



ERIC GARCETTI
MAYOR

VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP
DIRECTOR
(213) 978-1271
KEVIN J. KELLER, AICP
EXECUTIVE OFFICER
(213) 978-1272
LISA M. WEBBER, AICP
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
(213) 978-1274

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

RICHARD BARRON
PRESIDENT

GAIL KENNARD
VICE PRESIDENT

PILAR BUELNA
DIANE KANNER
BARRY A MILOFSKY

ROCKY WILES
COMMISSION OFFICE MANAGER
(213) 978-1300

<http://planning.lacity.org>

April 23, 2018

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:

CORBIN PALMS MODEL H-3; 6134 NORTH JUMILLA AVENUE; CASE NO. CHC-2018-376-HCM, ENV-2018-377-CE

At its meeting of **April 19, 2018**, the Cultural Heritage Commission took the actions below to include the above-referenced property 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; and
3. **Recommended** that the City Council consider and designate the subject property a Historic-Cultural Monument; and
4. **Adopted** the staff attached report findings as the findings of the Commission.

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

Vote: 5 – 0


Etta Armstrong, Commission Executive Assistant I
Cultural Heritage Commission

Time for Council to Act The Commission action will be 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. The 90-day time limit may be extended by the Council for good cause for a maximum of 15 days. If the Council does not act on the application or initiation within this 105-days total time limit, the application or initiation to designate a Monument shall be deemed to have been denied. The Council may override a Commission recommendation of denial of Council initiated designation by a minimum of 10-votes.

Enclosures: Findings

CORBIN PALMS MODEL H-3

FINDINGS

(Adopted by the Cultural Heritage Commission on April 19, 2018)

Corbin Palms Model H-3 "embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for study of a period, style, or method of construction" as an excellent example of Mid-Century Modern style architecture applied to postwar suburban subdivision design.

Corbin Palms Model H-3 is "a notable work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age" as a highly intact work by architects Dan Palmer and William Krisel that represents their early careers.

CRITERIA

The criterion is the Cultural Heritage Ordinance which defines a historical or cultural monument as any site (including significant trees or other plant life located thereon) building or structure of particular historic or cultural significance to the City of Los Angeles, such as historic structures or sites in which the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, State or community is reflected or exemplified, or which are identified with historic personages or with important events in the main currents of national, State or local history or which embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period style or method of construction, or a notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual genius influenced his age.

SUMMARY

The 1954 Corbin Palms Model H-3 is a one-story single-family residence with an attached carport located on the east side of Jumilla Avenue, where Jumilla Avenue intersects with Delano Street, in Woodland Hills. The house was designed in the Mid-Century Modern architectural style by architects Dan Palmer (1920-2007) and William Krisel (1924-2017) as part of the Corbin Palms subdivision for Corval Estates and developer George Alexander (1898-1965).

Corbin Palms, which was developed in four phases between 1953 and 1954, offered three basic rectangular floor plans (F, G, and H) with 2-3 variations on the plan in elevation and the carport location, as well as a reverse floor plan for each. Palmer and Krisel's alpha-numeric systems (e.g. H-1, H-2, H2R, H-3) and its application to a plot plan meant that the streetscape never looked monotonous as it did in other tracts. The subject property is an intact example of the model H-3, only twelve of which are present among the 89 homes constructed during the last phase of the development.

Rectangular in plan, the subject property is of post-and-beam construction clad with striated wooden siding and stucco. The primary, west-facing elevation features large, fixed pane gabled clerestory windows below a low-pitched front-gabled composition and rock roof. The primary entrance is a single-paneled wood entry door with a brass colored doorknob and a sputnik shaped face-plate matching a large sputnik-shaped metal sculpture affixed to the wall to the north. At a right angle at the southern end of the primary elevation is an attached wood, post-and-beam carport accessed via a semi-circular driveway. The north-facing elevation has a lanai created by an attached post-and-beam wooden shade structure, as well as a sandstone-clad built-in barbecue. A low sandstone clad planter runs the length of the lanai along the southern edge of the parcel and the western wall of the carport. At the rear of the property is a large rectangular swimming pool and rectangular wooden post-and-beam constructed pool cabana. Fenestration consists of large, sliding glass doors, large, fixed-pane windows, and clerestory windows. The interior features an open plan, entry screen, a partial height dividing wall separating the kitchen, dining and living room areas, visible ceiling beams, wood-paneled walls, and a sandstone-clad accent wall in the living room.

Born in Shanghai, China, William Krisel worked for Los Angeles architects Paul Laszlo and Victor Gruen after graduating from the University of Southern California's School of Architecture. Born in Budapest, Hungary, Dan Palmer attended New York University and started his career with New York architect Morris Lapidus. In 1949 Palmer and Krisel formed their own architectural firm, a partnership that lasted until 1964. Throughout their 17 years working together, Palmer and Krisel left a diverse architectural legacy that spans commercial and residential projects in more than a dozen states and over 20,000 houses throughout Southern California and Nevada alone. They also eventually expanded their role in their projects to include landscaping and interior design. Palmer and Krisel's quest to create well-designed Modernist homes for the masses blossomed with their collaboration with developer George Alexander, for whom they designed developments including Corbin Palms (1953-1954) in the San Fernando Valley, featuring the Corbin House (HCM #976), and Racquet Club Road Estates (1959-1962) in Palm Springs. Projects with other developers include Valley of the Sun (1957) in Rancho Mirage, Northridge College Estates (1957-1958) in Northridge, and Paradise Palms (1961-1962) in Las Vegas.

The subject property has experienced very minor alterations and most alterations, including the addition of the swimming pool, cabana, bedroom sliding glass doors, and lanai patio roof, occurred within two years of construction. Other alterations include the 1989 addition of a wooden lattice shade structure extending from the lanai roof, a few window replacements in 2008, and the removal of a bedroom wall and the reconfiguration of the kitchen at unknown dates.

The citywide historic resources survey, SurveyLA, identified the subject property as eligible for listing at the local level as a Contributor to the Eastwood Estates/Fieldstone Series Historic District, which is significant as an excellent, intact example of a postwar suburban subdivision in the Mid-Century Modern style designed by noted architects Palmer and Krisel and developer George Alexander Co., and as an intact representation of the larger Corbin Palms/Eastwood Estates subdivisions.

DISCUSSION

Corbin Palms Model H-3 successfully meets two of the Historic-Cultural Monument criteria.

The subject property "embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural-type specimen, inherently valuable for study of a period, style or method of construction" as an excellent example of Mid-Century Modern style architecture applied to postwar suburban subdivision design. The subject property is representative of some of the most innovative postwar suburban residential tract development in Los Angeles. After World War II, demand for housing in Southern California was acute and architects were eager to explore how new materials, ideas, and construction methods could be used to facilitate modern living. As exemplified by the subject property, rectangular-shaped plans offered construction efficiency and the post-and-beam construction method enabled an open floor plan that made the houses feel larger than their allotted square footage. Also, bringing in light from a multiplicity of directions and using floor-to-ceiling glass windows and sliding glass doors integrate indoor and outdoor living spaces—offering an avant-garde aesthetic experience and encouraging the postwar California lifestyle. In keeping with the Mid-Century Modern architectural style, the subject property features horizontal massing, simple, geometric volumes, and unornamented wall surfaces. Other characteristics that are representative of the style include clerestory windows, the sandstone-clad accent wall in the living room, and the open, attached double carport.

The subject property is also "a notable work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age" as a highly intact work by architects Dan Palmer and William Krisel that represents their early careers. While most Mid-Century Modernist architects designed custom homes, Palmer and Krisel created affordable tract developments, bringing architectural high design to the masses. By varying their homes' rooflines, paint schemes, and setbacks from the street, they assured that no two adjacent tract homes looked the same, despite a limited number of floor plans. Corbin Palms was Palmer and Krisel's first collaboration with developer George Alexander and its success led to many tract housing

developments in Los Angeles, San Diego, Palm Springs, and Las Vegas, allowing them to transform the built environment of Southern California and Nevada.

Corbin Palms Model H-3 is highly intact and retains a high level of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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 Corbin Palms Model H-3 as a 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 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-2018-377-CE was prepared on March 29, 2018.

BACKGROUND

On February 15, 2018 the Cultural Heritage Commission voted to take the property under consideration. On February 22, 2018, a subcommittee of the Commission consisting of Commissioners Barron and Kanner visited the property, accompanied by staff from the Office of Historic Resources.