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Date: October 31, 2014

RE: 828 7th Street

INTRODUCTION
Historic Resources Group has completed an evaluation of the single-family residence located at 828 7th Street in the City of Santa Monica, California, for potential historic significance, and to identify significant character-defining features of the property. HRG’s review included site observation of existing conditions on the property; research of building permits and other primary and secondary sources; and a review of existing photographs and survey data for the property. This report concludes that 828 7th Street is eligible for designation as a City of Santa Monica Structure of Merit as a representative of a style in the City that is no longer prevalent. These conclusions are based on a review of the relevant historic contexts, and an analysis of the eligibility criteria for designation as a structure of merit.

828 7th Street, Santa Monica

828 7th Street is located in the southwest part of the City of Santa Monica, south of Lincoln Boulevard and east of Montana Avenue. The property contains a one-story Craftsman bungalow at the front of the parcel, and a two-story multi-family residential building at the rear; this assessment is for the one-story Craftsman residence. It was constructed in 1911. According to the building permit, the builder was George Allen, a carpenter from Ocean Park. Per the 1912 City Directory, the original occupant of the house was T.J. Cavanaugh.

1 City of Santa Monica, “Historic Resources Inventory,” California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1994.
Previous Surveys and Evaluations
The property located at 828 7th Street was surveyed in the 1994 Santa Monica Historic Resources Inventory and was assigned a California Historical Resources Status Code of 5S3, which at that time was defined as “individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation.” The property was found individually eligible for designation as a City of Santa Monica Structure of Merit as “a nicely detailed and very intact example of a building type that characterized Santa Monica during the first quarter of the twentieth century: the Craftsman bungalow.” The property was reevaluated in 2006 by PCR Services and was again found to be eligible for designation as a City of Santa Monica Structure of Merit.

HISTORIC CONTEXT
The residence at 828 7th Street was built in 1911, during the height of the Craftsman bungalow’s popularity. Craftsman bungalows as well as larger Arts and Crafts residences were popular building types among Santa Monica’s residents between 1895 and 1930. Numerous bungalows were constructed near the ocean in the central and southern parts of Santa Monica, while larger homes, many in the Craftsman style, were primarily constructed north of Montana Avenue.

The Arts & Crafts Movement
William Morris, the father of the Arts and Crafts movement in Britain, would have enjoyed the early absence of factories in Southern California. Although Morris lived most of his life in or near London, he claimed to detest the city. In his Utopian novel, News from Nowhere: An Epoch of Rest (1890), he wrote of a day when London would be broken up into small towns where the air, freed from the smoke of factories, would be clear again. All work that was pleasant to do would be hand-crafted, though the onerous tasks would be given to machines hidden somewhere behind a grove of trees and surrounded with gardens. Otherwise the air would not be fouled by industry. Morris’ mood was anti-city, anti-industrial, and anti-modern. Although trained as an architect, Morris’ only experience with house building was his “Red House” at Bexley Heath near London (1859). His friend, the architect Philip Webb designed it in a vaguely country house style of the English seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a period whose building was often used in the late nineteenth century as a substitute for the domestic architecture of the Middle Ages. Morris, his wife, and friends formed a kind of guild in order to

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2 City of Santa Monica, “Historic Resources Inventory,” California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1994.
produce the beautiful objects that eventually furnished the house. This enterprise was extended into a design and manufacturing firm, Morris and Company, whose products included stained glass windows, furniture, and wallpaper.

As in Britain, American Arts and Crafts architecture was only one of the many evocations of William Morris' ideas. The organized agents of these ideas were the Arts and Crafts and William Morris societies that sprang up across the United States at the turn of the century, first in Minneapolis (1895) and then in Chicago and Boston (both 1897). Architecture was not a prominent interest of these groups, though the Chicago society did sponsor Frank Lloyd Wright's famous "The Art and Craft of the Machine" address at Jane Addams' Hull House in 1901. Morris' message was congruent with the nostalgia that many Americans had of a better day before industry had taken command. Two Americans who most explicitly followed Morris were Elbert Hubbard and Gustav Stickley. Hubbard was the founder of an Arts and Crafts community called the Roycrofters, located in East Aurora in upper New York State. Stickley was a furniture maker and journalist whose United Crafts was located in Eastwood, New York, near Syracuse. These two men, along with other believers, made Morris' Arts and Crafts movement a familiar topic in the United States.

The Craftsman style was first developed in Southern California in the landscape surrounding the Arroyo Seco in Pasadena and northeast Los Angeles. The natural bluffs and lush plant growth of Santa Monica provided a similar environment to which the style was easily adapted. The Craftsman style in Southern California placed an emphasis on integration of usually small, single-family houses with their surroundings, the use of broad porches and deep overhangs to provide shelter from the sun, and the use of expressed wood framing and natural cladding materials. In smaller and less expensive examples, these characteristics are usually present in simpler form.4

In the early twentieth century, Arts and Crafts single-family residences were built throughout Southern California. The emergence of Arts and Crafts architecture was first evidenced in the Shingle style houses dating from the mid-1890s. By the early years of the twentieth century, the imagery utilized in their design followed the principal architectural modes of the day Craftsman, Swiss Chalet, Prairie School, Anglo-Colonial Revival, Mission Revival, English-Influenced (Tudor, Cotswold Cottage) styles. At that time these styles represented a conscious search for the supposed simplicity of pre-industrial times. All versions are meant to counter the excesses of the Victorian period by returning to a pre-industrial past when handicrafts displayed personal involvement in the products of a

4 Adapted from City of Santa Monica: Historic Preservation Element, prepared by PCR Services Corporation and Historic Resources Group, September 2002.
laborer’s work. Features, commonly held by all these styles were a simplicity of form, informal character, direct response to site, and an extensive use of natural materials - particularly wood and rubble masonry.

Southern California's single-family Arts and Crafts residences include the one or one-and-one-half story bungalow and the two-story house. The bungalow is the house type most often associated with Southern California’s Arts and Crafts architecture. Many bungalows were custom-designed, often for the upper middle-class. However, speculatively developed bungalows were also built, most of which were designed by builders. The popularity of this small dwelling in Southern California in the early part of the twentieth century was an almost inevitable result of rapid growth of a middle-class population with moderate means. The bungalow provided respectability and the good life for the common people. In fact, the bungalow would probably have appeared without the help of the Arts and Crafts movement. Inexpensive housing adapted to the wallets of the people with limited incomes was an absolute necessity for the average citizen.

In late nineteenth-century California, the attempt to relate the house to the natural features of its setting was furthered by the use of wood as an exterior sheathing material. Shiplap and clapboard siding were the main materials used for covering smaller houses; these materials, often in combination with shingles, were used for larger houses. Wood shingles were typically used when the form of the building included curved bays, towers or other complexly shaped protuberances. The integration of Arts and Crafts dwellings with the environment was an important element in its design, which in Southern California was encouraged by the year-round temperate climate. The houses were often designed to fit the contours of a site, preserving trees and other natural features, and were typically set in a garden, whether formal or informal.

The use of local materials created a harmonious relationship between the house and the natural features of the site. In Southern California, boulders from the Arroyo Seco were often used for foundations, porch piers, chimneys, retaining walls, and other decorative elements. California redwood was used for the exterior wall sheathing. Architectural details included articulated wooden structural elements, decorative tile work, and leaded glass windows designed by local artisans.

The siting of the Arts and Crafts bungalow and two-story house usually had a front yard and a backyard that was somewhat larger. The front yard almost always remained open to the street. The backyard was typically large enough for flower and vegetable gardens and often a croquet court. For reasons of efficiency there was little gardening at either side of the house, one side being given over to a driveway from the street to the garage (and its
predecessor the carriage house) at the rear of the backyard. While individual dwellings were designed to integrate indoor and outdoor spaces, neighborhoods were often unified by the use of features, which included street trees, common set-backs, retaining walls, and entrance piers.

The Craftsman style developed during the Arts and Crafts period, and has become strongly identified with Arts and Crafts architecture. In historic and current literature this style, when applied to the design of a bungalow, is also called the "California" style. The Craftsman architectural image combines references to the Swiss and Japanese traditions of domestic architecture with the characteristic aesthetic values of the Arts and Crafts movement. The distinctive exterior features of the Craftsman bungalow include a front porch, usually with a shallow pitched gable roof. The main body of the house, also with a pitched roof, rises slightly above this porch. Typically the proportions of the houses are wide and low, effectively conveying a gravity-bound character to the dwellings. This feature assumes mannered proportions when stone or stuccoed piers are thickened under the weight of large wooden beams and rafters that support thin, albeit broad roof planes. The exterior walls of a Craftsman bungalow are usually clad in shingles or clapboard.

**Property Type Description**

828 7th Street is an excellent example of Craftsman architecture applied to a single-family residence in Santa Monica. The Craftsman style is a sub-theme of the broader Arts and Crafts movement. Craftsman bungalows are horizontal in their lines and have low-pitched roofs. Wide over-hanging eaves with exposed rafters stretch over broad terraces. Gable roofs predominate, whether side- or front-facing. Large single-gable or shed dormers, or single or paired gable dormers may break the street-oriented roof plane. Typically this roof plane is supported by a porch that stretches across the entire width of the entrance facade. Alternatively, the porch may be limited to the immediate entrance area. The porch is supported by a row of stone piers, battered or straight-sided, or wooden columns or piers. When these elements are symmetrically disposed, and especially if a large, centrally positioned gable dormer is present, the design may convey a classical quality. The roof is usually sheathed with composition or wooden shingles. Foundations, chimneys, and retaining walls are constructed of stone.
ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The subject property is located on the south side of 7th Street, between Idaho and Montana Avenues. The property is bounded on the west by a one-story single-family residence, on the east by a three-story multi-family residential building, on the north by 7th Street, and on the south by an alley. The property contains a one-story, single-family residence constructed in 1911, and a two-story, multi-family residence constructed in 1953.

The single-family residence at 828 7th Street is set back from the street and is situated at the north end of the lot amidst lush landscaping. The one-and one-half-story building is in the Craftsman style. It is of wood frame construction with a rectangular plan and a one-room addition to the southwest. The roof is cross-gabled with exposed eaves and rafter tails, and is clad in asphalt composition shingles. The exterior walls are clad in cedar shake. The primary entrance is symmetrically located on the northeast facade and consists of a flush wood door with a square vision light, metal hardware, and wood surround. The door is accessed by a partial-width porch with a front-gabled roof supported on a wood beam, square wood posts and battered arroyo stone piers. Stepped outriggers support the overhanging rake. There is an interior arroyo stone chimney projecting from the south side of the roof. Fenestration consists primarily of coupled, fixed divided light wood windows with wood surrounds. There are small, fixed, divided-light, wood sash windows in the upper half story at the gable ends.

The multi-family residence at 828 7th Street is located at the south end of the parcel, and is not visible from the street. It is of wood frame construction with a rectangular plan and flat roof. The exterior walls are clad in textured cement plaster. Fenestration consists of sliding aluminum windows.

Character-defining Features

Every historic building is unique, with its own identity and its own distinctive character. Character-defining features are those visual aspects and physical features or elements that give the building its character and help to convey its significance. Character-defining features can identify the building as an example of a specific building type, usually related to the building’s function; they can exemplify the use of specific materials or methods of construction, or embody an historical period or architectural style; and they can convey the sense of time and place in buildings associated with significant events or people.
A building’s character-defining features can include but are not limited to:

- Setting and site;
- Shape and massing;
- Roof and related features, such as chimneys or skylights;
- Projections, such as balconies or porches;
- Recesses or voids, such as galleries or arcades;
- Windows and doors and their openings;
- Materials, with their distinguishing textures, finishes, colors and craftsmanship; and
- Interior features, materials, finishes, spaces, and spatial relationships.

Character-defining features are those constructed during the property’s period of significance that contribute to the integrity of the property. In general, retaining character-defining features retains the integrity of an historic property, and therefore helps to retain the property’s eligibility as an historic resource. Significant impacts on an historic resource result from major change to character-defining features, or from many incremental changes over time.

Significant exterior character-defining features of 828 7th Street include:

- One-and-one-half-story height
- Rectangular plan
- Side-gable roof with open eaves and exposed rafter tails
- Partial width porch with front gable roof with wood beam, outriggers, square wood posts and battered stone piers
- Wood shingle siding
- Flush wood door with vision light and metal hardware
- Divided light wood sash windows
Alterations
828 7th Street has undergone some alterations over time, but it does not appear to have been significantly altered since the 1994 survey. In 1923, a one-room addition of concrete construction was added to the southwest. In 1950, the kitchen was remodeled, with wood paneling replacing lath and plaster, and new wiring and plumbing installed. In 1953, a two-unit-over-five-garages multi-family residence of wood frame construction was built on the southern end of the parcel. In 1954, several floor joists in the single-family residence were repaired. In 1996, the multi-family residence underwent a soft story earthquake retrofit during which structural steel moment frame, footings, and drag struts were installed.

EVALUATION CRITERIA
Historic resources may be designated at the federal, state, and local levels. Current designations available in Santa Monica include: National Historic Landmarks, National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, California Registered Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, and Santa Monica Landmarks, Structures of Merit, and Historic Districts. While some programs place emphasis on architectural character, all use basic criteria relating to a property’s place in important events or patterns of development, association with important personages, and architectural significance. This evaluation of 828 7th Street is limited to the property’s eligibility for designation as a Santa Monica Structure of Merit.

Santa Monica Structure of Merit Designation Criteria
The Santa Monica Landmarks and Historic Districts Ordinance includes criteria and procedures for designating City of Santa Monica Landmarks, Structures of Merit, and Historic Districts. An improvement may be designated a Structure of Merit if the Landmarks Commission determines that it merits official recognition. Structures of Merit must be identified in the City of Santa Monica’s Historic Resources Inventory, and must be fifty years of age or more. Further, they must meet one of the following criteria:

1. The structure is a unique or rare example of an architectural design, detail or historical type.
2. The structure is representative of a style in the City that is no longer prevalent.
3. The structure contributes to a potential Historic District.

City of Santa Monica Permit B1535, April 19, 1923.
City of Santa Monica Permit B8157, August 31, 1950.
City of Santa Monica Permit B13374, April 16, 1953.
City of Santa Monica Permit B16695, October 27, 1954.
City of Santa Monica Permit EQR3378, March 22, 1996.
HISTORIC RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

The single-family residence at 828 7th Street has undergone some minor alterations. A room was added to the southwest, and a two-unit over five-garage multi-family residence of wood frame construction was built to on the southern end of the parcel. The building has not been significantly altered since it was surveyed in 1994. It retains a high degree of historic integrity, and continues to convey its historic significance.

828 7th Street is more than 50 years old, and it has been identified in two previous survey efforts. It is an excellent local example of Arts and Crafts residential architecture, an architectural style no longer prevalent in Santa Monica. It retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance, and exhibits significant character-defining features of its style and type. Therefore, the single-family residence located at 828 7th Street in the City of Santa Monica appears eligible for local designation as a Structure of Merit.

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City of Santa Monica Permit B13374, April 16, 1953.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


City of Santa Monica. “Historic Resources Inventory.” California Department of Parks and Recreation. 1994.


Ingersoll, Luther A. Ingersoll’s Century History, Santa Monica Bay Cities. Los Angeles County: Luther A. Ingersoll, 1908.


Figure 1: 828 7th Street, northeast façade, viewed from the north.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Maps

Figure 2: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Santa Monica, 1950, 828 7th Street outlined in red.