

August 3, 2015

To the Members of the Los Angeles City Council's PLUM Committee:

Thank you for considering the nomination of Historic Cultural Monument (HCM) status for Circle S Ranch in West Hills.

It saddens me that a relative of the property's owner has chosen to oppose this nomination in her capacity as her mother's trustee. I would like to take this opportunity to address her objections:

1. **Allegation: This nomination constitutes an unreasonable and severe deprivation of property rights.** HCM status merely requires a 180-day notice before a demolition or major alteration takes place. This delay gives the city and the community an opportunity to find alternatives to destruction of a treasured historic and cultural landmark. The City Council then has the option of extending the period for another 180 days.
2. **Allegation: HCM status has no benefit to the property owner.** This, too, is untrue. Owners of HCMs have access to funds under the Mills Act to provide funds for qualified property improvements in lieu of property taxes.
3. **Allegation: The owner's family is united in opposition to this designation.** A family member appeared before the HCM Commission and indicated he was OK with the designation. He only asked that the commission leave a large portion of the property out of the protected zone to allow easier development at a future time. The commission granted his request.
4. **Allegation: This application was sprung upon the family without warning or attempts at consultation.** Contrary to this claim, I attempted to contact the property owner by telephone approximately two years ago. I spoke with her caretaker, who said the owner was incapable of communicating with me. The caretaker would not provide information about others who could discuss matters with me. Later, as soon as the HCM Commission agreed to consider the matter, I personally dropped a copy of the entire application package into the mailbox at the property. This happened several months ago.
5. **Allegation: This property has no historic or cultural value.** The application filed by historian Charles Fisher thoroughly documents the property's architectural and historic significance. The Historic Cultural Monument Commission, which is the city's designated body for reviewing such applications, voted **unanimously** to approve the application.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dan Brin  
West Hills