



# **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

**APPLICATION:** DPR2017-16

**AGENDA ITEM:** AR-2

**PREPARED BY:** Teresa Santilena  
Assistant Planner

**MEETING DATE:** August 23, 2017

**TITLE:** Determination of Historic Significance  
153 North Alta Vista Avenue

**APPLICANT:** Adrienne Blanton  
153 North Alta Vista Avenue  
Monrovia, CA 91016

**REQUEST:** Determine the historic significance of a residential building built within the historic period (50 years or older) that is proposing to demolish more than 50 percent of the existing roof structure.

**BACKGROUND:** The City's demolition review standards are set forth in Chapter 17.10 of the Monrovia Municipal Code and apply to main residential buildings in any zone that are fifty (50) years old or older proposing total demolition or significant alteration or removal of exterior building wall area and/or roof area. The demolition application requires the submittal of either documentation from a historic survey that indicates a California Historical Resource Status (CHRS) code for the subject building and other site data, a historic assessment and determination of CHRS code for the property by a qualified historic preservation consultant, or a written request for an exemption due to perceived obvious lack of historic significance.

The evaluation and determination made by the Historic Preservation Commission is in the form of approval of a DPR Form which includes the assignment of a CHRS code. The determination made by the Commission using the CHRS codes is the first step in the process and will be part of the overall evaluation of the "project" pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).



On July 5, 2017, the property owner submitted a written request for exemption from the Demolition Review Permit Regulations for the main residence at the subject property due to the perceived obvious lack of historic significance.

**ANALYSIS:** According to the current Tax Assessor information, the existing 1,800 square foot single-story residence was built in 1920. The applicant has prepared a written request for exemption due to perceived obvious lack of historic significance. The exemption request is attached as Exhibit "A".

The residence is a single-story house with a partial width front porch that was originally built in the Prairie style, but has undergone significant alteration since it was constructed. Permit history indicates that a bedroom and a breakfast room were added to the south side of the house in 1931. At some point after this addition, the south property line was moved six feet to the north, when a portion of the property was sold to the neighbor to the south. This property line adjustment has created a nonconforming setback of less than two feet on the south property line, which also makes maintenance of the home difficult. Permit history also shows an alteration in 1949, which was most likely the enclosure of the back porch.

Over the structure's lifetime, significant additions and alterations have occurred and many of the physical features and elements of the original structure have been removed and/or altered. These alterations have impacted the building's visual quality. Many of the building's original features and details are no longer identifiable, and therefore do not convey architectural significance. The home, including front porch support columns, chase, and chimney, has been re-clad with rough textured stucco. Alterations over time have changed the character defining roof shape. The original home has a flat roof structure with broad eaves, but the 1931 addition and the back porch enclosure both have flat roofs that are lower in height than the original roof structure and have no eave overhang. Additionally, a new den built at the rear of the home has a shed roof. While there is no building permit on file for the den, a stamp in the concrete indicates that the den may have been built in 1956. The exterior of the den is clad in wood siding, which is inconsistent with the stucco siding found on the rest of the exterior. Most of the original wood windows have been replaced with vinyl windows.

There are no special events or persons who lived in the home who are known to have made a significant contribution to local history. The original building permit indicates that the home was built by O. Huffman and was owned by F. Argue. Omer Huffman was an active builder in Monrovia from 1911 to 1929, but he has not been identified as a significant architect or builder in the City's history.

The building has been substantially altered through the addition of rough textured stucco, vinyl windows, and additions. Furthermore, the property has been altered through the property line adjustment and demolition of the carriage house. Therefore, one could argue that the integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, association, location and setting have all been degraded. The home would not be considered a contributor to a potential historic district due to lack of integrity.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The applicant's exemption request demonstrates that the property at 153 North Alta Vista Avenue does not have architectural or known historic value that meets the criteria for local landmark status and is not a contributor to a potential historic district. Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission accept the DPR and assign a

CHRS Code of 6Z to the property. If the Historic Preservation Commission concurs with this recommendation, then the motion is appropriate:

**Approve the DPR Form with a Status Code of 6Z.**

**ADRIENNE BLANTON AND SCOTT EAKER**

153 N. Alta Vista Ave, Monrovia CA 91016

**July 5, 2017**

City of Monrovia  
Historic Preservation Commission  
Community Development Department, Planning  
415 S. Ivy Ave, Monrovia CA 91016

**To Whom It May Concern,**

The purpose of this letter is to request an exemption from the review standards set forth in Monrovia Municipal Code, Chapter 17.10, based on the lack of historical significance as documented below. The property is located at 153 N. Alta Vista Ave and is our family's primary residence. We wish to remodel and upgrade the existing structure for our personal use, bringing the building up to current building and setback code, while keeping the style consistent with the time period in which it was built.

The property currently has a single story, approximately 1800 square foot house and a detached 2 car garage with attached pool house. It resides in a residential neighborhood, surrounded by homes of mixed style and age. The house is not listed in any historical registries, nor is it a candidate for Mills Act status. The house most closely resembles the Prairie Bungalow style of architecture but due to the many modifications and alterations, it is not a good example of this or any type of architectural style.

City building permits indicate the original house was built in 1920 by a contractor named O. Hoffman. No mention of a contractor by this name was found in the historical records, though an Ogden Hoffman briefly served as Reverend of St. Luke's Church located at the corner Wildrose and California. The first owner was F. Argue who is mentioned in the historical record only as a Mason of Sojourner Lodge #607. The main house is currently clad in a combination of stucco and wood siding, with the majority of the house covered in stucco and only the 1956 addition covered in wood siding. No photographic evidence of the original appearance of the house could be found so it's unknown if it was built with a stucco or wood siding exterior. The home has a flat roof which has 3 elevations due to the several additions done over the years.

The house was a 2 bedroom, 1 bath home until 1931 when an additional bedroom was added on the south side by G. Rentfle, also noted only as a Mason of Sojourner Lodge #607. Based on survey assessor data the additional room was approximately 8 feet from the South property line. The property line was subsequently moved, giving 6 feet to the neighbor to the South. This resulted in a clearance of less than 2 feet between the house and fence which is not allowable by today's standards and makes access to the utility box difficult. In 1949, the back porch was enclosed and the 1956 unpermitted addition of a den brought the square footage up to the current 1800. The date of the den addition is known due to a concrete stamp found at the back of the house (see picture). A closet was converted into a ½ bath but no permit records exist to determine the date. Additional permits indicate that the house has been reroofed twice, a sewer line run to the detached garage, the heating unit upgraded and AC added, some windows were replaced with vinyl and the den was remodeled. The kitchen was altered dramatically at some unknown date as it obviously not in keeping with a 1920's

EXHIBIT A

bungalow style home. A pool and new fencing were added during the 1995-1997 period though the fence was never inspected and the permit expired.

We have made the following upgrades and additions since purchasing the property in 2011 (all appropriately permitted): Upgrade of all electrical, demolition of garage and construction of a new 2 car garage with attached pool house. The new construction is done in the Craftsman style, in keeping with the character of the neighborhood. The main house remodel will be done in the Craftsman style and will increase the aesthetics of the street view. The remodel will also change the footprint of the house so that it is appropriately spaced from the property line with clearance for access to the utility box.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrienne Blanton and Scott Eaker'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Adrienne Blanton and Scott Eaker

## References

- Davis, Charles F and Norman, Mr. & Mrs. *History of Monrovia and Duarte*, 1938
- Davis, Charles F. *The Monrovia Blue Book*, 1943
- Davis, Charles F. *Picturesque Monrovia*, 1929
- Monrovia Historical Society, *Monrovia's Heritage Vol I*, 1980
- Monrovia Historical Society, *Monrovia's Heritage Vol II*, 1982
- Monrovia Preservation Society, *Monrovia's Heritage: An Architectural Perspective*, 1996
- Ostrye, Peter *Monrovia Centennial Review 1886-1986*, 1986
- Wiley, John L. *History of Monrovia*, 1972
- City of Monrovia Building Permit database
- Monrovia Library Street Address Index

Other Listings  
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 4 \*Resource Name or #: 153 North Alta Vista Avenue

P1 Other Identifier: \_\_\_\_\_

\*P2 Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted

a. County: Los Angeles

c. Address: 153 North Alta Vista Avenue City: Monrovia Zip: 91016

e. Other Locational Data: APN # 8504-010-002

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

This single story, single family Prairie-influenced dwelling is approximately 1,800 square feet and was built in 1920. It has a flat roof with overhanging eaves. A projecting flat roof partial porch is on the north half of the front (east) elevation. The porch is supported by two square posts atop stucco piers with a concrete cap. Within the porch area is the front entrance and a large single pane window. The porch is enclosed on one side with a low wall.

The house has a mixture of wood, vinyl and aluminum windows and is sided with a heavy texture non-original stucco finish. Other An addition on the south side was completed in 1931. A six-foot wide portion of the parcel was later sold to the adjacent neighbor to the south leaving that addition less than 2 feet from the property line. Another addition to the rear was completed and is wood sided.

P3b Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP2 - Single Family Property

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

P5a Photograph

P5b Description of Photo: (view, date)

Facade (view from south) July 2017

P6 Date Constructed: 1912

Source: LA County Assessor

P7 Owner and Address:

Christopher and Dana Dattola  
419 Lotone Street  
Monrovia, CA 91016

P8 Recorded by:

City of Monrovia

P9 Date Recorded: August  
2017

P10 Survey Type: Individual



P11 Report Citation:

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 #: 153 North Alta Vista Avenue

- 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** Prairie

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

- 1920 – House and Garage
- 1931 – Bed and Breakfast Room Addition
- 1949 – Alteration
- 1956 – Den Addition (no permit found)
- 1995 – Pool
- 2014 – Carriage House Demolished
- 2014 – Detached Garage with Attached Pool House

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

**B8 Related Features:**

Detached accessory structure at rear of property also has no known historic or architectural significance.

B9a **Architect:** Unknown      **b. Builder:** O. Huffman

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

**Period of Significance:** None      **Property Type** HP2 - Single Family Property

Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as well as integrity.

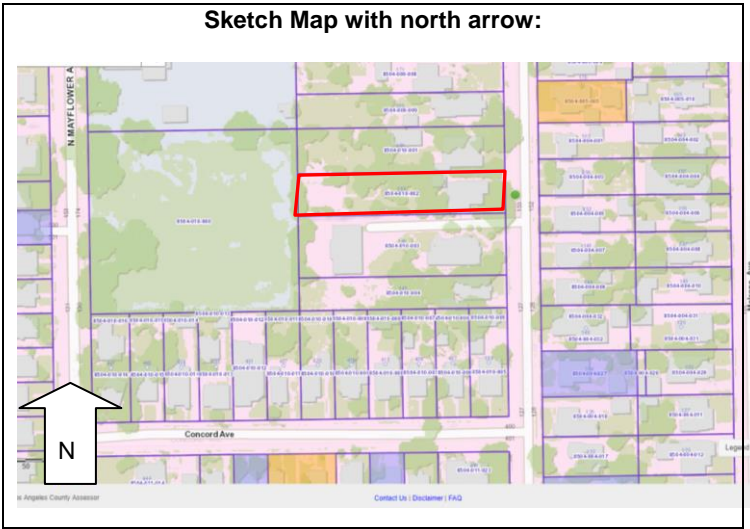
*This structure appears ineligible for the National Register and the California Register. The structure has been significantly altered affecting its character defining features therefore lacking sufficient integrity necessary for individual designation at the local level or as a contributor to a historic district.*

**B11 Additional Resource Attributes:**

- B12 References:**  
 Los Angeles County Assessor's Records  
 City of Monrovia Building Permits  
 Sanborn Maps

**B13 Remarks**

**B14 Evaluator/ Date**    City of Monrovia  
 August 2017





# CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 3 of 4 \*Resource Name or #: 153 North Alta Vista Avenue

**P5a** Photograph



**P5b Description of Photo:** Front porch, side view, looking south, 7/2017.

**P5a** Photograph



**P5b Description of Photo:** Partial north elevation, 7/2017.

**CONTINUATION SHEET**

Page 4 of 4 \*Resource Name or #: 153 North Alta Vista Avenue

**P5a** Photograph



**P5b** Description of Photo: Addition on south elevation, looking west, 7/2017.

**P5a** Photograph



**P5b** Description of Photo: Rear elevation, looking east, 7/2017.