

Granada Theater
628-634 N. Avalon Boulevard
CHC-2021-408-HCM
ENV-2021-409-CE

FINDINGS

- The Granada Theater “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community” as an excellent and rare example of a neighborhood theater with Renaissance Revival architectural influences in Wilmington.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Granada Theater “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community” as an excellent and rare example of a neighborhood theater with Renaissance Revival architectural influences in Wilmington.

The business of motion picture distribution and exhibition encouraged the development of the neighborhood theater. Movie palaces Downtown were considered first-run theaters, while the neighborhood theaters exhibited a film once its drawing power had decreased. Two distinct forms of the neighborhood theater developed during the 1920s and 1930s. One was to imitate the Downtown movie palace in its presence on the street by featuring enlarged scale and ornate detailing. The other form was the incorporation of the theater into a standard business block, often prominently located in the commercial core of a community, as exhibited by the subject property. As seen at the subject property, the entrance was typically a recessed portal in place of a storefront, surrounded by storefronts on either side and office space above. The lobby filled the space otherwise occupied by a store, and the large auditorium sat behind the office block. Only the sign and the marquee differentiated the building from those around it. Intact examples of neighborhood theaters are becoming increasingly rare, and the subject property is the only example of a neighborhood theater remaining in downtown Wilmington.

Despite interior and exterior alterations, the subject property retains most of its essential characteristic features and sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, 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 Granada Theater 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-2021-409-CE was prepared on March 10, 2021.