



# CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

333 West Ocean Boulevard, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor • Long Beach, CA 90801 • (562) 570-6194 • Fax (562) 570-6068

October 10, 2016

## CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS

City of Long Beach  
California

### RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend the City Council designate the building located at 210 The Promenade North as a local Historical Landmark. (District 2)

APPLICANT: Gilro, LLC - Greg Gill  
c/o GRG Management Services  
1716 Clark Ave., PMB 334  
Long Beach, CA 90815  
(Application No. HP16-450)

### THE REQUEST

The City requests that the Cultural Heritage Commission review the background materials and recommend that the City Council designate the building located at 210 The Promenade North as a local Historical Landmark.

### BACKGROUND

The subject property is located on the east side of The Promenade North between Broadway and Third Street (Exhibit A – Location Map). The subject building is a two-story commercial structure which is rectangular in shape and built from front property line to rear property line. The new owner filed a Site Plan Review application (1605-38) with the Planning Bureau to permit rehabilitation of the commercial façade. The application was approved by the Site Plan Review Committee on August 10, 2016.

The property is located within the PD-30 (Downtown Plan Area) zone. When the PD-30 zoning district was adopted, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared which included an evaluation of historic properties within the Downtown Plan Area. The accompanying mitigation measures in the EIR included recommendations for the properties identified as historically significant to be considered for local landmark designation or adaptive reuse. This property was recommended as a property that appears eligible for local landmark designation.

## **ANALYSIS**

### *DESIGN*

The building located at 210 The Promenade North is a two-story commercial building with elements of both Art Deco and Streamline Moderne styles. All character defining features are located on the front façade and include the smooth plaster wall finish, second floor vertical fins, horizontal grooves, stepback parapet walls, steel casement windows, and curved building corners. The property is located on The Promenade North (previously Locust Avenue) and the building faces a westerly direction.

The shape of the building is primarily rectangular with a flat roof. The two vertical fin features on the second floor front façade extend vertically above the roof line and wrap around and over the stepback parapet wall. The vertical fins flank a set of centered metal casement and fixed windows which are oriented in a narrow vertical position that emphasize the vertical features typically associated with the Art Deco style. The top of the windows are capped with horizontal grooves, a feature associated with the Streamline Moderne style. Other second floor windows include three sets of metal windows consisting of nine window panes arranged in rows of three. The center row windows are operable awning windows while the other windows are fixed and flanked with curved walls featuring horizontal grooves.

All the original first floor storefront windows have been changed and replaced with modern aluminum storefront windows. The corbel over the main entry has been altered and the original door has been replaced with an aluminum frame door. The original fluted wall detailing remains on the first floor walls. The front façade is all clad in smooth plaster finish.

### **HISTORIC CONTEXT**

The 1933 Long Beach Earthquake caused extensive damage to many masonry structures. As the reconstruction of the earthquake damaged buildings began, many buildings in Long Beach were rebuilt with new Art Deco style facades. During this period, several local schools were constructed in Art Deco and Streamline Moderne styles. The architectural firm of architect Cecil Schilling and engineer Arthur Schilling were well-known in Long Beach for their achievements in the Art Deco style. They are credited with the design of the first Art Deco building in the Long Beach area in 1928, the Hancock Motors Building. In 1933, Cecil Shilling was president of the Long Beach Architectural Club. Their work included the Casa Grande Apartment Building, a Moderne remodel of City Hall after the 1933 earthquake (now demolished), American Legion Hall (demolished in 1932), Home Market Building, Lafayette Hotel, Merrill Building (1935), and Art Theater.

## BUILDING RESTORATION

The Site Plan Review Committee approved plans for the restoration project using the original Schilling and Schilling plans from 1933 as the basis of the restoration work (Exhibit B – Plans and Photographs). When compared to the 1933 plans, one significant building alteration is evident. At the center of the second floor façade where the centered 9-pane window is currently located, the 1933 plans show additional vertical fin features that would have been the visual centerpiece of the building. The plans also show that the horizontal grooves extended below the vertical fin features. The project proposes restoring the features according to the Schilling and Schilling plans. Along the first floor, the aluminum frames will be replaced with new steel frame doors and storefronts. Some repair work will also be done to repair the exterior plaster finish.

## *PERMIT HISTORY*

A records search of building permits is standard research for a historic landmark designation. These records are valuable for purposes of identifying architects, contractors, craftsmen or other historically significant persons affiliated with the construction of a resource. The original building permit was not found in the City's records, and no definitive year built date has been conclusively determined. However, using Sanborn Maps, staff was able to narrow down the date of construction to between 1905 and 1908. The subject building was identified in the Sanborn Map records in 1908, but 1905 maps show a residence constructed on the property.

The earliest available building permit was an alteration for 212 Locust Avenue. A second permit was issued for a "store alteration" in 1926. The 1933 building permit indicated the following scope of work: alteration to stores, office, structural repairs, new roof and new (building) front. The permit is significant since it was issued in April of 1933, and likely the building permit to repair damage from the Long Beach Earthquake in March 1933. The record includes a memorandum from the office of Schilling and Schilling outlining general supplemental conditions for the scope of work.

## **DESIGNATION CRITERIA**

The Cultural Heritage Ordinance contains four criteria, any one of which may be used as a basis for designation, associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history (Criterion A), associated with the lives of persons important to the City's past (Criterion B), embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values (Criterion C), or has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important in prehistory or history (Criterion D).

The subject property is eligible for Landmark designation under Criteria A and C. The building is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the City's history. Many new facades that were rebuilt in the City after the 1933 earthquake were designed in the Art Deco style. During the Post-Depression period several buildings were designed by Schilling and Schilling in this style. This

building represents a design aesthetic that characterized the post depress chapter of the City's development that resulted in a lasting contribution to the City's broad patterns of history.

The building is also eligible under Criteria C as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style (Art Deco and Streamline Moderne) and period of Significance (1933). The structure is a unique and notable example of this 1930s stylistic transition from 1920s and 1930s Art Deco to Streamline Moderne style in the 1930s, and retains its architectural character.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff has analyzed the landmark nomination and has determined that it meets the requirements set forth in Title 21 of the City's Zoning Code, Section 2.63.050 (Cultural Heritage Commission) of the Long Beach Municipal Code which state that a cultural resource qualifies for designation as a Landmark if it retains integrity and meets one or more of the four findings. Staff supports the nomination, and finds that the nomination meets Criteria A and C of the Cultural Heritage ordinance for landmark designation.

The proposed nomination is complimentary to the commercial district and surrounding neighborhood. The building is currently located within the PD-30 Downtown Area. Its location is within an urban area t with commercial, offices and residential. The building is historically significant because of its association with the Long Beach Earthquake that resulted in the reconstruction of several damaged buildings. The structure is also significant as an architectural example designed by Schilling and Schilling that features elements of both Art Deco and Streamline Moderne styles. The building also reflects a high level of integrity which conveys the historic character and period in which it was constructed. The designation of the building as a historic landmark protects it from inappropriate alterations and raises awareness of the City's history. The nomination for Landmark status is consistent with the General Plan Land Use Historic Preservation Goal of protecting historic resources from inappropriate alterations.

Staff recommends that the Cultural Heritage Commission make a recommendation to the City Council to approve the nomination.

### **PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

Public notices were distributed on September 20, 2016. As of this date no letters have been received.


### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

In accordance with the 15331 Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), environmental review is not required for actions taken for the preservation or restoration of historic structures.

Respectfully submitted,



CHRISTOPHER KOONTZ, AICP  
ADVANCE PLANNING OFFICER



LINDA F. TATUM, AICP  
PLANNING BUREAU MANAGER

LFT:CK:AP

Attachments: Exhibit A – Location Map  
Exhibit B – Photographs & Plans  
Exhibit C – Findings  
Exhibit D – Local Landmark Evaluation Report