

R-24 CORRESPONDENCE – Cheryl Perry



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July 23, 2015

Councilmember
333 W. Ocean Blvd., 14th floor
Long Beach, CA 90802

Dear Councilmember,

Development Services staff, in conjunction with Galvin Preservation Associates, has rewritten the Cultural Heritage Commission Ordinance, Chapter 2.63, in order to streamline the process for designating city landmarks. Most of the new recommendations will aid in the designation of new landmarks, but the changes to Section 2.63.060 will remove a key element in this process. The original wording in Section 2.63.060 allows “any interested group or individual” to nominate a structure as a historic landmark, provided that he/she follows the proper process. If someone nominates a building and the owner objects to its having landmark status, the record owner “may petition to withdraw from designated status” by following the correct procedure.

On the other hand, the revised Section 2.63.060 states that “no landmark designation shall be considered without authorization of the property owner.” This means that interested persons who believe that a historically significant building should be protected from immediate demolition, while a solution may be negotiated with the owner, can no longer nominate a structure at all. If the new wording is adopted, Long Beach stands to lose a large number of historically and aesthetically important buildings in the near future. Since the original Cultural Heritage Ordinance was adopted, various individuals have nominated historic properties and none of the owners have objected to landmark designation. The original language of Section 2.63.060 not only protects private ownership of historic structures, but also allows concerned citizens to attempt to save significant endangered buildings. Both the cities of Los Angeles and Pasadena, which have preserved a number of historic sites and enjoy robust tourism because of their diverse downtown areas, do not require that property owners initiate requests for landmarking buildings.

Long Beach Heritage asks that you vote to keep the original language in Section 2.63.060 of the Cultural Heritage Ordinance, which allows all citizens to nominate Long Beach city landmarks.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl Perry".

Cheryl Perry, President

