

MOTION

I HEREBY MOVE that Council ADOPT Motion (Koretz – Huizar) relative to initiating proceeds to include the Twenty-eighth Church of Christ, Scientist building located at 1018 South Hilgard Avenue in the list of Historic-Cultural Monuments (Item No. 9, Council file No. 17-0168), as amended as follows:

1. INSTRUCT the Department of City Planning (DCP) to initiate consideration of the Twenty-eighth Church of Christ, Scientist building located at 1018 South Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024, as a City Historic-Cultural Monument under the procedures of Section 22.171.10 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code, and to prepare the Historic-Cultural Monument application for review and consideration by the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC).
2. REQUEST the CHC, after reviewing the application, to submit a report and recommendation to the Council regarding the inclusion of the Twenty-eighth Church of Christ, Scientist building in the City's list of Historic-Cultural Monuments.
3. INSTRUCT the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety to place a hold on issuing a demolition permit for this property until the DCP has investigated whether a development project has been proposed for this site.
4. INITIATE a General Plan Amendment to down plan this property.

PRESENTED BY _____
PAUL KORETZ
Councilmember, 5th District

SECONDED BY _____
MITCH O'FARRELL
Councilmember, 13th District

February 24, 2017

CF 17-0168

CD 5

Amending Motion

This item involves the historical nomination for a well-known property in the Westwood Village that has been identified by Survey LA for local as well as National Historic Status. The Los Angeles Conservancy has also stated this property is a significant historical asset to the City of Los Angeles and the Country as a whole.

However, we have an unusual situation in that the property owner is citing exemption as a religious institution under the California Government Code. While today's action is not the designation of historical status, it is the only the nomination and investigation of the building, the applicant claims that when the property owner publically announces a substantial hardship the Council cannot even investigate the eligibility of the religious institution or the criteria in which they are exempt. This advice seems counter to the intent of the historical nomination process. What would prevent any non-profit or any individual from claiming this relief without investigation? Title records have not been submitted to Council, nor the eligibility of the claim.

Additionally, the circumstances surrounding this property are unique in that the property owner is clearly proposing a redevelopment to a much larger building, yet has stated that they have no plans for a project and claimed to that the reason for demolition was reducing the operating and monthly expenses associated with maintain the building.

CEQA prohibits the "piecemealing" of a project. For the record, the City received a request from the same property owner just a few months ago for a lot-untie and claimed within their documentation to the City the purposes was for the sale of property and development. The City has also received from the public obvious real estate advertisements for the development of the property. This piecemealing is unlawful and shows bad faith in working with the City and the Westwood Community.

I have received several calls from the Westwood Community urging time to seek a preservation solution. Just as we found with the historical nomination of the Century Plaza Hotel, there should be time to explore solutions. While the property owner states it has done it's independent research, the lack of transparency has caused many to question whether all options have been fully explored. We have been told this is simply to reduce operating costs and then just recently we were copied on an email correspondence indicating the want to create an endowment. We simply have not received all the information here.

I THEREFORE ask for your SUPPORT of the Motion before you today also AMEND this Motion to: INSTRUCT THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING & SAFETY TO PLACE A HOLD ON ISSUING A DEMOLITION PERMIT AT THIS PROPERTY UNTIL A CEQA CLEARANCE HAS BEEN ISSUED BY THE CITY PLANNING HISTORIC PRESERVATION UNIT.

In addition to the Historic Nature of the Property, I have received many concerns regarding the increased density on the site. I also AMEND this Motion to: INSTRUCT THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING TO INITIATE A GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT TO DOWN PLAN THIS PROPERTY