WEST HOLLYWOOD
Landmark THIS!
Guide for Local Landmark Designation
Why Designate?
Local Landmarks

Jen Dunbar
President
West Hollywood Preservation Alliance
Local Landmarks in West Hollywood

Understanding the Area:
- Before West Hollywood Cityhood in 1984
- After West Hollywood Cityhood, 1984 - present


Losses spurred action
Landmark THIS!
Types of HCM local landmarks and criteria

Landmark THIS!

West Hollywood Boundaries
History of Development in West Hollywood (Historic Contexts)

- Rancho LaBrea
- Town of Sherman
- Sunset Strip
- Movie & Film Industry
- Design Culture & Industry
- Apartment Dwellings
- Russian Immigration
- LGBT Culture
West Hollywood Preservation Surveys

1986-1987 Survey

- citywide “windshield” survey for potentially historic resources
- 188 potential resources constructed prior to 1937

2008 Survey

- R2, R3, R4 Multi-family Survey built prior to 1970
- “windshield” survey of 2,160 potentially historic resources
- documented 250 properties with State of California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms. DPRs were done on:
  1. structures built prior to 1920
  2. structures designed by Edward Ficket
  3. structures appearing to meet definition of Garden Courts
- included previously reviewed properties, excluding those with prior extensive documentation
IS THERE ANYTHING LEFT?

YES!

Only 82 properties are listed on the West Hollywood Cultural Resources List. (That’s ONLY 32% of the 250 DPRs and 4% of identified potentially historic sites in 2008!)

“IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THERE MAY BE ADDITIONAL PROPERTIES WITHIN THE R2, R3, AND R4 ZONED AREAS OF WEST HOLLYWOOD THAT WARRANT ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION – PARTICULARLY HISTORIC DISTRICTS.”

-page 70, 2008 Survey - ARG

Preservation planning in West Hollywood

Landmark THIS!
Why Designate?
Local Landmarks

Adrian Scott Fine
Director of Advocacy
Los Angeles Conservancy
Why Designate?
Different types

1. Administered by: local government
   Historic Preservation Commission HPC
   
   Local Landmark Designation
   Cultural Resource Designation

2. Administered by: state preservation office
   
   California Register Designation

3. Administered by: National Park Service
   
   National Register Designation

Different types of landmark designation

Landmark THIS!
Local preservation programs vary greatly. Landmark THIS!
04 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic preservation is an important component of West Hollywood's urban design and culture. This chapter addresses the goals and policies of the City of West Hollywood in preserving and protecting its historic resources.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Although not required by the California Government Code, the City of West Hollywood has chosen to include a Historic Preservation element in its General Plan. This is because the City values and seeks to recognize its built environment, its history, and its culture. West Hollywood has been an important site both for the general flow of cultural ideas and innovation in entertainment and the arts, and for leadership in political and social movements.

CONTEXT

Overview of Historic Preservation

In the United States, the concept of preserving a community's past environment is connected with important figures in American history. Public concerns about the preservation of important parts of the nation's heritage prompted Congress in 1935 to establish the Historic Sites Act of 1935, which established the National Park Service. The legislation empowered the Secretary of the Interior to use the Historic American Buildings Survey to evaluate, record, and preserve architectural and historic sites.

Historic preservation efforts in California began in the nineteenth century with the founding of the Association for the Preservation of Missions in 1889 and the formation of the Los Angeles Landmarks Club in 1895. Preservation in the Los Angeles region was a reaction to the threatened demolition of the Downtown Central Library. A number of historic sites and buildings were saved through the efforts of the Los Angeles Historical Society, founded in 1920. The history of historic preservation in West Hollywood was the failure of an attempt by the City of Los Angeles to save the oldest house in the City, the Eugenia Plummer House, located in Plummer Park. In 1983, a year before West Hollywood's incorporation, the house was demolished without proper notice or public scrutiny.

Existing Historic Districts in West Hollywood

West Hollywood has a number of historic districts, most of which were designated in the 1980s. These districts include clusters of buildings from the first half of the twentieth century, with modern, Craftsman, and Spanish influences among others.

Harper Avenue National Register District (designated in 1982)

This district contains excellent examples of the 1920s and 1930s styles of period revival and modernistic architecture typical of the growing business district of Los Angeles. At its core are the buildings of the Harper Avenue National Register District, which was designated in 1982 by the National Park Service. This district includes some of the finest examples of Spanish Revival architecture in the city. The district encompasses Harper Avenue and the area surrounding it, including the Harper Avenue Historic District, which was designated in 1982.

Courtyard Historic District (designated in 1982)

The Courtyard Historic District includes the houses located on Harper Avenue and the area surrounding it. This district includes some of the finest examples of Spanish Revival architecture in the city.
Why local designation
Landmark THIS!
Why Designate?

Benefits of becoming a Cultural Resource

1) Bring attention and official recognition to previously unrecognized resources
2) Protection from demolition or inappropriate alterations
3) Enable financial incentives
4) Encourages long-term stewardship and owner/community pride
Why Designate?

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Why Designate?

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Reasons to designate a place

Landmark THIS!
Norms Coffee Shop (1957), local designation on May 20, 2015
Norms Coffee Shop (1957)

Landmark THIS!
The fight to preserve an iconic Los Angeles diner

Norms Coffee Shop (1957)

Landmark THIS!
Disney's Iger helps stop demolition of Williams-designed house

Hunt Residence (1940), HCM designation in April, 2014
Hunt Residence (1940), HCM designation in April, 2014

Landmark THIS!
Fifth Church of Christ, Scientist (1960), local designation initiated July 16

Landmark THIS!
Fifth Church of Christ, Scientist (1960), local designation initiated July 16
Fifth Church of Christ, Scientist (1960), local designation initiated July 16
Local Designation in West Hollywood DOES:
Make the property eligible for preservation incentives

Local Designation in West Hollywood DOES NOT:
Makes restoration grant funds automatically eligible
Local Designation in West Hollywood DOES NOT:

• Require that a building be restored or maintained in excellent condition
• Restrict the use of a property
• Make a property “open to the public”
What can be Designated?

Types of local landmarks and criteria

Landmark THIS!
STRUCTURE: North Spring Street Bridge (1929)

Landmark THIS!
EVENTS: The Black Cat Bar Building (1939)

Landmark THIS!
THEATRES: Cinerama Dome Theatre (1963)

Landmark THIS!
Landmark THIS!

RELIGIOUS: Sepulveda Unitarian Universalist
RESIDENCES: Glen Lukens House & Studio (1940)

Landmark THIS!
CONDITION: Bethlehem Baptist Church (1944)

Landmark THIS!
INTEGRITY: Ability to convey its physical sig.
Landmark THIS!
Filling in the Blanks: Nuts and Bolts of the Nomination

Antonio Castillo
Associate Planner
City of West Hollywood
Filling in the Blanks:
Nuts and Bolts of the Nomination

CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

Cultural Resource Designation Application

INSTRUCTIONS

1. APPLICANT INFORMATION
The person or organization who initiates the application is the applicant. Please provide the applicant's name, complete address and telephone number(s). If a specific person(s) or consultant prepared the application, please provide his/her name and phone number. The preparer must sign the application.

2. OWNERSHIP INFORMATION
Provide the name, complete mailing address, and telephone number(s) of the property owner. Ownership information can be obtained from the County Assessor's Office.

3. CURRENT SITE INFORMATION
Provide a common name for the property if one is generally associated with the site; otherwise, indicate "none." Indicate the street address of the proposed cultural resource.

4. HISTORIC SITE INFORMATION
Provide an historic name for the property if one is generally associated with the site; otherwise, indicate "none." Indicate the date of construction of the building. If known, otherwise provide an approximate date. Attach copies of all supporting documents (articles, permits, deeds, etc.).

5. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
The statement of significance specifically define why the buildings is important to the community. The statement should be based on the designation criteria as defined in Section 16.38.00 through Section 16.38.019 of the West Hollywood Zoning Code (see and attachment) and should be written in a similar format. The building need not meet all of these criteria, but it must be a significant criterion of all stated in order to list the building for historic designation.

6. DESCRIPTION OF SITE
Describe the major architectural features of the building. The description should include information about style, construction materials, type of roof, number of stories, base plans, and distinguishing features (chimneys, porches, ornamentation, unique windows, etc.). Interior features of the building should be described if they are significant. Assistant building features like bays, garages, and guest houses, should be described if designation is also being sought for these structures. Finally, a description of the building's surrounding environment should be given, noting how the property relates to other buildings and street features.

(continued)
Criteria for Designation of Cultural Resources

A. Exemplifies Special Elements of the City
   *It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the city’s aesthetic, architectural, cultural, economic, engineering, political, natural, or social history and possesses an integrity of design, location, materials, setting, workmanship feeling, and association*

B. Example of Distinguishing Characteristics
   *It is one of the few remaining examples in the city, region, state or nation, possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type or specimen*

C. Identified with Persons or Events
   *It is identified with persons or events significant in local, state, or national history*

D. Notable Work
   *It is representative of the work of a notable architect, builder, or designer*
Nomination Process

What can be designated as a cultural resource?

- An Area
- Improvement
- Natural Feature
- Object
- Structure
- Historic District

Who can submit a nomination application to designate a cultural resource?

- Any Person or Group
- City Council or HPC can initiate a designation by Resolution

When can a nomination application be submitted?

- At any time with some exceptions
How to Get Started

1. Download the application
2. Gather and organize research you have already completed
3. Conduct additional research
   a. Building & Safety permits
   b. Planning records
   c. Sanborn Maps
   d. Historic Photos
   e. Historic Periodicals & Newspapers
   f. Real Estate Listings
   g. Site Visit

Landmark THIS!
Step 1: Download the Application at www.weho.org
Step 2: **Review the application form and fill in the information**

Before conducting additional research, gather all you know about the proposed cultural resource and keep it organized. You may need to refer to it as you complete the application and include it in a bibliography.
Step 3: Gather Information from Available Sources
Nomination Process

What happens once a nomination application is submitted?

- Staff reviews the application for completeness
- Property owner and occupants are notified
- HPC reviews nomination at public hearing and makes recommendation to the City Council
- City Council considers designation or denial
- Designations are forwarded to the State Office of Historic Preservation

Can a property that has not been identified in a historic resources survey be eligible for cultural resource designation?

What happens once a cultural resource has been designated?
Making the Case:
Connecting Criteria to Significance

Laura Dominguez
Preservation Coordinator
Los Angeles Conservancy
Why does this place matter?
Landmark THIS!
**SIGNIFICANCE:** The building is an exceptional example of Lloyd Wright’s use of the textile concrete block system (originally conceived by Frank Lloyd Wright). It is the summation of his residential design philosophy and a masterwork of this important architect.
Making the Case: Connecting Criteria to Significance

A property may be designated a Cultural Resource if it meets one or more of the following criteria (excerpted):

A) Exemplifies Special Elements of the City; or

B) Example of Distinguishing Characteristics; or

C) Identified with Persons or Events; or

D) Notable Work.

Landmark criteria varies among jurisdictions

Landmark THIS!
Lloyd Wright Studio and Residence
Built in 1927; designated locally in 1992

HISTORY: The building was designed in 1927 as Wright’s own home and studio, and he lived and worked here until his death in 1978. During this time, he raised his family in the residence and completed such notable commissions as the Wayfarer’s Chapel and the second Hollywood Bowl shell.
Lloyd Wright was part of the architectural “avant-garde” of Southern California during the 1920s. Like his father, he experimented with the use of concrete, a material coming into popularity in local modernist residential design.
927 and 931 Palm Avenue
Built in 1902; Designated in 2013

IMPORTANT ARCHITECTURE? “927 and 931 Palm Avenue are likely the last remaining examples of the Transitional period between the Victorian-era and the Craftsman-era in West Hollywood.”

Does this building have architectural significance? Landmark THIS!
927 and 931 Palm Avenue  
Built in 1902; Designated in 2013

**IMPORTANT SOCIAL HISTORY?** “Old Sherman was created and originally existed to maintain and service the rail yard. The homes were built in the original Sherman subdivision and the home’s early inhabitants were rail workers.”

**IMPORTANT SOCIAL HISTORY?** “The homes reflect the era of historic expansion westward from Los Angeles, and the transition from a primarily agrarian society to an industrial society in the original Cahuenga Valley.”

Does this building have historical significance?  
Landmark THIS!
In 1894, Moses H. Sherman and his business partner Eli P. Clark bought a large piece of farm land to subdivide and turn into housing for Sherman’s rail workers. Palm Avenue is part of the original old Sherman subdivision.
Does it meet the criteria?

A) Exemplifies Special Elements of the City; or

B) Example of Distinguishing Characteristics; or

C) Identified with Persons or Events; or

D) Notable Work.

Case for significance?
Landmark THIS!
Irv’s Burgers, 8289 Santa Monica Boulevard
Built in 1948; Designated in 2005

Consider modest structures with historic significance
Landmark THIS!
Irv’s Burgers, 8289 Santa Monica Boulevard
Built in 1948; Designated in 2005

IMPORTANT ARCHITECTURE? “Irv’s began its life as part of a service station complex owned by Sun Oil. In the early years of Route 66, service station prototypes were developed regionally through experimentation, and then were adopted universally across the country.”

Is there a case for architectural significance?
Landmark THIS!
IMPORTANT SOCIAL HISTORY? “As part of the late ‘40s and early ‘50s population boom, Irv’s Burgers served the motorists who shaped Los Angeles, many of whom came as tourists...Fronting Route 66, Irv’s Burgers remains part of the road culture that captured America’s imagination.”

IMPORTANT SOCIAL HISTORY? “Ramshackle hot dog and hamburger stands that popped up in the years after World War II evolved into the fast-food industry.”
Does it meet the criteria?

A) Exemplifies Special Elements of the City; or

B) Example of Distinguishing Characteristics; or

C) Identified with Persons or Events; or

D) Notable Work.
Fire Station No. 8, 7643 Santa Monica Blvd.
Built in 1953; Not currently designated

POP QUIZ! Take a few minutes to brainstorm a case for this building’s significance.

Dig deeper & ask questions about buildings/places
Landmark THIS!
Fire Station No. 39, 50 Avenue 64
Built in 1948; Determined eligible for local listing

Significance: Fire Station No. 39 is an excellent example of Mid-Century Modern architecture and reflects the postwar expansion of Pasadena outward from the city center.
Significance: The Late Moderne style and two-story form of the building were typical of fire stations built in Los Angeles in the 1940s and 1950s.

Look at examples in other cities

Landmark THIS!
Name that Part:
Writing Building and Place Descriptions

Marcello Vavala
Preservation Associate
Los Angeles Conservancy
Writing an Architectural Description
Los Angeles County Fire Station No. 8
Resource books can help with describing details

Landmark THIS!
Architectural Description
Describe the building’s relationship to its site, street, adjacent buildings, etc..

Consider the entire site/how it relates broadly

Landmark THIS!
Architectural Description
Describe the building’s relationship to its site, street, adjacent buildings, etc..

“Los Angeles County Fire Station No. 8 is located at the northeast corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and N. Spaulding Avenue in the City of West Hollywood”

Consider the entire site/how it relates broadly
Landmark THIS!
Architectural Description
Describe the building’s form and primary character defining features
Architectural Description
Describe the building’s form and primary character defining features

“The three-story, Late Moderne-style fire station is primarily rectangular in plan, with an asymmetrical façade.”
Architectural Description
Continue with further description of macro aspects: building shape, cladding material, roofing material, and foundation material.

Use images to help understand the intent & design
Landmark THIS!
Architectural Description
Continue with further description of macro aspects: building shape, cladding material, roofing material, and foundation material.

“The main façade is characterized by angled, projecting canopies and projecting walls that frame a pair of double-height overhead doors and a single entrance door on ground level and form the roofline at the set back third floor.”
Architectural Description

Continue with further description of macro aspects: building shape, cladding material, roofing material, and foundation material.

Consider the overall form and orientation

Landmark THIS!
Architectural Description

Continue with further description of macro aspects: building shape, cladding material, roofing material, and foundation material.

“The building is flat roofed, and is constructed of poured in place concrete.”
Architectural Description
Continue with further description of macro aspects: building shape, cladding material, roofing material, and foundation material.
Architectural Description

Continue with further description of macro aspects: building shape, cladding material, roofing material, and foundation material.

“Brick cladding in a stacked bond is used as a contrasting texture for portions of the façade framed by the projecting entrance canopies and bezeled window surrounds.”
Architectural Description

Begin to focus on specific features: window type, doors and door surrounds, porches, chimneys, storefronts, etc., and the location of these elements on the facades.
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“Windows are primarily arranged within horizontal ribbons set within bezeled frames. Bezeled frames at the southwest corner of the building wrap around the primary (south) and west facades.”
Architectural Description
Continue with further description of macro aspects: building shape, cladding material, roofing material, and foundation material.
Architectural Description
Continue with further description of macro aspects: building shape, cladding material, roofing material, and foundation material.

“Integrated signage in the form of stainless steel lettering above the stainless steel entrance door spells out “LOS ANGELES” “COUNTY FIRE” “DEPARTMENT”, set within three rows of horizontal stainless steel framing."
Architectural Description
Continue with further description of macro aspects: building shape, cladding material, roofing material, and foundation material.
Architectural Description

Continue with further description of macro aspects: building shape, cladding material, roofing material, and foundation material.

“Metal piping above the entrance door, which supports the building signage and rises through a circular break-through in the entrance canopy, is suggestive of a fireman’s pole.”
Architectural Description
Interactive Exercise, 927 Palm Avenue: Identifying Character-Defining Features

Use images to help understand the intent & design
Landmark THIS!
Architectural Description

Interactive Exercise, 927 Palm Avenue: Identifying Character-Defining Features

Use images to help understand the intent & design

Landmark THIS!
Architectural Description
Interactive Exercise: Identifying Character-Defining Features

Use images to help understand the intent & design
Landmark THIS!
Building Support: Navigating the Political Process
For more information:
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