



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

APPLICATION: HL-146/MA-139

AGENDA ITEM: PH-2

PREPARED BY: Austin Arnold
Planning Technician

MEETING DATE: August 29, 2018

TITLE: Historic Landmark HL-146/Mills Act Contract MA-139
310 East Lemon Avenue
Monrovia, CA 91016

APPLICANT: Pedro Torres
310 East Lemon Avenue
Monrovia, CA 91016

REQUEST: Historic landmark designation and approval of a Mills Act Contract

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: Categorical Exemption (Class 31)

BACKGROUND: Pursuant to the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the property owner of 310 East Lemon Avenue has filed an application for consideration of historic landmark designation and approval of a Mills Act Contract.

ANALYSIS: The subject property is located on the south side of East Lemon Avenue between South Canyon Boulevard and South California Avenue. The site is located within a multi-family residential district that contains several of Monrovia's first homes which were built between 1887 and 1902.

The property is improved with two residential structures. The primary (front) unit is a 1,361 square foot Folk Victorian single-family home (310 East Lemon Avenue) that was built in 1887. A 648 square foot second unit (312 East Lemon Avenue), built in 1947, is located at the rear of the property, and was constructed in a modest vernacular style and is not a contributing feature of the property.



The single-story Folk Victorian residence was built on speculation by John Wilde. The home features a pyramidal hipped roof that incorporates a unique triangular notched gable roof section centered on the front elevation. The roof also has boxed eave overhangs and a

decorative cornice trim. A full-width, projecting, shed roof front porch is located on the front (north) elevation which is supported by square wood posts that have been enhanced with decorative beveled pier casings, and the underside of the porch roof features exposed beams and tongue and groove bead board. The home is clad in wide redwood shiplap siding. The front façade is symmetrical. It has a centered entry that is flanked by a pair of large wood sash windows. Windows on the rear (south) and sides (east and west) are a combination of wood sash and fixed units. All of the windows have simple surrounds. A decorative river rock foundation was once featured along the bottom edge of the home; however, this was replaced with a period appropriate, custom-milled, redwood siding skirting when the home was seismically retrofitted in 2017.

Sometime after the main dwelling was built, the home was illegally converted into a duplex. There were also several unpermitted alterations. However, the home was completely restored and rehabilitated over the last year by the new owner, Pedro Torres. Mr. Torres worked closely with the former Historic Preservation Commissioner, Jimi Hendrix, and City Treasurer and City Historian, Steve Baker, who guided him in identifying the historical characteristics of the home in order to return it to its original state. For example, during the demolition of the interior space the original window headers on the front elevation were found intact. Mr. Torres worked with Mr. Hendrix and Mr. Baker to restore these original window openings with large period appropriate, six-foot, wood windows.

The entire restoration and rehabilitation project was valued at \$213,500 and included the following improvements:

- New asphalt shingles to match original shingles.
- Ceilings were restored to their original 12' ceiling height.
- The unpermitted door openings from the duplex that were added to the exterior of the home were enclosed and replaced with salvaged redwood siding to match the existing home.
- New wood windows were installed.
- New electrical and plumbing was installed.
- Seismic retrofit was completed.
- River rock foundation was removed during the retrofit. Salvaged redwood siding from the home was used to construct a period appropriate foundation skirting.

The applicant has provided information about the ownership history and development of the main dwelling. According to Monrovia Historical Society's Legacy Project, the main house was built by Mr. John Wilde on speculation. Building permit records on file for the primary residence show a plumbing permit was issued in 1912, which was most likely to install sewer to the home.

The second unit at the rear of the property (312 East Lemon Avenue) was built in 1947. This modest vernacular home totals 648 square feet in size. The home has a simple gable roof. The exterior is finished in hardie board cement siding. As shown in the photo to the right, the home does not contain significant character defining features that would make it a contributing feature to the proposed landmark residence. It is also not visible from the street.



Criteria and Guidelines

The Commission must make a recommendation to City Council based on the applicable landmark designation criteria for landmark status for the house at 310 East Lemon Avenue. As specified by the Historic Preservation Ordinance, a property must include one or more of the applicable designation criteria. The following criterion is presented for the Commission's consideration.

Criteria Number 1 – *It is identified with persons or events significant in local, regional, state, or national history.*

The property at 310 East Lemon Avenue is significant under Criterion 1 because of its association with the City's initial residential development that occurred just east of the original 120-acre town site that was laid out by William Monroe and his partners. The City Historic Context Statement defines this period of development as "Downtown Residential Development, 1887-1902." The justification of this period of significance begins with Monrovia's incorporation as a City until the establishment of the Pacific Electric Railway to Los Angeles and its influence on suburbanization in Monrovia in the early twentieth century.

This Folk Victorian home is one of the first homes built within the City (1887), and is a good example of the pattern of the original town development of the City and its early residential subdivision.

Criteria Number 4 – *It embodies one or more distinctive characteristics of style, type, period, design, materials, detail, or craftsmanship.*

The property is significant under this criterion as it exemplifies characteristics of Folk Victorian architecture with its pyramidal hipped roof that incorporates a triangular notched gable roof section centered on the front elevation, symmetrical front façade, full width front porch, wide vertical shiplap siding, large single-hung wood windows with simple window surrounds.

Mills Act Contract

The applicant is also requesting approval of a Mills Act Contract which will provide tax savings for the homeowner. The City will lose a portion of the property tax collected on the property to assure its preservation and enhancement.

Conditions

The owner has made significant improvements to rehabilitate the home, which included the required seismic retrofit. The set standards and conditions will be applied (Exhibit A). The property owner's ten year work program also includes improving the property landscaping and perimeter fencing that is visible from the public right-of-way.

The home owner is also interested in installing a river rock façade to screen the existing concrete foundation at the base of the front porch. Given that achieving an appropriate river rock application is not a simple task, Staff would like the Commission's direction as to whether this item should be included in the proposed standards and conditions.

DPR Form

Staff is processing this application as a City of Monrovia Historic Landmark, and a status code of 5S3 has been assigned (appears to be individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation). If the Historic Preservation Commission determines that the building is eligible for listing for local designation and the City Council concurs, then the code will be changed to 5S1 (individual property that is listed or designated locally). The DPR form is attached for the review, comment and approval of the Commission.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission forward a Nomination Statement to the City Council recommending that the house at 310 East Lemon Avenue be designated as a historic landmark and the approval of a Mills Act Contract with the property owner subject to the attached conditions is also recommended.

If the Historic Preservation Commission concurs with this recommendation and determines that the property meets two of the seven criteria for historic landmark designation, and that the information provided on the DPR is accurate, then following the public hearing, the following motion is appropriate:

Designate the property at 310 East Lemon Avenue as Historic Landmark Number 146, and approve entering into a Mills Act Contract Number with the conditions of approval, and so recommend to the City Council.

Page 1 of 4 *Resource Name or #: HL-146/MA-139

P1 Other Identifier: 310 East Lemon Avenue

*P2 Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

a. County: Los Angeles

c. Address: 310 East Lemon Avenue City: Monrovia Zip: 91016

e. Other Locational Data: APN # 8516-020-006

P3a Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

This Folk Victorian home was built in 1887. The home features a pyramidal hipped roof that incorporates a unique triangular notched gable roof section centered on the front elevation. The roof also has boxed eave overhangs and a decorative cornice trim. A full-width, projecting, shed roof front porch is located on the front (north) elevation which is supported by square wood posts that have been enhanced with decorative beveled pier casings. The underside of the porch roof features exposed beams and tongue and groove bead board. The home is clad in wide redwood shiplap siding. The front façade is symmetrical. It has a centered entry with a wood door that is flanked by a pair of large wood sash windows. Windows on the rear (south) and sides (east and west) of the house consist of a combination of wood sash and fixed units. All of the windows have simple surrounds. A custom-milled, redwood siding skirting screens the building's concrete foundation.

P3b Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP3. Multi-Family Property

*P4 Resources Present: Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other

P5a Photograph

P5b Description of Photo: (view, date)

Facing South, July 2018

P6 Date Constructed: 1887

Source:

P7 Owner and Address:

Pedro Torres
310 East Lemon Avenue
Monrovia, CA 91016

P8 Recorded by:

City of Monrovia

P9 Date Recorded: August 2018

P10 Survey Type: Individual



P11 Report Citation: None

Attachments: NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record
 Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record
 Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

Page 2 of 4 *Resource Name or #: 310 East Lemon Avenue HL-146/MA-139

- B1 **Historic Name:** N/A
- B2 **Common Name:** N/A
- B3 **Original Use** Single-family residential
- B4 **Present Use** Single-family residential
- B5 **Architectural Style** Folk Victorian

B6 Construction History (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

1887 – Main dwelling constructed
1923 – Addition to the main dwelling (461 SF)
1946 – Construction of second dwelling (312 East Lemon Avenue)

B7 **Moved:** No **Date Moved** N/A **Original Location** N/A

B8 **Related Features:**
 A 648 SF modest vernacular second dwelling (312 East Lemon Avenue) at the rear of the property and is not a contributing feature of the property.

B9a **Architect:** Unknown **b. Builder:** John Wilde

B10 **Significance:** **Theme:** Downtown Residential Development **Area:** Monrovia

Period of Significance: 1887-1902 **Property Type** Multi-Family Residence

Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as well as integrity.
 This home is one of the first out of 168 homes built near the town center in 1887. It is significant under Local Criterion No. 1 because of its association with the City’s initial residential development that occurred just east of the original 120-acre town site that was laid out by William Monroe and his partners. The City Historic Context Statement defines this period of development as “Downtown Residential Development, 1887-1902.” The justification of this period of significance begins with Monrovia’s incorporation as a City until the establishment of Pacific Electric Railway to Los Angeles and its influence on suburbanization in Monrovia in the early twentieth century.

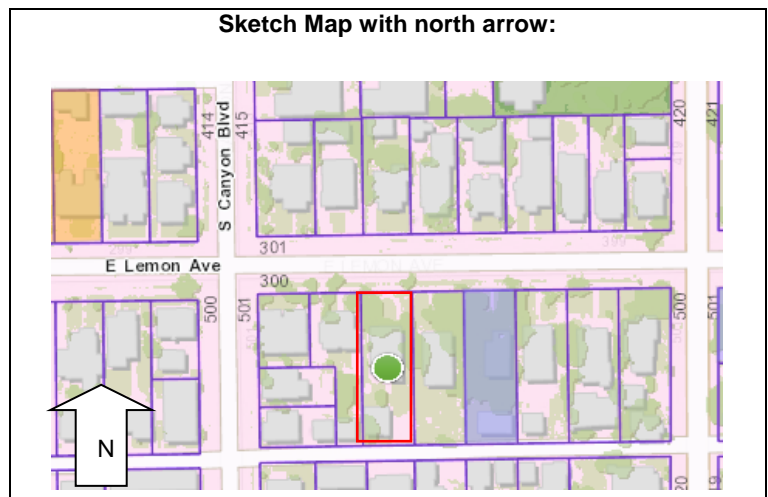
This home is also locally significant due to its use of Folk Victorian styling and features in its overall design. Therefore, the dwelling appears eligible for City of Monrovia Landmark designation under Criterion No. 4.

B11 Additional Resource Attributes:


B12 **References:**
 Los Angeles County Assessor’s Records
 City of Monrovia Building Permits
 City of Monrovia Historic Context Statement
 Monrovia’s First Homes, Monrovia Historical Society Legacy Project


B13 Remarks

B14 **Evaluator/ Date** City of Monrovia
 August 2018



P5a Photograph	P5b Description of Photo: Front (North) Building Elevation, July 2018.
 A photograph showing the front (north) elevation of a single-story house. The house has a light-colored exterior, a dark brown gabled roof with a wide overhang, and a front porch with white columns and a decorative railing. The house number '310' is visible above the door. The house is surrounded by a lawn and trees.	

P5a Photograph	P5b Description of Photo: Side (West) Building Elevation, July 2018.
 A photograph showing the side (west) elevation of the same house. The house has light-colored horizontal siding and a dark brown roof. A side porch with white columns and a decorative railing is visible. The house number '310' is visible on the side wall. The house is surrounded by a lawn and trees.	

P5a Photograph	P5b Description of Photo: Rear (South) Building Elevation, July 2018.
 A photograph showing the rear (south) elevation of a single-story house. The house has light-colored horizontal siding and a red roof. A small porch with a wooden railing is visible. There are several windows, including a small double window above the porch. A utility meter and a white panel are visible on the ground near the house. The background shows trees and another house.	

P5a Photograph	P5b Description of Photo: Side (East) Building Elevation, July 2018.
 A photograph showing the side (east) elevation of the same house. The house has light-colored horizontal siding and a red roof. A window is visible on the side wall. The ground is covered with dry leaves and there is a white fence in the background.	

EXHIBIT A

STANDARDS AND CONDITIONS
310 East Lemon Avenue
Mills Act Contract HL-146/MA-139

During the term of this agreement, the Historic property shall be subject to the following conditions:

1. All structures on the property shall be kept in excellent condition including exterior walls, windows and roofing.
2. A Certificate of Appropriateness shall be required for all exterior alterations and/or additions to any structure on the property. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation shall be applied to the property with the exception that standard condition #9 shall allow for additions, exterior alterations or related new construction to match the original house upon approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness (Attachment A).
3. *View Corridor Maintained.* The view corridor enabling the general public to see the house from the public right-of-way shall not be further obscured. The view corridor, including landscaping, hardscape and fencing, shall be maintained.
4. *Landmark Plaque.* The owner(s) shall place a Historic Preservation Commission approved historic plaque on the site within two (2) years of the City Council designation of the historic landmark. The plaque shall be displayed at all times and shall be visible from the right-of-way.
5. *Electrical Safety Inspection.* Within two years of the date of City Council approval, an electrical safety inspection report shall be submitted on the electrical contractor's letterhead indicating that the existing service panel meets minimum code and poses no hazardous conditions, GFCI outlets are provided as specified by code, and proper grounding of the panel exists. This condition shall be waived if the building records confirm the upgrading of the service panel or written electrical inspection completed within the last five (5) years is provided.
6. *City Inspections.* After five years of the anniversary date, and every five years thereafter, the City shall inspect the interior and exterior of the premises to determine the owner's continued compliance with the contract. It shall be the owner's responsibility to contact the City to arrange this required inspection.
7. The property owner(s) shall submit to the Planning Division a progress report every two (2) years for the first ten (10) years on the anniversary date of the Contract, listing a response to the conditions of approval as listed on this document. Report shall also include interior and exterior maintenance projects completed since your last required update report. After the first ten (10) years, a progress report shall be required every five (5) years.