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October 13, 2020

Los Angeles City Council
c/o Office of the City Clerk
City Hall, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attention: PLUM Committee

Dear Honorable Members:

MORRIS KIGHT RESIDENCE; 1822 WEST 4th STREET; CHC-2020-3322-HCM; ENV-2020-3323-CE; CD-1

At its meeting of **September 3, 2020**, the Cultural Heritage Commission took the actions below to include the Morris Kight Residence in the list of Historic-Cultural Monuments, subject to adoption by the City Council:

1. **Determined** that the proposed designation is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 and Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 of the State CEQA Guidelines;
2. **Determined** that the property conforms with the definition of a Monument pursuant to Section 22.171.7 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code;
3. **Recommended** that the City Council consider the Morris Kight Residence for inclusion in the list of Historic-Cultural Monuments; and
4. **Adopted** the attached Findings.

The Commission vote was as follows:

Moved: Kennard
Seconded: Milofsky
Ayes: Barron, Kanner
Absent: Buelna

Vote: 4 – 0


James K. Williams, Commission Executive Assistant II
Cultural Heritage Commission

The Cultural Heritage Commission would appreciate your inclusion of the subject property to the list of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

Time for Council to Act: The Commission action is hereby transmitted to the City Council for consideration. Pursuant to Section 22.171.10(f) of the Los Angeles Administrative Code, the Council may approve or disapprove in whole or in part an application or initiation for a proposed designation of a Monument. The Council shall act in 90-days of the public hearing held before the Commission on the proposed designation. The City Council may unilaterally extend the 90-day time limit to act for a maximum of 15 days for good cause. With written consent of the owner, the time for the City Council to act may be extended by up to an additional 60 days. If the Council does not act on the application or initiation within this specified time limit, the application or initiation to designate a Monument shall be deemed to have been denied.

Enclosure: Findings, Staff Report, Mailing List

FINDINGS

- The Morris Kight Residence “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community” for its association with the gay liberation movement in Los Angeles as the founding location of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF/LA), as well as for its association with the creation of the Gay Community Services Center (GCSC) and the Christopher Street West Parade.
- The Morris Kight Residence “is associated with the lives of historic personages important to national, state, city, or local history” as the home of gay liberation leader and activist Morris Kight.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Morris Kight Residence meets two of the Historic-Cultural Monument criteria.

The subject property “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community” for its association with the gay liberation movement in Los Angeles as the founding location of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF/LA), as well as for its association with the creation of the Gay Community Services Center (GCSC) and the Christopher Street West Parade.

SurveyLA’s LGBT Historic Context Statement identifies eligibility standards for properties significant for their association with the gay liberation movement as being those that are directly associated with an event, organization, or institution that played an important role in the development of LGBT consciousness, community, or culture during the period of significance. Many of the early groups that played an important role in the gay liberation movement were founded in and operated out of the homes of one or more of the members.

Morris Kight’s Westlake home, which he occupied from 1967 until 1974, was the epicenter of the development of several important organizations that significantly influenced the LGBT civil rights movement both locally and nationally. The GLF/LA first convened at Kight’s home in 1969 with fewer than 20 members and eventually grew to over 250 regular attendees at meetings held every Sunday. The GLF/LA was headquartered at the subject property, where volunteers managed an estimated 200 daily phone calls to provide one-to-one social services for members of the LGBT community. Stemming from the work of the GLF/LA, in 1971, the GCSC was founded at the subject property, and quickly expanded in scope and participation to become one of the United States’ largest LGBT organizations by the mid-1970s.

Furthermore, in 1970, the GLF/LA collaborated with the Metropolitan Community Church to assemble the first gay pride parade down Hollywood Boulevard to commemorate the 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York City, the Christopher Street West Parade. This parade would later serve as a model for other gay pride events across the world. Given that the idea for the parade is credited to Kight and the fact that the GLF/LA operated out of the subject property, it can be surmised that much of the planning and preparation for the parade also took place at this same location.

The Morris Kight Residence is also “associated with the lives of historic personages important to national, state, city, or local history” as the home of gay liberation leader and activist Morris Kight. The subject property was the residence of Kight from 1967 to 1974 and is directly associated with his productive life where he achieved significance as a gay liberation leader. Kight devoted his

professional and personal life to the advancement of LGBT civil rights, and co-founded two important LGBT organizations, the Gay Community Services Center and the Los Angeles Chapter of the Gay Liberation Front, which helped elevate the gay liberation movement to the national stage. Locally, Kight operated a gay crisis call center out of the subject property and organized crucial resources, such as housing, counseling, job finding, bail bonds, and advocacy, for the LGBT community during their fight for justice.

Despite interior and exterior alterations to the subject property, it retains sufficient integrity of location, setting, materials, design, feeling, and association to convey its significance.

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 Morris Kight 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 a 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.