

MARILYN MONROE RESIDENCE

12305 West 5th Helena Drive

CHC-2023-6134-HCM

ENV-2023-6135-CE

FINDINGS

- The Marilyn Monroe Residence “is associated with the lives of historic personages important to national, state, city, or local history” as the home of internationally known American model and actress Marilyn Monroe.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Marilyn Monroe Residence meets one of the Historic-Cultural Monument criteria: it “is associated with the lives of historic personages important to national, state, city, or local history” as the home of internationally known American model and actress Marilyn Monroe.

Monroe is widely regarded as one of the most iconic film figures of the 20th century. She began her acting career in 1946, at the age of 20, and over the next sixteen years, she appeared in multiple major motion pictures. A top-billed actress for more than a decade, Monroe transcended the silver screen to become an icon of the post-World War II sexual revolution, redefining perceptions of femininity on film and establishing an archetype that actresses seek to recreate today. Even in the 21st century, decades after death, her influence on the entertainment industry and popular culture at large has been recognized by such organizations as the Smithsonian Institution, who in 2014 named Monroe as one of the “100 Most Significant Americans of All Time,” and the American Film Institute, who named her the sixth female “Greatest American Screen Legend” in 2005. Due to the mercurial nature of the film industry as well as her tumultuous personal life, Monroe lived a largely itinerant lifestyle for the majority of her career, residing primarily in rented accommodations.

SurveyLA, Los Angeles’s citywide historic resources survey, established eligibility standards and integrity considerations for evaluating resources associated with significant persons in Los Angeles as follow:

Eligibility Standards

- Directly associated with the productive life of a significant person who made important individual contributions to one or more areas of significance as it relates to Los Angeles history
- Individual must be proven to have made an important contribution to Los Angeles History
- Individual must have lived in or used the property during the period in which he or she achieved significance
- Contributions of individuals must be compared to those of others who were active, successful, or influential in the same field
- Each property associated with someone important should be compared with other properties associated with that individual to identify those resources that are good representatives of the person’s historic contributions
- For residential property types, the individual must have resided in the property during the period in which he/she achieved significance

- For multi-family residential properties, the apartment or room occupied by the person must be readable from the period of significance
- Properties associated with the lives of living persons may be eligible, if the person's active life in their field of endeavor is over AND sufficient time has elapsed to assess both their field and their contribution in a historic perspective
- May be associated with individuals important in ethnic, cultural, LGBT, and/or women's history
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period of significance
- For the National Register, properties associated with individuals whose significant accomplishments date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional significance

Integrity Considerations

- Retains sufficient integrity to convey significance
- Should retain integrity of Feeling, Association, Location, and Design from the period of significance
- Some original materials may be altered or removed, particularly in cases where a property is not also evaluated for significance under Criterion C/3/3 (Historic-Cultural Monument Criterion 3).
- Setting may have changed (surrounding buildings and land uses)
- A good test for integrity is whether the significant person associated with the resource would recognize it as it exists today

The subject property is the first and only residence Monroe ever purchased by herself, and represents a portion of her productive period and an embarkation on a new phase of her life. There is no indication that Monroe's productive life had concluded prior to her move to the subject property. During the weeks prior to her sudden death, she was in talks to resume filming that coming autumn and she had already commenced development on two additional films to be filmed the following year for which she was carrying out promotional interviews and photography sessions. Some of her most important and revealing interviews were conducted during the final months of her life at the subject property, including a series of notable conversations with Richard Meryman for LIFE magazine. She also posed for several photography sessions that produced some of the most memorable images of her career, including sittings with Bert Stern for *Vogue* and George Barris for *Cosmopolitan* magazine. As a result, even though it had been a year since she had appeared onscreen, Monroe was clearly "productive" while she was residing at the subject property and her activities during this period were historically significant to the advancement of her career as it was envisioned at the time. Further, her acquisition of the subject property marked a turning point in her life: she had finally achieved some degree of financial stability in her film career and found herself single after her 1960 divorce of her third husband, Arthur Miller. Indeed, the subject property was a particularly poignant purchase for Monroe, whose early life had been characterized by instability – shuttled between foster homes, an orphanage, family friends, and her own mentally ill mother, she often spent no more than a year or two at most at any address at which she resided. The subject property epitomizes Monroe's establishment of independence and stability in her life.

Despite interior and exterior alterations over the years, the subject property retains a sufficient level of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance. Most of the alterations were completed prior to Monroe's purchase and therefore have gained significance as related to the period of her occupancy.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT ("CEQA") FINDINGS

State of California CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 “*consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment.*”

State of California CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 “*consists of projects limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic buildings.*”

The designation of the Marilyn Monroe Residence as an Historic-Cultural Monument in accordance with Chapter 9, Article 1, of The City of Los Angeles Administrative Code (“LAAC”) will ensure that future construction activities involving the subject property are regulated in accordance with Section 22.171.14 of the LAAC. The purpose of the designation is to prevent significant impacts to an Historic-Cultural Monument through the application of the standards set forth in the LAAC. Without the regulation imposed by way of the pending designation, the historic significance and integrity of the subject property could be lost through incompatible alterations and new construction and the demolition of an irreplaceable historic site/open space. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation are expressly incorporated into the LAAC and provide standards concerning the historically appropriate construction activities which will ensure the continued preservation of the subject property.

The City of Los Angeles has determined based on the whole of the administrative record, that substantial evidence supports that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 and Class 31, and none of the exceptions to a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 applies. The project was found to be exempt based on the following:

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 8 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals of maintaining, restoring, enhancing, and protecting the environment through the imposition of regulations designed to prevent the degradation of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 31 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals relating to the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of historic buildings and sites in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Categorical Exemption ENV-2023-6135-CE was prepared on December 29, 2023.