

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

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May 30, 2019

Los Angeles City Council
c/o Office of the City Clerk
City Hall, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attention: PLUM Committee

Dear Honorable Members:

**GREEN DOG & CAT HOSPITAL; 1544 WEST SLAUSON AVENUE;
CASE NO. CHC-2019-1120-HCM, ENV-2019-1121-CE**

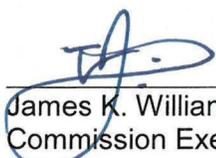
At its meeting of **May 16, 2019**, the Cultural Heritage Commission took the actions below to include the Green Dog & Cat Hospital in the list of Historic-Cultural Monuments, subject to adoption by the City Council:

1. **Determined** that the proposed designation is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 and Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 of the State CEQA Guidelines;
2. **Determined** that the property conforms with the definition of a Monument pursuant to Section 22.171.7 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code;
3. **Recommended** that the City Council consider the Green Cat & Dog Hospital for inclusion in the list of Historic-Cultural Monuments; and
4. **Adopted** the attached findings.

The Commission vote was as follows:

Moved: Kennard
Seconded: Kanner
Ayes: Barron
Absent: Buelna, Milofsky

Vote: 3 – 0


James K. Williams
Commission Executive Assistant II

The Cultural Heritage Commission would appreciate your inclusion of the subject property to the list of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

Time for Council to Act: The Commission action is hereby transmitted to the City Council for consideration. Pursuant to Section 22.171.10(f) of the Los Angeles Administrative Code, the Council may approve or disapprove in whole or in part an application or initiation for a proposed designation of a Monument. The Council shall act in 90-days of the public hearing held before the Commission on the proposed designation. The City Council may unilaterally extend the 90-day time limit to act for a maximum of 15 days for good cause. With written consent of the owner, the time for the City Council to act may be extended by up to an additional 60 days. If the Council does not act on the application or initiation within this specified time limit, the application or initiation to designate a Monument shall be deemed to have been denied.

Enclosures: Findings

FINDINGS

- The Green Dog & Cat Hospital “embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction” as a rare intact example of a 1930s purpose-built animal hospital with an upper story residential component, and an excellent example of Art Deco style architecture applied to a mixed-use commercial building.

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 if it meets at least one of the following criteria:

1. Is identified with important events of national, state, or local history, or exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community;
2. Is associated with the lives of historic personages important to national, state, city, or local history; or
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction; or represents a notable work of a master designer, builder, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age.

SUMMARY

The Green Dog & Cat Hospital is a two-story mixed-use commercial building with an attached two-story volume with alley-facing garages at the rear located on Slauson Avenue between Denker Avenue and Halldale Avenue in South Los Angeles. Commissioned by veterinarian George C. Green in 1934, the building was designed in the Art Deco architectural style by architectural engineer Jules G. Koppel as a dog and cat hospital with a residential upper story. The property is the founding and long-term location of the Green Dog & Cat Hospital, which has been in continuous operation since 1934.

Irregular in plan, the main pet hospital building is of wood-frame construction with smooth stucco cladding and has a flat roof with a parapet. It has a stepped geometric massing with a one-story portion fronting the primary, north-facing façade that wraps both front corners, a stepped-back two-story residential portion, and a tall, stepped tower centered on the second story, above the main entry. There is signage on the tower that reads “GREEN” on three lower faces and “G” on two faces of the octagonal cap. The first story of the primary façade is symmetrically configured into three bays, each containing a recessed entry flanked by fluted pilasters capped by panels with a triangle motif. The central bay contains the primary entrance that has a wide, glazed, wood door with wrought iron over the glazing. The door is accessed by two shallow concrete steps clad in dark green tile with a white stylized chain motif detail. The two bays flanking the primary entrance contain secondary entries with plain wood slab doors accessed by unornamented concrete steps. Fenestration includes tripartite aluminum windows, multi-lite wood casement windows, multi-lite wood double-hung windows, wood multi-lite hopper windows, and fixed and single-hung vinyl windows. The building features ornamentation across the primary elevation that includes a decorative cornice with a sawtooth motif and corner zigzags, triangle motifs, and stylized geometric molding. On the interior there is an entry lobby with a polychromatic tile floor and plaster-finished walls with a stepped tray ceiling, stepped, Art

Deco-style details, a stairway with tiled steps and an elaborate wrought iron railing with a sunburst motif, built-in upholstered benches, and metal pendant light fixtures with Art Deco-style shades.

A garage volume, designed and built at the same time as the pet hospital, is attached to the rear of the main building via a one-story volume with a flat roof that serves as an open deck/large balcony. The one-story volume wraps around the east side of the garage volume to create an open promenade with a low stucco wall.

The subject property has undergone multiple alterations over the years that include an addition and a freestanding storeroom in 1934; an addition to the west-facing elevation in 1947; and the replacement of some windows on the north-, east-, and west-facing elevations, the infill of transom windows on the north-facing elevation, the boarding-up of an entry at the north-facing elevation's second story, the addition of signage to the primary façade, the painting over of some window glazing, and the addition of security window bars, all at unknown dates.

SurveyLA, the citywide historic resources survey, identified the subject property as individually eligible for listing under the national, state, and local designation programs as an excellent example of Art Deco commercial architecture, and as the earliest known remaining dog and cat hospital in the Los Angeles area.

DISCUSSION

The Green Dog & Cat Hospital meets one of the Historic-Cultural Monument criteria: it “embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction” as a rare intact example of a 1930s purpose-built animal hospital with an upper story residential component, and an excellent example of Art Deco style architecture applied to a mixed-use commercial building.

For much of its length through Los Angeles, including the portion containing the subject property, Slauson parallels the historic Atchison Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Redondo route completed in 1888. The AT&SF line was the primary shaper of Slauson Avenue and enabled industrial uses. Due to Los Angeles' zoning, many industrially zoned areas across the city, including along Slauson Avenue, saw the development veterinary facilities. The Green Dog & Cat Hospital was among the numerous pet hospitals that existed in Los Angeles during the 1930s. However, it is unknown how many properties from this era survive in the city today, and it is presumed that intact examples are rare and are unlikely to reflect stronger articulations of the Art Deco architectural style than the subject property. Furthermore, the Green Dog & Cat Hospital may be the earliest known intact, purpose-built pet hospital in Los Angeles.

In addition, the Green Dog & Cat Hospital reflects the execution of the Art Deco architectural style at the height of its popularity. The building's smooth stucco wall cladding, stepped, geometric massing, central tower, and emphasis on verticality are all reflective of the style. Other distinguishing features include fluted pilasters, geometric decorative motifs, and wrought iron detailing, as well as original interior tilework throughout the property, stepped archways, and polychromatic tile flooring.

Despite some exterior and minor interior alterations, the subject property retains a high level of integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance.

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 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 Green Dog & Cat Hospital as an 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 an irreplaceable historic site/open space. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for 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 and sites in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Categorical Exemption ENV-2019-1121-CE was prepared on April 26, 2019.

BACKGROUND

On March 21, 2019, the Cultural Heritage Commission voted to take the property under consideration. On April 25, 2019, a subcommittee of the Commission consisting of Commissioners Kanner and Kennard visited the property, accompanied by staff from the Office of Historic Resources.