

Dear Council Members:

My wife (Janet Jha) and I (Akhilesh Jha) are the owners of the property 1848 S Gramercy Place, Los Angeles, CA. This property is in front of the council as Item 18-0330 for designation as a Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM). Let us present to you the facts gathered so far as to why this property does not qualify to be an HCM:

1. **Department of Parks and Recreation (1987)** – “None of these properties (including 1848 S Gramercy Place) would be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places as examples of Architecture”
2. **SurveyLA Assessment (2012)** – “This was not a property that was found eligible either as a contributor to the nearby historic district or individually eligible for designation.”
3. **CRA/LA Assessment** – “Nothing in record suggesting that it is a historically important property”.
4. **United Neighborhoods (2018)** – Did not support the Historic-Cultural Monument Nomination.
5. **LA Office of Historic Resources (2018)** – “The Stokes’ Angelus Vista Tract Residence does not meet any of the three criteria of the Cultural Heritage Ordinance and therefore is ineligible for designation as a Historic-Cultural Monument.”
6. **Environmental Science Associates (2018)** – “There is no evidence that suggests the subject property was significant to the development of the Angelus Vista Tract, the subject property lacks architectural merit as an excellent example of the Tudor Revival style and a notable work of builder Naldo Stokes. The subject property also has not yielded, and is not likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. In addition, the subject property lacks integrity of design, materials, workmanship and feeling due to alterations.”
7. **Cultural Heritage Commission (2018)** - “Determined that this property does not conform with the definition of a Monument pursuant to LAAC Section 22.171.7 by a vote of 5-0.”
8. **Statements from Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) Hearing:**
  - a. **Gail Kennard, Commissioner** – “If we designate this property, I am not sure this is the best way to tell that [legal] story if that [Werner v. Graham] is the crux of the nomination. I do not see really any other criteria into which this would fit. Because I do not think it is particularly a great specimen of Tudor-Revival type. It does not meet any of the other criteria in terms of architecture. So, you are left with the criteria on broad social economic impact. At the end of the day, I just do not see that it tells that story well enough to rise to the level of a monument.”
  - b. **Barry Milofsky, Commissioner** – “I also agree with Commissioner Kennard that a single-family house of this specific type adjacent to a three-story brick building and a liquor store across the street is not enough to tell a story of the legal case [Werner v. Graham] that has been cited here.”
  - c. **Diane Kanner, Commissioner** – “Designating this house because it represents a land-use precedence [Werner v. Graham], does anybody get excited about that? I don’t. If this were a

human story of segregation or something like that, I might get a little excited. As far as broader Los Angeles implications, I do not see it.”

- d. **Lambert Giessinger, Architect, Office of Historic Resources** – “There has been some dilapidated property that has been restored. Once you restore this property, is it a great Tudor house around in 10-mile radius - No”
- e. **Ken Bernstein, Principal City Planner, Office of Historic Resources** – “I want to set the records straight factually on one item. A couple of speakers asserted that this property was not surveyed by SurveyLA. And that is inaccurate. SurveyLA did not record every property in the city that was surveyed. However, it did evaluate every property in the city. If we had actually done recordation of every property, we would have been at this for the next 40 years with 880,000 properties city-wide. Every property was evaluated. And because it was asserted in writing, we did go back and checked with our SurveyLA team, led by Janet Hansen. What was being referred to with respect to industrial properties, we did go back to properties that were zone industrial, which were deferred to a later phase of the survey because we were completing our city-wide industrial historic context statement. We know that this is not an industrial property. This has been a residential property. The survey team did go back and resurveyed all properties that had a zoning designation of industrial at a later phase including the residential properties within those zones. So, that was done here. And again, this was not a property that was found eligible either as a contributor to the nearby historic district or individually eligible for designation.”

**9. Surroundings**

North side: Apartment building  
South side: Liquor Store  
East side: Single-family house  
West side: Apartment building

**10. Usage**

**Current Use** – Single family house on a commercial zone (CM-1).

**Proposed Use** – TOC Tier II Affordable Housing of 20 units including 2 units for Extremely Low-Income Residents.



Therefore, I urge you to deny the HCM designation for this property. Thank you!

Respectfully,

Janet & Akhilesh Jha

Owners, 1848 S Gramercy Place, Los Angeles, CA 90019

(310) 995-4859, [akhilesh.jha@gmail.com](mailto:akhilesh.jha@gmail.com)

Dear Commissioners, Council Members, and City Staff:

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on the 1848 S Gramercy PI Historic Nomination. I am in strong opposition to this nomination because of my ability to see and the lack of historic content that has taken place at the site.

Please take a look at the photos below:



It is not my intent to come across as elitist, and I don't believe saying this place is lacking architectural character does that. These photos show the amount of attention this home has received prior to it being considered for a new development site. All of a sudden, we must preserve this property because of what? Age? If that is the precedent being set, our city's problems will continue to get worse.

Please let me know if there are other merits to this project I am missing. As it stands, this building is borderline embarrassing but preserving it is a mistake.

Thank you for your consideration and service to Los Angeles

V. Weathersby  
1672 North Western Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90027

To the Council President and Cultural Heritage Commission:

I am writing in opposition to the HCM for 1848 Gramercy Place. I considered the report, reviewed the site, and looked up the property.

The nomination appears to be made at the request of neighborhood residents. These residents did not appreciate the aesthetic of the building until progress was initiated. At that point the building was being considered despite SurveyLA already rejecting this building.

The building itself is insignificant, run down, and nothing more than an opportunity to do something relevant. Whatever the plan for the site is, I will be excited to see LA embrace progress and move forward as this building has been deteriorating it seems for decades. I don't like this word, but it's ugly.

When I looked it up, on Yelp it appeared as a sober living facility. I called the number and hung up after it asked me for insurance information. There was nothing else I saw online except for the price of the house on various real estate sites.

I did not come across anything historically significant for this project and encourage you to reject this nomination.

Respectfully,

Ruth Myers  
(952) 200-0944

Dear Council Members and Cultural Heritage Commissioners,

The intent of this email is to oppose the historic nomination of 1848 Gramercy Place - Council File: 18-0330.

I understand the purpose of this commission is not to weigh in on the future plans of a site, but to consider the item at hand and judge its historic merits. The nomination of this property, however, was not done with the history in mind but the opportunity it presented by nominating it. That opportunity was to block development and future housing.

There were years of opportunities to preserve this site, but until the plans came for the new development, the neighborhood had no interest in this property. If a one story organic grocer or trendy restaurant was proposed, would the nomination have occurred? The history of tomorrow will be decided by the decisions we make today, and the needs of our city are far greater than the discomfort brought by change for a handful of residents.

If this building is truly historic, I hope something exceptional will be done with the structure. The current narrative of weaponizing HCM nominations will be an unfortunate chapter in the future history books of Los Angeles.

Thank You,

Peggy Sears  
900 N Orange Grove Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90046  
(607)684-8348

To Whom It May Concern -

I've witnessed first hand how HCM designations are wielded as tools to block future development all across Los Angeles. I've already spoken at a PLUM hearing on this topic regarding another site in Los Angeles and here I am, spending more time speaking to this issue on yet another site, slated for development. I believe that the HCM Designation in question at 1848 Gramercy is yet another example of how the HCM designation has been weaponized by NIMBYs to block development. And I urge you to abandon this consideration swiftly and unapologetically.

This practice of weaponizing HCM's is shameful because it undermines the integrity of the HCM designation and contributes to the larger housing crisis, thereby preventing Angelenos from creating our own meaningful history in this city. In this case, 1848 Gramercy wasn't motioned for designation until the land was purchased by a developer. The single family home, built in the early 1900's, hasn't been deemed culturally or architecturally significant by Survey LA and still, here we are debating this.

The small and vocal NIMBY contingent has become strategic in their attempts to stunt growth in Los Angeles, and we should not fall for this trap. An HCM would stymie the potential for this valuable lot, impacting Angelenos for generations to come.

Do not grant the HCM designation for 1848 Gramercy Place.

Thank you,  
Chelsea

Dear Council Member Herb Wesson and the Staffs:

Does Los Angeles have a rich history worthy of preservation? Of course, but on what grounds are we deciding the merit of said nomination? Reviewing the increasing staff reports for these types of nominations I am becoming increasingly concerned. I am concerned from 2 perspectives:

- 1) As a housing advocate and
- 2) Someone who appreciates history

If we perennially approve projects simply based on the age of a building, we are diluting true historical relevancy as most of these nominations are simply a tool to block new development. Does the neighborhood truly value this property, or are they actually opposed to new development and see an opportunity with the HCM. I will let you decide on your own but it appears very clear to me.

The 1848 S Gramercy Pl property is a great example. It had been dismissed as an HCM until the demolition permit was filed. This property has been heavily modified and overlooked for years. It is not significant, it is an eye sore and I hope you dismiss this nomination, Council File: 18-0330.

Thank you

Katie Sears  
900 N Orange Grove Ave. #2  
Los Angeles, CA 90046  
(607)684-8348

June 25<sup>th</sup> 2018

**1848 S. Gramercy Pl Los Angeles CA 90019**

Dear members of Los Angeles Historical Committee,

I am going to suggest against the consideration of this property as a historical property.

Let me begin by offering some magnitude to a decision of considering a property such as this to be historic. We live in the most populous metro in California, 2nd largest metros in the USA, our local economy would rank in the top 20 worldwide. We have a growing population in California, it fuels a demand for housing, naturally by not building more units we have a housing crisis in LA. This property at 1848 South Gramercy Pl. can provide 20 times more housing units than its current use.

This property was built as a single-family home, all neighboring properties have multi-unit housing and commercial properties, it has become out of character with the neighborhood (Zoning is CM-1, neighboring properties are zoned R3, R4 & C2). Entering 1848 South Gramercy Pl. you will see an old house with many modifications, replacements and additions, it has lost many of its original characteristics.

There will be a few reports provided with the history of this property and there hasn't been any significant event related to this property.

This property is in Tier 2 of the Transit Oriented Communities Program passed in September 2016 with Measure JJJ. The TOC program incentivizes developers to build more affordable housing, this property will house 10% for affordable housing. By considering this property historic you will be obstructing the development of the necessary housing our city desperately needs.

In conclusion, the consideration of this property as historic should be rejected, it doesn't qualify as having the character, history or value for historic designation.

Gabriel Getter  
Real Estate Broker  
15 year resident in Los Angeles

To Whom It May Concern:

Can you please explain to me what is so significant about 1848 S. Gramercy Place? I am beyond confused that a seemingly mediocre building would warrant a HCM designation. An HCM should tell a story of our city, speak to our shared values, or enshrine the legacy of a contributor. What is worth saving about this building? I supposed this could all fall into a matter of opinion, but there must be some explanation.

I often look to trusted community leaders and organizations to offer perspective in moments like this, but as I understand it, Survey LA - an agency entrusted with this scope of designations - did not make this motion. If this building hasn't landed on their radar, why is it on anyone else's radar? I ask this, with all due respect, because I truly don't know and despite all of my research, I can't figure it out.

Does my home warrant designation? I suppose we could make the case for any home to be designated HCM -- but that seems a bit dangerous. HCM's effectively ward off future influence and change to that specific area, and who am I to say what this city will need 10, 20, 30 years from now? This is why Survey LA's work is important, and done so scrupulously. All this to say -- I think we should really consider (perhaps, more carefully) what is being motioned for HCM and why.

Respectfully,

Harlan Allen

(949) 702-5372

Dear Council Members and Cultural Heritage Commissioners:

I am writing this letter in regards to the HCM nomination at 1848 S Gramercy Pl, Council File: 18-0330.

I am opposed to this nomination for a handful of reasons. The most obvious is due to the condition of the property. This building is run down, modified, and offering little to no value as it currently stands.

If this dilapidated building were to be preserved, what would the future plan with it be? Just to hold onto something that is subject for demolition, or would it be converted into a museum, an adaptively reused building, or something else? We have an opportunity with the land this building sits on, but the wood structure itself is getting in the way.

Please deny this nomination and help improve our cities infrastructure, aesthetic, and ability to achieve progress. Thank you for your consideration.

Dan Collins  
900 N Orange Grove Ave. #2  
Los Angeles, CA 90046  
(781) 999-0977

To Whom It May Concern -

We are in the midst of an unprecedented effort to address the decades-long housing affordability crisis in Los Angeles. This means, we are actively seeking to build new homes - and every corner of the city is called to do its part. This call-to-action has peaked the activity of the "Not-In-My-Backyard (NIMBY)" folks. The HCM designation at 1848 Gramercy sadly speaks to another pitiful attempt by this contingent to block much-needed housing. The property isn't worth saving by Survey LA's standards -- and it didn't occur to any of the neighborhood to bother saving it, until it was slated for development. Suspicious? Absolutely. This strategy of nominating buildings for HCM has been mobilized at a growing rate, and we must not be fooled. We have a moral obligation to press-on in our pursuit of lifting LA out of the depths of this housing crisis.

This is not a battle between single family homes and apartment buildings - we need homes of all types in Los Angeles. And yet, we are woefully under-supplied with apartments, condos, and mixed use spaces that provide economic value to neighborhoods, and create greater access for the diversity of people living throughout Los Angeles. Do not let 1848 Gramercy be a victory for the NIMBY movement. Please deny this HCM and help bring new, much-needed homes to LA. '

Thank you for your consideration and service to Los Angeles.

Claudia Baticele  
8360 Clinton Ave  
W. Hollywood 90046

To: Council President Herb Wesson, CHC, and City Staff  
Regarding: Council File: 18-0330 1848 S Gramercy

The property at 1848 S Gramercy is not a historic property, unless age alone qualify it. Nothing historic has yet to occur. It is just another older building in Los Angeles that doesn't need to be preserved when there are several examples of this type of building in this very small geographic area.

A person actually had to be rich to move into the Angelus Vista neighborhood when it was originally planned, with homeowners required to spend at least \$2,000.00 in home construction costs to live here. This was clearly an attempt to keep out the influx of "others". Preserving this property in this fashion is preserving the idea that rich neighbors can still exclude people they feel are beneath them, or different than them, just because they have an emotional reaction.

Please deny this ridiculous nomination, reject impulse, and side with actual history.

Thank You,

Avis Bates  
1672 North Western Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90027