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November 19, 2019

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:

**BOTHWELL RANCH; 5300 NORTH OAKDALE AVENUE; CASE NO. CHC-2019-5114-HCM, ENV-2019-5115-CE; CD-3**

At its meeting of **November 7, 2019**, the Cultural Heritage Commission took the actions below to include the Bothwell Ranch 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 Bothwell Ranch for inclusion in the list of Historic-Cultural Monuments; and
4. **Adopted** the attached findings as amended by the Commission.

The Commission vote was as follows:

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

**Vote: 5 - 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: Amended Findings

## FINDINGS

(As Amended by the Cultural Heritage Commission on November 7, 2019)

- Bothwell Ranch “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community” as one of the last remaining commercial citrus groves in the San Fernando Valley, representing a significant remnant of the region’s agricultural roots and a once-integral element of the local economy.
- Bothwell Ranch “is associated with the lives of historic personages important to national, state, city, or local history” as the long-time home of Lindley Bothwell, a prominent University of Southern California cheerleading coach and prosperous orange grower.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Bothwell Ranch 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” as one of the last remaining commercial citrus groves in the San Fernando Valley, representing a significant remnant of the region’s agricultural roots and a once-integral element of the local economy.

Agriculture, particularly citrus growing, once dominated the San Fernando Valley and other parts of Los Angeles, and played a key role in Southern California’s development and promotion in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The image of orange and lemon groves supported the branding of the region as a Mediterranean paradise. However, in the decades after the Second World War orchards and other farms in the Valley mostly gave way to development. Rising water costs and property taxes made farming less profitable than before, encouraging farmers to sell their lands to developers, as evidenced by the reduction of the original 30-acre Bothwell Ranch to its current size of 13 acres. Today, nearly all agricultural land in the San Fernando Valley has been replaced with residential neighborhoods.

Citrus in California are now largely grown in the Central Valley, although, some remnants of citrus farming still exist within the City of Los Angeles—a 12-acre orange grove at City-owned Orcutt Ranch (HCM #31), and 6 acres on the California State University Northridge campus. Nevertheless, neither of these orange groves are for commercial consumption. Bothwell Ranch, in continuous operation from 1926 until 2016, is the last property of this type, which was essential to the development of the San Fernando Valley and the local economy.

Furthermore, Bothwell Ranch “is associated with the lives of historic personages important to national, state, city, or local history” a prominent University of Southern California cheerleading coach and prosperous orange grower. In 1926, Lindley Bothwell purchased the citrus grove, which at the time covered about 30 acres, and he resided there with his wife until his death in 1986. Bothwell, who came to own or manage over 30 ranches across Southern California, ran a business managing and providing services for other citrus orchards in the area and served for over 60 years as a volunteer coach for the University of Southern California (USC) Song Girls and Yell Leaders.

As an undergraduate at USC in 1919, Bothwell was the university's first yell leader and he started the first rotating card stunts in cheering sections at USC football games in 1921, a stunt replicated by other universities across the nation. Additionally, under Bothwell's leadership, the USC Song Girls were named the best song-leading team in the United States by the International Cheerleading Foundation in both 1972 and 1974.

### **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 Bothwell Ranch 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.

Categorical Exemption ENV-2019-5115-CE was prepared on August 12, 2019.