contributing Structures
4	Vacant Parcels

The proposed Stonehurst HPOZ boundary consists of 92 parcels containing 90 structures of which approximately 65% are designated as Contributing, 34% are designated as Non-Contributing, and 1% are designated as a Vacant Lot.

### **STONEHURST PRESERVATION PLAN**

It is the intent of the Department of City Planning to work with the community to develop a Preservation Plan once there is approval of the establishment of the Stonehurst HPOZ by the City Planning Commission. The Stonehurst HPOZ Preservation Plan will be used by the HPOZ Board to make recommendations on projects under their jurisdiction. The Plan will also be used by the Department of City Planning as the basis for its determinations on Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs) and Certificates of Compatibility (CCMPs) and to review projects where the authority has been delegated to the Director. The Stonehurst Preservation Plan will articulate the community's vision and goals regarding the HPOZ by setting clear guidelines for the development of properties within the district.

The Stonehurst Preservation Plan will serve as a resource for property owners planning repairs or alterations, as an educational tool for both existing and potential property owners, residents, and investors, and will also be used by the general public to learn more about the City of Los Angeles and its unique neighborhoods.

## **SUMMARY OF PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Public Hearing**

- Date/Time: February 29, 2008, 1:00 p.m.
- Location: Marvin Braude Constituent Center, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd, Van Nuys CA, 91401
- Number of Attendees: 14
- Number of Speakers: In Support: 7; In Opposition: 0
- Organizations testifying in Support: The Little Landers Historical Society
- Planning Deputy from Council District 2 was in attendance

### **Summary of Public Hearing Testimony**

#### Points in Favor:

- This neighborhood holds a special place in our hearts as it contains so much cultural, social, architectural and political history.
- It is an accomplishment of the past, a physical reference of the past.
- The establishment of an HPOZ is critical to the preservation of this neighborhood.
- The restoration is so important to maintain the historic Arts & Crafts woodsy feeling as back in the 1920s.
- This is an architecturally unique neighborhood in the north east Valley, from a different time and place in history.
- It hurts to see a beautiful stone house demolished and replaced with stucco boxes.
- In the future it is believed that the Altered Structures identified in the Survey may be reversed to near their original state.
- The establishment of the HPOZ will foster pride in this neighborhood.
- Although there were only 14 people in attendance, when the neighborhood was being threatened by eminent domain over, 300 people were in opposition of losing this neighborhood to a new development.
- This is a cornerstone of a large rural horse keeping area which adds to the uniqueness.
- The City of Los Angeles did not fund this project, the neighborhood and stakeholders provided the unequivocal support to get to this point.
- This project was a grassroots effort with outpouring of support.
- The Period of Significance is a small window (1915-1930). Many buildings are 50 years or older and would qualify if the Period of Significance could be extended and re-studied in the future.
- The only complaints heard among the neighborhood have been by renters/owners whose house was not included in the Survey area.
- The neighborhood as a whole is concerned with maintaining the rural feel of the community, beyond the stone houses.

### **Summary of Communications**

The Department of City Planning has received eleven (11) letters in support of the establishment of the proposed HPOZ.

In summary, the letters state that the Stonehurst neighborhood is unique and distinctive within the City of Los Angeles and cannot be replaced. The historic and cultural character of the neighborhood is being lost as stone houses have been torn down and replaced with more modern architecture and up-dated materials. Stonehurst is one of the oldest continuously existing neighborhoods in the Valley, the stone-house center of the neighborhood is the only core of a rural equestrian rancho

community, and the majority of the residents of the neighborhood have a sense of their community that extends back in time to the beginnings of the neighborhood and which they all hope will continue in the future.

It is believed that the Stonehurst neighborhood qualifies as a Cultural Resource worthy of inclusion as a district of national, state, and/or local importance under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Stonehurst exhibits the characteristics described by Section 106C that embody the distinctive characteristic of a type, period or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The establishment of a Historic Preservation Overlay Zone is critical to the preservation of a record craftsmanship, construction technique, and a time and a place that has no rival. [We] are anxious to see the new zoning implemented and it is [our] belief that it will bring a sense of pride and a greater sense of community to the Stonehurst neighborhood and by extension the City of Los Angeles.

### **Hearing Officer Comments**

The proposed Stonehurst HPOZ is supported throughout the community. Although there were only fourteen people in attendance to show support, the residents that live in the survey area have shown support and excitement at the two public workshops and through letters of communication for the establishment of the HPOZ. There has been no opposition to the establishment of the HPOZ, and no one was present at the public hearing to speak against it.

Comments were made regarding the Period of Significance being too small and the criteria to be designated Contributing too narrow. It is believed that expanding the Period of Significance would allow many more homes to be preserved, as they too add to the uniqueness of the community as they are over 50 years of age and expand the qualification criteria to allow resources that represent established features of the neighborhood to also be included.

The Stonemason Vernacular type of architecture demonstrated in the Stonehurst community is unique within the City of Los Angeles and exists as a cohesive neighborhood. Without designation, the historic structures could be demolished or substantially altered, and the historic integrity of the neighborhood could be destroyed by inappropriate new development.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Exhibit 1: Map of the Proposed HPOZ Boundary and Designations

Exhibit 2: Historic Resources Survey Executive Summary and Context Statement

Exhibit 3: ENV-2007-5634-CE and Narrative



## Executive Summary

The information and photographs presented in this volume for the Stonehurst neighborhood represent the results of the *Historic Resources Survey* (the "Survey") for the proposed *Stonehurst Historic Preservation Overlay Zone* (the "HPOZ"). The Proposed Stonehurst HPOZ *Historic Resources Survey* was undertaken as a result of a City Council Motion sponsored by Councilmember Wendy Greuel<sup>1</sup> and was conducted between April 2006 and March 2007 as a private partnership between the Little Landers Historical Society and Jones & Stokes, with large contributions of work provided by Albert Knight and other neighborhood volunteers. This Survey was revised to incorporate the comments of the City of Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources, dated April 19, 2007. The Survey was further revised in February 2008 by the Department of City Planning after further review. The Survey is under the jurisdiction of the Department of City Planning and Cultural Heritage Commission, and was completed in accordance with the procedures set forth in Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) §12.20.3 F.

The Survey area is comprised of 92 parcels, containing mostly single-family residential structures. The area is roughly bounded by Sheldon Street on the north, Stonehurst Avenue on the east, Wicks Street on the south, and Dronfield Avenue on the west, and is inclusive of the Stonehurst Recreation Center and Park. These boundaries were established by the Department of City Planning in conjunction with the Council office, with input by the Little Landers Historical Society. Information gathered by the Survey about the historical development of the Stonehurst neighborhood indicates the boundaries surround an area with a high concentration of houses built circa 1924 that are unique within the City of Los Angeles because of the extensive use of native river rock as the main building material for a majority of the structures and their related features, such as the exterior walls, chimneys, fireplaces or foundations. It is believed to be the highest such concentration in the City of Los Angeles.

Results of the Survey were verified by qualified<sup>2</sup> architectural historians at Jones & Stokes (the "Consultant"). The Consultant provided site-specific construction information, an assessment of current building integrity, and a determination as to whether resources are *Contributing*, *Contributing-Altered*, *Non-Contributing*, or *Vacant Lots*. *Contributing* resources include those that meet at least one of the HPOZ criteria [LAMC §12.20.3 F.3. (a)-(c)]. An important sub-category is *Contributing-Altered Structure*, which includes resources built within the HPOZ's period of significance with alterations that appear to be reversible. *Non-Contributing* resources include those that do not appear to meet any of the HPOZ criteria and

<sup>1</sup> Planning and Land Use Management Motion dated October 21, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.*, meeting the Secretary of the Interior's qualifications in architectural history (Federal Register, Vol. 48, No. 190, pp. 44738-44739, September 29, 1983).

have age, integrity, or stylistic considerations. (The criteria are described in detail later in this volume, on pages 13-19.)

**Statement of Significance:** The Stonehurst neighborhood meets the criteria for HPOZ designation because of the unique architectural and aesthetic character demonstrated through the extensive use of native river rock as one of the main building materials for the vast majority of the structures and their related features. Many of the structures were designed and constructed between 1923 and 1925 by *Dan Montelongo*, a local artisan, builder, and stonemason, using stone selected and gathered from the nearby washes and foothills of the Tujunga Valley. Within the context of Los Angeles residential architecture of the 1920s, the Stonehurst HPOZ is believed to contain the highest concentration of houses that used native river rock as their primary building material or for their major architectural features.

To support the argument that native river rock structures in the Stonehurst area are significant within the City of Los Angeles, the Stonehurst Park Community Building at 9901 Dronfield Street was designated as a City of Los Angeles Historical-Cultural Monument #172 in 1977. Another structure which would likely meet City Monument criteria on an individual basis, is the structure located at 10021 Stonehurst Avenue (Photograph 1). While the vast majority of the structures that contribute to the HPOZ were constructed from 1923 to 1925, the period of significance was extended to begin at 1915, to include the oldest home in the neighborhood at 11115 Wicks Street, and to end at 1930, to include the Stonehurst Park Community Building, designed and built by Dan Montelongo, at 9901 Dronfield Street.



**Photograph 1: 10021 Stonehurst Avenue**

A majority of the *Contributing* structures in the proposed Stonehurst HPOZ do not typify one of the predominant architectural styles that characterized Los Angeles' residential structures in the 1920s, such as Spanish Colonial Revival, Colonial Revival, or any of the Period Revival styles. Their design was most likely influenced by the Arts & Crafts movement, and some elements such as the window sash and roof shape are reminiscent of the Craftsman style of architecture, but their unique use of large stone wyeths sets them apart from the more urban examples of the Craftsman style that feature smaller scale stone piers, foundations, chimneys and, only rarely, exterior walls.



**Photograph 2: 11155 Allegheny Street**

With a few notable exceptions, many of the structures are quite simple in execution, with their stone walls rising to the height of the window lintels and simple gables and low pitched roof resting as in the above photograph (Photograph 2 and 3). Even though the structures themselves are often simple, the selection of the shape and size of the stones by Dan Montelongo lends a deceptively complex sculptural and aesthetic quality to their design. As a result, their unique local style and character is referred to in the Survey as "Stonemason Vernacular", a derivative of the Craftsman style of architecture. Collectively, these structures create a cohesive neighborhood of single-family residences of historical and architectural distinction that, as a whole entity, meets the HPOZ criteria for designation.

The *Contributing Elements* to the Stonehurst HPOZ, include the Stonemason Vernacular structures, and other residences that were constructed within the period of significance of the HPOZ, from 1915 to 1930. Each of the structures that contribute to the HPOZ "possess historic integrity," or, if altered, "represents an established feature of the neighborhood" and "would help preserve and protect an historic place in

the City.<sup>3</sup> These findings are consistent within the definition of the context statement provided in LAMC §12.20.3 F.3.(b) which indicates it may include “associations with...designers, building types, [or] building materials... that influenced the character of the Preservation Zone at a particular time in history.”



**Photograph 3: 11202 Sheldon Street**

The Survey area is comprised of:

- A total of 92 parcels, including vacant parcels, containing 90 structures;
- 59 structures were identified as Contributing resources,<sup>4</sup>
- 31 structures were identified as Non-Contributing resources,<sup>5</sup> and
- 4 parcels were identified as *Vacant Lots*.

The complete survey results are provided in tabular form in Appendices A-C, and in map form in Appendix D. Because of this high concentration of *Contributing* resources (65%), the Stonehurst area meets the definition of a Preservation Zone as “any area of the City of Los Angeles containing

<sup>3</sup> Los Angeles Municipal Code § 12.20.3 E.3.

<sup>4</sup> The survey findings included: 31 structures under Contributing 1, 2 structures under Contributing 2, 8 structures under criterion Contributing-Altered 1, and 18 structures under Contributing-Altered 2.

<sup>5</sup> The survey findings included: 31 non-contributors due to age, incompatible character, lack of physical integrity of design, materials, or workmanship. The boundary and the number of contributors could be increased if the period of significance were broadened to include buildings over 50 years of age constructed after 1930 because they “represent an established feature of the neighborhood” and this recommendation should be considered by the Cultural Heritage Commission during its review of the survey.

structures, landscaping, natural features or sites having historic, architectural, cultural or aesthetic significance..."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Los Angeles Municipal Code § 12.20.3 B.16.

COUNTY CLERK'S USE	<b>CITY OF LOS ANGELES</b> OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK ROOM 395, CITY HALL LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012 <b>CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT</b> <h2 style="margin: 0;">NOTICE OF EXEMPTION</h2> (Article III, Section 3—City CEQA Guidelines)	CITY CLERK'S USE
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Submission of this form is optional. The form shall be filed with the County Clerk, 12400 E. Imperial Highway, Norwalk, CA 90650, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21152 (b). Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21167 (d), the filing of this notice starts a 35-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the approval of the project. Failure to file this notice with the County Clerk results in the statute of limitations being extended to 180 days.

LEAD CITY AGENCY <b>City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning</b>	COUNCIL DISTRICT <b>2</b>
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PROJECT TITLE * <b>Stonehurst Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ)</b>	LOG REFERENCE <b>ENV 2007-5634-CE</b>
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PROJECT LOCATION  
\* **Area bounded by Sheldon St. (N), Stonehurst Ave. (E), Wicks St. (S), Dronfield Ave (W)**

DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE, AND BENEFICIARIES OF PROJECT:  
\* **Establishment of a proposed HPOZ for the Stonehurst neighborhood in Sun Valley.**

NAME OF PERSON OR AGENCY CARRYING OUT PROJECT, IF OTHER THAN LEAD CITY AGENCY:  
\*

CONTACT PERSON * <b>Emily V. Yllescas</b>	AREA CODE * <b>818</b>	TELEPHONE NUMBER * <b>374-5058</b>	EXT.
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EXEMPT STATUS:

**Categorical Exemption: State CEQA Guidelines, Article. 19, Section 15308, Class 8**

**Justification for Project Exemption:** 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 procedure for the protection of the environment. Construction activities and relaxation of standards allowing environmental degradation are not included in this exemption.

**Categorical Exemption: State CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31**

**Justification for Project Exemption:** Projects limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer.

IF FILED BY APPLICANT, ATTACH CERTIFIED DOCUMENT OF EXEMPTION FINDING.

SIGNATURE <b>Emily V. Yllescas</b>	TITLE <b>Planning Assistant</b>	DATE <b>2/27/08</b>
FEE:	RECEIPT NO.	REC'D. BY
		DATE

DISTRIBUTION: (1) County Clerk, (2) City Clerk, (3) Agency Record  
Form Gen. 183 (Rev. 8-90) (Appendix A) (C.S. 4/98) (P.C. 5/02)

THE APPLICANT CERTIFIES THAT HE OR SHE UNDERSTANDS THE FOLLOWING:

Completion of this form by an employee of the City constitutes only a staff recommendation that an exemption from CEQA be granted. A Notice of Exemption is only effective if, after a public review and any required public hearings, it is adopted by the City agency having final jurisdiction (including any appeals) over the project application. If a CEQA exemption is found inappropriate, preparation of a Negative Declaration or Environmental Impact Report will be required. IF THE INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY THE APPLICANT IS INCORRECT OR INCOMPLETE SUCH ERROR OR OMISSION COULD INVALIDATE ANY CITY ACTIONS ON THE PROJECT, INCLUDING CEQA FINDINGS.

\* \_\_\_\_\_  
NAME (PRINTED)

\* \_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

# STONEHURST CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION NARRATIVE

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## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project includes the establishment of the Stonehurst Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ). The proposed project area is generally bounded by Sheldon Street on the north, Stonehurst Avenue on the east, Dronfield Avenue on the west, and Wicks Street on the south. The affected lots are almost entirely comprised of single-family zoned lots, with the exception of the Stonehurst Park and Recreational Center. The land use designations of the proposed project include Very Low, Public Facilities and Open Space with a K-Overlay Zone covering the entire proposed HPOZ area. The proposed project area is located within the Sun Valley - La Tuna Canyon Community Plan and the San Gabriel Verdugo Mountains Specific Plan.

Although the Stonehurst HPOZ would place the subject area under design regulations, it would not change the underlying zoning or prohibit or generate construction activities. Moreover, all construction activities within the designated area requiring discretionary approval would be subject to project-specific environmental analysis.

Once the proposed HPOZ boundaries have been recommended for approval by the City Planning Commission, the Department of City Planning intends on working with the community on developing a Preservation Plan to clarify and elaborate upon the City's HPOZ ordinance and the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation to narrow in on exactly what the community wants to preserve.

## HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY (the "SURVEY")

The Survey is under the jurisdiction of the Department of City Planning and the Cultural Heritage Commission, and it was completed in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 12.20.3E. The Survey was conducted between April 2006 and March 2007, and revised twice in August 2007 and February 2008. The Survey researched the historic development of the neighborhood in order to determine its eligibility as a HPOZ and Jones and Stokes (the Consultant) provided site-specific information, an assessment of current building integrity, and a determination as to whether the resources are *Contributing*, *Contributing-Altered*, *Non-Contributing*, or *Vacant Lots*.

As set forth in Subsection 12.20.3 of the LAMC the various qualifying elements include:

***Contributing Elements*** are structures, landscaping, natural features or sites within the involved area or the area as a whole shall meet one or more of the following criteria:

- (1) adds to the historic architectural qualities or historic associations for which a property is significant because it was present during the period of significance, and possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time; or
- (2) owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristics, represents an established feature of the neighborhood, community or city; or

***Contributing-Altered Structures*** are buildings or structures which have been altered, where the natural extent of the alterations are determined reversible by the Historic Resources Survey.

The Department of City Planning utilizes the Secretary of the Interior's National Register Bulletin 15 and the Standards for Rehabilitation, used by all professional historians and architectural historians undertaking historic resource surveys, to consider the appropriate designation of these properties and determine whether alterations were reversible. The relevant text in National Register Bulletin 15<sup>1</sup> providing guidance for evaluating altered structures<sup>2</sup> is as follows:

*"A property important for illustrating a particular architectural style or construction technique must retain most of the physical features that constitute that style or technique. A property that has lost some historic materials or details can be eligible [read: contributing] if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its style in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials, and ornamentation. The property is not eligible [read: contributing], however, if it retains some basic features conveying massing but has lost the majority of the features that once characterized its style...If the historic exterior building material is covered by non-historic material (such as modern siding), the property can still be [contributing] if the significant form, features, and detailing are not obscured."*

Structures that are altered but still convey their historic architectural style according to the guidance set forth in National Register Bulletin 15 were assigned the Contributor-Altered Structure criteria code AS1) and AS2) defined as follows:

- AS1) *Building or Structure with minor alterations, but it contributes because it was built within the period of significance and the nature and extent of alterations are determined to be easily reversible by the Historic Resources Survey.*
- AS2) *Building or Structure with major alterations, but still contributes because it was built within the period of significance and the nature and extent of alterations are deemed to be reversible by the Historic Resources Survey.*

**Non-Contributing Elements** are buildings, structures, natural features, lots, or landscaping that is identified in the Historic Resources Survey as Non-Contributing as defined by the following criteria:

- NC) *Age: The building or structure was built after the proposed HPOZ's historic and architectural periods of significance and has no known overriding significance.*
- NC) *Lacks Integrity, Update Potential: Building or structure did not contribute to the HPOZ because it lacked sufficient integrity at the time of the survey, but it may contain major stonework elements from the period of significance.*
- NC) *Incompatible Character: The massing, scale, setback, or materials of the structure are not compatible with the physical characteristics that establish the historical significance of the neighborhood.*
- NC) *Incompatible Style: Structure is incompatible in style and is a visual intrusion with nearby HPOZ contributors*
- NC) *Lacks Integrity: Structure lacks integrity as a result of irreversible alterations.*

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. Date of Publication: 1990, revised 1991, 1995, 1997, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Pages 47 and 48.

**Vacant Lots** are considered to be any parcel that does not contain a clearly identifiable Contributing or Non-Contributing Element, and does not appear to be associated with a contributing building or structure on another parcel.

<b>HPOZ Criterion</b>	<b>Number of Resources</b>
Contributing 1	31
Contributing 2	2
Contributing Altered 1	8
Contributing Altered 2	18
Non-Contributing	31
Vacant Lots	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>90 Structures, 92 Parcels</b>

The Survey concluded with stating that the Stonehurst community area meets the HPOZ designation criteria as the project area retains the physical integrity and character-defining features that establish the historic significance of the neighborhood, primarily found in the Stonemason Vernacular derivation of the Craftsman style designed and constructed by Dan Montelongo during the period of significance from 1915-1930.

The Planning Department has held two Public Workshops regarding the proposed Stonehurst HPOZ on January 23, 2008 and February 20, 2008 at the Stonehurst Recreational Center Gymnasium. The purpose of the Public Workshops was to allow residents the opportunity to review the Survey and discuss and ask questions relating to the proposed HPOZ with the Department of Planning staff.

The Public Hearing will be held on February 29, 2008.