

CRENSHAW WOMEN'S CENTER
1025-1029 South Crenshaw Boulevard
CHC-2021-1448-HCM
ENV-2021-1449-CE

FINDINGS

- The Crenshaw Women's Center "exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community" as a pioneering venue for lesbian education, health, and empowerment in Los Angeles, and a rare example in the Wilshire area of institutional development associated with the Gay Liberation Movement. The subject property is also significant for its association with the Women's Liberation Movement in Los Angeles as a support center for women and women's rights.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Crenshaw Women's Center meets one of the Historic-Cultural Monument criteria: it "exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community" as a pioneering venue for lesbian education, health, and empowerment in Los Angeles, and a rare example in the Wilshire area of institutional development associated with the Gay Liberation Movement. The subject property is also significant for its association with the Women's Liberation Movement in Los Angeles as a support center for women and women's rights.

SurveyLA's LGBT Historic Context Statement identifies eligibility standards for properties significant for their association with the gay liberation movement as being those that are directly associated with an event, organization, or institution that played an important role in the development of LGBT consciousness, community, or culture during the period of significance. Within the context of Women's Rights, SurveyLA identifies eligibility standards for significant properties as being associated with organizations and institutions that provided a wide range of services to support women and women's rights.

The Crenshaw Women's Center not only served as a centralized hub for the communication and organization of lesbian and feminist groups, but also provided critical services as the first women's center in Los Angeles. Additionally, it became one of the earliest institutions to support medical and mental health needs for Los Angeles' lesbian community, and was progressive in bringing activism for women's liberation and gay liberation under a single roof. Though it only experienced a short tenure at the subject property, the Crenshaw Women's Center became a symbol of women's growing autonomy and liberation and provided an important framework for future women's centers. Furthermore, the Center's location within a duplex provided a familiar home-like environment for those who visited, and its proximity to transit lines and parking further ensured women could safely and easily access its services.

While most of the historic fabric on the interior of the subject property has been removed, the exterior retains a high level of integrity of location, setting, materials, design, feeling, and association from 1970-1972 to convey its significance. Based on a 1972 image, the primary facade of the building retains many features from the time the Crenshaw Women's Center occupied the building, including the porch entry, front stair orientation, window locations, and roof.

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 Crenshaw Women’s Center 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 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-2021-1449-CE was prepared on April 30, 2021.