

Appendix D

Historic Resources Group Response Memo

HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP

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MEMO

TO: CAJA ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, LLC
ATTN: STACIE HENDERSON, SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER
FROM: JOHN LOCASCIO, AIA, PRINCIPAL ARCHITECT
RE: BARRY BUILDING, 11973 SAN VICENTE BOULEVARD
DATE: MAY 11, 2023

Introduction

This memorandum responds to Comment No. B1-5 in Letter No. B1 from Robert Blue & Sieglinde Kruse Blue, commenting on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the 11973 San Vicente Boulevard Project.

Comment No. B1-5

The Historical Connection between The Barry Building and The Coral Tree Median, two historic-cultural monuments

Mr. Barry played a key part in the development of another historic resource along the San Vicente Median, HCM #148, Coral Trees. The Coral trees along the San Vicente were adopted as a Historic-Cultural Monument on March 3, 1976.

*After the red car line running along the Brentwood median was removed in the 1940s, the community resolved to plant trees where the tracks once lay. Horticulturist Samuel Ayres, **David Barry**, and Hugh Evans persuaded the city to plant coral trees, native to South Africa, for their remarkable beauty. It's said that the trees originally began as rooted cuttings from Hugh Evans, owner of the well-known Evans and Reeves Nursery on Barrington Ave.*

The median and Coral trees are fully visible from the Barry Building offices and courtyard and are an integral part of the Barry Building property.

This shows that David Barry was not only invested in the community, but also its beautification and its culture.

Mr. Barry also constructed another development that became home to a nursery in the west section of the Barry Building parcel. The nursery opened at the same time as the Barry Building and specialized in introducing new varieties of palms to Southern California. The nursery site consisted of a front gable greenhouse, with an open garden area located behind. California Jungle Gardens occupied the space from 1951 into the 1980s. (ENV-2019-6645-EIR, DEIR, Appendix C-1)

California Jungle Garden was replaced by “Trellis Florist”, another botanical shop. The Fishtail Palm Trees that were once raised there grew through the pots they were planted in and rooted themselves into place and created a unique, secluded paradise.

Just a little west of the flower shop and the Barry Building was the Bonner School, which was located at 11991 San Vicente Blvd.

The applicant completely demolished the Bonner School Building in 2014 along with 3 other structures that were part of the now “withdrawn” Green Hollow Square Project, which is elaborated in detail below.

Response to Comment No. B1-5

There is no historic association between the Barry Building (HCM No. 887) and the Coral Trees (HCM No. 148). They are two separate historical resources. The Barry Building is significant for its Mid-century Modern architecture; the Coral Trees are significant for their association with the vacated Westgate streetcar line. The historic significance of the Barry Building, and the basis for its designation as an HCM, is not dependent on its setting, including the Coral Trees. The historic significance of the Coral Trees is not related to or dependent on the Barry Building. The demolition of the Barry Building is limited to activities on the parcel and therefore would not directly impact the Coral Trees. The demolition of the Barry Building would change the general setting of the Coral Trees; however, this change in setting would not materially alter the Coral Trees such that they could no longer convey their significance, as they would still retain, unaltered, all other aspects of integrity.

The California Jungle Gardens and Bonner School properties are not historically significant and are not associated with the historic significance of the Barry Building. The Barry Building is significant for its Mid-century Modern architecture.