

From: [Ted Myers](#)
To: [Planning Commission Comments](#)
Subject: 1626 California Ave
Date: Wednesday, August 19, 2020 1:02:17 PM
Importance: High

EXTERNAL

Hello,

I live on the same block as 1626 California Ave and have walked past it hundreds of times over the past 27 years. These early 20th century wooden bungalows are becoming increasingly rare and are being replaced all too often by unsightly modern cubes made of glass and steel, detracting from the quiet charm of my neighborhood. I ask the City Landmarks Commission to grant the owner's request and grant this charming house Landmark status.

Thank you for your attention!

Sincerely,
Ted Myers
1610 California Ave
Santa Monica, CA 90403

1112 – 17th Street, Santa Monica

Santa Monica Landmarks Commission,

I am writing in regards to the house located at 1626 California Ave.

My father was an admirer of this historical house. He, the owner, Betty, and I spoke many times about the unique architecture and history of her house. Betty was my neighbor for 35 years. My father and I loved the architecture of the house, and he stated that the columns in front were from turn of the century. We felt, and I feel the same today, that the house is unique. It truly represents an era that will never be replicated again. Once this house is gone, a part of Santa Monica and our history will be gone forever.

Please consider the approval of 1626 California Ave. for designation of Landmark status.

My father would, and I feel now, that this property deserves this special recognition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Georgia Bender". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Georgia Bender

Rec'd 8/21/20 MB



**SANTA MONICA
CONSERVANCY**
Celebrating Our Architectural Heritage

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August 24, 2020
Item 9A, Landmarks Commission agenda

Dear Chair Genser and Honorable Commissioners,

The Santa Monica Conservancy disagrees with the consultant report and the staff report, and believes that findings can be made to support designation of 1626 California Ave. as a landmark.

The fact that the house was relocated from a prior site to 1626 California in 1923 is not unusual; indeed a number of our designated landmarks were moved in their past, which becomes part of the story that they convey. In this case, by relocating this residence from 26th and Broadway to California Avenue it became a pioneering structure in a neighborhood just beginning its residential development. The 1920s were a time of tremendous growth of residential neighborhoods in Santa Monica, and relocating a house that was already built was a way of kick-starting the inauguration of this area as a desirable place to live. Photographs from the 1920s taken by the long-time property owners of this house show large open fields and scattered structures.

Today it's one of the last vestiges in the area of this first phase of settlement. There are very few single-family Craftsman homes remaining, which can be verified by driving around; I found only two others between 14th and 20th streets and California to Montana, and they were not comparable in type or integrity. There are numerous Spanish Colonial Revival homes built later in the 1920s and of course many multi-family apartments.

Several other designated landmark residences were found to meet criteria 1 as one of the last remaining homes from the original time of neighborhood development. This was the case for 1527 17th Street, a classic Craftsman home designated under criteria 1 because it exemplified the original period of residential development in the Pico neighborhood. The small vernacular bungalow at 1414 Idaho is similar to 1626 California, and I quote here from the staff report (12/08/2003) discussing criteria 1:

“The property at 1414 Idaho Avenue and the two detached residential structures with which it formerly shared a parcel were among the first residential properties constructed in the immediate neighborhood. The structure was built in 1923 and designed by a local architect in the classic California bungalow style with Colonial Revival influence. Though considered common in style and design, its intact existence stands as a physical document to the residential development and architectural history of the surrounding area during the first quarter of the twentieth century, a period that defined Santa Monica's first permanent residential neighborhoods. In an area with much infill, the subject property retains uncompromised physical and stylistic integrity to exemplify its period of significance and architectural style.”

Other landmarks designated as representing pioneering residences in their neighborhoods are 954 5th St. 1012 2nd. St. and 1129 Ashland Avenue. Relocated designated residences include 642 Kensington Rd., 2323 5th St., 1124 7th St. and others.

We also believe that valid findings can be made according to criteria 4, as 1626 California embodies distinguishing architectural characteristics valuable to a study of a period, style, method of construction....

The house is a classic Craftsman bungalow that incorporates Colonial Revival influences, which was not untypical of the late phase of the bungalow style. Features characteristic of the bungalow style are the prominent gable roof, triangular bracket supports, wide extended eaves, extended rafter tails, clapboard siding, the horizontal orientation, the numerous windows which are double-hung wood sash, the open front porch (now partially enclosed in a reversible alteration), the wood front door with three narrow beveled glass windows in a diagonal (the door hardware is not original), the wide board frames of doors, windows and porch. Characteristic of Colonial Revival is the compositional symmetry, the dentil detailing, and the Tuscan porch columns.

While there are a number of Craftsman designated landmarks of both high-style and vernacular examples in Santa Monica, this late phase in the early 1920s is represented by only one other landmark - at 1414 Idaho, which also combines Craftsman with Colonial Revival. Again I quote from the staff report analyzing how that structure was significant under criteria 4:

“The subject property is a good representative example of the vernacular California bungalow, with influences of the Colonial Revival style. It embodies a number of distinguishing architectural features of the style including an asymmetrical façade, a front-facing gabled roof, clapboard siding with corner boards, wood-framed windows with prominent surrounds, exposed rafter tails, overhanging eaves, and a rectilinear front porch. Although it is not considered a unique or rare example of the California bungalow, of which there are still comparable examples within the City, this bungalow is significant in that it has been maintained true to its origins with very little alteration, providing an enduring example of the method of construction and craftsmanship incorporated into this type of residential building in the first quarter of the twentieth century.”

We believe that it would be inconsistent to allege that 1626 California did not address the very same findings under criteria 4.

Looking at potential designation as a Structure of Merit, it would appear that this building could meet those criteria as well. Specifically, that would be:

- A. The structure has been identified in the City’s HRI
- B. The structure is a minimum of 50 years of age and meets one of the following criteria:
 - 2. The structure is representative of a style in the City that is no longer prevalent.

However, we recommend designation as a landmark as providing stronger protections for the historic resource. The residence has an unusually high degree of original integrity. And this case can provide a good example of how the Landmarks Commission might proceed if there were a single level of designation and the Structure of Merit designation were eliminated from the landmarks ordinance.

Thank you for your consideration.
Ruthann Lehrer
Santa Monica Conservancy

From: [Brian Lasky](#)
To: [Planning Commission Comments](#)
Cc: [Roger Genser](#); [Barry Rosenbaum](#); [Ruth Shari](#); [Amy Beth Green](#); [Richard Brand](#); ken.breisch@smgov.net; dolly.sloan@smgov.net
Subject: Item 9A, Landmarks Commission agenda - 1626 California Ave
Date: Sunday, August 23, 2020 9:19:12 PM
Attachments: [Betty Pape photos.pdf](#)
[Photos explanation.pdf](#)

EXTERNAL

Dear Chair Genser and Honorable Commissioners,

My name is Brian Lasky and I am a resident of Santa Monica and live near 1626 California Avenue. I have had the pleasure of knowing Betty Pape (previous owner of 1626 California) and her family from 2010 until her death in 2018.

I had many conversations with the Betty and her family and got to know them quite well over the years. This gave me an opportunity to get a bit of history on the house as well as some pictures of Betty as a child in front of the house.

Property History -

Based on conversations with Betty and her family, Betty's grandmother ordered a home in 1921 as a gift to Betty's mom upon learning that she was pregnant. The house was originally located at 26th / Broadway in SM, but then moved to 1626 California Avenue in 1923. The reason I say "ordered" is because according to Betty's daughter (Sherry), the house is a California craftsman mail-order / kit-house house. She was unsure of the manufacturer, although she did say that she was almost certain that it was not a Sears-Roebuck home.

Eventually the family owned all 3 parcels on California Ave between the alley (16th St Ct) and 17th Street. Betty's parents owned and managed the apartment building on the corner for extra income, which they later sold when he could not manage it anymore. He also built the duplex at 1620-1622 California Ave once the house at 1626 was relocated. Betty then grew up in the duplex; raised her own family in it; and eventually moved back into 1626 California where she lived until her death in 2018. Upon Betty's death in 2018, the family sold both remaining parcels.

Photos from Sherry - Betty's daughter.

Attached are 3 photos that Sherry gave to me showing her mom Betty Pape on the property as a child. The writing on the back is Sherry's.

The bottom photo is significant in that it shows Betty sitting on the porch of the home in 1934, when Betty was 12 years old. Nothing has changed... in fact, the the hydrangea's in the photo are still at the front of the house today. (I often see neighbors walking over to give the hydrangeas water now that the landscaping is no longer being watered).

The photos also show that when they moved to California Ave, this area of SM was still largely undeveloped. The development track was barely starting and was mainly fields at the time. And of course, the few homes that are shown in the background have since been demolished and replaced with apartments and condos/townhomes.

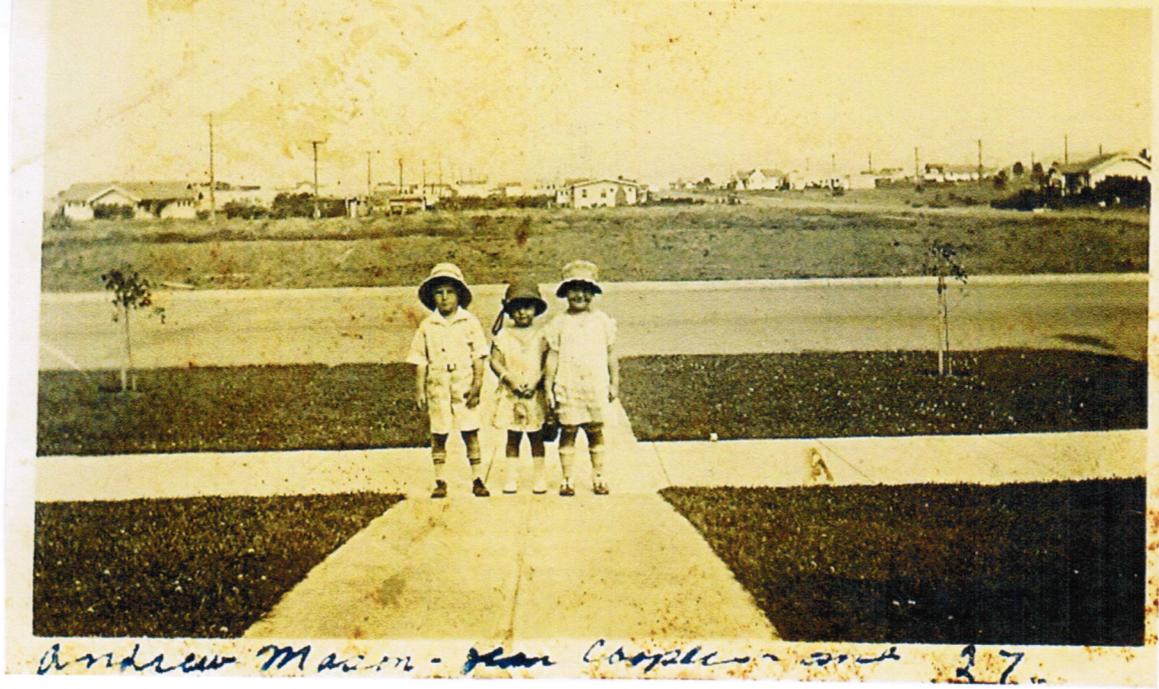
Conclusion -

I admire this house for its classic architecture and for being one of the last few homes in our area from the past, when our neighborhood was young. Please protect this building so that future generations can understand the history and growth of Santa Monica. There are not that many craftsman style bungalows in the area anymore and it is part of what gives Santa Monica it's charm.

Beyond being largely untouched and unmodified in almost 100 years, this house possibly has even more value if it can be verified that it is indeed a "mail-order" home. I am surprised the independent consultant did not address this in their report.

Thank you for your time,

Brian Lasky



This photo was taken from the porch of 1626 looking north. The 3 little bungalows aren't there yet. Looks like nothing's there almost to Washington. This was taken in 1927. Mom is the girl on the right.

Betty in 1926 where the apartment house now sits. You can see California Avenue behind her and 17th Street on the right of the photo. Notice that the apartment you dislike after remodel hasn't even been built yet!

Betty on the Porch
of 1626 at
17 years old in
1934