

March Avenue Palm Trees
N. March Avenue between W. Ingomar Street
and W. Justice Street
CHC-2021-2244-HCM
ENV-2021-2245-CE

FINDINGS

- The March Avenue Palm Trees “exemplif[y] significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community for their association with the Rancho Sombra del Roble, an early agricultural and residential development of the western San Fernando Valley.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The March Avenue Palm Trees meet one of the Historic-Cultural Monument criteria: they “exemplif[y] significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community” for their association with the Rancho Sombra del Roble, an early agricultural and residential development of the western San Fernando Valley.

Based on their presence in aerial images from 1928, the March Avenue Palm Trees date to the original development of the Rancho Sombra del Roble. During the Rancho Sombra del Roble’s time as a private retreat, the subject landscape was located within the ranch property. March Avenue was originally an extension of Cohasset Street, which comprised the southern boundary of the ranch and one of the means of access to the property from other parts of the San Fernando Valley. The March Avenue Palms Trees formed a distinctive corridor within the Rancho Sombra del Roble that intersected Justice Street about 600 feet west of the original entry gate. Today, the trees create a cohesive streetscape along March Avenue and represent a vestige of the once-sprawling Rancho Sombra del Roble, an early development of the western San Fernando Valley. Despite the change of setting and removal of some trees, the subject landscape retains a high level of integrity 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 March Avenue Palm Trees 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 trees 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 trees 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 trees.

The City of Los Angeles has determined based on the whole of the administrative record, that substantial evidence supports that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 and Class 31, and none of the exceptions to a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 applies. The project was found to be exempt based on the following:

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-2021-2245-CE was prepared on February 26, 2021.