

FINDINGS AND DETERMINATION
OF THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA IN THE MATTER OF
THE DESIGNATION OF A STRUCTURE OF MERIT

APPROVAL OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
LOCATED AT 1626 CALIFORNIA AVENUE
AS A STRUCTURE OF MERIT

20ENT-0022

SECTION I. On December 12, 2019, the owner of the property located at 1626 California Avenue filed an application to demolish the single-unit residential structure located on the property. On February 10, 2020, the Landmarks Commission held a preliminary hearing review for a demolition application and determined that there was enough credible evidence in the record to conduct a full evidentiary hearing to determine whether the subject property is eligible as a City Landmark or Structure of Merit. The Landmarks Commission, having held a Public Hearing on August 24, 2020, hereby finds that the subject residential building located at 1626 California Avenue meets one of more of the criteria for designation as a Structure of Merit as enumerated in SMMC 9.56.080 based on the following findings:

9.56.080(a). The structure has been identified in the City's Historic Resources Inventory.

The property at 1626 California Avenue was individually identified in the 2018 Historic Resources Inventory Update. It was assigned a status code of 5S3* for “[appearing] eligible for listing as a Santa Monica Structure of Merit. As identified in the HRI, “the property conveys patterns of residential development that shaped the Wilshire Montana and Mid-City neighborhoods of Santa Monica in the early decades of the twentieth century. Constructed in 1923, it is an example of a residential building from this formative period of neighborhood growth. The building does not rise to the level of significance needed to be eligible as a Landmark, but it appears eligible as a Structure of Merit.”

9.56.080(b). The structure is a minimum of 50 years of age and meets the following criteria:

The subject property was constructed in 1920 and satisfies the 50-year age criterion. Therefore, the structure is eligible for further consideration under the following criteria:

9.56.080(b)(1). Structure is a unique or rare example of an architectural design, detail or historical type.

The subject property is over fifty years of age, but it is not a unique or rare example of an architectural design, detail, or historical type. The house is a simple and modestly sized craftsman-style kit or catalog house that is

ubiquitous throughout Santa Monica and Southern California and does not appear to satisfy this criterion.

9.56.080(b)(2). It is representative of a style in the City that is no longer prevalent.

The subject property is a representative example of the vernacular California bungalow. 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, exposed rafter tails, overhanging eaves, and a rectilinear front porch. Although it is not considered a unique or rare example of the California bungalow, this bungalow has been maintained and remains largely in its original condition, providing an example of this type of residential building in the period from the turn of the century thru the 1920s, that was once prevalent in Santa Monica.

9.56.080(b)(3). The structure contributes to a potential Historic District.

The subject property is not located within any previously identified potential historic district, and a historic district is unlikely to exist in the area surrounding 1626 California Avenue. The subject property is surrounded by single- and multi-family buildings of various styles, sizes, and construction dates. They are not visually or historically unified and do not form a significant or cohesive grouping. Therefore, the subject property does not appear to satisfy this criterion.

SECTION II. I hereby certify that the above Findings and Determination accurately reflect the final determination of the Landmarks Commission of the City of Santa Monica August 24, 2020 as determined by the following vote:

AYES: Breisch, Genser, Green, Shari, Chair Pro Tem Rosenbaum
NAYS: Brand
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Sloan

Each and all of the findings and determinations are based on the competent and substantial evidence, both oral and written, contained in the entire record relating to the Project. All summaries of information contained herein or in the findings are based on

the substantial evidence in the record. The absence of any particular fact from any such summary is not an indication that a particular finding is not based in part on that fact.

Respectfully Submitted
October 12, 2020

Roger Genser, Chairperson

Attest:

Stephanie Reich, AIA, LEED AP
Landmarks Commission Secretary