

WOMAN’S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION STATE HEADQUARTERS

551 South Kingsley Drive
CHC-2022-1865-HCM
ENV-2022-1866-CE

FINDINGS

- The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union State Headquarters “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community” for its association with the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, an international women’s club that played a pivotal role in the social history of women in Los and was influential in local, state, and national politics in the 20th century. The subject property is the longest and last remaining state headquarters for the nearly 140 year-old Woman’s Christian Temperance Union of Southern California.
- The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union State Headquarters “embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction” as an excellent example of a Craftsman-style residence with Tudor Revival and Gothic Revival architectural style influences.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union State Headquarters meets two of the Historic Cultural Monument criteria.

The subject property “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community” for its association with the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, an international women’s club that played a pivotal role in the social history of women in Los Angeles and was influential in local, state, and national politics in the 20th century. The subject property is the longest and last remaining state headquarters for the nearly 140 year-old Woman’s Christian Temperance Union of Southern California. Prior to the establishment of the first women’s club in Los Angeles in 1878, women found themselves in a town largely controlled by men, with little physical or social infrastructure to support their needs; there were few social opportunities for women. At this time, during the mid- to late 19th century, women’s main role was to keep house and raise children, and women had little independence when it came to finances, their home, and decisions regarding their children; women also had no right to vote and had a limited political voice. Women’s clubs such as the WCTU, in Los Angeles and across the country, supported and empowered women, and gave them a voice; they served as both cultural clubs for self-betterment and as agencies of reform.

Further, throughout its organizational history, the WCTU has been influential in politics and civic reform at all levels– local, state, and nationwide. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the WCTU played a significant role in the temperance movement, prohibition, and successfully campaigned for women’s right to vote through the suffrage movement. Following in line with the organization’s second national president, Frances Willard’s “do everything” motto, the group also pursued equal rights, child welfare laws and prison reform, alcohol education, and world peace. In addition, as of the late 20th century, white ribboners (what club members called themselves) had lobbied Congress to ban radio and alcoholic beverage television ads, worked to denounce free drinks on airplanes, and protested a bar proposed at the California State University,

Bakersfield. At the local level, WCTU members partnered with schools on anti-alcohol and narcotic educational materials and programs, hosted temperance and abstinence related speech and coloring contests for youth, and have helped ex-serviceman and their families in ports such as San Diego with personal calls, knitted items, and homemade clothes, bedding, and stump warmers for wounded vets.

While WCTU membership has declined over the years, the subject property represents the history of a significant organization that has persevered nearly 140 years despite drastic political and social changes since the organization's founding in 1874. The subject property has been the home of the WCTU's state headquarters for 71 years and is the only remaining state headquarter building for the organization in Southern California; the WCTU was at their first headquarters building on Broadway in downtown Los Angeles, the Temperance Temple (not extant), for 59 years and at their second home at 1018 West 8th Street (not extant) for two years.

The subject property also "embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction" as an excellent example of a Craftsman-style residence with Tudor Revival and Gothic Revival architectural style influences. Hallmarks of the style, as exhibited by the subject property, include low-pitched gable roof with wide eaves and exposed rafter tails, prominent projecting front entrance porch, and its broad, full-width porch with square columns. Other distinctive features include the wood built-ins, decorative wood ceiling beams, wood floors, and wood grand staircase.

The subject property has experienced a limited number of alterations over the years, most of which appear to in place at the time that the WCTU acquired the property in 1950, and therefore it has a high level of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling, 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 Woman's Christian Temperance Union State Headquarters 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 an 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-2022-1866-CE was prepared on April 28, 2022.