



## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

**APPLICATION:** DPR2019-0011

**AGENDA ITEM:** AR-2

**PREPARED BY:** Teresa Santilena  
Associate Planner

**MEETING DATE:** March 27, 2019

**TITLE:** Determination of Historic  
Significance 501 Ranchito Road

**APPLICANT:** Mark Houston Associates, Inc.  
517 South Myrtle Avenue  
Monrovia, CA 91016

**REQUEST:** Determine the historic significance of a residential building built within the historic period (50 years or older) that is proposed for total demolition.

**BACKGROUND:** The applicant has presented staff with a preliminary development plan that would involve the demolition of a one-story, Minimal Ranch style house at 501 Ranchito Road. Since the house was built over 50 years ago (1950), the proposed demolition requires that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) first make a determination about the building's potential significance as an historic resource. On March 4, 2019, Mark Houston (Mark Houston Associates, Inc.) submitted a written request to be exempt from the demolition review requirements due to the home's perceived obvious lack of historic significance, prepared by Jeanette A. McKenna, a professional historic preservation consultant. According to Monrovia Municipal Code (MMC) Section 17.10.050(8)(3), the HPC may either reject the request or require additional documentation.



Staff determined that the documentation includes a sufficient assessment of the property's lack of historic significance. The submittal includes: a summary of her research, a written description of the house and its features, a history of the building permits, an ownership history, and a list of structural alterations. Ms. McKenna also included photographs of the home's current conditions. Staff prepared the property's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR 523A) survey form which assigned a status code of 6Z. A California Resources Historic Status (CRHS) code of 6Z means that the property is not eligible for listing or designation under federal, state, or local evaluation criteria.

**ANALYSIS:** Pursuant to Monrovia Municipal Code (MMC) Section 17.10.030, the demolition or removal of a main residential building that was constructed over 50 years ago requires HPC review. The purpose of this review is to encourage the preservation of potentially historic residential buildings and protect against the loss of potential historic landmarks. MMC Section 17.10.060 states that no demolition permit shall be approved or issued until the HPC has made a determination of historic significance.

A field survey and evaluation of 501 Ranchito Road was conducted by City staff including a review of the applicant's documentation and an inspection of the site and existing structure. This information was used to document its current conditions and evaluate the property for historic significance. Staff used the City of Monrovia's Historic Context Statement to establish a historic background and understand the property's place in the City's history. Staff referenced the Residential Development Theme (1941-1967), Housing Developments sub- theme and evaluated the architectural style using the registration requirements of the Ranch House period of significance (1935-1975).

### ***Properly History***

A City-issued building permit shows that the house and an attached garage was built in 1950 by Otto C. Haakar, the original owner and architect/builder. Otto C. Haakar is not listed as a notable builder in the City's Context Statement. In 1961, a permit was issued to Clifford L. Swisher to connect the house to the sewer. In 1978, Swisher was issued a permit to install a hot tub, and in 1980, the house and attached garage were re-roofed. In 1992, a permit was issued for a block wall. In 1995, Albert Guilbaud was issued a permit for a new detached garage. In 1998, a permit was issued for a wood fence.

Though building permits were not issued, the applicant's request for exemption notes that significant alterations have been made to the home. At some point after the original construction, the attached garage was converted into living space. The exemption request notes that all of the original wood windows have been replaced. With the exception of the picture window on the north elevation, facing Lemon Avenue the windows have been replaced with vinyl windows, though the wooden sills remain. The picture window was also replaced with a wood window. The request also notes that the front entry was moved from the east elevation (facing Ranchito Road) to the north elevation (facing Lemon Avenue). Finally, the exemption request also notes that the residence was re-sided with composite wood and red brick skirt sometime after 1992.

There is no information that indicates that any of the home's owners made any important contributions to local, regional, or state history. Page three of the exemption request includes the ownership history; page four includes resources she consulted.

### ***Current Conditions***

The subject building is a single-story house that has some basic elements of the Minimal Ranch architectural style as seen from the street. The home retains the original L-shaped footprint. An attached garage originally projected from the west elevation; this has since been converted to living area. A covered patio is located on the south elevation. The house features a low-pitched, double-hipped roofline with an interior red brick chimney. The original garage has a hipped roof with a lower ridge height and the covered patio has a shed roof with rounded corner. The original cedar roofing material has been replaced with asphalt shingles.

The primary elevation faces East Lemon Avenue, and features a recessed front porch and entryway. The assessment notes that the front door may have been reoriented from the east facing wall under the porch to the north facing wall. The house is clad in a composition siding and red brick skirt, which have replaced the original wood siding and smooth stucco finishes. All of the original windows have been replaced, the majority of which were replaced with vinyl windows.

### ***Historic Integrity***

Staff assessed the property under the seven aspects of historic integrity including: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The house at 501 Ranchito Road has lost many of the seven essential physical aspects of its original integrity. The property does have some integrity of location and setting in that the house has remained on its original site since construction in 1950 as part of a housing development, and the neighborhood setting is still single-family residential. However, the various exterior alterations have compromised the aspects of design, feeling, and association. The most notable alterations include the composite siding and red brick skirt and the replacement windows. The property has not retained integrity of materials and workmanship in that there are few, if any, original features remaining.

### ***Evaluation Criteria***

In order to be eligible for designation as a local landmark, the property would need to meet at least one of the seven criterion listed in MMC Section 17.40.060. The property would not meet any of those standards. The house at 501 Ranchito Road is not identified with persons or events that are significant in local, regional, state, or national history. It does not represent the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect. The house was substantially altered with the conversion of the attached garage to living space, the reorientation of the front entry, and the replacement of the windows and the original siding materials. Even if the house was restored, there are superior examples of the Minimal Ranch style architecture throughout Monrovia. The Context Statement notes that for a Minimal Ranch house to be considered for individual listing, it should retain all of its character-defining features, as there are numerous examples that remain.

The surrounding residential neighborhood was developed in the 1950s as part of a post-war housing development. Most of the residences in the neighborhood are single-story Minimal Traditional and Ranch-style single-family residences. The homes to the north (across Lemon Avenue) are located within the City of Bradbury; they are much larger homes on much larger parcels. Given the number of significant alterations that have been made to the home, if this area was identified as a potential historic district in the future, the subject property lacks the integrity required to be considered a contributor.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The applicant's exemption request demonstrates that the property located at 501 Ranchito Road does not have architectural or known historic value that meets the criteria for local landmark status and is not a contributor to a potential historic district.

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the attached DPR form and assign a CHRS Code of 6Z to the property. If the Historic Preservation Commission concurs with this recommendation, then the following motion is appropriate:

**Approve the DPR Form with a Status Code of 6Z.**

Other Listings  
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 2 \*Resource Name or #: 501 Ranchito Road

P1 Other Identifier: \_\_\_\_\_

\*P2 Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted

a. County: Los Angeles

c. Address: 501 Ranchito Road City: Monrovia Zip: 91016

e. Other Locational Data: APN # 8526-012-028

**P3a Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries).

The subject property is located on the west side of Ranchito Road in a single-family residential neighborhood. This single story (1640 sq. ft.) house was originally built in 1950 and has some basic elements of the Minimal Ranch architectural style. The home retains the original L-shaped footprint. An attached garage originally projected from the west elevation; this has since been converted to living area. A covered patio is located on the south elevation.

The house features a low-pitched, double-hipped roofline with an interior red brick chimney. The original garage has a hipped roof with a lower ridge height and the covered patio has a shed roof with rounded corner. The original cedar roofing material has been replaced with asphalt shingles.

The primary elevation faces East Lemon Avenue, and features a recessed front porch and entryway. The house is clad in a composition siding and red brick skirt, which have replaced the original wood siding and smooth stucco finishes. All of the original windows have been replaced, the majority of which were replaced with vinyl windows.

**P3b Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP2. Single family property

\*P4 Resources Present:  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other

P5a Photograph

**P5b Description of Photo:** (view, date)

Facing North, March 2019

**P6 Date Constructed:** 1950

**Source:** Building Permit

**P7 Owner and Address:**

Albert G. and Jamonee Guilbaud

501 Ranchito Road  
Monrovia, CA 91016

**P8 Recorded by:**

City of Monrovia

**P9 Date Recorded:** 03/2019

**P10 Survey Type:** Individual



**P11 Report Citation:**

**Attachments:**  NONE  Location Map  Sketch Map  Continuation Sheet  Building, Structure, and Object Record  
 Archaeological Record  District Record  Linear Feature Record  Milling Station Record  Rock Art Record  
 Artifact Record  Photograph Record  Other (List):

Page 2 of 2 \*Resource Name or #: 501 Ranchito Road

**B1 Historic Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B2 Common Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B3 Original Use** Single Family Residence

**B4 Present Use** Single Family Residence

**B5 Architectural Style** Minimal Traditional

**B6 Construction History** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

1950 – Permit issued to owner Otto C. Haaker to construct residence and attached garage.  
 1961 – Permit issued to owner Clifford L. Swisher to connect the home to the City sewer.  
 1980 – Permit issued to owner Clifford L. Swisher to re-roof the house and attached garage.  
 1973 – Permit issued to owner Albert Guilbaud to construct a new detached garage.

**B7 Moved:** No **Date Moved** \_\_\_\_\_ **Original Location** \_\_\_\_\_

**B8 Related Features:** None

**B9a Architect:** Otto C. Haaker **b. Builder:** Otto C. Haaker

**B10 Significance:** **Theme:** Residential Development, 1941-1967 **Area:** City of Monrovia  
**Period of Significance:** 1935-1975 **Property Type** HP2 - Single Family Property

Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as well as integrity.

According to the City of Monrovia Historic Context Statement, the Ranch House was one of the popular architectural styles of single-family homes between 1935 and 1975. To be eligible for historic significance, the house must retain all of its character-defining features, retain the essential aspects of integrity, and represent the best of its kind compared to similar properties. The house at 501 Ranchito Road has retained very few of its character defining features. It possesses a few aspects of integrity including location and setting. However, the design, workmanship, material, and feeling/association are aspects of the property's integrity that have been diminished by major alterations conducted after the property's period of significance. Major alterations include the addition composite siding and red brick to the exterior walls and the replacement of original windows. Examples of Ranch architecture are found throughout Monrovia that better exemplify the tenets of this style. Therefore, this building appears ineligible for designation at any level.

**B11 Additional Resource Attributes:** None

**B12 References:**  
 City Building permits, Los Angeles County Tax Assessor

**B13 Remarks**

**B14 Evaluator/ Date** City of Monrovia  
March, 2019

