



CITY OF POMONA

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

COMMISSION REPORT

DATE: AUGUST 2, 2017

TO: HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

FROM: PLANNING DIVISION

SUBJECT: MAJOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS (MAJCOA 7490-2017)
TO DEMOLISH THREE (3) STRUCTURES LOCATED AT 148 N.
HUNTINGTON STREET

SUMMARY

Issue – Should the Historic Preservation Commission approve Major Certificate of Appropriateness (MAJCOA 7490-2017) to allow the demolition of structures built prior to 1945 located at 148 N. Huntington Street?

Recommendation – Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 1) approving Major Certificate of Appropriateness (MAJCOA 7490-2017).

Applicable Codes and Guidelines –

- 1) Historic Preservation Design Guidelines dated July 19, 1999
- 2) Zoning Ordinance Section .5809-13 (Historic Preservation) adopted June 15, 1998

Public Noticing Requirements – At a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the public hearing, notice was mailed to all owners of property located directly adjacent to and directly across the street from the subject site. In addition, at a minimum of ten (10) days prior to the public hearing, notice was posted at the subject site and mailed to all owners of property located directly adjacent to and directly across the street from the subject site.

City Initiated Corrective Action – None

Environmental Determination – Pursuant to the Guidelines for Implementation of the Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an Initial Study and a Mitigated Negative Declaration were prepared consistent with CEQA Section 15070 to assess the potential effects of this project on the environment. The study determined that all potential environmental effects could be reduced to less than significant levels with appropriate mitigation measures.

BACKGROUND

Property Description and Background

The project site consists of an unpaved lot west of the existing City yard; the Annex Yard east of the unpaved lot; and the Water Yard east of the Annex Yard. The property address is 148 North Huntington Street. Vehicle sheds and material storage areas are located on the Annex Yard. The main administrative building, 2-story warehouse, vehicle sheds and smaller office buildings are located on the Water Yard. The site is paved (concrete and asphalt), with minimal exposed soil and sparse weeds.

The property is the former manufactured gas plant (MGP) site. A review of historical records indicates that from 1887 until 1917, a coal gas and oil gas plant was operated at the MGP site by various utilities, including Pomona Gas and Electric Light Company, Pomona and Ontario Light and Fuel Company, Edison Electric Company, Southern California Edison Company, and Southern Counties Gas Company. Natural gas was available in Pomona in approximately 1917 and the MGP site was then converted to a natural gas storage and distribution facility. The site continued as a natural gas storage and distribution operation until 1955. Sanborn maps from 1911 indicate the plant was still operational, whereas a 1928 map shows that most of the plant structures had been removed and replaced by warehouses, an office, and an auto repair shed. Between 1917 and 1955, the MGP facility was operated by Southern Counties Gas Company (a predecessor of SoCalGas). Since 1955, the City of Pomona Water Department has used the MGP site as a corporate yard and operating base.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project involves the remediation of contamination associated with a former MGP; demolition of the vehicle sheds on the Annex Yard; demolition of the vehicle sheds, administration building, office buildings and warehouse on the Water Yard; followed by construction of a new, consolidated water and wastewater operations corporate yard facility on the site of the existing corporate yard facility, located at 148 North Huntington Street in the City of Pomona (see Attachments 3 and 4).

The proposed project will require excavation, removal, and off-site treatment of approximately 10,000 cubic yards of contaminated soils and an additional estimated 3,000 tons of clean soils as part of geotechnical engineering requirements for support of structures on the project site.

ANALYSIS

A cultural resources study was prepared by a consultant as part of the Initial Study under CEQA and included the following components:

- (1) a California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) records search covering the proposed project site plus a one-half-mile radius at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC),
- (2) a review of the California Native American Heritage Commission's (NAHC's) Sacred Lands File,
- (3) outreach with local Native American tribes/groups identified by the NAHC to collect any information they may have concerning cultural resources,
- (4) a pedestrian survey of the project site for cultural resources,
- (5) archival and building development research for buildings located within the project site,
- (6) the evaluation of buildings/structures in consideration of the City of Pomona historic landmark program and the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) designation criteria and integrity requirements, and
- (7) consideration of impacts to historical resources in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The SCCIC records indicate that 12 cultural resources investigations have been conducted within one-half-mile of the project site. None of these studies included the current project site. There are 13 previously recorded cultural resources located within the one-half-mile search radius. None of these resources fall within the current project site.

The NAHC Sacred Lands File search was completed with negative results. The consultant prepared and sent letters to each of the five persons and entities on the NAHC contact list requesting information about cultural sites and resources in or near the project site. One response was received that requested both archaeological and Native American monitoring.

Nine buildings/structures over 45 years of age were identified within the project site as a result of the pedestrian survey (see Attachments 5, 6 and 7). These resources were recorded and evaluated for historical significance as part of the former Pomona Gas Plant site. As a result of the significance evaluation, the Pomona Gas Plant site was found not eligible for inclusion in the CRHR, nor does it appear to warrant consideration as a City of Pomona Historic Landmark. Therefore, the proposed project will have a less than significant impact on historical resources under CEQA. No further mitigation is required for historical resources.

No archaeological resources were identified within the project site as a result of the CHRIS records search, Native American coordination, or survey. However, it is always possible that intact archaeological deposits are present at subsurface levels. For these reasons, the project site should be treated as potentially sensitive for archaeological resources. Management recommendations to reduce potential impacts to unanticipated archaeological resources and human remains during campus construction activities are provided.

Consistency with Section .5809-13 (Historic Preservation) of the Zoning Ordinance Standards:

Because most of the structures to be demolished were built prior to 1945, the regulations of Section .5809-13(F)(8) require “special consideration” of any proposed demolition.

Section .5809-13 also includes reviewing the structures proposed for demolition to determine if they would likely meet the criteria used in historic landmark designation thus deeming one or more of historical significance. If the structures are deemed to be of historic significance, then those structures would be denied a certificate of appropriateness for demolition unless they meet the criteria for economic hardship.

The site and the buildings were evaluated in the cultural resources study and were found not eligible for inclusion in the CRHR, nor do they appear to warrant consideration as a City of Pomona Historic Landmark. Therefore, the structures are not eligible for protection under the provisions of Section .5809-13 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Consistency with the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines:

Since the structures are not eligible for protection as historic resources, the historic preservation design guidelines do not apply.

CONCLUSION

The structures proposed for demolition are not eligible for protection as historic resources under the standards contained in Section .5809-13 of the Zoning Ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission adopt the attached resolution approving Major Certificate of Appropriateness (MAJCOA 7490-2017).

Respectfully submitted,

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Brad Johnson
Development Services Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution Approving MAJCOA 7490-2017
2. Project Vicinity Map and Aerial Photo
3. Project Plan Reductions
4. 400' Radius Map and Public Hearing Notice
5. List of Buildings and Structures on the Property
6. Map of Buildings Keyed to List
7. Site Photos
8. Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Pomona Corporate Yard Facility Project