SurveyLA Documents Venice’s Unique Architectural and Cultural Legacy

The findings for SurveyLA, the Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey, continue to be posted on the SurveyLA web site at www.preservation.lacity.org/survey/reports. Among the latest results to be posted is the survey covering the Venice Community Plan Area, a community with diverse architectural styles and a rich cultural legacy. This article is the 13th in a series of features on some of the interesting “finds” from SurveyLA.

St. Mark’s Hotel, Venice

St. Mark’s Hotel, 19 E. Windward Ave., a 1905 Renaissance Revival structure that is a rare remaining example of an original Venice arcade building, developed as part of Abbot Kinney’s Venice of America development. This building is the oldest remaining hotel in Venice, also displaying three of Venice’s best known murals. The St. Mark’s Hotel was a popular hangout for Los Angeles beatniks who congregated in Venice during the 1950s.

Venice Short Line Ticket Building, 1641 S. Abbot Kinney Blvd., a rare remaining example of a streetcar ticket building in Venice. This 1911 Craftsman structure was a ticket building for the Venice Short Line, a Pacific Electric streetcar line than ran along Electric Avenue. The building’s Japanese motif is similar to the main train station, called the "Tokio" stop, which was located next to City Hall on Venice Boulevard.

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OHR Sponsors July 18 “Landmark THIS!” Workshop

Have you been hoping to nominate a historic place for City Historic-Cultural Monument (local landmark) designation? Learn how to get started, by joining us at the “Landmark THIS!” workshop, presented by the Office of Historic Resources and the Los Angeles Conservancy on Saturday, July 18.

The workshop takes place from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the beautiful and historic Church of the Epiphany in Lincoln Heights, designated by architect Arthur Benton, which was designated as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument in 2005. To sign up for the workshop, visit the Conservancy’s registration page.

This hands-on, interactive session will walk you through writing an effective nomination, finding the necessary information, and navigating the political process. We’ll focus on buildings or sites with cultural significance, using local sites as practice examples. While hundreds of buildings have been designated locally for their rich architectural heritage, far fewer historic places have been formally designated as City Historic-Cultural Monuments.

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**“Landmark THIS!” Workshop**

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recognized for their cultural associations, including connections to ethnic and LGBT communities, women, and arts and literary movements.

**Space is limited to 35 people,** so we’re looking for participants with an active interest in completing a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument nomination.

Admission is $15, including materials and refreshments. If you know if a specific historic place you’d like to see protected with landmark status, we hope to see you at the workshop!

**Historic Resources of Venice**

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**Bushman Residence**, “The Castle”, 11 E. Anchorage St., a 1932 Renaissance Revival home constructed by silent screen actor Francis X. Bushman, which is an excellent and rare example of a 1930s apartment house in Venice and utilizes unusual concrete brick construction.

**30 E. Fleet St.**, a 1925 Craftsman home that is a rare example of a shotgun house; one of few examples remaining in Los Angeles.


**Lennon Sisters Residence**, 944 W. Harding Ave., a 1905 home that is an excellent example of Craftsman architecture in Venice and the long-time family home of the Lennon Sisters, who gained fame as singers on television’s Lawrence Welk Show.

**Eames Office**, 901 S. Abbot Kinney Blvd., which served as the office for American designers Charles and Ray Eames from 1943 to 1988. The Eames’ made significant contributions to various design fields throughout their careers, including architecture, furniture design, industrial design, graphic design, fine art, and film. The vernacular building was constructed in 1912 and had previously served as the Bay Cities Garage. From the late 1950s through 1978 nearly all of the Eames’ design and production work was completed at the Office.

**The Architecture Gallery**, 200 E. Westminster Ave., a 1914 vernacular commercial building significant as "The Architecture Gallery," established at this site in 1979 by local architect Thom Mayne. It was the first gallery space in Los Angeles devoted to architecture, created to showcase architecture as an art form. Participants included Frederick Fisher, Thom Mayne and Michael Rotondi (Morphosis), Craig Hodgetts and Robert Mangurian (Studio Works), Frank Gehry, and Eric Owen Moss.

**Caplin House**, 229 E. San Juan Ave., an excellent example of Post Modern/Deconstructivist residential architecture in Venice and the work of noted architects Frederick Fisher and Thane Roberts. Completed in 1979, this was Fisher’s first independent commission, designed for the family of artist Laurie Caplin and composer Loren-Paul Caplin in a nautical theme, resembling the hull of a boat from the inside and a rolling wave from the outside.

**Spiller House**, 39 E. Horizon, a 1979 home that is an excellent example of Post-Modern/Deconstructivist architecture and a notable work of master architect Frank Gehry.

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Historic Resources of Venice

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2-4-6-8 House, 932 W. Amoroso Pl., a 1979 structure that is an excellent example of Post Modern/Deconstructivist residential architecture in Venice and one of the earliest designs noted Los Angeles architects Thom Mayne and Michael Rotondi. This small cube-shaped building, perched on top of concrete blocks, features one window on each facade, in the dimensions of 2x2, 4x4, 6x6, and 8x8.

Venice Vanguard Building, 120 Mildred Ave., a 1913 structure later remodeled in the Streamline Moderne/Art Deco style that served as the home of the Venice Vanguard newspaper from approximately 1918 to 1955.

King George Hotel/Ocean View Hotel, 217 Ocean Front Walk, a 1912 building that is one of the few remaining examples of an early hotel in Venice; The King George was one of Venice's luxury hotels.

Hotel Cadillac, 401 Ocean Front Walk, a 1914 structure that is another excellent example of a 1910s hotel. Originally a honeymoon hotel, this later became a rooming house for elderly Jewish immigrants, before undergoing extensive remodeling in the 1980s and returning to its original hotel use.

Bay Cities Synagogue/Shul on the Beach, 505 Ocean Front Walk, a rare example of an early (1924) Jewish synagogue along Ocean Front Walk. In the 1950s, the "Shul on the Beach" was part of a thriving Jewish community along the coast. Today, this is the only remaining synagogue on the beach and the oldest remaining in the area.

Gingerbread Court, 517-519 Ocean Front Walk, an excellent example of a bungalow court composed of six detached one-story buildings and one two-story building at the rear, featuring pitched and conical roofs clad in glazed tiles. Originally constructed as "Sea Spray Court" in 1922, a residential building containing 21 apartment units, today the property contains multiple retail and office tenants and is known as "Gingerbread Court."

Gold's Gym Sign, 1006 S. Pacific Ave., a painted wall sign that is a remnant of Gold's Gym, an important Venice institution. Founded by Joe Gold at this location in 1963 as a storefront weight room, the building was subsequently purchased by gym member, Ken Sprague, who built the business into an internationally known weight-lifting gym, located a short walk from Venice's Muscle Beach. Sprague closed the Venice location and opened a larger outpost in Santa Monica in 1976, and this original Venice location was converted into a single-family residence in 1982.

16 E. Park Ave., a 1906 Craftsman/Tudor Revival home that was Venice founder Abbot Kinney's first Venice residence; Kinney lived here during the construction of the Venice Canals. The house was later the residence of one of Kinney's sons.

University of the Arts, 1302 S. Riviera Ave., a 1904 Craftsman/Prairie Style building originally constructed by Abbot Kinney as the University of the Arts, which was intended to bring culture to Los Angeles. The building was also a stop on the Venice Miniature Railway, an amusement railway line that operated from 1906 to 1925. The building was converted to a three-family residence in 1936.

509 E. Rialto Ave., a 1924 building that operated as a neighborhood market from 1924 until the 1970s; it was the only business in the Venice Canals. Today, the building is used as a single-family residence.

Venice Gondola Building, 200 E. Mildred Ave. a 1913 vernacular structure that served as the repair shop and storage facility for the Venice gondolas. The street to the rear of the building was formerly a canal. Other sources suggest this building was also used as a machine shop to repair Venice’s popular amusement park rides.

Arthur Reese Residence, 541 E. Santa Clara Ave., the long-time residence of Arthur Reese, the first African American to live and work in Venice. Reese came to Venice from New Orleans in 1905 to work as a janitor and built this residence in the Oakwood neighborhood,
What Is SurveyLA?

SURVEYLA: THE LOS ANGELES HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY PROJECT is the first-ever comprehensive inventory of our city’s historic resources.

The survey findings have a multiplicity of benefits and uses: it helps direct future growth, shapes the revision of Los Angeles’ 35 Community Plans, streamlines environmental review processes, provides opportunities for public education, assists in disaster planning, and spurs heritage tourism and the marketing of historic neighborhoods and properties.

The J. Paul Getty Trust and the City of Los Angeles entered into a grant agreement for SurveyLA under which the Getty has provided $2.5 million to the project, subject to matching requirements by the City. Field surveys and evaluations will occur through 2016. The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) is also providing technical and advisory support for SurveyLA. For more information visit the SurveyLA website, www.SurveyLA.org.
On June 17, the City Council approved the City’s 30th Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ), the 52nd Place Tifal Brothers Tract HPOZ. With Mayor Garcetti’s signature of the adopting ordinance, the new HPOZ will go into effect on August 4.

Located on E. 52nd Place between Avalon Boulevard and McKinley Avenue, just west of Central Avenue, the 52nd Place neighborhood was first identified as a potential historic district in 2008. A number of demolitions were taking place on the block and neighbors formed a grassroots effort to preserve their neighborhood’s historic character. With the help of then-Councilmember Jan Perry, procedures for local and national historic district designation began. After the historic resources survey found the block to be significant for its architecture as well as for its cultural and social history. The block was nominated and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2008. The recent Council adoption makes this the first HPOZ and very first planning overlay zone within the Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan area.

Designed and constructed by the firm of brothers Gustav, Charles, and William Tifal, the one-block HPOZ contains 52 homes, predominantly one-story, single-family residences built in the Craftsman architectural style. The architectural Period of Significance is 1911 to 1914, the period in which the tract was developed by the Tifal Brothers. The Tifal Brothers were immigrants from Germany who designed and built over 300 houses in the greater Los Angeles area. The HPOZ has a high level of architectural integrity, as most properties within the HPOZ (88%)...
The Office of Historic Resources received the American Planning Association, Los Angeles Chapter Award of Excellence of Social Change and Diversity, for the Survey-LA LGBT Historic Context Statement. The award was presented at a June 25 ceremony held at Glendale's historic Alex Theatre. From left, Laura O’Neill and Amanda Yoder, GPA Consulting (whose firm researched and prepared the Context Statement), Ken Bernstein, Office of Historic Resources, Teresa Grimes, GPA Consulting, and Ashley Atkinson, Marissa Aho, and Andre Sahakian, APA LA Board Members.

The California Office of Historic Preservation awarded a $35,000 Certified Local Government (CLG) grant to the Department of City Planning to develop a historic context statement for SurveyLA relating to the rich history of Los Angeles’ Jewish community. This will be the first citywide context on Jewish history to be developed in California, and possibly in the nation. The historic context will focus on people and places associated with themes such as religion and spirituality, social organizations, commerce and business, the entertainment industry, and arts and culture.

Los Angeles’ Jewish community spans two centuries beginning in the mid-1800s with the early settlement of the new city. By 1870 almost 6% of the population of Los Angeles was Jewish, according to the census of that year. By the early 1900s over 2,500 Jews lived in and around downtown although there was no distinct Jewish neighborhood. In the first decades of the twentieth century significant numbers of Jewish immigrants moved to Los Angeles from Russia and Eastern Europe, settling in South Los Angeles and the Boyle Heights neighborhood which, by the 1920s, boasted the largest Jewish community west of Chicago. The boom of the 20s also saw settlement of Jews in the Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood, which, like Boyle Heights and South Los Angeles, was not subject to the deed restrictions common in most areas of Los Angeles. The city’s Jewish population steadily increased during and after the Post WWII period. As deed restrictions were lifted, Jews migrated further west to the Pico-Robertson neighborhood, West Los Angeles, and into the San Fernando Valley.

The Office of Historic Resources will develop a community outreach strategy for development of the Jewish context, which will include public meetings. If you have information to contribute please contact Janet Hansen at janet.hansen@lacity.org.

City Receives State Grant for Jewish Context

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MEET THE NEWEST MEMBERS OF THE OHR TEAM!

The OHR is pleased to welcome new permanent staff members and interns this summer:

**Ari Briski**, a new Planning Assistant with the OHR’s HPOZ Unit, recently graduated from USC with a Masters in Planning and Certificate in Landscape Architecture. Before returning to school she worked in Development and Communications at a large social service agency in New York City. She grew up in Los Angeles and holds a Bachelor’s degree in The Growth and Structure of Cities from Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania.

**Danalynn Dominguez**, the OHR’s 2015 Getty Multicultural Undergraduate Summer Intern, will be a Senior next fall at Brown University, where she majors in Urban Studies. She grew up within the Highland Park Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) and interned previously for Los Angeles City Councilmember Gil Cedillo. Danalynn joined the OHR after spending last semester studying in Barcelona, Spain.

**Tim Rosenstein** has now joined the HPOZ Unit as a full-time Planning Assistant after working for two years as an intern and Student Professional Worker for the OHR, including the HPOZ Unit, where he played a key role overseeing several historic districts. Tim has a B.A. in Anthropology from the University of Washington and a Master’s in Urban and Regional Planning from Cal Poly Pomona. He worked previously as a Restoration Volunteer Supervisor for TreePeople and a Project Planner for Mountains Restoration Trust.

**Blair Smith** has joined the HPOZ team as a full-time Planning Assistant, after nearly two years with significant responsibility as an intern and Student Professional Worker for the HPOZ Unit, coordinating a redesign of the HPOZ web site and evaluating the implementation of all Preservation Plans. She has also served as the Communication Coordinator for Pasadena Heritage.

**Alissa Gordon**, a 2014 intern with the OHR’s HPOZ Unit, has rejoined the HPOZ team as an intern following her graduation with a Master’s in Urban Planning from New York University (NYU). She previously graduated from UC Berkeley with a B.A. in Legal Studies. While studying in New York, Alissa was a Community Planning Fellow for a Brooklyn Community Board and a Project Associate with the Regional Plan Association.

**Max Loder**, a PhD student in Public History with an emphasis on historic preservation, has also joined the HPOZ Unit as an intern. Max is a summa cum laude graduate from UCLA with a B.A. in History. He has previously worked as an intern assisting with the collections of the Dominguez Rancho Adobe Museum and as a research volunteer for the Santa Monica History Museum.

COMING SOON — NEW HPOZ LANDSCAPING GUIDE

With summer here and water use a major concern, many property owners are considering replacing their lawns with drought-tolerant landscaping. However, many typical forms of drought-tolerant landscaping may not be appropriate for historic properties, however, so the Office of Historic Resources has been busy preparing an HPOZ Drought-Tolerant Landscaping Handbook to better inform and guide homeowners who wish to remove their lawn.

The handbook will include details on historically-appropriate landscape design, how to prepare a landscape plan, and drought-tolerant native plant suggestions. Look for it on our website in the coming weeks!
L.A.’s Newest Historic-Cultural Monuments

The Cultural Heritage Commission and City Council have designated seven new Historic-Cultural Monuments (HCMs) between April and June 2015. Los Angeles’ newest Monuments include the following:

HCM #1085, Haddon Hall (3184 West 8th St.) Built in 1926, Haddon Hall reflects traditional Late Gothic Revival design. It is a four-story multi-family residential building in Wilshire Center-Koreatown with a U-shaped plan, featuring a gated and Tudor-arched courtyard entrance and a steeply pitched cross-gable roof. The property was designed by prominent architect S. Charles Lee, who is known as one of the most prolific motion picture theater designers of the West Coast.

HCM #1086, Charles I.D. Moore Residence (2242 S. Hobart Blvd.) Built in 1907, the Charles I.D. Moore Residence is a large, single family residence in the West Adams Heights Neighborhood with a Craftsman and single-style exterior and Craftsman style interior. It is a three-story house with pitched roofs and an expansive front porch. The interior features Douglas Fir woodwork, including ceiling beams, flooring and built-in cabinetry.

HCM #1087, Wilshire Professional Building (3875 Wilshire Blvd.) The 13-story Wilshire Professional Building was constructed in 1929 and exhibits character-defining features of the Art Deco, Zigzag Moderne style. The building, located in Wilshire Center, was designed by prominent local architect Arthur E. Harvey who designed other HCMs including: the Chateau Elysee, the Crocker Bank Building, the Villa Carlotta and the Hollywood Woman’s Club.

HCM #1088, Bank of Hollywood/Equitable Building (6253 West Hollywood Blvd.) Built in two phases, the Bank of Hollywood is a Late Gothic Revival and Art Deco building, first completed in 1929, with a later addition in 1931. The exterior of the building exhibits many characteristic-defining features of the Late Gothic Revival and Art Deco styles, including: wrought iron flourishes with tall finials and cresting, decorative spandrel panels and a steeply pitched roof with finials, pinnacles, towers and spires. Its architect was Alex Culett who contributed to the design of eight other Historic-Cultural Monuments.

HCM #1089, Bartlett Building (215 West 7th Street) Built in 1911, the Bartlett Building is a Beaux Arts style commercial building that stands at the south end of Downtown’s Spring Street Financial National Register District. The building has a U-shaped plan and is reinforced concrete structure that is clad in glazed brick. The exterior of the building exhibits many character-defining features of the Beaux-Arts style, including: the use of the classical orders in the design of columns and pilasters, monumental scaled architectural elements and highly ornamental and grandiose design. The Bartlett Building was designed by the architectural firm of Parkinson & Bergstrom, made up of John Parkinson and G. Edward Bergstrom. Parkinson and Bergstrom together designed many other Historic-Cultural Monuments, including: the Continental Building, the Security Building and the Los Angeles Athletic Club.

HCM #1090, Norms Coffee Shop (470 North La Cienega Blvd) Built in 1956, Norm’s La Cienega Coffee Shop is a Googie style restaurant that has remained in continuous operation since its opening. The structure has a rectangular plan, incorporating a kitchen on the northeast side and a dining area wrapped around the south and west sides. The exterior of the building exhibits many characteristic-defining features of the Googie-style, including: building forms displaying sharp angles and sweeping curves, custom designed neon signage integrated within architecture, and a use of natural materials contrasting with modern technological materials.

HCM #1091, Dante’s View (Griffith Park) Dante’s View is a two-acre site in Griffith Park, located due east of Mount Hollywood along the Mount Hollywood Hiking Trail. Circa 1964, a Brazilian immigrant of Italian descent, Dante Orgolini, terraced and converted this section of the park into a folk garden. He removed the typical Southern California mountain chaparral, terraced the land, added winding paths, and new plantings. After Orgolini’s death in 1978, volunteer Charlie Turner maintained the garden until 1997 while the plantings from the 1960s were lost 1990 and 2007 fire. The garden is a unique example of a cultural landscape maintained by a private individual.