

September 29, 2020

**CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS**

City of Long Beach  
California

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Recommend that the City Council designate the following three properties as Historic Landmarks: 4204 Cedar Avenue, 244 Mira Mar Avenue, and 262 Newport Avenue.

Recommend that the City Council approve a Mills Act contract for properties located at 2333 Carroll Park South (District 2), 4204 Cedar Avenue (District 8) and 262 Newport Avenue (District 3)

APPLICANT: Various

**THE REQUEST**

Staff requests the Cultural Heritage Commission recommend that the City Council approve landmark designation for three properties located at 4204 Cedar Avenue, 244 Mira Mar Avenue, and 262 Newport Avenue and Mills Act contracts for three properties located at 4204 Cedar Avenue and 262 Newport Avenue, Mills Act only for 2333 Carroll Park West and Landmark designation only for the property at 244 Mira Mar Avenue (Exhibit A – Location Map). In consideration of the tax abatement provided, the property owners have proposed a work plan to rehabilitate the proposed Mills Act properties and maintain them over the 10-year contract term (Exhibit B - Workplans).

**BACKGROUND**

On August 25, 2020, the Cultural Heritage Commission conducted a public hearing and recommended that the City Council approve ten Mills Act contracts (Exhibit C – Cultural Heritage Commission Mills Act Report). At that time, staff's recommendation for Mills Act contracts approval did not include six properties, which were also requesting landmark designation, because additional review was necessary to evaluate those applications. This review is now complete, and staff has prepared recommendations on both landmark and Mills Act applications for each property.

These six applications were included among the 22 total applications filed with the Planning Bureau during this year's application period. Limits have been established on the number of



## CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS

SEPTEMBER 29, 2020

Page 2 of 9

contracts awarded per year by property type. A limit of 12 contracts can be awarded for single family properties. A total of seven applications for single family properties were recommended to the City Council by the Commission at the previous CHC meeting on August 25, 2020, leaving five available contracts for single family properties. Of the six remaining applications presented in this report, four applications are for single family properties, one is for a two-unit property and one is for a three-unit property.

To be eligible for the Mills Act program the properties must either be contributors to a historic district or designated historic landmarks. Among the subject applications, three are located outside of the historic district and require landmark designation to be eligible for Mills Act. Consequently, the respective property owners are applying for landmark designation concurrently with their Mills Act applications. One property is in the Bluff Park historic district but exceeds the annual property valuation limit, and this application is therefore dependent on meeting landmark designation criteria.

Following is an overview of the six applications reviewed during this process and staff's recommendation for each:

| <b>Address</b>          | <b>Building Type</b> | <b>Historic District</b> | <b>Landmark Recommendation</b> | <b>Mills Act Recommendation</b> |
|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2333 Carroll Park South | Single family        | Carroll Park             | No                             | Yes                             |
| 4204 Cedar Avenue       | Single Family        | N/A                      | Yes                            | Yes                             |
| 29 Kennebec Avenue      | Triplex              | Bluff Park               | No                             | No                              |
| 20 Lindero Avenue       | Duplex               | Bluff Park               | No                             | No                              |
| 244 Mira Mar Avenue     | Single Family        | N/A                      | Yes                            | No                              |
| 262 Newport Avenue      | Single Family        | N/A                      | Yes                            | Yes                             |

### **LANDMARK DESIGNATION**

As noted previously, four of the applications are also under consideration for landmark designation in order to be eligible for Mills Act since they are not located within a historic district. One property is located in a historic district and would typically be eligible to apply as a contributing structure in the district, but, in this instance, also requires landmark designation under the exceptional category because the property exceeds the property valuation limit. Landmark designation is important for protecting historically significant buildings located outside of historic districts which would not otherwise have historic district protections, as well as to individually recognize significant buildings within historic districts. These applications are evaluated against

the City's Landmark designation criteria and for historic building integrity (Exhibit D- Historic Property Evaluations – DPR Forms). To be eligible for Landmark designation, a cultural resource must retain integrity and meet one of the following criteria:

- A. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the City's history; or
- B. It is associated with the lives of persons significant in the City's past; or
- C. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or it represents the work of a master or it possesses high artistic values; or
- D. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history.

The properties have been thoroughly evaluated in accordance with Chapter 2.63 of the Long Beach Municipal Code and the criteria for designation outlined above (Exhibit E – Landmark Findings).

## **ANALYSIS**

Since this group of Mills Act applications are dependent on Landmark designation, a combined analysis of each property's eligibility for both Landmark designation and Mills Act is provided below; the discussion is organized by address.

### **1. 2333 Carroll Park South**

**Landmark Designation** – Built circa 1905, this building is the oldest included in this year's application cycle. The two-story Transitional Craftsman style building features a high-pitched front facing gable and centered gable fish scale shingles at gable center, porch, and front balcony. Two cross gable roof lines at the sides of each building is adorned with a clipped gable. The building still retains its essential building form, but the various parts of the building has been altered over time including the non-period stucco cladding added to the exterior walls, and modifications to openings throughout the building. In this case, there were enough alterations, including major alterations, that staff is not recommending landmark designation at this time. The application should be reconsidered for landmark designation once substantial repair and restoration has been completed.

**Mills Act** – The proposed workplan includes fixing drainage issues and leaks in a second floor balcony, balcony waterproofing; installation of new wall insulation, re-piping a bathroom to resolve leaks; building foundation retrofit for earthquake protection; re-leveling of the floor after foundation work; removal of exterior non-period stucco; restoration and/or replacement with new wood siding for both the house and garage; cleaning of the sewer line of tree roots; and replacement of non-period bathroom window with appropriate window material and style. The workplan addresses visible but reversible alterations to the building. The applicants have presented a thoughtful and comprehensive workplan that proposes the reversal of major alterations.

**Conclusion:** Staff does not currently recommend landmark designation but does recommend approval for the Mills Act application. This building is not dependent on landmark designation to be eligible, as it is in the Carroll Park historic district and under the valuation limits for a single-family property.

## 2. **4204 Cedar Avenue**

**Landmark Designation** – This building was designed by architect Ed Killingsworth for his architectural firm partner Jules Brady under the firm Killingsworth, Brady and Smith (KBS). The building was originally constructed in 1970 and is 50 years of age meeting the minimum eligibility requirement for historic structures. The building is considered to be the final single-family residential project designed by Long Beach architect Ed Killingsworth, whose notable work includes the Case Study #25 house at 82 Rivo Alto Way, Opdahl House at 5576 Vesuvian Way, Killingsworth, Brady Smith (KBS) office at 3827 Long Beach Boulevard, and his work at California State Long Beach as the University's master architect.

The building is a late example of the Mid-Century Modern style. The building features Killingsworth's signature architectural detailing and the building proportions, and scale that define his work. Killingsworth's work is influential as he gained an exemplary reputation throughout the country. The house has a privacy wall made with opaque glass and wood screening an open-air courtyard. The tall front door is reminiscent of the Case Study #25 house. The building has floor to ceiling glass front walls, high vaulted ceilings, and wood beams. The exterior also features vertical tongue and groove wood cladding and stucco finishes.

The building needs landmark designation to be eligible, as the property is not located in a historic district. Staff finds the building merits landmark designation, which will also provide protection against inappropriate alterations, consistent with LBMC Section 2.63.

**Mills Act** – The building requires substantial replacement of tongue and groove wood replacement; resurfacing damaged exterior stucco walls to repair cracks, exterior wall discoloration, and prior patch work; removing an inappropriate addition to the rear of the building; restoration of the building from three bedroom to the original two-bedroom configuration designed by Killingsworth.

**Conclusion** – The building is as important as any of Killingsworth's larger or more high-profile buildings. It is the former private residence that was designed as a custom house for his partner Jules Brady. The proposed workplan includes substantial improvements designed to restore the structure to its original configuration and to repair and maintain many of the character defining features that are unique to the mid-century style. Staff supports both the Mills Act application and landmark designation request for this property.

3. **29 Kennebec Avenue**

**Landmark Designation** – The property consists of a two-story building with two dwelling units constructed in 1939 and a detached two-story building consisting of a single dwelling unit built over the garage constructed in 1920. The two buildings took design cues from a house previously on the same lot (later demolished) which was in the Prairie architectural style. Until a recent subdivision, this was a much larger lot extending to First Street. The buildings feature horizontal stucco banding, and wide overhanging roof eaves reminiscent of Prairie style detailing. The building is also associated with Dr. Harriman Jones who purchased the property in 1939 and is an important figure in Long Beach history. Dr. Jones's former clinic located at 211 Cherry Avenue is a designated landmark. The buildings, while generally intact, have modest detailing and do not meet landmark designation criteria and the association with Dr. Harriman Jones is not sufficient to support designation.

**Mills Act** – The workplan includes removal and replacement of existing roofing; window restoration; replacement of electrical panels; replacement of plumbing; painting of the building exterior; sewer line replacement; new attic insulation installation; and heating system replacement. In staff's assessment the buildings do not rise to the level of significance that would merit landmark designation of the property which is already located within and benefits from the protections of being in a historic district. Furthermore, while there are good workplan items proposed, many proposed workplan items appear constitute deferral of routine building maintenance and generally are not substantial rehabilitation that would commensurate with the value of the tax benefit that would be afforded to the property and do not support the Mills act application request, given the high valuation of the property.

**Conclusion** – While this is an interesting building, neither the Landmark application nor Mills Act application rise to a level that staff can support.

4. **20 Lindero Avenue**

**Landmark Designation** – The subject property includes a two-story, Prairie style single-family residence constructed in 1914 and a detached two-story building consisting of a second dwelling unit built over the garage at the rear of the property that was constructed in 1930. The building was designed by a partnership of two notable Long Beach architects, W. Horace Austin, and Harvey Lochridge. The building was constructed during the period in which Austin's professional reputation was well-established and in the early years of Lochridge's long career. Austin was called the "Dean of Long Beach architects," for the tutelage he provided to many of his associates who went on to enjoy successful careers. The building, while generally intact, did have additions take place in the 1930s, notably an addition which widened the building from its original building footprint. The building is also notable as the former residence California Governor Frank Merriam from 1934-1939. Merriam, originally from Iowa also served as an elected official in Iowa, later moving to Southern California and representing the Long Beach area as a California state assemblyman.

The building distinctly has associations with two groups of people important in history. W. Horace Austin, widely respected as an architect, whose extant work can be seen throughout Long Beach. His classical detailing is a notable feature found throughout his work. He is also well noted for designing several educational buildings and civic buildings. The other importation association is that it is was the residence of a former California Governor who has personal family roots in the migration of people from Iowa to Long Beach leading to the City's moniker of "Iowa by the Sea." In light of these associations, the building may eligible for landmark designation.

**Mills Act** – The workplan includes repair of roof leaks on both buildings to resolve leaks and pooling water; repair and/or replacement of warped metal flashing on roof and gutters; relocation of downspouts to improve groundwater drainage; sanding and staining garage doors and repairing gage; inspecting and repairing a second floor drain which causes backup and flooding; rehabilitating three front facing single-hung wood windows to operable condition; installing insulation and weather stripping at two doors; inspecting cracks in foundation basement walls; patching and repairing stucco; and painting the structure with period appropriate colors.

The subject property requires a landmark designation in order to be eligible for Mills Act due to the fact that is already located in a historic district but exceeds the valuation limit for the duplex property type. Staff finds that the building is likely to be eligible for landmark designation based on adopted criteria but also concluded that the proposed workplan is not commensurate with the tax benefit that would be afforded to the property nor is the workplan as comprehensive as other applications in this year's application cycle. The applicant was presented with the option of continuing with landmark designation without the Mills Act but declined to proceed.

**Conclusion** – In light of the above, Mills Act and Landmark designation are not recommended for Commission consideration for this property.

5. **244 Mira Mar Avenue**

**Landmark Designation** – The structure is a Craftsman Bungalow built in 1921 by Miner Smith, an artisan builder in Long Beach. Smith's unique and artful craftsmanship can be found throughout this house. While the building form itself reflects a traditional Craftsman Bungalow shape and appearance, it is his unique finishes through the house that make the building significant. His signature craftsmanship is likely due to Smith's early work designing fireplace mantles and other decorative stonework. The notable detailing attributable to Miner Smith includes decorative stone tree trunks, stone flower and plant detailing used as ornamentation and is a stylistic element carried through to the building exterior in his buildings. Staff supports landmark designation for this building, as the building reflects the true artisan spirit of the period.

**Mills Act** – The workplan includes repair of cracked stained glass panes in windows flanking the fire place; repair of a damaged chimney which exhibits several interior and

exterior cracks; reinforcement of the entire chimney; restoration of the cast concrete benches at front and rear porches to include original ornamentation; installation of new composition shingle roof; repair of terminate damaged wood members at porte-cochere; restoration of existing window finger pulls and replacement where missing; and repair and or replacement of water damaged doors. The workplan does include important repairs needed for this unique structure. However, in comparison to other workplans this year this application is not as competitive in major workplan items, and consequently staff is not recommending approval of the Mills Act application. The applicant was presented with the option of continuing with landmark designation without the Mills Act and accepted moving forward with landmark designation.

**Conclusion** – In light of the above, staff is recommending only landmark designation but not recommending Mills Act for this property.

6. **262 Newport Avenue**

**Landmark Designation** – This property consists of Craftsman Bungalow style single-family residence built in 1920. This structure is also designed and built by Miner Smith. This building is uniquely important as his earliest known commission to build a house in Long Beach. This commission initiated the start of several “Bungalow Mansion” buildings he constructed mostly in the Belmont Heights neighborhood. His signature architectural features are visible in this building including planter niches in the porch piers, stone tree trunk rails at the porch and a wainscot stone detailing. While Miner Smith went on to build homes in other areas in Southern California, these buildings are unique to Long Beach and built during a period of growth and expansion in the City.

This building requires landmark designation to be eligible for landmark designation since it is not located in a designated historic district.

**Mills Act** – The workplan includes termite and dry rot repairs on both house and garage; reroofing the garage; an upgrade in electrical service in the garage; removal of knob and tube wiring, replacement of aluminum kitchen window and replacement with period appropriate wood window; brick and mortar repair and the addition of a chimney cap and spark arrestor; repair and/or replacement of damaged exterior siding and trim as needed; refurbishment of dining room French doors; removal of aluminum sliders and replacement with wood French doors; undertaking an engineering evaluation to determine source of cracked brick at northwest porch column; repair/replacement of damaged wood siding on garage; repair of basement due to water damage and waterproofing walls; evaluating and refurbishing as needed all wood windows and wood screens; replacement of all damaged glazing. Staff recommends Mills Act approval as this workplan presents substantial repair, but also includes major workplan items.

**Conclusion** – The application includes both a good workplan and analysis of the building reveals this to be an important building for landmark designation. The designation also

protects the building under the City's ordinance against future inappropriate alterations. Staff recommends approval of both the Landmark designation and the Mills Act application.

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

Public notices for landmark designation were distributed on September 14, 2020, in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 21.21, of the Long Beach Municipal Code. As of this date, two public comments were submitted in support of the landmark application request at 244 Mira Mar (Exhibit F – Public Comments).

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

In accordance with the 15331 Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), environmental review is not required for actions taken for the preservation or restoration of historic structures.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alejandro Plascencia'.

ALEJANDRO PLASCENCIA  
PRESERVATION PLANNER

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Patricia A. Diefenderfer'.

PATRICIA A. DIEFENDERFER, AICP  
ADVANCE PLANNING OFFICER

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Christopher Koontz'.

CHRISTOPHER KOONTZ, AICP

CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS

SEPTEMBER 29, 2020

Page 9 of 9

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

CK: PD: AP:

Attachments:     Exhibit A – Location Map  
                         Exhibit B – Workplans  
                         Exhibit C – Cultural Heritage Commission Mills Act Report 8.25.20  
                         Exhibit D – Historic Property Evaluations - DPR Forms  
                         Exhibit E – Findings  
                         Exhibit F – Public Comments