

SIEGEL HOUSE
12400 West Deerbrook Lane
CHC-2025-3531-HCM
ENV-2025-3532-CE

FINDINGS

- The Siegel House “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city, or community” as an excellent example of a residence that was constructed as part of the Mutual Housing Association postwar cooperative housing development.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Siegel House meets one of the Historic-Cultural Monument criteria for designation.

The subject property “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city, or community” as an excellent example of a residence that was constructed as part of the Mutual Housing Association postwar cooperative housing development. The Mutual Housing Association project was a notable, coordinated effort that was successful in achieving its goal of bringing Mid-Century Modernism to the masses and serving as a prototype for California modern living with utopian ideals. As reflected by the Siegel House, typical features of MHA homes are single-story, open floor plans; rectangular massing punctuated by walls of glass; post-and-beam construction; and the use of mass-produced materials like concrete block and redwood siding. Of the approximately 85 residences that were originally constructed, the subject property is one of only 34 intact MHA homes still in existence.

While the applicant claims that the subject property also, “embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction” as an excellent and highly intact example of a Mid-Century Modern-style single-family residence, staff are unable to make this finding. SurveyLA, Los Angeles’s citywide historic resources survey, established eligibility standards and character-defining feature considerations for evaluating resources for significance as Mid-Century Modern-style architecture:

Eligibility Standards:

- Exhibits quality of design through distinctive features
- Is an excellent example of the Mid-Century Modern style
- Was constructed during the period of significance

Character-Defining/Associative Features:

- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period of significance
- Direct expression of the structural system, often wood or steel post and beam
- Simple geometric volumes
- Unornamented wall surfaces
- Flat roof, at times with wide overhanging eaves
- Floor-to-ceiling windows, often flush-mounted metal framed
- Horizontal massing

- If Expressionistic: sculptural forms intersecting with geometric volumes
- If Expressionistic: curved, sweeping wall surface
- If Expressionistic: dramatic roof forms, such as butterfly, A-frame, hyperbolic paraboloid, folded plate, or barrel vault

Although the Siegel House retains some characteristic features of the Mid-Century Modern architectural style such as horizontal massing, unornamented wall surfaces, floor-to-ceiling windows, and simple geometric volumes, it no longer exhibits quality of design and is not an excellent example of the architectural style. The Siegel House has experienced various alterations throughout the years. Among the most significant is the enclosure of an integrated carport, and the removal of a concrete and redwood tongue-and-groove wall that extended from the exterior of the house into the interior living room, which were typical features of the subject property's design based on the Mutual Housing Association model 111. Additionally, the primary bedroom and bathroom at the eastern side of the residence was expanded, resulting in the removal of many of the original materials and the significant alteration of the spatial configuration. Further, the finishes and millwork in the kitchen are no longer reflective of the original design, and some of the originally unpainted wood surfaces throughout the dwelling have been painted white.

There is a more intact example of model 111 that is already designated as an Historic-Cultural Monument – the Hamma House (1951, HCM #797). Located across the street from the Siegel House at 12401 Deerbrook Lane, the Hamma House has retained more of its original design while accommodating compatible additions. There are also a multitude of other more intact and exemplary examples of Mid-Century Modern single-family residences that are designated across the city.

While the subject property has experienced interior and exterior alterations, it still retains a sufficient level of integrity relating to location, setting, feeling, association, design, materials, and workmanship to convey its significance under Criterion 1.

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 Siegel House 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 an 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. 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.

Furthermore, none of the exceptions to the Categorical Exemption Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply to the proposed Project. The proposed Project will not result in significant cumulative impacts from successive projects of the same type in the same place. The Project does not involve unusual circumstances as it is in a similar location, topography, and streetscape as other Historic-Cultural Monuments in the Brentwood - Pacific Palisades Community Plan Area. The Project will not damage scenic resources in a state scenic highway. The Project site is not on a list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 related to hazardous waste sites. The Project will also not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource.

Categorical Exemption ENV-2025-3532-CE was prepared on September 2, 2025.