

DEPARTMENT OF  
CITY PLANNING  
OFFICE OF HISTORIC RESOURCES  
200 N. SPRING STREET, ROOM 620  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-4801  
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CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

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GAIL KENNARD  
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[www.planning.lacity.org](http://www.planning.lacity.org)

Date: **OCT 31 2014**

Los Angeles City Council  
Room 395, City Hall  
200 North Spring Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Attention: Sharon Gin, Legislative Assistant  
Planning and Land Use Management Committee

CASE NUMBER: **CHC-2014-2860-HCM  
PRESBURGER HOUSE  
4255 AGNES AVENUE**

At the Cultural Heritage Commission meeting of **October 16, 2014**, the Commission moved to include the above property in the list of Historic-Cultural Monument, subject to adoption by the City Council.

As required under the provisions of Section 22.171.10 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code, the Commission has solicited opinions and information from the office of the Council District in which the site is located and from any Department or Bureau of the city whose operations may be affected by the designation of such site as a Historic-Cultural Monument. Such designation in and of itself has no fiscal impact. Future applications for permits may cause minimal administrative costs.

The City Council, according to the guidelines set forth in Section 22.171 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code, shall act on the proposed inclusion to the list within 90 days of the Council or Commission action, whichever first occurs. By resolution, the Council may extend the period for good cause for an additional 15 days.

The Cultural Heritage Commission would appreciate your inclusion of the subject modification to the list of Historic-Cultural Monuments upon adoption by the City Council.

The above Cultural Heritage Commission action was taken by the following vote:

Moved: Commissioner Milofsky  
Seconded: Commissioner Barron  
Ayes: Commissioner Irvine and Scrafano  
Absent: Commissioner Kennard

Vote: **4 - 0**

  
Rhonda Ketay for Fely C. Pingol, Commission Executive Assistant  
Cultural Heritage Commission

Attachment: Application

c: Councilmember Paul Krekorian, Second Council District  
GIS

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Date: OCT 31 2014

Amy Schulenberg and Chris Culliton  
4255 Agnes Avenue  
Los Angeles CA 91604

**CERTIFIED MAIL**  
**RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

CASE NUMBER: **CHC-2014-2860-HCM**  
**PRESBURGER HOUSE**  
**4255 AGNES AVENUE**

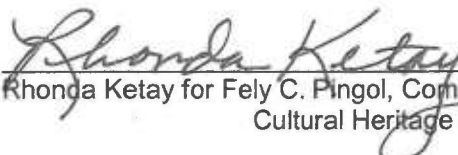
As you will note from the attached copy of our communication to the Los Angeles City Council, the Cultural Heritage Commission has moved to include the above-referenced property in the list of Historic-Cultural monuments, subject to adoption by the City Council.

In due course, our transmittal will be given a council file number and will be referred to the Council's Planning and Land Use Management Committee for review and recommendation. If you are interested in attending the Council Committee meeting, you should call Sharon Gin at (213) 978-1074 for information as to the time and place of the Committee and City Council meetings regarding this matter. Please give Ms. Gin at least one week from the date of this letter to schedule this item on the Committee Agenda before you call her.

The above Cultural Heritage Commission action was taken by the following vote:

Moved: Commissioner Milofsky  
Seconded: Commissioner Barron  
Ayes: Commissioners Irvine and Scrafano  
Absent: Commissioner Kennard

Vote: 4 - 0

  
Rhonda Ketay for Fely C. Pingol, Commission Executive Assistant  
Cultural Heritage Commission

Attachment: Application

c: Councilmember Paul Krekorian, Second Council District  
GIS

# Los Angeles Department of City Planning

## RECOMMENDATION REPORT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CASE NO.: CHC-2014-2860-HCM  
ENV-2014-2861-CE

**HEARING DATE:** October 16, 2014  
**TIME:** 10:00 AM  
**PLACE:** City Hall, Room 1010  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA  
90012

Location: 4255 Agnes Avenue  
Council District: 2  
Community Plan Area: Studio City  
Area Planning Commission: South Valley  
Neighborhood Council: Studio City  
Legal Description: Lot 103, TR 10132

**PROJECT:** Historic-Cultural Monument Application for the  
PRESBURGER HOUSE

**REQUEST:** Declare the property a Historic-Cultural Monument

**APPLICANT/  
OWNER:** Amy Schulenberg and Chris Culliton  
4255 Agnes Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 91604

**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 staff report and findings.

MICHAEL J. LOGRANDE  
Director of Planning



Ken Bernstein, AICP, Manager  
Office of Historic Resources



Lambert M. Giessinger, Preservation Architect  
Office of Historic Resources

Nels Young bong  
for

Attachments:      Historic-Cultural Monument Application

## **FINDINGS**

- 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 the Mid-Century Modern residential style.
- The building is “a notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual genius influenced his age” as a work by master architect Rudolph Schindler.

## **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 1945, this one-story, single-family residence in Studio City exhibits character-defining features of the Mid-Century Modern style. The subject building has a square floor plan, multiple clerestory windows, and a combination of a shed and flat roofs. The recessed entrance is located on the north side of the façade. To the left of the entrance is a front lawn enclosed by a row of box hedges. The living room and a bedroom open onto this outdoor area. The south and north sides of the house contain horizontal windows, which are organized by a fixed window over a sliding window, and the north façade has a long clerestory running the length of the house. The west façade faces the back yard and pool area. The master bedroom, kitchen and a bedroom open onto the back yard. In the back yard, there is a garage that is also a part of the original construction.

The interior of the house is largely open and lit by the multiple clerestory windows and French doors wrapping the house. The roof rafters and beams are exposed. At the entrance, there is a small foyer with a built-in coat closet that opens into the living room. The living room features multiple built-in elements, including a sofa with an end table and storage drawers underneath, a hinged-desk that swings down from the south wall and radio-phonograph cabinet. The fireplace is situated on the west wall. A set of bi-folding doors create a separation between the living room and the kitchen area. The master bedroom is accessed from the kitchen area and takes up the north-western portion of the house. The two smaller bedrooms are accessed by a door in the living room and these rooms make up the southern portion of the house. There are built-in features within the bedrooms which include closets, dressers, and shelves. There are two bathrooms in the house: one in the master bedroom and one in the short hallway that connects the living room to the two bedrooms.

This house was designed by Rudolf Schindler in 1945 and construction was complete in 1947. He designed the house for a family of four on a lot which was, at that time, in a grove of eucalyptus trees. The house used the characteristic “Schindler Frame”, which was a method of design and construction developed by Schindler, utilizing the concept of framing techniques

through modular units and a consistent style of execution of construction. This type of house was described by Esther McCoy, a renowned Schindler scholar:

[A "Schindler Frame" house] had these characteristic features: a cellarless, rambling, low, one-story building with its floor extending without steps into the garden; full height glass walls with large sliding doors on the patio side under ample overhangs; a flat, shed roof with clerestory windows; a solid back wall for privacy and moveable partitions for flexibility.<sup>1</sup>

The Presburger House has been included in many articles, books, and publications regarding Schindler's work.

The house has undergone a major restoration to reverse many alterations made to the property by previous owners. Since purchasing the property in 2009, the current owners have restored the property to its mid-century period of significance. Some of the restoration projects completed include:

- Removed HVAC components from the roof
- Restored the openings in the ceiling caused by the ducting retrofit,
- Removed later windows and reconstructed the original wooden windows,
- Repaired and replaced exterior wooden elements that were damaged,
- Custom-made replicas of the built-in furniture designed by Schindler that had been discarded by previous owners,
- Restored the patio on the west façade that had been enclosed by previous owners,
- Restored the bathrooms to original position of fixtures, and
- Stripped and painted all surfaces with the original colors and wood treatments.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Presburger House historic 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 "a notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual genius influenced his age." The open floor plan, exposed structural elements, lack of ornamentation, open clearstory, flat and shed roof lines with deep, overhanging eaves, interior spaces connected to exterior areas and extensive use of glass make the subject building an archetype of the Mid-Century Modern style. Rudolph Schindler is widely considered one of the most important modernist architects and is recognized as a master. The subject building represents an important period in the architect's career and a distillation of his design philosophy.

## **CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT ("CEQA") FINDINGS**

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*

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<sup>1</sup> McCoy, Esther. *A Servantless House Meets Three Needs*. Los Angeles Times, 11/27/1947

*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 Presburger 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.

## **BACKGROUND**

On August 21st, 2014 the Cultural Heritage Commission took the property under consideration. On September 18<sup>th</sup>, Commissioners Barron and Milofsky inspected the site with Lambert Giessinger of the Office of Historic Resources (OHR) staff. Separately, Commissioner Scrafano inspected the site with Tim Rosenstein of the OHR staff. And later the same day, September 18th, 2014, Commissioners Irvine and Kennard inspected the site with Nels Youngborg of the OHR staff.