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# **Appendix D**

## Cultural Resources



## **Appendix D.1**



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Historic Resource Assessment Reports



## 456 North Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills Historic Resource Assessment Report

*Prepared for:*

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. Introduction ..... 1**
  - 1.1. Executive Summary ..... 1
  - 1.2. Preparer Qualifications ..... 2
- 2. Architectural Description..... 3**
  - 2.1. Site and Setting ..... 3
  - 2.2. Building Exterior ..... 4
  - 2.3. Landscape and Hardscape Features ..... 5
- 3. Development Chronology and Alterations..... 11**
  - 3.1. Development Chronology ..... 11
  - 3.2. Alterations..... 13
- 4. Historic Contexts ..... 14**
  - 4.1. Commercial Development in the Business Triangle ..... 14
  - 4.2. Owners and Occupants: 456 North Rodeo Drive ..... 15
  - 4.3. Architecture and Design..... 17
- 5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation ..... 21**
  - 5.1. National Register of Historic Places ..... 21
  - 5.2. California Register of Historical Resources ..... 22
  - 5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance ..... 23
- 6. Evaluation of Significance..... 25**
  - 6.1. Previous Evaluations ..... 25
  - 6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility ..... 25
  - 6.3. Evaluation of Integrity..... 31
- 7. Conclusion ..... 32**
- 8. Bibliography..... 33**



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Executive Summary

At the request of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) has prepared this Historic Resource Assessment Report for the property at 456 North Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills, California. The property contains a one-story commercial retail building that was constructed in 1948. This building has been occupied by a variety of commercial tenants over the years including electronics retailers, art galleries, and clothing and accessories boutiques. From circa 1961 to circa 1964, the building housed an art gallery that was operated by noted television actor Raymond Burr, who was also an art aficionado. The building is currently used as a retail store for Celine, a purveyor of high style accessories.

Original permits indicate that the building was not architect-designed, and that it was built by contractor Bernard Lindberg of Los Angeles. Lindberg is not included on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Local Master Architects.<sup>1</sup> Subsequent building permits and ARG's field observations indicate that the building has been extensively modified over time and bears little resemblance to its original appearance.

This report examines the history of the building and evaluates it against eligibility criteria for federal (National Register of Historic Places), state (California Register of Historical Resources), and local (Beverly Hills Landmark) listing, to determine if it satisfies the definition of a historical resource for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Preparation of this report included the following tasks related to research, documentation, and analysis:

- Site visit on May 5, 2020 to assess existing conditions and document the building's exterior features with digital photographs;
- Review of pertinent federal and state technical bulletins, local ordinances, and other reference materials related to the evaluation of historical resources;
- Review of applicable background materials including historical building permits and Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) data for the subject property;
- Primary and secondary source research to glean additional information about the property's development history, design, occupancy, and potential historical significance;
- Identification of applicable historic contexts and themes; and
- Evaluation of the building against eligibility criteria for the National Register, the California Register, and as a Beverly Hills Landmark.

Research materials were culled from the following sources: the Los Angeles Public Library; the Beverly Hills Public Library; the archives of the *Los Angeles Times* and other local periodicals; building permits obtained from the City of Beverly Hills's Community Development Department; technical bulletins

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<sup>1</sup> City of Beverly Hills, "List of Local Master Architects, Version 2.1," adopted Oct. 14, 2015, revised Jan. 13, 2016.

published by the National Park Service (NPS) and the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP); online repositories; and ARG's in-house collection of architectural books and reference materials. A complete list of sources is included in *Section 8: Bibliography* of this report.

In summary, ARG concludes that the building at 456 North Rodeo Drive does not meet eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register, California Register, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark. Therefore, the building is not a historical resource for purposes of CEQA. The following sections provide a contextual basis for analysis and a detailed discussion of how this determination was made.

## 1.2. Preparer Qualifications

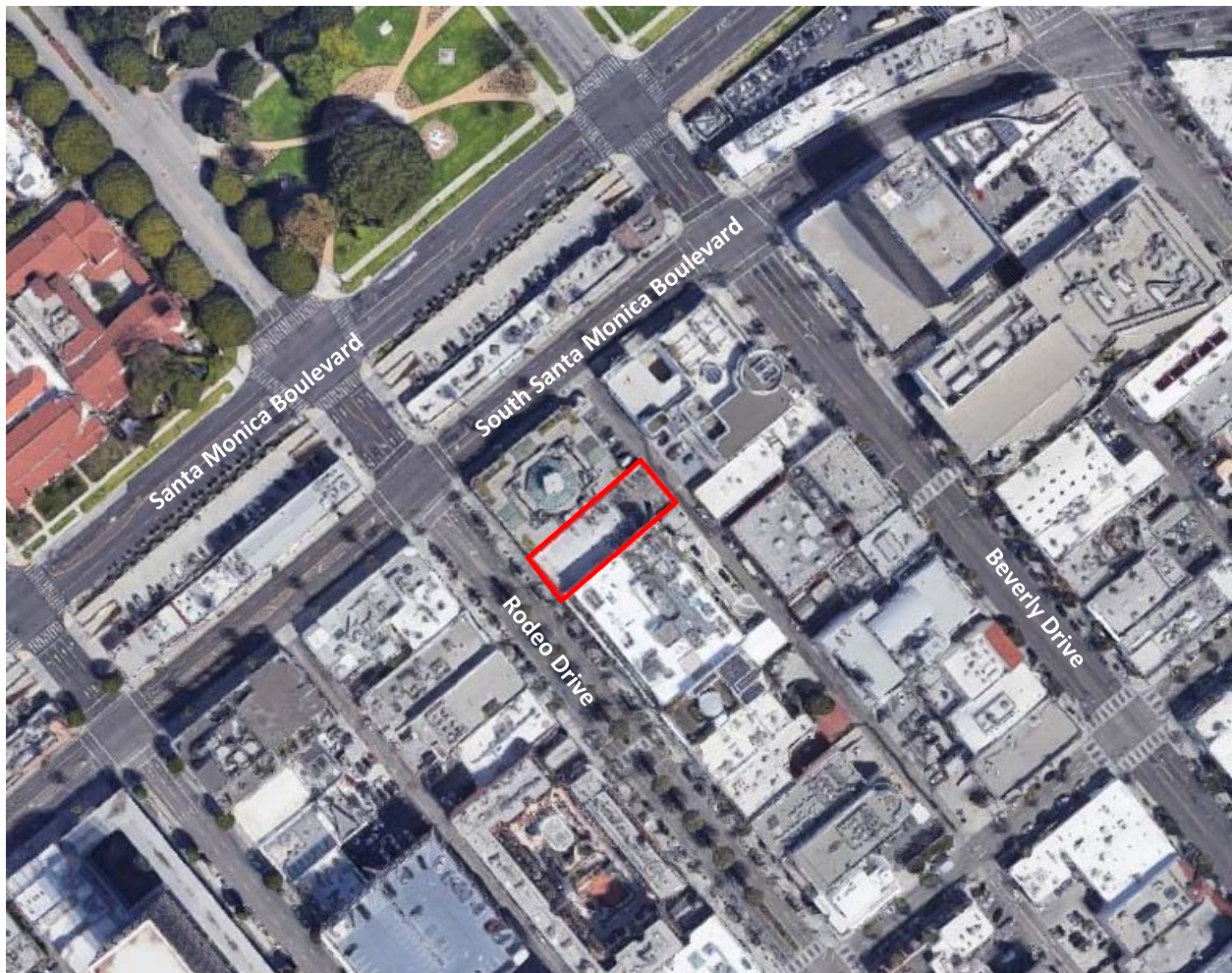
This report was prepared by Katie E. Horak, Principal, and Andrew Goodrich, AICP, Associate, both Architectural Historians and Preservation Planners. ARG intern Krista Gelev provided additional project support. Ms. Horak and Mr. Goodrich meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards*, 36 CFR Part 61, in the discipline of Architectural History.

## 2. Architectural Description

### 2.1. Site and Setting

The subject property is located near the northern edge of a triangular-shaped commercial district that is bounded by Santa Monica Boulevard (north and west), Wilshire Boulevard (south), and Canon Drive (east). This area serves as the central business district of Beverly Hills. Known as the Business Triangle, it is densely developed with a mix of low and mid-scale commercial buildings, many of which are occupied by some of the foremost purveyors of luxury retail goods. The circulation network ascribes to a grid that is oriented 45 degrees askew of the cardinal directions and contributes to the area's wedge-like form.

456 North Rodeo Drive occupies a flat commercial parcel that is located on the east side of Rodeo Drive, between South Santa Monica Boulevard and Brighton Way. The parcel is askew of the cardinal directions, is rectangular in shape, and measures 7,633 square feet. The southeast and northwest property lines abut adjacent buildings. The northeast property line abuts a service alley.



*Location map. The subject property, 456 N Rodeo Dr, is outlined in red (Google Maps)*

## 2.2. Building Exterior

Most of the parcel is occupied by a 5,000-square-foot commercial building that was constructed in 1948.<sup>2</sup> It was purpose-built as a retail store and continues to be used as such. The building is one story with mezzanine. It has a rectangular footprint, is constructed of brick, and sits on a concrete slab foundation. Like most of the commercial buildings on this stretch of Rodeo Drive, the subject building is set flush with the sidewalk. It is architecturally vernacular and lacks the distinctive characteristics of any particular style.

The building is capped by a flat roof and parapet. The roof was not accessible at the time of ARG's site visit, but is likely sheathed in a composition membrane. Publicly visible volumes of the roof are accentuated by a molded cornice. HVAC units and other pieces of mechanical equipment are installed atop the roof are obscured by corrugated metal decking. Exterior walls are clad in a smooth plaster finish. Score lines are incised into the plaster walls on the street-facing façade.

The primary façade faces southwest, toward Rodeo Drive. Features on this façade are symmetrically composed. This façade measures three bays wide, with each bay delineated by an embossed segmental arch that spans the full height of the building. At its center is an entrance that is slightly recessed into the face of the building. Ingress is provided by paired, fully glazed metal doors with a chrome finish. The doors are flanked on each side by a narrow, fixed, full-length sidelight and are surmounted by a fixed transom, also with a chrome finish. The entrance threshold is finished with stone.

On each side of the entrance bay is a storefront bay with a single, fixed plate glass window. Each window is set within one of the aforementioned embossed arches and is framed in chrome. Along the base of each window is a shallow bulkhead that is finished with the same stone that is applied to the entrance threshold. Overall, the building exudes a chaste, minimalist appearance and is generally lacking in decorative details. The only other feature of note on the primary façade is wall-mounted signage that reads "CELINE/PARIS" in a sans-serif font, which is affixed to the wall above the entrance.

The rear (northeast) façade is visible from a service alley. By virtue of its location at the rear of the building, this façade is less articulated and more utilitarian in appearance. It features two rear entrances: the first consists of a single, glazed metal door with a chrome finish; the second consists of a single, unarticulated solid metal door. Painted signage that reads "456 N RODEO" is located on the wall above the solid door. Adjacent to the glazed door is a pair of metal utility doors; adjacent to the solid door are metal utility boxes that are affixed to the building. Symmetrically positioned above the rear entrances are four multi-light fixed windows with articulated surrounds. These windows appear to have composite frames. At the far end of the rear façade is a painted metal utility ladder that is affixed to the exterior wall and provides access to the roof.

The two side (northwest, southeast) façades directly abut the footprints of adjacent commercial buildings and are thus not visible.

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<sup>2</sup> Original construction date obtained from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor.



## 2.3. Landscape and Hardscape Features

Since the building occupies almost the entirety of the lot, landscape and hardscape features are minimal. The only landscape feature is a single king palm tree that is planted in the parkway space along Rodeo Drive. Flax plants are planted around the king palm tree. The rear setback is occupied by a small surface parking lot that is accessed by the aforementioned service alley.

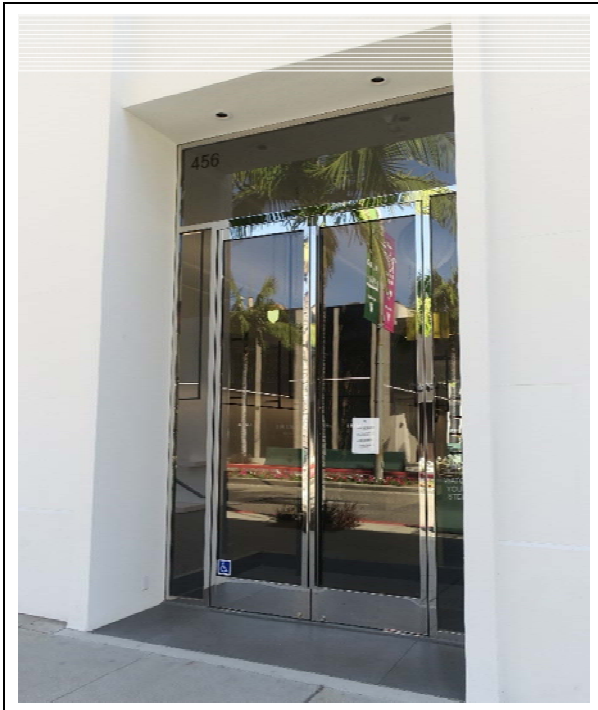
### Current Photos



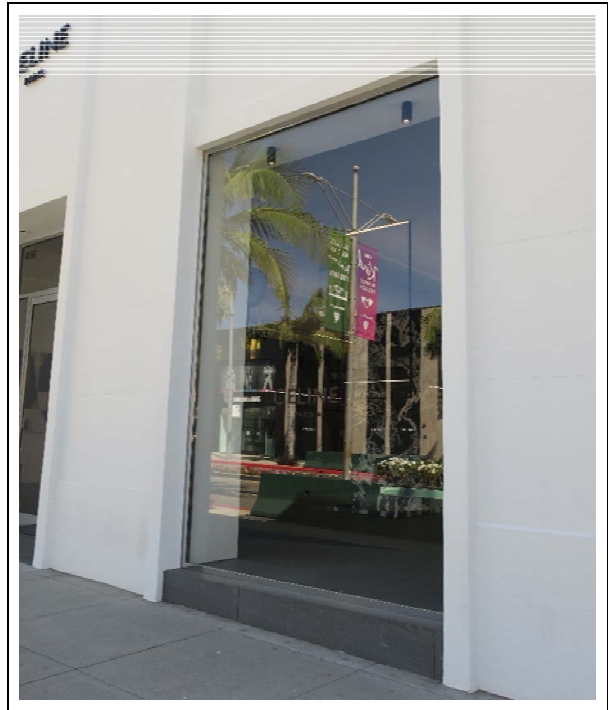
*Primary (southwest) façade, view east (ARG, 2020)*



*Primary façade, view northeast (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of entrance on primary façade (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of storefront window and stone bulkhead on primary façade (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of stone entrance threshold on primary façade (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of stone bulkhead on primary façade (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of wall-mounted signage on primary façade, above entrance (ARG, 2020)*



*Rear (northeast) façade, view south. Note parking lot in foreground (ARG, 2020)*



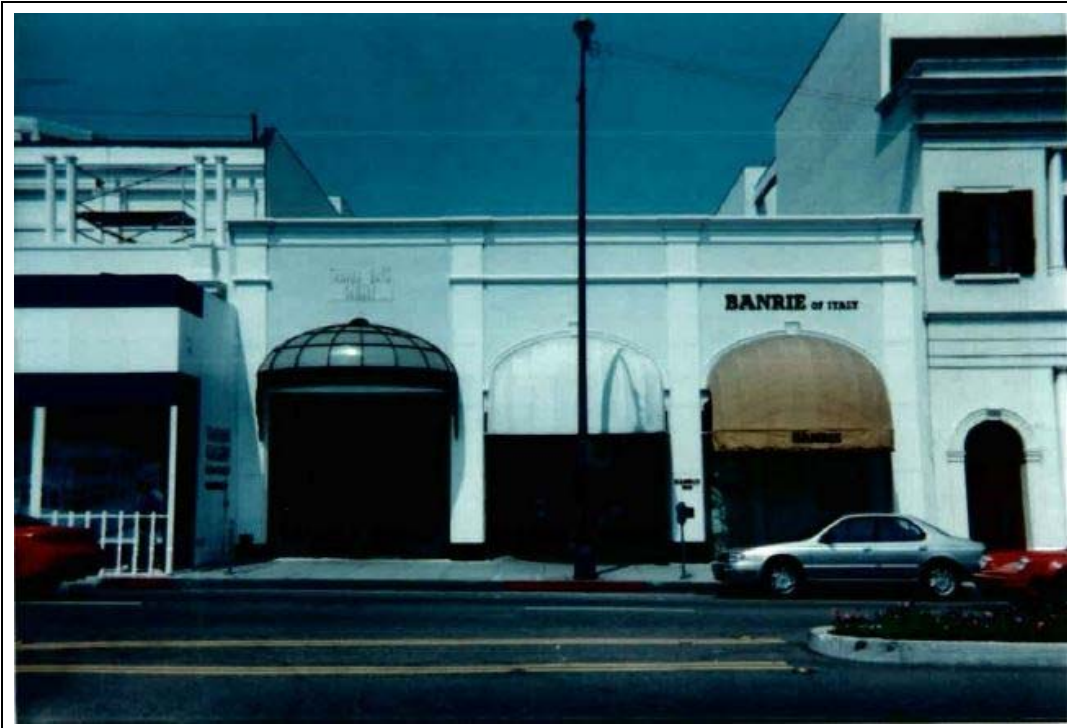
*Rear façade, view northwest (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of upper-story windows and painted signage on rear façade (ARG, 2020)*



## Additional Photos



*Subject building, primary façade, 1997 (included in building permit record, City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department)*



*Subject building, primary façade, 1999 (included in building permit record, City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department)*

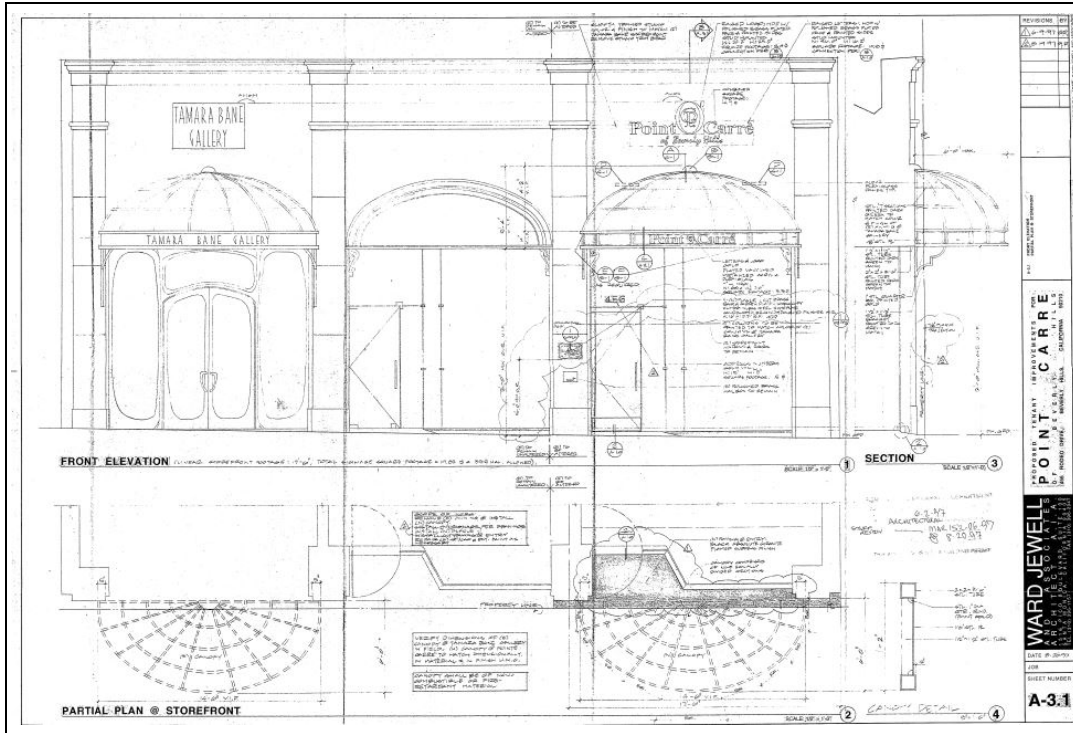


*Subject building, rear façade, 1999 (included in building permit record, City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department)*



*Subject building, primary façade, ca. 2000s. This photo was taken prior to the façade renovations commissioned by Juicy Couture in 2007 (loopnet.com)*

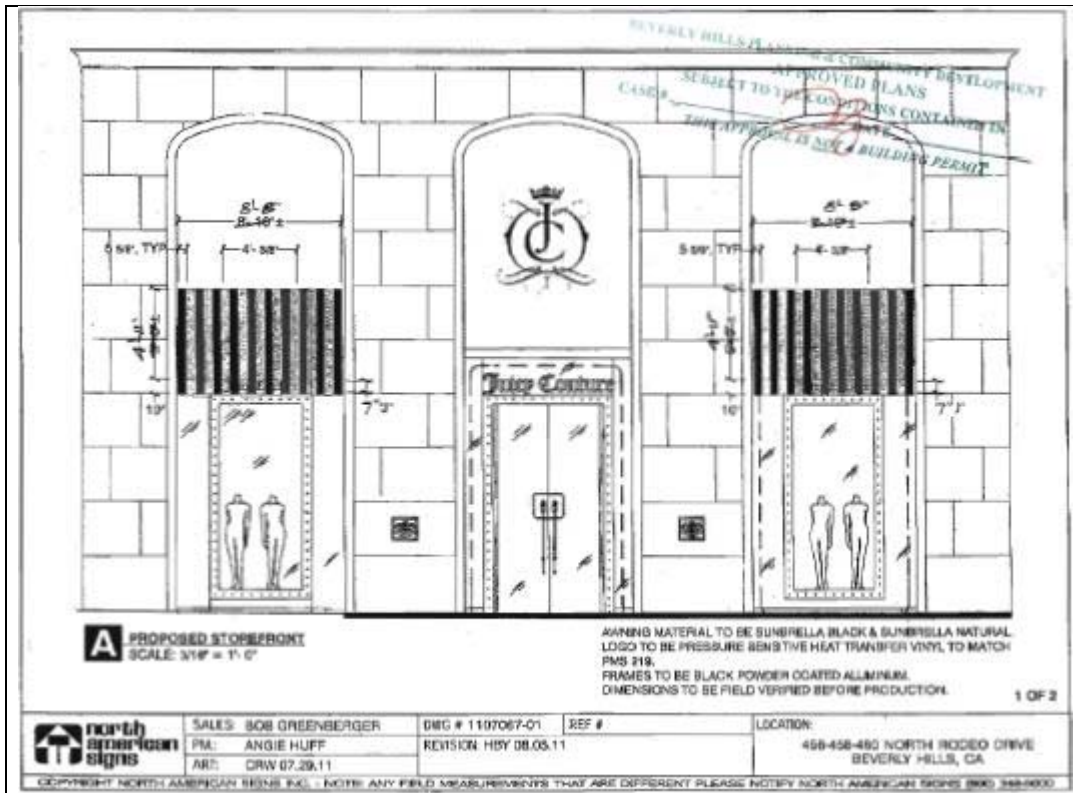




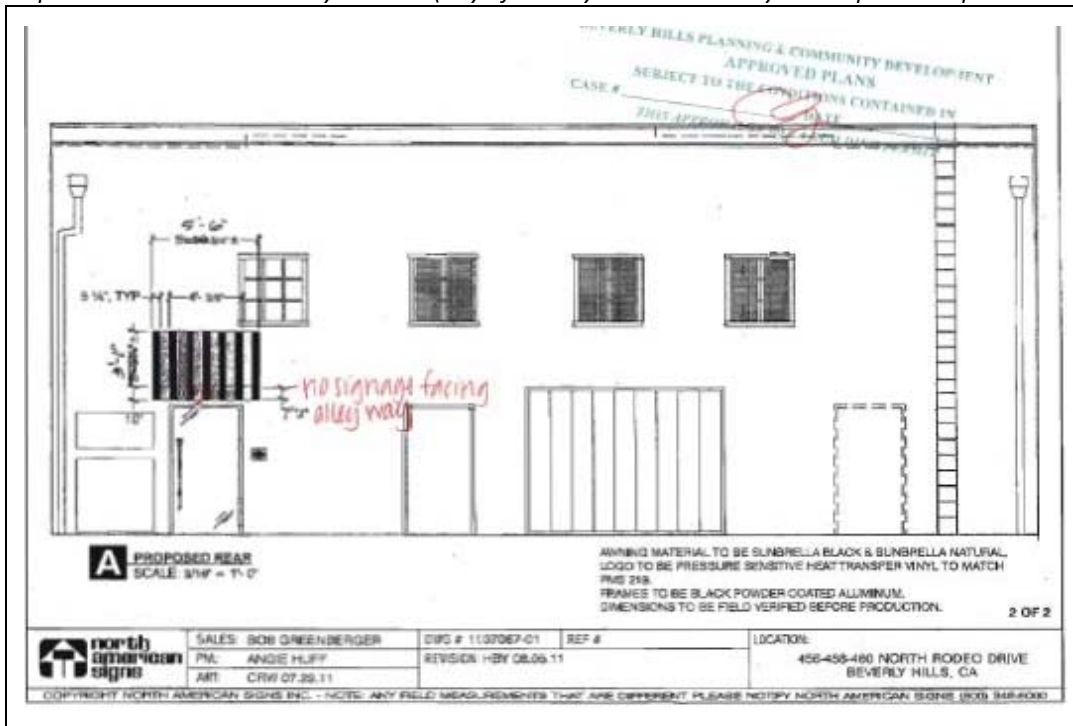
Elevation, primary façade, 1997. This was submitted as part of a permit application for tenant improvements related to Point Carré (City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department)



Rendering, primary façade, 2007. This was submitted as part of a permit application for tenant improvements related to Juicy Couture; the rendering depicts exterior alterations that resulted in the building's present-day appearance (City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department)



Elevation, primary façade, 2007. This was submitted as part of a permit application for tenant improvements related to Juicy Couture (City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department).



Elevation, rear façade, 2007. This was submitted as part of a permit application for tenant improvements related to Juicy Couture (City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department)

### 3. Development Chronology and Alterations

#### 3.1. Development Chronology

The following development chronology for 456 North Rodeo Drive summarizes key events in the property’s development history between its original construction in 1948 and the present-day. It was developed by reviewing historical building permits from the Beverly Hills Community Development Department, and was augmented by additional sources of information including historic photos and aerial images, parcel data from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor, the collections of the Beverly Hills Public Library and other local and online repositories, and other source materials.

<b>1947</b>	Original construction permit issued for the subject building. It was described as a 1-story-and-mezzanine store building with a concrete slab foundation and brick masonry walls. No architect is listed on the permit; Bernard Lindberg is listed as the contractor; Mrs. Maude Lloyd and A. Miller are listed as the owners (Permit No. 22394).
<b>1948</b>	Construction completed (Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor).
<b>1961</b>	Permit issued to “remodel existing building for art gallery.” The art gallery referenced in the permit was operated by actor Raymond Burr and was called the Raymond Burr Galleries. No architect is listed on the permit; Len Goldberg and G.E. Wolf are listed as the contractors; Karl B. Schurz is listed as the owner (Permit No. 611129).
<b>1971</b>	At the request of the City of Beverly Hills, an assessment of the building’s structural integrity was commissioned following the 1971 Sylmar Earthquake. The assessment was completed by the structural engineering firm of Hillman, Biddison & Loevenguth, and concluded that the building “has suffered no ill effects from the earthquake” (correspondence dated Mar 26, 1971, included in the permit file for the property).
<b>1982</b>	<p>Permit issued to remove non-structural interior walls and ceiling. No architect is listed on the permit; Samson Contractors is listed as the contractor; A.D. Hoppe is listed as the owner (Permit No. 820544).</p> <p>Permit issued for “alterations to existing building.” The scope of work appears to include the addition of insulation (interior) and storefront modifications (exterior). Claude Coyne, AIA is listed as the architect; Robert Coleman is listed as the contractor; Schurz Family Trust is listed as the owner (Permit No. 821018).</p> <p>Permit issued for interior alterations. The scope of work appears to relate to tenant improvements. Claude Coyne, AIA is listed as the architect; Robert Coleman Jr., Inc. is listed as the contractor; Lady Battaglia, Inc. is listed as the owner (Permit No. 821284).</p>
<b>1983</b>	Permit issued for interior alterations. The scope is described as “interior remodeling for leather goods.” Jorge Newbery Assoc. is listed as the architect; R.B. Coleman Jr. Inc. is listed as the contractor; Karl Schurz is listed as the owner (Permit No. 831586).

<b>1995</b>	Permits issued for interior alterations. The scope is described as “T.I. decorative walls and ceiling in existing retail store.” Twen Ma is listed as the architect; Shimiben International, Inc. is listed as the contractor; Karl B. Schurz Trust is listed as the owner (Permit Nos. 95005166, C9500851).
<b>1997</b>	Permits issued for interior alterations. The scope is described as “T.I. interior remodel of existing retail space.” Ward Jewell is listed as the architect; D’Escoto West is listed as the contractor; Arnaout/Point Carte [sic] and Karl B. Schurz Trust are listed as the owners (Permit Nos. C9700579, C9700481).
<b>1997</b>	<p>Permit issued for “exterior canopy and entry paving for ‘Point Carrè.’” Ward Jewell is listed as the architect; D’Escoto West is listed as the contractor; no owner is listed on the permit (Permit No. 97002988).</p> <p>Permit issued to “demolish interior walls and construct a new exit ramp at rear of store.” The scope appears to pertain to the interior. Ward Jewell is listed as the architect; Descoto West is listed as the contractor; no owner is listed on the permit (Permit No. 97003548).</p> <p>Various application materials are submitted, and approved, related to exterior façade modifications and awning alterations. The scope of work was requested to accommodate a new tenant, Point Carrè of Beverly Hills, which relocated to the subject building from 319 N Rodeo Dr. Gabriel Ruspini of Ward Jewell &amp; Associates is listed as the architect; Mike Witte of d’Escoto West is listed as the contractor; Bill Arnaout of Point Carrè (business owner) and Karl B. Schurz (property owner) are listed as the owners.</p>
<b>2007</b>	<p>Permit issued for various interior and exterior alterations. The scope is described as “alter 3 existing stores to 1, raise parapet, interior non-structural demolition, [and] interior renovation.” Drawings submitted with the permit application also indicate that the scope included new awnings. These improvements coincided with the arrival of a new tenant, Juicy Couture, and produced the building’s present-day façade treatment. Albert Gregor is listed as the architect; multiple construction firms are listed as the contractors; no owner is listed on the permit, though it does make reference to Juicy Couture (Permit No. BS0713419).</p> <p>Permit issued for the demolition of interior and exterior canopies. Albert Gregor is listed as the architect; National Contractors, Inc. is listed as the contractor; no owner is listed on the permit (Permit No. BS0715434).</p> <p>Application submitted to install a balconette and French doors in the place of an existing second floor window on the rear (northeast) façade. Global Arch, LLC is listed as the architect; John J Neeson is listed as the applicant; Carl B. Shurz [sic] is listed as the owner. It is not clear if this permit was approved, and based on evaluation of existing conditions this scope of work does not appear to have been completed (Case No. PL0861168).</p>
<b>2015</b>	Permit issued for interior alterations. The scope of work is described as “interior T.I. for Ralph Lauren temp. store.” Gruen Associates Architecture is listed as the architect; Shawmut Design & Construction is listed as the contractor; Ralph Lauren Corp. is listed as the applicant; no owner is listed on the permit (Permit No. BS1525804).

<b>2018</b>	Permit issued for interior alterations. The scope of work is described as “interior soft demo – finishes, flooring, ceiling, non-bearing walls,” and appears to be associated with tenant improvements for the current tenant, Celine. Gruen Associates Architecture is listed as the architect; Alain Hirsch Construction Corp. is listed as the contractor; no owner is listed on the permit (Permit No. BS1807305).
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### 3.2. Alterations

The following alterations were noted during a site visit conducted by ARG on May 5, 2020. Whenever possible, these alterations were corroborated by the building permits listed above, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, historic aerial images, parcel data from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor, and other source materials. The alterations listed herein pertain only to the exterior of the building.

- The primary façade and storefronts have been extensively modified, as follows:
  - The parapet has been elevated several feet, providing a sense of added height; a molded cornice was added to the parapet
  - Original wall cladding has been replaced with a smooth, scored plaster finish
  - Pilasters that historically delineated storefront bays have been removed or obscured
  - Embossed, full height arches have been added to each storefront bay
  - All doors have been replaced
  - All windows have been replaced
  - Fenestration patterns have been modified
  - Signage has been altered
- The rear façade has been extensively modified, as follows:
  - Exterior walls, originally exposed brick, have been clad in smooth plaster
  - The parapet, which appears to have originally been stepped, is now flat; a molded cornice has been added to the top of the parapet
  - All doors have been replaced
  - All windows have been replaced
  - Two upper-story windows – one at each end of the façade – have been infilled; the four extant windows appear to have been resized
  - Surrounds have been added to the windows
- Decking has been added to the roof to obscure mechanical equipment

Building permits indicate that almost all of these alterations date to 2007, when the building underwent an extensive renovation to accommodate then-tenant Juicy Couture. Together, these alterations have significantly changed the appearance of the building as to where it retains little original fabric aside from its essential form and structure, and does not retain the look or feel of a 1940s commercial building.



## 4. Historic Contexts

### 4.1. Commercial Development in the Business Triangle

456 North Rodeo Drive is located in an area of Beverly Hills that is known as the Business Triangle (and at times, colloquially, as the Golden Triangle) so named because of its distinctive, triangular form. Located near the center of Beverly Hills, between Santa Monica and Wilshire Boulevards and Canon Drive, the area is densely developed with various commercial and institutional uses. It serves as the City's central business district and civic center.

In spite of its present-day associations with luxury, glamour, opulence, and wealth, Beverly Hills had relatively inauspicious beginnings. The first house was constructed in 1907, but overall development activity in the nascent community was languid. The Beverly Hills Hotel was constructed between 1911-1912 in an attempt to lure in prospective buyers. In its early years, the sprawling Mission Revival style complex not only served as a luxurious hostelry, but also functioned as a *de facto* community center for area residents.<sup>3</sup> Since the hotel was located amid what was then a swath of peripheral, undeveloped land, an auxiliary rail line called The Dinky was built to convey people between the hotel and the Pacific Electric Railway line nearer the center of town.<sup>4</sup> The Dinky traveled down the center of Rodeo Drive, originating at its intersection with Santa Monica Boulevard and terminating at the hotel on Sunset Boulevard.

Beverly Hills formally incorporated as an independent city in 1914, but development – and particularly commercial development – remained sluggish. Aside from the hotel, the City's only commercial buildings were clustered near the intersection of Beverly Drive and Burton Way (now South Santa Monica Boulevard). At this time, the business district consisted of a small handful of one- and two-story business blocks that were occupied by grocers, barbers, hardware stores, a bank, a post office, and other enterprises that served residents' day-to-day needs. A Pacific Electric Railway station was located just to the north, on Santa Monica Boulevard. Elsewhere within the Business Triangle, the blocks were sparsely developed with a smattering of small, humble bungalows for those of more modest means.<sup>5</sup>

Just to the south of the business district and Business Triangle, where the Beverly Wilshire Hotel and Beverly Hills High School are located today, a wood plank track for automobile racing was built between 1919-1920. Known as the Beverly Hills Speedway, it became an immediate attraction and was ranked second in race quality only to the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway.<sup>6</sup> But as popular as the speedway was, rising real estate costs and mounting development pressures meant that it was a short-lived endeavor. The racetrack was demolished in 1924, and the land was subdivided shortly thereafter.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed May 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Water and Power Associates, "Early Views of Beverly Hills," accessed May 2020. Additional information about development patterns in Beverly Hills was gleaned from Sanborn Fire Insurance maps dated 1922.

<sup>6</sup> Susan King, "Speedway Brought Life in the Fast Lane to 1920s Beverly Hills," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 24, 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid; Pacific Coast Architecture Database, "Beverly Hills Speedway, Beverly Hills, CA (1919-1920)," accessed May 2020.

Like most communities in Southern California, Beverly Hills witnessed an unprecedented amount of growth and development in the 1920s. It was during this time that the community truly came of age, shedding its roots as a small, peripheral outpost and asserting itself as one of Southern California's premier residential communities. Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Will Rogers, Rudolph Valentino, and other A-list celebrities built stylish mansions in the community, cementing its reputation as a haven for the entertainment elite.<sup>8</sup> As Beverly Hills's population grew, its small commercial node evolved into a discernible central business district. A number of new commercial buildings arose in the triangular-shaped district between Santa Monica and Wilshire boulevards. Buildings like the exotic Beverly Theatre (1925, L.A. Smith, not extant) and the posh, Renaissance Revival style Beverly Wilshire Apartment Hotel (1928, Walker and Eisen) attested to the quality of architecture in the city at this time.

In the early 1930s, two resplendent civic buildings were constructed at the northeast corner of the triangular-shaped business district: the Spanish Renaissance style Beverly Hills City Hall (1932, William J. Gage and Harry G. Koerner), and the Italian Renaissance style Beverly Hills Post Office (1934, Ralph Flewelling and Allison and Allison). These buildings denoted the civic and political heart of the burgeoning city, and represented significant new additions to its commercial and institutional core.

Beverly Hills entered into another period of remarkable growth after World War II. Parcels that had remained undeveloped prior to the war were swiftly purchased and improved, and the City also expanded its physical reach by annexing a large tract of hillside land that became the Trousdale Estates.<sup>9</sup> The character of commercial development also began to visibly transform at this time, with Rodeo Drive as its focus. Historically a "fairly quiet suburban street with beauty shops, hardware stores, gas stations and bookstores," Rodeo Drive began to evolve into an internationally renowned locus of the cultural elite.<sup>10</sup> In 1967, fashion retailer Fred Hayman opened Giorgio Beverly Hills, the first high-end boutique to open on the street. Other luxurious retailers including Parisian jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels (1969) and coiffeur Vidal Sassoon (1970) followed suit.<sup>11</sup> Subsequent development on Rodeo Drive and nearby streets took on an increasingly posh and sumptuous character.

The subject building is associated with this latter period of commercial growth. Completed in 1948, its construction is associated with the wave of commercial development that took place in the early postwar period to serve the area's growing population, and culminated in an increasingly dense commercial streetscape along Rodeo Drive and other major streets within the City's business district.

## 4.2. Owners and Occupants: 456 North Rodeo Drive

Sanborn maps, permit records, historic aerial images, and other source materials indicate that prior to the construction of the subject building, its parcel was undeveloped. The original construction permit for the subject building was issued in 1947; construction was completed in 1948. Original permit records indicate that the building was erected by building contractor Bernard Lindberg, and that its original

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<sup>8</sup> City of Beverly Hills, "History of Beverly Hills," accessed May 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed May 2020.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Darling, "A Rodeo Drive Timeline," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 9, 2013.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

owners were Mrs. Maude Lloyd and A. Miller; no architect is identified on the permit.<sup>12</sup> Permit records describe the building as a “one-story and mezzanine” structure, and state that it was purpose-built as a single retail store. In 1952, the property was sold to Karl Schurz, a prominent Beverly Hills real estate developer and commercial landlord, for \$120,000.<sup>13</sup> Schurz owned a number of commercial properties within the Business Triangle.

The building’s first known commercial tenant was a retail store called Crawford’s, which sold an array of consumer electronics including televisions, transistor radios, stereo equipment, musical instruments, telephones, and vinyl records. Crawford’s closed in 1960.<sup>14</sup> The next tenant was a retail store called the Beverly Hills Music Company which, despite its name, also appears to have sold a similar variety of consumer electronics. The Beverly Hills Music Company remained in business until 1961. A *Los Angeles Times* advertisement from June 1961 announced the liquidation of its inventory, noting that the business “goes broke” and declaring that “everything must be sold...to the bare walls...immediately.”<sup>15</sup>

In September 1961, a permit was issued to renovate the store into an art gallery.<sup>16</sup> Known as the Raymond Burr Galleries, it appears to have opened by late 1961 and, as its name suggests, was operated by Raymond Burr, a noted Canadian-American actor best known for his title roles in the television dramas *Perry Mason* and *Ironside*. In addition to acting, Burr had an eclectic laundry list of hobbies that included flying, sailing, fishing, hybridizing orchids, cultivating grapes and making wine, importing and breeding Portuguese Water Dogs, and collecting art.<sup>17</sup> At his Rodeo Drive gallery, Burr displayed a rotating exhibit of art – mostly paintings – and hosted a number of star-studded receptions and other exclusive events. Ava Astaire, an aspiring artist and the daughter of dancer Fred Astaire, was among those employed at the gallery.<sup>18</sup> In 1963, the gallery hosted a fashion show in advance of that year’s Academy Awards, which was described as “a royal fete of stars and styles.”<sup>19</sup> The purpose of the event, notes the *Los Angeles Times*, was to provide film stars and others associated with the top brass of the entertainment industry with an opportunity to “view a collection of evening dresses and ball gowns that that will be registered as sold to avoid the embarrassment of duplication...red velvet, red roses and a 60-ft. red-carpeted runway have transformed the Burr Galleries for the evening”<sup>20</sup>

The Raymond Burr Galleries appears to have been a fleeting venture; references to the art gallery stop appearing in newspapers and other outlets of popular culture by early 1964. By 1967, the building had been reverted back into a store and was now occupied by a clothing retailer called Eres Couture, which remained in operation at this location until the early 1980s. Operated by Sam and Helene Rosenblatt, both from Paris, Eres Couture sold high-end women’s apparel, much of which was custom made by Sam Rosenblatt himself. The Rosenblatts renovated the building to exude a Parisian atmosphere. “From the gazebo centering the interior to the street signs that connote areas of merchandise...to the armoires and

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<sup>12</sup> City of Beverly Hills, Permit No. 22394, issued Aug. 1947.

<sup>13</sup> “Sales Volume Tops \$380,000,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 30, 1952.

<sup>14</sup> Display Ad, *Los Angeles Times*, Apr. 13, 1960.

<sup>15</sup> Display Ad, *Los Angeles Times*, Jun. 4, 1961.

<sup>16</sup> City of Beverly Hills, Permit No. 611129, issued Sept. 1961.

<sup>17</sup> William Grimes, “Raymond Burr, Actor, 76, Dies; Played Perry Mason and Ironside,” *New York Times*, Sept. 14, 1993.

<sup>18</sup> Hedda Hopper, “Ava’s Happy Birthday,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 30, 1963.

<sup>19</sup> Fay Hammond, “Everybody a Winner When Saks Unveils Oscar Award Ball Gowns,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 15, 1963.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.



antique furniture, the accent is French,” remarks the *Los Angeles Times*.<sup>21</sup> Among the store’s regular customers included model Rosemary Bowe Stack, wife of actor Robert Stack; singer and actress Harriet Nelson, wife of actor Ozzie Nelson and co-star of the television sitcom *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*; and model and onetime Orange Bowl Queen Jeanne Martin, the wife of actor Dean Martin.<sup>22</sup>

Between late 1982 and early 1983, multiple permits were issued for tasks related to tenant improvements, connoting a change in tenancy at this time. Thereafter, the building was occupied by the Mila Schon boutique, a women’s clothing and accessories store operated by Giuseppe and Kay Battaglia. Unlike the previous tenant, whose brand identity was irrefutably French, the Mila Schon boutique capitalized on Italian haute couture. “The Mila Schon boutique caters to the very chic women of Milan,” once remarked a buyer for the company, “who are after all the chicquest [sic] in the world.”<sup>23</sup>

Other tenants who are known to have occupied the building in subsequent years include the Tamara Bane Art Gallery, a walk-in gallery that exhibited erotic paintings (1980s-1990s); Banrie of Italy (women and men’s apparel, 1990s); Point Carrè of Beverly Hills (men’s apparel, 1990s); Juicy Couture (women’s apparel, 2000s), and a temporary store for Ralph Lauren (women’s and men’s apparel, 2010s).<sup>24</sup> By the 1990s, the building had been divided into three separate storefronts, which were joined back together with the arrival of Juicy Couture in 2007.<sup>25</sup> Since 2019, the building has been occupied by a flagship store of French luxury brand Celine, which sells handbags and other accessories. Its interior, designed by the French photographer and creative director Hedi Slimane, is replete with artwork produced by noted contemporary artists, including “sculptures from David Nash and Virginia Overton. Other design elements include Basaltina, a Roman lava stone, alongside reclaimed oak and brass and gold mirrors.”<sup>26</sup>

In 2018, the property was sold by its longtime owner, the Karl B. Schurz Trust, to the Sterling Organization, a Florida-based private equity group that “obtained control of the property via a highly-structured, off-market deal first made public through the recording of a long-term ground lease with rights to purchase.”<sup>27</sup> The next day, the property was sold to LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton Inc.<sup>28</sup>

### 4.3. Raymond Burr

Arguably the single-most significant individual associated with the building was Raymond Burr, an acclaimed television actor who operated an art gallery in this space between circa 1961 and circa 1964.

Raymond William Stacy Burr (1917-1993) was born in British Columbia. Accounts of his early life are conflated with his own embellished descriptions, which are factually dubious. It is known that as a child, Burr moved with his family to China, then back to Canada, and finally settled in Vallejo, California with

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<sup>21</sup> Dorothy Harrington, “Boutique Beat: Clothes with French Accent,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 9, 1972.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> “Say Cheese,” *Los Angeles Times*, Jun. 25, 1984; Mary Lou Loper, “Organizers Barge In for L.A. Junior League,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 13, 1986.

<sup>24</sup> Gleaned from building permit records, accessed May 2020 via the City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Kavita Daswani, “Celine Brings its Hedi Slimane Charms to Beverly Hills With a New Store,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 21, 2019.

<sup>27</sup> Claran McEvoy, “LVMH Buys Rodeo Drive Retail Space for \$110M,” *Los Angeles Business Journal*, Mar. 29, 2018.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

his mother after his parents divorced. He matriculated at the San Rafael Military Academy but soon dropped out to support his mother and siblings during the Great Depression, finding working on a cattle and sheep ranch in New Mexico.<sup>29</sup> Burr then returned to school but dropped out once again. He would only ever possess a junior high-level education.

Burr began his acting career on the Broadway theater circuit in the early 1940s, though he had picked up some occasional acting work during his youth. In 1941, he made his theater debut in the musical *Crazy With the Heart*, and appeared in various other live productions before enlisting in the Navy at the onset of World War II.<sup>30</sup> After he was discharged from the Navy in 1946, he returned to acting, and his burly, imposing appearance – at the time, he stood six feet tall, weighed approximately 350 pounds, and had a deep, commanding voice – led to numerous casting opportunities in motion pictures, typically as a villain. He began starring in films during the late 1940 and early 1950s; among the numerous productions in which Burr appeared were *Without Reservations* (1946), a comedy film starring John Wayne and Claudette Colbert; *Pitfall* (1946), a suspense film starring Dick Powell; *Rear Window* (1954), a thriller in which he played a heinous murderer; *San Quentin* (1947); *The Adventures of Don Juan* (1948); and *A Cry in the Night* (1956). By the end of his acting career, Burr had starred in some 90 motion pictures.<sup>31</sup>

Beginning in the 1950s, Burr found success as a television character actor – which is arguably the context in which he is best known. In 1957, he was cast as the lead in the CBS television drama series *Perry Mason*, which became immortalized in television history as one of the industry’s longest running and most successful television drama series. For the show’s duration, between 1957 and 1966, Burr starred as Perry Mason, a criminal defense attorney from Los Angeles. Episodes ascribed to the same basic formula: “aided by investigator Paul Drake (William Hopper) and secretary Della Street (Barbara Hale), Mason ferreted out the truth and foiled prosecutor Hamilton Burger (William Talman) at trial’s end, often with a dramatic courtroom confession from the real culprit.”<sup>32</sup> The program was consistently among the most popular on television, and for his role, Burr twice won Emmy Awards for best actor.<sup>33</sup>

Between 1967 and 1975, Burr once again found success on television, this time as the curmudgeonly, paraplegic police detective Robert T. Ironside in the NBC television drama series *Ironside*. *Ironside* was also an extraordinarily popular program, and its eponymous lead character is among the roles for which Burr is best remembered. Burr was nominated for six Emmy Awards and two Golden Globe Awards for his starring role in the series.<sup>34</sup> After *Ironside* went off the air, Burr appeared in a number of other popular television drama series including *Kingston: Confidential*, *Centennial*, and *Unsolved Mysteries*.<sup>35</sup>

Burr often bears mention as a *cause de celebre* in the context of the gay and lesbian (LGBT) rights movement. While he never officially came out as a gay man – at the time, such a proclamation would have irrefutably destroyed his career – and while his burly, stereotypically masculine characters were

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<sup>29</sup> William Grimes, “Raymond Burr, Actor, 76, Dies; Played Perry Mason and Ironside,” *New York Times*, Sept. 14, 1993.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> “Actor Raymond Burr Dies at 76,” *The Washington Post*, Sept. 14, 1993.

<sup>33</sup> IMBd, “Raymond Burr: Biography,” accessed May 2020.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> “Actor Raymond Burr Dies at 76,” *The Washington Post*, Sept. 14, 1993.

antithetical to popular opinion about the appearance and conduct of gay men, Burr's homosexuality is considered to be one of Hollywood's most open, yet best kept secrets. Burr's sexuality was supposedly well known among his peers, but they remained tight lipped in order to shield their friend and colleague from the discrimination that would have certainly come with being "outed" as a gay man at the time.<sup>36</sup> In 1960, on the set of *Perry Mason*, Burr met actor Robert Benevides, with whom he developed a close relationship with. Burr and Benevides were domestic partners for some thirty years until Burr's death. Burr died in 1993, at age 76, in Healdsburg, California. The cause of death was kidney cancer.<sup>37</sup>

## 4.4. Architecture and Design

Historic photos depicting the building in its original state could not be found, but based upon descriptions of the building in permit records, newspaper articles, and other source materials the building appears to have originally been a vernacular commercial structure that was designed to be consistent with the scale and character of other commercial buildings in the vicinity but lacked the distinctive characteristics of a particular architectural style. Alterations have been made to the building over time to accommodate changes in tenancy; the building was extensively modified in 2007 to accommodate then-tenant Juicy Couture, which resulted in the building's present-day appearance. The building, in its present state, exudes a contemporary appearance but lacks the characteristics of a style.

A number of architects and builders are linked to the design and construction of the building over its history. Building contractor Bernard Lindberg (1893-1982) presided over its original construction. Lindberg was born in Sweden and appears to have emigrated to Wisconsin in 1912, becoming a United States citizen in 1919.<sup>38</sup> By 1924, Lindberg was living in California and working as a carpenter. By about 1930, Lindberg was working as a contractor in Los Angeles.<sup>39</sup> There is little information about Lindberg's career. What appears to have been his most notable commission was Park West, a luxury apartment building in Westwood (1441 S Beverly Glen Boulevard) which he built in 1954 in collaboration with architects I. Herman Kanner and Robert Mayer.<sup>40</sup> Lindberg died in Los Angeles in 1982 at the age of 89.<sup>41</sup>

Building permits indicate that architects Claude Coyne, Jorge Newbery, Twen Ma, Ward Jewell, Albert Gregor, and Gruen Associates were involved in various remodeling projects at the subject building over the years. Generally, there is very little information about the lives, careers, and legacies of these practitioners. Gruen Associates is notable as one of Southern California's most prolific architectural firms, but its association with this building is nominal – the firm was retained to design minor tenant improvements in 2015 and 2018, more than 30 years after the death of its founder and namesake, Victor Gruen. The firm's scope of work appears to have generally been confined to interior spaces.

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<sup>36</sup> "Excerpt: Hidden in Plain Sight," *ABC News*, May 29, 2008.

<sup>37</sup> William Grimes, "Raymond Burr, Actor, 76, Dies; Played Perry Mason and Ironside," *New York Times*, Sept. 14, 1993.

<sup>38</sup> "Bernhard Lindberg [sic]," U.S. Passport Applications, 1795-1925, accessed May 2020 via Ancestry.com.

<sup>39</sup> "Bernard Lindberg," California Voter Registrations, 1900-1968," accessed May 2020 via Ancestry.com.

<sup>40</sup> "Westwood's Newest Luxury Apartments Now Available," *Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 27, 1954.

<sup>41</sup> "Bernard Lindberg," California Death Index, 1940-1997, accessed May 2020 via Ancestry.com.

Coyne – another of the better-known architects listed above – was a longtime associate of trailblazing architect Paul R. Williams, but does not appear to have made notable contributions in his own right.

## 5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation

### 5.1. National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation’s master inventory of known historic resources. Established under the auspices of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level. Eligibility for in the National Register is addressed in National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. NRB 15 states that in order to be eligible for the National Register, a resource must both: (1) be historically significant, and (2) retain sufficient integrity to adequately convey its significance.

Significance is assessed by evaluating a resource against established eligibility criteria. A resource is considered significant if it satisfies any one of the following four National Register criteria:<sup>42</sup>

- Criterion A (events): associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- Criterion B (persons): associated with the lives of significant persons in our past;
- Criterion C (architecture): embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- Criterion D (information potential): has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Once significance has been established, it must then be demonstrated that a resource retains enough of its physical and associative qualities – or *integrity* – to convey the reason(s) for its significance. Integrity is best described as a resource’s “authenticity” as expressed through its physical features and extant characteristics. Generally, if a resource is recognizable as such in its present state, it is said to retain integrity, but if it has been extensively altered then it does not. Whether a resource retains sufficient integrity for listing is determined by evaluating the seven aspects of integrity defined by NPS:

- Location (the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred);
- Setting (the physical environment of a historic property);
- Design (the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property);

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<sup>42</sup> Some resources may meet multiple criteria, though only one needs to be satisfied for National Register eligibility.

- Materials (the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular manner or configuration to form a historic property);
- Workmanship (the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory);
- Feeling (a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time);
- Association (the direct link between an important historic event/person and a historic property).

Integrity is evaluated by weighing all seven of these aspects together and is ultimately a “yes or no” determination – that is, a resource either retains sufficient integrity, or it does not.<sup>43</sup> Some aspects of integrity may be weighed more heavily than others depending on the type of resource being evaluated and the reason(s) for the resource’s significance. Since integrity depends on a resource’s placement within a historic context, integrity can be assessed only after it has been concluded that the resource is in fact significant.

## 5.2. California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an authoritative guide used to identify, inventory, and protect historical resources in California. Established by an act of the State Legislature in 1998, the California Register program encourages public recognition and protection of significant architectural, historical, archeological, and cultural resources; identifies these resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The structure of the California Register program is similar to that of the National Register, though the former more heavily emphasizes resources that have contributed specifically to the development of California. To be eligible for the California Register, a resource must first be deemed significant under one of the following four criteria, which are modeled after the National Register criteria listed above:

- Criterion 1 (events): associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
- Criterion 2 (persons): associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;
- Criterion 3 (architecture): 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 4 (information potential): has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, state, or the nation.

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<sup>43</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VIII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

Mirroring the National Register, the California Register also requires that resources retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing. A resource's integrity is assessed using the same seven aspects of integrity used for the National Register. However, since integrity thresholds associated with the California Register are generally less rigid than those associated with the National Register, it is possible that a resource may lack the integrity required for the National Register but still be eligible for listing in the California Register.

Certain properties are automatically listed in the California Register, as follows:<sup>44</sup>

- All California properties that are listed in the National Register;
- All California properties that have formally been determined eligible for listing in the National Register (by the State Office of Historic Preservation);
- All California Historical Landmarks numbered 770 and above; and
- California Points of Historical Interest which have been reviewed by the State Office of Historic Preservation and recommended for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission.

Resources may be nominated directly to the California Register. State Historic Landmarks #770 and forward are also automatically listed in the California Register.

Unlike the National Register's 50 year age requirement, there is no prescribed age limit for listing in the California Register. However, guidelines state that sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with a resource.

### 5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance

Historic preservation in Beverly Hills is governed by Title 10, Chapter 3, Articles 32 and 32.5 of the Beverly Hills Municipal Code (referred to hereinafter as "the Ordinance"). The Ordinance authorizes the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) to recommend the nomination of properties as local landmarks and historic districts to the City Council. To facilitate this process, the Ordinance establishes requirements a property must meet in order to qualify for designation as a landmark listed in the City of Beverly Hills Register of Historic Properties. The 2012 Ordinance was revised and updated in 2015, with an additional amendment in 2016; all criteria and definitions used in this document are effective as of April 1, 2016.

To be eligible for local designation as a historic landmark, a property must satisfy the following sets of requirements (A and B) as noted:

**A. A landmark must meet all of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance;

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<sup>44</sup> California Public Resources Code, Division 5, Chapter 1, Article 2, § 5024.1.

- (2) It possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period;
- (3) It retains substantial integrity<sup>45</sup> from its period of significance; and
- (4) It has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.

**B. In addition to those listed above, a landmark must meet at least one of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- (2) It is an exceptional work<sup>46</sup> by a master architect<sup>47</sup>;
- (3) It is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous;
- (4) It is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance;
- (5) It is an iconic property<sup>48</sup>; or
- (6) The landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).

Mirroring the National Register and California Register, the Ordinance requires that a resource retain integrity. The Ordinance defines integrity as “the ability of a property to convey its historical significance through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, relevant association, and character defining features.”<sup>49</sup> This builds upon the definition that is used by the National Register.

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<sup>45</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “substantial integrity” as “Integrity that is considerable in importance, value, degree, amount, or extent, and that continues to exist, or would have continued to exist, but for work done without appropriate permits after the enactment of this article.”

<sup>46</sup> A 2016 amendment to BHMC 10-3-32 in Ord. 15-O-2700 defines “exceptional work” as “A remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community. At a minimum, the work’s exceptional quality shall have been documented by at least one of the following: a) it was the subject of a major architectural award; b) it was substantively discussed (i.e., not just mentioned) and photographically depicted in a monograph on a master architect’s career; or c) it was substantively discussed or photographically depicted in at least two (2) publications (e.g., a book, treatise, trade magazine article, film, or set of photographs made available to the public by an institutional archive) authored by acknowledged experts in the field of architecture. A monograph or publication made available to the public solely in electronic form and without any reasonable expectation of compensation to the author, or substantially authored by the architect of the work, shall not count toward this minimum.”

<sup>47</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “master architect” as “An architect of widely recognized greatness in the field of architecture whose individual genius influenced his or her age.”

<sup>48</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “iconic property” as “A property that has been visited and photographed so often by residents and visitors to the city that it has become inextricably associated with Beverly Hills in the popular culture and forms part of the city’s identity to the world at large.”

<sup>49</sup> BHMC 10-3-3202, Definitions.



## 6. Evaluation of Significance

### 6.1. Previous Evaluations

456 North Rodeo Drive is not currently designated, and it does not appear to have been previously evaluated for historical significance. The property is not listed in the California Historical Resources Inventory (HRI) database for Los Angeles County (last updated 2012), and was not identified in any of the City's historic resource survey efforts (1985/86, 2004, 2006, 2013).

### 6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility

#### National Register and California Register

ARG concludes that 456 North Rodeo Drive is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources, as follows:

***National/California Register Criterion A/1: associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history.***

Constructed in 1948, the building at 456 North Rodeo Drive is loosely associated with broad patterns of commercial development that characterized Beverly Hills in the early postwar era. Its construction is indicative of how parcels within the city's wedge-shaped business district – and particularly along its main street, Rodeo Drive – were developed with low-scale commercial buildings that were compatible with the bulk, scale, and general appearance of the area's existing commercial building stock. These buildings were generally constructed to house everyday businesses like beauty parlors, hardware stores, bookstores, and others that catered to the local community, and represented how the pace of commercial development corresponded to the steady residential growth taking place in Beverly Hills at this time. The subject building ascribed to this trend. It was purpose-built as a retail store, and for about a decade after its construction it was occupied by an electronics retailer that sold televisions, transistor radios, and various other consumer electronic products at reasonable prices. Its business model was typical of a neighborhood-oriented enterprise and appears to have catered to a middle-income clientele – a distant cry from the critical mass of high-end retailers that define Rodeo Drive in the present day.

The building is also demonstrative of how, in subsequent years, the identity of the Business Triangle evolved from one defined by typical businesses that catered to the local community to a glitzy, internationally renowned shopping destination comprising boutiques, coiffeurs, and various other high-end specialty retailers. For a brief period in the early 1960s, the building was occupied by the Raymond Burr Galleries, which was operated by television actor Raymond Burr and hosted a cadre of special events that drew a star-studded audience. The gallery exuded a sense of celebrity and exclusivity that was reflective of the area's evolving character. After the gallery's departure circa 1964, the building was

occupied by a succession of boutiques that embodied popular trends in fashion and similarly reflect this area's evolution into an epicenter of high culture and haute couture.

National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* provides guidance related to the evaluation of properties that are associated with events. It specifically states that "mere association with historic events or trends is not enough, in and of itself, to qualify under Criterion A: the property's specific association must be considered important as well. For example, a building historically in commercial use must be shown to have been significant in commercial history."<sup>50</sup>

Applying this guidance, the subject building is more representative of broad patterns of commercial history than it is exemplary. Numerous examples of commercial buildings dating to the postwar period pepper the blocks within the Business Triangle, all of which convey the same broad patterns of development. The same can be said for the building's association with broad patterns of commercial history associated with the Business Triangle's evolution into an epicenter of high culture during the latter decades of the twentieth century. By the 1960s, the area was beginning to witness this transformation with the arrival of exclusive retailers like clothier Giorgio Beverly Hills and jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels in 1967 and 1969, respectively, and coiffeur Vidal Sassoon in 1970. The presence of these businesses had a cascading effect on the surrounding area, as other commercial buildings within the Business Triangle were increasingly leased by similarly exclusive retailers. The subject building was one of many in the area that reflected this trend by attracting higher-profile tenants than it had in previous years. There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that this building somehow exemplifies these broad patterns of commercial history in a way that is not equally expressed in the many other commercial buildings in the vicinity that date to the same general era and bear the same broad associative qualities.

There is also insufficient evidence demonstrating that the subject building is associated with an event that is singularly significant to history. When the building was occupied by Raymond Burr Galleries from circa 1961 to circa 1964, it was often used as a venue for receptions, fashion shows, and other events. Given the gallery's association with Burr, a noted television star, these events were typically exclusive affairs that were attended by a cadre of celebrities. However, events of this nature are not atypical of galleries, and especially those with a celebrity affiliation. While the events that took place at the gallery appear to have been well attended by Burr's celebrity friends, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that any one of these events contributed to an understanding of history in the spirit of this criterion. Celebrity-studded galas were commonplace in Southern California, and particularly in communities like Beverly Hills that had longstanding reputations as bastions of celebrity life and culture.

Furthermore, the building has been significantly altered since the mid-1960s, and no longer bears any visual association with the period during which Raymond Burr housed his gallery at this location. As noted, the building's current appearance largely dates to an extensive remodel that dates to 2007.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion A/1.

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<sup>50</sup> Derived from National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

***National/California Register Criterion B/2: associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.***

The building at 456 North Rodeo Drive has been continuously used for commercial purposes since its construction in 1948. It is typical for commercial buildings to be loosely associated with a considerable number of people, as these buildings are generally intended to be accessible to the public and are frequented by staff members. Many customers have patronized the various businesses that have operated out of this building over time; many business owners and shopkeepers have presided over these businesses. Between 1952 and 2018, the property on which the building is located was owned by Karl Schurz and his family's trust; Schurz and his son, also named Karl Schurz, headed the Karl B. Schurz Company, a prominent local real estate development firm and commercial landlord.

However, with the exception of Raymond Burr, who operated an art gallery in the building for a brief period in the 1960s (and is discussed below), there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that any one of the individuals associated with the building is historically significant in the spirit of this criterion. There is no evidence to demonstrate that any customers, proprietors, or landlords associated with the building made notable contributions to local, state, or national history in the spirit of this criterion.

The notable exception, of course, is Raymond Burr (1917-1993), a noted Canadian American television actor who was best known for his leading roles in the television programs *Perry Mason* and *Ironsides*. Burr had myriad hobbies that he pursued in his time away from the small screen, including art collection. Toward this end, Burr operated an art gallery out of the subject building between circa 1961 and 1964, during which time he displayed a rotating exhibit of paintings and other works of art that piqued his interest. Burr also hosted celebrity-studded galas and other events at his eponymous gallery.

This begs the question of whether the building is significant for its association with Burr. National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* provides guidance related to the evaluation of properties associated with significant people. It lists two benchmarks that must be met for a property to meet Criterion B: first, "the persons associated with the property must be individually significant within a historic context," and second, the property must be "associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he or she achieved significance."<sup>51</sup>

When this guidance is applied, the subject building does not appear to be significant for its association with Burr. Burr is, by all accounts, a historically significant individual, but there is insufficient evidence to substantiate the second benchmark – that this building somehow bears a direct and meaningful association with Burr's productive life as an entertainer. Burr's significance is derived from his accomplishments as a character actor. Research suggests that the building had very little to do with his professional career in this regard – he did not produce, write, or film episodes of his popular television shows here, and the goings-on in this building did not propel his acting career in any sort of meaningful way. The only association between this building and his acting career pertained to his hosting of special events that were attended by his celebrity friends – an association that is nominal at best..

Furthermore, as noted above, the building has been significantly altered since the mid-1960s, and no longer bears any visual association with the period during which Raymond Burr housed his gallery here.

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<sup>51</sup> Derived from National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with the lives of persons important to local, state, or national history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion B/2.

***National/California Register Criterion C/3: embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.***

The building at 456 North Rodeo Drive is vernacular and lacks the distinctive characteristics of a particular architectural style. Its present-day appearance largely dates to an extensive remodel that was completed in 2007 at the behest of its then-tenant, Juicy Couture. This remodeling project provided the building with a contemporary aesthetic that does not at all resemble a 1940s-era commercial building.

The building is not notable on account of its method of construction. Permits indicate that it was constructed of brick and featured a trussed wood roof – a common construction method for small-scale commercial buildings of its era. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that there is anything unusual, innovative, or otherwise noteworthy about that manner in which it was constructed.

The building does not represent the notable work of a master. The original permit identifies the builder as Bernard Lindberg, a contractor who was based in Los Angeles; no architect was identified on the permit. There is little information available about the life and career of Lindberg aside from that he was born in Sweden and arrived in Los Angeles by way of Wisconsin; there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that he made notable contributions to his craft in the spirit of this criterion. Lindberg is not mentioned in any of the standard literature about locally significant practitioners of his respective era. The building also does not appear in any architectural books, journals, or periodicals from its time of construction, indicating that it was not seen as a notable architectural work.

Other architects associated with alterations made to the building after its original construction include Claude Coyne, Jorge Newbery, Twen Ma, Ward Jewell, Albert Gregor, and Gruen Associates, all of whom were retained to complete various remodeling projects and tenant improvements over the years. Generally speaking, aside from Gruen Associates, there is very little information about the lives, careers, and legacies of these practitioners. Coyne was a longtime associate of Paul R. Williams, but he does not appear to have made significant inroads in his own right. Gruen Associates is also notable as one of Southern California's largest and most prolific architectural firms, but its association with this building is nominal and part of recent history – the firm was retained to design minor tenant improvements in 2015 and 2018, which were generally confined to interior spaces and did not significantly alter the appearance of the building. These minor alterations were completed more than 30 years after the death of the firm's founder and namesake, Victor Gruen, who died in 1980. With the exception of Gruen, none of the above-listed practitioners is included on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Master Architects; Gruen Associates' involvement in the design of this building is so nominal that it does not appear to merit any additional discussion for purposes of this evaluation.

Given its vernacular and heavily altered appearance, the building does not possess high artistic value, and given its status as a single property with no meaningful visual or associative relationship with its environs, the building does not represent a significant entity whose components lack individual distinction.

For these reasons, the subject building is not significant for reasons related to its architecture and physical design, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion C/3.

***National/California Register Criterion D/4.*** *Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.*

As an archaeological assessment was not conducted as part of this study, the property's potential for containing subsurface archaeological resources is unknown.

## Local Eligibility

ARG concludes that 456 North Rodeo Drive is not eligible for local listing as a Beverly Hills Landmark, as follows:

### **Part A Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet all four of the following requirements):**

***Criterion A.1:*** *it is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance.*

The subject building was constructed in 1948, making it about 72 years of age at this time of this evaluation. It surpasses the City's 45-year age threshold. Thus, the building meets local Criterion A.1.

***Criterion A.2:*** *it possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period.*

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, the subject building is a vernacular edifice that has been extensively altered over time. It does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a particular architectural style, type, or period, and does not possess high aesthetic or artistic value. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion A.2.

***Criterion A.3:*** *it retains substantial integrity from its period of significance.*

The subject building has been extensively altered, to the extent that it retains very little historic fabric and no longer retains the distinctive look and feel of a 1940s-era commercial building. Its primary façade has been modified over the years to accommodate the preferences of its individual tenants. The current appearance of the building largely dates to a 2007 remodel that, among other things, resulted in augmentation of the parapet and a complete remodel of the façade and storefronts. The building, then, does not retain integrity from its 1948 date of construction, and does not meet local Criterion A.3.

***Criterion A.4:*** *it has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.*

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register criteria, this building is a typical example of a commercial building from the early postwar era. It was constructed in a vernacular architectural style using common methods and materials, and has been occupied by a typical succession

of commercial tenants. There is nothing particularly remarkable about this building that would suggest that it has continued historic value to the community. For these same reasons, the building does not satisfy local Criterion A.4.

**Part B Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet at least one of the following requirements):**

***Criterion B.1: it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.***

The subject building is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and therefore does not meet local Criterion B.1.

***Criterion B.2: it is an exceptional work by a master architect.***

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, the building was not designed by an architect; it was constructed by a contractor named Bernard Lindberg about whom little is known. Other architects associated with the building, who completed renovations and tenant improvements in subsequent years, are not listed on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Master Architects aside from Gruen Architects, which carried out some minor tenant improvements in 2015 and 2018. The scope of work toward this end was so nominal and recent that it cannot be regarded as an exceptional work of Gruen Associates. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion B.2.

***Criterion B.3: it is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous.***

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion B/2, there is insufficient evidence demonstrating that the subject building bears a meaningful association with the productive lives of historically significant individuals. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion B.3.

***Criterion B.4: it is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance.***

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion B/2 and local Criterion B.3, the subject building does not appear to have been associated with persons of great local importance in a manner that would merit consideration under this criterion. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion B.4.

**Criterion B.5:** *it is an iconic property.*

The subject building is not an iconic property as defined by the Ordinance. It is a ubiquitous commercial building that complements the streetscape of Rodeo Drive but does not possess any architectural or contextual qualities that would render it iconic. The building therefore does not meet local Criterion B.5.

**Criterion B.6:** *the landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).*

The Landmark designation procedure is not known to have been initiated by any parties, and the owner(s) of the property have not expressly agreed to the initiation of such a procedure. As a result, the subject building does not meet Criterion B.6.

### **Summary of Local Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for local listing, a resource must meet all four of the above-listed Part A requirements, and at least one of the above-listed Part B requirements. As addressed above, the subject building does not meet Criterion A.2, A.3, and A.4, as required, and does not meet any of the Part B requirements. In summary, the building does not meet local eligibility criteria.

## **6.3. Evaluation of Integrity**

For a property to be eligible for listing in the National and California Registers, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark, it must meet eligibility criteria and must also retain sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance. *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* states that “only after significance is fully established can you proceed to the issue of integrity.”<sup>52</sup> In accordance with best professional practices, it is customary to apply this same methodology when evaluating resources at the state and local levels. Because the building does not meet the criteria for federal, state, or local listing, an assessment of integrity is not necessary.

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<sup>52</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

## 7. Conclusion

Per the above analysis, the building at 456 North Rodeo Drive does not meet any of the criteria for federal, state, or local listing. Therefore, ARG concludes that the building is not considered to be a “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA.



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## 468 North Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills, CA Historic Resources Assessment Report

*Prepared for:*

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP  
San Francisco, CA

*Prepared by:*



Architectural  
Resources Group

Architectural Resources Group  
Los Angeles, CA

June 24, 2020

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1. Executive Summary .....	1
1.2. Preparer Qualifications .....	2
<b>2. Architectural Description</b> .....	<b>3</b>
2.1. Site and Setting .....	3
2.2. Building Exterior .....	4
2.3. Landscape and Hardscape Features .....	5
<b>3. Development Chronology and Alterations</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>4. Historic Contexts</b> .....	<b>13</b>
4.1. Commercial Development in Beverly Hills.....	13
4.2. 468 North Rodeo Drive .....	14
4.3. New Classicism .....	17
4.4. Allan Greenberg, Architect.....	19
<b>5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation</b> .....	<b>22</b>
5.1. National Register of Historic Places .....	22
5.2. California Register of Historical Resources .....	24
5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance .....	25
<b>6. Evaluation of Significance</b> .....	<b>27</b>
6.1. Previous Evaluations .....	27
6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility.....	27
6.3. Evaluation of Integrity.....	35
<b>7. Conclusion</b> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>8. Bibliography</b> .....	<b>37</b>

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Executive Summary

Architectural Resources Group (ARG) has prepared this Historic Resource Assessment Report for the property at 468 North Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills, California. The property is developed with a two-story commercial building that was constructed in 1997 as a flagship retail store for the clothing brand Tommy Hilfiger Corp. It later served as a flagship retail store for the Brooks Brothers clothing brand. The building is currently vacant.

The subject building was designed by Allan Greenberg. Greenberg is a prominent exponent of the modern architectural movement known as New Classicism, a neo-historicist paradigm that celebrates, emulates, and reinterprets classically derived architectural forms and motifs. His eponymous architectural practice, established in 1972, remains active, with offices in New York and Alexandria, VA.

ARG evaluated the subject building to determine whether it appears to be eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, and/or as a Beverly Hills Landmark. At only 23 years of age at this writing, the subject building is generally too young to be considered a historical resource. Federal, state, and local eligibility criteria all have age requirements that safeguard against the designation of properties of “passing contemporary interest,” ensuring these designation programs remain lists of truly historical resources. However, due to the fact that the building was designed by an acclaimed architect, it is evaluated herein for its potential to have exceptional importance such that it meets eligibility criteria despite its very young age.

Preparation of this report included the following tasks related to research, documentation, and analysis:

- Visited the property on February 19, 2019 to assess existing conditions and document the building with digital photographs;
- Reviewed pertinent federal and state technical bulletins, local ordinances, and other reference materials related to the evaluation of historical resources;
- Reviewed applicable background materials including historical building permits and Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) data for the subject property;
- Conducted supplemental research to glean additional information about the property’s development history, design, occupancy, and potential historical significance;
- Identified applicable historic contexts and themes; and
- Evaluated the building against eligibility criteria for the National Register, the California Register, and as a Beverly Hills Landmark.

Research materials were culled from the following sources: the Los Angeles Public Library; the Beverly Hills Public Library; the archives of the *Los Angeles Times* and other local periodicals; building permits obtained from the City of Beverly Hills’s Community Development Department; technical bulletins



published by the National Park Service (NPS) and the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP); online repositories; and ARG’s in-house collection of architectural books and reference materials. A complete list of sources is included in *Section 8: Bibliography* of this report.

Because the property is less than 50 years of age, the analysis herein incorporates the guidance enumerated by National Register Criteria Consideration G, a set of evaluative guidelines applied when assessing resources of the recent past (generally defined as those constructed in the past 50 years).<sup>1</sup>

In summary, ARG concludes that the subject building is not eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark, and is thus not considered to be a “historical resource” for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The following sections provide a contextual basis for analysis and a detailed discussion of how this determination was made.

## 1.2. Preparer Qualifications

This report was prepared by Katie E. Horak, Principal, Andrew Goodrich, AICP, Associate, and Lakan Cole, all Architectural Historians and Preservation Planners. ARG intern Rafael Fontes provided additional project support. Ms. Horak, Mr. Goodrich, and Ms. Cole meet the *Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards*, 36 CFR Part 61, in the discipline of Architectural History.

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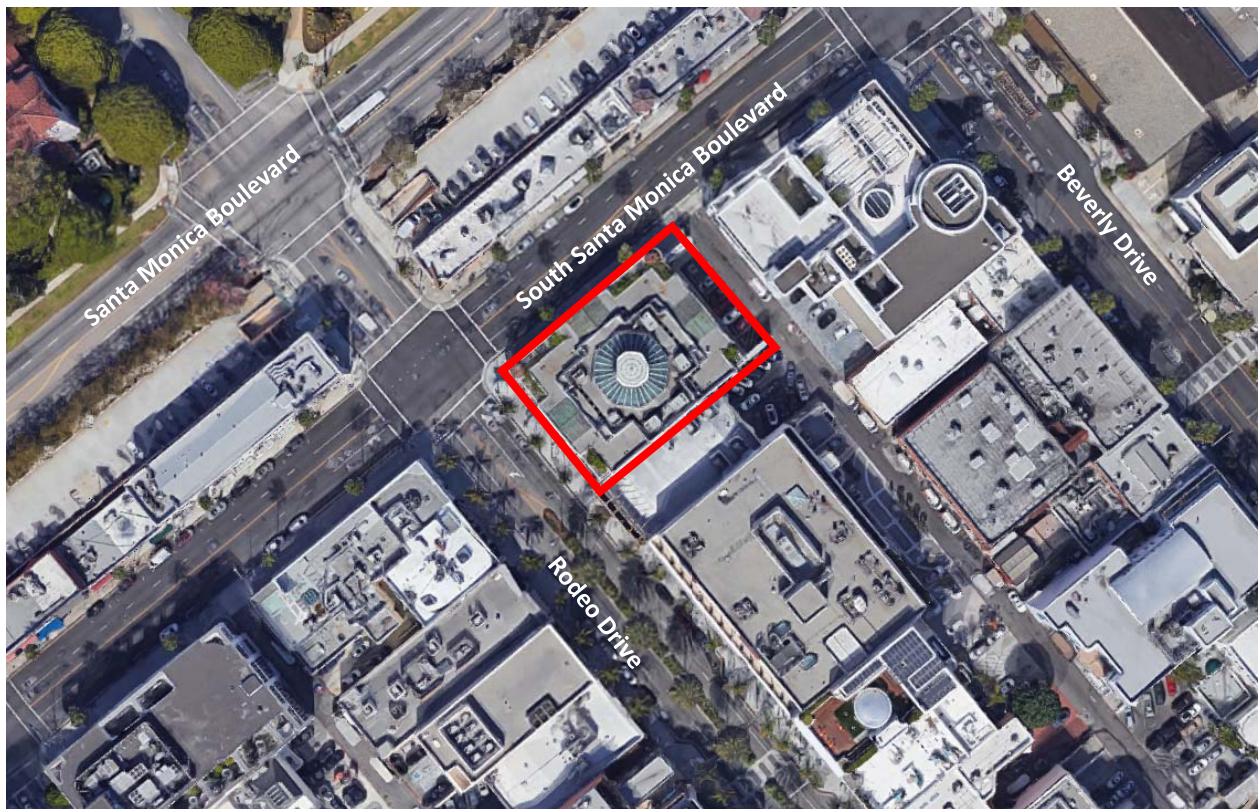
<sup>1</sup> Derived from National Register Bulletin No. 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. Criterion Consideration G is addressed in greater detail in Sections 5 and 6 of this report.

## 2. Architectural Description

### 2.1. Site and Setting

The subject property is located within a triangular-shaped commercial district that is bounded by Santa Monica Boulevard (north and west), Wilshire Boulevard (south), and Canon Drive (east). This area serves as the central business district of Beverly Hills. Known as the Business Triangle (or, the Golden Triangle), it is densely developed with a mix of low- and mid-scale commercial buildings, many of which are occupied by some of the world's foremost purveyors of luxury retail goods. The adjacent circulation network ascribes to a grid that is oriented 45 degrees askew of the cardinal directions and reinforces the area's wedge-like form.

468 North Rodeo Drive sits on a flat, compact commercial parcel that is located at the southeast corner of Rodeo Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard. The parcel is rectangular in shape and measures 15,255 square feet.<sup>2</sup> The southeast property line abuts an adjacent commercial building. The northeast property line abuts a service alley that runs parallel to, and is equidistant from, Beverly and Rodeo Drives.



*Location map. The subject property, 468 North Rodeo Drive, is outlined in red (Google Maps).*

<sup>2</sup> Parcel dimensions obtained from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor, Feb. 2019.

## 2.2. Building Exterior

The parcel contains a 23,509-square-foot commercial building that was built in 1997 as a flagship retail store for the clothing brand Tommy Hilfiger Corp.<sup>3</sup> The building extends to the edges of the lot lines. It rises two stories in height, is constructed of cast concrete, sits on a concrete foundation, and is roughly rectangular in plan. Its design reflects a contemporary interpretation of Classical architecture, and consistent with the tenets underpinning Classicism, it exudes a prevailing sense of symmetry, order, and balance. Given its prominent corner site, the building has two street-facing elevations: one faces southwest toward Rodeo Drive, and the other faces northwest toward South Santa Monica Boulevard.

The roof structure is predominantly flat and is spanned by parapet walls. The parapet walls obscure mechanical equipment that is placed atop the roof. There are also three gabled volumes that are placed at the center of the southwest, northwest, and northeast elevations. These gables frame large pediments that reinforce the building's overall sense of symmetry. The flat roof volumes were not visible during ARG's site visit, but are presumed to be sheathed in a composition membrane; the gabled volumes were partially visible and appear to be sheathed in copper sheets that are coated with an oxidized patina. A glazed octagonal volume projects from the center of the roof and caps a rotunda.

On the two street-facing (southwest and northwest) elevations, portions of the building's upper story are set back to form a series of exterior terraces. Each terrace is capped by a pergola structure that is affixed to the building's exterior walls and comprises painted wood rafters and notched beams. These pergolas are supported by slender concrete Doric columns, which are arranged in pairs.

Exterior walls consist of cast concrete panels that are painted white and incised with score lines, presumably to emulate the appearance of heavy masonry. Each exterior wall has a polished stone base.

The primary elevation of the building faces southwest, toward Rodeo Drive. This elevation is strictly symmetrical in its composition. It measures three bays wide, and features a prominent center bay that is surmounted by a pediment and raking cornice. At the base of this center bay is an articulated entranceway that serves as the building's main point of ingress. The entranceway is framed by Ionic columns, and is surmounted by an open pediment and raking cornice. An engaged keystone is set within the tympanum. Placed within the entranceway is a pair of glazed metal doors with metal hardware. The entranceway is flanked by multi-light fixed sidelights and surmounted by a multi-light fixed transom.

Fenestration on the primary elevation consists of fixed windows. Each window unit is composed of wood sash that is set within a metal frame. The center bay is dominated by several large, multi-light arched windows with decorative concrete molding. The arched windows on the ground floor are framed by pilasters and surmounted by keystones. On the two side bays, fenestration consists of fixed storefront windows that are delineated by Ionic columns and topped by multi-light clerestory windows.

Due to the dimensions of the lot, the northwest elevation is wider than the primary elevation, but it ascribes to a nearly identical architectural program. It, too, has a very visible street presence and is symmetrically composed. This elevation is also divided into three bays; features a pedimented central

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<sup>3</sup> Square footage and year of construction obtained from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor, Feb. 2019.

bay; is approached by an articulated entranceway with Ionic columns, open pediment, keystone, and glazed metal doors; and is fenestrated by a combination of single-pane and multi-light fixed windows, several of which are set within arched openings. Each end of this elevation terminates in a rounded bay.

There are multiple secondary entrances on the two street-facing (southwest and northwest) elevations, all of which are located on the upper story and lead to the aforementioned roof terraces. Each secondary entrance consists of a single, multi-light glazed door with narrow sidelights and a fanlight.

The southwest and northwest elevations are both replete with an assemblage of integral cast concrete moldings, trim, and other applied decoration that reference themes and motifs in Classical architecture. Classically derived details that are present on these two street-facing elevations include pediments, articulated cornices, columns, pilasters, arched window openings, keystones, and sections of spindled balustrade. Other decorative features include integral concrete planter boxes, which are placed at the base of each storefront window, and metal sconces that are affixed to the exterior walls.

The northeast elevation, which faces the service alley, is less articulated than the two street-facing elevations yet carries forward the building's architectural vocabulary. This elevation is also dominated by a central pediment, and its exterior walls consist of scored concrete panels that are painted white. There are three secondary entrances on this elevation. Two consist of single, glazed metal doors that are framed by engaged pilasters and surmounted by engaged pediments and abstracted keystones; the third consists of paired, paneled metal doors that are positioned off center. Fenestration is limited to a handful of fixed multi-light windows. Concrete moldings and trim frame arches and other abstracted details that afford a nominal degree of enunciation to the otherwise unarticulated façade. Metal sconces are affixed to the exterior walls. At the southeast end of the elevation is a small balcony that is capped by a wood pergola and enclosed by a wood trellis. The pergola is supported by slender columns.

Two wing walls project outward from the northeast elevation. The wing wall nearest the street is punctuated by an arched opening that is framed by pilasters and an entablature. The opposite wing wall, at the southeast corner of the building, is identically composed but for the fact that the arch is blind.

Since the southeast elevation directly abuts an adjacent commercial building, it is almost entirely obscured from view. There do not appear to be any notable architectural features on this elevation.

## 2.3. Landscape and Hardscape Features

Because the building occupies almost the entirety of the lot, landscape and hardscape features are minimal. The shallow setbacks on the two street-facing elevations feature a dark stone finish that effectively demarcates the property line. A small surface parking lot, which is accessed via the service alley, occupies the space between the two projecting wing walls on the northeast elevation.

Landscaping is limited to manicured box hedges that occupy the integral planter boxes on the southwest and northwest elevations, and semi-mature palm trees that are planted in the parkway space on both streets. Bougainvillea plants are woven into the rafters comprising the upper-story pergolas.



**Current Photos**



*Primary (southwest) and northwest elevations, view east (ARG, 2019).*



*Primary (southwest) elevation, view north (ARG, 2019).*



*Northwest elevation, view east (ARG, 2019).*



*Northwest elevation, view southwest (ARG, 2019).*



*Detail of pergola with column supports on northwest elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



*Detail of entrance on primary elevation, view northeast (ARG, 2019).*





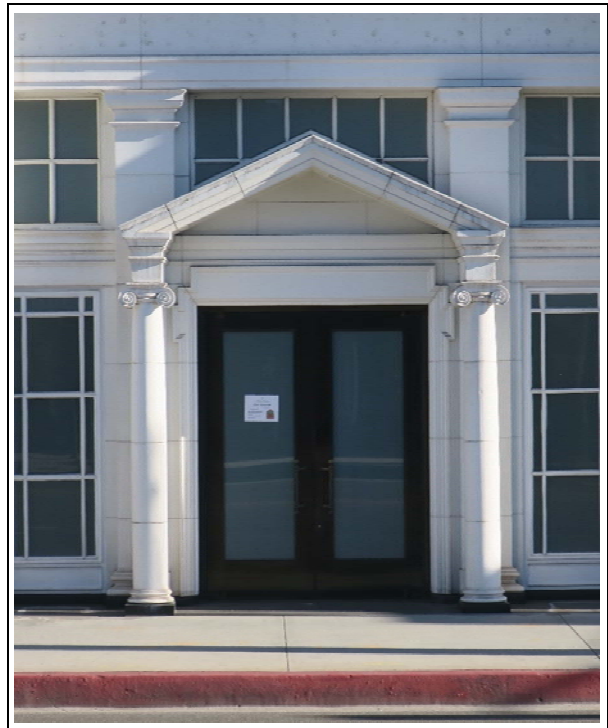
*Detail of entrance on primary elevation, view southeast. Note columns and pediment (ARG, 2019).*



*Detail of storefront system on primary elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



*Rounded bay at juncture between primary and northwest elevations, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



*Detail of entrance on northwest elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



*Prominent central bay with pediment on northwest elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



*Northeast elevation and parking, view southwest. Note wing wall with blind arch (ARG, 2019).*



*Southeast elevation, view northwest (ARG, 2019).*



*Projecting wing wall with rounded arch, pilasters, and entablature, view northwest (ARG, 2019).*



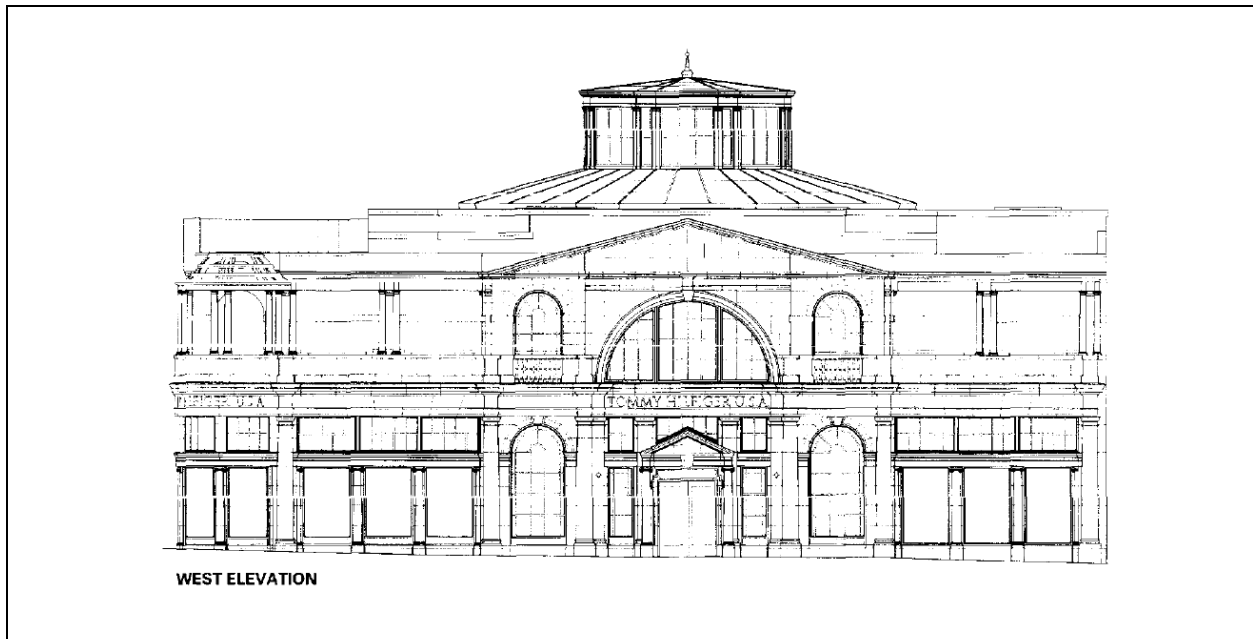
*Detail of polished stone at base of building (ARG, 2019).*



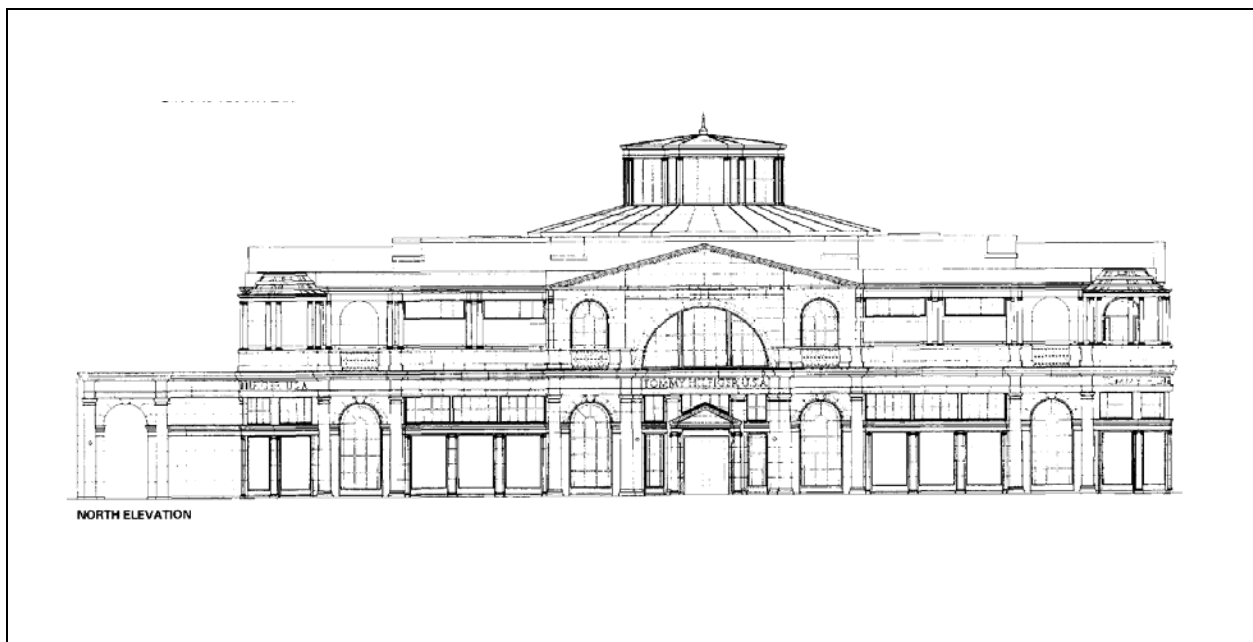
*Detail of integral concrete planter box on primary elevation (ARG, 2019).*



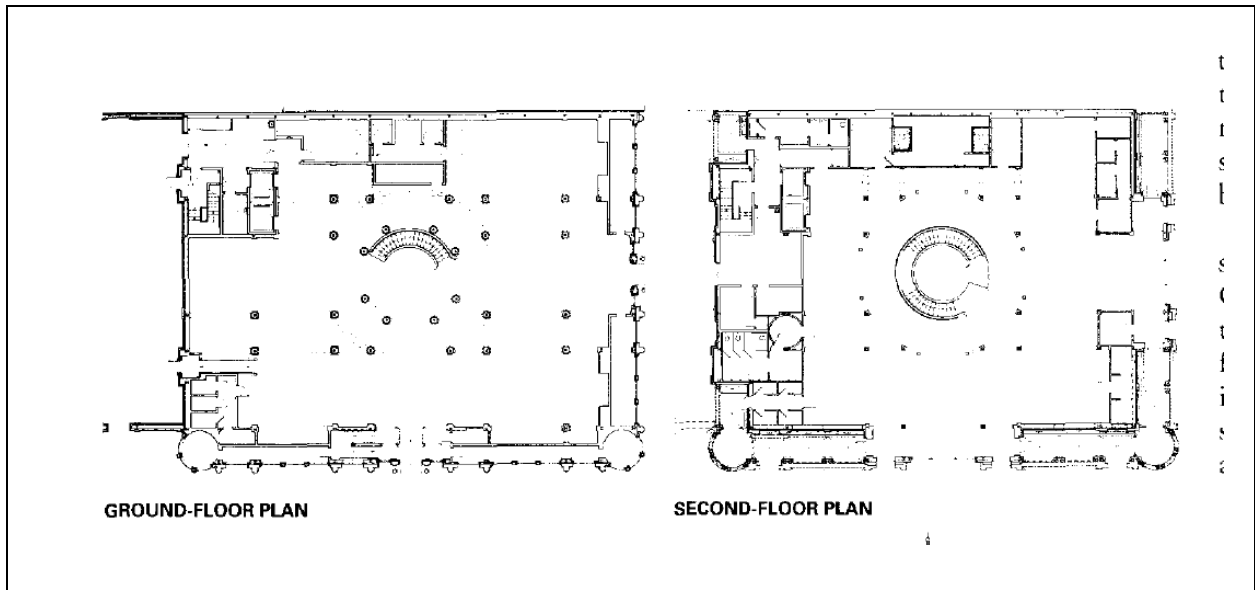
## Additional Images



*Rendering of primary (west) elevation toward Rodeo Drive (Los Angeles Times Magazine, 1996).*



*Rendering of north elevation toward South Santa Monica Boulevard (Los Angeles Times Magazine, 1996).*



Floor plans (Los Angeles Times Magazine, 1996).

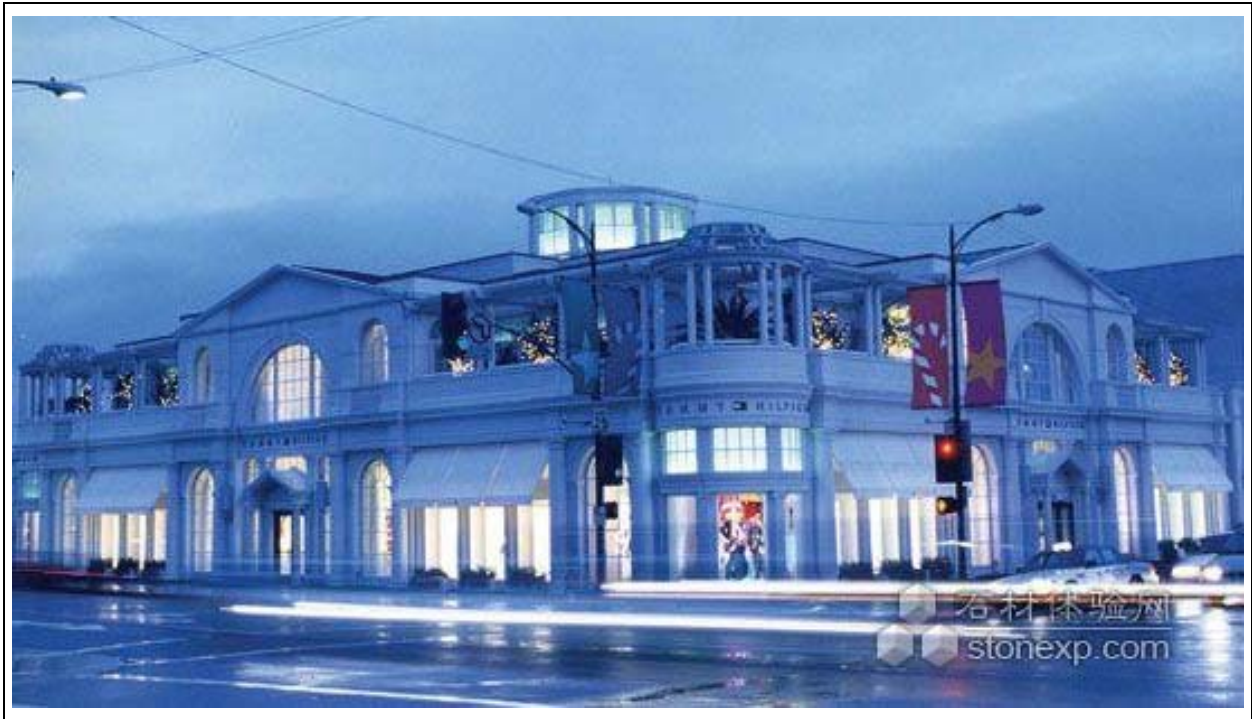


Images from the grand opening celebration of the Tommy Hilfiger flagship store, 1997 (Getty Images).





Primary (southwest) elevation of the subject building, n.d. (wiki.wildberries.ru)



View of subject building from the corner of Rodeo Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard, n.d. (stonexp.com).



### 3. Development Chronology and Alterations

The following development chronology for 468 North Rodeo Drive summarizes key events in the property’s development history between its original construction and the present-day. It was developed by reviewing historical building permits from the Beverly Hills Community Development Department, and was augmented by additional sources of information including historic photos and aerial images; parcel data from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor; the collections of the Beverly Hills Public Library and other local and online repositories; and other archival materials.

<b>1996</b>	Tommy Hilfiger Corp., a popular apparel company and lifestyle brand, entered into a lease agreement with the owners of the property at the southeast corner of Rodeo Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard in February 1996. Hilfiger announced plans to open its first-ever flagship retail store on the site shortly after the lease agreement was executed. Allan Greenberg was selected to design the new flagship store.  An existing 14,400-square-foot commercial building, which had been occupied by the haberdashery Carroll and Co. since 1953, was demolished to make way for the new Hilfiger store. Carroll and Co. relocated to a new location nearby on Canon Drive.
<b>1997</b>	Construction completed. The Tommy Hilfiger flagship store officially opened to the public in November 1997 with a star-studded celebration.
<b>2000</b>	Tommy Hilfiger Corp. closed its Rodeo Drive flagship store. The closure was part of a restructuring aimed at increasing profitability and directing resources toward smaller stores.
<b>2003</b>	Brooks Bros., a New York based clothier, leased the vacant building as the site of its Southern California flagship retail store. The store opened in September 2003.
<b>2018</b>	Brooks Bros. permanently closed its Beverly Hills store in August 2018. The building has since remained vacant, with the exception of a temporary pop-up exhibition in 2019.

Based on its permit record and current appearance, the subject building appears to have been very minimally altered over time, and appears almost exactly as it did when it was built in 1997. Alterations are extremely minor, and are limited to the following:

- Awnings on storefront windows have been removed
- Signage bearing the name of the building’s former tenants has been removed
- Portions of the overhead trellises, which were originally painted white, have been repainted to emulate the appearance of wood
- Original sconces affixed to the exterior walls have been replaced with contemporary sconces

## 4. Historic Contexts

### 4.1. Commercial Development in Beverly Hills

468 North Rodeo Drive is located in an area of Beverly Hills that is known as the Business Triangle (also referred to colloquially as the Golden Triangle), so named because of its distinctive, wedge-shaped form. Located near the center of Beverly Hills, between Santa Monica and Wilshire Boulevards and Canon Drive, the area is densely developed with various commercial and institutional uses. It serves as the city's central business district and civic center.

In spite of its present-day associations with luxury, glamour, opulence, and wealth, Beverly Hills had inauspicious beginnings. The first house was constructed in 1907, but overall development activity in the nascent community was languid. The Beverly Hills Hotel was constructed between 1911-1912 in an attempt to lure in prospective buyers. In its early years, the sprawling Mission Revival style complex not only served as a luxurious hostelry, but also functioned as a *de facto* community center for area residents.<sup>4</sup> Since the hotel was located amid what was then a swath of peripheral, undeveloped land, an auxiliary rail line called The Dinky was built to convey people between the hotel and the Pacific Electric Railway line nearer the center of town.<sup>5</sup> The Dinky traveled down the center of Rodeo Drive, originating at its intersection with Santa Monica Boulevard and terminating at the hotel on Sunset Boulevard.

Beverly Hills formally incorporated as an independent city in 1914, but development – and particularly commercial development – remained sluggish. Aside from the hotel, the city's only commercial buildings were clustered near the intersection of Beverly Drive and Burton Way (now South Santa Monica Boulevard). At this time, the business district consisted of a small handful of one- and two-story business blocks that were occupied by grocers, barbers, hardware stores, a bank, a post office, and other enterprises that served residents' day-to-day needs. A Pacific Electric Railway station was located just to the north, on Santa Monica Boulevard. Elsewhere within the Business Triangle, the blocks were sparsely developed with a smattering of small, humble bungalows for those of more modest means.<sup>6</sup>

Just to the south of the business district and Business Triangle, where the Beverly Wilshire Hotel and Beverly Hills High School are located today, a wood plank track for automobile racing was built between 1919-1920. Known as the Beverly Hills Speedway, it became an immediate attraction and was ranked second in race quality only to the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway.<sup>7</sup> But as popular as the speedway was, rising real estate costs and mounting development pressures meant that it was a short-lived endeavor. The racetrack was demolished in 1924, and the land was subdivided shortly thereafter.<sup>8</sup>

Like most communities in Southern California, Beverly Hills witnessed an unprecedented amount of growth and development in the 1920s. It was during this time that the community truly came of age,

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<sup>4</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Water and Power Associates, "Early Views of Beverly Hills," accessed Jan. 2019. Additional information about development patterns in Beverly Hills was gleaned from Sanborn Fire Insurance maps dated 1922.

<sup>7</sup> Susan King, "Speedway Brought Life in the Fast Lane to 1920s Beverly Hills," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 24, 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid; Pacific Coast Architecture Database, "Beverly Hills Speedway, Beverly Hills, CA (1919-1920)," accessed Jan. 2019.

shedding its roots as a small, peripheral outpost and asserting itself as one of Southern California's premier residential communities. Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Will Rogers, Rudolph Valentino, and other A-list celebrities built stylish mansions in the community, cementing its reputation as a haven for the entertainment elite.<sup>9</sup> As Beverly Hills's population grew, its small commercial node evolved into a discernible central business district. A number of new commercial buildings arose in the triangular-shaped district between Santa Monica and Wilshire boulevards. Buildings like the exotic Beverly Theatre (1925, L.A. Smith, not extant) and the posh, Renaissance Revival style Beverly Wilshire Apartment Hotel (1928, Walker and Eisen) attested to the quality of commercial architecture in the city at this time.

In the early 1930s, two resplendent civic buildings were constructed at the northeast corner of the triangular-shaped business district: the Spanish Renaissance style Beverly Hills City Hall (1932, William J. Gage and Harry G. Koerner), and the Italian Renaissance style Beverly Hills Post Office (1934, Ralph Flewelling and Allison and Allison). These buildings denoted the civic and political heart of the burgeoning city, and represented significant new additions to its commercial and institutional core.

Beverly Hills entered into another period of remarkable growth after World War II. Parcels that had remained undeveloped prior to the war were swiftly purchased and improved, and the city also expanded its physical reach by annexing a large tract of hillside land that became the Trousdale Estates.<sup>10</sup> The character of commercial development also began to visibly transform at this time, with Rodeo Drive as its focus. Historically a "fairly quiet suburban street with beauty shops, hardware stores, gas stations and bookstores," Rodeo Drive began to evolve into an internationally renowned locus of the cultural elite.<sup>11</sup> In 1967, fashion retailer Fred Hayman opened Giorgio Beverly Hills, the first high-end boutique to open on the street. Other luxurious retailers including Parisian jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels (1969) and coiffeur Vidal Sassoon (1970) followed suit. Subsequent development on Rodeo Drive and nearby streets took on an increasingly posh and sumptuous character.

Construction of the subject building in 1997 corresponded with this trend toward luxury retail development within the Business Triangle. While its original tenant, Tommy Hilfiger Corp., arguably had more mainstream appeal than many of the higher-end design labels along Rodeo Drive, it was nonetheless envisaged as a vehicle for showcasing its higher-end lines and bolstering its brand identity.

## 4.2. 468 North Rodeo Drive

468 North Rodeo Drive has been occupied by two commercial tenants since its construction in 1997, both eminent American clothiers: Tommy Hilfiger Corp. (1997-2000) and Brooks Brothers (2003-2018).

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<sup>9</sup> City of Beverly Hills, "History of Beverly Hills," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Darling, "A Rodeo Drive Timeline," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 9, 2013.

## Tommy Hilfiger Corp.

The subject building was purpose-built as the first flagship store for the apparel brand Tommy Hilfiger Corp. (now known simply as Tommy Hilfiger). Founded in the 1980s, Hilfiger's eponymous line of casual clothing and accessories swiftly grew into one of the nation's most popular apparel brands, hitting its peak in the 1990s. The brand is often considered to be an icon of late twentieth century popular culture.

Thomas "Tommy" Hilfiger (1951- ) entered into the world of fashion design in the late 1960s. Responding to a dearth of trendy clothing options in his hometown of Elmira, New York, he jumpstarted his fashion career by buying jeans in Manhattan, repurposing them, and selling them at a markup out of a basement in Elmira. In 1971, he and two friends pooled their resources and opened a store called People's Place. People's Place was part clothier, part headshop, and "sold hippie supplies like bell bottoms, incense and records."<sup>12</sup> It eventually grew into a chain comprising a half dozen stores. However, the company was not able to weather an economic slump and went out of business in 1977.<sup>13</sup>

Hilfiger thereafter moved to Manhattan to find work as a fashion designer. He initially worked as a freelancer for a variety of clothing companies, and eventually landed a job designing jeans for Jordache.<sup>14</sup> However, the entrepreneurial designer was malcontent with the status quo, and instead wanted to develop a clothing line of his own. This opportunity presented itself in 1984 when Mohan Murjani, an Indian textile magnate and clothing manufacturer, approached Hilfiger about designing a new line of casual menswear akin to Calvin Klein and Ralph Lauren. In 1985, the Tommy Hilfiger brand was formally unveiled to the public. Its product portfolio included button-down shirts, chinos, and other modern takes on the classic "all American" look.<sup>15</sup>

Hilfiger's modern interpretation of the classic, American preppy look, with its trademark red, white, and blue logo, resonated with consumers and became an extraordinary commercial success. By the late 1980s, the Tommy Hilfiger brand had morphed into a multi-million dollar enterprise; in 1992, the company was taken public; and by the 1990s sales had ballooned to \$500 million. Pop stars and other ambassadors of popular culture donned Tommy Hilfiger garb on MTV and at highly publicized events, and as time passed Hilfiger expanded his brand to include women and children's lines, footwear, accessories, fragrances, and home furnishings. By the 1990s, Hilfiger had unequivocally "achieved a remarkable level of mass appeal, with everyone from bike messengers to CEOs dressed in his designs."<sup>16</sup>

Initially, Tommy Hilfiger-branded apparel was predominantly sold in major department stores. However, as the company grew, it incrementally opened freestanding retail stores. By 1995, the company operated six full-price and 16 discount outlet stores in addition to its lucrative license agreements with department store chains.<sup>17</sup> Also in 1995, Hilfiger dabbled in the possibility of opening a series of flagship stores that would carry higher-end lines, showcase the brand, and serve as an incubator where new

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<sup>12</sup> Biography, "Tommy Hilfiger Biography," accessed Feb. 2019.

<sup>13</sup> Michael D'Antonio, "Everything He Touches Turns to Tommy," *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 9, 1997.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Mimi Avins, "Take A Spin Inside Tommy Hilfiger's Fashion Cuisinart," *Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 25, 1996.

<sup>16</sup> "Tommy Hilfiger Corporation History," accessed Feb. 2019.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

concepts and products could be tested with consumers. He set his sights on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, one of the world's most esteemed retail districts, as the location of his first flagship store.

In 1996, Tommy Hilfiger Corp. signed a ground lease agreement with the owners of the property at the southeast corner of Rodeo Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard. Per the terms of the lease, the company demolished an existing commercial building on the site – which had been the longtime location of local haberdasher Carroll and Co. – and began construction of its first-ever flagship store.<sup>18</sup> Noted architect Allan Greenberg of New York, a leading exponent of classically derived architecture, was commissioned to design the new store. That Hilfiger selected Greenberg to design the public face of his eponymous company was logical, as Greenberg's penchant for precisely replicating historical architectural styles evinced the same sense of "all-American-ness" that permeated the Hilfiger brand.

Compared to other stores within the Hilfiger portfolio, most of which were smaller in size and were curated toward a middle-income clientele, the new Greenberg-designed flagship on Rodeo Drive was a behemoth that unapologetically showcased the company and its namesake designer for all their worth:

Inside the two-story, 20,000-square-foot store, Hilfiger will offer his mainstays – crisp but colorfully casual clothes for men – and a variety of departments. Sort of a department store for Tommy, it will look nothing like Sears. Themed areas will include one for golf, another for small leather goods and an exclusive "rock and roll" collection. And instead of a department store lunch counter or the ubiquitous coffee bear, it will feature a Wolfgang Puck café.<sup>19</sup>

The store opened in November 1997 amid a star-studded backdrop that included performances by singers Sheryl Crow and No Doubt, and a fashion show featuring actors Cuba Gooding, Jr., Harry Hamlin, and Cameron Diaz. The opening gala was a highly publicized affair that aired on network television.<sup>20</sup>

The Rodeo Drive flagship store was a testament to the company's remarkable ascent from a diminutive start-up fashion label to one of the world's most iconic apparel brands. The store was constructed at a time when the company was riding high on the wave of cultural relevance and economic success. However, the constantly evolving and relentlessly competitive nature of the fashion industry eventually caught up with the company. By 2000, sales had declined as image conscious consumers turned their attention away from Hilfiger's red, white, and blue garb and toward the latest and greatest trends in popular fashion. Attempts at revamping the company's image were maligned as belated and misguided.

In February 2000, just two years after opening, Tommy Hilfiger Corp. announced that it planned to permanently close the Rodeo Drive flagship store. The decision was part of a company-wide restructuring plan that aimed to eliminate glitzy flagship stores – which were generally not profitable – and replace them with smaller, less-costly specialty stores.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Mimi Avins, "A Legend's Move Gives an Upstart a Space," *Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 8, 1996.

<sup>19</sup> Michael D'Antonio, "Everything He Touches Turns to Tommy," *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 9, 1997.

<sup>20</sup> Teena Hammond, "Tommy Roars Into Rodeo," *New York Times*, Nov. 13, 1997.

<sup>21</sup> Mariano Willoughby, "Hilfiger to Close Flagship Rodeo Drive Store," *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 4, 2000.



## Brooks Brothers

The subject property sat vacant between 2000 and 2003. In April 2003, it was announced that Brooks Brothers, a prominent New York-based clothier best known as a purveyor of classic, buttoned-down shirts and suits, would open a flagship store in the former Hilfiger store at 468 North Rodeo Drive.<sup>22</sup>

Brooks Brothers is one of the nation's most enduring businesses and is generally considered to be the oldest operating haberdasher in the United States. Founded in 1818 in New York City by Henry Sands Brooks, the company was conceived as H. Brooks and Company. It made a name for itself by offering mass-produced, reasonably priced men's clothing that appealed to an extraordinarily broad cross-section of the American male population. "Ready-to-wear placed gentlemanliness within the reach of men who once inhabited the outer reaches of society, enabling them to subscribe to its tenants and tout its virtues," remarked Brooks about his guiding philosophy.<sup>23</sup> Brooks's four sons – Elisha, Daniel, Edward, and John – inherited the business upon their father's death and re-named it Brooks Brothers in 1850.<sup>24</sup>

Over the next 150 years, the company would finesse its product line to keep pace with advances in industrial production and evolutions in consumer taste, but would never stray from its conservative, buttoned-down aesthetic. To this day, it remains a very traditional clothier. The company was headquartered in New York City, but later expanded its reach to cities across the nation. Brooks Brothers arrived in Southern California in 1939 when it opened a shop in the Pacific Mutual Building in Downtown Los Angeles, allegedly at the behest of Fred Astaire and Clark Gable.<sup>25</sup> Though its location has changed several times, the company has maintained a presence downtown to this day.

The Rodeo Drive store, which opened in 2003, was one of several flagships within the company's portfolio. It remained in continuous operation at this location, and functioned as an important northern anchor to the Rodeo Drive commercial district, until it permanently closed its doors in August 2018.<sup>26</sup>

### 4.3. New Classicism

The subject building embodies characteristics that are associated with a contemporary architectural movement known as New Classicism. New Classicism, which is also sometimes referred to as Traditionalism, Neo-Traditionalism, or Neo-Historicism, is a historically derived idiom that emerged as one of several reactions against the ubiquity of post-World War II Modern architecture.

By the late 1960s, architects and the American public alike had begun to grow weary of the Modern orthodoxy. The template for postwar Modernism had been so widely replicated, and so often compromised through cost cutting and value engineering, that it was increasingly seen as cheap, generic, pedestrian, and effete.<sup>27</sup> In response, architects began to dabble in new modes of architectural

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<sup>22</sup> Hanah Cho, "Buttoned-Down Brooks Bros. to Open on Ritzy Rodeo Drive," *Los Angeles Times*, Apr. 3, 2003.

<sup>23</sup> Jenna Weissman Joselit, *A Perfect Fit: Clothes, Character and the Promise of America* (New York: Henry Holt and Co 2001), 79.

<sup>24</sup> Brooks Brothers, "Brooks Brothers Heritage and History," accessed Feb. 2019.

<sup>25</sup> Hanah Cho, "Buttoned-Down Brooks Bros. to Open on Ritzy Rodeo Drive," *Los Angeles Times*, Apr. 3, 2003.

<sup>26</sup> Shwanika Narayan, "Brooks Brothers to Close Rodeo Store," *Los Angeles Business Journal*, Aug. 21, 2018.

<sup>27</sup> Charles Jencks, "Postmodern and Late Modern: The Essential Definitions," *Chicago Review*, 35.4 (1987): 31-58.

expression that reacted to some of the most banal qualities of postwar Modernism in different ways. Some of these dissident architects – who would later be identified as “Late Modernists” – took the basic tenets of Modernism and reinterpreted them in new ways, typically by exaggerating a particular structural element or architectural feature. Others, known as “Postmodernists,” married exaggerated classical motifs with bold forms and vivid colors to criticize and counterbalance Modernism’s sterility.

Yet another group of architects reacted to the Modern orthodoxy through a regenerated interest in architectural styles that were rooted in historical precedent. Although many of the styles that had been popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were fodder for reinterpretation, many expressed a particularly profound interest in carrying forward and reinterpreting the practice of classical architecture. The aesthetic that these practitioners promoted became known as the New Classicism.

Various factors influenced these practitioners’ rekindled interest in classical precedents. The much-maligned 1963 demolition of Pennsylvania Station, an imposing Neoclassical landmark in New York, sparked a greater appreciation for the architecture of the past. By the mid-1960s, the modern historic preservation movement had been conceived, and architectural history was beginning to truly come of age as a legitimate field of study. Americans were also becoming much more cognizant of, and nostalgic for, their collective past as the nation was approaching its bicentennial celebration in 1976.

It was within these contexts – dissatisfaction with Modernism and its direction, and heightened awareness of and appreciation for the past – that the New Classical movement was born. Buildings that made overt reference to classical precedent began appearing in the United States in the early 1970s. It is generally emphasized that the New Classical movement was not derivative; rather, those who honed and championed the style sought to take those timeless elements of classical architecture and reinterpret them to the present-day. These architects “understand classical principles and architectural style well enough to subtly alter or rearrange elements to create New Traditional [buildings], not copies – [buildings] instantly familiar yet subtly distinct from the [buildings] that inspired them.”<sup>28</sup> Buildings associated with the movement, then, struck a careful and orchestrated balance between old and new.

New Classicism remained popular in the 1980s and 1990s, and early 2000s; it continues to exert influence over the design of buildings into the present day. Beginning in the 1990s, the aesthetic and philosophical principles associated with the style were also applied on a broader scale with the ascent of the New Urbanism movement. Among the American architects who are generally considered to be exponents of New Classicism are Thomas Beeby, Robert A.M. Stern, and Allan Greenberg. Many of these practitioners have been awarded the Driehaus Architecture Prize, which was founded in 2003 to honor excellence in contemporary classical architecture and is analogous to the modernist Pritzker Prize.

The subject building was designed by Greenberg in 1997, and exhibits the balance between historical precedents and contemporary massing, proportions, and materiality that characterize New Classicism.

Character-defining features of New Classical architecture include the following:

- Prevailing sense of symmetry, balance, proportionality, and order
- Formal arrangement of architectural elements

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<sup>28</sup> Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 725.

- Low-pitched hipped or gabled roof
- Roof balustrades
- Exterior walls clad with masonry veneer (commercial, institutional) or wood siding (residential)
- Pedimented entrance portico, usually supported by Classical columns
- Multi-light wood or metal windows
- Palladian, elliptical, and/or rounded window openings
- Eclectic synthesis of classically derived decorative details including columns, pilasters, dentils, entablatures, swags, garlands, urns, and grotesques

#### 4.4. Allan Greenberg, Architect

The subject building was designed by architect Allan Greenberg. Greenberg, who is often described as a “canonical classicist,” is a leading exponent of New Classicism, and has helped to promote and disseminate this movement since establishing his eponymous architectural practice in the early 1970s.

Greenberg (1938 - ) was born and reared in Johannesburg, South Africa. He matriculated at the University of Witwatersrand, located in Johannesburg, where he studied architecture and was trained in both classical and modern design. Early in his professional life, Greenberg was a self-described Modernist and a devotee of Le Corbusier. After earning his degree, Greenberg moved to Denmark to work in the studio of Scandinavian Modernist Jørn Utzon, who at the time was designing the Sydney Opera House.<sup>29</sup> He subsequently moved to Helsinki to work with Viljo Revell, a noted Finnish Modernist.

In 1963, Greenberg came to the United States to pursue a Master of Architecture degree at Yale University. There, he studied under Paul Rudolph, another prominent figure in the modern movement, and graduated from the program in 1965.<sup>30</sup> Upon graduating, he worked in civil service and also taught architecture at Yale before founding his own architectural firm, Allan Greenberg Architect LLC, in 1972.<sup>31</sup>

By the time that Greenberg had established his eponymous practice in the early 1970s, he had grown disillusioned with Modernism and its perceived banality. He instead turned his attention to the classicism that he had been introduced to as a university student in Johannesburg. His firm developed a reputation for skillfully combining classical architecture with contemporary construction technologies.

That an architect who admired, studied under, and worked with some of the world’s most esteemed Modern architects would embrace an aesthetic entrenched in historical precedent may appear to be something of an anomaly. But Greenberg came of professional age at a time when Modernism and its derivatives were falling out of favor, and new directions forward were being developed. While at Yale, Greenberg was introduced to, and influenced by the critiques of Modernism articulated by Postmodern masters Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, and became familiar with the work of contemporary classicists such as Edwin Lutyens and Mott B. Schmidt.<sup>32</sup> His architectural dialect was also shaped by his

<sup>29</sup> Arthur Lubow, “The Ionic Man,” *Departures* (May-June 1999), accessed Feb. 2019.

<sup>30</sup> Allan Greenberg Architect, “About Allan,” accessed Feb. 2019.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Lubow (1999).

appreciation for iconic American landmarks like The Mall in Washington, D.C., Pennsylvania Station, and Monticello, and the emotional response that these landmarks could elicit. Speaking to this point, he remarked that “I learned early on that people in America love and understand old American buildings.”<sup>33</sup>

One of Greenberg’s first independent commissions was an addition to a seventeenth century house in Connecticut, which “reinforced his growing belief in the adaptability and richness of Classical architecture.”<sup>34</sup> What he considers to have been one of his big breaks came in 1979, when industrialist and philanthropist Peter Brant commissioned Greenberg to construct a custom house in the “Mt. Vernon/George Washington style” in the affluent New York suburb of Greenwich, Connecticut.<sup>35</sup> Brant had been referred to Greenberg by architect Philip Johnson. Known as White Birch Firm, the Brant residence took a year to design and three years to build, and provided Greenberg with the perfect blank slate on which he could develop and hone his distinctively contemporary approach to classical design.

The construction of White Birch Firm cemented Greenberg’s reputation as a leader of the New Classical movement. It also established the young practitioner as one of the premier residential architects in the Northeast. A number of additional residential commissions were awarded to Greenberg during the 1980s and 1990s, almost all of which consisted of high style, custom single-family houses that skillfully incorporated elements of Federal, Georgian, Adam, and other classically derived American idioms. One of the more notable dwellings that Greenberg designed is known as Huckleberry House (1982), a sprawling, pedimented Palladian estate in New Canaan, Connecticut that was designed as the personal residence of George Lichtblau, the inventor of the clip-on anti-shoplifting tag.<sup>36</sup> The house is distinguished by its strict sense of symmetry, abundance of Palladian windows and Classical ornament, and three-story rotunda. It is about one of 20 houses in suburban Connecticut designed by Greenberg.<sup>37</sup>

The timeless aesthetic that defined Greenberg and his body of work, and his penchant for designing elaborate, high style custom residences, appealed to celebrities and rendered Greenberg a modern-day “architect to the stars.” Greenberg has designed the personal houses of actor Harrison Ford, businesswoman and television personality Martha Stewart, and fashion designer Carolyne Roehm.<sup>38</sup>

One of the most distinguishing qualities of Greenberg’s work is the melding together of historically derived architectural idioms with contemporary materials, methods, and building technologies. His work is also not, and was never intended to be, completely derivative, but rather represents a continuum of tried-and-true architectural methods and their adaption to the conditions of present-day life:

Let there be no confusion: the houses Greenberg designs, though not modernist, are modern. They have spacious bathrooms, display kitchens, large windows, and roomy closets, elements that were not part of an 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup>-century house. They have efficient plumbing and

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<sup>33</sup> Ted Loos, “Allan Greenberg Brings a Modern Eye to Classical Architecture,” *Introspective Magazine*, Jan. 15, 2014.

<sup>34</sup> Brooke Perry, “Successful Architecture is Not Simply a Building But an Elevation Design Process that Gives Form to a Client’s Dreams and Ideals,” *Suburban Classic* (2008).

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*; Lisa Prevost, “Estate of Tech Entrepreneur Who Invented an Anti-Theft Tag Lists for \$8.5 Million,” *New York Times*, Apr. 13, 2017.

<sup>37</sup> Prevost (2017).

<sup>38</sup> “New England Huckleberry House,” accessed Feb. 2019.

sophisticated, low-velocity air conditioning systems. Beyond that, though, the classical details that at first glance might seem authentic aren't – and aren't meant to be.<sup>39</sup>

Greenberg is known first and foremost as a designer of high style custom dwellings. However, he has also been awarded a number of institutional commissions, typically by university campuses or government agencies that aspire to project a sense of endurance and formality. Notable institutional commissions within Greenberg's portfolio include the Humanities Building at Rice University, Gore Hall and Dupont Hall at the University of Delaware, J. Wilson Newman Pavilion at the University of Virginia, and the Supreme Court Historical Society and the Luxembourg Embassy, both in Washington, D.C.<sup>40</sup> Like his residences, Greenberg's institutional commissions exemplify how the vocabulary of classical architecture can be skillfully transposed and modulated to meet the programmatic needs of the present.

Commercial architecture constitutes a smaller component of Greenberg's work, but on occasion the architect has been tapped by commercial clients. In 1983, he was asked to design a new, yet contextual, storefront system for the historic Bergdorf Goodman department store in Manhattan. Greenberg was selected for the job because of his extensive and highly nuanced knowledge of classicism.<sup>41</sup> He later designed the Simon and Shuster offices in Rockefeller Center and the D&D Annex, also in Manhattan.<sup>42</sup>

In 1996, Greenberg was selected to design the subject building, a flagship store for the popular apparel brand Tommy Hilfiger. Though he was not especially well known as a commercial architect, the "conservative chic" aesthetic that Greenberg had honed coincided nicely with the classic, all-American look that defined Hilfiger and his brand. Housing the flagship store in a classically derived building, then, served as a bold aesthetic manifestation of the brand and the values it stood behind.

For the Hilfiger store, Greenberg utilized architectural elements such as pediments, columns, and rotundas that were unequivocally classical, but elected to render the façade in fiber-reinforced concrete, a contemporary material.<sup>43</sup> He "experimented with 22 shades of white before arriving at a cream-colored aggregate with blue and black stone, to complement yet contrast with the adjacent Museum of Television and Radio," a stark, Neo-Corbusian edifice that was designed by Richard Meier and Partners.<sup>44</sup>

In 2006, Greenberg was the first American architect to be awarded the Driehaus Prize for Classical Architecture, a prestigious prize bestowed upon practitioners who make notable contributions within the context of contemporary classical or vernacular design. He maintains an active architectural practice, with offices in Alexandria, Virginia, and New York City, and is a prolific author and educator.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Lubow (1999).

<sup>40</sup> Allan Greenberg Architect, "Projects," accessed Feb. 2019.

<sup>41</sup> Perry (2008).

<sup>42</sup> Christopher Gray, "Streetscapes/The Bergdorf Goodman Building on Fifth Avenue; From Architectural Links to Common Ownership," *New York Times*, Aug. 30, 1998.

<sup>43</sup> "On the Boards: Tommy Hilfiger Store, Los Angeles, California, Allan Greenberg, Architect," *Los Angeles Times Magazine* (Dec. 1996), 43.

<sup>44</sup> Lubow (1999).

<sup>45</sup> Allan Greenberg Architect, "About Allan," accessed Feb. 2019.



## 5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation

### 5.1. National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation’s master inventory of known historic resources. Established under the auspices of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level. Eligibility for in the National Register is addressed in National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. NRB 15 states that in order to be eligible for the National Register, a resource must both: (1) be historically significant, and (2) retain sufficient integrity to adequately convey its significance.

Significance is assessed by evaluating a resource against established eligibility criteria. A resource is considered significant if it satisfies any one of the following four National Register criteria:<sup>46</sup>

- Criterion A (events): associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- Criterion B (persons): associated with the lives of significant persons in our past;
- Criterion C (architecture): embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- Criterion D (information potential): has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Once significance has been established, it must then be demonstrated that a resource retains enough of its physical and associative qualities – or *integrity* – to convey the reason(s) for its significance. Integrity is best described as a resource’s “authenticity” as expressed through its physical features and extant characteristics. Generally, if a resource is recognizable as such in its present state, it is said to retain integrity, but if it has been extensively altered then it does not. Whether a resource retains sufficient integrity for listing is determined by evaluating the seven aspects of integrity defined by NPS:

- Location (the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred);
- Setting (the physical environment of a historic property);
- Design (the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property);

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<sup>46</sup> Some resources may meet multiple criteria, though only one needs to be satisfied for National Register eligibility.

- Materials (the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular manner or configuration to form a historic property);
- Workmanship (the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory);
- Feeling (a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time);
- Association (the direct link between an important historic event/person and a historic property).

Integrity is evaluated by weighing all seven of these aspects together and is ultimately a “yes or no” determination – that is, a resource either retains sufficient integrity, or it does not.<sup>47</sup> Some aspects of integrity may be weighed more heavily than others depending on the type of resource being evaluated and the reason(s) for the resource’s significance. Since integrity depends on a resource’s placement within a historic context, integrity can be assessed only after it has been concluded that the resource is in fact significant.

## Criteria Consideration G

Generally, a resource must be at least 50 years of age to be eligible for listing in the National Register. NRB 15 explains that “fifty years is a general estimate of the time needed to develop historical perspective and to evaluate significance. This consideration guards against the listing of properties of passing contemporary interest and ensures that the National Register is a list of truly historic places.”<sup>48</sup>

However, the NPS acknowledges that on occasion, a resource less than 50 years of age may merit consideration for listing in the National Register. Criteria Consideration G offers guidance related to the evaluation of properties that may have achieved significance within the past 50 years, setting forth the conditions under which these resources may be eligible for listing. It provides that exceptions to the age threshold may be granted if it can be demonstrated that a resource less than 50 years of age if the individual resource is: (1) of exceptional importance, or (2) an integral component of a National Register-eligible historic district whose other component parts are predominantly 50 years or older.<sup>49</sup>

In justifying exceptional importance for individual resources (*i.e.*, outside of the National Register-eligible historic district context), NRB 15 cites the necessity of comparative analysis. Specifically, it states that “it is necessary to identify other properties within the geographical area that reflect the same significance or historical associations and to determine which properties *best* represent the historic context in question.” It continues, “Several properties in the area could become eligible with the passage of time, but few will qualify now as exceptionally important.”<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VIII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

<sup>48</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Apply the Criteria Considerations.”

<sup>49</sup> The subject building is not an integral component of a National Register-eligible historic district whose other component parts are predominantly 50 years of age or older, therefore this report will not further evaluate the building under this consideration standard.

<sup>50</sup> NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Apply the Criteria Considerations.”

## 5.2. California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an authoritative guide used to identify, inventory, and protect historical resources in California. Established by an act of the State Legislature in 1998, the California Register program encourages public recognition and protection of significant architectural, historical, archeological, and cultural resources; identifies these resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The structure of the California Register program is similar to that of the National Register, though the former more heavily emphasizes resources that have contributed specifically to the development of California. To be eligible for the California Register, a resource must first be deemed significant under one of the following four criteria, which are modeled after the National Register criteria listed above:

- Criterion 1 (events): associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
- Criterion 2 (persons): associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;
- Criterion 3 (architecture): 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 4 (information potential): has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, state, or the nation.

Mirroring the National Register, the California Register also requires that resources retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing. A resource's integrity is assessed using the same seven aspects of integrity used for the National Register. However, since integrity thresholds associated with the California Register are generally less rigid than those associated with the National Register, it is possible that a resource may lack the integrity required for the National Register but still be eligible for listing in the California Register.

Certain properties are automatically listed in the California Register, as follows:<sup>51</sup>

- All California properties that are listed in the National Register;
- All California properties that have formally been determined eligible for listing in the National Register (by the State Office of Historic Preservation);
- All California Historical Landmarks numbered 770 and above; and
- California Points of Historical Interest which have been reviewed by the State Office of Historic Preservation and recommended for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission.

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<sup>51</sup> California Public Resources Code, Division 5, Chapter 1, Article 2, § 5024.1.

Resources may be nominated directly to the California Register. State Historic Landmarks #770 and forward are also automatically listed in the California Register.

Unlike the National Register's 50 year age requirement, there is no prescribed age limit for listing in the California Register, although guidelines state that sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with a resource.

### 5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance

Historic preservation in Beverly Hills is governed by Title 10, Chapter 3, Articles 32 and 32.5 of the Beverly Hills Municipal Code (referred to hereinafter as "the Ordinance"). The Ordinance authorizes the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) to recommend the nomination of properties as local landmarks and historic districts to the City Council. To facilitate this process, the Ordinance establishes requirements a property must meet in order to qualify for designation as a landmark listed in the City of Beverly Hills Register of Historic Properties. The 2012 Ordinance was revised and updated in 2015, with an additional amendment in 2016; all criteria and definitions used in this document are effective as of April 1, 2016.

To be eligible for local designation as a historic landmark, a property must satisfy the following sets of requirements (A and B) as noted:

**A. A landmark must meet all of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance;
- (2) It possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period;
- (3) It retains substantial integrity<sup>52</sup> from its period of significance; and
- (4) It has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.

**B. In addition to those listed above, a landmark must meet at least one of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places;

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<sup>52</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines "substantial integrity" as "Integrity that is considerable in importance, value, degree, amount, or extent, and that continues to exist, or would have continued to exist, but for work done without appropriate permits after the enactment of this article."

- (2) It is an exceptional work<sup>53</sup> by a master architect<sup>54</sup>;
- (3) It is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous;
- (4) It is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance;
- (5) It is an iconic property<sup>55</sup>; or
- (6) The landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).

Mirroring the National Register and California Register, the Ordinance requires that a resource retain integrity. The Ordinance defines integrity as “the ability of a property to convey its historical significance through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, relevant association, and character defining features.”<sup>56</sup> This builds upon the definition that is used by the National Register.

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<sup>53</sup> A 2016 amendment to BHMC 10-3-32 in Ord. 15-O-2700 defines “exceptional work” as “A remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community. At a minimum, the work’s exceptional quality shall have been documented by at least one of the following: a) it was the subject of a major architectural award; b) it was substantively discussed (i.e., not just mentioned) and photographically depicted in a monograph on a master architect’s career; or c) it was substantively discussed or photographically depicted in at least two (2) publications (e.g., a book, treatise, trade magazine article, film, or set of photographs made available to the public by an institutional archive) authored by acknowledged experts in the field of architecture. A monograph or publication made available to the public solely in electronic form and without any reasonable expectation of compensation to the author, or substantially authored by the architect of the work, shall not count toward this minimum.”

<sup>54</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “master architect” as “An architect of widely recognized greatness in the field of architecture whose individual genius influenced his or her age.”

<sup>55</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “iconic property” as “A property that has been visited and photographed so often by residents and visitors to the city that it has become inextricably associated with Beverly Hills in the popular culture and forms part of the city’s identity to the world at large.”

<sup>56</sup> BHMC 10-3-3202, Definitions.



## 6. Evaluation of Significance

### 6.1. Previous Evaluations

468 North Rodeo Drive does not appear to have been previously evaluated for historical significance. It is not listed in the California Historical Resources Inventory (HRI) database, and was also not identified in any of the City’s historic resource survey efforts (1985/86, 2004, 2006, 2013).

### 6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility

At only 23 years of age at this writing, the subject building is generally too young to be considered a historical resource. As previously enumerated, federal, state, and local eligibility criteria all have age requirements that safeguard against the designation of properties of “passing contemporary interest,” ensuring these designation programs remain lists of truly historical resources, by requiring – for properties fewer than 50 years of age – that individual properties have exceptional importance.

Illustrative of these guidelines, only an extremely small handful of properties younger than 30 years old have been successfully listed in the National Register of Historic Places as individual properties of exceptional importance. Among these are Michael Graves’s Portland Public Service Building (Portland Building), which was listed at 29 years of age; and E. Fay Jones’s Thorncrown Chapel, which was listed at only 20 years of age. Both of these resources were determined to possess exceptional importance because they were the best-known and most pivotal buildings of their respective architects’ careers.



**Name:** Portland Building  
**Architect:** Michael Graves  
**Date of Construction:** 1982  
**Date of NRHP Listing:** 2011

**Exceptional Importance (excerpted from the National Register Nomination Form):**

“Exceptionally important as one of the first large-scale manifestations of a new architectural style coming on the heels of the Modern movement.”

“One of the most notable works by internationally-known master architect Michael Graves and is widely credited as the design that established Graves’s preeminence in the field.”



**Name:** Thorncrowne Chapel  
**Architect:** E. Fay Jones  
**Date of Construction:** 1980  
**Date of NRHP Listing:** 2000

**Exceptional Importance (excerpted from the National Register Nomination Form):**

“Exceptional as a turning point in Fay Jones’s career.”

The chapel was “crucial to [Fay Jones’s] receipt of the AIA Gold Medal for his lifetime of achievement.”

“Arguably among the twentieth century’s great works of art.”

Nevertheless, due to the fact that the subject building was designed by an acclaimed architect, it is evaluated herein for its potential to have exceptional importance such that it meets eligibility criteria despite its very young age.

## National Register and California Register

As described above in *Sections 5.1-5.2*, California Register criteria were modeled on those of the National Register, and therefore they are essentially identical in their language and the ways in which they are used to evaluate potential significance. Under both programs, in order to be eligible for listing a resource must meet the age requirement; be significant at the local, state, or national level under one or more of the eligibility criteria; and retain sufficient integrity to convey significance. It is in the application of an age requirement that the two programs differ. For listing in the National Register, resources fewer than 50 years of age are generally not eligible for listing unless they meet the requirements of Criterion Consideration G, whereas for listing in the California Register, regulations state that “sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with a resource.”<sup>57</sup>

What follows is an evaluation of the subject building against both National Register and California Register criteria, with distinction made when there is an issue of age due to the fact that the building is fewer than 50 years old.

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<sup>57</sup> California Office of Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Series #6: California Register and National Register: A Comparison (for purposes of determining eligibility for the California Register). Sacramento: Dept. of Parks and Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation.

<https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1069/files/technical%20assistance%20bulletin%206%202011%20update.pdf>

ARG concludes that 468 North Rodeo Drive is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources, as follows:

***National/California Register Criterion A/1: associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history.***

Constructed in 1997, the subject building is associated with a relatively contemporary period of development in the Business Triangle district of Beverly Hills. It was one of many commercial and institutional buildings that were constructed in this area at the time, and its association with the glitz and glamour of Hollywood helped to augment the area's reputation as an epicenter of opulence, wealth, and high culture. On its own, the building does not signify important trends in the development of Beverly Hills that are not expressed in the many other commercial and institutional buildings that were constructed in this area of the city in the latter decades of the twentieth century.

The building has hosted a number of special events over the course of its history, most notably a celebrity-studded gala that marked the grand opening of the Tommy Hilfiger flagship store in November 1997. The gala was a widely publicized event and aired on network television. However, these types of high profile events are fairly typical advertising tactics employed by retailers, particularly those associated with the fashion industry. There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that any event that has taken place within the building are, or will be considered to be singularly significant to history.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion A/1.

***National/California Register Criterion B/2: associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.***

The subject building was commissioned by fashion icon Tommy Hilfiger as the site of his brand's inaugural flagship store. While Hilfiger was deeply invested in the building's construction and operation, and visited the building when it operated as a Tommy Hilfiger store between 1997 and 2000, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that it is the property best associated with the fashion mogul. There existed numerous retail stores, and several flagship stores, within the Hilfiger company's portfolio. The building bears a stronger association with the Hilfiger brand than with Hilfiger himself.

As a retail store that was occupied by two major tenants – Tommy Hilfiger and Brooks Brothers – the building has been patronized by scores of visitors since its construction in 1997. However, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the subject building bears a direct association with the productive period of any one individual in a manner that would merit consideration under this criterion.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with the lives of persons important to local, state, or national history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion B/2.

***National/California Register Criterion C/3: embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.***

The subject building embodies distinguishing characteristics of New Classical architecture. Features of the building that are associated with the style include its symmetrical façade, balanced composition, formal arrangement of architectural elements, scored white concrete exterior walls that emulate the appearance of heavy masonry, articulated entrances with pediments and columns, multi-light windows, arched window openings, balustrades, and classically derived decorative elements.

The building is also representative of the work produced by architect Allan Greenberg and his eponymous firm. Greenberg is widely recognized as a leader of the New Classical movement, and has designed an array of notable and highly articulated residential, institutional, and commercial buildings across the nation. His myriad contributions have helped to steer the direction of contemporary architecture toward a more traditional aesthetic, and arguably elevate him to the status of a master architect. This particular building, while not especially transformative in the arc of his career to date, nonetheless exemplifies the careful balance between classical derivatives and modern technologies that so strongly characterize Greenberg and his work, and have provided him with international acclaim.

### ***National Register Age Requirement: Criteria Consideration G***

According to National Register Criteria Consideration G, it is not enough for a resource to simply meet the conditions enumerated in the criterion to justify eligibility for the National Register if the resource being evaluated is less than 50 years of age. For resources that are not yet 50 years of age, it must be demonstrated that the resource is not merely significant, but exhibits *exceptional* importance within its requisite historic context(s). This consideration “guards against the listing of properties of passing contemporary interest” and ensures that enough time has elapsed to develop historical perspective.<sup>58</sup>

Determining whether a resource is exceptionally important for purposes of the National Register requires comparative analysis of the resource against contextually related properties. If, when the resource is compared to others, it becomes evident that (1) it conveys unique extraordinary qualities that render it an extremely important example of its respective context, or (2) represents a type so rare or fragile that extant examples of any age are unusual, it is generally considered to meet Criteria Consideration G.<sup>59</sup> Conversely, resources that are more ordinary or representative of a given context are generally not considered to satisfy the “exceptional importance” benchmark.

When the subject building is compared to other examples of New Classicism, and particularly with other projects in Greenberg’s portfolio using the above-listed benchmark criteria, it does not appear to meet the definition of “exceptional importance.” Greenberg is best associated with residential and, to a lesser extent, institutional commissions, and it is through these types of residential and institutional projects that his skill and prowess are arguably best expressed. Other projects within his expansive portfolio, including White Birch Farm and Huckleberry House in Connecticut and his university buildings, arguably possess a higher degree of detail and articulation than the subject building.

Greenberg is not especially well known for his body of commercial work, largely because the ephemeral nature of consumer culture is usually better suited to bold, unabashed modern architectural idioms.

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<sup>58</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Apply the Criteria Considerations.”

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

Commercial buildings, and especially those associated with the retail industry, are often designed in contemporary styles in an effort to keep abreast with current trends. The building also does not appear to have represented a watershed moment in Greenberg's career, which by this point had been well-established for decades. Newspaper articles and other media about the building's construction were generally focused on the tenant (Tommy Hilfiger) and not the building itself.

There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the subject building is an exceptionally rare example of its type. Contemporary interpretations of Classical architecture and other historically idioms can be found in abundance across Southern California. There do not appear to be many examples of Greenberg's work in California, but that is because an overwhelming majority of his signature buildings are located on the East Coast, and particularly in the New York metropolitan area.

It also bears mention that Greenberg continues to operate active practices in New York City and Alexandria, Virginia, and so the complete breadth of his legacy is not yet known. It will likely take time for the significance of Greenberg's arc of work to be fully grasped. For this reason, it seems somewhat premature to evaluate the building through the lens of history at this moment in time.

Critically evaluating the contributions of a living architect is also challenging in that one's perception of the architect may be colored more by factors apart from their professional contributions, making it difficult to issue an objective and analytical judgment of their work that is free of emotional pretense.

#### ***California Register Age Requirement***

The California Register does not enumerate a minimum age requirement for listing, as does the National Register, but stipulates that sufficient time has to have elapsed to have a scholarly perspective on the historical significance of a resource to be eligible for listing. As stated above, the building's relatively recent construction date (1997), coupled with the fact that Allan Greenberg continues to operate an active architectural practice, hinder the ability to thoroughly and objectively evaluate its historical significance.

In conclusion, while the subject building represents the tenets underpinning New Classicism and the work of architect Allan Greenberg, it does not stand out as an exceptionally important example of either context. Compounding this is the fact that an insufficient amount of time has elapsed to truly understand the building through the lens of history. Taking into account the high eligibility thresholds associated with resources of the recent past, the building does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion C/3.

***Criterion D/4. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.***

As an archaeological assessment was not conducted as part of this study, the property's potential for containing subsurface archaeological resources is unknown.



## Local Eligibility

ARG concludes that 468 North Rodeo Drive does not appear eligible for local listing as Beverly Hills Landmark, as follows:

### **Part A Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet all four of the following requirements):**

***Criterion A.1: it is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance.***

The subject building was constructed in 1997 and is not yet forty-five years of age. As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, it is not a property of extraordinary significance. Thus, it does not satisfy Criterion A.1.

***Criterion A.2: it possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period.***

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, the subject building embodies the distinctive characteristics of New Classicism. It therefore meets Criterion A.2.

***Criterion A.3: it retains substantial integrity from its period of significance.***

The subject building has been minimally altered since its construction between 1997. It appears almost exactly as it did when it was built, and continues to express the aesthetic and architectural principles that influenced its original design. It therefore meets Criterion A.3.

***Criterion A.4: it has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.***

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, not enough time has elapsed to fully understand the significance of the subject building through the lens of history. The building is of relatively recent construction (1997), and when compared to other works of Greenberg it does not appear to be of exceptional importance. It is also not a rare example of a contemporary interpretation of a historical architectural style. Absent these qualities, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the building has historic value to the community. Thus, it does not satisfy Criterion A.4.

### **Part B Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet at least one of the following requirements):**

***Criterion B.1: it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.***

The subject building is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and therefore does not meet Criterion B.1.

**Criterion B.2:** *it is an exceptional work by a master architect.*

The subject building was designed by architect Allan Greenberg. Greenberg, while a noted practitioner, is not currently included on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Local Master Architects.

Moreover, the building does not meet the Beverly Hills Municipal Code's definition of "exceptional work." A 2016 amendment to BHMC 10-3-32 in Ord. 15-O-2700 defines "exceptional work" as "a remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community," meeting at least one of the following criteria:

Firstly, a work would be considered exceptional if "it was the subject of a major architectural award." Although the subject building was named the "Best Commercial Building of 1998" by the Precast/Prestressed Concrete Institute, research did not suggest that the building won any major architectural awards.<sup>60</sup>

Secondly, a work would be considered exceptional if "it was substantively discussed (i.e., not just mentioned) and photographically depicted in a monograph on a master architect's career." There is one monograph of Allan Greenberg's work, *Allan Greenberg: Classical Architect*, which was written by Greenberg. The subject building is photographically depicted and discussed in this monograph. However, the fact that the building is depicted in a monograph compiled by Greenberg himself does not provide scholarly or critical evidence that it is an exceptional work by a master architect.

Finally, a work would be considered exceptional if "it was substantively discussed or photographically depicted in at least two (2) publications (e.g., a book, treatise, trade magazine article, film, or set of photographs made available to the public by an institutional archive) authored by acknowledged experts in the field of architecture." The subject building was published in newspaper articles at the time of its design and construction. Notably, *Architecture* magazine published renderings of the building in the "On the Boards" section of the December 1996 issue.<sup>61</sup> However, nearly all newspaper articles and other media about the building's construction were generally focused on the tenant (Tommy Hilfiger) and not the building itself.

In summary, as a flagship store for an international clothing brand located in a prominent location, the building was a notable commission for Greenberg and subject of press and recognition at the time of its design and construction. However, as stated previously under National Register and California Register Criterion C/3, the building's relatively recent construction date (1997), coupled with the fact that the importance of Allan Greenberg's work in the overall context of late 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture is yet to be fully understood, hinder the ability to thoroughly and objectively evaluate its historical significance as an exceptional work by a master architect.

For these reasons, the building does not meet Criterion B.2.

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<sup>60</sup> "Allan Greenberg," University of Notre Dame School of Architecture, accessed June 2020. <<https://architecture.nd.edu/news-events/events/driehaus-prize/recipients/allan-greenberg/>>

<sup>61</sup> Ned Cramer, "On the Boards," *Architecture*, December 1996, 43.

**Criterion B.3:** *it is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous.*

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion B/2, there is insufficient evidence demonstrating that the subject building bears a meaningful association with the productive lives of historically significant individuals. Thus, the building does not meet Criterion B.3.

**Criterion B.4:** *it is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance.*

As discussed, the subject building does not appear to have been associated with persons of great local importance in a manner that would merit consideration under this criterion. Thus, the building does not meet Criterion B.4.

**Criterion B.5:** *it is an iconic property.*

The subject building is not an iconic property as defined by the Ordinance. Although, because of its location and use it has been visited by many, the building does not appear to have become inextricably associated with Beverly Hills's identity in a manner that would merit further consideration under this criterion. For this reason, the building does not meet Criterion B.5.

**Criterion B.6:** *the landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).*

The Landmark designation procedure is not known to have been initiated by any parties, and the owner(s) of the property have not expressly agreed to the initiation of such a procedure. As a result, the subject building does not meet Criterion B.6.

### **Summary of Local Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for local listing, a resource must meet all four of the above-listed Part A requirements, and at least one of the above-listed Part B requirements. The building does not meet Criterion A.1 and A.4, as required, and does not meet any of the Part B requirements. In summary, the subject building does not meet local eligibility criteria.

### 6.3. Evaluation of Integrity

For a property to be eligible for listing in the National and California Registers, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark, it must meet eligibility criteria and retain sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance. *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* states that “only after significance is fully established can you proceed to the issue of integrity.”<sup>62</sup> In accordance with best professional practices, it is customary to apply this same methodology when evaluating resources at the state and local levels. Because the building does not meet the criteria for federal, state, or local listing, an assessment of integrity is not necessary.

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<sup>62</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

## 7. Conclusion

The building at 468 North Rodeo Drive embodies characteristics of New Classicism, a contemporary architectural idiom, and is also a representative work of architect Allan Greenberg. However, when evaluating the significance of buildings of the recent past, the bar is held particularly high to ensure that a resource is evaluated with an appropriate amount of historical perspective. Resources of the recent past – and especially resources like the subject building that were built in the very recent past (1997) – must demonstrably exhibit exceptional importance to be eligible for listing.

The building does not exhibit the exceptional level of historical and/or architectural significance needed to substantiate its eligibility for federal, state, or local listing. Therefore, the building is not eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark at this time, and is not considered to be a “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA.



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# Paley Center for Media

461 North Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, CA

## Historic Resources Assessment Report

*Prepared for:*

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP  
San Francisco, CA

*Prepared by:*



Architectural  
Resources Group

Architectural Resources Group  
Los Angeles, CA

June 24, 2020

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Executive Summary	1
1.2. Preparer Qualifications	2
<b>2. Architectural Description</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1. Site and Setting	3
2.2. Building Exterior	4
2.3. Building Interior	5
2.4. Landscape and Hardscape Features	6
<b>3. Development Chronology and Alterations</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>4. Historic Contexts</b>	<b>16</b>
4.1. Commercial Development in Beverly Hills	16
4.2. Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center for Media	20
4.3. Late Modern Architecture	24
4.4. Richard Meier and Partners	26
<b>5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation</b>	<b>31</b>
5.1. National Register of Historic Places	31
5.2. California Register of Historical Resources	33
5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance	35
<b>6. Evaluation of Significance</b>	<b>37</b>
6.1. Previous Evaluations	37
6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility	37
6.3. Evaluation of Integrity	47
<b>7. Conclusion</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>8. Bibliography</b>	<b>49</b>



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Executive Summary

At the request of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) has prepared this Historic Resource Assessment Report for the property at 461 North Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, California. The property is developed with a two-story cultural/institutional building that was constructed between 1994-96 as the West Coast branch of the Museum of Television and Radio (now called the Paley Center for Media). Founded in 1975 in New York City, the museum was the brainchild of broadcasting titan and longtime CBS Chief Executive William S. Paley. Its collections explore the creative and cultural contributions of television, radio, and other popular modes of media.

The subject building was designed by Richard Meier and Partners. Meier's eponymous, internationally renowned architecture firm is known for its prolific use of abstract geometric forms and the color white, and development of a derivative of Late Modern architecture that is, at times, referred to as Neo-Corbusian. Meier is included on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Local Master Architects.<sup>1</sup> The subject building was not constructed from the ground up, but was rather an extensive remodel of two existing commercial buildings on the site.

ARG evaluated the subject building to determine whether it appears to be eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, and/or as a Beverly Hills Landmark. At only 25 years of age at this writing, the subject building is generally too young to be considered a historical resource. Federal, state, and local eligibility criteria all have age requirements that safeguard against the designation of properties of "passing contemporary interest," ensuring these designation programs remain lists of truly historical resources. However, due to the fact that the building was designed by an internationally acclaimed architectural partnership, it is evaluated herein for its potential to have exceptional importance such that it meets eligibility criteria despite its very young age.

Preparation of this report included the following tasks related to research, documentation, and analysis:

- Visited the property on January 10, 2019 to assess existing conditions and document the building's exterior and publicly accessible interior spaces with digital photographs;
- Reviewed pertinent federal and state technical bulletins, local ordinances, and other reference materials related to the evaluation of historical resources;
- Reviewed applicable background materials including historical building permits and Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) data for the subject property;
- Conducted supplemental research to glean additional information about the property's development history, design, occupancy, and potential historical significance;
- Identified applicable historic contexts and themes; and

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<sup>1</sup> City of Beverly Hills, "List of Local Master Architects, Version 2.1," adopted Oct. 14, 2015, revised Jan. 13, 2016.

- Evaluated the building against eligibility criteria for the National Register, the California Register, and as a Beverly Hills Landmark.

Research materials were culled from the following sources: the Los Angeles Public Library; the Beverly Hills Public Library; the archives of the *Los Angeles Times* and other local periodicals; building permits obtained from the City of Beverly Hills’s Community Development Department; technical bulletins published by the National Park Service (NPS) and the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP); online repositories; and ARG’s in-house collection of architectural books and reference materials. A complete list of sources is included in *Section 8: Bibliography* of this report.

Because the property is less than 50 years of age, the analysis herein incorporates the guidance enumerated by National Register Criteria Consideration G, a set of evaluative guidelines applied when assessing resources of the recent past (generally defined as those constructed in the past 50 years).<sup>2</sup>

In summary, ARG concludes that the subject building exhibits the character-defining features of Late Modern architecture, and specifically those of the Neo-Corbusian derivative of this style. The building is also characteristic of the institutional work of Richard Meier and Partners, an architect of international acclaim. However, as a very young resource, it does not exhibit exceptional historical and/or architectural significance needed to substantiate its eligibility for federal, state, or local listing at this time. Also, since Richard Meier and Partners continues to operate an active practice in Los Angeles, the complete arc of the firm’s work is not yet fully understood to an extent that would substantiate the building’s eligibility. Thus, the building is not eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark, and is not considered to be a “historical resource” for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) at this time.

The following sections provide a contextual basis for analysis and a detailed discussion of how this determination was made.

## 1.2. Preparer Qualifications

This report was prepared by Katie E. Horak, Principal, and Andrew Goodrich, AICP, Associate, both Architectural Historians and Preservation Planners. ARG intern Rafael Fontes provided additional project support. Ms. Horak and Mr. Goodrich meet the *Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards*, 36 CFR Part 61, in the discipline of Architectural History.

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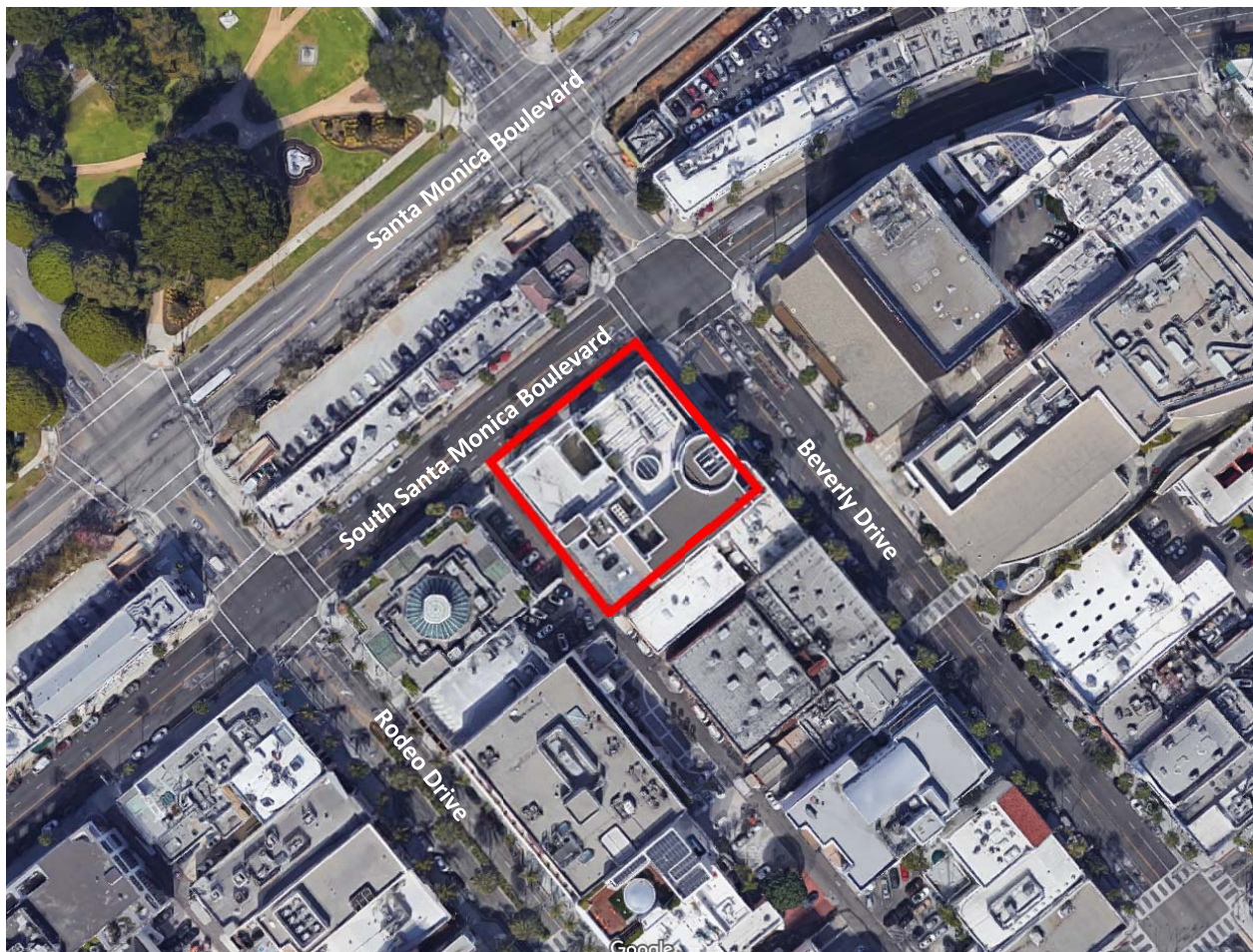
<sup>2</sup> Derived from National Register Bulletin No. 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. Criterion Consideration G is addressed in greater detail in Sections 5 and 6 of this report.

## 2. Architectural Description

### 2.1. Site and Setting

The subject property is located near the northern edge of a triangular-shaped commercial district that is bounded by Santa Monica Boulevard (north and west), Wilshire Boulevard (south), and Canon Drive (east). This area serves as the central business district of Beverly Hills. Known as the Business Triangle, it is densely developed with a mix of low- and mid-scale commercial buildings, many of which are occupied by some of the foremost purveyors of luxury retail goods. The circulation network ascribes to a grid that is oriented 45 degrees askew of the cardinal directions and contributes to the area's wedge-like form.

461 North Beverly Drive consists of a flat, compact commercial parcel that sits at the southwest corner of Beverly Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard. The parcel is rectangular in shape and measures roughly 22,000 square feet. The southeast property line abuts an adjacent commercial building. The southwest property line abuts a small service alley that is equidistant from Beverly and Rodeo Drives.



*Location map. The subject property, 461 North Beverly Drive, is outlined in red (Google Maps).*

## 2.2. Building Exterior

The parcel contains a 26,523-square-foot commercial building that was constructed between 1994 and 1996. It was not built from the ground up, but rather involved the extensive remodeling of two existing commercial buildings. It was built to house the collections of the Museum of Television and Radio (later known as the Paley Center for Media). The building varies between two and three stories in height and is constructed of steel frame. It sits on a concrete foundation, atop a subterranean parking garage that is accessed from the northwest via a driveway off South Santa Monica Boulevard. The building is spatially complex, with an irregular footprint that is composed of multiple geometric planes and volumes. It has two street-facing elevations: one faces northeast, toward Beverly Drive, and the other faces northwest, toward South Santa Monica Boulevard. The northeast elevation features a slight setback; the northwest elevation is mostly flush with the street.

Since the subject building is of relatively recent vintage (1994-96), it is somewhat difficult to assign it a discernible architectural style. However, the building's prevailing sense of rationality and order, its emphasis on balanced geometric forms, its crisp lines, and its austere exterior surfaces, devoid of color and superfluous ornament, are typically associated with Neo-Corbusian architecture, a derivative of the Late Modern style that harkens back to trends in pre-World War II Modernism.

The building is capped by a flat roof with multiple levels and volumes. The roof was neither visible nor accessible during ARG's site visit, but appears to be sheathed in a composition sheet membrane and is spanned by a flat parapet. Skylights are incorporated into the roof and naturally illuminate key interior spaces. The northeast quadrant of the roof is occupied by an exterior deck that is used as an events venue. Photos of the roof deck indicate that it is finished with square tiles, is enclosed by parapet walls, and is capped by an abstracted metal canopy. The canopy, which is visible from the street, appears as if it is hovering over the building. The roof deck also features metal railings and integral planter boxes.

The primary elevation is oriented to the northeast. Features on this elevation are asymmetrically composed. Exterior walls are extensively glazed; those portions of exterior wall that are not glazed are clad with white enameled metal panels and warm travertine. The metal panels are arranged in a modular grid pattern. The focal point of this elevation is a large cylindrical volume that is positioned off center and extensively glazed with fixed, flush-mounted anodized aluminum windows. This volume acts as the symbolic center of the building. At its base is a pair of glazed, anodized aluminum entrance doors. These doors are sheltered by a cantilevered canopy that projects out over the sidewalk and is clad with enameled metal panels. Signage that spells "THE PALEY CENTER FOR MEDIA" is affixed to the canopy.

The rest of the primary elevation is dominated by a trapezoidal volume that cantilevers out from the building and frames an interior stair. This volume is also extensively glazed. Steel muntins and steel structural beams (which effectively double as muntins) divide the glazed volume into a gridded network of fixed metal windows. Additional fixed windows are located on the opposite side of the main entrance.

The northwest elevation also has extensive street frontage, and its features are arranged asymmetrically. Exterior walls are clad with enameled metal panels and smooth stucco. The stucco is painted white, and is scored in such a manner as to mimic the modularity of the metal panels and reinforce the building's prevailing sense of geometry. Metal signage that spells "THE PALEY CENTER FOR



MEDIA” is affixed to the metal panels. The cadence of this elevation is interrupted by a large void near its center; this void frames a driveway that slopes down beneath the building and provides vehicular access to the subterranean garage. There are two secondary entrances to the building on this elevation: the first is located adjacent to the driveway and consists of a single, recessed unarticulated metal door, and the second is located at the far (northwest) end of the elevation and consists of paired, glazed anodized aluminum doors. The latter are flush with the building’s face and set beneath a stucco hood.

Fenestration is generally confined to the two street-facing (northeast and northwest) elevations. It consists of fixed, flush-mounted aluminum windows, many of which wrap around the corners of the building to create uninterrupted expanses of glass. Elsewhere, windows are placed in a seemingly random manner and consist of single fixed aluminum windows, some of which have recessed openings.

The rear (southwest and southeast) elevations are both obscured from public view; the southwest elevation faces a service alley, and the southeast elevation abuts an adjacent building. Compared to the street-facing elevations, the rear elevations are utilitarian in appearance and lack articulation. Walls are either clad with scored stucco or consist of painted concrete blocks. Fenestration is minimal. There are several unarticulated secondary entrances and a loading dock on the southwest elevation.

## 2.3. Building Interior

The entrance doors on the northeast elevation leads into a large rotunda that functions as the museum’s entry pavilion and is the unequivocal focal point of the building’s interior. The rotunda is a dramatic, voluminous triple-height space that is naturally illuminated by extensive glazing and skylights. Its walls are painted white, and its floors are finished with polished travertine. Its cylindrical form is reinforced by a circumferential staircase that clings to one wall, and an undulated balcony that projects out from another. The staircase and balcony feature metal handrails that are painted white. The northwest wall features a reception desk and rear wall panels, both of which are finished in light maple.

The rotunda leads into a gallery that is naturally illuminated by skylights and floor-to-ceiling glazing. The gallery features carpeted floors and white-painted walls that are accentuated by tack panels and polished travertine. Clinging to one wall of the gallery is a U-shaped staircase that leads to the second floor. The stairs have shallow treads, are finished in polished travertine, and are accentuated by a combination of chrome and painted metal handrails. Exterior walls adjacent to the staircase are extensively glazed, providing those outside the building with a clear view of interior circulation patterns.

Near the rear (northwest) of the entry pavilion is a travertine staircase that enters into a second, smaller sky-lit rotunda. The stairs lead to a 150-seat theater. The theater is a large, double-height space with raked floors, light maple wall panels, fabric-covered seats, and a projection screen. The entry pavilion also affords access to a radio studio, listening room, museum shop, and various back-of-house facilities.

The second floor includes the aforementioned balcony and two large open spaces that originally housed a “console center,” where patrons could cue up and watch archived television programs on video screens. Finishes on the second floor are of a decidedly lesser quality than those on the first floor. Most second-floor spaces feature drop ceilings and laminate flooring that loosely emulates the appearance of



the polished travertine that is applied elsewhere on the building. The console center features a reception desk and wall panels that are finished in light maple. Near the rear of the console center is a room that was originally known as the “Scholars’ Room” (and was used primarily by researchers) but now appears to house all of the video and audio equipment. The Scholars’ Room is a small, enclosed space with drop ceilings and carpeted floors.

The third floor is not publically accessible, and was thus not accessible during ARG’s site visit. Research indicates that it contains a boardroom and the roof deck. Access to this level is provided by elevator and by the circumferential staircase in the entrance pavilion/rotunda.

## **2.4. Landscape and Hardscape Features**

Since the building occupies almost the entirety of the lot, landscape and hardscape features are minimal. The shallow setback on the primary (northeast) elevation features a set of stairs and a walkway, which are framed on either side by low buffer walls. The stairs, walkway, and buffer walls are all clad in the same travertine finish that is used to adorn the building’s exterior walls; the travertine effectively demarcates the property line. A small reflecting pool is located in what would otherwise be void space beneath the cantilever. Metal handrails flank the stairs and wrap around the northwest edge of the reflecting pond. Landscaping consists only of the aforementioned planter boxes atop the roof, and several semi-mature Mexican fan palm trees that are planted in the parkways along both streets.

Current Photos



Primary (northeast) elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).



Primary (northeast) elevation, view northwest (ARG, 2019).



Northwest elevation, view southwest (ARG, 2019).



Northwest elevation, view east (ARG, 2019).



Southwest elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).



Southwest elevation, view north (ARG, 2019).



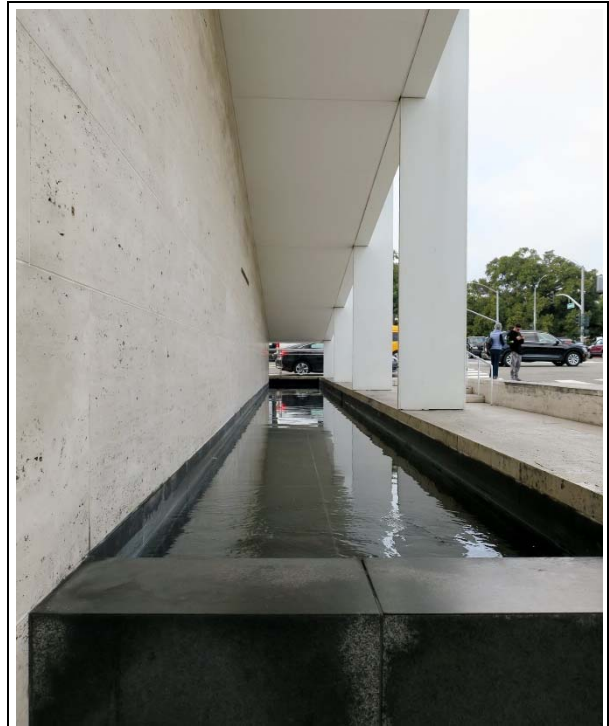
*Cylindrical volume on primary (northeast) elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



*Glazed, cantilevered canopy above primary entrance (ARG, 2019).*

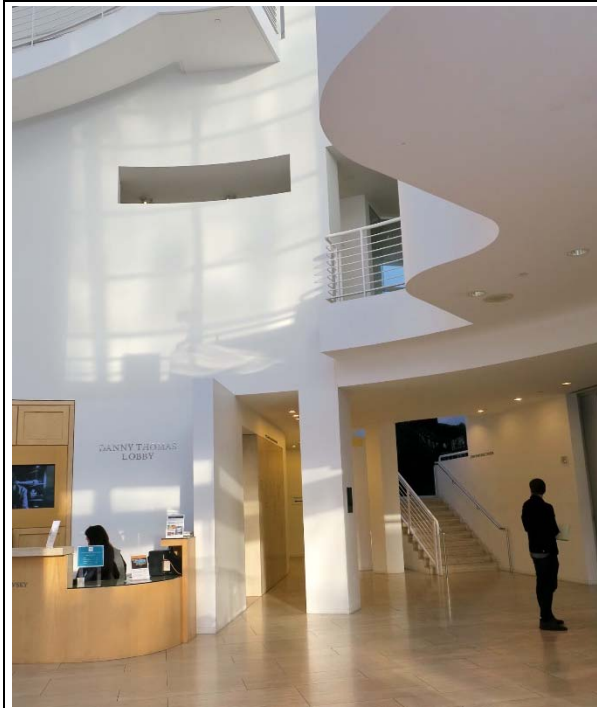


*Travertine finishes in front setback, view northwest (ARG, 2019).*

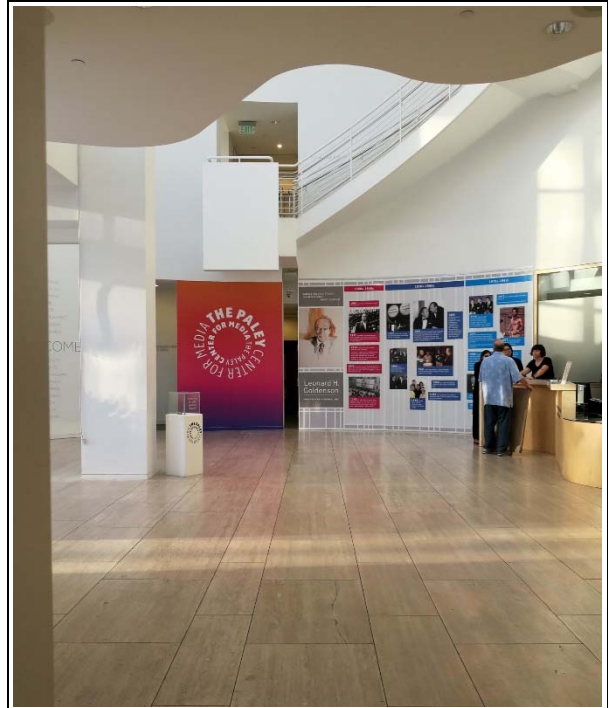


*Reflecting pool beneath cantilever on primary (northeast) elevation, view northwest (ARG, 2019).*

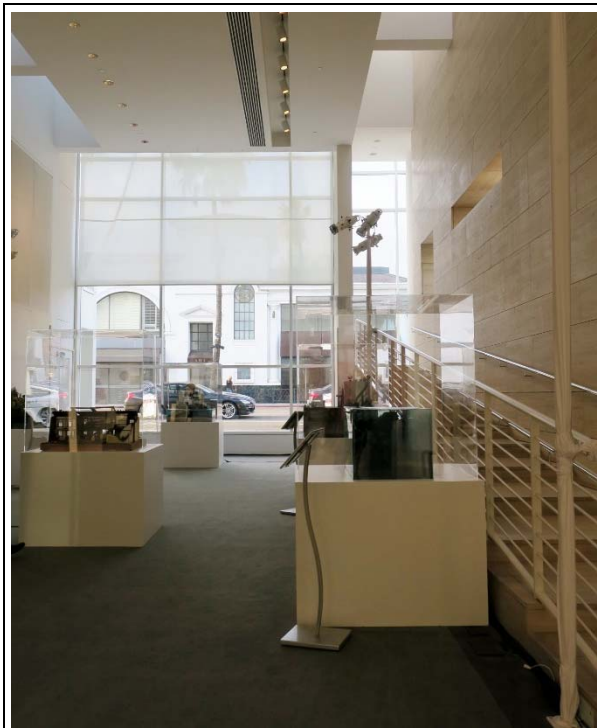




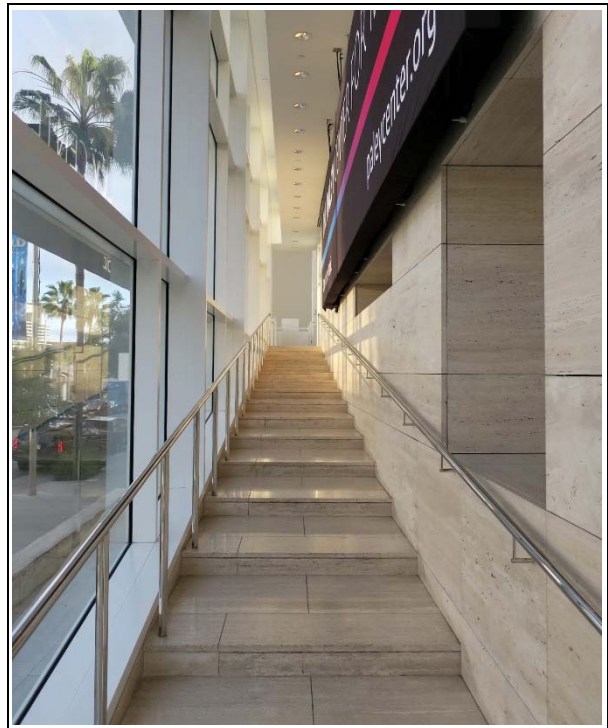
*Rotunda/entry pavilion. Note natural illumination and undulated balcony (ARG, 2019).*



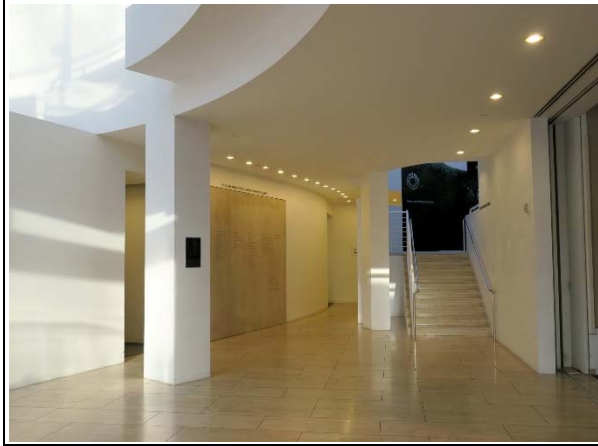
*Rotunda/entry pavilion (ARG, 2019).*



*First floor gallery as viewed from rotunda. Note travertine stairs and extensive glazing (ARG, 2019).*



*Travertine stairs to second floor (ARG, 2019).*



*Stairs to first floor theater as viewed from rotunda (ARG, 2019).*



*First floor theater (ARG, 2019).*



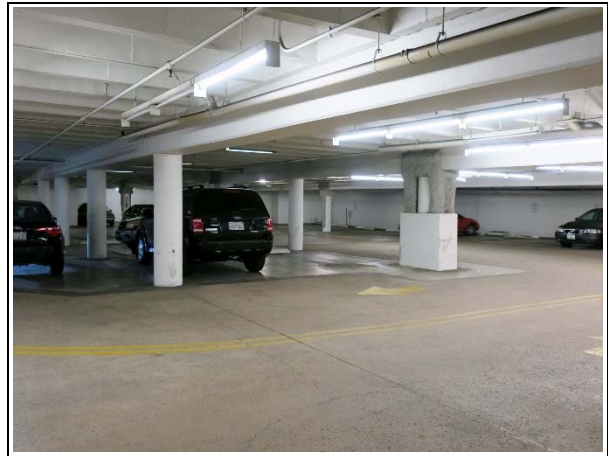
*Second floor balcony. Note undulation (ARG, 2019).*



*Second floor console center. Note light maple accents (ARG, 2019).*



*Driveway to subterranean parking garage, northwest elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



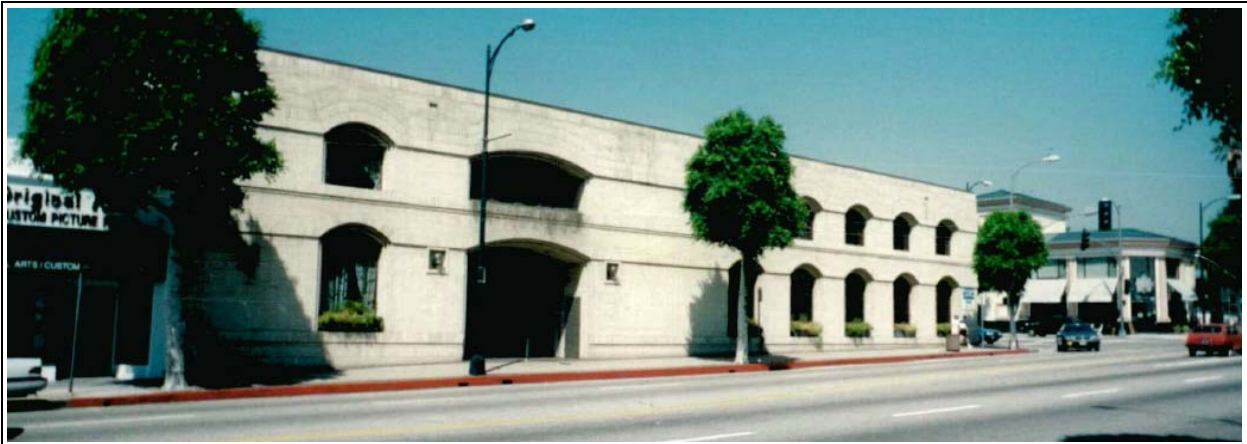
*Subterranean parking garage (ARG, 2019).*



## Additional Photos and Images



*View of subject property prior to construction of the Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center, 1994, view south. An existing bank building (painted white) is pictured in the foreground; an existing restaurant building (clad with brick) is pictured in the background (Permit File for 461 N Beverly Drive).*



*View of subject property prior to construction of the Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center, 1994, view northwest (Permit File for 461 N Beverly Drive).*



*View of subject property prior to construction of the Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center, 1994, view southeast. The entry to the subterranean garage is pictured in the foreground (Permit File for 461 N Beverly Drive).*



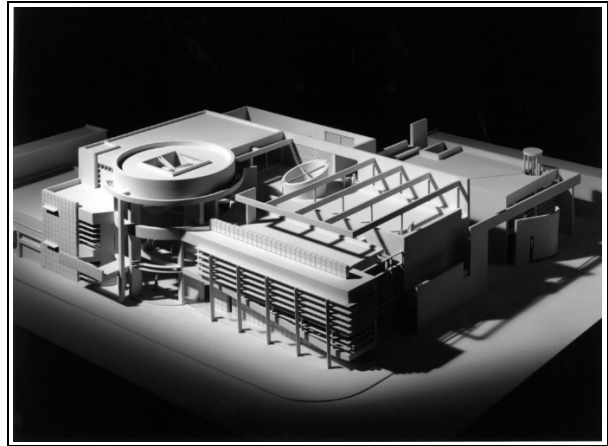
Primary (northeast) elevation, view southwest, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).



Primary (northeast) elevation at dusk, view southwest, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP)



Detail of entrance rotunda, n.d. Note signage with original name (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).



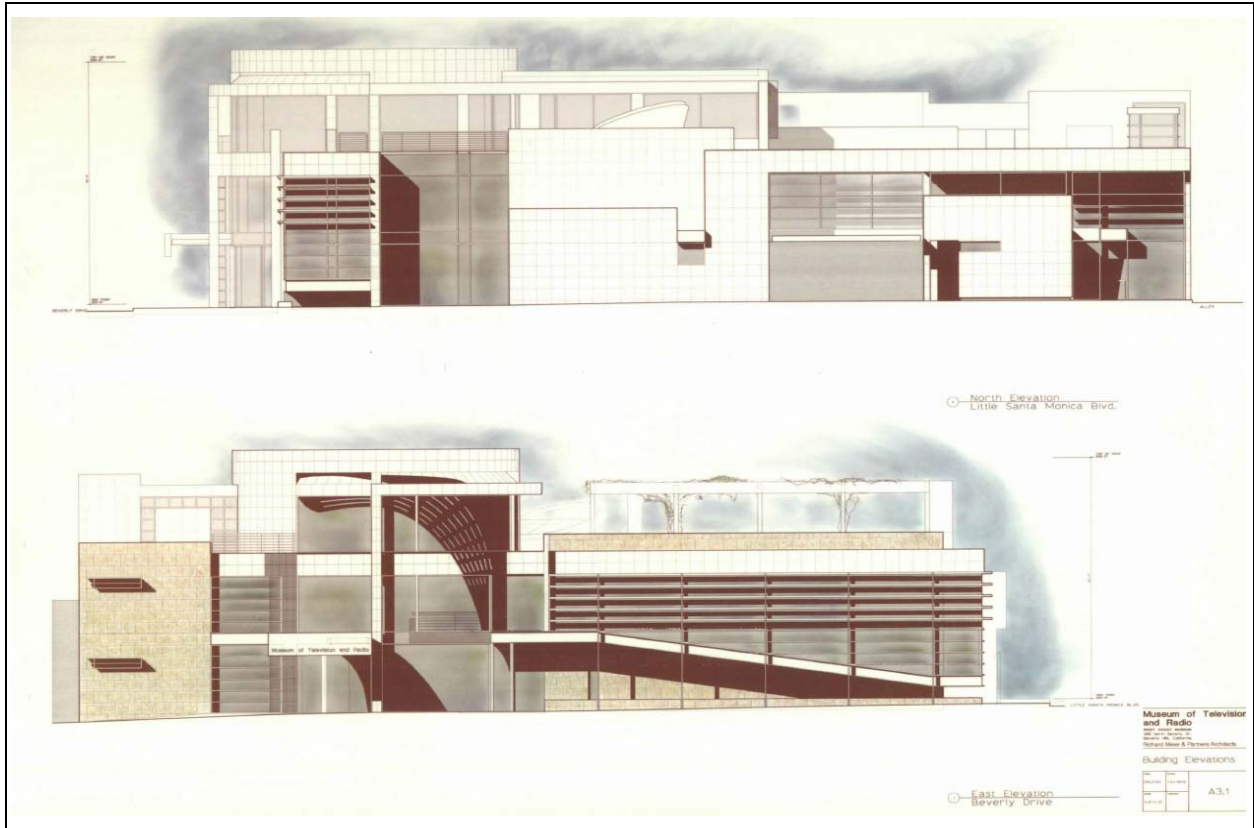
Model depicting original plans for the building, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).



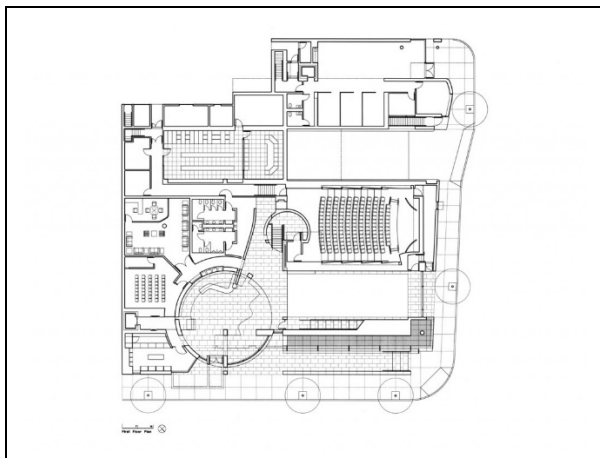
Entrance rotunda/main lobby, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).



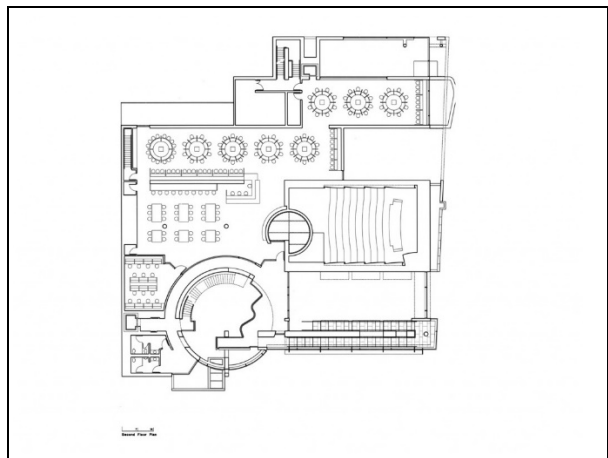
Detail of rotunda and skylight, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).



Building elevations, 1994 (Permit File for 461 N Beverly Drive).



First floor plan, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).



Second floor plan, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).



### 3. Development Chronology and Alterations

The following development chronology for 461 North Beverly Drive summarizes key events in the property’s development history between its 1994-1996 construction and the present-day. It was developed by reviewing historical building permits from the Beverly Hills Community Development Department, and was augmented by additional sources of information including historic photos and aerial images; parcel data from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor; the collections of the Beverly Hills Public Library and other local and online repositories; and other archival materials.

<p><b>1994</b></p>	<p>The Museum of Television and Radio, a New York City-based institution that explores the creative and cultural contributions of television, radio, and other popular modes of media, announced plans to open a sister location in Beverly Hills. Its Board of Trustees selected Richard Meier to redesign an existing bank building at the southwest corner of Beverly Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard into a new, state-of-the-art facility for the museum.</p> <p>Permit issued to renovate existing commercial buildings at the southwest corner of Beverly Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard into the Museum of Television and Radio. Richard Meier and Partners is listed as the architect (Permit No. C9400833). One building (461 North Beverly Drive) had previously been occupied by a bank; the other (9474 South Santa Monica Boulevard) had previously been occupied by a restaurant.</p> <p>Permit issued to demolish interior bank vaults and install a permanent storage system for the museum. Richard Meier and Partners is listed as the architect (Permit No. C9400741).</p>
<p><b>1996</b></p>	<p>Construction completed. The West Coast location of the Museum of Television and Radio opened to the public in March 1996.</p>
<p><b>1998</b></p>	<p>Permit issued to repair leaks in the glass curtain wall system. Peck Jones Construction is listed as the contractor (Permit No. 98000849).</p> <p>Permit issued to replace a broken skylight pane. Its exact location is not specified. Interstate Glass is listed as the contractor (Permit No. 98005526).</p>
<p><b>2005</b></p>	<p>Permit issued to deliver equipment and materials for landscape work. Neither the location nor the scope of the landscape work is specified. Williams Landscaping is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS0523388).</p>
<p><b>2006</b></p>	<p>Permit issued to replace one broken exterior window in-kind. Giroux Glass, Inc. is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS0623085).</p>
<p><b>2007</b></p>	<p>The Museum of Television and Radio was re-christened the Paley Center for Media to account for the evolution and diversification of media that had taken place since its founding. The name change was applied to both locations (New York City and Beverly Hills).</p> <p>Permit issued to replace panels from exterior wall; the scope of work is not specified, but is presumed to have been related to minor façade repairs. Southland Marble and Ceramic Tile, Inc. is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS0707208).</p>

	Permit issued to clean travertine walls. Stuart-Dean Co., Inc. is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS0738156).
<b>2010</b>	Permit issued to remove ceramic tiles on the roof and replace-in-kind. Ted L. Olsen Construction is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS1016610).
<b>2011</b>	Permit issued to remove existing built-up roof and install a new, energy efficient built-up roof. Royal Roofing Company is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS1112361).
<b>2012</b>	Permit issued to add new interior wall and door to separate exhibit space from office space. Ted L. Olsen Construction is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS1203037).  Permit issued to pressure-wash the building façade. Peerless Preferred Maintenance, Inc. is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS1213922).
<b>2020</b>	The Paley Center for Media’s lease was terminated and it vacated the building. The building is currently partially leased on a temporary basis as an exhibition space.

Based on its permit record and current appearance, the subject building appears to have been very minimally altered since its construction in 1994-1996.



## 4. Historic Contexts

### 4.1. Early Development of the Business Triangle

461 North Beverly Drive is located in an area of Beverly Hills that is known as the Business Triangle (and at times, colloquially, as the Golden Triangle) so named because of its distinctive, triangular form. Located near the center of Beverly Hills, between Santa Monica and Wilshire boulevards and Canon Drive, the area is densely developed with various commercial and institutional uses. It serves as the City's central business district and civic center.

In spite of its present-day associations with luxury, glamour, opulence, and wealth, Beverly Hills had relatively inauspicious beginnings. The first house was constructed in 1907, but overall development activity in the nascent community was languid. The Beverly Hills Hotel was constructed between 1911-1912 in an attempt to lure in prospective buyers. In its early years, the sprawling Mission Revival style complex not only served as a luxurious hostelry, but also functioned as a *de facto* community center for area residents.<sup>3</sup> Since the hotel was located amid what was then a swath of peripheral, undeveloped land, an auxiliary rail line called The Dinky was built to convey people between the hotel and the Pacific Electric Railway line nearer the center of town.<sup>4</sup> The Dinky traveled down the center of Rodeo Drive, originating at its intersection with Santa Monica Boulevard and terminating at the hotel on Sunset Boulevard.

Beverly Hills formally incorporated as an independent city in 1914, but development – and particularly commercial development – remained sluggish. Aside from the hotel, the City's only commercial buildings were clustered near the intersection of Beverly Drive and Burton Way (now South Santa Monica Boulevard). At this time, the business district consisted of a small handful of one- and two-story business blocks that were occupied by grocers, barbers, hardware stores, a bank, a post office, and other enterprises that served residents' day-to-day needs. A Pacific Electric Railway station was located just to the north, on Santa Monica Boulevard. Elsewhere within the Business Triangle, the blocks were sparsely developed with a smattering of small, humble bungalows for those of more modest means.<sup>5</sup>

Just to the south of the business district and Business Triangle, where the Beverly Wilshire Hotel and Beverly Hills High School are located today, a wood plank track for automobile racing was built between 1919-1920. Known as the Beverly Hills Speedway, it became an immediate attraction and was ranked second in race quality only to the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway.<sup>6</sup> But as popular as the speedway was, rising real estate costs and mounting development pressures meant that it was a short-lived endeavor. The racetrack was demolished in 1924, and the land was subdivided shortly thereafter.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Water and Power Associates, "Early Views of Beverly Hills," accessed Jan. 2019. Additional information about development patterns in Beverly Hills was gleaned from Sanborn Fire Insurance maps dated 1922.

<sup>6</sup> Susan King, "Speedway Brought Life in the Fast Lane to 1920s Beverly Hills," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 24, 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid; Pacific Coast Architecture Database, "Beverly Hills Speedway, Beverly Hills, CA (1919-1920)," accessed Jan. 2019.

Like most communities in Southern California, Beverly Hills witnessed an unprecedented amount of growth and development in the 1920s. It was during this time that the community truly came of age, shedding its roots as a small, peripheral outpost and asserting itself as one of Southern California's premier residential communities. Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Will Rogers, Rudolph Valentino, and other A-list celebrities built stylish mansions in the community, cementing its reputation as a haven for the entertainment elite.<sup>8</sup> As Beverly Hills's population grew, its small commercial node evolved into a discernible central business district. A number of new commercial buildings arose in the triangular-shaped district between Santa Monica and Wilshire boulevards. Buildings like the exotic Beverly Theatre (1925, L.A. Smith, not extant) and the posh, Renaissance Revival style Beverly Wilshire Apartment Hotel (1928, Walker and Eisen) attested to the quality of architecture in the city at this time.

In the early 1930s, two resplendent civic buildings were constructed at the northeast corner of the triangular-shaped business district: the Spanish Renaissance style Beverly Hills City Hall (1932, William J. Gage and Harry G. Koerner), and the Italian Renaissance style Beverly Hills Post Office (1934, Ralph Flewelling and Allison and Allison). These buildings denoted the civic and political heart of the burgeoning city, and represented significant new additions to its commercial and institutional core.

Beverly Hills entered into another period of remarkable growth after World War II. Parcels that had remained undeveloped prior to the war were swiftly purchased and improved, and the City also expanded its physical reach by annexing a large tract of hillside land that became the Trousdale Estates.<sup>9</sup> The character of commercial development also began to visibly transform at this time, with Rodeo Drive as its focus. Historically a "fairly quiet suburban street with beauty shops, hardware stores, gas stations and bookstores," Rodeo Drive began to evolve into an internationally renowned locus of the cultural elite.<sup>10</sup> In 1967, fashion retailer Fred Hayman opened Giorgio Beverly Hills, the first high-end boutique to open on the street. Other luxurious retailers including Parisian jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels (1969) and coiffeur Vidal Sassoon (1970) followed suit.<sup>11</sup> Subsequent development on Rodeo Drive and nearby streets took on an increasingly posh and sumptuous character.

When the subject building was constructed between 1994 and 1996, the Business Triangle was well established as an upscale shopping district. Its construction entailed the remodel of two existing commercial edifices: one was occupied by a Bank of America branch, and the other by a restaurant.<sup>12</sup>

## 4.2 Cultural Institutional Development in Southern California

The subject building was constructed as the West Coast branch of the Museum of Television and Radio (now called the Paley Center for Media), a cultural institution that explores the social and cultural contributions of television, radio, and other contemporary modes of popular media.

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<sup>8</sup> City of Beverly Hills, "History of Beverly Hills," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>9</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Darling, "A Rodeo Drive Timeline," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 9, 2013.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Leon Whiteson, "TV Museum Both Formal and Inviting," *Los Angeles Times*, Jun. 2, 1996.

During the Gilded Age (ca.1870-1900), the amalgamation of large collections of monumental art became symbols of class, status, and wealth. Capitalists and others of extraordinary personal wealth began the tradition of opening art museums, in part to showcase their collections to the public and also “to shape and fix an image that history would have of them, as enlightened power brokers of the day and benefactors to the future.”<sup>13</sup> The act of collecting art was an activity that became inextricably linked with the genteel class. By proxy, the act of visiting museums, and viewing and appreciating art and other relics on display at these institutions, became popular among the middle and upper classes as it put one’s sense of refinement and sophistication – be it real or perceived – squarely into the public eye.

The Los Angeles region was coming of age at the same time that museums were emerging as popular cultural attractions. At around the turn of the twentieth century, Los Angeles was witnessing a period of steady growth that was transforming the once-peripheral outpost into a populous urban environment. As the City grew, there was a desire on the part of its residents to project a sense of sophistication to the rest of the nation, to prove that Los Angeles was on par with other world-class American cities like New York, Chicago, and – Los Angeles’s rival at the time – San Francisco. “In the growth of any community there comes a time when its members begin to feel the need for culture – for a taming influence to smooth the rough edges of its raw beginnings,” notes art historian Nancy Moure.<sup>14</sup> “In Los Angeles that urge began to exert itself around 1890, when both artists and art-interested laymen grew numerous enough and interested enough to organize efforts for establishing an art museum.”<sup>15</sup>

Southern California’s first proper museum opened in 1913.<sup>16</sup> Called the Los Angeles County Museum of History, Science and Art, it was located in Exposition Park and was housed in a resplendent, Beaux Arts style building that was befitting of the City’s urbane ambitions. For decades, the Museum of History, Science and Art was the sole repository of most of Los Angeles County’s scientific and artistic treasures, where historical relics and artistic works were housed together under one roof. When the museum opened, the *Los Angeles Times* boasted that “Chicago is not the only art center in the western world. Los Angeles has ‘arrived.’ Those who were of the thousand or more who visited the fine arts gallery in the Museum of History, Science and Art in Exposition Park last night know that this is true.”<sup>17</sup>

The following year, in 1914, the Southwest Museum of the American Indian opened in the Mount Washington neighborhood. This museum was a pet project of Charles Fletcher Lummis, a journalist who arrived in Los Angeles in the 1880s and became enthralled with Southern California history and especially with its pre-Columbian and Native American past. Like the Museum of History, Science and Art, the Southwest Museum signified Los Angeles’s coming of age as a harbinger of culture, and the dedication of its Mount Washington campus was met with a tremendous amount of fanfare and marked a momentous occasion in the region’s cultural institutional history. “It’s no exaggeration to say that [the

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<sup>13</sup> Holland Cotter, “Review: The Broad is an Old-Fashioned Museum for a New Gilded Age,” *New York Times*, Sept. 12, 2015.

<sup>14</sup> Nancy Moure, “The Struggle for a Los Angeles Art Museum, 1890-1940,” *Southern California Quarterly* 74.3 (Fall 1992): 247-275.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid; “Earth Wonders on Public View,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 10, 1913.

<sup>17</sup> “The City as a Center of Art: Exposition Park Display Attracts Attention,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 7, 1913.

museum] was the Getty of its era...Los Angeles now had a world-class museum with an immense collection of Native-American and Pre-Columbian artifacts that rivaled anything in the” United States.<sup>18</sup>

Another notable addition to Southern California’s cultural institutional landscape was the Griffith Observatory, which opened in 1935. The observatory featured a unique combination of exhibits related to astronomy including a planetarium, a refracting telescope and observation deck, and an exhibition hall that featured various exhibits related to the physical sciences. Its planetarium was notable as the third to be constructed in the United States.<sup>19</sup> At the behest of its benefactor, Colonel Griffith J. Griffith, the observatory was bequeathed to the City of Los Angeles upon its completion for use as a public facility. Admission to the observatory was – and continues to be – free of charge to the general public, reflecting Griffith’s desire to make the observatory and its programmatic offerings available to all.<sup>20</sup>

Los Angeles’s burgeoning reputation as a bastion of arts and culture was cemented after World War II. Unprecedented development at this time attracted scores of newcomers to the region and resulted in commensurate additions to its cultural institutional landscape. Perhaps no institution expressed this phenomenon more strongly than the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), which was originally a part of the County Museum of History, Science and Art. In 1961, the museum was split into two, with one branch dedicated to science and history (and now known as the Natural History Museum in Exposition Park) and the second dedicated to the visual arts (and now known as LACMA). In 1965, the newly-founded LACMA, including the old museum’s art collection, moved to a new campus on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles.<sup>21</sup> The new LACMA facility was “the largest new art museum the country had seen in a quarter century,” not to mention one of the region’s most popular attractions.<sup>22</sup>

During LACMA’s dedication rites, then-County Supervisor Ernest Debs, speaking to the museum’s board and benefactors, remarked that “all of us and all of our children and children’s children will forever be in your debt for this magnificent achievement.”<sup>23</sup> Museum president Edward W. Carter stated that the institution marked “a cultural coming of age not just for Los Angeles but for the West.”<sup>24</sup>

At about the same time that LACMA opened, County officials were also embarking upon an equally influential development project in Downtown Los Angeles that was wholly dedicated to the performing arts: the Music Center of Los Angeles County. Development of the monumental complex commenced in the 1960s and comprised three main buildings: the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion (1964), the Mark Taper Forum (1967), and the Ahmanson Theatre (1967). In 2003, the iconic Walt Disney Concert Hall was added to the complex, rounding out its development.<sup>25</sup> The complex has stood as a stable locus of culture and a much-beloved landmark in the ever-expanding Southern California region since its

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<sup>18</sup> “Southwest Museum of the American Indian: Los Angeles’ First Museum,” *KCET*, Oct. 16, 2011.

<sup>19</sup> Griffith Observatory, “About,” accessed Feb. 2020.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*; John M. Broder, “Observatory Reopens in Fall,” *New York Times*, May 11, 2006.

<sup>21</sup> Hadley Meares, “Higher Ideals: The Original Los Angeles County Museum of History, Science and Art,” *KCET*, Oct. 13, 2015.

<sup>22</sup> Los Angeles Conservancy, “Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA),” accessed Feb. 2020.

<sup>23</sup> Noelene Clark, “LACMA’s 50 Years on Miracle Mile,” *Los Angeles Times*, Apr. 9, 2015.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>25</sup> David Gebhard and Robert Winter, *An Architectural Guidebook to Los Angeles* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, 2004), 258.

construction. The Dorothy Chandler Pavilion was notably the site of the Academy Awards for a number of years.<sup>26</sup>

Some of the region's foremost cultural institutions were operated by government entities, either in full or in part, but others were affiliated with private interests. Chief among them was oil magnate and philanthropist J. Paul Getty, an avid collector of arts and antiquities who had amassed a substantial horde of paintings, sculptures, and other artistic works. Throughout his life, Getty worked to make his art collection accessible to the public, establishing a trust in 1953 and opening a museum in his Malibu ranch house that same year.<sup>27</sup> In 1974, Getty opened a larger museum (now known as the Getty Villa), also on a portion of his Malibu property, in which to display his ever-growing art collection. Getty left a substantial sum of his vast fortune to the trust upon his death in 1976, allowing his collection to grow.<sup>28</sup>

In the 1980s, as the museum began to outgrow its Malibu facility, the Getty Trust sought to construct a new, 24-acre campus in the Brentwood neighborhood of Los Angeles. Noted architect Richard Meier was commissioned to design the new hilltop campus, which he did in his signature Neo-Corbusian style. In 1997, when the complex opened to the public, it instantly became an iconic architectural landmark and one of the boldest new additions to the Los Angeles region's cultural institutional landscape. The Getty Center was considered to be one of the finest new art museums in the nation – if not the world – and was extensively written about upon opening, both for its architectural and institutional merit.<sup>29</sup> One of many articles about the Getty Center published by the *New York Times* in 1997 described the new museum as analogous to such renowned world institutions as the Louvre in France, the Metropolitan in New York, and the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna.<sup>30</sup> Its opening marked a watershed moment in the history of artistic and cultural institutions in Los Angeles, solidifying its identity as a mecca of high society.

Over time, hundreds of other, smaller museums have opened across the greater Los Angeles region, each with a specific program geared toward a certain niche of art and culture. This includes the Paley Center, which opened a West Coast branch location in 1996.

### 4.3. Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center for Media

What is now the Paley Center for Media was originally called the Museum of Broadcasting. The subject building was constructed as the West Coast counterpart to the museum's main branch in New York City.

The Museum of Broadcasting was conceived in 1975 by the longtime CBS chief executive William S. Paley (1901-1990). Paley, who "cultivated CBS from a handful of struggling radio stations in 1928 into

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<sup>26</sup> Los Angeles Conservancy, "Music Center of Los Angeles County," accessed Feb. 2020.

<sup>27</sup> Getty, "History of Getty," accessed Feb. 2020.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Herbert Muscchamp, "A Mountaintop Temple Where Art's Future Worships its Past," *New York Times*, Dec. 1, 1997.



the most powerful communications company in the world,” expressed a need to pay homage to the sights and sounds of radio and television programming.<sup>31</sup> Remarkably Paley:

It is time that we take stock of our past, so that we can know and understand the heritage of the broadcast media in building our future...It is imperative that we do this now, for the precious body of broadcasting history that is still in existence – discs, kinescopes, film and audio and videotapes – must be preserved. Otherwise, it will simply, by neglect, disintegrate or disappear.<sup>32</sup>

With financing provided by Paley and other charitable entities, the Museum of Broadcasting opened its doors in Midtown Manhattan, at 1 East 53<sup>rd</sup> Street, in 1976.<sup>33</sup> When it opened, the museum was notable as the only institution of its kind in the United States, and was also somewhat anomalous in the realm of museums in that it celebrated modes of expression that were more significant for their ephemeral qualities than their high artistic values. Visitors entered into a console center comprising individual stations, each of which was equipped with a Betamax machine and television monitor, and could access archived television and radio programs that were stored electronically on cassettes. Paley envisioned the museum as an inclusive setting that would be accessible to anybody who was interested.<sup>34</sup>

The museum was a success. Between its opening in 1976 and the early 1990s, its permanent collection expanded from several hundred archives to tens of thousands of television and video programs spanning 70 years.<sup>35</sup> Popular media continued to morph and evolve at this time, and so too did the scope and breadth of the museum’s collections. In 1991, the Board of Trustees voted to change the name of the institution from the Museum of Broadcasting to the Museum of Television and Radio. The change was intended to reflect the museum’s “expanding collection of material that has been transmitted by means other than broadcasting airwaves, like cable and satellite.”<sup>36</sup> Also in 1991, the museum moved into a new building on West 52<sup>nd</sup> Street designed by John Burgee and Philip Johnson.<sup>37</sup>

Though it was based in New York, the Museum of Television and Radio also maintained a visible presence in Los Angeles. Each year, the museum hosted a well-attended, multi-week Television Festival at which members of the public were invited to interact with the cast and creative teams of popular television shows.<sup>38</sup> In 1994, it was announced that the museum was planning to open a sister location in Beverly Hills, which through digital technology would contain the exact same collection of archived radio and television programs that was featured at its New York City location. “I don’t think there’s ever been a museum in two locations with exactly the same collection,” remarked museum President Robert

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<sup>31</sup> Jeremy Gerard, “William S. Paley, Builder of CBS, Dies at 89,” *New York Times*, Oct. 27, 1990.

<sup>32</sup> “50 Years of History on Instant Replay,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 10, 1976.

<sup>33</sup> Tom Shales, “Broadcast Museum: The Way TV Said We Were,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 30, 1978. Additional information about previous development on the subject property was gleaned from the permit file for 461 North Beverly Drive.

<sup>34</sup> The Paley Center for Media, “Mission and History,” accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>35</sup> “Broadcasting Museum Fine Tunes Its Name,” *New York Times*, Mar. 30, 1991.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Robert Koehler, “A N.Y. Mecca for Media Hounds and Historians,” *Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 4, 1992.

<sup>38</sup> Rick Du Brow, “Model of West Coast Museum of TV and Radio Unveiled,” *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 13, 1994.

Batscha about this approach.<sup>39</sup> Under this structure, the New York and Beverly Hills museums would both be treated as a single entity and would be jointly managed by the same governing board.

Presiding over the move to open a new West Coast branch was Robert M. Batscha (1945-2003), who served as president of the Museum of Broadcasting/Paley Center for more than twenty years. Batscha was a New Yorker through and through; he was born in Rochester, raised and educated in New York City, and resided in Manhattan up until his death. Batscha became the museum's president in 1981, in which role he presided over a period marked by considerable institutional growth and expansion. An adroit administrator and prodigious fundraiser, Batscha "vastly expanded [the museum's] collection, moved it to Midtown Manhattan, opened a branch in Beverly Hills and brought together industry leaders, stars and academics at seminars."<sup>40</sup> Speaking about Batscha's life and legacy, a colleague of his once remarked that "when you put it together, he was the architect of something that very faithfully carried out the mission envisioned by Mr. Paley, but clearly expanded on it."<sup>41</sup>

To design the new Beverly Hills branch, the museum retained Richard Meier and Partners, a renowned New York City architectural firm that was also working on the sprawling Getty Center complex in the Brentwood hills at that time (the Getty Center was constructed between 1987 and 1996, with its doors opening to the public in December 1997). The Museum of Television and Radio was a smaller commission – construction was projected at \$8 million, compared to the \$773 million price tag for the Getty Center – and its construction entailed the remodeling of two existing buildings, as opposed to designing an entirely new edifice from the ground up.<sup>42</sup> Like its New York City counterpart, the Beverly Hills museum would be organized around a series of interior spaces that accommodated its interactive programming and its prevailing emphasis on digital media. Meier's design included "a theater, a broadcast studio, a computerized library, a gallery, educational facilities and scores of individual viewing consoles where the public can listen to and watch programs chosen for artistic, cultural and historical significance."<sup>43</sup>

The museum represented a notable new addition to Southern California's rich body of cultural institutions, but it was not the first collection of its kind in Los Angeles. The Academy of Television Arts and Sciences maintained an archive of film and television programming at UCLA. However, that collection was reserved primarily for researchers and industry professionals, and did not have the same emphasis on public access that was such a driving force behind William Paley's vision for his museum.

The Beverly Hills location of the Museum of Television and Radio – formally named the Leonard Goldenson Building (Goldenson had been Paley's counterpart at ABC) – opened to the public in March 1996. Its opening was prefaced by a black tie, celebrity-studded gala that attracted more than 1,000 invitees; guests included the museum's top brass, architect Richard Meier, studio executives, and a litany of film and television stars including Candice Bergen, Carol Burnett, Marlo Thomas, Larry King, and Dick Van Dyke.<sup>44</sup> Completion of the Goldenson Building marked a major milestone in the institutional

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<sup>39</sup> Daniel Cerone, "Museum to Offer Classic Radio, T.V. Shows," *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 1, 1994.

<sup>40</sup> Michael Cooper, "Robert M. Batscha, 58, Dies: Archived Television and Radio," *New York Times*, Jul. 7, 2003.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Cerone (1994).

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Bill Higgins, "Museum Gets a Place in the Sun," *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 19, 1996.

history of the museum, as it significantly expanded its reach into the epicenter of television culture and rendered its collections accessible to the nation's two largest media markets.

By the time the museum ventured west, its collection had grown to include more than 80,000 television and radio programs covering more than 75 years of broadcast history.<sup>45</sup> Like its setup in New York City, the museum was organized around a series of consoles, where patrons could cue episodes of television and radio programs from the digitized catalog. Culling material from its vast collection, the museum also curated exhibitions, hosted screening and listening series on various topics of cultural interest, and organized seminars with industry veterans and educational classes for students from elementary to university levels.<sup>46</sup> Most programming was offered concurrently at both museum locations.

From the start, the museum's approach to curation has been fraught with inherent challenges, as the ephemeral nature of radio, television, and other modes of popular media has required the institution to constantly evolve and recast itself amid the rapid pace of technological change. This challenge had already reared its head once before, when in 1991 the decision was made to change the institution's name to account for a new generation of media technologies.

The advent of the Internet, cellular devices, podcasts, and other contemporary modes of communication once again led the museum to critically evaluate its name and its remit. In 2007, it was announced that the name of the institution would be changed from the Museum of Television and Radio to the Paley Center for Media, part of a larger overhaul that was intended to bring the museum into the thrust of the 21st century. "By no longer calling itself a museum," remarked the *New York Times*, the center "is playing down its archive of TV and radio programs and is recasting itself as a place for industry leaders and the public to discuss those shows and the role of media in society."<sup>47</sup> The institution continued to serve as a repository for television and radio shows, and patrons could still sit at console stations and cue up archived programs, but greater emphasis was placed on dialogue and other alternative forms of programming. Somewhat ironically, by constantly adapting to the swift evolution of media technology, the museum also served as something of a living testament to media obsolescence.<sup>48</sup>

The Paley Center vacated its Beverly Hills location in February 2020, and is reported to have set up new offices in Century City and transferred much of its television and radio archives to the Beverly Hills Public Library.<sup>49</sup> The New York location remains open to the public.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> "The Museum of Television & Radio," n.d., accessed via the Library of Congress, Jan. 2019.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Elizabeth Jensen, "New Name and New Mission for Museum of Television," *New York Times*, Jun. 5, 2007.

<sup>48</sup> Amy Holdsworth, *Television, Memory and Nostalgia* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 147-148.

<sup>49</sup> Michael Schneider, "Paley Center Moves Out of Beverly Hills, Lays Off Three; Finds New Home for Archives," *Variety*, Feb 18, 2020.

<sup>50</sup> It should be noted that at the time of this writing, the New York location of the Paley Center for Media is temporarily closed due to COVID-19.

## 4.4. Late Modern Architecture

The subject building exhibits characteristics of Late Modern architecture, and specifically a derivative of Late Modernism that is at times referred to as Neo-Corbusian. The Late Modern movement first emerged in the 1960s as a reaction against the orthodoxy and ubiquity of post-World War II Modernism, and exerted considerable influence on American architecture for the duration of the twentieth century.

Modernism is a broad term that is used to define an array of architectural styles and city planning principles that were conceived in the early twentieth century, honed after World War I, and became a dominant element of American architecture after World War II. The tenets of Modernism are extraordinarily broad and diverse, but in the most general sense the movement eschewed past traditions and called for an approach to design that embraced progress and technology.<sup>51</sup>

Swiss-French architect Charles-Edouard Jeanneret (known professionally as Le Corbusier) played an extraordinarily influential role in the development of an American dialect of Modernism. In the 1920s, he developed a set of architectural principles that dictated his technique and emerged as something akin to a manifesto of Modern architecture. Known as the Five Points of Architecture, his quintet of principles articulated many of the key ideas and philosophies underpinning the Modern architectural movement. They included: (1) the reinforced concrete column, or *piloti*, in lieu of a structural wall; (2) an open floor plan, which was made possible by the absence of large supporting walls; (3) gardens atop flat roofs; (4) the horizontal or ribbon window, which cuts a building's façade along its entire length; and (5) composition of the freed façade, which was made possible by a building's concrete skeleton frame.<sup>52</sup>

The principles of Le Corbusier and others wielded tremendous influence over the character of American architecture in the mid-twentieth century. In the period after World War II, International Style Modernism emerged as the dominant mode of domestic architecture, and its emphasis on authenticity and rationality permeated almost every facet of the American built environment at this time. Large, tall cubic boxes, devoid of superfluous ornament, became ubiquitous elements of the American cityscape.<sup>53</sup>

However, by the 1960s, architects and the American public alike had begun to grow weary of the Modern orthodoxy. The template for postwar Modernism had been so widely replicated, and so often compromised through cost cutting and value engineering, that it was increasingly perceived as cheap, generic, pedestrian, and effete.<sup>54</sup> In response, architects began to dabble in new modes of architectural expression that reacted to some of the most banal qualities of postwar Modernism. While some of these dissident architects – who would later be identified as “Postmodernists” – popularized an aesthetic that represented a radical departure from Modernism, others took the basic tenets of Modernism and reinterpreted them in new ways, typically by exaggerating a particular structural element or architectural feature. Those in this latter camp honed what became known as the “Late Modern” style.

The term “Late Modern” was coined in 1977 by architectural historian and theorist Charles Jencks. Jencks remarked that “there are many ways to characterize Late Modern architecture, and most of them

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<sup>51</sup> Alan Hess, “Everyday Modernisms: Diversity, Creativity and Ideas in L.A. Architecture, 1940-1990,” May 2013.

<sup>52</sup> Bernard Leupen, et al., *Design and Analysis* (Rotterdam, Netherlands: 010 Publishers, 1997), 51.

<sup>53</sup> Hess (2013).

<sup>54</sup> Charles Jencks, “Postmodern and Late Modern: The Essential Definitions,” *Chicago Review* 35.4 (1987): 31-58.

can be reduced to the single notion of exaggeration. Late Modernism takes Modern architecture to an extreme in order to overcome its monotony and the public's boredom with it."<sup>55</sup>

Several derivatives of the Late Modern movement emerged beginning in the 1960s, each of which had a distinctive architectural vocabulary and its own catalog of distinguishing features. Among the most common derivatives of Late Modern architecture in Southern California include Brutalism, which emphasized the structural and aesthetic merits of raw concrete; High-Tech/Structural Expressionism, in which structural, infrastructural, and operating systems are emphasized with dematerialized imagery; Sculptural, which utilized obscure shapes like chamfers, cuts, punchouts, sharp angles, and curves to break apart the rectilinear forms that characterized Modern buildings; and Glass Skin, in which the glass curtain wall method of construction expanded to cover the entire exterior surface of a building.<sup>56</sup>

Yet other architects associated with the Late Modern movement reacted to the perceived shortcomings of orthodox Modernism by revisiting and examining Modernism's pre-World War II roots. These architects looked back to the early development of Modernism – prior to its commercialization in the postwar era – and sought to reintroduce its fundamental principles to American architecture. The characteristically clean, chaste, and austere aesthetic that came out of this movement is often referred to as Neo-Corbusian, due in no small part to the fact that the architects most closely associated with the movement relied heavily on the pioneering work of Le Corbusier for inspiration.<sup>57</sup> They also made reference to European Modernism such as the De Stijl movement, the Bauhaus school, and Futurism.

Five architects in particular became closely associated with the Neo-Corbusian aesthetic: Peter Eisenman, John Hejduk, Charles Gwathmey, Michael Graves, and Richard Meier. These architects were collectively known as The New York Five, and later as “the Whites,” a reference to the relative starkness and lack of color that characterized their bodies of work.<sup>58</sup> Their work was widely publicized and became the focus of a considerable amount of critical attention beginning in the late 1960s. In 1973, the movement drew a sharp rebuke from a group of Postmodern architects (who called themselves “the Greys”), who lambasted Neo-Corbusian buildings as reactionary, indifferent, and divorced from reality.<sup>59</sup>

The New York Five were never an official group – and its members arguably “had as much dividing them as joining them” – but all shared the same commitment to pure and unaltered architectural forms, rooted in the early development of Modernism.<sup>60</sup> Over time, some of these architects – most notably, Michael Graves – veered away from the pure and chaste Neo-Corbusian style, but others would continue to hone its aesthetic for decades to come. The Neo-Corbusian derivative of Late Modernism remained popular for the duration of the twentieth century. The fundamental characteristics of the style continued to define the work of Richard Meier, whose architectural firm remains active to this day.

Character-defining features of Neo-Corbusian architecture include the following:

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<sup>55</sup> Charles Jencks, *Late Modern Architecture and Other Essays* (New York: Rizzoli, 1980).

<sup>56</sup> Derived from SurveyLA, “Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement, Context: Architecture and Engineering, Subcontext: Los Angeles Modernism, Theme: Late-Modern,” prepared by Daniel Paul, in-progress draft.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Paul Goldberger, “A Little Book That Led Five Men to Fame,” *New York Times*, Feb. 11, 1996.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.



- Spatial and geometric complexity
- Exaggerated sense of abstraction; a sense of isolation within the surrounding environment
- Manipulation of two and three-dimensional compositional systems (such as grid patterns) to modulate space, structure, and surface
- Integration of a circular tower or rotunda element on an otherwise orthogonal form (particularly seen in Meier’s work)
- Flat roofs, often capped by gardens or other landscape features
- White exterior surfaces, occasionally softened by warmer material accents
- Overarching sense of transparency and ambiguity; abundant fenestration and ribbon windows
- Incorporation of Corbusian elements including ramps, pipe rails, accent curves, and *pilotis*
- Absence of historical references or superfluous ornament

## 4.5. Richard Meier and Partners

The subject building was designed by the architectural firm Richard Meier and Partners. Meier is a highly acclaimed architect and abstract artist who designed a number of high profile residential and institutional commissions – and particularly museums – in the latter decades of the twentieth century.

Richard Alan Meier (1934 - ) was born into a Jewish family in Newark, New Jersey. After matriculating at Cornell University and earning his Bachelor of Architecture degree in 1957, he travelled abroad to network with architects whose work he admired. While abroad, Meier attempted to join the office of his early idol Le Corbusier, but his advances were declined. Meier returned to the United States and settled in New York. He worked briefly for Gordon Bunshaft at the corporate architectural firm Skidmore, Owings and Merrill in 1959, and went on to work with the eminent Hungarian Modernist Marcel Breuer.

The fundamental tenets of Modernism – which was the dominant mode of American architecture as Meier came of professional age – played an influential role in defining his style. While in school, and during the formative years of his career, he was exposed to the seminal works of some of the world’s most highly influential Modern architects. In addition to Le Corbusier, Meier has credited Modern masters Frank Lloyd Wright, Mies van der Rohe, and Alvar Aalto as some of his foremost influences.<sup>61</sup>

Meier parted ways with Breuer and opened his own eponymous architectural practice in 1963.<sup>62</sup> His early commissions consisted primarily of custom single-family residences, which afforded him the opportunity to put his ideas into practice and hone his distinctive aesthetic. Meier’s first independent commission was a house that he designed for his parents in Essex Fells, New Jersey in 1965. The Jerome and Carolyn Meier Residence, set within a neighborhood of traditional, Colonial style houses, was notable for its “pure” monolithic masses painted white, both hallmark characteristics of Meier’s work.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>61</sup> The Pritzker Architecture Prize, “Richard Meier,” accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>62</sup> Richard Meier and Stan Allen, *Richard Meier: Architect* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1999), 12.

<sup>63</sup> Richard Meier and Partners Architects LLP, “Meier House, Essex Fells, New Jersey, 1963-1965,” accessed Jan. 2019.

The commission that propelled Meier and his aesthetic into the national spotlight was the Frederick J. Smith House in Darien, Connecticut, which was constructed between 1965-1967. Resembling an immaculate white villa set within the countryside, its cubic massing, complex geometric forms, smooth exterior walls painted white, and abundant fenestration evoked the chaste aesthetic of the International style and expressed the architect's emphasis on "space, form, light, and how to make them."<sup>64</sup> Its design attracted critical attention and received several awards. Another of Meier's notable residential commissions was the Jim and Jean Douglas House in Harbor Springs, Michigan, built between 1971-1973. Perilously perched atop a steep bluff amid dense vegetation, "this tall, vertically oriented, white and machine-like villa is dramatically juxtaposed with the unspoiled greenery of its idyllic site."<sup>65</sup> It, too, garnered a considerable amount of attention and helped to solidify Meier's professional reputation.

There were some common threads binding together the residential work of Meier with the work of four other architects who were similarly exploring architectural modes that were fundamentally rooted in the tenets of pre-World War II Modernism. Specifically, their work all pledged a common allegiance to the "pure" iteration of Modernism that was enumerated in the work of Le Corbusier and other exponents of the International style in the 1920s and '30s. The work of these architects – who were collectively known as the New York Five – was featured in a CASE (Committee of Architects for the Study of the Environment) meeting hosted by the Museum of Modern Art, and was later the subject of a book entitled *Five Architects* (1972).<sup>66</sup> Exposure in the CASE meeting and the associated book provided Meier and his aesthetic with additional brand recognition, particularly within the architectural realm.

Meier continued to design residential commissions, but his repertoire became increasingly defined by a series of high profile, critically acclaimed institutional projects that he designed in subsequent years. Two of his most significant early institutional commissions in the United States include the New Harmony Athenaeum in New Harmony, Indiana (1979) and the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, Georgia (1983). The former was constructed as a welcome center for visitors to the historic utopian colony of New Harmony, Indiana. Meier's design, which is centered on a sequenced approach through the use of ramps, frames views and provides users of the building with a strong and discernible sense of place.

These ideas are further developed and refined at the High Museum, which employs shifting grid patterns in both the pavement and cladding, in tandem with the generous use of curtain walls. In conjunction, these features create the types of large, white, light-filled spaces that have rendered Meier's work attractive to museums and other prominent cultural institutions. The High Museum of Art is considered to have "solidified Meier's reputation as a leading museum architect."<sup>67</sup>

Notable institutional commissions continued to pour in for Meier during the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1978, he added a small reading room to the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City; in 1981, he completed a building for the Hartford Seminary, a gleaming white edifice that was described by one critic as "the most unexpected building in Hartford"; and in 1982, he was selected to design an elementary school campus in the Midwest modernist mecca of Columbus,

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<sup>64</sup> "Biography: Richard Meier," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Claudia Conforti and Marzia Marandola, *Richard Meier* (Milan: Motta Cultura srl, 2009),21.

<sup>67</sup> Meier and Allen (1999), 108.

Indiana.<sup>68</sup> Meier also designed a line of furniture that was produced in 1982.<sup>69</sup> Through these commissions, Meier was provided the opportunity to further hone his aesthetic. His buildings were generally white or silver in color, made considerable use of glass and metal or porcelain panels, and had complex, elaborate compositions that were described as “almost picturesque in their sensibility.”<sup>70</sup>

In 1984, Meier was awarded the Pritzker Architecture Prize, considered to be the profession’s highest and most prestigious accolade. At age 49, Meier was the Pritzker’s youngest-ever recipient. In its citation, the jury remarked that it chose Meier because of “his single-minded pursuit of new directions in contemporary architecture. In his search for clarity and his experiments in balancing light, forms, and space, he has created works which are personal, vigorous, original.”<sup>71</sup>

Moving forward, Meier’s institutional work continued to increase in size, scope and complexity. One of his most enormously influential institutional commissions was the J. Paul Getty Center in the Brentwood community of Los Angeles, which took more than a decade to construct (1987-1996) and earned such widespread acclaim that it propelled him into the echelon of “starchitects,” at a time when the term and concept of a starchitect was just making its way into the American lexicon. The vast, sprawling 100-acre campus is an exceptionally articulated and fully fleshed out interpretation of Meier’s aesthetic vocabulary and distinctive approach to architecture, and is widely considered to represent Meier at his very best. Its design has been described as “a marriage of the austere and the sumptuous,” evincing a sense of dignity and esteem while also staying true to the prevailing sense of asceticism that so strongly defines Meier and his work.<sup>72</sup> The complex features crisp lines, stark geometries, white exterior walls with stone and marble accents, and a large rotunda – all hallmark characteristics of Meier.

At any scale, Meier’s buildings are notable for their consistent aesthetic expression. What can be tenuously referred to as his “style” has been repeatedly employed throughout a body of work that, following the completion of the Getty Center, has continued to win him commissions globally. Of paramount importance is the use of rectilinear massing, circular atria, undulating curvilinear walls, and complex spatial interpenetrations.<sup>73</sup> These features, when executed as part of a site design, typically result in compositions whose formality tends to appeal to designers, without reading as unapproachable or off-putting to laypeople. In terms of brute tectonics, Meier’s designs are structurally achieved with the use of concrete-frame open plans, with important spaces defined by walls of travertine, generous (glass skin) curtain walls, and a gridded exterior cladding of steel panels finished in white porcelain. With respect to defining features, the use of pipe railings are notable, in addition to the “characteristic trope” of a “fully glazed ramp hall that effectively converts a given elevation into a dynamic display of the circulation.”<sup>74</sup> These features draw upon the Five Principles enumerated by his early idol, Le Corbusier.

The Getty Center commission expanded Meier’s reach into the Western United States and, in doing so, cemented his reputation as a master architect of national acclaim. In 1985, Meier, who was then based

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<sup>68</sup> Paul Goldberger, “Richard Meier Gets the Pritzker Prize,” *New York Times*, Apr. 18, 1984.

<sup>69</sup> Goldberger (1984).

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Goldberger (1984).

<sup>72</sup> James Sterngold, “Getty Center Inaugurated in Los Angeles,” *New York Times*, Dec. 14, 1997.

<sup>73</sup> Benjamin Forgey, “The Getty Center Sets Its Site.” *The Washington Post*, Oct. 27, 1991.

<sup>74</sup> Richard Meier, *Richard Meier, Architect*, Vol. 2 (New York: Rizzoli, 1991).

in New York, opened a second office in Los Angeles to manage the design and construction of the Getty Center.<sup>75</sup> Michael Palladino, FAIA, an associate of Meier since 1979 and an accomplished architect in his own right, was tapped to lead the Los Angeles office, a role that he continues to hold to this day. Under the leadership and creative eye of Palladino, Meier's Los Angeles office has undertaken a number of notable commissions in Southern California including the Gagosian Gallery in Beverly Hills (1994-1995), the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Center at UCLA (1999-2006), a new visitor center (International Center for Possibility Thinking) at the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove (1998-2003), the New Pacific Realty Headquarters, also in Beverly Hills (2008-2010), and several single-family and multi-family residences.<sup>76</sup>

The Museum of Television and Radio (later the Paley Center for Media) in Beverly Hills was among the collection of smaller-scale projects that came out of Meier's Los Angeles office following its establishment in the mid-1980s. Palladino is credited as the building's Lead Designer.<sup>77</sup> Sited on a dense, compact urban lot at a gateway location on the edge of Beverly Hills's main commercial district, this building differed somewhat from other institutional commissions in Meier's oeuvre in that the high degree of attention to symbiotically orienting the building to its surrounding environment – the dramatic sense of isolation evident in projects like the High Museum of Art and the Getty Center – is not evident in this project and its urban setting. In addition, the building was essentially a remodel of two existing commercial buildings on the site. However, the resulting building itself is quintessentially Meier. It has the complex geometric forms, enameled white exterior walls with warm natural accents, and large rotunda that were used, in one form or another, in almost all of the institutional commissions to come out of his practice.

Notable features on the Museum of Television Radio Building were the entrance rotunda – Meier “managed to avoid making the obvious gesture of putting the cylinder at the corner,” and instead made a decision to orient it off center – and glazed interior stair that provides an unfettered view of circulation within the building from the street.<sup>78</sup> Meier explained that “the main purpose of the building, like that of the media it celebrates, is communication. We made it as open and transparent as possible, and devoid of mystery, so that people passing by can plainly see what happens inside.”<sup>79</sup>

When it opened in 1996, the museum was generally met with praise from architecture critics, but overall it appears to have been lauded more for its familiarity than as a particularly bold and revelatory architectural statement. Leon Whiteson, architecture critic for the *Los Angeles Times*, describes the building as a sophisticated addition to the Business Triangle, remarking that it “wears its sophistication lightly...its clean, simple lines have the good manners not to shame its neighbors while still making it clear that the building boasts a far more urbane architecture.”<sup>80</sup> And Paul Goldberger, architecture critic for *The New York Times*, notes that while the building has unequivocal visual appeal and a strong sense of vibrancy, in the body of Meier's work, it is acquiescent, not revolutionary:

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<sup>75</sup> Richard Meier and Partners Architects LLP, “Michael Palladino, FAIA, Design Partner,” accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Paul Goldberger, “And Now, Live from Beverly Hills, A New Museum,” *New York Times*, Apr. 7, 1996.

<sup>79</sup> Leon Whiteson, “TV Museum Both Formal and Inviting,” *Los Angeles Times*, Jun. 2, 1996.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

It is better to be good than original, Mies van der Rohe said, and his words could well apply to Richard Meier...the new Museum of Television and Radio, which opened last month in the center of Beverly Hills, is not going to convince anyone that there is a new Richard Meier waiting to be discovered. The building is as white and sleek as anything Mr. Meier has ever done, and it looks not terribly different from the many museums and institutional and commercial buildings he produced in the 1970s and '80s.<sup>81</sup>

Meier's firm continued to turn out noteworthy commissions in subsequent years, both domestically and abroad. Among the firm's most significant contemporary works include the Sandra Day O'Connor Courthouse in Phoenix, Arizona (2000); the Ara Pacis Museum in Rome (2006); San Jose City Hall (2007); the reconstruction of City Tower in Prague, Czech Republic (2008); new academic buildings on the campuses of the University of Scranton (2007) and Cornell University (2008); and Meier on Rothschild (2014), a skyscraper in Tel Aviv that is the second-highest residential building in Israel. Meier, who at this point was working on a semi-emeritus basis, took a leave of absence from the firm in March 2018 amid controversy related to allegations of sexual harassment. The firm continues to carry the name Richard Meier and Partners, and as of this writing, Meier continues to be listed on the company's website as an active partner.

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<sup>81</sup> Goldberger (1996).



## 5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation

### 5.1. National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation’s master inventory of known historic resources. Established under the auspices of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level. Eligibility for in the National Register is addressed in National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. NRB 15 states that in order to be eligible for the National Register, a resource must both: (1) be historically significant, and (2) retain sufficient integrity to adequately convey its significance.

Significance is assessed by evaluating a resource against established eligibility criteria. A resource is considered significant if it satisfies any one of the following four National Register criteria:<sup>82</sup>

- Criterion A (events): associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- Criterion B (persons): associated with the lives of significant persons in our past;
- Criterion C (architecture): embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- Criterion D (information potential): has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Once significance has been established, it must then be demonstrated that a resource retains enough of its physical and associative qualities – or *integrity* – to convey the reason(s) for its significance. Integrity is best described as a resource’s “authenticity” as expressed through its physical features and extant characteristics. Generally, if a resource is recognizable as such in its present state, it is said to retain integrity, but if it has been extensively altered then it does not. Whether a resource retains sufficient integrity for listing is determined by evaluating the seven aspects of integrity defined by NPS:

- Location (the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred);
- Setting (the physical environment of a historic property);
- Design (the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property);

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<sup>82</sup> Some resources may meet multiple criteria, though only one needs to be satisfied for National Register eligibility.

- Materials (the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular manner or configuration to form a historic property);
- Workmanship (the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory);
- Feeling (a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time);
- Association (the direct link between an important historic event/person and a historic property).

Integrity is evaluated by weighing all seven of these aspects together and is ultimately a “yes or no” determination – that is, a resource either retains sufficient integrity, or it does not.<sup>83</sup> Some aspects of integrity may be weighed more heavily than others depending on the type of resource being evaluated and the reason(s) for the resource’s significance. Since integrity depends on a resource’s placement within a historic context, integrity can be assessed only after it has been concluded that the resource is in fact significant.

## Criteria Consideration G

Generally, a resource must be at least 50 years of age to be eligible for listing in the National Register. NRB 15 explains that “fifty years is a general estimate of the time needed to develop historical perspective and to evaluate significance. This consideration guards against the listing of properties of passing contemporary interest and ensures that the National Register is a list of truly historic places.”<sup>84</sup>

However, the NPS acknowledges that on occasion, a resource less than 50 years of age may merit consideration for listing in the National Register. Criteria Consideration G offers guidance related to the evaluation of properties that may have achieved significance within the past 50 years, setting forth the conditions under which these resources may be eligible for listing. It provides that exceptions to the age threshold may be granted if it can be demonstrated that a resource less than 50 years of age if the individual resource is: (1) of exceptional importance, or (2) an integral component of a National Register-eligible historic district whose other component parts are predominantly 50 years or older.<sup>85</sup>

In justifying exceptional importance for individual resources (*i.e.*, outside of the National Register-eligible historic district context), NRB 15 cites the necessity of comparative analysis. Specifically, it states that “it is necessary to identify other properties within the geographical area that reflect the same significance or historical associations and to determine which properties *best* represent the historic context in question.” It continues, “Several properties in the area could become eligible with the passage of time, but few will qualify now as exceptionally important.”<sup>86</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VIII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

<sup>84</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Apply the Criteria Considerations.”

<sup>85</sup> The subject building is not an integral component of a National Register-eligible historic district whose other component parts are predominantly 50 years of age or older, therefore this report will not further evaluate the building under this consideration standard.

<sup>86</sup> NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Apply the Criteria Considerations.”

## 5.2. California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an authoritative guide used to identify, inventory, and protect historical resources in California. Established by an act of the State Legislature in 1998, the California Register program encourages public recognition and protection of significant architectural, historical, archeological, and cultural resources; identifies these resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The structure of the California Register program is similar to that of the National Register, though the former more heavily emphasizes resources that have contributed specifically to the development of California. To be eligible for the California Register, a resource must first be deemed significant under one of the following four criteria, which are modeled after the National Register criteria listed above:

- Criterion 1 (events): associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
- Criterion 2 (persons): associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;
- Criterion 3 (architecture): 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 4 (information potential): has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, state, or the nation.

Mirroring the National Register, the California Register also requires that resources retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing. A resource's integrity is assessed using the same seven aspects of integrity used for the National Register. However, since integrity thresholds associated with the California Register are generally less rigid than those associated with the National Register, it is possible that a resource may lack the integrity required for the National Register but still be eligible for listing in the California Register.

Certain properties are automatically listed in the California Register, as follows:<sup>87</sup>

- All California properties that are listed in the National Register;
- All California properties that have formally been determined eligible for listing in the National Register (by the State Office of Historic Preservation);
- All California Historical Landmarks numbered 770 and above; and
- California Points of Historical Interest which have been reviewed by the State Office of Historic Preservation and recommended for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission.

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<sup>87</sup> California Public Resources Code, Division 5, Chapter 1, Article 2, § 5024.1.

Resources may be nominated directly to the California Register. State Historic Landmarks #770 and forward are also automatically listed in the California Register.

Unlike the National Register's 50-year age requirement, there is no prescribed age limit for listing in the California Register. However, guidelines state that sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with a resource.

### 5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance

Historic preservation in Beverly Hills is governed by Title 10, Chapter 3, Articles 32 and 32.5 of the Beverly Hills Municipal Code (referred to hereinafter as “the Ordinance”). The Ordinance authorizes the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) to recommend the nomination of properties as local landmarks and historic districts to the City Council. To facilitate this process, the Ordinance establishes requirements a property must meet in order to qualify for designation as a landmark listed in the City of Beverly Hills Register of Historic Properties. The 2012 Ordinance was revised and updated in 2015, with an additional amendment in 2016; all criteria and definitions used in this document are effective as of April 1, 2016.

To be eligible for local designation as a historic landmark, a property must satisfy the following sets of requirements (A and B) as noted:

**A. A landmark must meet all of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance;
- (2) It possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period;
- (3) It retains substantial integrity<sup>88</sup> from its period of significance; and
- (4) It has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.

**B. In addition to those listed above, a landmark must meet at least one of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- (2) It is an exceptional work<sup>89</sup> by a master architect<sup>90</sup>;
- (3) It is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous;

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<sup>88</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “substantial integrity” as “Integrity that is considerable in importance, value, degree, amount, or extent, and that continues to exist, or would have continued to exist, but for work done without appropriate permits after the enactment of this article.”

<sup>89</sup> A 2016 amendment to BHMC 10-3-32 in Ord. 15-O-2700 defines “exceptional work” as “A remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community. At a minimum, the work's exceptional quality shall have been documented by at least one of the following: a) it was the subject of a major architectural award; b) it was substantively discussed (i.e., not just mentioned) and photographically depicted in a monograph on a master architect's career; or c) it was substantively discussed or photographically depicted in at least two (2) publications (e.g., a book, treatise, trade magazine article, film, or set of photographs made available to the public by an institutional archive) authored by acknowledged experts in the field of architecture. A monograph or publication made available to the public solely in electronic form and without any reasonable expectation of compensation to the author, or substantially authored by the architect of the work, shall not count toward this minimum.”

<sup>90</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “master architect” as “An architect of widely recognized greatness in the field of architecture whose individual genius influenced his or her age.”



- (4) It is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance;
- (5) It is an iconic property<sup>91</sup>; or
- (6) The landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).

Mirroring the National Register and California Register, the Ordinance requires that a resource retain integrity. The Ordinance defines integrity as “the ability of a property to convey its historical significance through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, relevant association, and character defining features.”<sup>92</sup> This builds upon the definition that is used by the National Register.

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<sup>91</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “iconic property” as “A property that has been visited and photographed so often by residents and visitors to the city that it has become inextricably associated with Beverly Hills in the popular culture and forms part of the city's identity to the world at large.”

<sup>92</sup> BHMC 10-3-3202, Definitions.

## 6. Evaluation of Significance

### 6.1. Previous Evaluations

461 North Beverly Drive does not appear to have been previously evaluated for historical significance. It is not listed in the California Historical Resources Inventory (HRI) database, and was also not identified in any of the City’s historic resource survey efforts (1985/86, 2004, 2006, 2013).

### 6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility

At only 25 years of age at this writing, the subject building is generally too young to be considered a historical resource. As previously enumerated, federal, state, and local eligibility criteria all have age requirements that safeguard against the designation of properties of “passing contemporary interest,” ensuring these designation programs remain lists of truly historical resources, by requiring – for properties fewer than 50 years of age – that individual properties have exceptional importance.

Illustrative of these guidelines, only an extremely small handful of properties younger than 30 years old have been successfully listed in the National Register of Historic Places as individual properties of exceptional importance. Among these are Michael Graves’s Portland Public Service Building (Portland Building), which was listed at 29 years of age; and E. Fay Jones’s Thorncrown Chapel, which was listed at only 20 years of age. Both of these resources were determined to possess exceptional importance because they were the best-known and most pivotal buildings of their respective architects’ careers.



**Name:** Portland Building  
**Architect:** Michael Graves  
**Date of Construction:** 1982  
**Date of NRHP Listing:** 2011

**Exceptional Importance (excerpted from the National Register Nomination Form):**

“Exceptionally important as one of the first large-scale manifestations of a new architectural style coming on the heels of the Modern movement.”

“One of the most notable works by internationally-known master architect Michael Graves and is widely credited as the design that established Graves’s preeminence in the field.”



**Name:** Thorncrowne Chapel  
**Architect:** E. Fay Jones  
**Date of Construction:** 1980  
**Date of NRHP Listing:** 2000

**Exceptional Importance (excerpted from the National Register Nomination Form):**

“Exceptional as a turning point in Fay Jones’s career.”

The chapel was “crucial to [Fay Jones’s] receipt of the AIA Gold Medal for his lifetime of achievement.”

“Arguably among the twentieth century’s great works of art.”

Nevertheless, due to the fact that the subject building was designed by an internationally acclaimed architectural partnership, it is evaluated herein for its potential to have exceptional importance such that it meets eligibility criteria despite its very young age.

## National Register and California Register

As described above in *Sections 5.1-5.2*, California Register criteria were modeled on those of the National Register, and therefore they are nearly identical in terms of language and the ways in which they are used to evaluate potential significance. Under both programs, in order to be eligible for listing a resource must meet the age requirement; be significant at the local, state, or national level under one or more of the eligibility criteria; and retain sufficient integrity to convey significance. It is in the application of an age requirement that the two programs differ. For listing in the National Register, resource fewer than 50 years of age are generally not eligible for listing unless they meet the requirements of Criterion Consideration G, whereas for listing in the California Register, regulations state that sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with a resource.<sup>93</sup>

What follows is an evaluation of the subject building against both National Register and California Register criteria, with distinction made when there is an issue of age due to the fact that the building is fewer than 50 years old.

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<sup>93</sup> California Office of Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Series #6: California Register and National Register: A Comparison (for purposes of determining eligibility for the California Register). Sacramento: Dept. of Parks and Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation.  
<https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1069/files/technical%20assistance%20bulletin%206%202011%20update.pdf>

ARG concludes that 461 North Beverly Drive is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources, as follows:

***National/California Register Criterion A/1: associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history.***

Built between 1994-1996, the subject building is associated with a relatively contemporary period of development in the Business Triangle district of Beverly Hills. It was one of many commercial and institutional buildings that were constructed in this area at this time, and its association with the glitz and glamour of Hollywood helped to augment the area's reputation as an epicenter of opulence, wealth, and high culture. On its own, the building does not signify important trends in the development of Beverly Hills that are not expressed in the many other commercial and institutional buildings that were constructed in this area of the City or in the Los Angeles region in the latter decades of the twentieth century.

As the longtime location of the Paley Center for Media, the building is also associated with broad patterns of cultural institutional development in the Southern California region. This museum is one of many new museums and cultural attractions that were established in the region during the latter twentieth century, and touched upon specific aspects of art and culture – in this case, television, radio, and other modes of mass media. The museum is known among media aficionados and others with an interest in the entertainment industry, but when compared against the broader pool of cultural institutions in greater Los Angeles, this particular institution appears to be more representative of these patterns than exemplary. Its presence in Beverly Hills has contributed to the rich cultural fabric of Southern California, but does not appear to have directly influenced arts and culture in the same vein as other locally renowned institutions including the County Museum of History, Science and Art (1913), the Southwest Museum (1914), LACMA (1961), and the Getty Center (1997). These other institutions had an indelible and transformative effect on the cultural institutional landscape of the Southern California region when they opened, because they were the first of their kind and/or because of their sheer scale. Almost immediately after opening, these institutions were touted as some of Southern California's foremost cultural attractions and drew international attention. As a much smaller institution with a more specialized program, the Paley Center – while a popular local attraction – lacks the gravitas of these other institutions that would render it historically significant under this criterion.

The building has been used as a venue for a number of galas, symposia, speaker panels, and other special events over the course of its 22 years in operation. Given the museum's function and its intrinsic association with entertainment moguls and television stars, many of these events have been highly profiled, celebrity-studded affairs. However, these types of events are fairly typical of museums, and especially of museums that bear such a strong and palpable association with the entertainment industry. There is not sufficient evidence to demonstrate that any event that has taken place within the building is, or will be, considered to be singularly significant in the annals of history.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion A/1.

***National/California Register Criterion B/2: associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.***

The Paley Center for Media is named for William S. Paley (1901-1999), the former chief executive of CBS and the driving force behind the institution's inception in the 1970s. The subject building – which is the sister location of the institution's counterpart in New York City – is named the Leonard Goldenson Building. Goldenson (1905-1999) was the former chief executive of ABC and played an influential role in the dissemination of television and radio programming. Both Paley and Goldenson are unquestionably significant because of their contributions to entertainment and broadcasting, but their association with the subject property is nominal at best. Paley's steadfast commitment to the Museum of Television and Radio and its overarching purpose paved the way for the subject building's construction in the 1990s, but he died several years before the decision was announced to construct a sister location in Beverly Hills. Goldenson's association with the subject building is commemorative only.

Robert Batscha was president of the Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center when the institution expanded beyond its original location in New York City and opened a branch location in Beverly Hills. A skilled administrator who was formally trained in political science and also dabbled in screenwriting, Batscha was important in the context of the institution, as it was under his directorship that it significantly grew from a small operation into a formidable institution with a bicoastal presence and an expanded program that encompassed other forms of media. Batscha is warmly remembered by those affiliated with the museum for expanding the institution in a way that stayed faithful to Paley's vision.

While Batscha is most certainly significant to the institutional development of the Paley Center, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that he should be considered a historically significant individual for purposes of this criterion. National Register Bulletin 15 states that "it must be shown that the [historically significant] person gained importance within his or her profession or group," and further states that "a property is not eligible under Criterion B if it is associated with an individual about whom no scholarly judgement can be made because either research has not revealed specific information about the person's activities and their impact, or there is insufficient perspective to determine whether those activities or contributions were historically important."<sup>94</sup> The latter point applies to Batscha. His contributions to the dissemination of media awareness generally, and the growth and expansion of the Paley Center specifically, are relatively recent. Most of the information that has been published about Batscha and his contributions toward these ends consist of obituaries that were published in the immediate aftermath of his death in 2003 and were thereby intended to pay homage to Batscha – not necessarily to frame him as a historically significant individual. Sufficient time has not elapsed, and sufficient perspective has not yet been developed, to assess whether it is appropriate to treat Batscha as a historically significant individual for purposes of this criterion.

The building has been patronized by scores of visitors during its 22 years in operation, and has been the site of numerous events that have drawn a fair number of celebrities. This is not uncommon for any museum, especially one that is dedicated to the entertainment industry. However, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the subject building bears a direct association with the productive period of any one individual in a manner that would merit consideration under this criterion.

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<sup>94</sup> NRB 15, Section VI: "How to Identify the Type of Significance of a Property," 15.



For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with the lives of persons important to local, state, or national history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion B/2.

**National/California Register Criterion C/3:** *embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.*

The subject building embodies characteristics of Neo-Corbusian architecture. The term “Neo-Corbusian” is generally used to describe the post-1980s work of Richard Meier and Partners, as it is clearly and directly influenced by the early modern work of Le Corbusier with its methodized geometries, exaggerated sense of abstraction, flat roofs, abundant fenestration, and white exterior walls. As a very recent iteration of late 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture, little scholarship exists on the development of the style, its essential characteristics, and its place in the context of Late Modern architecture. The late 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a number of idiosyncratic reactions to the ubiquity of post-World War II Modernism, including Postmodernism, High Tech, Glass Skin, and others yet to be classified. With the passage of time and increasing scholarship, the term Neo-Corbusian may or may not even continue to be used to describe these works, which are still being produced; rather, the character of the style may continue to coalesce in a way that will be better understood in the decades to come. In general, the subject building possesses features that stylistically align it with the work of Richard Meier and Partners; however, whether or not it is essential to a study of an architectural type or period cannot at this time be ascertained.

The building is also representative of the institutional work of architectural firm Richard Meier and Partners, whose myriad accomplishments between its inception in 1963 and the present day most certainly merit recognition of the firm as a master architect. It specifically relates to the reputation that Meier and his eponymous firm developed as a leading designer of museums. Its design – though not particularly transformative – is a good representation of how the firm’s aesthetic sensibilities and highly rigid, rational approach to design lent themselves especially well to museums and other cultural institutions. The building exhibits several of the features – geometric planes, white enameled exterior panels with warm stone accents, an entrance rotunda, and obfuscation of the line between interior and exterior spaces – that played such a definitive role in establishing Meier and Partners’ aesthetic and repertoire.

**National Register Age Requirement: Criteria Consideration G**

According to National Register Criteria Consideration G, it is not enough for a resource to simply meet the conditions enumerated in the criterion to justify eligibility for the National Register if the resource being evaluated is less than 50 years of age. For resources that are not yet 50 years of age, it must be demonstrated that the resource is not merely significant, but exhibits *exceptional* importance within its requisite historic context(s). This consideration “guards against the listing of properties of passing contemporary interest” and ensures that enough time has elapsed to develop historical perspective.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Apply the Criteria Considerations.”

Determining whether a resource is exceptionally significant for purposes of the National Register requires comparative analysis of the resource against contextually related properties. If, when the resource is compared to others, it becomes evident that (1) it is the property that *best* represents the historic context in question, or (2) represents a type so rare or fragile that extant examples of any age are unusual, it is generally considered to meet Criteria Consideration G.<sup>96</sup>

When the subject building is evaluated in the context of institutional projects in Richard Meier and Partners' portfolio using the above-listed criteria, it does not meet the definition of exceptional significance. As articulated by architectural critics who wrote about the building upon its completion in 1996, the building is quintessentially Meier and Partners in that it exhibits the same set of common characteristics that they applied, in varying degrees and at various scales, to almost all of their institutional commissions. Its design, while respectable, did not manipulate or combine these characteristics in a particularly unusual, inventive, or transformative manner. Overall, the subject building lacks the exceptional articulation, exaggerated sense of isolation, and degree of spatial complexity that called international attention to some of their other institutional works. Richard Meier himself described the project as being designed by himself and Michael Palladino "during a weekend charrette," and "on a very tight schedule and a limited budget."<sup>97</sup>

The building did not connote a watershed moment in the oeuvre of Meier and Partners, as did the Smith House (1967), which was widely studied and photographed and ultimately led to his canonization as a member of the New York Five; the High Museum of Art (1983), after which Meier was awarded the Pritzker Prize; and the Getty Center (1987-1996), which asserted the firm's presence on the West Coast, earned them international acclaim, and thrust them into the upper echelons of the world's greatest architects. According to NRB 15, "Several properties in the area could become eligible with the passage of time, but few will qualify now as exceptionally important."<sup>98</sup> In an evaluation of Meier and Partners' institutional work in Los Angeles, the Getty Center is the most exceptional example within this context. Notably, the subject building fails to exhibit a distinctive relationship to its surroundings, as do more notable buildings produced by Richard Meier and Partners.

Furthermore, the building is not a rare example of its type. Richard Meier and Partners designed many cultural/institutional buildings across Southern California after establishing an office in Los Angeles in 1985. These include the Getty Center, multiple buildings on the campus of UCLA, and a visitor's center for the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove. There are also several other Meier-designed buildings in Beverly Hills including the Gagosian Gallery and Gagosian Gallery Expansion, interior work at the historic Beverly Wilshire Hotel, and a mixed-use complex at 9200 Wilshire Boulevard. Therefore, even without the subject building, Beverly Hills would retain numerous examples of the work of Richard Meier and Partners.

It also bears mention that Richard Meier and Partners continues to operate active practices in New York and Los Angeles, and continues to be involved in the design of new buildings across the greater Southern California region. According to NRB 15, properties associated with living persons are usually

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Kenneth Frampton and Joseph Rykwert, *Richard Meier Architect*, New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1999: 288.

<sup>98</sup> NRB 15, Section VII: "How to Apply the Criteria Considerations."

not eligible for inclusion in the National Register, as “active participation in [this person’s] endeavor must be finished for this historic perspective to emerge.”<sup>99</sup> The story of Richard Meier and Partners, and its contributions to the architectural history of Southern California, are still unfolding, and the complete breadth of the firm and its work is not yet known. Though some commissions – such as the Getty Center – are obviously pivotal, it will likely take time for the significance of others to be fully grasped.

### ***California Register Age Requirement***

The California Register does not enumerate a minimum age requirement for listing, as does the National Register, but stipulates that sufficient time has to have elapsed to have a scholarly perspective on the historical significance of a resource to be eligible for listing. As stated above, the building’s relatively recent construction date (1994-96), coupled with the fact that Richard Meier and Partners remains an active architectural practice, hinder the ability to thoroughly and objectively evaluate its historical significance within a scholarly perspective. A review of monographs, articles and other materials related to Meier’s built projects does not suggest that the subject building is considered by critics, scholars, or the architectural community as a seminal work. In fact, the scholarly perspective on the subject building is that it is one of many museum projects to come out of Meier’s office from the late 1970s to the present day, and that there is nothing groundbreaking or pivotal about its design, as has been written about the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, the Getty Center in Los Angeles, or the Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona.

In conclusion, while the subject building generally represents the Neo-Corbusian derivative of the Late Modern style and the institutional work of architectural firm Richard Meier and Partners, it is not an exceptionally important example in either category. Taking into account the high eligibility thresholds associated with resources of the recent past, the building does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion C/3 at this time.

***Criterion D/4. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.***

As an archaeological assessment was not conducted as part of this study, the property’s potential for containing subsurface archaeological resources is unknown.

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<sup>99</sup> NRB 15, page 16.

## Local Eligibility

ARG concludes that 461 North Beverly Drive does not appear eligible for local listing as Beverly Hills Landmark, as follows:

### **Part A Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet all four of the following requirements):**

***Criterion A.1: it is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance.***

The subject building was constructed in 1996 and is not yet forty-five years of age. It is roughly 25 years of age. As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, it is not a property of extraordinary significance. Thus, it does not satisfy Criterion A.1.

***Criterion A.2: it possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period.***

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, the subject building embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Late Modern style, and specifically of the Neo-Corbusian derivative of the style. It therefore meets Criterion A.2.

***Criterion A.3: it retains substantial integrity from its period of significance.***

The subject building has been minimally altered since its construction between 1994-1996. It appears almost exactly as it did when it was built, and continues to express the aesthetic and architectural principles that influenced its original design. It therefore meets Criterion A.3.

***Criterion A.4: it has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.***

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, not enough time has elapsed to fully understand the significance of the subject building through the lens of history. The building is of relatively recent construction (1996), and compared to other works of Meier – including some in the Los Angeles area – it is not of exceptional importance. It is also not a rare example of a Meier and Partners building in Beverly Hills. Absent these qualities, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the building has historic value to the community. Thus, it does not satisfy Criterion A.4.

### **Part B Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet at least one of the following requirements):**

***Criterion B.1: it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.***

The subject building is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and therefore does not meet Criterion B.1.

**Criterion B.2:** *it is an exceptional work by a master architect.*

The subject building was designed by the architectural firm Richard Meier and Partners, which has been identified on the City of Beverly Hills’s List of Local Master Architects.

Although the building was designed by a master architect, it does not meet the Beverly Hills Municipal Code’s definition of “exceptional work.” A 2016 amendment to BHMC 10-3-32 in Ord. 15-O-2700 defines “exceptional work” as “a remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community,” meeting at least one of the following criteria:

Firstly, a work would be considered exceptional if “it was the subject of a major architectural award.” Research did not provide evidence that the subject building won any architectural awards.

Secondly, a work would be considered exceptional if “it was substantively discussed (i.e., not just mentioned) and photographically depicted in a monograph on a master architect's career.” As indicated in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3 and reiterated in *Section 8: Bibliography* of this report, much has been written about Meier, the arc of his work, and his contributions to architecture in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, including multiple monographs. The subject building is addressed in four of six monographs reviewed. The two monographs that do not depict the subject building are smaller, summary monographs that are curated to focus mainly on seminal works.<sup>100</sup> The fact that the Paley Center is omitted from these texts conveys that it was not considered important enough to include, while other museums – such as the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, the Museum for the Decorative Arts in Frankfurt, the Getty Center in Los Angeles, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona – were. Three additional monographs include the subject building in plates and with limited discussion of the building<sup>101</sup>; one includes it only in the comprehensive index of works without any photographs or discussion.<sup>102</sup> Not one of these monographs cites the subject building as being a seminal or pivotal work, nor was the building substantially discussed in comparison to other, more notable works.

Finally, a work would be considered exceptional if “it was substantively discussed or photographically depicted in at least two (2) publications (e.g., a book, treatise, trade magazine article, film, or set of photographs made available to the public by an institutional archive) authored by acknowledged experts in the field of architecture.” The subject building has been mentioned in a variety of sources including the monographs described above, newspaper and journal articles, and travel guides of the Southern California region. A small number of articles were written by architectural critics at the time of its opening. Leon Whiteson, architecture critic for the *Los Angeles Times*, describes the building as a sophisticated addition to the Business Triangle, remarking that it “wears its sophistication lightly...its clean, simple lines have the good manners not to shame its neighbors while still making it clear that the

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<sup>100</sup> Claudia Conforti, Marzia Marandola, and Richard Meier, *Richard Meier* 1. ed. Milano: Motta architettura, 2009; and Philip Jodidio and Peter Gössel, *Richard Meier & Partners: White Is the Light*. Köln: Taschen, 2010.

<sup>101</sup> Kenneth Frampton, *Richard Meier*. Milano: Electa Architecture, 2002 (pub in English in 2003); Philip Jodidio, *Richard Meier & Partners: Complete Works 1963-2013* Köln: Taschen, 2013; and Richard Meier, Germano Celant, and Massimo Vignelli, *Richard Meier: Museums: 1973/2006*. New York, NY: Rizzoli International Publications, 2006.

<sup>102</sup> Richard Meier and Stan Allen, *Richard Meier, Architect* New York: Monacelli Press, 1999.



building boasts a far more urbane architecture.”<sup>103</sup> Paul Goldberger, architecture critic for *The New York Times*, notes that the building “is not going to convince anyone that there is a new Richard Meier waiting to be discovered. The building is as white and sleek as anything Mr. Meier has ever done, and it looks not terribly different from the many museums and institutional and commercial buildings he produced in the 1970s and ‘80s.”<sup>104</sup> Deborah K. Deitsch wrote about the building in *Architecture* journal, noting that it is “classic Meier,” and that “Meier breaks no new ground with the museum.”<sup>105</sup> No architectural criticism published at the time of the building’s design or thereafter has lauded the building as being seminal, groundbreaking, noteworthy, or pivotal in the context of Meier’s work.

The absence of any deep discussion in these sources about the building’s design and contribution to an understanding of architecture and the overall arc of Meier’s body or work suggest that it is not considered to be a “remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community.”

For these reasons, the subject building does not meet the definition of an “exceptional work” per the Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance and thus does not meet Criterion B.2.

***Criterion B.3:*** *it is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous.*

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion B/2, there is insufficient evidence demonstrating that the subject building bears a meaningful association with the productive lives of historically significance individuals. Thus, the building does not meet Criterion B.3.

***Criterion B.4:*** *it is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance.*

As discussed, the subject building does not appear to have been associated with persons of great local importance in a manner that would merit consideration under this criterion. Thus, the building does not meet Criterion B.4.

***Criterion B.5:*** *it is an iconic property.*

The subject building is not an iconic property as defined by the Ordinance. Though as a cultural institution it has very likely been visited and photographed by many visitors to the City, the building does not appear to have become inextricably associated with Beverly Hills’s identity in a manner that would merit further consideration under this criterion. For this reason the building does not meet Criterion B.5.

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<sup>103</sup> Whiteson (1996).

<sup>104</sup> Goldberger (1996).

<sup>105</sup> Deborah K. Dietsch, “Broadcast News,” *Architecture*, November 1996, 100-101.

**Criterion B.6:** *the landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).*

The Landmark designation procedure is not known to have been initiated by any parties, and the owner(s) of the property have not expressly agreed to the initiation of such a procedure. As a result, the subject building does not meet Criterion B.6.

### **Summary of Local Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for local listing, a resource must meet all four of the above-listed Part A requirements, and at least one of the above-listed Part B requirements. The building does not meet Criterion A.1 and A.4, as required, and also does not meet any of the Part B requirements. In summary, the subject building does not meet local eligibility criteria.

## **6.3. Evaluation of Integrity**

For a property to be eligible for listing in the National and California Registers, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark, it must meet eligibility criteria and also retain sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance. *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* states that “only after significance is fully established can you proceed to the issue of integrity.”<sup>106</sup> In accordance with best professional practices, it is customary to apply this same methodology when evaluating resources at the state and local levels. Because the building does not meet the criteria for federal, state, or local listing, an assessment of integrity is not necessary.

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<sup>106</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

## 7. Conclusion

The Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center for Media embodies characteristics of Late Modern/Neo-Corbusian architecture and is also a representative work of Richard Meier and Partners. Its design includes many of the characteristics that define Richard Meier and Partners' practice and approach to design. However, when evaluating the significance of buildings of the recent past, the bar is held particularly high to ensure that a resource is evaluated with an appropriate amount of historical perspective. Resources of the recent past – and especially resources like the subject building that were built in the very recent past (1994-96) – must demonstrably exhibit exceptional importance to be eligible for listing.

While the subject building is a representative work of Richard Meier and Partners, it does not appear to exhibit the exceptional level of historical and/or architectural significance needed to substantiate its eligibility for federal, state, or local listing. Therefore, the building is not eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark at this time, and is not considered to be a "historical resource" for purposes of CEQA.

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## 449-453 North Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills Historic Resource Assessment Report

*Prepared for:*

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP  
San Francisco, CA

*Prepared by:*



Architectural  
Resources Group

Architectural Resources Group  
Los Angeles, CA

June 24, 2020

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Executive Summary	1
1.2. Preparer Qualifications	2
<b>2. Architectural Description</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1. Site and Setting	3
2.2. Building Exterior	4
2.3. Landscape and Hardscape Features	5
<b>3. Development Chronology and Alterations</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1. Development Chronology	8
3.2. Alterations	9
<b>4. Historic Contexts</b>	<b>11</b>
4.1. Commercial Development in the Business Triangle	11
4.2. Owners and Occupants: 449-453 North Beverly Drive	12
4.3. Ruth Law	14
4.4. Jack L. Warner	15
4.5. Architecture and Design	17
<b>5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation</b>	<b>18</b>
5.1. National Register of Historic Places	18
5.2. California Register of Historical Resources	19
5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance	20
<b>6. Evaluation of Significance</b>	<b>22</b>
6.1. Previous Evaluations	22
6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility	22
6.3. Evaluation of Integrity	28
<b>7. Conclusion</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>8. Bibliography</b>	<b>30</b>

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Executive Summary

At the request of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) has prepared this Historic Resource Assessment Report for the property at 449-453 North Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, California. The property contains a one-story commercial building that was constructed in 1921 and appears to have been significantly expanded circa 1926. Research suggests that the rear (southwest) portion of the building, which is set back and backs onto a service alley, dates to 1921; it contains one unit (451½ North Beverly Drive) that has historically been occupied by warehouses and other light industrial uses. It appears to currently be occupied by a warehouse for an art gallery. The front (northeast) volume, which faces Beverly Drive, is an addition that dates to circa 1926 and is divided into three commercial storefronts (449, 451, and 453 North Beverly Drive), all of which are currently vacant. The two volumes are connected via a small hyphen.

No original building permit is available, so the identity of the original architect and builder could not be determined. Briefly, between 1928 and 1929, the property was owned by Ruth Law, a pioneering female aviator. Between 1928 and the 1940s, the building was one of several commercial properties in the business district of Beverly Hills that were owned by film executive Jack L. Warner, the president and driving force of Warner Brothers Studios. Warner, like many prominent figures of his era, appears to have dabbled in the local real estate market as a means of generating additional income.

This report examines the history of the building and evaluates it against eligibility criteria for federal (National Register of Historic Places), state (California Register of Historical Resources), and local (Beverly Hills Landmark) listing, to determine if it satisfies the definition of a historical resource for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Preparation of this report included the following tasks related to research, documentation, and analysis:

- Site visit on May 5, 2020 to assess existing conditions and document the building's exterior features with digital photographs;
- Review of pertinent federal and state technical bulletins, local ordinances, and other reference materials related to the evaluation of historical resources;
- Review of applicable background materials including historical building permits and Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) data for the subject property;
- Primary and secondary source research to glean additional information about the property's development history, design, occupancy, and potential historical significance;
- Identification of applicable historic contexts and themes; and
- Evaluation of the building against eligibility criteria for the National Register, the California Register, and as a Beverly Hills Landmark.



Research materials were culled from the following sources: the Los Angeles Public Library; the Beverly Hills Public Library; the archives of the *Los Angeles Times* and other local periodicals; building permits obtained from the City of Beverly Hills's Community Development Department; technical bulletins published by the National Park Service (NPS) and the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP); online repositories; and ARG's in-house collection of architectural books and reference materials. A complete list of sources is included in *Section 8: Bibliography* of this report.

In summary, ARG concludes that the building at 449-453 North Beverly Drive does not meet eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register, California Register, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark. Therefore, the building is not a historical resource for purposes of CEQA. The following sections provide a contextual basis for analysis and a detailed discussion of how this determination was made.

## 1.2. Preparer Qualifications

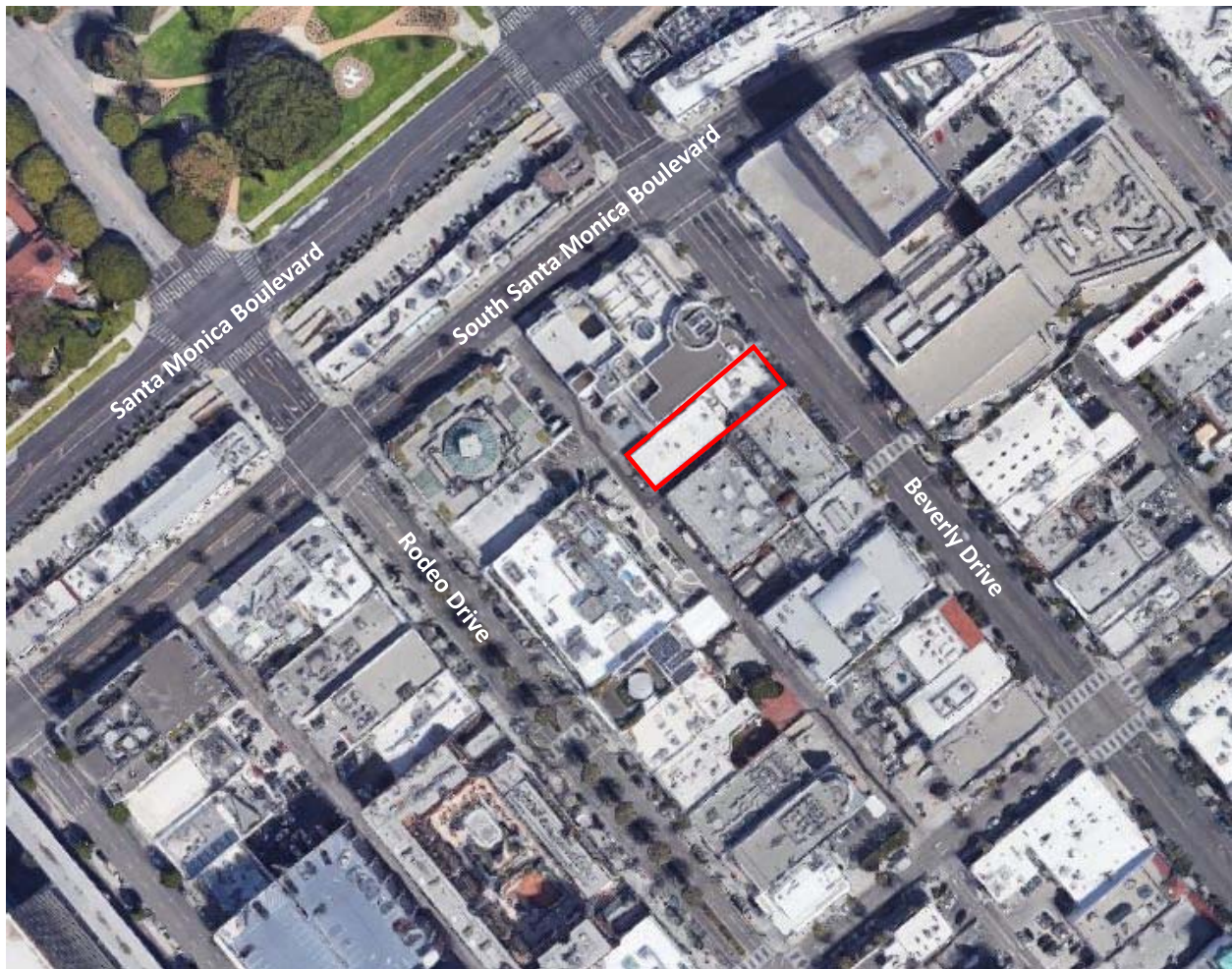
This report was prepared by Katie E. Horak, Principal, and Andrew Goodrich, AICP, Associate, both Architectural Historians and Preservation Planners. ARG intern Krista Gelev provided additional project support. Ms. Horak and Mr. Goodrich meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards*, 36 CFR Part 61, in the discipline of Architectural History.

## 2. Architectural Description

### 2.1. Site and Setting

The subject property is located near the northern edge of a triangular-shaped commercial district that is bounded by Santa Monica Boulevard (north and west), Wilshire Boulevard (south), and Canon Drive (east). This area serves as the central business district of Beverly Hills. Known as the Business Triangle, it is densely developed with a mix of low and mid-scale commercial buildings, many of which are occupied by some of the foremost purveyors of luxury retail goods. The circulation network ascribes to a grid that is oriented 45 degrees askew of the cardinal directions and contributes to the area's wedge-like form.

449-453 North Beverly Drive occupies a flat commercial parcel that is located on the west side of Beverly Drive, between South Santa Monica Boulevard and Brighton Way. The parcel is askew of the cardinal directions, is rectangular in shape, and measures 7,632 square feet. The southeast and northwest property lines abut adjacent buildings. The southwest property line abuts a service alley.



*Location map. The subject property, 449-453 N Beverly Dr, is outlined in red (Google Maps).*

## 2.2. Building Exterior

Most of the parcel is occupied by a 6,020-square-foot commercial building that was constructed in 1921 and appears to have been significantly expanded in 1926.<sup>1</sup> The building is one story tall, is constructed of brick, and sits on a concrete slab foundation. It has an irregular footprint that comprises two volumes: at the front (northeast) of the parcel is a volume that comprises three storefront units, and at the rear (southwest) is a volume that comprises a warehouse. The two volumes are connected at the center of the building by a small hyphen. The original building permit is not available, but the building appears to have originally consisted of the rear volume only, and not the three storefronts facing the street. Like most buildings in the vicinity, the subject building is set flush with the front lot line. It is vernacular and lacks the distinctive characteristics of any particular architectural style.

The building is capped by a flat roof, likely sheathed in a composition membrane, and parapet. HVAC units and other pieces of mechanical equipment are installed atop the roof, but are largely obscured from public view by the parapet wall. Exterior walls on the street-facing (northeast) façade are clad in smooth stucco. Exterior walls on the side and rear façades feature exposed brick; some of these brick surfaces have been painted.

The primary façade faces northeast, toward Beverly Drive, and is divided into three storefronts of roughly equal width. Each storefront has a different façade treatment. The south storefront (449 North Beverly Drive) is framed by full height reeded pilasters. Ingress is provided by a central entrance that consists of a single-glazed wood door. The door is framed by pilasters, and is flanked on each side by a fixed, multi-light wood storefront window that sits atop a polished marble base. The center storefront (451 North Beverly Drive) consists of a single glazed aluminum door with a bronze finish. It is incorporated into a system of fixed aluminum storefront windows, which also have a bronze finish. This door is deeply recessed into the face of the building. The north storefront (453 North Beverly Drive) features a single glazed door. The door is flanked on each side by a fixed, floor-to-ceiling metal storefront window that is framed in chrome. The north storefront is surmounted by an awning, and above the awning is wall-mounted signage that reads “THE/ORGANIC/PHARMACY.”

The rear (southwest) façade backs onto an alley and is utilitarian in appearance. It features exposed ducting and seismic anchor plates along the eave line. Set off center is a deeply recessed entrance that appears to be punched into the wall and is secured by an accordion style metal gate. This entrance consists of a single metal door, which provides ingress to the warehouse unit at the rear of the building. Other features of note include arched window openings that have been infilled with bricks.

The two side (southeast, northwest) elevations are similarly utilitarian in appearance, and also feature exposed ducting and seismic anchor plates. Both also feature windows with arched openings that have been infilled. The southwest façade features two full height, roll-up metal utility doors that provide ingress to the rear warehouse unit. Along each side façade is a narrow walkway that is secured in part by a metal security door and leads to rear entrances to the retail units at the front of the building.

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<sup>1</sup> Original construction date obtained from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor. Information about the addition was gleaned from “Beverly Hills Firm’s March Sales \$225,000,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 11, 1928.



## 2.3. Landscape and Hardscape Features

Since the building occupies almost the entirety of the lot, landscape and hardscape features are minimal. The only landscape feature is a Mexican fan palm tree and a locust tree that are planted in the parkway space along Beverly Drive.

### Current Photos



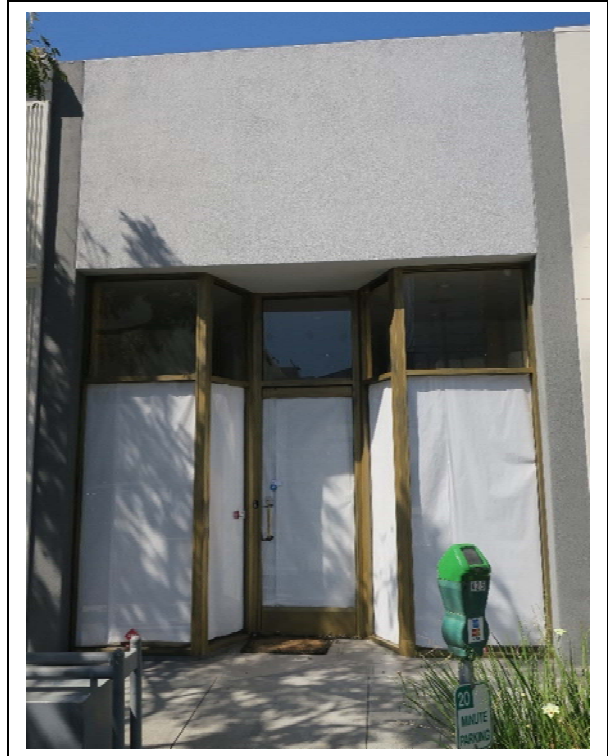
*Primary (northeast) façade, view northwest (ARG, 2020)*



*Primary façade, view southwest (ARG, 2020)*



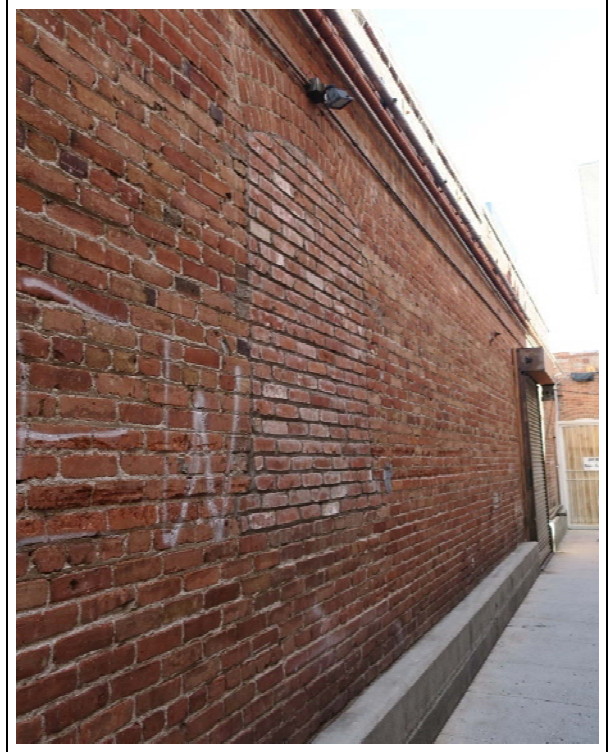
*Detail of south storefront (449 N Beverly Dr) on primary façade (ARG, 2020)*



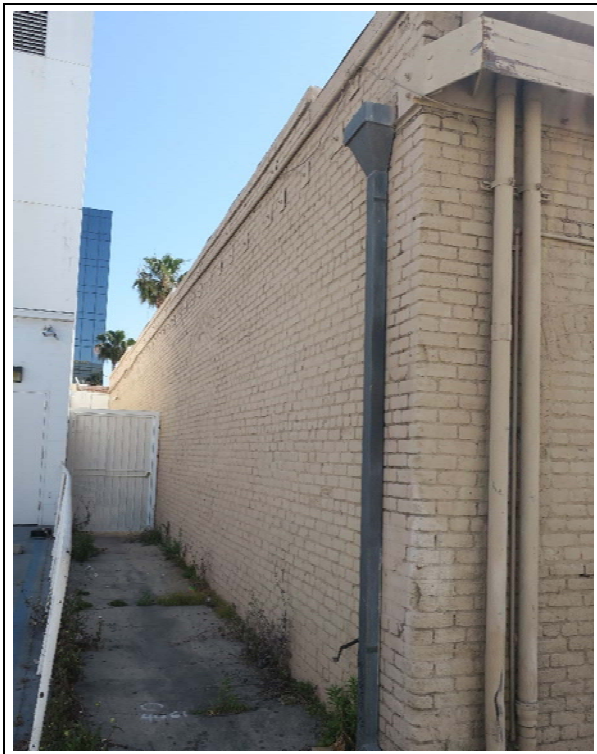
*Detail of center storefront (451 N Beverly Dr) on primary façade (ARG, 2020)*



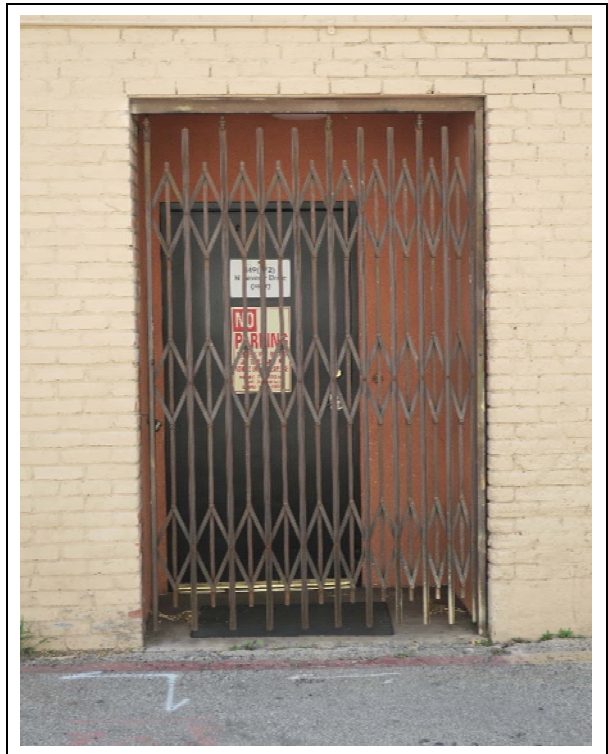
*Side (southeast) façade, view west (ARG, 2020)*



*Side (southeast) façade, view northeast. Note infilled window in foreground (ARG, 2020)*



*Side (northwest) façade, view east (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of recessed entrance on rear (southwest) façade (ARG, 2020)*



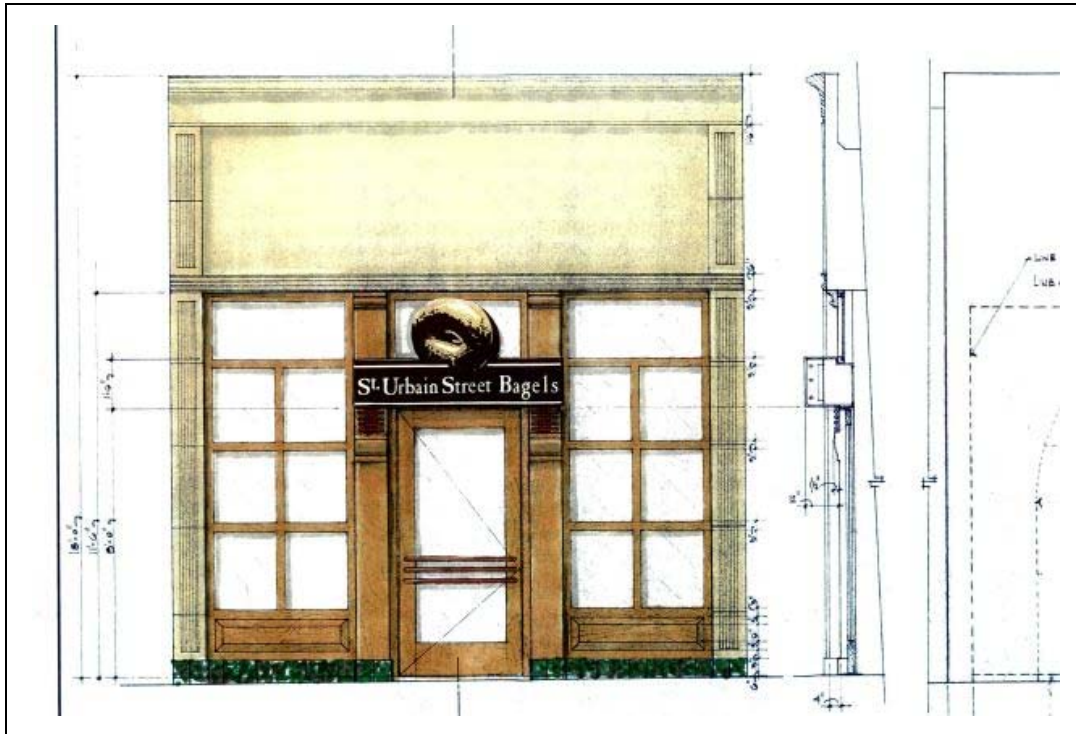


Rear (southwest) façade, view east (ARG, 2020)



Rear façade, view northeast (ARG, 2020)

### Additional Photos



Rendering of south storefront, 449 N Beverly Dr, 1995. This was submitted as part of a permit application for tenant improvements and façade renovations (City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department).

### 3. Development Chronology and Alterations

#### 3.1. Development Chronology

The following development chronology for 449-453 North Beverly Drive summarizes key events in the property’s development history between its original construction in 1921 and the present-day. It was developed by reviewing historical building permits from the Beverly Hills Community Development Department, and was augmented by additional sources of information including historic photos and aerial images; parcel data from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor; the collections of the Beverly Hills Public Library and other local and online repositories; and other source materials.

<b>1921</b>	Original construction of the subject building (Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor).
<b>ca. 1926</b>	A <i>Los Angeles Times</i> article dated March 1928 notes that “following the purchase of the business property a year and a half ago by Mrs. [W. Asa] Hudson, the store building was rebuilt as to its front and generally improved.” <sup>2</sup> Permits associated with this work are not available, and the phrasing of the article is obtuse, but based on this article and visual observations, it is believed that the building originally consisted of the rear volume, and was expanded by Hudson circa 1926 to include the three storefronts at the front of the parcel.
<b>1928</b>	Ruth Law, a female aviator who moved to Beverly Hills and dabbled in real estate investment after retiring from flying, purchased the subject property for \$92,500. <sup>3</sup>
<b>1929</b>	Entertainment titan Jack L. Warner, President of Warner Bros., purchased the subject property for \$95,000. At the time, it was noted that the property was “improved with a one-story business block and has a fifty-foot frontage.” <sup>4</sup> Permit records suggest that Warner owned the property through the mid-1940s.
<b>1933</b>	Permit issued for interior alterations. The scope is described as “partitions and fixtures in store, new floor under windows.” No architect is listed on the permit; E.A. Pedersen is listed as the contractor; Jack Warner is listed as the owner (Permit No. 122212).
<b>1939</b>	Permit issued for storefront modifications. The scope is described as “change trim on plate glass show windows; re-paint exterior wood trim and interior of store; replace present wood bulkheads with brick; cover bulkheads with structural glass.” No architect is listed on the permit; Robert D. Blake is listed as the contractor; J.L. Warner is listed as the owner (Permit No. 16906).
<b>1943</b>	Permit issued to modify interior partition walls. No architect is listed on the permit; Amos Carr is listed as the contractor; Jack Warner is listed as the owner (Permit No. 79221).

<sup>2</sup> “Beverly Hills Firm’s March Sales \$225,000,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 11, 1928.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> “Film Magnate Buys Holdings From Aviatrix,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 17, 1929.

<b>1944</b>	Permit issued to modify interior partition walls and build interior shelves for store. No architect is listed on the permit; Don Findlay is listed as the contractor; Jack Warner is listed as the owner (Permit No. 19918).
<b>1945</b>	Permit issued to fireproof and plaster interior partition walls. The building is described as “storage and workshop,” indicating that this scope of work pertained to the warehouse unit at the rear of the building. No architect is listed on the permit; W.J. Haskell is listed as the contractor; Mr. Warner is listed as the owner (Permit No. 20255).
<b>1955</b>	Permit issued for storefront modifications. The scope is described as “face existing glass and mullion storefront with metal shutters and arch. decoration; remove existing 4x6 post and place one light plate glass as shown.” No architect is listed on the permit; Manfred McArthur is listed as the contractor; Robin Stroud is listed as the owner (Permit No. 31072).
<b>1964</b>	Permit issued for interior and exterior alterations. The scope is described as “building partition and store room; alter existing front.” No architect is listed on the permit; Alexander Mandel is listed as the contractor and owner (Permit No. 640454).  Permit issued to modify interior partition walls. No architect is listed on the permit; Les Silver is listed as the contractor; Steve Hecht is listed as the owner (Permit No. 840496).  Permit issued to complete unspecified interior improvements for a retail store. Allen & Sheriff is listed as the architect; Les Silver is listed as the contractor; Steven Hecht is listed as the owner (Permit No. 840655).
<b>1995</b>	Various application materials are submitted, and approved, related to the modification of the south storefront. The scope of work was described as a façade remodel, interior improvements, and business identification signage to accommodate a new tenant, a bagel shop called St. Urbain Street Bagels. Jonathan L. Green of Designall is listed as the architect; Frank Farzaneh is listed as the contractor; Brenda Abramson Co. Tr. Is listed as the owner (Permit Nos. 95000797, C9500064).
<b>1996</b>	Various application materials are submitted, and approved, related to the infill of windows and modification of the door on the rear (warehouse) volume of the building. The rear unit was occupied by an art gallery at this time. Seni Paibul of StrucCo Inc. is listed as the engineer; Michael’s Gallery Warehouse is listed as the tenant (Case No. M-AR-159-06-96).
<b>1997</b>	Various application materials are submitted, and approved, related to the installation of bird abatement spike strips along the top edge of the building. Carl Garcia Engler of Encom Industries is listed as the contractor; Brenda Abramson Co. Trust and Abraham S. Hershenson are listed as the owners (Case No. M-AR-159-06-96).

### 3.2. Alterations

The following alterations were noted during a site visit conducted by ARG on May 5, 2020. Whenever possible, these alterations were corroborated by the building permits listed above, Sanborn Fire

Insurance Maps, historic aerial images, parcel data from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor, and other source materials. The alterations listed herein pertain only to the exterior of the building.

- Original wall cladding (presumably brick) has been replaced with a stucco finish
- Exposed brick walls on the side and rear façades have been painted
- Fenestration patterns on the storefronts have been extensively modified
- The rear entrance has been modified
- Doors have been replaced
- Metal roll-up doors have been added to the southwest façade
- Windows have been replaced
- Windows on the rear and side façades have been infilled
- Seismic anchor plates have been added
- An awning has been added above the storefront unit at 453 N Beverly Dr

Together, these alterations have significantly changed the appearance of the building such that it retains little original fabric aside from its essential form and structure, and does not retain the look or feel of a 1920s commercial building.

## 4. Historic Contexts

### 4.1. Commercial Development in the Business Triangle

449-453 North Beverly Drive is located in an area of Beverly Hills that is known as the Business Triangle (and at times, colloquially, as the Golden Triangle) so named because of its distinctive, triangular form. Located near the center of Beverly Hills, between Santa Monica and Wilshire Boulevards and Canon Drive, the area is densely developed with various commercial and institutional uses. It serves as the City's central business district and civic center.

In spite of its present-day associations with luxury, glamour, opulence, and wealth, Beverly Hills had relatively inauspicious beginnings. The first house was constructed in 1907, but overall development activity in the nascent community was languid. The Beverly Hills Hotel was constructed between 1911-1912 in an attempt to lure in prospective buyers. In its early years, the sprawling Mission Revival style complex not only served as a luxurious hostelry, but also functioned as a *de facto* community center for area residents.<sup>5</sup> Since the hotel was located amid what was then a swath of peripheral, undeveloped land, an auxiliary rail line called The Dinky was built to convey people between the hotel and the Pacific Electric Railway line nearer the center of town.<sup>6</sup> The Dinky traveled down the center of Rodeo Drive, originating at its intersection with Santa Monica Boulevard and terminating at the hotel on Sunset Boulevard.

Beverly Hills formally incorporated as an independent city in 1914, but development – and particularly commercial development – remained sluggish. Aside from the hotel, the City's only commercial buildings were clustered near the intersection of Beverly Drive and Burton Way (now South Santa Monica Boulevard). At this time, the business district consisted of a small handful of one- and two-story business blocks that were occupied by grocers, barbers, hardware stores, a bank, a post office, and other enterprises that served residents' day-to-day needs. A Pacific Electric Railway station was located just to the north, on Santa Monica Boulevard. Elsewhere within the Business Triangle, the blocks were sparsely developed with a smattering of small, humble bungalows for those of more modest means.<sup>7</sup>

Just to the south of the business district and Business Triangle, where the Beverly Wilshire Hotel and Beverly Hills High School are located today, a wood plank track for automobile racing was built between 1919-1920. Known as the Beverly Hills Speedway, it became an immediate attraction and was ranked second in race quality only to the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway.<sup>8</sup> But as popular as the speedway was, rising real estate costs and mounting development pressures meant that it was a short-lived endeavor. The racetrack was demolished in 1924, and the land was subdivided shortly thereafter.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed May 2020.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Water and Power Associates, "Early Views of Beverly Hills," accessed May 2020. Additional information about development patterns in Beverly Hills was gleaned from Sanborn Fire Insurance maps dated 1922.

<sup>8</sup> Susan King, "Speedway Brought Life in the Fast Lane to 1920s Beverly Hills," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 24, 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid; Pacific Coast Architecture Database, "Beverly Hills Speedway, Beverly Hills, CA (1919-1920)," accessed May 2020.



Like most communities in Southern California, Beverly Hills witnessed an unprecedented amount of growth and development in the 1920s. It was during this time that the community truly came of age, shedding its roots as a small, peripheral outpost and asserting itself as one of Southern California's premier residential communities. Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Will Rogers, Rudolph Valentino, and other A-list celebrities built stylish mansions in the community, cementing its reputation as a haven for the entertainment elite.<sup>10</sup> As Beverly Hills's population grew, its small commercial node evolved into a discernible central business district. A number of new commercial buildings arose in the triangular-shaped district between Santa Monica and Wilshire boulevards. Buildings like the exotic Beverly Theatre (1925, L.A. Smith, not extant) and the posh, Renaissance Revival style Beverly Wilshire Apartment Hotel (1928, Walker and Eisen) attested to the quality of architecture in the city at this time.

In the early 1930s, two resplendent civic buildings were constructed at the northeast corner of the triangular-shaped business district: the Spanish Renaissance style Beverly Hills City Hall (1932, William J. Gage and Harry G. Koerner), and the Italian Renaissance style Beverly Hills Post Office (1934, Ralph Flewelling and Allison and Allison). These buildings denoted the civic and political heart of the burgeoning city, and represented significant new additions to its commercial and institutional core.

Beverly Hills entered into another period of remarkable growth after World War II. Parcels that had remained undeveloped prior to the war were swiftly purchased and improved, and the City also expanded its physical reach by annexing a large tract of hillside land that became the Trousdale Estates.<sup>11</sup> The character of commercial development also began to visibly transform at this time, with Rodeo Drive as its focus. Historically a "fairly quiet suburban street with beauty shops, hardware stores, gas stations and bookstores," Rodeo Drive began to evolve into an internationally renowned locus of the cultural elite.<sup>12</sup> In 1967, fashion retailer Fred Hayman opened Giorgio Beverly Hills, the first high-end boutique to open on the street. Other luxurious retailers including Parisian jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels (1969) and coiffeur Vidal Sassoon (1970) followed suit.<sup>13</sup> Subsequent development on Rodeo Drive and nearby streets took on an increasingly posh and sumptuous character.

The subject building was constructed in 1921 and appears to have been significantly expanded in 1926, amid a period marked by considerable growth in Beverly Hills and elsewhere throughout the greater Los Angeles region. It was one of many new commercial buildings that were constructed in the up-and-coming business district of Beverly Hills during this time, and were primarily used as retail storefronts by a variety of neighborhood-oriented businesses.

## 4.2. Owners and Occupants: 449-453 North Beverly Drive

The Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor indicates that the subject building was constructed in 1921.<sup>14</sup> Original permit records are not available, so the identities of the architect (if any), contractor,

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<sup>10</sup> City of Beverly Hills, "History of Beverly Hills," accessed May 2020.

<sup>11</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed May 2020.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Darling, "A Rodeo Drive Timeline," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 9, 2013.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Original construction date obtained from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor.

and original owner could not be determined. Research indicates that originally, the building consisted of only the brick warehouse volume at the rear of the parcel. In the mid-1920s, Helen Hudson, the wife of prominent local architect W. Asa Hudson, purchased the property, and the *Los Angeles Times* notes that under her ownership, “the store building was rebuilt as to its front and generally improved.”<sup>15</sup> The language in this article is vague, but it is believed to be a reference to the front volume that comprises the three storefront units that front onto Beverly Drive.

Sanborn maps of Beverly Hills that were published in 1926 show that by this time, the building had the same basic configuration as it does today, with three retail stores at the front of the lot and a single unit at the rear of the lot that appears to have been used for light industrial purposes. This map shows that the south and center storefronts (449 and 451 North Beverly Drive) were jointly occupied by a single store, and that the north storefront (453 North Beverly Drive) was occupied by a restaurant. The rear unit (then listed as 449C North Beverly Drive) was occupied by an upholstering company at this time.<sup>16</sup>

In 1928, the property was sold to Ruth Law for \$92,500, a then-record for commercial real estate on this stretch of Beverly Drive.<sup>17</sup> Law had made a name for herself in the field of aviation, and was notably “the first woman to achieve fame as an aviator in the United States.”<sup>18</sup> When Law purchased the building, its tenants included “the Sheetz candy store, Burdsall’s Boy Shop and the Empire Tile and Mantel Company and the Dean Gown Shop.”<sup>19</sup>

Law did not hold onto the property for long. In 1929, less than a year after she purchased it, Law sold the property to another individual of high acclaim: Jack L. Warner, the renowned film executive who headed the Warner Brothers studios. The *Los Angeles Times* reports that the property was sold for \$95,000, and was “improved with a one-story business block and has a fifty-foot frontage” at the time of its sale.<sup>20</sup> Like Law and other prominent figures of this era, Warner appears to have dabbled in commercial real estate as a means of augmenting his income. While his name appears on building permits issued throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, he does not appear to have played a role in the building aside from owning it – there is no evidence that he established offices here, or used the building for purposes related to his role in the motion picture industry. The last reference to Warner with respect to the property is a building permit issued in 1945; subsequent building permits issued in the 1950s do not reference Warner, indicating that he sold the property at some point prior to this time.

The building’s individual tenant spaces were occupied by a succession of tenants in subsequent years. Known occupants of the south storefront (449 North Beverly Drive) include the Beverly Hills Fur Shop (women’s apparel, 1930s); Bob Fly’s Portofino, which sold “Italian imports for men and women” (1960s); a wig shop called Tiara Wigs (1960s); and Alice Schweitzer, a woman’s boutique that was known for being particularly fashion forward to the point of being eccentric, with “zany décor and [an inventory of] dresses that crackle with noise, light up with electricity or shine with metal.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> “Beverly Hills Firm’s March Sales \$225,000,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 11, 1928.

<sup>16</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, accessed May 2020 via the Los Angeles Public Library.

<sup>17</sup> “Beverly Hills Firm’s March Sales \$225,000,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 11, 1928.

<sup>18</sup> “Film Magnate Buys Holdings from Aviatrix,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 17, 1929.

<sup>19</sup> “Beverly Hills Firm’s March Sales \$225,000,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 11, 1928.

<sup>20</sup> “Film Magnate Buys Holdings from Aviatrix,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 17, 1929.

<sup>21</sup> Lynn Lilliston, “Merchandisers of Mod Look,” *Los Angeles Times*, Apr. 23, 1967.

Known tenants of the center storefront (451 North Beverly Drive) include a handbag retailer called Daniel's (1950s), an art dealer called Erawan Asian Imports (1960s), and a women's boutique called Lady Madonna that specialized in pregnancy attire (1970s and 1980s). In 1962, Erawan Asian Imports was raided by the federal government on suspicion that it had smuggled illegal artifacts to the United States from China. Noted actor Tab Hunter was named as a person of interest in the raid because of his previous dealings with the store's proprietress, Mrs. Lois L. McMillian.<sup>22</sup>

Comparatively little information is available about the occupancy history of the rear warehouse unit (451½ North Beverly Drive). Sanborn maps indicate that this unit was occupied by an upholster in 1926, and by a storage warehouse and machine shop in 1950. Permit records dated 1996 identify the tenant as Michael's Gallery Warehouse.

Known tenants of the north storefront (453 North Beverly Drive) include a restaurant called The Cellar (1960s), a location of the Coffee Bean franchise (1970s), and a frozen yogurt shop called the Cultured Cow (1970s). Most recently, the building was occupied by a bagel shop called St. Urbain Street Bagels (449 North Beverly Drive), a clothing boutique called Dale Michele (451 North Beverly Drive), and a homeopathic beauty store called The Organic Pharmacy (453 North Beverly Drive). All of the tenant spaces are currently vacant aside from the rear warehouse unit (451½ Beverly Drive), which appears to still be occupied by a warehouse for an art gallery.

### 4.3. Ruth Law

As noted, the building was owned by Ruth Law for a brief period in the late 1920s. Law was a pioneering female aviator who pivoted to real estate investment after retiring from aeronautics.

Ruth Bancroft Law (1887-1970) was born in Massachusetts. She first developed an interest in flight from her brother Rodman Law, a parachutist and movie stuntman who was known as something of a daredevil. By virtue of his career path, Rodman Law knew individuals associated with the then-nascent and tight knit aeronautics industry, and Ruth Law leveraged these connections to pursue her own budding interest. In 1912, Law approached the pioneering aviator Orville Wright for flight lessons but he refused, she said, "because he thought women weren't mechanically inclined."<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, she persisted. "The surest way to make me do a thing is to tell me I can't do it," she recalled in 1921.<sup>24</sup> Wright would not teach Law how to fly but he did sell her a plane. She found an instructor and quickly mastered the mechanics of flight, initially finding work as an exhibition pilot at fairs and air shows. In 1915 she announced that she was going to attempt to "loop the loop" – a maneuver in which passengers are sent in a complete 360-degree circle. She did so not once but twice, much to the dismay of her husband, Charles Oliver, who was less than thrilled about his wife's thirst for adrenaline.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> "Tab Hunter Faces Quiz on Imported Art Goods," *Los Angeles Times*, May 20, 1962.

<sup>23</sup> Eliza McGraw, "This Ace Aviatrix Learned to Fly Even Though Orville Wright Refused to Teach Her," *Smithsonian Magazine*, Mar. 22, 2017.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

What is regarded as Law's single greatest accomplishment took place in 1916 when she flew from Chicago to New York – a distance of 884 miles – in record time, breaking records and shattering barriers in the process. "A hundred and twenty pounds of pluck called Ruth Law glided her little old 100 horse power 'pusher' aeroplane down on a swift wind out of a mixture of fog and Jersey smoke yesterday morning and landed on Governor's Island, winner of the American non-stop cross-country aviation record, and breaker of all world's records for women fliers," remarked the *New York Times* in 1916 about her unprecedented accomplishment.<sup>26</sup> Her accomplishment is all the more impressive when considering that it was completed four years before women were granted the right to vote, and that the act of flying was considered to be an extraordinarily risky endeavor at the time.

Law continued to set records after her remarkable 1916 flight. She taught herself about war planes and attempted to contribute to the United States' military efforts during World War I – but her offer of assistance was rebuffed by the United States Army, which would not let a woman fly.<sup>27</sup> Instead, she was enlisted to perform other tasks related to the wartime effort: dropping Liberty Bond pamphlets from planes, raising money for the Red Cross, and other tasks that were less risky and were seen at the time as better suited to women. Law again broke a record and made headlines when in 1917, she became "the first woman to wear a non-commissioned officer's military uniform."<sup>28</sup> After the war, she starred in a production called Ruth Law's Flying Circus, a three-plane troupe that appeared at state and county fairs and amazed spectators with derring-do stunts including cartwheels, wing-walking, "racing against cars, flying through fireworks, and setting altitude and distance records."<sup>29</sup>

Law's remarkable career as an aviatrix came to an abrupt and unceremonious end in 1922 when one morning, she read in the newspaper that her husband, Charles Oliver, had announced her retirement, apparently without her knowledge.<sup>30</sup> Oliver could purportedly no longer bear his wife's risk taking. She stopped flying thereafter. Following her retirement, Law and Oliver moved to California and settled in Beverly Hills, where they invested in local real estate. This appears to have been one of many investment properties in the business district of Beverly Hills that were owned by the duo in the 1920s.

Law died in 1970 in San Francisco.<sup>31</sup> She kept a detailed scrapbook about her career and accomplishments, which is kept at the archives of the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum.

#### 4.4. Jack L. Warner

Another significant individual associated with the subject building was Jack Warner, an entertainment executive who is best known for co-founding and heading the Warner Brothers Studio.

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<sup>26</sup> "Ruth Law Lands Here From Chicago in Record Flight," *New York Times*, Nov. 21, 1916.

<sup>27</sup> Eliza McGraw, "This Ace Aviatrix Learned to Fly Even Though Orville Wright Refused to Teach Her," *Smithsonian Magazine*, Mar. 22, 2017.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, "Women in Aviation and Space History: Ruth Law," accessed May 2020.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> "Ruth Law Oliver, 79, Pioneer Flier, Dies," *New York Times*, Dec. 4, 1970.

Jack Leonard Warner (1892-1978), the co-founder and decades-long head of Warner Brothers Studio, was born in London, Ontario to Benjamin and Pearl Warner, both Polish-Jewish immigrants. In 1895, the Warners left Canada, where Benjamin had worked as a fur trader, and settled in Youngstown, Ohio, where he started a small grocery store.<sup>32</sup> The eighth of nine children in the Warner family, Jack worked in family enterprises from an early age. In 1905, his older brothers Harry, Sam, and Albert made a foray into the nascent world of cinematic entertainment, buying a projector and a print of the early Western film *The Great Train Robbery* and screening it around town. Finding success, the brothers purchased a store in a neighboring town and converted it into an ad hoc theatre called the Bijou. A teenaged Jack would entertain the audience with vaudeville interludes during the well-attended local screenings.<sup>33</sup>

The brothers next shifted their efforts to film distribution, starting a company in Pittsburg called Duquesne Amusement Supply that sold films to theaters around the country. Within a few years, they sold the business for a profit of \$100,000. Jack moved between cities, working in various film exchanges. By 1917, Jack and his brothers moved into film production and established their presence in Los Angeles. The following year, Warner Brothers studio produced its first blockbuster film, *My Four Years in Germany*, a tale that gripped audiences with its innovation of mixing newsreel footage of the First World War into the filmed narrative.<sup>34</sup> Jack and Sam became heads of production, and the brothers set up a new studio in Hollywood, at the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Bronson Avenue, in 1919.<sup>35</sup>

Initially associated with lowbrow comedies and thrillers, Warner Brothers Studio became a major industry player when it acquired the newly developed Vitaphone technology and produced the first feature-length talking picture, *The Jazz Singer*, in 1927. When Sam Warner died of pneumonia shortly before the film's premiere, Jack became the sole executive of Warner Brothers, a role he would retain until retiring in 1966. Over the course of his long and distinguished career, Jack Warner would introduce such actors as Bette Davis, Errol Flynn, Humphrey Bogart, and Doris Day to the public, and would give debuts to directors including John Huston and Mike Nichols. Though he gained a reputation for recalcitrance and bigotry, Warner's foresight as a producer of cinema was widely lauded; he was one of the first to encourage the use of color film and helped invent the musical comedy genre.<sup>36</sup>

Jack Warner became a resident of Beverly Hills in the early 1920s, when it was rapidly gaining a reputation as a bastion of the rich and famous following the construction of Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks' Pickfair estate in 1919.<sup>37</sup> Warner became active in Beverly Hills civic life, financing and constructing the first Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce (474 North Beverly Drive) in 1928, before the city had a post office or dedicated City Hall.<sup>38</sup> In 1931, he "fulfilled his promise" to construct a movie palace in Beverly Hills, opening Warner Brothers' Theatre on Wilshire Boulevard, just east of Beverly

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<sup>32</sup> Bob Thomas, *The Clown Prince of Hollywood: The Antic Life and Times of Jack L. Warner* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1990), 8-12.

<sup>33</sup> Wayne Warga, "Jack Warner, Hollywood Movie Pioneer, Dies at 86," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 10, 1978.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas, *The Clown Prince of Hollywood: The Antic Life and Times of Jack L. Warner*, 20-30.

<sup>35</sup> "Warner Brothers to Build," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 3, 1919; "Distribute Directly: Warner Brothers Handling Film Marketing Themselves," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 29, 1921.

<sup>36</sup> Wayne Warga, "Jack Warner, Hollywood Movie Pioneer, Dies at 86," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 10, 1978.

<sup>37</sup> "Film Leaders in Beverly," *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 2, 1926.

<sup>38</sup> "1928 Commercial Building in Beverly Hills Fetches \$11.75 Million," *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 20, 2013.



Drive (not extant, demolished 1988).<sup>39</sup> The building at 449-453 North Beverly Drive, which Warner bought in 1929 and retained ownership of through the 1940s, was one of many real estate investments he made at a time when the value of the city's commercial land was rising precipitously.<sup>40</sup> Warner lived in Beverly Hills, in a palatial 1938 estate by Roland Coate, up until his death in 1978 at the age of 86.<sup>41</sup>

## 4.5. Architecture and Design

Historic photos depicting the building in its original state could not be found, but based upon descriptions of the building in permit records, newspaper articles, and other source materials the building appears to have originally been a vernacular commercial structure that was designed to be consistent with the scale and character of other commercial buildings in the vicinity but lacked the distinctive characteristics of a particular architectural style. Alterations have been made to the building over time to accommodate changes in tenancy. The present-day appearance of the building is generally lacking in architectural distinction and does not have the characteristics of a style.

Since an original permit was not available, it could not be determined whether the building was architect-designed, and the original contractor also could not be identified. In the mid-1920s, the property was purchased by Helen Hudson, the wife of local architect W. Asa Hudson, and as noted she appears to have presided over the construction of the three storefront units at the front of the property at this time. As she was married to an architect, W. Asa Hudson, and given that he was a locally prominent architect who designed many buildings in Beverly Hills, it seems quite likely that Hudson was the architect of this improvement project; however, absent permit records or other source materials the association between Hudson and the design of the subject building could not be corroborated.

Building permits indicate that a number of other contractors – and, on occasion, architects and engineers – were retained to complete subsequent renovations and tenant improvements. A list of these practitioners is woven into the discussion provided in *Section 3.2: Development Chronology*. Research turned up very little information about the lives and careers of these practitioners. Moreover, none of these practitioners are identified on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Master Architects.

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<sup>39</sup> "Opening of Film House Gala Event," *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 1931; "Warner Beverly Hills: Interior Views," Los Angeles Theatres, accessed May 2020.

<sup>40</sup> "Rapid Rise Revealed in Values," *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 21, 1926.

<sup>41</sup> Charles Lockwood, "Tour Jack L. Warner's House in Beverly Hills," *Architectural Digest*, Aug 24, 2016.

## 5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation

### 5.1. National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation’s master inventory of known historic resources. Established under the auspices of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level. Eligibility for in the National Register is addressed in National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. NRB 15 states that in order to be eligible for the National Register, a resource must both: (1) be historically significant, and (2) retain sufficient integrity to adequately convey its significance.

Significance is assessed by evaluating a resource against established eligibility criteria. A resource is considered significant if it satisfies any one of the following four National Register criteria:<sup>42</sup>

- Criterion A (events): associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- Criterion B (persons): associated with the lives of significant persons in our past;
- Criterion C (architecture): embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- Criterion D (information potential): has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Once significance has been established, it must then be demonstrated that a resource retains enough of its physical and associative qualities – or *integrity* – to convey the reason(s) for its significance. Integrity is best described as a resource’s “authenticity” as expressed through its physical features and extant characteristics. Generally, if a resource is recognizable as such in its present state, it is said to retain integrity, but if it has been extensively altered then it does not. Whether a resource retains sufficient integrity for listing is determined by evaluating the seven aspects of integrity defined by NPS:

- Location (the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred);
- Setting (the physical environment of a historic property);
- Design (the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property);

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<sup>42</sup> Some resources may meet multiple criteria, though only one needs to be satisfied for National Register eligibility.

- Materials (the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular manner or configuration to form a historic property);
- Workmanship (the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory);
- Feeling (a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time);
- Association (the direct link between an important historic event/person and a historic property).

Integrity is evaluated by weighing all seven of these aspects together and is ultimately a “yes or no” determination – that is, a resource either retains sufficient integrity, or it does not.<sup>43</sup> Some aspects of integrity may be weighed more heavily than others depending on the type of resource being evaluated and the reason(s) for the resource’s significance. Since integrity depends on a resource’s placement within a historic context, integrity can be assessed only after it has been concluded that the resource is in fact significant.

## 5.2. California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an authoritative guide used to identify, inventory, and protect historical resources in California. Established by an act of the State Legislature in 1998, the California Register program encourages public recognition and protection of significant architectural, historical, archeological, and cultural resources; identifies these resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The structure of the California Register program is similar to that of the National Register, though the former more heavily emphasizes resources that have contributed specifically to the development of California. To be eligible for the California Register, a resource must first be deemed significant under one of the following four criteria, which are modeled after the National Register criteria listed above:

- Criterion 1 (events): associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
- Criterion 2 (persons): associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;
- Criterion 3 (architecture): 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 4 (information potential): has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, state, or the nation.

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<sup>43</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VIII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

Mirroring the National Register, the California Register also requires that resources retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing. A resource's integrity is assessed using the same seven aspects of integrity used for the National Register. However, since integrity thresholds associated with the California Register are generally less rigid than those associated with the National Register, it is possible that a resource may lack the integrity required for the National Register but still be eligible for listing in the California Register.

Certain properties are automatically listed in the California Register, as follows:<sup>44</sup>

- All California properties that are listed in the National Register;
- All California properties that have formally been determined eligible for listing in the National Register (by the State Office of Historic Preservation);
- All California Historical Landmarks numbered 770 and above; and
- California Points of Historical Interest which have been reviewed by the State Office of Historic Preservation and recommended for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission.

Resources may be nominated directly to the California Register. State Historic Landmarks #770 and forward are also automatically listed in the California Register.

Unlike the National Register's 50 year age requirement, there is no prescribed age limit for listing in the California Register. However, guidelines state that sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with a resource.

### 5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance

Historic preservation in Beverly Hills is governed by Title 10, Chapter 3, Articles 32 and 32.5 of the Beverly Hills Municipal Code (referred to hereinafter as "the Ordinance"). The Ordinance authorizes the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) to recommend the nomination of properties as local landmarks and historic districts to the City Council. To facilitate this process, the Ordinance establishes requirements a property must meet in order to qualify for designation as a landmark listed in the City of Beverly Hills Register of Historic Properties. The 2012 Ordinance was revised and updated in 2015, with an additional amendment in 2016; all criteria and definitions used in this document are effective as of April 1, 2016.

To be eligible for local designation as a historic landmark, a property must satisfy the following sets of requirements (A and B) as noted:

**A. A landmark must meet all of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance;

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<sup>44</sup> California Public Resources Code, Division 5, Chapter 1, Article 2, § 5024.1.

- (2) It possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period;
- (3) It retains substantial integrity<sup>45</sup> from its period of significance; and
- (4) It has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.

**B. In addition to those listed above, a landmark must meet at least one of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- (2) It is an exceptional work<sup>46</sup> by a master architect<sup>47</sup>;
- (3) It is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous;
- (4) It is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance;
- (5) It is an iconic property<sup>48</sup>; or
- (6) The landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).

Mirroring the National Register and California Register, the Ordinance requires that a resource retain integrity. The Ordinance defines integrity as “the ability of a property to convey its historical significance through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, relevant association, and character defining features.”<sup>49</sup> This builds upon the definition that is used by the National Register.

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<sup>45</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “substantial integrity” as “Integrity that is considerable in importance, value, degree, amount, or extent, and that continues to exist, or would have continued to exist, but for work done without appropriate permits after the enactment of this article.”

<sup>46</sup> A 2016 amendment to BHMC 10-3-32 in Ord. 15-O-2700 defines “exceptional work” as “A remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community. At a minimum, the work’s exceptional quality shall have been documented by at least one of the following: a) it was the subject of a major architectural award; b) it was substantively discussed (i.e., not just mentioned) and photographically depicted in a monograph on a master architect’s career; or c) it was substantively discussed or photographically depicted in at least two (2) publications (e.g., a book, treatise, trade magazine article, film, or set of photographs made available to the public by an institutional archive) authored by acknowledged experts in the field of architecture. A monograph or publication made available to the public solely in electronic form and without any reasonable expectation of compensation to the author, or substantially authored by the architect of the work, shall not count toward this minimum.”

<sup>47</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “master architect” as “An architect of widely recognized greatness in the field of architecture whose individual genius influenced his or her age.”

<sup>48</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “iconic property” as “A property that has been visited and photographed so often by residents and visitors to the city that it has become inextricably associated with Beverly Hills in the popular culture and forms part of the city’s identity to the world at large.”

<sup>49</sup> BHMC 10-3-3202, Definitions.



## 6. Evaluation of Significance

### 6.1. Previous Evaluations

449-453 North Beverly Drive is not currently designated, and it does not appear to have been previously evaluated for historical significance. The property is not listed in the California Historical Resources Inventory (HRI) database for Los Angeles County (last updated 2012) and was not identified in any of the City's historic resource survey efforts (1985/86, 2004, 2006, 2013).

### 6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility

#### National Register and California Register

ARG concludes that 449-453 North Beverly Drive is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources, as follows:

***National/California Register Criterion A/1: associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history.***

Constructed in 1921 and significantly expanded circa 1926, the building at 449-453 North Beverly Drive is loosely associated with broad patterns of commercial development that are linked to the extraordinary growth and development of Beverly Hills in the 1920s. Its construction is indicative of how parcels within the city's business district were developed with low-scale commercial buildings that were intended to provide space in which local commerce could be carried out. These buildings were generally constructed to house everyday businesses like beauty parlors, hardware stores, bookstores, and other enterprises that catered to the local community, and represented how the pace of commercial development corresponded with the steady residential growth taking place in Beverly Hills at this time.

National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* provides guidance related to the evaluation of properties that are associated with events. It specifically states that "mere association with historic events or trends is not enough, in and of itself, to qualify under Criterion A: the property's specific association must be considered important as well. For example, a building historically in commercial use must be shown to have been significant in commercial history."<sup>50</sup>

Applying this guidance, the subject building is more representative of broad patterns of commercial history than it is exemplary. There are a number of examples of 1920s-era commercial buildings in this area of Beverly Hills, many of which retain integrity and are much stronger representations of the broad patterns of commercial history associated with this period. It was not the first example of a commercial building constructed in the business district of Beverly Hills, nor does its presence appear to have impacted the trajectory of local commercial development in any sort of consequential way. Moreover,

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<sup>50</sup> Derived from National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

the building has been extensively altered. Original wall cladding has been replaced with an incompatible stucco finish; storefronts have been extensively modified to accommodate changes in tenancy; all doors and windows have been replaced, and fenestration patterns have been modified with the insertion of new storefront systems and rear doors, and the infill of some original windows. Collectively, these alterations have substantially changed the appearance of the building. While its essential form and massing vaguely reference the 1920s, the building reads as an amalgamation of disparate parts, rather than as any sort of unified whole. It does not retain the distinctive look or feel of a 1920s-era commercial building and bears almost no visible association with the era in which it is associated.

There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the building is associated with an event that is singularly significant to history. Primary and secondary source research did not suggest that it functioned as anything more than an ordinary commercial/light industrial building over the course of its history. The storefront at 451 North Beverly Drive made minor headlines in local newspapers in 1962 because the art gallery that occupied this space was implicated in a federal smuggling raid that involved noted actor Tab Hunter; however, this event, while an interesting anecdote, does not appear to have been especially consequential. It does not appear to contribute to an understanding of history that would merit consideration under this criterion.

Furthermore, the building has been significantly altered since its construction and expansion in the 1920s. As noted, it has withstood a number of alterations that, over time, have changed the appearance of the building insofar as to where it no longer clearly reads as a product of the 1920s.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion A/1.

***National/California Register Criterion B/2: associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.***

The building at 449-453 North Beverly Drive has been continuously used for commercial and light industrial purposes since its construction in 1921. It is typical for buildings housing businesses to be loosely associated with a number of people, as these buildings are generally intended to be accessible to the public and are frequented by staff members. Many customers have patronized the various businesses that have operated out of this building over time; many business owners and shopkeepers have presided over these businesses.

However, with the exception of Ruth Law and Jack Warner, who both owned the property for a period of time (and are discussed below), there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that any one of the individuals associated with the building is historically significant in the spirit of this criterion. There is no evidence to demonstrate that any customers, proprietors, or landlords associated with the building made notable contributions to local, state, or national history in the spirit of this criterion.

Two notable exceptions are Ruth Law (1887-1970), who briefly owned the property between 1928 and 1929, and Jack Warner (1892-1978), who purchased the property from Law in 1929 and is believed to have owned it through the mid-1940s. Both are historically significant individuals: Law is notable as one of the earliest and most accomplished female aviators; Warner is notable for his contributions to the motion picture industry by virtue of his role as co-founder and president of Warner Brothers Studios.

The question, then, is whether the building is significant for its association with Law or Warner. National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* provides guidance related to the evaluation of properties associated with significant people. It lists two benchmarks that must be met for a property to meet Criterion B: first, “the persons associated with the property must be individually significant within a historic context,” and second, the property must be “associated with a person’s productive life, reflecting the time period when he or she achieved significance.”<sup>51</sup>

When this guidance is applied, the subject building does not appear to be significant for its association with either Law or Warner. There is little question that Law and Warner are both historically significant individuals, but there is insufficient evidence to substantiate that this building somehow bears a meaningful association with Law’s and Warner’s productive lives. Both appear to have purchased the property for the purposes of investment and generating supplemental income. Dabbling in real estate was a common practice in this era among individuals of wealth and stature, and typically had little to do with the reason(s) belying their significance. This is true of both Law and Warner. Law was significant for her trailblazing accomplishments in aviation, and specifically for breaking down barriers in the aviation business; Warner was significant for his myriad contributions to the motion picture industry and for shaping what is now known as the “Golden Age” of Hollywood. That both Law and Warner owned the subject building as a real estate investment for a period is an interesting anecdote in the building’s history, but this has nothing to do with the reasons belying the significance of either individual. Research suggests that Law and Warner owned the building for investment purposes only – they do not appear to have established offices in the building or carried out tasks here that led to significant developments in their respective career paths. Law purchased the property some six years after she had retired from the aviation industry entirely.

Furthermore, the building has been significantly altered since the period during which it was owned by Law (1928-1929) and Warner (1929-circa 1940s), and no longer bears any visual association with this period.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with the lives of persons important to local, state, or national history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion B/2.

***National/California Register Criterion C/3: embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.***

The building at 449-453 North Beverly Drive is vernacular and lacks the distinctive characteristics of a particular architectural style. Its present-day appearance is the result of a succession of remodeling projects that have been completed over time, none of which appear to have ascribed to a certain style.

The building is not notable on account of its method of construction. It is constructed of brick, a common construction method for small-scale commercial buildings of its era. Therefore, there is

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<sup>51</sup> Derived from National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

insufficient evidence to demonstrate that there is anything unusual, innovative, or otherwise noteworthy about that manner in which it was constructed.

The building does not represent the notable work of a master. No original building permit is available, an architect and builder were not identified. However, given its small scale and generally vernacular appearance, it seems unlikely that the building would have been constructed as any sort of architectural statement that would have represented the work of a master. It also does not appear in any architectural books, journals, or periodicals from its time of construction, indicating that it was not seen as a notable architectural work. None of the other architects, engineers, or contractors who have completed remodels and tenant improvement projects at the building over the years appears to rise to a level of individual significance that would render them masters. None of these practitioners are included on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Master Architects.

Given its vernacular and heavily altered appearance, the building does not possess high artistic value, and given its status as a single property with no meaningful visual or associative relationship with its environs, the building does not represent a significant entity whose components lack individual distinction.

For these reasons, the subject building is not significant for reasons related to its architecture and physical design, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion C/3.

***Criterion D/4.*** *Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.*

As an archaeological assessment was not conducted as part of this study, the property's potential for containing subsurface archaeological resources is unknown.

## Local Eligibility

ARG concludes that 449-453 North Beverly Drive is not eligible for local listing as Beverly Hills Landmark, as follows:

### **Part A Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet all four of the following requirements):**

***Criterion A.1:*** *it is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance.*

The subject building was constructed in 1921 and expanded circa 1926, far surpassing the City's 45-year age threshold. Thus, the building meets local Criterion A.1.

***Criterion A.2:*** *it possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period.*

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, the subject building is a vernacular edifice that has been extensively altered over time. It does not embody the distinctive

characteristics of a particular architectural style, type, or period, and does not possess high aesthetic or artistic value. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion A.2.

***Criterion A.3: it retains substantial integrity from its period of significance.***

The subject building has been extensively altered, to the extent that it retains very little historic fabric and no longer retains the distinctive look and feel of a 1920s-era commercial building. Its primary façade has been modified over the years to accommodate the preferences of its individual tenants. Specifically, original wall cladding has been replaced with an incompatible stucco finish; storefronts have been extensively modified to accommodate changes in tenancy; all doors and windows have been replaced, and fenestration patterns have been modified with the insertion of new storefront systems and rear doors, and the infill of some original windows. Collectively, these alterations have substantially changed the appearance of the building. The building, then, does not retain integrity from its 1920s period of construction, and does not meet local Criterion A.3.

***Criterion A.4: it has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.***

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register criteria, this building is a typical example of a commercial building from the 1920s. It was constructed in a vernacular architectural style using common methods and materials and has been occupied by a typical succession of commercial tenants. There is nothing particularly remarkable about this building that would suggest that it has continued historic value to the community. For these same reasons, the building does not satisfy local Criterion A.4.

**Part B Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet at least one of the following requirements):**

***Criterion B.1: it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.***

The subject building is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and therefore does not meet local Criterion B.1.

***Criterion B.2: it is an exceptional work by a master architect.***

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, an original building permit was not available, and its original architect and contractor could not be determined. Its small scale, vernacular appearance, and lack of mention in any architectural trade journals suggest that it was not an exceptional work of a master architect. Other architects associated with the building, who completed renovations and tenant improvements in subsequent years, are not listed on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Master Architects. The building does not meet local Criterion B.2.

***Criterion B.3: it is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation.***



*For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous.*

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion B/2, there is insufficient evidence demonstrating that the subject building bears a meaningful association with the productive lives of historically significant individuals. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion B.3.

***Criterion B.4:*** *it is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance.*

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion B/2 and local Criterion B.3, the subject building does not appear to have been associated with persons of great local importance in a manner that would merit consideration under this criterion. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion B.4.

***Criterion B.5:*** *it is an iconic property.*

The subject building is not an iconic property as defined by the Ordinance. It is a ubiquitous commercial building that complements the streetscape of Rodeo Drive but does not possess any architectural or contextual qualities that would render it iconic. The building therefore does not meet local Criterion B.5.

***Criterion B.6:*** *the landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).*

The Landmark designation procedure is not known to have been initiated by any parties, and the owner(s) of the property have not expressly agreed to the initiation of such a procedure. As a result, the subject building does not meet Criterion B.6.

### **Summary of Local Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for local listing, a resource must meet all four of the above-listed Part A requirements, and at least one of the above-listed Part B requirements. As addressed above, the subject building does not meet Criterion A.2, A.3, and A.4, as required, and does not meet any of the Part B requirements. In summary, the building does not meet local eligibility criteria.

### 6.3. Evaluation of Integrity

For a property to be eligible for listing in the National and California Registers, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark, it must meet eligibility criteria and must also retain sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance. *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* states that “only after significance is fully established can you proceed to the issue of integrity.”<sup>52</sup> In accordance with best professional practices, it is customary to apply this same methodology when evaluating resources at the state and local levels. Because the building does not meet the criteria for federal, state, or local listing, an assessment of integrity is not necessary.

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<sup>52</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

## 7. Conclusion

Per the above analysis, the building at 449-453 North Beverly Drive does not meet any of the criteria for federal, state, or local listing. Therefore, ARG concludes that the building is not considered to be a “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA.

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## **Appendix D.2**

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### Historic Resources Review Report



To: Laura Rodriguez,  
Eyestone Environmental

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From: Paul Travis, Managing Partner

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Date: September 14, 2021

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#### 1. REVIEW SUMMARY

Historic Resources Group (HRG) has reviewed the proposed Cheval Blanc Specific Plan and development project in Beverly Hills (the Project) for potential impacts to historical resources as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This examination included a review of recent independent historic assessments of buildings located on the Project Site by Architectural Resources Group (ARG) on behalf of the project applicant. City of Beverly Hills historic resources inventories were also reviewed to identify potential historic resources located in the immediate vicinity of the Project Site. HRG concurs with ARG's findings that the existing buildings on the Project Site are not eligible for historic listing and, therefore, are not considered historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. Six properties roughly located within two blocks of the Project Site have been listed as Landmarks by the City of Beverly Hills.

Because the Project Site does not contain any historical resources and all of the demolition and construction activity will be contained to the Project Site, no historical resources will be demolished, altered, rehabilitated, converted, or relocated by the Project. The Project does have, however, the potential for significant impacts on one historical resource located across the street from the Project Site, the Writers and Artists Building at 9507 S. Santa Monica Boulevard, due to potential structural vibration and settlement. Noise and vibration have been analyzed as part of environmental review for the Project and the estimated vibration velocity levels from all construction equipment would be well below the building damage significance threshold for the Writers and Artists Building. Therefore, the proposed Project will not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined by CEQA, and therefore would not result in a significant effect on the environment.

#### 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### MEMORANDUM

## Cheval Blanc Historic Resources Review

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The project is located on the parcels addressed 456 and 468 North Rodeo Drive and 449, 451, 453 and 465 North Beverly Drive (collectively, the “Project Site”). The Project Applicant proposes redevelopment of the approximately 1.2-acre Project Site located within the northern portion of the Beverly Hills Business Triangle and bounded by the streets North Rodeo Drive, South Santa Monica Boulevard, and North Beverly Drive. The Applicant proposes to construct a luxury hotel (“Cheval Blanc”) on the Project Site, with street level-retail located on North Rodeo Drive and a street-level restaurant located on North Beverly Drive. The Project includes approximately 220,950 square feet of floor area in a single building.

The Project is proposed to include the following:

- The Cheval Blanc Hotel is proposed to contain approximately 109 guest rooms and appurtenant uses including but not limited to a private club, restaurants, bars and lounges, lobbies and other common areas, wellness (fitness) center, spa, a screening room, storage including wine storage, and back of house, occupying approximately 187,671 SF, with up to approximately 5,000 SF of outdoor dining areas and approximately 20,000 SF of pool deck areas on the varied roof areas, and balconies associated with guest rooms and 24,300 SF of ground floor retail space on Rodeo Drive.
- The Project’s maximum proposed above-ground floor area ratio is approximately 3.9:1, and with the inclusion of certain subterranean areas that count toward floor area the Project’s total FAR is 4.2:1.
- The Project’s building height ranges from approximately 4-stories, 51-FT in height on North Rodeo Drive to 9-stories, 115-FT in height on North Beverly Drive (excluding rooftop mechanical equipment).

### 3. PROJECT SITE EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Project Site consists of 4 existing parcels and is roughly bounded by North Rodeo Drive, South Santa Monica Boulevard, and North Beverly Drive. It is proposed that a portion of the alley that separates the project parcels located on North Rodeo Drive and the parcels located on North Beverly Drive be relocated to allow construction of one contiguous building. The alley is proposed to be re-configured to newly dedicated land on the southern portion of the Project site that will connect eastbound with North Beverly Drive. The Project involves demolition of the existing improvements on the Project site, which consists of the following four buildings:

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**449-453 North Beverly Drive (currently rented for storage)**

The property contains a one-story commercial building originally constructed in the 1920s. The building is of brick construction and consists of two connected rectangular volumes with flat roofs. The front (northeast) volume contains three storefronts facing N. Beverly Drive; each storefront has a different façade treatment to reflect the tenant businesses. The rear volume contains a warehouse space. Exterior walls on the primary (northeast), street-facing facade are clad in smooth stucco.

449-453 N. Beverly Drive has been subject to numerous alterations since its original construction. Storefronts today reflect contemporary alterations.

**461 North Beverly Drive (former Paley Center for Media)**

The property contains a two- and three-story commercial/institutional building that was constructed between 1994 and 1996 and involved the extensive remodeling of two existing commercial buildings. It was commissioned to house the Museum of Television and Radio (later known as the Paley Center for Media).

An elegant and asymmetrical arrangement of geometric volumes, the building was designed by the renown architectural firm of Richard Meier and Partners in an austere “Neo-Corbusian” style featuring an expressed structural framework, stone cladding, and expanses of exterior glazing.

**456 North Rodeo Drive (currently Celine Beverly Hills store)**

The property contains a commercial/retail building that was constructed in 1948. The one-story with mezzanine building is rectangular in plan with brick construction and a flat roof. Exterior walls are clad in a smooth cement plaster.

The primary (southwest) façade is divided into three bays delineated by embossed segmental arches, rising the full height of the building. A central, recessed entry flanked by single display windows are centered within each bay. on the ground floor.

The building has been subject to extensive modifications since its original construction. The current appearance largely dates from 2007.

**468 North Rodeo Drive (former Tommy Hilfiger, later Brooks Brothers, store)**

The property contains a large, two-story commercial building that was constructed in 1997 as a flagship store for the clothing brand Tommy Hilfiger Corp.; it was later occupied by Brooks Brothers. The building is rectangular in plan and constructed of

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cast concrete. The roof is a combination of flat and gabled volumes with a central octagonal rotunda. Exterior walls consist of cast concrete panels with incised with score lines and a polished stone base.

Designed by architect Allen Greenberg as a contemporary interpretation of Classical architecture, building facades are symmetrically arranged and feature pediments, articulated cornices, columns, pilasters, arched window openings, keystones, and sections of spindled balustrade.

#### **4. IDENTIFICATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES**

##### **Investigation of the Project Site**

The four buildings located on the Project Site were independently assessed for historic significance by Architectural Resources Group (ARG) in June 2020. Each building was analyzed in a separate report. The four ARG historic assessment reports for each of the four Project Site properties are included with this memorandum as attachments.

In all four cases, ARG concluded that the subject building is not a “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA because, the subject building is not listed on and is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark and the subject building is not significant pursuant to the criteria set forth in Subsection (g) of Public Resources Code Section 5020.1.

Two buildings (449-453 N. Beverly Drive and 456 N. Rodeo Drive) have been substantially altered since their original construction and no longer reflect the period in which they were originally developed. 449-453 N. Beverly Drive was originally constructed in 1921 and expanded later in the 1920s. Since that time, the building has undergone substantial alteration. According to the 2020 assessment report by ARG, the following exterior alterations have been made:

- Original wall cladding (presumably brick) has been replaced with a stucco finish.
- Exposed brick walls on the side and rear façades have been painted.
- Fenestration patterns on the storefronts have been extensively modified.
- The rear entrance has been modified.
- Doors have been replaced.
- Metal roll-up doors have been added to the southwest façade.

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- Windows have been replaced.
- Windows on the rear and side façades have been infilled.
- Seismic anchor plates have been added.
- An awning has been added above the storefront unit at 453 N Beverly Drive

These alterations have substantially changed the appearance of the building such that it retains little original fabric aside from its essential form and structure. As such, the building does not retain sufficient integrity to convey the historic significance of its original or any subsequent historic time period.

456 N. Rodeo Drive was originally constructed in 1948 as a commercial retail building. Similar to 449-453 N. Beverly Drive, the building has sustained numerous alterations since its original construction. Much of the building's current appearance can be traced to a major remodel in 2007. According to the 2020 assessment report by ARG, the following exterior alterations have been made:

- The primary façade and storefronts have been extensively modified, as follows:
  - The parapet has been elevated several feet, providing a sense of added height; a molded cornice was added to the parapet.
  - Original wall cladding has been replaced with a smooth, scored plaster finish.
  - Pilasters that historically delineated storefront bays have been removed or obscured.
  - Embossed, full height arches have been added to each storefront bay.
  - All doors have been replaced.
  - All windows have been replaced.
  - Fenestration patterns have been modified.
  - Signage has been altered.
- The rear façade has been extensively modified, as follows:
  - Exterior walls, originally exposed brick, have been clad in smooth plaster.

#### MEMORANDUM

## Cheval Blanc Historic Resources Review

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- The parapet, which appears to have originally been stepped, is now flat; a molded cornice has been added to the top of the parapet.
  - All doors have been replaced.
  - All windows have been replaced.
  - Two upper-story windows – one at each end of the façade – have been infilled; the four extant windows appear to have been resized.
  - Surrounds have been added to the windows.
- Decking has been added to the roof to obscure mechanical equipment.

These alterations have substantially changed the appearance of the building. As such, the building does not retain sufficient integrity to convey the historic significance of its original 1940s appearance or any subsequent historic time period.

461 N. Beverly Drive constructed between 1994 and 1996, and 468 N. Rodeo Drive constructed in 1997, are both too recent in their development to be considered as historical resources. The National Park Service, which provides guidance for the practice of preservation, has established that a resource fifty years of age or older may be considered for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. A property less than fifty years old may only be considered for listing, if it meets the criterion for “exceptional significance.”<sup>1</sup> The California Register has similar guidelines in regard to a fifty-year age threshold, as well as a provision analogous to the exceptional significance criterion for properties that don’t meet this threshold, as the guidance states as follows: “a resource less than fifty years old may be considered for listing in the California Register if it can be demonstrated that sufficient time has passed to understand its historical importance.”<sup>2</sup> Eligibility requirements for designation as a landmark in the City of Beverly Hills stipulates that the property be “at least forty-five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance.”<sup>3</sup> Both 461 N. Beverly Drive and 468 N. Rodeo Drive are substantially less than 45 years in age and, as discussed in detail in HRG’s Assessments, no evidence suggests that they would be considered of “exceptional” or “extraordinary” significance.” As such, more time would need to pass before they would meet the general age thresholds for consideration as

<sup>1</sup> *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. Washington D.C.: National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior, 1995, p. 2. The Park Service does make exceptions for properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years that are of “exceptional importance”.

<sup>2</sup> *California Office of Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Series #7: How to Nominate a Resource to the California Register of Historical Resources*. California Office of Historic Preservation, Department of Parks and Recreation, 2001.

<sup>3</sup> City of Beverly Hills Municipal Code 10-3-3212: Landmark Designation Criteria.

## MEMORANDUM

# Cheval Blanc Historic Resources Review

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potential historic resources. Therefore, 461 N. Beverly Drive and 468 N. Rodeo Drive are not eligible for listing as a historic resource under National, State, or local criteria.

HRG has reviewed ARG's assessments and concurs with the findings that none of the four buildings are listed or eligible for historic listing and the buildings are not significant pursuant to the criteria set forth in Subsection (g) of Public Resources Code Section 5020.1. This includes eligibility criteria for designation as a landmark listed in the City of Beverly Hills Register of Historic Properties under which a property must satisfy the following sets of requirements (A and B) as noted:

A. A landmark must meet all of the following requirements:

- 1) It is at least forty-five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance;
- 2) It possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period;
- 3) It retains substantial integrity from its period of significance; and
- 4) It has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.

B. In addition to those listed above, a landmark must meet at least one of the following requirements:

- 1) It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- 2) It is an exceptional work<sup>46</sup> by a master architect;
- 3) It is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous;
- 4) It is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance;
- 5) It is an iconic property; or

#### MEMORANDUM

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- 6) The landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property.<sup>4</sup>

None of the four buildings are listed as or satisfy criteria for eligibility as a City of Beverly Hills landmark. None of the four buildings are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or in the California Register of Historical Resources. Therefore, none of the four buildings are considered “historical resources” for the purposes of CEQA.

### **Historic Resources in the Near Vicinity of the Project Site**

A review of the City of Beverly Hills Local Register of Historic Properties and previous survey evaluations did not reveal any listed historical resources or resources identified as eligible for historic listing through survey evaluation immediately adjacent to the Project Site. A review of the Local Register of Historic Properties, however, does indicate a number of properties located within two blocks of the Project Site. All of these resources are separated from the Project Site by streets, other buildings, and distance.

The closest identified historical resource to the Project Site is the Writers and Artists Building (Landmark No. 24) at 9507 S. Santa Monica Boulevard. Located on the northwest corner of S. Santa Monica Boulevard and Rodeo Drive, this three-story Spanish Colonial Revival style commercial building sits directly across the S. Santa Monica Boulevard/Rodeo Drive intersection on a diagonal from the Project Site.

Other City landmarks in the near vicinity of the Project Site include the following:

- Beverly Gardens Park (Landmark No. 20)  
Constructed in 1906 and 1930, this linear park is located north of the Project Site on the north side of N. Santa Monica Boulevard. The park begins at the intersection of Santa Monica Boulevard and N. Doheny Drive and continues southwest to Wilshire Boulevard where it continues along Wilshire to Whittier Drive. It is separated from the Project Site by N. Santa Monica Boulevard, the properties between N. Santa Monica and S. Santa Monica boulevards, and S. Santa Monica Boulevard.
- Union 76 Service Station at 427 N Crescent Dr (Landmark No. 37)  
This service station was constructed in 1965. Designed by Gin D. Wong, a partner with the Los Angeles architectural firm of William L. Pereira and Associates, the station is distinguished by a free-standing triangular concrete canopy supported on three integrated piers. It is located on the southwest corner at the intersection of S.

<sup>4</sup> Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015

#### **MEMORANDUM**

## **Cheval Blanc Historic Resources Review**

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Santa Monica Boulevard and N. Crescent Drive and is located a block and a half east of the Project Site .

- Beverly Hills City Hall at 450 N Crescent Dr (Landmark No. 12)  
Constructed in 1932, this H-shaped, Spanish Renaissance style building is distinguished by a central tower rising five stories above a three-story central volume with one- and two-story flanking wings. Located in the center of a block bounded by N. Santa Monica Boulevard, S. Santa Monica Boulevard, N. Rexford Drive and N. Crescent Drive, it is separated from the Project Site by two city blocks.
- The Beverly Hills Post Office at 469 N. Crescent Drive (Landmark No. 5)  
This Renaissance Revival post office building was constructed in 1933. It is located northeast of the Project Site on an irregularly-shaped block bounded by N. Santa Monica Boulevard, S. Santa Monica Boulevard, N. Crescent Drive, and N. Canon Drive. A full city block separates the Post Office building from the Project Site. Today, the Post Office building is part of the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts.
- Anderton Court at 332 N Rodeo Dr (Landmark No. 6)  
This three-story plus penthouse commercial building was constructed in 1954. Designed by master architect Frank Lloyd Wright, the building features glazed exterior storefronts, cantilevered walkways, and a central spire. The building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Anderton Court is located a block and a half south of the Project Site, on the east side of Rodeo Drive between Brighton Way and Dayton Way.

The Writers and Artists Building, Beverly Gardens Park, the Union 76 station, Beverly Hills City Hall, Beverly Hills Post Office building, and the Anderton Court retail building have all been listed as historic resources by the City and are considered historical resources for the purposes of CEQA.

## 5. ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

### Significance Thresholds

CEQA Guidelines, including Appendix G of the Guidelines, state that a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.<sup>5</sup> A substantial adverse

<sup>5</sup> *CEQA Guidelines*, section 15064.5(b).

## MEMORANDUM

# Cheval Blanc Historic Resources Review

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change in the significance of a historic resource means “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of a historical resource would be materially impaired.”<sup>6</sup>

The Guidelines go on to state that “[t]he significance of an historical resource is materially impaired when a project... [d]emolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources... local register of historic resources... or its identification in a historic resources survey meeting the requirements of section 5014.1(g) of the Public Resources Code...”<sup>7</sup> As such, the test for determining whether or not a proposed project will have a significant impact on an identified historical resource is whether or not the project will alter in an adverse manner the physical integrity of the historical resource such that it would no longer be eligible for listing in the National or California Registers or for local designation as a City of Beverly Hills Landmark.

### **Discussion of Potential Impacts**

The Project proposes the demolition of the four existing buildings located on the Project Site and construction of a new hotel and retail mixed-use building on site. As demonstrated in the 2020 ARG historic assessments for these properties, none of these buildings are eligible for listing as historic resources and are not considered historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. Because all demolition and new construction associated with the Project will take place on the site of the four non-historic buildings, the Project will not demolish, alter, relocate, or convert any historical resources.

Historical resources located outside of, but immediately adjacent to the Project Site also can be adversely impacted because they border the affected area. No historical resources have been identified that immediately border the Project Site.

Because no historical resources are located on the Project Site or immediately adjacent to the Project Site, the analysis of potential impacts to historical resources is concerned with those resources located in the near vicinity of the Project Site. Out of an abundance of caution, the “near vicinity” is defined as those historical resources generally located within two blocks of the Project Site that have been identified above. These resources are physically separated from the Project Site by other buildings, streets and distance and are,

<sup>6</sup> *CEQA Guidelines*, section 15064.5(b) (1).

<sup>7</sup> *CEQA Guidelines*, section 15064.5(b)(2).

## **MEMORANDUM**

# **Cheval Blanc Historic Resources Review**

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therefore, less likely to be adversely impacted due to their spatial separation from the affected area.

As noted above, the Project Site is located across the intersection of S. Santa Monica Boulevard and Rodeo Drive from the Writers and Artists Building at 9507 S. Santa Monica Boulevard. The Writers and Artists Building has been designated Landmark No. 24 by the City of Beverly Hills and is the closest identified historical resources to the Project Site. The intersection of the two streets separates the Writers and Artists Building from the Project Site. The Project does not include the demolition, relocation, rehabilitation, alteration, or conversion of the Writers and Artists Building. The Writers and Artists Building will remain unchanged and in its original location after implementation of the Project and continue to convey its historic significance.

New construction associated with the Project would include substantial foundation work and the construction of subterranean parking. There is potential for these activities to cause damage to the Writers and Artists Building due to vibration or settlement given the building's close proximity to the Project Site construction activity. As is common in similar urban development sites, vibration and settlement would be controlled through adherence to values prescribed by the shoring engineer and geotechnical engineer with the intent to prevent damage to adjacent structures, and through monitoring of associated construction activities. In addition, noise and vibration have been analyzed as part of environmental review for the Project and the estimated vibration velocity levels from all construction equipment would be well below the building damage significance threshold for the Writers and Artists Building.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, the proposed Project will not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of the Writers and Artists Building as defined by CEQA, and therefore would not result in a significant effect on the environment.

All other historic resources in the vicinity of the Project Site including the Beverly Gardens Park north of the Project Site, the Union 76 Service Station at 427 N Crescent Drive, Beverly Hills City Hall at 450 N Crescent Drive, the Beverly Hills Post Office building (now known as the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts) at 469 N. Crescent Drive, and the Anderton Court retail building at 332 N Rodeo Drive are located considerable distances from the Project Site. None of these resources would be demolished, altered, rehabilitated, converted, or relocated by the Project. All of these resources will remain unchanged and in their original locations after implementation of the Project and will continue to convey their historic significance. Given the distances between these resources and the Project Site, potential damage from vibration and settlement to

<sup>8</sup> EIR Section 4.8.

#### MEMORANDUM

## Cheval Blanc Historic Resources Review

#### HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP

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these resources would be controlled by standard engineering practices to prevent damage to adjacent and nearby structures and no additional measures are required.

### **Summary of Potential Impacts**

The proposed Project was evaluated for potential impacts to designated and identified historical resources located on the Project Site, directly adjacent to the Project Site or within a two-block radius of the Project Site. Analysis of potential impacts does not reveal any potential impacts to historical resources.

Because the Project Site does not contain any historical resources and all of the demolition and construction activity will be contained to the Project Site, no historical resources will be demolished, altered, rehabilitated, converted, or relocated by the Project. All of the identified historical resources, including the Writers and Artists Building at 9507 S. Santa Monica Boulevard, the Beverly Gardens Park north of the Project Site, the Union 76 Service Station at 427 N Crescent Drive, Beverly Hills City Hall at 450 N Crescent Drive, the Beverly Hills Post Office building at 469 N. Crescent Drive, and the Anderton Court retail building at 332 N Rodeo Drive are located at sufficient distances from the Project Site so that they will not be adversely affected by the proposed Project.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

*449-453 North Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills Historic Resource Assessment Report*, prepared by Architectural Resources Group, June 24, 2020.

*The Paley Center for Media, 461 North Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills Historic Resources Assessment Report*, prepared by Architectural Resources Group, June 24, 2020

*456 North Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills Historic Resource Assessment Report*, prepared by Architectural Resources Group, June 24, 2020

*468 North Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills Historic Resources Assessment Report*, prepared by Architectural Resources Group, June 24, 2020

### **MEMORANDUM**

# **Cheval Blanc Historic Resources Review**

### **HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP**

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## 449-453 North Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills Historic Resource Assessment Report

*Prepared for:*

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP  
San Francisco, CA

*Prepared by:*



Architectural  
Resources Group

Architectural Resources Group  
Los Angeles, CA

June 24, 2020

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1. Executive Summary .....	1
1.2. Preparer Qualifications .....	2
<b>2. Architectural Description</b> .....	<b>3</b>
2.1. Site and Setting .....	3
2.2. Building Exterior .....	4
2.3. Landscape and Hardscape Features .....	5
<b>3. Development Chronology and Alterations</b> .....	<b>8</b>
3.1. Development Chronology .....	8
3.2. Alterations.....	9
<b>4. Historic Contexts</b> .....	<b>11</b>
4.1. Commercial Development in the Business Triangle .....	11
4.2. Owners and Occupants: 449-453 North Beverly Drive .....	12
4.3. Ruth Law .....	14
4.4. Jack L. Warner .....	15
4.5. Architecture and Design.....	17
<b>5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation</b> .....	<b>18</b>
5.1. National Register of Historic Places .....	18
5.2. California Register of Historical Resources .....	19
5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance .....	20
<b>6. Evaluation of Significance</b> .....	<b>22</b>
6.1. Previous Evaluations .....	22
6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility .....	22
6.3. Evaluation of Integrity.....	28
<b>7. Conclusion</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>8. Bibliography</b> .....	<b>30</b>

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Executive Summary

At the request of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) has prepared this Historic Resource Assessment Report for the property at 449-453 North Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, California. The property contains a one-story commercial building that was constructed in 1921 and appears to have been significantly expanded circa 1926. Research suggests that the rear (southwest) portion of the building, which is set back and backs onto a service alley, dates to 1921; it contains one unit (451½ North Beverly Drive) that has historically been occupied by warehouses and other light industrial uses. It appears to currently be occupied by a warehouse for an art gallery. The front (northeast) volume, which faces Beverly Drive, is an addition that dates to circa 1926 and is divided into three commercial storefronts (449, 451, and 453 North Beverly Drive), all of which are currently vacant. The two volumes are connected via a small hyphen.

No original building permit is available, so the identity of the original architect and builder could not be determined. Briefly, between 1928 and 1929, the property was owned by Ruth Law, a pioneering female aviator. Between 1928 and the 1940s, the building was one of several commercial properties in the business district of Beverly Hills that were owned by film executive Jack L. Warner, the president and driving force of Warner Brothers Studios. Warner, like many prominent figures of his era, appears to have dabbled in the local real estate market as a means of generating additional income.

This report examines the history of the building and evaluates it against eligibility criteria for federal (National Register of Historic Places), state (California Register of Historical Resources), and local (Beverly Hills Landmark) listing, to determine if it satisfies the definition of a historical resource for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Preparation of this report included the following tasks related to research, documentation, and analysis:

- Site visit on May 5, 2020 to assess existing conditions and document the building's exterior features with digital photographs;
- Review of pertinent federal and state technical bulletins, local ordinances, and other reference materials related to the evaluation of historical resources;
- Review of applicable background materials including historical building permits and Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) data for the subject property;
- Primary and secondary source research to glean additional information about the property's development history, design, occupancy, and potential historical significance;
- Identification of applicable historic contexts and themes; and
- Evaluation of the building against eligibility criteria for the National Register, the California Register, and as a Beverly Hills Landmark.



Research materials were culled from the following sources: the Los Angeles Public Library; the Beverly Hills Public Library; the archives of the *Los Angeles Times* and other local periodicals; building permits obtained from the City of Beverly Hills's Community Development Department; technical bulletins published by the National Park Service (NPS) and the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP); online repositories; and ARG's in-house collection of architectural books and reference materials. A complete list of sources is included in *Section 8: Bibliography* of this report.

In summary, ARG concludes that the building at 449-453 North Beverly Drive does not meet eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register, California Register, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark. Therefore, the building is not a historical resource for purposes of CEQA. The following sections provide a contextual basis for analysis and a detailed discussion of how this determination was made.

## 1.2. Preparer Qualifications

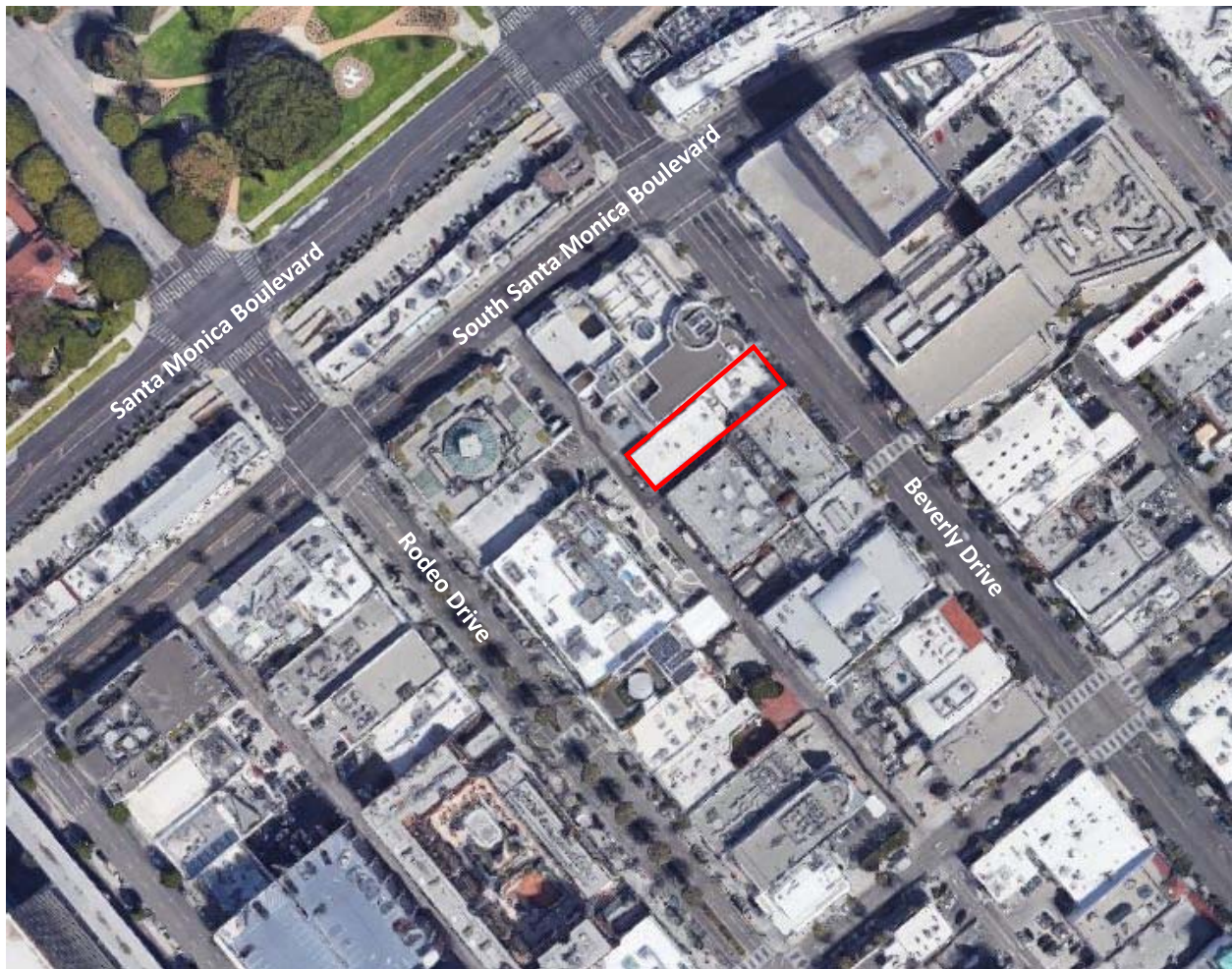
This report was prepared by Katie E. Horak, Principal, and Andrew Goodrich, AICP, Associate, both Architectural Historians and Preservation Planners. ARG intern Krista Gelev provided additional project support. Ms. Horak and Mr. Goodrich meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards*, 36 CFR Part 61, in the discipline of Architectural History.

## 2. Architectural Description

### 2.1. Site and Setting

The subject property is located near the northern edge of a triangular-shaped commercial district that is bounded by Santa Monica Boulevard (north and west), Wilshire Boulevard (south), and Canon Drive (east). This area serves as the central business district of Beverly Hills. Known as the Business Triangle, it is densely developed with a mix of low and mid-scale commercial buildings, many of which are occupied by some of the foremost purveyors of luxury retail goods. The circulation network ascribes to a grid that is oriented 45 degrees askew of the cardinal directions and contributes to the area's wedge-like form.

449-453 North Beverly Drive occupies a flat commercial parcel that is located on the west side of Beverly Drive, between South Santa Monica Boulevard and Brighton Way. The parcel is askew of the cardinal directions, is rectangular in shape, and measures 7,632 square feet. The southeast and northwest property lines abut adjacent buildings. The southwest property line abuts a service alley.



*Location map. The subject property, 449-453 N Beverly Dr, is outlined in red (Google Maps).*

## 2.2. Building Exterior

Most of the parcel is occupied by a 6,020-square-foot commercial building that was constructed in 1921 and appears to have been significantly expanded in 1926.<sup>1</sup> The building is one story tall, is constructed of brick, and sits on a concrete slab foundation. It has an irregular footprint that comprises two volumes: at the front (northeast) of the parcel is a volume that comprises three storefront units, and at the rear (southwest) is a volume that comprises a warehouse. The two volumes are connected at the center of the building by a small hyphen. The original building permit is not available, but the building appears to have originally consisted of the rear volume only, and not the three storefronts facing the street. Like most buildings in the vicinity, the subject building is set flush with the front lot line. It is vernacular and lacks the distinctive characteristics of any particular architectural style.

The building is capped by a flat roof, likely sheathed in a composition membrane, and parapet. HVAC units and other pieces of mechanical equipment are installed atop the roof, but are largely obscured from public view by the parapet wall. Exterior walls on the street-facing (northeast) façade are clad in smooth stucco. Exterior walls on the side and rear façades feature exposed brick; some of these brick surfaces have been painted.

The primary façade faces northeast, toward Beverly Drive, and is divided into three storefronts of roughly equal width. Each storefront has a different façade treatment. The south storefront (449 North Beverly Drive) is framed by full height reeded pilasters. Ingress is provided by a central entrance that consists of a single-glazed wood door. The door is framed by pilasters, and is flanked on each side by a fixed, multi-light wood storefront window that sits atop a polished marble base. The center storefront (451 North Beverly Drive) consists of a single glazed aluminum door with a bronze finish. It is incorporated into a system of fixed aluminum storefront windows, which also have a bronze finish. This door is deeply recessed into the face of the building. The north storefront (453 North Beverly Drive) features a single glazed door. The door is flanked on each side by a fixed, floor-to-ceiling metal storefront window that is framed in chrome. The north storefront is surmounted by an awning, and above the awning is wall-mounted signage that reads “THE/ORGANIC/PHARMACY.”

The rear (southwest) façade backs onto an alley and is utilitarian in appearance. It features exposed ducting and seismic anchor plates along the eave line. Set off center is a deeply recessed entrance that appears to be punched into the wall and is secured by an accordion style metal gate. This entrance consists of a single metal door, which provides ingress to the warehouse unit at the rear of the building. Other features of note include arched window openings that have been infilled with bricks.

The two side (southeast, northwest) elevations are similarly utilitarian in appearance, and also feature exposed ducting and seismic anchor plates. Both also feature windows with arched openings that have been infilled. The southwest façade features two full height, roll-up metal utility doors that provide ingress to the rear warehouse unit. Along each side façade is a narrow walkway that is secured in part by a metal security door and leads to rear entrances to the retail units at the front of the building.

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<sup>1</sup> Original construction date obtained from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor. Information about the addition was gleaned from “Beverly Hills Firm’s March Sales \$225,000,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 11, 1928.



## 2.3. Landscape and Hardscape Features

Since the building occupies almost the entirety of the lot, landscape and hardscape features are minimal. The only landscape feature is a Mexican fan palm tree and a locust tree that are planted in the parkway space along Beverly Drive.

### Current Photos



*Primary (northeast) façade, view northwest (ARG, 2020)*



*Primary façade, view southwest (ARG, 2020)*



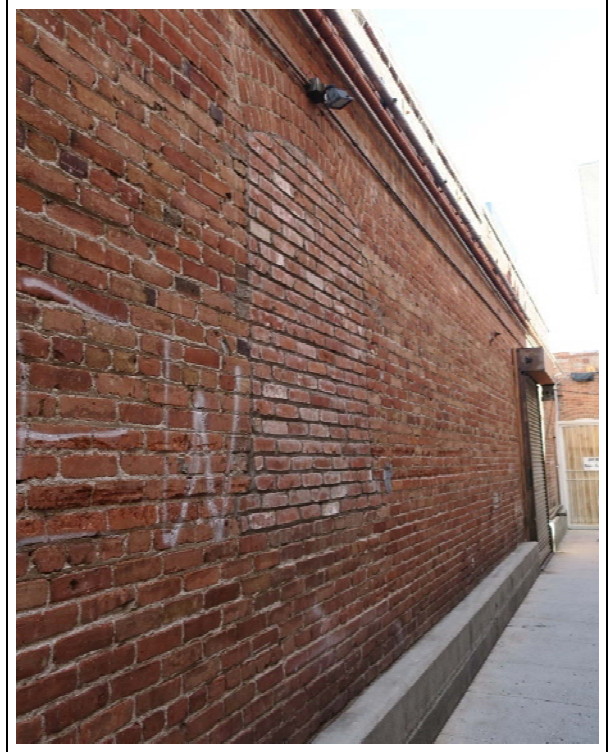
*Detail of south storefront (449 N Beverly Dr) on primary façade (ARG, 2020)*



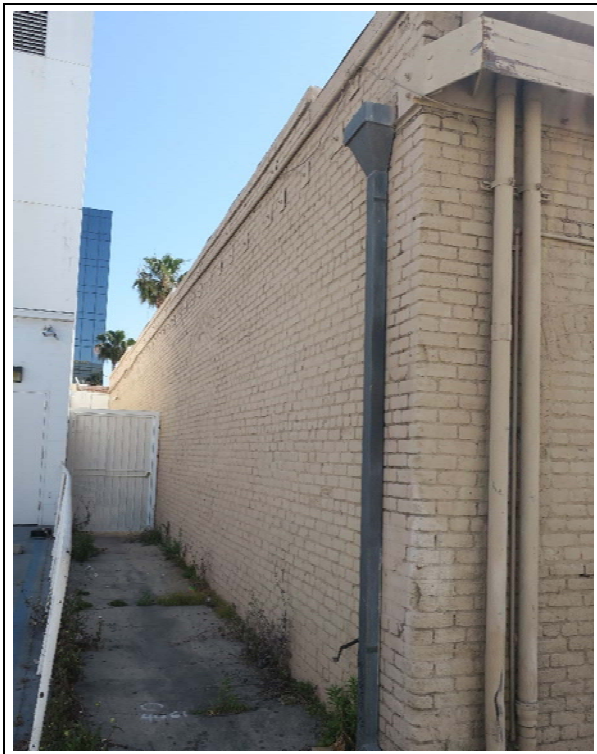
*Detail of center storefront (451 N Beverly Dr) on primary façade (ARG, 2020)*



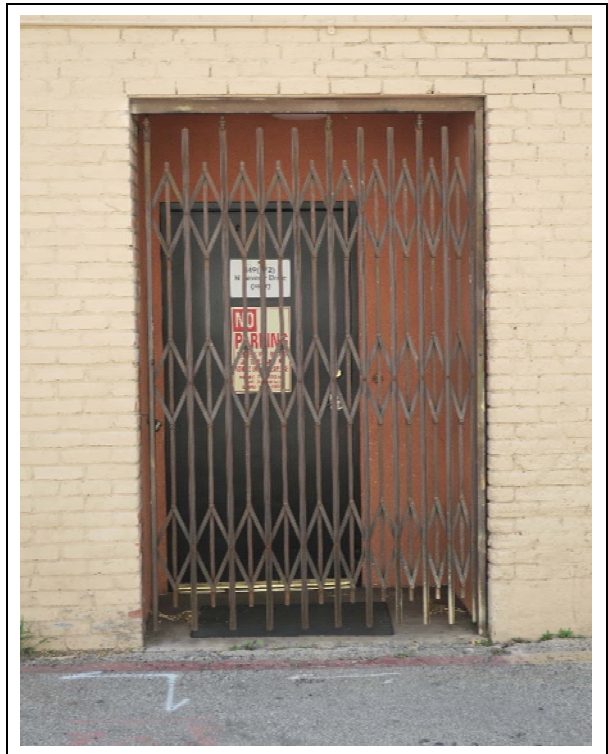
*Side (southeast) façade, view west (ARG, 2020)*



*Side (southeast) façade, view northeast. Note infilled window in foreground (ARG, 2020)*



*Side (northwest) façade, view east (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of recessed entrance on rear (southwest) façade (ARG, 2020)*



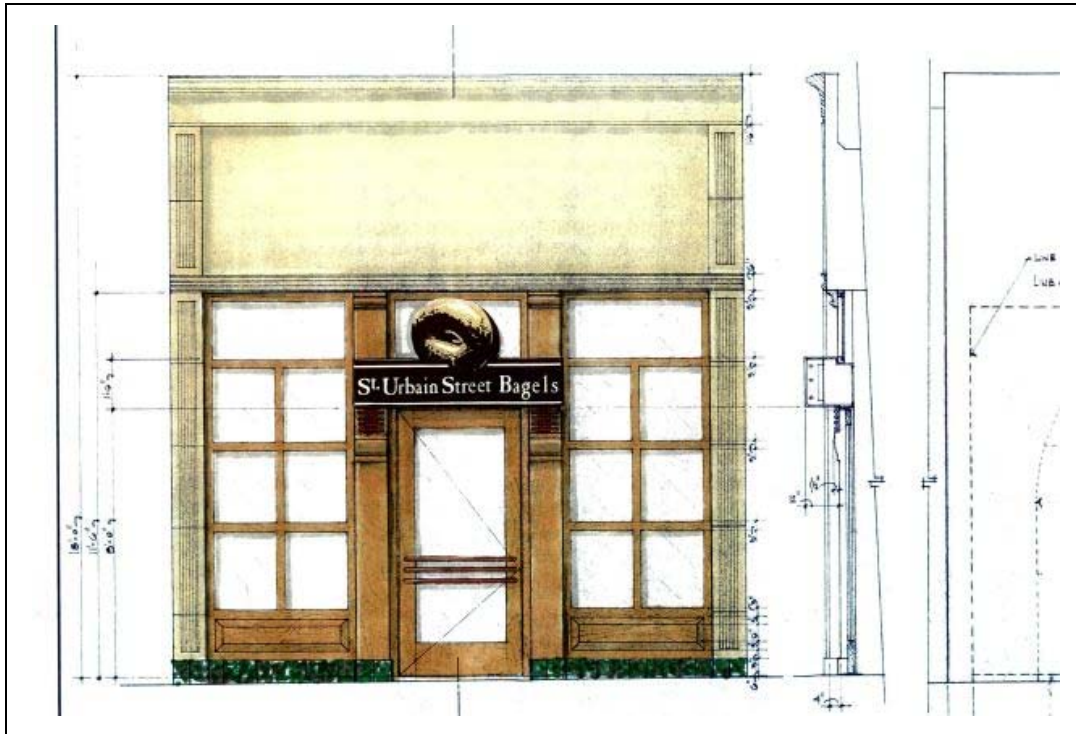


Rear (southwest) façade, view east (ARG, 2020)



Rear façade, view northeast (ARG, 2020)

### Additional Photos



Rendering of south storefront, 449 N Beverly Dr, 1995. This was submitted as part of a permit application for tenant improvements and façade renovations (City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department).



### 3. Development Chronology and Alterations

#### 3.1. Development Chronology

The following development chronology for 449-453 North Beverly Drive summarizes key events in the property’s development history between its original construction in 1921 and the present-day. It was developed by reviewing historical building permits from the Beverly Hills Community Development Department, and was augmented by additional sources of information including historic photos and aerial images; parcel data from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor; the collections of the Beverly Hills Public Library and other local and online repositories; and other source materials.

<b>1921</b>	Original construction of the subject building (Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor).
<b>ca. 1926</b>	A <i>Los Angeles Times</i> article dated March 1928 notes that “following the purchase of the business property a year and a half ago by Mrs. [W. Asa] Hudson, the store building was rebuilt as to its front and generally improved.” <sup>2</sup> Permits associated with this work are not available, and the phrasing of the article is obtuse, but based on this article and visual observations, it is believed that the building originally consisted of the rear volume, and was expanded by Hudson circa 1926 to include the three storefronts at the front of the parcel.
<b>1928</b>	Ruth Law, a female aviator who moved to Beverly Hills and dabbled in real estate investment after retiring from flying, purchased the subject property for \$92,500. <sup>3</sup>
<b>1929</b>	Entertainment titan Jack L. Warner, President of Warner Bros., purchased the subject property for \$95,000. At the time, it was noted that the property was “improved with a one-story business block and has a fifty-foot frontage.” <sup>4</sup> Permit records suggest that Warner owned the property through the mid-1940s.
<b>1933</b>	Permit issued for interior alterations. The scope is described as “partitions and fixtures in store, new floor under windows.” No architect is listed on the permit; E.A. Pedersen is listed as the contractor; Jack Warner is listed as the owner (Permit No. 122212).
<b>1939</b>	Permit issued for storefront modifications. The scope is described as “change trim on plate glass show windows; re-paint exterior wood trim and interior of store; replace present wood bulkheads with brick; cover bulkheads with structural glass.” No architect is listed on the permit; Robert D. Blake is listed as the contractor; J.L. Warner is listed as the owner (Permit No. 16906).
<b>1943</b>	Permit issued to modify interior partition walls. No architect is listed on the permit; Amos Carr is listed as the contractor; Jack Warner is listed as the owner (Permit No. 79221).

<sup>2</sup> “Beverly Hills Firm’s March Sales \$225,000,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 11, 1928.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> “Film Magnate Buys Holdings From Aviatrix,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 17, 1929.

<b>1944</b>	Permit issued to modify interior partition walls and build interior shelves for store. No architect is listed on the permit; Don Findlay is listed as the contractor; Jack Warner is listed as the owner (Permit No. 19918).
<b>1945</b>	Permit issued to fireproof and plaster interior partition walls. The building is described as “storage and workshop,” indicating that this scope of work pertained to the warehouse unit at the rear of the building. No architect is listed on the permit; W.J. Haskell is listed as the contractor; Mr. Warner is listed as the owner (Permit No. 20255).
<b>1955</b>	Permit issued for storefront modifications. The scope is described as “face existing glass and mullion storefront with metal shutters and arch. decoration; remove existing 4x6 post and place one light plate glass as shown.” No architect is listed on the permit; Manfred McArthur is listed as the contractor; Robin Stroud is listed as the owner (Permit No. 31072).
<b>1964</b>	Permit issued for interior and exterior alterations. The scope is described as “building partition and store room; alter existing front.” No architect is listed on the permit; Alexander Mandel is listed as the contractor and owner (Permit No. 640454).  Permit issued to modify interior partition walls. No architect is listed on the permit; Les Silver is listed as the contractor; Steve Hecht is listed as the owner (Permit No. 840496).  Permit issued to complete unspecified interior improvements for a retail store. Allen & Sheriff is listed as the architect; Les Silver is listed as the contractor; Steven Hecht is listed as the owner (Permit No. 840655).
<b>1995</b>	Various application materials are submitted, and approved, related to the modification of the south storefront. The scope of work was described as a façade remodel, interior improvements, and business identification signage to accommodate a new tenant, a bagel shop called St. Urbain Street Bagels. Jonathan L. Green of Designall is listed as the architect; Frank Farzaneh is listed as the contractor; Brenda Abramson Co. Tr. Is listed as the owner (Permit Nos. 95000797, C9500064).
<b>1996</b>	Various application materials are submitted, and approved, related to the infill of windows and modification of the door on the rear (warehouse) volume of the building. The rear unit was occupied by an art gallery at this time. Seni Paibul of StrucCo Inc. is listed as the engineer; Michael’s Gallery Warehouse is listed as the tenant (Case No. M-AR-159-06-96).
<b>1997</b>	Various application materials are submitted, and approved, related to the installation of bird abatement spike strips along the top edge of the building. Carl Garcia Engler of Encom Industries is listed as the contractor; Brenda Abramson Co. Trust and Abraham S. Hershenson are listed as the owners (Case No. M-AR-159-06-96).

### 3.2. Alterations

The following alterations were noted during a site visit conducted by ARG on May 5, 2020. Whenever possible, these alterations were corroborated by the building permits listed above, Sanborn Fire

Insurance Maps, historic aerial images, parcel data from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor, and other source materials. The alterations listed herein pertain only to the exterior of the building.

- Original wall cladding (presumably brick) has been replaced with a stucco finish
- Exposed brick walls on the side and rear façades have been painted
- Fenestration patterns on the storefronts have been extensively modified
- The rear entrance has been modified
- Doors have been replaced
- Metal roll-up doors have been added to the southwest façade
- Windows have been replaced
- Windows on the rear and side façades have been infilled
- Seismic anchor plates have been added
- An awning has been added above the storefront unit at 453 N Beverly Dr

Together, these alterations have significantly changed the appearance of the building such that it retains little original fabric aside from its essential form and structure, and does not retain the look or feel of a 1920s commercial building.

## 4. Historic Contexts

### 4.1. Commercial Development in the Business Triangle

449-453 North Beverly Drive is located in an area of Beverly Hills that is known as the Business Triangle (and at times, colloquially, as the Golden Triangle) so named because of its distinctive, triangular form. Located near the center of Beverly Hills, between Santa Monica and Wilshire Boulevards and Canon Drive, the area is densely developed with various commercial and institutional uses. It serves as the City's central business district and civic center.

In spite of its present-day associations with luxury, glamour, opulence, and wealth, Beverly Hills had relatively inauspicious beginnings. The first house was constructed in 1907, but overall development activity in the nascent community was languid. The Beverly Hills Hotel was constructed between 1911-1912 in an attempt to lure in prospective buyers. In its early years, the sprawling Mission Revival style complex not only served as a luxurious hostelry, but also functioned as a *de facto* community center for area residents.<sup>5</sup> Since the hotel was located amid what was then a swath of peripheral, undeveloped land, an auxiliary rail line called The Dinky was built to convey people between the hotel and the Pacific Electric Railway line nearer the center of town.<sup>6</sup> The Dinky traveled down the center of Rodeo Drive, originating at its intersection with Santa Monica Boulevard and terminating at the hotel on Sunset Boulevard.

Beverly Hills formally incorporated as an independent city in 1914, but development – and particularly commercial development – remained sluggish. Aside from the hotel, the City's only commercial buildings were clustered near the intersection of Beverly Drive and Burton Way (now South Santa Monica Boulevard). At this time, the business district consisted of a small handful of one- and two-story business blocks that were occupied by grocers, barbers, hardware stores, a bank, a post office, and other enterprises that served residents' day-to-day needs. A Pacific Electric Railway station was located just to the north, on Santa Monica Boulevard. Elsewhere within the Business Triangle, the blocks were sparsely developed with a smattering of small, humble bungalows for those of more modest means.<sup>7</sup>

Just to the south of the business district and Business Triangle, where the Beverly Wilshire Hotel and Beverly Hills High School are located today, a wood plank track for automobile racing was built between 1919-1920. Known as the Beverly Hills Speedway, it became an immediate attraction and was ranked second in race quality only to the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway.<sup>8</sup> But as popular as the speedway was, rising real estate costs and mounting development pressures meant that it was a short-lived endeavor. The racetrack was demolished in 1924, and the land was subdivided shortly thereafter.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed May 2020.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Water and Power Associates, "Early Views of Beverly Hills," accessed May 2020. Additional information about development patterns in Beverly Hills was gleaned from Sanborn Fire Insurance maps dated 1922.

<sup>8</sup> Susan King, "Speedway Brought Life in the Fast Lane to 1920s Beverly Hills," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 24, 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid; Pacific Coast Architecture Database, "Beverly Hills Speedway, Beverly Hills, CA (1919-1920)," accessed May 2020.

Like most communities in Southern California, Beverly Hills witnessed an unprecedented amount of growth and development in the 1920s. It was during this time that the community truly came of age, shedding its roots as a small, peripheral outpost and asserting itself as one of Southern California's premier residential communities. Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Will Rogers, Rudolph Valentino, and other A-list celebrities built stylish mansions in the community, cementing its reputation as a haven for the entertainment elite.<sup>10</sup> As Beverly Hills's population grew, its small commercial node evolved into a discernible central business district. A number of new commercial buildings arose in the triangular-shaped district between Santa Monica and Wilshire boulevards. Buildings like the exotic Beverly Theatre (1925, L.A. Smith, not extant) and the posh, Renaissance Revival style Beverly Wilshire Apartment Hotel (1928, Walker and Eisen) attested to the quality of architecture in the city at this time.

In the early 1930s, two resplendent civic buildings were constructed at the northeast corner of the triangular-shaped business district: the Spanish Renaissance style Beverly Hills City Hall (1932, William J. Gage and Harry G. Koerner), and the Italian Renaissance style Beverly Hills Post Office (1934, Ralph Flewelling and Allison and Allison). These buildings denoted the civic and political heart of the burgeoning city, and represented significant new additions to its commercial and institutional core.

Beverly Hills entered into another period of remarkable growth after World War II. Parcels that had remained undeveloped prior to the war were swiftly purchased and improved, and the City also expanded its physical reach by annexing a large tract of hillside land that became the Trousdale Estates.<sup>11</sup> The character of commercial development also began to visibly transform at this time, with Rodeo Drive as its focus. Historically a "fairly quiet suburban street with beauty shops, hardware stores, gas stations and bookstores," Rodeo Drive began to evolve into an internationally renowned locus of the cultural elite.<sup>12</sup> In 1967, fashion retailer Fred Hayman opened Giorgio Beverly Hills, the first high-end boutique to open on the street. Other luxurious retailers including Parisian jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels (1969) and coiffeur Vidal Sassoon (1970) followed suit.<sup>13</sup> Subsequent development on Rodeo Drive and nearby streets took on an increasingly posh and sumptuous character.

The subject building was constructed in 1921 and appears to have been significantly expanded in 1926, amid a period marked by considerable growth in Beverly Hills and elsewhere throughout the greater Los Angeles region. It was one of many new commercial buildings that were constructed in the up-and-coming business district of Beverly Hills during this time, and were primarily used as retail storefronts by a variety of neighborhood-oriented businesses.

## 4.2. Owners and Occupants: 449-453 North Beverly Drive

The Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor indicates that the subject building was constructed in 1921.<sup>14</sup> Original permit records are not available, so the identities of the architect (if any), contractor,

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<sup>10</sup> City of Beverly Hills, "History of Beverly Hills," accessed May 2020.

<sup>11</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed May 2020.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Darling, "A Rodeo Drive Timeline," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 9, 2013.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Original construction date obtained from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor.



and original owner could not be determined. Research indicates that originally, the building consisted of only the brick warehouse volume at the rear of the parcel. In the mid-1920s, Helen Hudson, the wife of prominent local architect W. Asa Hudson, purchased the property, and the *Los Angeles Times* notes that under her ownership, “the store building was rebuilt as to its front and generally improved.”<sup>15</sup> The language in this article is vague, but it is believed to be a reference to the front volume that comprises the three storefront units that front onto Beverly Drive.

Sanborn maps of Beverly Hills that were published in 1926 show that by this time, the building had the same basic configuration as it does today, with three retail stores at the front of the lot and a single unit at the rear of the lot that appears to have been used for light industrial purposes. This map shows that the south and center storefronts (449 and 451 North Beverly Drive) were jointly occupied by a single store, and that the north storefront (453 North Beverly Drive) was occupied by a restaurant. The rear unit (then listed as 449C North Beverly Drive) was occupied by an upholstering company at this time.<sup>16</sup>

In 1928, the property was sold to Ruth Law for \$92,500, a then-record for commercial real estate on this stretch of Beverly Drive.<sup>17</sup> Law had made a name for herself in the field of aviation, and was notably “the first woman to achieve fame as an aviator in the United States.”<sup>18</sup> When Law purchased the building, its tenants included “the Sheetz candy store, Burdsall’s Boy Shop and the Empire Tile and Mantel Company and the Dean Gown Shop.”<sup>19</sup>

Law did not hold onto the property for long. In 1929, less than a year after she purchased it, Law sold the property to another individual of high acclaim: Jack L. Warner, the renowned film executive who headed the Warner Brothers studios. The *Los Angeles Times* reports that the property was sold for \$95,000, and was “improved with a one-story business block and has a fifty-foot frontage” at the time of its sale.<sup>20</sup> Like Law and other prominent figures of this era, Warner appears to have dabbled in commercial real estate as a means of augmenting his income. While his name appears on building permits issued throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, he does not appear to have played a role in the building aside from owning it – there is no evidence that he established offices here, or used the building for purposes related to his role in the motion picture industry. The last reference to Warner with respect to the property is a building permit issued in 1945; subsequent building permits issued in the 1950s do not reference Warner, indicating that he sold the property at some point prior to this time.

The building’s individual tenant spaces were occupied by a succession of tenants in subsequent years. Known occupants of the south storefront (449 North Beverly Drive) include the Beverly Hills Fur Shop (women’s apparel, 1930s); Bob Fly’s Portofino, which sold “Italian imports for men and women” (1960s); a wig shop called Tiara Wigs (1960s); and Alice Schweitzer, a woman’s boutique that was known for being particularly fashion forward to the point of being eccentric, with “zany décor and [an inventory of] dresses that crackle with noise, light up with electricity or shine with metal.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> “Beverly Hills Firm’s March Sales \$225,000,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 11, 1928.

<sup>16</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, accessed May 2020 via the Los Angeles Public Library.

<sup>17</sup> “Beverly Hills Firm’s March Sales \$225,000,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 11, 1928.

<sup>18</sup> “Film Magnate Buys Holdings from Aviatrix,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 17, 1929.

<sup>19</sup> “Beverly Hills Firm’s March Sales \$225,000,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 11, 1928.

<sup>20</sup> “Film Magnate Buys Holdings from Aviatrix,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 17, 1929.

<sup>21</sup> Lynn Lilliston, “Merchandisers of Mod Look,” *Los Angeles Times*, Apr. 23, 1967.

Known tenants of the center storefront (451 North Beverly Drive) include a handbag retailer called Daniel's (1950s), an art dealer called Erawan Asian Imports (1960s), and a women's boutique called Lady Madonna that specialized in pregnancy attire (1970s and 1980s). In 1962, Erawan Asian Imports was raided by the federal government on suspicion that it had smuggled illegal artifacts to the United States from China. Noted actor Tab Hunter was named as a person of interest in the raid because of his previous dealings with the store's proprietress, Mrs. Lois L. McMillian.<sup>22</sup>

Comparatively little information is available about the occupancy history of the rear warehouse unit (451½ North Beverly Drive). Sanborn maps indicate that this unit was occupied by an upholster in 1926, and by a storage warehouse and machine shop in 1950. Permit records dated 1996 identify the tenant as Michael's Gallery Warehouse.

Known tenants of the north storefront (453 North Beverly Drive) include a restaurant called The Cellar (1960s), a location of the Coffee Bean franchise (1970s), and a frozen yogurt shop called the Cultured Cow (1970s). Most recently, the building was occupied by a bagel shop called St. Urbain Street Bagels (449 North Beverly Drive), a clothing boutique called Dale Michele (451 North Beverly Drive), and a homeopathic beauty store called The Organic Pharmacy (453 North Beverly Drive). All of the tenant spaces are currently vacant aside from the rear warehouse unit (451½ Beverly Drive), which appears to still be occupied by a warehouse for an art gallery.

### 4.3. Ruth Law

As noted, the building was owned by Ruth Law for a brief period in the late 1920s. Law was a pioneering female aviator who pivoted to real estate investment after retiring from aeronautics.

Ruth Bancroft Law (1887-1970) was born in Massachusetts. She first developed an interest in flight from her brother Rodman Law, a parachutist and movie stuntman who was known as something of a daredevil. By virtue of his career path, Rodman Law knew individuals associated with the then-nascent and tight knit aeronautics industry, and Ruth Law leveraged these connections to pursue her own budding interest. In 1912, Law approached the pioneering aviator Orville Wright for flight lessons but he refused, she said, "because he thought women weren't mechanically inclined."<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, she persisted. "The surest way to make me do a thing is to tell me I can't do it," she recalled in 1921.<sup>24</sup> Wright would not teach Law how to fly but he did sell her a plane. She found an instructor and quickly mastered the mechanics of flight, initially finding work as an exhibition pilot at fairs and air shows. In 1915 she announced that she was going to attempt to "loop the loop" – a maneuver in which passengers are sent in a complete 360-degree circle. She did so not once but twice, much to the dismay of her husband, Charles Oliver, who was less than thrilled about his wife's thirst for adrenaline.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> "Tab Hunter Faces Quiz on Imported Art Goods," *Los Angeles Times*, May 20, 1962.

<sup>23</sup> Eliza McGraw, "This Ace Aviatrix Learned to Fly Even Though Orville Wright Refused to Teach Her," *Smithsonian Magazine*, Mar. 22, 2017.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

What is regarded as Law's single greatest accomplishment took place in 1916 when she flew from Chicago to New York – a distance of 884 miles – in record time, breaking records and shattering barriers in the process. "A hundred and twenty pounds of pluck called Ruth Law glided her little old 100 horse power 'pusher' aeroplane down on a swift wind out of a mixture of fog and Jersey smoke yesterday morning and landed on Governor's Island, winner of the American non-stop cross-country aviation record, and breaker of all world's records for women fliers," remarked the *New York Times* in 1916 about her unprecedented accomplishment.<sup>26</sup> Her accomplishment is all the more impressive when considering that it was completed four years before women were granted the right to vote, and that the act of flying was considered to be an extraordinarily risky endeavor at the time.

Law continued to set records after her remarkable 1916 flight. She taught herself about war planes and attempted to contribute to the United States' military efforts during World War I – but her offer of assistance was rebuffed by the United States Army, which would not let a woman fly.<sup>27</sup> Instead, she was enlisted to perform other tasks related to the wartime effort: dropping Liberty Bond pamphlets from planes, raising money for the Red Cross, and other tasks that were less risky and were seen at the time as better suited to women. Law again broke a record and made headlines when in 1917, she became "the first woman to wear a non-commissioned officer's military uniform."<sup>28</sup> After the war, she starred in a production called Ruth Law's Flying Circus, a three-plane troupe that appeared at state and county fairs and amazed spectators with derring-do stunts including cartwheels, wing-walking, "racing against cars, flying through fireworks, and setting altitude and distance records."<sup>29</sup>

Law's remarkable career as an aviatrix came to an abrupt and unceremonious end in 1922 when one morning, she read in the newspaper that her husband, Charles Oliver, had announced her retirement, apparently without her knowledge.<sup>30</sup> Oliver could purportedly no longer bear his wife's risk taking. She stopped flying thereafter. Following her retirement, Law and Oliver moved to California and settled in Beverly Hills, where they invested in local real estate. This appears to have been one of many investment properties in the business district of Beverly Hills that were owned by the duo in the 1920s.

Law died in 1970 in San Francisco.<sup>31</sup> She kept a detailed scrapbook about her career and accomplishments, which is kept at the archives of the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum.

#### 4.4. Jack L. Warner

Another significant individual associated with the subject building was Jack Warner, an entertainment executive who is best known for co-founding and heading the Warner Brothers Studio.

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<sup>26</sup> "Ruth Law Lands Here From Chicago in Record Flight," *New York Times*, Nov. 21, 1916.

<sup>27</sup> Eliza McGraw, "This Ace Aviatrix Learned to Fly Even Though Orville Wright Refused to Teach Her," *Smithsonian Magazine*, Mar. 22, 2017.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, "Women in Aviation and Space History: Ruth Law," accessed May 2020.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> "Ruth Law Oliver, 79, Pioneer Flier, Dies," *New York Times*, Dec. 4, 1970.

Jack Leonard Warner (1892-1978), the co-founder and decades-long head of Warner Brothers Studio, was born in London, Ontario to Benjamin and Pearl Warner, both Polish-Jewish immigrants. In 1895, the Warners left Canada, where Benjamin had worked as a fur trader, and settled in Youngstown, Ohio, where he started a small grocery store.<sup>32</sup> The eighth of nine children in the Warner family, Jack worked in family enterprises from an early age. In 1905, his older brothers Harry, Sam, and Albert made a foray into the nascent world of cinematic entertainment, buying a projector and a print of the early Western film *The Great Train Robbery* and screening it around town. Finding success, the brothers purchased a store in a neighboring town and converted it into an ad hoc theatre called the Bijou. A teenaged Jack would entertain the audience with vaudeville interludes during the well-attended local screenings.<sup>33</sup>

The brothers next shifted their efforts to film distribution, starting a company in Pittsburg called Duquesne Amusement Supply that sold films to theaters around the country. Within a few years, they sold the business for a profit of \$100,000. Jack moved between cities, working in various film exchanges. By 1917, Jack and his brothers moved into film production and established their presence in Los Angeles. The following year, Warner Brothers studio produced its first blockbuster film, *My Four Years in Germany*, a tale that gripped audiences with its innovation of mixing newsreel footage of the First World War into the filmed narrative.<sup>34</sup> Jack and Sam became heads of production, and the brothers set up a new studio in Hollywood, at the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Bronson Avenue, in 1919.<sup>35</sup>

Initially associated with lowbrow comedies and thrillers, Warner Brothers Studio became a major industry player when it acquired the newly developed Vitaphone technology and produced the first feature-length talking picture, *The Jazz Singer*, in 1927. When Sam Warner died of pneumonia shortly before the film's premiere, Jack became the sole executive of Warner Brothers, a role he would retain until retiring in 1966. Over the course of his long and distinguished career, Jack Warner would introduce such actors as Bette Davis, Errol Flynn, Humphrey Bogart, and Doris Day to the public, and would give debuts to directors including John Huston and Mike Nichols. Though he gained a reputation for recalcitrance and bigotry, Warner's foresight as a producer of cinema was widely lauded; he was one of the first to encourage the use of color film and helped invent the musical comedy genre.<sup>36</sup>

Jack Warner became a resident of Beverly Hills in the early 1920s, when it was rapidly gaining a reputation as a bastion of the rich and famous following the construction of Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks' Pickfair estate in 1919.<sup>37</sup> Warner became active in Beverly Hills civic life, financing and constructing the first Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce (474 North Beverly Drive) in 1928, before the city had a post office or dedicated City Hall.<sup>38</sup> In 1931, he "fulfilled his promise" to construct a movie palace in Beverly Hills, opening Warner Brothers' Theatre on Wilshire Boulevard, just east of Beverly

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<sup>32</sup> Bob Thomas, *The Clown Prince of Hollywood: The Antic Life and Times of Jack L. Warner* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1990), 8-12.

<sup>33</sup> Wayne Warga, "Jack Warner, Hollywood Movie Pioneer, Dies at 86," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 10, 1978.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas, *The Clown Prince of Hollywood: The Antic Life and Times of Jack L. Warner*, 20-30.

<sup>35</sup> "Warner Brothers to Build," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 3, 1919; "Distribute Directly: Warner Brothers Handling Film Marketing Themselves," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 29, 1921.

<sup>36</sup> Wayne Warga, "Jack Warner, Hollywood Movie Pioneer, Dies at 86," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 10, 1978.

<sup>37</sup> "Film Leaders in Beverly," *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 2, 1926.

<sup>38</sup> "1928 Commercial Building in Beverly Hills Fetches \$11.75 Million," *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 20, 2013.

Drive (not extant, demolished 1988).<sup>39</sup> The building at 449-453 North Beverly Drive, which Warner bought in 1929 and retained ownership of through the 1940s, was one of many real estate investments he made at a time when the value of the city's commercial land was rising precipitously.<sup>40</sup> Warner lived in Beverly Hills, in a palatial 1938 estate by Roland Coate, up until his death in 1978 at the age of 86.<sup>41</sup>

## 4.5. Architecture and Design

Historic photos depicting the building in its original state could not be found, but based upon descriptions of the building in permit records, newspaper articles, and other source materials the building appears to have originally been a vernacular commercial structure that was designed to be consistent with the scale and character of other commercial buildings in the vicinity but lacked the distinctive characteristics of a particular architectural style. Alterations have been made to the building over time to accommodate changes in tenancy. The present-day appearance of the building is generally lacking in architectural distinction and does not have the characteristics of a style.

Since an original permit was not available, it could not be determined whether the building was architect-designed, and the original contractor also could not be identified. In the mid-1920s, the property was purchased by Helen Hudson, the wife of local architect W. Asa Hudson, and as noted she appears to have presided over the construction of the three storefront units at the front of the property at this time. As she was married to an architect, W. Asa Hudson, and given that he was a locally prominent architect who designed many buildings in Beverly Hills, it seems quite likely that Hudson was the architect of this improvement project; however, absent permit records or other source materials the association between Hudson and the design of the subject building could not be corroborated.

Building permits indicate that a number of other contractors – and, on occasion, architects and engineers – were retained to complete subsequent renovations and tenant improvements. A list of these practitioners is woven into the discussion provided in *Section 3.2: Development Chronology*. Research turned up very little information about the lives and careers of these practitioners. Moreover, none of these practitioners are identified on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Master Architects.

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<sup>39</sup> "Opening of Film House Gala Event," *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 1931; "Warner Beverly Hills: Interior Views," Los Angeles Theatres, accessed May 2020.

<sup>40</sup> "Rapid Rise Revealed in Values," *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 21, 1926.

<sup>41</sup> Charles Lockwood, "Tour Jack L. Warner's House in Beverly Hills," *Architectural Digest*, Aug 24, 2016.



## 5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation

### 5.1. National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation’s master inventory of known historic resources. Established under the auspices of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level. Eligibility for in the National Register is addressed in National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. NRB 15 states that in order to be eligible for the National Register, a resource must both: (1) be historically significant, and (2) retain sufficient integrity to adequately convey its significance.

Significance is assessed by evaluating a resource against established eligibility criteria. A resource is considered significant if it satisfies any one of the following four National Register criteria:<sup>42</sup>

- Criterion A (events): associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- Criterion B (persons): associated with the lives of significant persons in our past;
- Criterion C (architecture): embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- Criterion D (information potential): has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Once significance has been established, it must then be demonstrated that a resource retains enough of its physical and associative qualities – or *integrity* – to convey the reason(s) for its significance. Integrity is best described as a resource’s “authenticity” as expressed through its physical features and extant characteristics. Generally, if a resource is recognizable as such in its present state, it is said to retain integrity, but if it has been extensively altered then it does not. Whether a resource retains sufficient integrity for listing is determined by evaluating the seven aspects of integrity defined by NPS:

- Location (the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred);
- Setting (the physical environment of a historic property);
- Design (the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property);

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<sup>42</sup> Some resources may meet multiple criteria, though only one needs to be satisfied for National Register eligibility.

- Materials (the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular manner or configuration to form a historic property);
- Workmanship (the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory);
- Feeling (a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time);
- Association (the direct link between an important historic event/person and a historic property).

Integrity is evaluated by weighing all seven of these aspects together and is ultimately a “yes or no” determination – that is, a resource either retains sufficient integrity, or it does not.<sup>43</sup> Some aspects of integrity may be weighed more heavily than others depending on the type of resource being evaluated and the reason(s) for the resource’s significance. Since integrity depends on a resource’s placement within a historic context, integrity can be assessed only after it has been concluded that the resource is in fact significant.

## 5.2. California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an authoritative guide used to identify, inventory, and protect historical resources in California. Established by an act of the State Legislature in 1998, the California Register program encourages public recognition and protection of significant architectural, historical, archeological, and cultural resources; identifies these resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The structure of the California Register program is similar to that of the National Register, though the former more heavily emphasizes resources that have contributed specifically to the development of California. To be eligible for the California Register, a resource must first be deemed significant under one of the following four criteria, which are modeled after the National Register criteria listed above:

- Criterion 1 (events): associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
- Criterion 2 (persons): associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;
- Criterion 3 (architecture): 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 4 (information potential): has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, state, or the nation.

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<sup>43</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VIII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

Mirroring the National Register, the California Register also requires that resources retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing. A resource's integrity is assessed using the same seven aspects of integrity used for the National Register. However, since integrity thresholds associated with the California Register are generally less rigid than those associated with the National Register, it is possible that a resource may lack the integrity required for the National Register but still be eligible for listing in the California Register.

Certain properties are automatically listed in the California Register, as follows:<sup>44</sup>

- All California properties that are listed in the National Register;
- All California properties that have formally been determined eligible for listing in the National Register (by the State Office of Historic Preservation);
- All California Historical Landmarks numbered 770 and above; and
- California Points of Historical Interest which have been reviewed by the State Office of Historic Preservation and recommended for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission.

Resources may be nominated directly to the California Register. State Historic Landmarks #770 and forward are also automatically listed in the California Register.

Unlike the National Register's 50 year age requirement, there is no prescribed age limit for listing in the California Register. However, guidelines state that sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with a resource.

### 5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance

Historic preservation in Beverly Hills is governed by Title 10, Chapter 3, Articles 32 and 32.5 of the Beverly Hills Municipal Code (referred to hereinafter as "the Ordinance"). The Ordinance authorizes the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) to recommend the nomination of properties as local landmarks and historic districts to the City Council. To facilitate this process, the Ordinance establishes requirements a property must meet in order to qualify for designation as a landmark listed in the City of Beverly Hills Register of Historic Properties. The 2012 Ordinance was revised and updated in 2015, with an additional amendment in 2016; all criteria and definitions used in this document are effective as of April 1, 2016.

To be eligible for local designation as a historic landmark, a property must satisfy the following sets of requirements (A and B) as noted:

**A. A landmark must meet all of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance;

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<sup>44</sup> California Public Resources Code, Division 5, Chapter 1, Article 2, § 5024.1.

- (2) It possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period;
- (3) It retains substantial integrity<sup>45</sup> from its period of significance; and
- (4) It has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.

**B. In addition to those listed above, a landmark must meet at least one of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- (2) It is an exceptional work<sup>46</sup> by a master architect<sup>47</sup>;
- (3) It is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous;
- (4) It is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance;
- (5) It is an iconic property<sup>48</sup>; or
- (6) The landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).

Mirroring the National Register and California Register, the Ordinance requires that a resource retain integrity. The Ordinance defines integrity as “the ability of a property to convey its historical significance through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, relevant association, and character defining features.”<sup>49</sup> This builds upon the definition that is used by the National Register.

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<sup>45</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “substantial integrity” as “Integrity that is considerable in importance, value, degree, amount, or extent, and that continues to exist, or would have continued to exist, but for work done without appropriate permits after the enactment of this article.”

<sup>46</sup> A 2016 amendment to BHMC 10-3-32 in Ord. 15-O-2700 defines “exceptional work” as “A remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community. At a minimum, the work’s exceptional quality shall have been documented by at least one of the following: a) it was the subject of a major architectural award; b) it was substantively discussed (i.e., not just mentioned) and photographically depicted in a monograph on a master architect’s career; or c) it was substantively discussed or photographically depicted in at least two (2) publications (e.g., a book, treatise, trade magazine article, film, or set of photographs made available to the public by an institutional archive) authored by acknowledged experts in the field of architecture. A monograph or publication made available to the public solely in electronic form and without any reasonable expectation of compensation to the author, or substantially authored by the architect of the work, shall not count toward this minimum.”

<sup>47</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “master architect” as “An architect of widely recognized greatness in the field of architecture whose individual genius influenced his or her age.”

<sup>48</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “iconic property” as “A property that has been visited and photographed so often by residents and visitors to the city that it has become inextricably associated with Beverly Hills in the popular culture and forms part of the city’s identity to the world at large.”

<sup>49</sup> BHMC 10-3-3202, Definitions.

## 6. Evaluation of Significance

### 6.1. Previous Evaluations

449-453 North Beverly Drive is not currently designated, and it does not appear to have been previously evaluated for historical significance. The property is not listed in the California Historical Resources Inventory (HRI) database for Los Angeles County (last updated 2012) and was not identified in any of the City's historic resource survey efforts (1985/86, 2004, 2006, 2013).

### 6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility

#### National Register and California Register

ARG concludes that 449-453 North Beverly Drive is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources, as follows:

***National/California Register Criterion A/1: associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history.***

Constructed in 1921 and significantly expanded circa 1926, the building at 449-453 North Beverly Drive is loosely associated with broad patterns of commercial development that are linked to the extraordinary growth and development of Beverly Hills in the 1920s. Its construction is indicative of how parcels within the city's business district were developed with low-scale commercial buildings that were intended to provide space in which local commerce could be carried out. These buildings were generally constructed to house everyday businesses like beauty parlors, hardware stores, bookstores, and other enterprises that catered to the local community, and represented how the pace of commercial development corresponded with the steady residential growth taking place in Beverly Hills at this time.

National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* provides guidance related to the evaluation of properties that are associated with events. It specifically states that "mere association with historic events or trends is not enough, in and of itself, to qualify under Criterion A: the property's specific association must be considered important as well. For example, a building historically in commercial use must be shown to have been significant in commercial history."<sup>50</sup>

Applying this guidance, the subject building is more representative of broad patterns of commercial history than it is exemplary. There are a number of examples of 1920s-era commercial buildings in this area of Beverly Hills, many of which retain integrity and are much stronger representations of the broad patterns of commercial history associated with this period. It was not the first example of a commercial building constructed in the business district of Beverly Hills, nor does its presence appear to have impacted the trajectory of local commercial development in any sort of consequential way. Moreover,

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<sup>50</sup> Derived from National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.



the building has been extensively altered. Original wall cladding has been replaced with an incompatible stucco finish; storefronts have been extensively modified to accommodate changes in tenancy; all doors and windows have been replaced, and fenestration patterns have been modified with the insertion of new storefront systems and rear doors, and the infill of some original windows. Collectively, these alterations have substantially changed the appearance of the building. While its essential form and massing vaguely reference the 1920s, the building reads as an amalgamation of disparate parts, rather than as any sort of unified whole. It does not retain the distinctive look or feel of a 1920s-era commercial building and bears almost no visible association with the era in which it is associated.

There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the building is associated with an event that is singularly significant to history. Primary and secondary source research did not suggest that it functioned as anything more than an ordinary commercial/light industrial building over the course of its history. The storefront at 451 North Beverly Drive made minor headlines in local newspapers in 1962 because the art gallery that occupied this space was implicated in a federal smuggling raid that involved noted actor Tab Hunter; however, this event, while an interesting anecdote, does not appear to have been especially consequential. It does not appear to contribute to an understanding of history that would merit consideration under this criterion.

Furthermore, the building has been significantly altered since its construction and expansion in the 1920s. As noted, it has withstood a number of alterations that, over time, have changed the appearance of the building insofar as to where it no longer clearly reads as a product of the 1920s.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion A/1.

***National/California Register Criterion B/2: associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.***

The building at 449-453 North Beverly Drive has been continuously used for commercial and light industrial purposes since its construction in 1921. It is typical for buildings housing businesses to be loosely associated with a number of people, as these buildings are generally intended to be accessible to the public and are frequented by staff members. Many customers have patronized the various businesses that have operated out of this building over time; many business owners and shopkeepers have presided over these businesses.

However, with the exception of Ruth Law and Jack Warner, who both owned the property for a period of time (and are discussed below), there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that any one of the individuals associated with the building is historically significant in the spirit of this criterion. There is no evidence to demonstrate that any customers, proprietors, or landlords associated with the building made notable contributions to local, state, or national history in the spirit of this criterion.

Two notable exceptions are Ruth Law (1887-1970), who briefly owned the property between 1928 and 1929, and Jack Warner (1892-1978), who purchased the property from Law in 1929 and is believed to have owned it through the mid-1940s. Both are historically significant individuals: Law is notable as one of the earliest and most accomplished female aviators; Warner is notable for his contributions to the motion picture industry by virtue of his role as co-founder and president of Warner Brothers Studios.

The question, then, is whether the building is significant for its association with Law or Warner. National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* provides guidance related to the evaluation of properties associated with significant people. It lists two benchmarks that must be met for a property to meet Criterion B: first, “the persons associated with the property must be individually significant within a historic context,” and second, the property must be “associated with a person’s productive life, reflecting the time period when he or she achieved significance.”<sup>51</sup>

When this guidance is applied, the subject building does not appear to be significant for its association with either Law or Warner. There is little question that Law and Warner are both historically significant individuals, but there is insufficient evidence to substantiate that this building somehow bears a meaningful association with Law’s and Warner’s productive lives. Both appear to have purchased the property for the purposes of investment and generating supplemental income. Dabbling in real estate was a common practice in this era among individuals of wealth and stature, and typically had little to do with the reason(s) belying their significance. This is true of both Law and Warner. Law was significant for her trailblazing accomplishments in aviation, and specifically for breaking down barriers in the aviation business; Warner was significant for his myriad contributions to the motion picture industry and for shaping what is now known as the “Golden Age” of Hollywood. That both Law and Warner owned the subject building as a real estate investment for a period is an interesting anecdote in the building’s history, but this has nothing to do with the reasons belying the significance of either individual. Research suggests that Law and Warner owned the building for investment purposes only – they do not appear to have established offices in the building or carried out tasks here that led to significant developments in their respective career paths. Law purchased the property some six years after she had retired from the aviation industry entirely.

Furthermore, the building has been significantly altered since the period during which it was owned by Law (1928-1929) and Warner (1929-circa 1940s), and no longer bears any visual association with this period.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with the lives of persons important to local, state, or national history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion B/2.

***National/California Register Criterion C/3: embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.***

The building at 449-453 North Beverly Drive is vernacular and lacks the distinctive characteristics of a particular architectural style. Its present-day appearance is the result of a succession of remodeling projects that have been completed over time, none of which appear to have ascribed to a certain style.

The building is not notable on account of its method of construction. It is constructed of brick, a common construction method for small-scale commercial buildings of its era. Therefore, there is

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<sup>51</sup> Derived from National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

insufficient evidence to demonstrate that there is anything unusual, innovative, or otherwise noteworthy about that manner in which it was constructed.

The building does not represent the notable work of a master. No original building permit is available, an architect and builder were not identified. However, given its small scale and generally vernacular appearance, it seems unlikely that the building would have been constructed as any sort of architectural statement that would have represented the work of a master. It also does not appear in any architectural books, journals, or periodicals from its time of construction, indicating that it was not seen as a notable architectural work. None of the other architects, engineers, or contractors who have completed remodels and tenant improvement projects at the building over the years appears to rise to a level of individual significance that would render them masters. None of these practitioners are included on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Master Architects.

Given its vernacular and heavily altered appearance, the building does not possess high artistic value, and given its status as a single property with no meaningful visual or associative relationship with its environs, the building does not represent a significant entity whose components lack individual distinction.

For these reasons, the subject building is not significant for reasons related to its architecture and physical design, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion C/3.

***Criterion D/4.*** *Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.*

As an archaeological assessment was not conducted as part of this study, the property's potential for containing subsurface archaeological resources is unknown.

## Local Eligibility

ARG concludes that 449-453 North Beverly Drive is not eligible for local listing as Beverly Hills Landmark, as follows:

### **Part A Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet all four of the following requirements):**

***Criterion A.1:*** *it is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance.*

The subject building was constructed in 1921 and expanded circa 1926, far surpassing the City's 45-year age threshold. Thus, the building meets local Criterion A.1.

***Criterion A.2:*** *it possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period.*

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, the subject building is a vernacular edifice that has been extensively altered over time. It does not embody the distinctive

characteristics of a particular architectural style, type, or period, and does not possess high aesthetic or artistic value. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion A.2.

***Criterion A.3: it retains substantial integrity from its period of significance.***

The subject building has been extensively altered, to the extent that it retains very little historic fabric and no longer retains the distinctive look and feel of a 1920s-era commercial building. Its primary façade has been modified over the years to accommodate the preferences of its individual tenants. Specifically, original wall cladding has been replaced with an incompatible stucco finish; storefronts have been extensively modified to accommodate changes in tenancy; all doors and windows have been replaced, and fenestration patterns have been modified with the insertion of new storefront systems and rear doors, and the infill of some original windows. Collectively, these alterations have substantially changed the appearance of the building. The building, then, does not retain integrity from its 1920s period of construction, and does not meet local Criterion A.3.

***Criterion A.4: it has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.***

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register criteria, this building is a typical example of a commercial building from the 1920s. It was constructed in a vernacular architectural style using common methods and materials and has been occupied by a typical succession of commercial tenants. There is nothing particularly remarkable about this building that would suggest that it has continued historic value to the community. For these same reasons, the building does not satisfy local Criterion A.4.

**Part B Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet at least one of the following requirements):**

***Criterion B.1: it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.***

The subject building is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and therefore does not meet local Criterion B.1.

***Criterion B.2: it is an exceptional work by a master architect.***

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, an original building permit was not available, and its original architect and contractor could not be determined. Its small scale, vernacular appearance, and lack of mention in any architectural trade journals suggest that it was not an exceptional work of a master architect. Other architects associated with the building, who completed renovations and tenant improvements in subsequent years, are not listed on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Master Architects. The building does not meet local Criterion B.2.

***Criterion B.3: it is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation.***

*For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous.*

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion B/2, there is insufficient evidence demonstrating that the subject building bears a meaningful association with the productive lives of historically significant individuals. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion B.3.

***Criterion B.4:*** *it is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance.*

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion B/2 and local Criterion B.3, the subject building does not appear to have been associated with persons of great local importance in a manner that would merit consideration under this criterion. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion B.4.

***Criterion B.5:*** *it is an iconic property.*

The subject building is not an iconic property as defined by the Ordinance. It is a ubiquitous commercial building that complements the streetscape of Rodeo Drive but does not possess any architectural or contextual qualities that would render it iconic. The building therefore does not meet local Criterion B.5.

***Criterion B.6:*** *the landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).*

The Landmark designation procedure is not known to have been initiated by any parties, and the owner(s) of the property have not expressly agreed to the initiation of such a procedure. As a result, the subject building does not meet Criterion B.6.

### **Summary of Local Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for local listing, a resource must meet all four of the above-listed Part A requirements, and at least one of the above-listed Part B requirements. As addressed above, the subject building does not meet Criterion A.2, A.3, and A.4, as required, and does not meet any of the Part B requirements. In summary, the building does not meet local eligibility criteria.

### 6.3. Evaluation of Integrity

For a property to be eligible for listing in the National and California Registers, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark, it must meet eligibility criteria and must also retain sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance. *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* states that “only after significance is fully established can you proceed to the issue of integrity.”<sup>52</sup> In accordance with best professional practices, it is customary to apply this same methodology when evaluating resources at the state and local levels. Because the building does not meet the criteria for federal, state, or local listing, an assessment of integrity is not necessary.

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<sup>52</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”



## 7. Conclusion

Per the above analysis, the building at 449-453 North Beverly Drive does not meet any of the criteria for federal, state, or local listing. Therefore, ARG concludes that the building is not considered to be a “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA.

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# Paley Center for Media

461 North Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, CA

## Historic Resources Assessment Report

*Prepared for:*

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP  
San Francisco, CA

*Prepared by:*



Architectural  
Resources Group

Architectural Resources Group  
Los Angeles, CA

June 24, 2020

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Executive Summary	1
1.2. Preparer Qualifications	2
<b>2. Architectural Description</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1. Site and Setting	3
2.2. Building Exterior	4
2.3. Building Interior	5
2.4. Landscape and Hardscape Features	6
<b>3. Development Chronology and Alterations</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>4. Historic Contexts</b>	<b>16</b>
4.1. Commercial Development in Beverly Hills	16
4.2. Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center for Media	20
4.3. Late Modern Architecture	24
4.4. Richard Meier and Partners	26
<b>5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation</b>	<b>31</b>
5.1. National Register of Historic Places	31
5.2. California Register of Historical Resources	33
5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance	35
<b>6. Evaluation of Significance</b>	<b>37</b>
6.1. Previous Evaluations	37
6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility	37
6.3. Evaluation of Integrity	47
<b>7. Conclusion</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>8. Bibliography</b>	<b>49</b>



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Executive Summary

At the request of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) has prepared this Historic Resource Assessment Report for the property at 461 North Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, California. The property is developed with a two-story cultural/institutional building that was constructed between 1994-96 as the West Coast branch of the Museum of Television and Radio (now called the Paley Center for Media). Founded in 1975 in New York City, the museum was the brainchild of broadcasting titan and longtime CBS Chief Executive William S. Paley. Its collections explore the creative and cultural contributions of television, radio, and other popular modes of media.

The subject building was designed by Richard Meier and Partners. Meier's eponymous, internationally renowned architecture firm is known for its prolific use of abstract geometric forms and the color white, and development of a derivative of Late Modern architecture that is, at times, referred to as Neo-Corbusian. Meier is included on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Local Master Architects.<sup>1</sup> The subject building was not constructed from the ground up, but was rather an extensive remodel of two existing commercial buildings on the site.

ARG evaluated the subject building to determine whether it appears to be eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, and/or as a Beverly Hills Landmark. At only 25 years of age at this writing, the subject building is generally too young to be considered a historical resource. Federal, state, and local eligibility criteria all have age requirements that safeguard against the designation of properties of "passing contemporary interest," ensuring these designation programs remain lists of truly historical resources. However, due to the fact that the building was designed by an internationally acclaimed architectural partnership, it is evaluated herein for its potential to have exceptional importance such that it meets eligibility criteria despite its very young age.

Preparation of this report included the following tasks related to research, documentation, and analysis:

- Visited the property on January 10, 2019 to assess existing conditions and document the building's exterior and publicly accessible interior spaces with digital photographs;
- Reviewed pertinent federal and state technical bulletins, local ordinances, and other reference materials related to the evaluation of historical resources;
- Reviewed applicable background materials including historical building permits and Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) data for the subject property;
- Conducted supplemental research to glean additional information about the property's development history, design, occupancy, and potential historical significance;
- Identified applicable historic contexts and themes; and

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<sup>1</sup> City of Beverly Hills, "List of Local Master Architects, Version 2.1," adopted Oct. 14, 2015, revised Jan. 13, 2016.

- Evaluated the building against eligibility criteria for the National Register, the California Register, and as a Beverly Hills Landmark.

Research materials were culled from the following sources: the Los Angeles Public Library; the Beverly Hills Public Library; the archives of the *Los Angeles Times* and other local periodicals; building permits obtained from the City of Beverly Hills's Community Development Department; technical bulletins published by the National Park Service (NPS) and the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP); online repositories; and ARG's in-house collection of architectural books and reference materials. A complete list of sources is included in *Section 8: Bibliography* of this report.

Because the property is less than 50 years of age, the analysis herein incorporates the guidance enumerated by National Register Criteria Consideration G, a set of evaluative guidelines applied when assessing resources of the recent past (generally defined as those constructed in the past 50 years).<sup>2</sup>

In summary, ARG concludes that the subject building exhibits the character-defining features of Late Modern architecture, and specifically those of the Neo-Corbusian derivative of this style. The building is also characteristic of the institutional work of Richard Meier and Partners, an architect of international acclaim. However, as a very young resource, it does not exhibit exceptional historical and/or architectural significance needed to substantiate its eligibility for federal, state, or local listing at this time. Also, since Richard Meier and Partners continues to operate an active practice in Los Angeles, the complete arc of the firm's work is not yet fully understood to an extent that would substantiate the building's eligibility. Thus, the building is not eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark, and is not considered to be a "historical resource" for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) at this time.

The following sections provide a contextual basis for analysis and a detailed discussion of how this determination was made.

## 1.2. Preparer Qualifications

This report was prepared by Katie E. Horak, Principal, and Andrew Goodrich, AICP, Associate, both Architectural Historians and Preservation Planners. ARG intern Rafael Fontes provided additional project support. Ms. Horak and Mr. Goodrich meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards*, 36 CFR Part 61, in the discipline of Architectural History.

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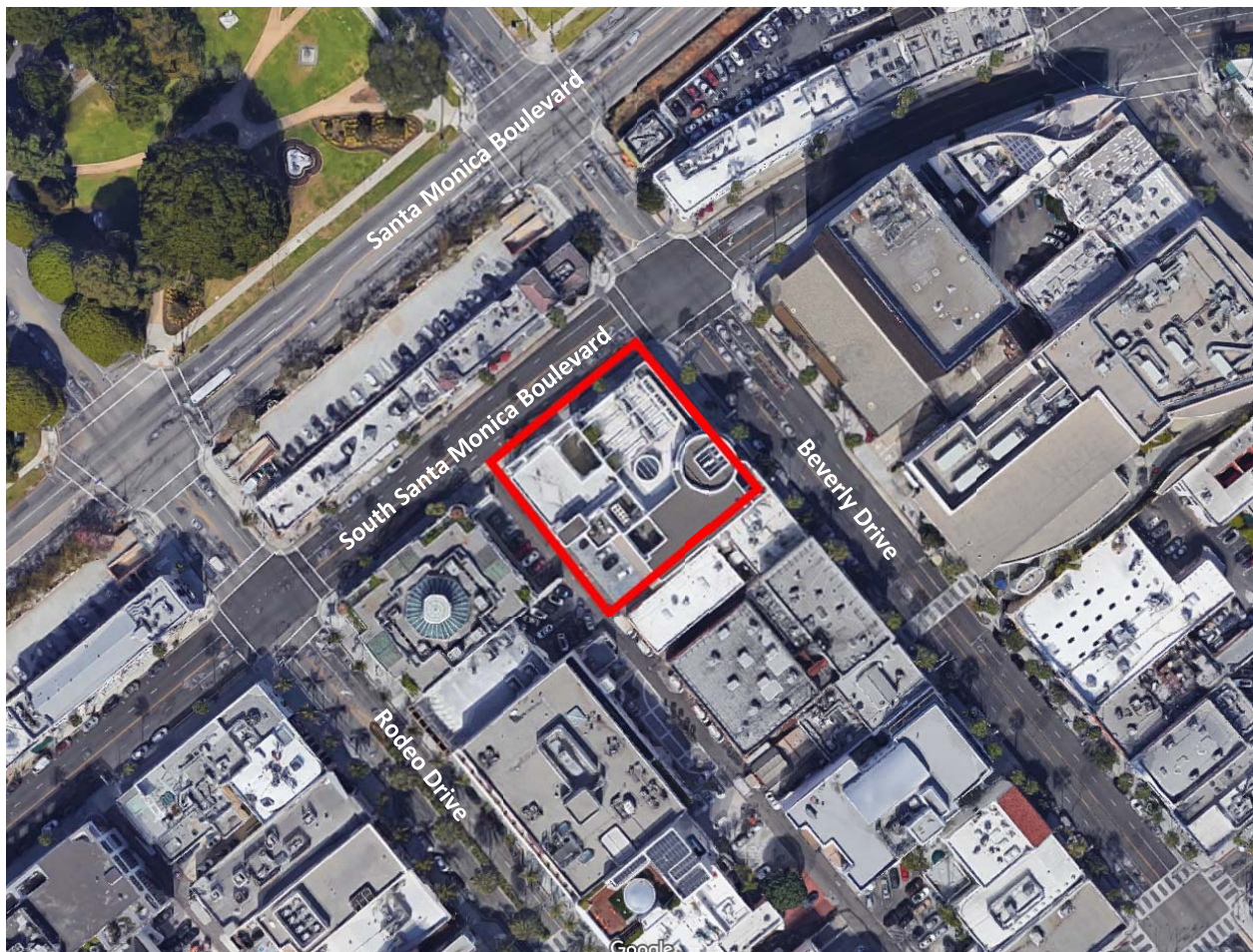
<sup>2</sup> Derived from National Register Bulletin No. 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. Criterion Consideration G is addressed in greater detail in Sections 5 and 6 of this report.

## 2. Architectural Description

### 2.1. Site and Setting

The subject property is located near the northern edge of a triangular-shaped commercial district that is bounded by Santa Monica Boulevard (north and west), Wilshire Boulevard (south), and Canon Drive (east). This area serves as the central business district of Beverly Hills. Known as the Business Triangle, it is densely developed with a mix of low- and mid-scale commercial buildings, many of which are occupied by some of the foremost purveyors of luxury retail goods. The circulation network ascribes to a grid that is oriented 45 degrees askew of the cardinal directions and contributes to the area's wedge-like form.

461 North Beverly Drive consists of a flat, compact commercial parcel that sits at the southwest corner of Beverly Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard. The parcel is rectangular in shape and measures roughly 22,000 square feet. The southeast property line abuts an adjacent commercial building. The southwest property line abuts a small service alley that is equidistant from Beverly and Rodeo Drives.



*Location map. The subject property, 461 North Beverly Drive, is outlined in red (Google Maps).*

## 2.2. Building Exterior

The parcel contains a 26,523-square-foot commercial building that was constructed between 1994 and 1996. It was not built from the ground up, but rather involved the extensive remodeling of two existing commercial buildings. It was built to house the collections of the Museum of Television and Radio (later known as the Paley Center for Media). The building varies between two and three stories in height and is constructed of steel frame. It sits on a concrete foundation, atop a subterranean parking garage that is accessed from the northwest via a driveway off South Santa Monica Boulevard. The building is spatially complex, with an irregular footprint that is composed of multiple geometric planes and volumes. It has two street-facing elevations: one faces northeast, toward Beverly Drive, and the other faces northwest, toward South Santa Monica Boulevard. The northeast elevation features a slight setback; the northwest elevation is mostly flush with the street.

Since the subject building is of relatively recent vintage (1994-96), it is somewhat difficult to assign it a discernible architectural style. However, the building's prevailing sense of rationality and order, its emphasis on balanced geometric forms, its crisp lines, and its austere exterior surfaces, devoid of color and superfluous ornament, are typically associated with Neo-Corbusian architecture, a derivative of the Late Modern style that harkens back to trends in pre-World War II Modernism.

The building is capped by a flat roof with multiple levels and volumes. The roof was neither visible nor accessible during ARG's site visit, but appears to be sheathed in a composition sheet membrane and is spanned by a flat parapet. Skylights are incorporated into the roof and naturally illuminate key interior spaces. The northeast quadrant of the roof is occupied by an exterior deck that is used as an events venue. Photos of the roof deck indicate that it is finished with square tiles, is enclosed by parapet walls, and is capped by an abstracted metal canopy. The canopy, which is visible from the street, appears as if it is hovering over the building. The roof deck also features metal railings and integral planter boxes.

The primary elevation is oriented to the northeast. Features on this elevation are asymmetrically composed. Exterior walls are extensively glazed; those portions of exterior wall that are not glazed are clad with white enameled metal panels and warm travertine. The metal panels are arranged in a modular grid pattern. The focal point of this elevation is a large cylindrical volume that is positioned off center and extensively glazed with fixed, flush-mounted anodized aluminum windows. This volume acts as the symbolic center of the building. At its base is a pair of glazed, anodized aluminum entrance doors. These doors are sheltered by a cantilevered canopy that projects out over the sidewalk and is clad with enameled metal panels. Signage that spells "THE PALEY CENTER FOR MEDIA" is affixed to the canopy.

The rest of the primary elevation is dominated by a trapezoidal volume that cantilevers out from the building and frames an interior stair. This volume is also extensively glazed. Steel muntins and steel structural beams (which effectively double as muntins) divide the glazed volume into a gridded network of fixed metal windows. Additional fixed windows are located on the opposite side of the main entrance.

The northwest elevation also has extensive street frontage, and its features are arranged asymmetrically. Exterior walls are clad with enameled metal panels and smooth stucco. The stucco is painted white, and is scored in such a manner as to mimic the modularity of the metal panels and reinforce the building's prevailing sense of geometry. Metal signage that spells "THE PALEY CENTER FOR



MEDIA” is affixed to the metal panels. The cadence of this elevation is interrupted by a large void near its center; this void frames a driveway that slopes down beneath the building and provides vehicular access to the subterranean garage. There are two secondary entrances to the building on this elevation: the first is located adjacent to the driveway and consists of a single, recessed unarticulated metal door, and the second is located at the far (northwest) end of the elevation and consists of paired, glazed anodized aluminum doors. The latter are flush with the building’s face and set beneath a stucco hood.

Fenestration is generally confined to the two street-facing (northeast and northwest) elevations. It consists of fixed, flush-mounted aluminum windows, many of which wrap around the corners of the building to create uninterrupted expanses of glass. Elsewhere, windows are placed in a seemingly random manner and consist of single fixed aluminum windows, some of which have recessed openings.

The rear (southwest and southeast) elevations are both obscured from public view; the southwest elevation faces a service alley, and the southeast elevation abuts an adjacent building. Compared to the street-facing elevations, the rear elevations are utilitarian in appearance and lack articulation. Walls are either clad with scored stucco or consist of painted concrete blocks. Fenestration is minimal. There are several unarticulated secondary entrances and a loading dock on the southwest elevation.

## 2.3. Building Interior

The entrance doors on the northeast elevation leads into a large rotunda that functions as the museum’s entry pavilion and is the unequivocal focal point of the building’s interior. The rotunda is a dramatic, voluminous triple-height space that is naturally illuminated by extensive glazing and skylights. Its walls are painted white, and its floors are finished with polished travertine. Its cylindrical form is reinforced by a circumferential staircase that clings to one wall, and an undulated balcony that projects out from another. The staircase and balcony feature metal handrails that are painted white. The northwest wall features a reception desk and rear wall panels, both of which are finished in light maple.

The rotunda leads into a gallery that is naturally illuminated by skylights and floor-to-ceiling glazing. The gallery features carpeted floors and white-painted walls that are accentuated by tack panels and polished travertine. Clinging to one wall of the gallery is a U-shaped staircase that leads to the second floor. The stairs have shallow treads, are finished in polished travertine, and are accentuated by a combination of chrome and painted metal handrails. Exterior walls adjacent to the staircase are extensively glazed, providing those outside the building with a clear view of interior circulation patterns.

Near the rear (northwest) of the entry pavilion is a travertine staircase that enters into a second, smaller sky-lit rotunda. The stairs lead to a 150-seat theater. The theater is a large, double-height space with raked floors, light maple wall panels, fabric-covered seats, and a projection screen. The entry pavilion also affords access to a radio studio, listening room, museum shop, and various back-of-house facilities.

The second floor includes the aforementioned balcony and two large open spaces that originally housed a “console center,” where patrons could cue up and watch archived television programs on video screens. Finishes on the second floor are of a decidedly lesser quality than those on the first floor. Most second-floor spaces feature drop ceilings and laminate flooring that loosely emulates the appearance of

the polished travertine that is applied elsewhere on the building. The console center features a reception desk and wall panels that are finished in light maple. Near the rear of the console center is a room that was originally known as the “Scholars’ Room” (and was used primarily by researchers) but now appears to house all of the video and audio equipment. The Scholars’ Room is a small, enclosed space with drop ceilings and carpeted floors.

The third floor is not publically accessible, and was thus not accessible during ARG’s site visit. Research indicates that it contains a boardroom and the roof deck. Access to this level is provided by elevator and by the circumferential staircase in the entrance pavilion/rotunda.

## **2.4. Landscape and Hardscape Features**

Since the building occupies almost the entirety of the lot, landscape and hardscape features are minimal. The shallow setback on the primary (northeast) elevation features a set of stairs and a walkway, which are framed on either side by low buffer walls. The stairs, walkway, and buffer walls are all clad in the same travertine finish that is used to adorn the building’s exterior walls; the travertine effectively demarcates the property line. A small reflecting pool is located in what would otherwise be void space beneath the cantilever. Metal handrails flank the stairs and wrap around the northwest edge of the reflecting pond. Landscaping consists only of the aforementioned planter boxes atop the roof, and several semi-mature Mexican fan palm trees that are planted in the parkways along both streets.



Current Photos



Primary (northeast) elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).



Primary (northeast) elevation, view northwest (ARG, 2019).



Northwest elevation, view southwest (ARG, 2019).



Northwest elevation, view east (ARG, 2019).



Southwest elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).



Southwest elevation, view north (ARG, 2019).



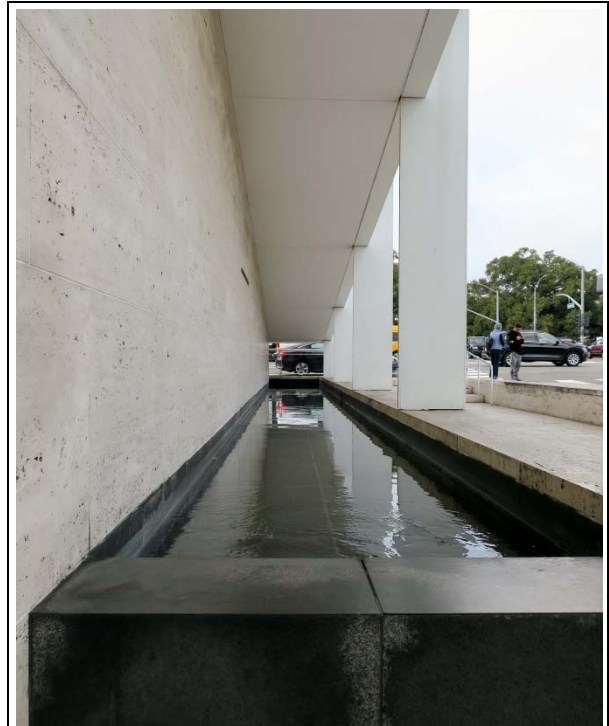
*Cylindrical volume on primary (northeast) elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



*Glazed, cantilevered canopy above primary entrance (ARG, 2019).*

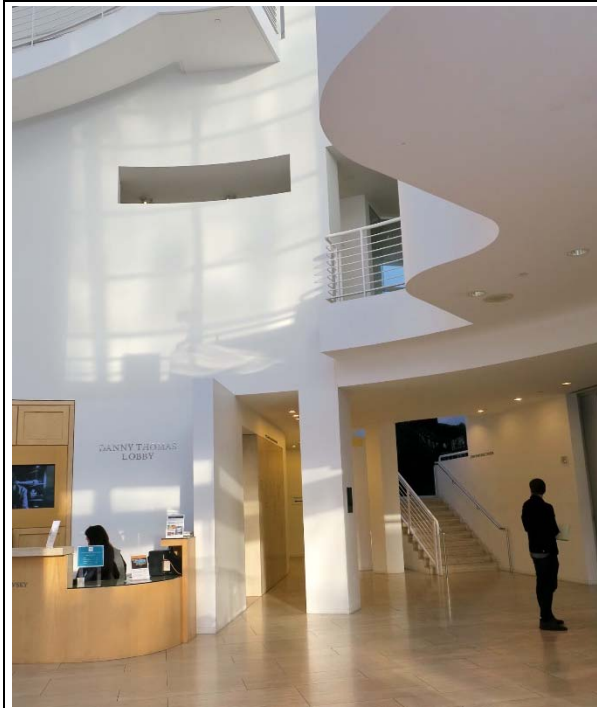


*Travertine finishes in front setback, view northwest (ARG, 2019).*

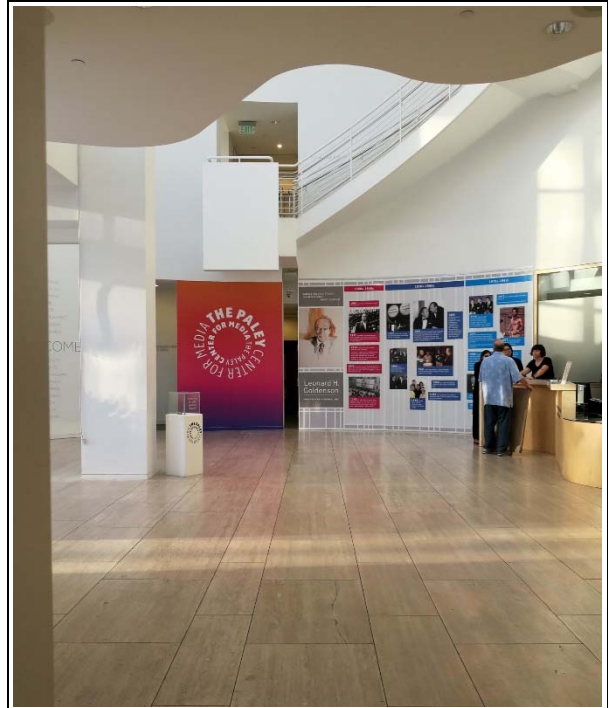


*Reflecting pool beneath cantilever on primary (northeast) elevation, view northwest (ARG, 2019).*

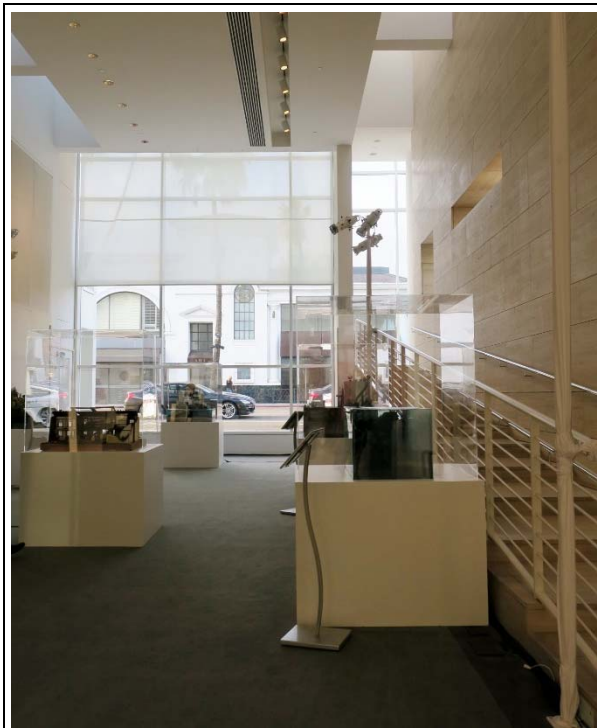




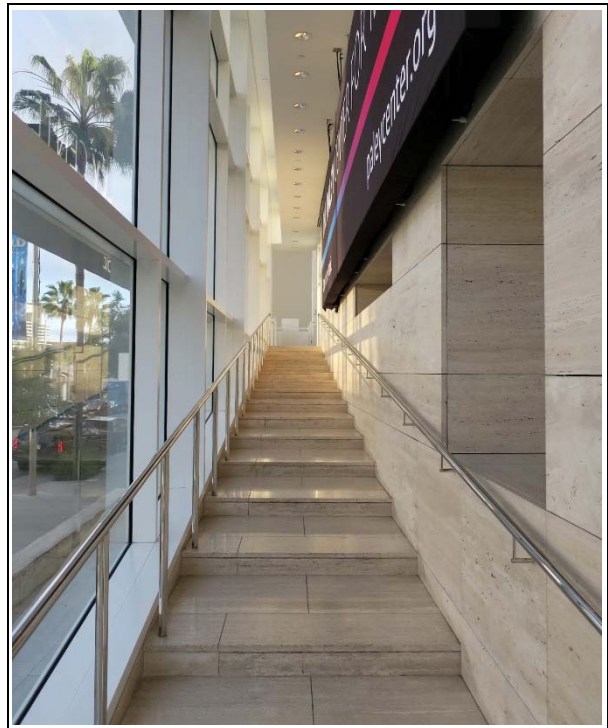
*Rotunda/entry pavilion. Note natural illumination and undulated balcony (ARG, 2019).*



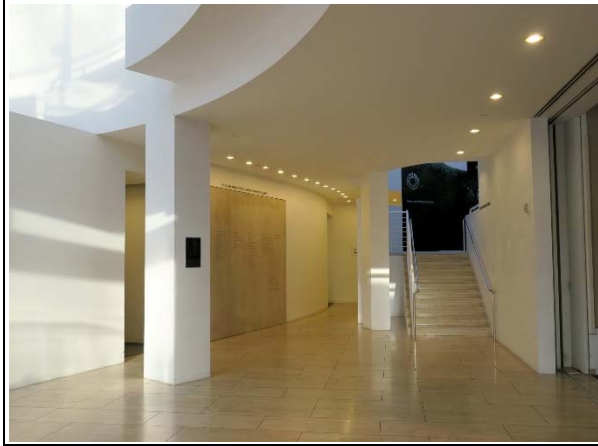
*Rotunda/entry pavilion (ARG, 2019).*



*First floor gallery as viewed from rotunda. Note travertine stairs and extensive glazing (ARG, 2019).*



*Travertine stairs to second floor (ARG, 2019).*



*Stairs to first floor theater as viewed from rotunda (ARG, 2019).*



*First floor theater (ARG, 2019).*



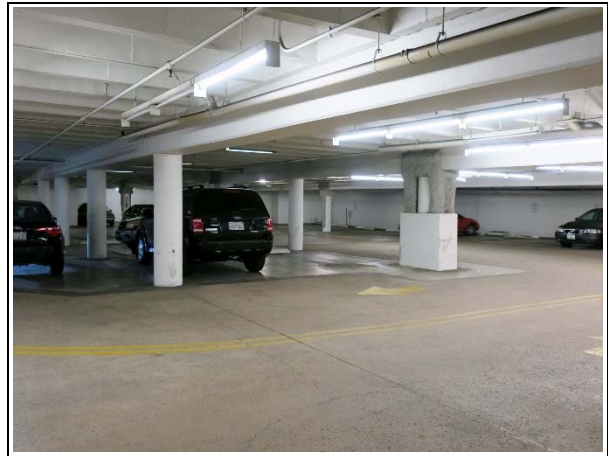
*Second floor balcony. Note undulation (ARG, 2019).*



*Second floor console center. Note light maple accents (ARG, 2019).*



*Driveway to subterranean parking garage, northwest elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



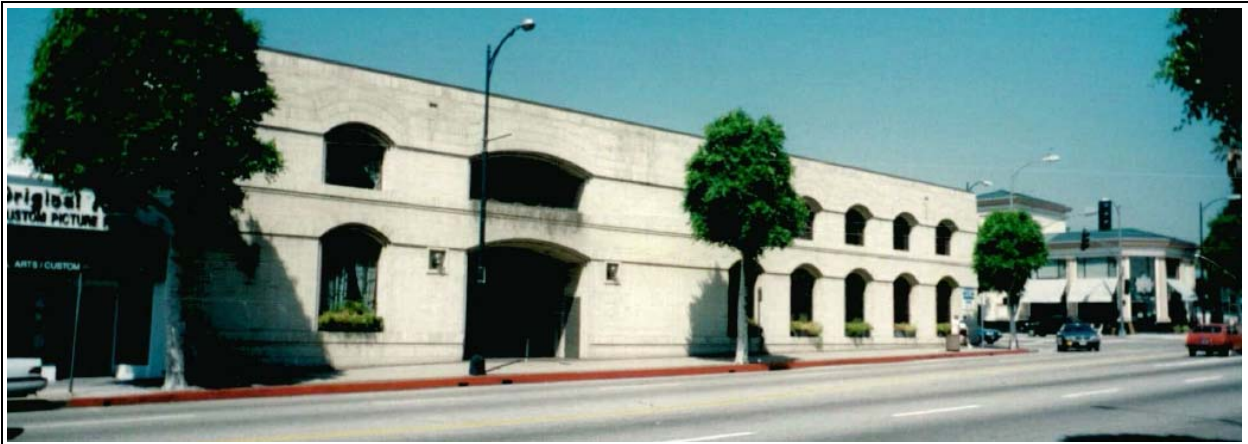
*Subterranean parking garage (ARG, 2019).*



## Additional Photos and Images



*View of subject property prior to construction of the Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center, 1994, view south. An existing bank building (painted white) is pictured in the foreground; an existing restaurant building (clad with brick) is pictured in the background (Permit File for 461 N Beverly Drive).*



*View of subject property prior to construction of the Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center, 1994, view northwest (Permit File for 461 N Beverly Drive).*



*View of subject property prior to construction of the Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center, 1994, view southeast. The entry to the subterranean garage is pictured in the foreground (Permit File for 461 N Beverly Drive).*



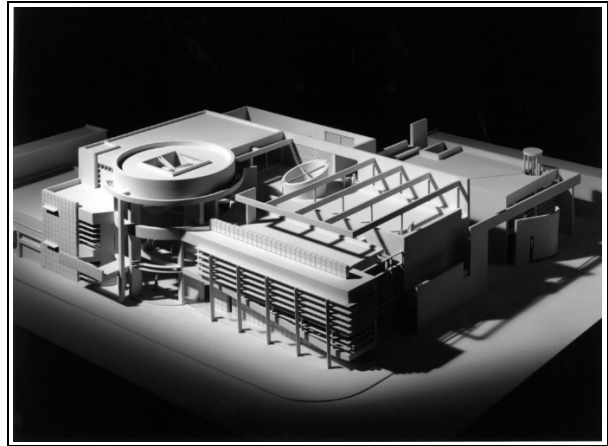
*Primary (northeast) elevation, view southwest, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).*



*Primary (northeast) elevation at dusk, view southwest, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).*



*Detail of entrance rotunda, n.d. Note signage with original name (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).*



*Model depicting original plans for the building, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).*

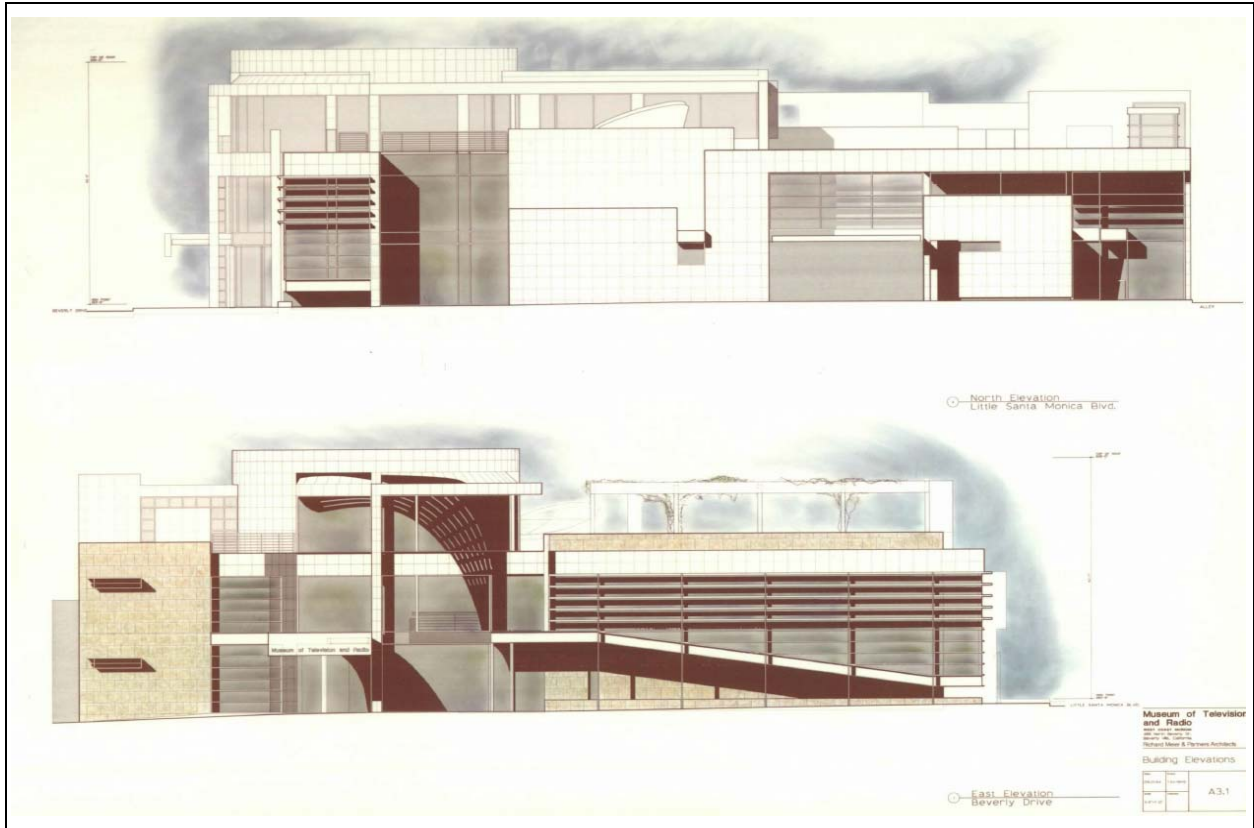


*Entrance rotunda/main lobby, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).*

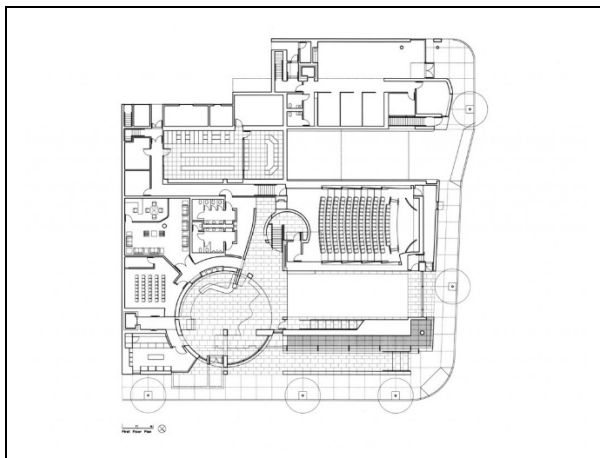


*Detail of rotunda and skylight, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).*

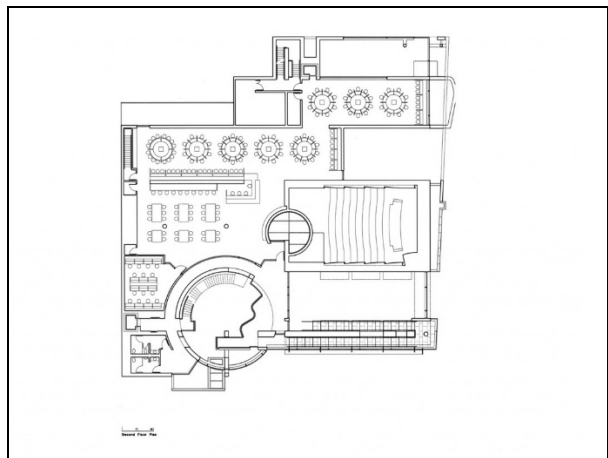




Building elevations, 1994 (Permit File for 461 N Beverly Drive).



First floor plan, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).



Second floor plan, n.d. (Richard Meier and Partners LLP).

### 3. Development Chronology and Alterations

The following development chronology for 461 North Beverly Drive summarizes key events in the property’s development history between its 1994-1996 construction and the present-day. It was developed by reviewing historical building permits from the Beverly Hills Community Development Department, and was augmented by additional sources of information including historic photos and aerial images; parcel data from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor; the collections of the Beverly Hills Public Library and other local and online repositories; and other archival materials.

<p><b>1994</b></p>	<p>The Museum of Television and Radio, a New York City-based institution that explores the creative and cultural contributions of television, radio, and other popular modes of media, announced plans to open a sister location in Beverly Hills. Its Board of Trustees selected Richard Meier to redesign an existing bank building at the southwest corner of Beverly Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard into a new, state-of-the-art facility for the museum.</p> <p>Permit issued to renovate existing commercial buildings at the southwest corner of Beverly Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard into the Museum of Television and Radio. Richard Meier and Partners is listed as the architect (Permit No. C9400833). One building (461 North Beverly Drive) had previously been occupied by a bank; the other (9474 South Santa Monica Boulevard) had previously been occupied by a restaurant.</p> <p>Permit issued to demolish interior bank vaults and install a permanent storage system for the museum. Richard Meier and Partners is listed as the architect (Permit No. C9400741).</p>
<p><b>1996</b></p>	<p>Construction completed. The West Coast location of the Museum of Television and Radio opened to the public in March 1996.</p>
<p><b>1998</b></p>	<p>Permit issued to repair leaks in the glass curtain wall system. Peck Jones Construction is listed as the contractor (Permit No. 98000849).</p> <p>Permit issued to replace a broken skylight pane. Its exact location is not specified. Interstate Glass is listed as the contractor (Permit No. 98005526).</p>
<p><b>2005</b></p>	<p>Permit issued to deliver equipment and materials for landscape work. Neither the location nor the scope of the landscape work is specified. Williams Landscaping is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS0523388).</p>
<p><b>2006</b></p>	<p>Permit issued to replace one broken exterior window in-kind. Giroux Glass, Inc. is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS0623085).</p>
<p><b>2007</b></p>	<p>The Museum of Television and Radio was re-christened the Paley Center for Media to account for the evolution and diversification of media that had taken place since its founding. The name change was applied to both locations (New York City and Beverly Hills).</p> <p>Permit issued to replace panels from exterior wall; the scope of work is not specified, but is presumed to have been related to minor façade repairs. Southland Marble and Ceramic Tile, Inc. is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS0707208).</p>

	Permit issued to clean travertine walls. Stuart-Dean Co., Inc. is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS0738156).
<b>2010</b>	Permit issued to remove ceramic tiles on the roof and replace-in-kind. Ted L. Olsen Construction is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS1016610).
<b>2011</b>	Permit issued to remove existing built-up roof and install a new, energy efficient built-up roof. Royal Roofing Company is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS1112361).
<b>2012</b>	Permit issued to add new interior wall and door to separate exhibit space from office space. Ted L. Olsen Construction is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS1203037).  Permit issued to pressure-wash the building façade. Peerless Preferred Maintenance, Inc. is listed as the contractor (Permit No. BS1213922).
<b>2020</b>	The Paley Center for Media’s lease was terminated and it vacated the building. The building is currently partially leased on a temporary basis as an exhibition space.

Based on its permit record and current appearance, the subject building appears to have been very minimally altered since its construction in 1994-1996.

## 4. Historic Contexts

### 4.1. Early Development of the Business Triangle

461 North Beverly Drive is located in an area of Beverly Hills that is known as the Business Triangle (and at times, colloquially, as the Golden Triangle) so named because of its distinctive, triangular form. Located near the center of Beverly Hills, between Santa Monica and Wilshire boulevards and Canon Drive, the area is densely developed with various commercial and institutional uses. It serves as the City's central business district and civic center.

In spite of its present-day associations with luxury, glamour, opulence, and wealth, Beverly Hills had relatively inauspicious beginnings. The first house was constructed in 1907, but overall development activity in the nascent community was languid. The Beverly Hills Hotel was constructed between 1911-1912 in an attempt to lure in prospective buyers. In its early years, the sprawling Mission Revival style complex not only served as a luxurious hostelry, but also functioned as a *de facto* community center for area residents.<sup>3</sup> Since the hotel was located amid what was then a swath of peripheral, undeveloped land, an auxiliary rail line called The Dinky was built to convey people between the hotel and the Pacific Electric Railway line nearer the center of town.<sup>4</sup> The Dinky traveled down the center of Rodeo Drive, originating at its intersection with Santa Monica Boulevard and terminating at the hotel on Sunset Boulevard.

Beverly Hills formally incorporated as an independent city in 1914, but development – and particularly commercial development – remained sluggish. Aside from the hotel, the City's only commercial buildings were clustered near the intersection of Beverly Drive and Burton Way (now South Santa Monica Boulevard). At this time, the business district consisted of a small handful of one- and two-story business blocks that were occupied by grocers, barbers, hardware stores, a bank, a post office, and other enterprises that served residents' day-to-day needs. A Pacific Electric Railway station was located just to the north, on Santa Monica Boulevard. Elsewhere within the Business Triangle, the blocks were sparsely developed with a smattering of small, humble bungalows for those of more modest means.<sup>5</sup>

Just to the south of the business district and Business Triangle, where the Beverly Wilshire Hotel and Beverly Hills High School are located today, a wood plank track for automobile racing was built between 1919-1920. Known as the Beverly Hills Speedway, it became an immediate attraction and was ranked second in race quality only to the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway.<sup>6</sup> But as popular as the speedway was, rising real estate costs and mounting development pressures meant that it was a short-lived endeavor. The racetrack was demolished in 1924, and the land was subdivided shortly thereafter.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Water and Power Associates, "Early Views of Beverly Hills," accessed Jan. 2019. Additional information about development patterns in Beverly Hills was gleaned from Sanborn Fire Insurance maps dated 1922.

<sup>6</sup> Susan King, "Speedway Brought Life in the Fast Lane to 1920s Beverly Hills," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 24, 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid; Pacific Coast Architecture Database, "Beverly Hills Speedway, Beverly Hills, CA (1919-1920)," accessed Jan. 2019.

Like most communities in Southern California, Beverly Hills witnessed an unprecedented amount of growth and development in the 1920s. It was during this time that the community truly came of age, shedding its roots as a small, peripheral outpost and asserting itself as one of Southern California's premier residential communities. Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Will Rogers, Rudolph Valentino, and other A-list celebrities built stylish mansions in the community, cementing its reputation as a haven for the entertainment elite.<sup>8</sup> As Beverly Hills's population grew, its small commercial node evolved into a discernible central business district. A number of new commercial buildings arose in the triangular-shaped district between Santa Monica and Wilshire boulevards. Buildings like the exotic Beverly Theatre (1925, L.A. Smith, not extant) and the posh, Renaissance Revival style Beverly Wilshire Apartment Hotel (1928, Walker and Eisen) attested to the quality of architecture in the city at this time.

In the early 1930s, two resplendent civic buildings were constructed at the northeast corner of the triangular-shaped business district: the Spanish Renaissance style Beverly Hills City Hall (1932, William J. Gage and Harry G. Koerner), and the Italian Renaissance style Beverly Hills Post Office (1934, Ralph Flewelling and Allison and Allison). These buildings denoted the civic and political heart of the burgeoning city, and represented significant new additions to its commercial and institutional core.

Beverly Hills entered into another period of remarkable growth after World War II. Parcels that had remained undeveloped prior to the war were swiftly purchased and improved, and the City also expanded its physical reach by annexing a large tract of hillside land that became the Trousdale Estates.<sup>9</sup> The character of commercial development also began to visibly transform at this time, with Rodeo Drive as its focus. Historically a "fairly quiet suburban street with beauty shops, hardware stores, gas stations and bookstores," Rodeo Drive began to evolve into an internationally renowned locus of the cultural elite.<sup>10</sup> In 1967, fashion retailer Fred Hayman opened Giorgio Beverly Hills, the first high-end boutique to open on the street. Other luxurious retailers including Parisian jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels (1969) and coiffeur Vidal Sassoon (1970) followed suit.<sup>11</sup> Subsequent development on Rodeo Drive and nearby streets took on an increasingly posh and sumptuous character.

When the subject building was constructed between 1994 and 1996, the Business Triangle was well established as an upscale shopping district. Its construction entailed the remodel of two existing commercial edifices: one was occupied by a Bank of America branch, and the other by a restaurant.<sup>12</sup>

## 4.2 Cultural Institutional Development in Southern California

The subject building was constructed as the West Coast branch of the Museum of Television and Radio (now called the Paley Center for Media), a cultural institution that explores the social and cultural contributions of television, radio, and other contemporary modes of popular media.

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<sup>8</sup> City of Beverly Hills, "History of Beverly Hills," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>9</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Darling, "A Rodeo Drive Timeline," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 9, 2013.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Leon Whiteson, "TV Museum Both Formal and Inviting," *Los Angeles Times*, Jun. 2, 1996.



During the Gilded Age (ca.1870-1900), the amalgamation of large collections of monumental art became symbols of class, status, and wealth. Capitalists and others of extraordinary personal wealth began the tradition of opening art museums, in part to showcase their collections to the public and also “to shape and fix an image that history would have of them, as enlightened power brokers of the day and benefactors to the future.”<sup>13</sup> The act of collecting art was an activity that became inextricably linked with the genteel class. By proxy, the act of visiting museums, and viewing and appreciating art and other relics on display at these institutions, became popular among the middle and upper classes as it put one’s sense of refinement and sophistication – be it real or perceived – squarely into the public eye.

The Los Angeles region was coming of age at the same time that museums were emerging as popular cultural attractions. At around the turn of the twentieth century, Los Angeles was witnessing a period of steady growth that was transforming the once-peripheral outpost into a populous urban environment. As the City grew, there was a desire on the part of its residents to project a sense of sophistication to the rest of the nation, to prove that Los Angeles was on par with other world-class American cities like New York, Chicago, and – Los Angeles’s rival at the time – San Francisco. “In the growth of any community there comes a time when its members begin to feel the need for culture – for a taming influence to smooth the rough edges of its raw beginnings,” notes art historian Nancy Moure.<sup>14</sup> “In Los Angeles that urge began to exert itself around 1890, when both artists and art-interested laymen grew numerous enough and interested enough to organize efforts for establishing an art museum.”<sup>15</sup>

Southern California’s first proper museum opened in 1913.<sup>16</sup> Called the Los Angeles County Museum of History, Science and Art, it was located in Exposition Park and was housed in a resplendent, Beaux Arts style building that was befitting of the City’s urbane ambitions. For decades, the Museum of History, Science and Art was the sole repository of most of Los Angeles County’s scientific and artistic treasures, where historical relics and artistic works were housed together under one roof. When the museum opened, the *Los Angeles Times* boasted that “Chicago is not the only art center in the western world. Los Angeles has ‘arrived.’ Those who were of the thousand or more who visited the fine arts gallery in the Museum of History, Science and Art in Exposition Park last night know that this is true.”<sup>17</sup>

The following year, in 1914, the Southwest Museum of the American Indian opened in the Mount Washington neighborhood. This museum was a pet project of Charles Fletcher Lummis, a journalist who arrived in Los Angeles in the 1880s and became enthralled with Southern California history and especially with its pre-Columbian and Native American past. Like the Museum of History, Science and Art, the Southwest Museum signified Los Angeles’s coming of age as a harbinger of culture, and the dedication of its Mount Washington campus was met with a tremendous amount of fanfare and marked a momentous occasion in the region’s cultural institutional history. “It’s no exaggeration to say that [the

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<sup>13</sup> Holland Cotter, “Review: The Broad is an Old-Fashioned Museum for a New Gilded Age,” *New York Times*, Sept. 12, 2015.

<sup>14</sup> Nancy Moure, “The Struggle for a Los Angeles Art Museum, 1890-1940,” *Southern California Quarterly* 74.3 (Fall 1992): 247-275.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid; “Earth Wonders on Public View,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 10, 1913.

<sup>17</sup> “The City as a Center of Art: Exposition Park Display Attracts Attention,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 7, 1913.

museum] was the Getty of its era...Los Angeles now had a world-class museum with an immense collection of Native-American and Pre-Columbian artifacts that rivaled anything in the” United States.<sup>18</sup>

Another notable addition to Southern California’s cultural institutional landscape was the Griffith Observatory, which opened in 1935. The observatory featured a unique combination of exhibits related to astronomy including a planetarium, a refracting telescope and observation deck, and an exhibition hall that featured various exhibits related to the physical sciences. Its planetarium was notable as the third to be constructed in the United States.<sup>19</sup> At the behest of its benefactor, Colonel Griffith J. Griffith, the observatory was bequeathed to the City of Los Angeles upon its completion for use as a public facility. Admission to the observatory was – and continues to be – free of charge to the general public, reflecting Griffith’s desire to make the observatory and its programmatic offerings available to all.<sup>20</sup>

Los Angeles’s burgeoning reputation as a bastion of arts and culture was cemented after World War II. Unprecedented development at this time attracted scores of newcomers to the region and resulted in commensurate additions to its cultural institutional landscape. Perhaps no institution expressed this phenomenon more strongly than the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), which was originally a part of the County Museum of History, Science and Art. In 1961, the museum was split into two, with one branch dedicated to science and history (and now known as the Natural History Museum in Exposition Park) and the second dedicated to the visual arts (and now known as LACMA). In 1965, the newly-founded LACMA, including the old museum’s art collection, moved to a new campus on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles.<sup>21</sup> The new LACMA facility was “the largest new art museum the country had seen in a quarter century,” not to mention one of the region’s most popular attractions.<sup>22</sup>

During LACMA’s dedication rites, then-County Supervisor Ernest Debs, speaking to the museum’s board and benefactors, remarked that “all of us and all of our children and children’s children will forever be in your debt for this magnificent achievement.”<sup>23</sup> Museum president Edward W. Carter stated that the institution marked “a cultural coming of age not just for Los Angeles but for the West.”<sup>24</sup>

At about the same time that LACMA opened, County officials were also embarking upon an equally influential development project in Downtown Los Angeles that was wholly dedicated to the performing arts: the Music Center of Los Angeles County. Development of the monumental complex commenced in the 1960s and comprised three main buildings: the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion (1964), the Mark Taper Forum (1967), and the Ahmanson Theatre (1967). In 2003, the iconic Walt Disney Concert Hall was added to the complex, rounding out its development.<sup>25</sup> The complex has stood as a stable locus of culture and a much-beloved landmark in the ever-expanding Southern California region since its

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<sup>18</sup> “Southwest Museum of the American Indian: Los Angeles’ First Museum,” *KCET*, Oct. 16, 2011.

<sup>19</sup> Griffith Observatory, “About,” accessed Feb. 2020.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*; John M. Broder, “Observatory Reopens in Fall,” *New York Times*, May 11, 2006.

<sup>21</sup> Hadley Meares, “Higher Ideals: The Original Los Angeles County Museum of History, Science and Art,” *KCET*, Oct. 13, 2015.

<sup>22</sup> Los Angeles Conservancy, “Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA),” accessed Feb. 2020.

<sup>23</sup> Noelene Clark, “LACMA’s 50 Years on Miracle Mile,” *Los Angeles Times*, Apr. 9, 2015.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>25</sup> David Gebhard and Robert Winter, *An Architectural Guidebook to Los Angeles* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, 2004), 258.

construction. The Dorothy Chandler Pavilion was notably the site of the Academy Awards for a number of years.<sup>26</sup>

Some of the region's foremost cultural institutions were operated by government entities, either in full or in part, but others were affiliated with private interests. Chief among them was oil magnate and philanthropist J. Paul Getty, an avid collector of arts and antiquities who had amassed a substantial horde of paintings, sculptures, and other artistic works. Throughout his life, Getty worked to make his art collection accessible to the public, establishing a trust in 1953 and opening a museum in his Malibu ranch house that same year.<sup>27</sup> In 1974, Getty opened a larger museum (now known as the Getty Villa), also on a portion of his Malibu property, in which to display his ever-growing art collection. Getty left a substantial sum of his vast fortune to the trust upon his death in 1976, allowing his collection to grow.<sup>28</sup>

In the 1980s, as the museum began to outgrow its Malibu facility, the Getty Trust sought to construct a new, 24-acre campus in the Brentwood neighborhood of Los Angeles. Noted architect Richard Meier was commissioned to design the new hilltop campus, which he did in his signature Neo-Corbusian style. In 1997, when the complex opened to the public, it instantly became an iconic architectural landmark and one of the boldest new additions to the Los Angeles region's cultural institutional landscape. The Getty Center was considered to be one of the finest new art museums in the nation – if not the world – and was extensively written about upon opening, both for its architectural and institutional merit.<sup>29</sup> One of many articles about the Getty Center published by the *New York Times* in 1997 described the new museum as analogous to such renowned world institutions as the Louvre in France, the Metropolitan in New York, and the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna.<sup>30</sup> Its opening marked a watershed moment in the history of artistic and cultural institutions in Los Angeles, solidifying its identity as a mecca of high society.

Over time, hundreds of other, smaller museums have opened across the greater Los Angeles region, each with a specific program geared toward a certain niche of art and culture. This includes the Paley Center, which opened a West Coast branch location in 1996.

### 4.3. Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center for Media

What is now the Paley Center for Media was originally called the Museum of Broadcasting. The subject building was constructed as the West Coast counterpart to the museum's main branch in New York City.

The Museum of Broadcasting was conceived in 1975 by the longtime CBS chief executive William S. Paley (1901-1990). Paley, who "cultivated CBS from a handful of struggling radio stations in 1928 into

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<sup>26</sup> Los Angeles Conservancy, "Music Center of Los Angeles County," accessed Feb. 2020.

<sup>27</sup> Getty, "History of Getty," accessed Feb. 2020.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Herbert Muscchamp, "A Mountaintop Temple Where Art's Future Worships its Past," *New York Times*, Dec. 1, 1997.

the most powerful communications company in the world,” expressed a need to pay homage to the sights and sounds of radio and television programming.<sup>31</sup> Remarkably Paley:

It is time that we take stock of our past, so that we can know and understand the heritage of the broadcast media in building our future...It is imperative that we do this now, for the precious body of broadcasting history that is still in existence – discs, kinescopes, film and audio and videotapes – must be preserved. Otherwise, it will simply, by neglect, disintegrate or disappear.<sup>32</sup>

With financing provided by Paley and other charitable entities, the Museum of Broadcasting opened its doors in Midtown Manhattan, at 1 East 53<sup>rd</sup> Street, in 1976.<sup>33</sup> When it opened, the museum was notable as the only institution of its kind in the United States, and was also somewhat anomalous in the realm of museums in that it celebrated modes of expression that were more significant for their ephemeral qualities than their high artistic values. Visitors entered into a console center comprising individual stations, each of which was equipped with a Betamax machine and television monitor, and could access archived television and radio programs that were stored electronically on cassettes. Paley envisioned the museum as an inclusive setting that would be accessible to anybody who was interested.<sup>34</sup>

The museum was a success. Between its opening in 1976 and the early 1990s, its permanent collection expanded from several hundred archives to tens of thousands of television and video programs spanning 70 years.<sup>35</sup> Popular media continued to morph and evolve at this time, and so too did the scope and breadth of the museum’s collections. In 1991, the Board of Trustees voted to change the name of the institution from the Museum of Broadcasting to the Museum of Television and Radio. The change was intended to reflect the museum’s “expanding collection of material that has been transmitted by means other than broadcasting airwaves, like cable and satellite.”<sup>36</sup> Also in 1991, the museum moved into a new building on West 52<sup>nd</sup> Street designed by John Burgee and Philip Johnson.<sup>37</sup>

Though it was based in New York, the Museum of Television and Radio also maintained a visible presence in Los Angeles. Each year, the museum hosted a well-attended, multi-week Television Festival at which members of the public were invited to interact with the cast and creative teams of popular television shows.<sup>38</sup> In 1994, it was announced that the museum was planning to open a sister location in Beverly Hills, which through digital technology would contain the exact same collection of archived radio and television programs that was featured at its New York City location. “I don’t think there’s ever been a museum in two locations with exactly the same collection,” remarked museum President Robert

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<sup>31</sup> Jeremy Gerard, “William S. Paley, Builder of CBS, Dies at 89,” *New York Times*, Oct. 27, 1990.

<sup>32</sup> “50 Years of History on Instant Replay,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 10, 1976.

<sup>33</sup> Tom Shales, “Broadcast Museum: The Way TV Said We Were,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 30, 1978. Additional information about previous development on the subject property was gleaned from the permit file for 461 North Beverly Drive.

<sup>34</sup> The Paley Center for Media, “Mission and History,” accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>35</sup> “Broadcasting Museum Fine Tunes Its Name,” *New York Times*, Mar. 30, 1991.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Robert Koehler, “A N.Y. Mecca for Media Hounds and Historians,” *Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 4, 1992.

<sup>38</sup> Rick Du Brow, “Model of West Coast Museum of TV and Radio Unveiled,” *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 13, 1994.

Batscha about this approach.<sup>39</sup> Under this structure, the New York and Beverly Hills museums would both be treated as a single entity and would be jointly managed by the same governing board.

Presiding over the move to open a new West Coast branch was Robert M. Batscha (1945-2003), who served as president of the Museum of Broadcasting/Paley Center for more than twenty years. Batscha was a New Yorker through and through; he was born in Rochester, raised and educated in New York City, and resided in Manhattan up until his death. Batscha became the museum's president in 1981, in which role he presided over a period marked by considerable institutional growth and expansion. An adroit administrator and prodigious fundraiser, Batscha "vastly expanded [the museum's] collection, moved it to Midtown Manhattan, opened a branch in Beverly Hills and brought together industry leaders, stars and academics at seminars."<sup>40</sup> Speaking about Batscha's life and legacy, a colleague of his once remarked that "when you put it together, he was the architect of something that very faithfully carried out the mission envisioned by Mr. Paley, but clearly expanded on it."<sup>41</sup>

To design the new Beverly Hills branch, the museum retained Richard Meier and Partners, a renowned New York City architectural firm that was also working on the sprawling Getty Center complex in the Brentwood hills at that time (the Getty Center was constructed between 1987 and 1996, with its doors opening to the public in December 1997). The Museum of Television and Radio was a smaller commission – construction was projected at \$8 million, compared to the \$773 million price tag for the Getty Center – and its construction entailed the remodeling of two existing buildings, as opposed to designing an entirely new edifice from the ground up.<sup>42</sup> Like its New York City counterpart, the Beverly Hills museum would be organized around a series of interior spaces that accommodated its interactive programming and its prevailing emphasis on digital media. Meier's design included "a theater, a broadcast studio, a computerized library, a gallery, educational facilities and scores of individual viewing consoles where the public can listen to and watch programs chosen for artistic, cultural and historical significance."<sup>43</sup>

The museum represented a notable new addition to Southern California's rich body of cultural institutions, but it was not the first collection of its kind in Los Angeles. The Academy of Television Arts and Sciences maintained an archive of film and television programming at UCLA. However, that collection was reserved primarily for researchers and industry professionals, and did not have the same emphasis on public access that was such a driving force behind William Paley's vision for his museum.

The Beverly Hills location of the Museum of Television and Radio – formally named the Leonard Goldenson Building (Goldenson had been Paley's counterpart at ABC) – opened to the public in March 1996. Its opening was prefaced by a black tie, celebrity-studded gala that attracted more than 1,000 invitees; guests included the museum's top brass, architect Richard Meier, studio executives, and a litany of film and television stars including Candice Bergen, Carol Burnett, Marlo Thomas, Larry King, and Dick Van Dyke.<sup>44</sup> Completion of the Goldenson Building marked a major milestone in the institutional

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<sup>39</sup> Daniel Cerone, "Museum to Offer Classic Radio, T.V. Shows," *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 1, 1994.

<sup>40</sup> Michael Cooper, "Robert M. Batscha, 58, Dies: Archived Television and Radio," *New York Times*, Jul. 7, 2003.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Cerone (1994).

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Bill Higgins, "Museum Gets a Place in the Sun," *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 19, 1996.



history of the museum, as it significantly expanded its reach into the epicenter of television culture and rendered its collections accessible to the nation's two largest media markets.

By the time the museum ventured west, its collection had grown to include more than 80,000 television and radio programs covering more than 75 years of broadcast history.<sup>45</sup> Like its setup in New York City, the museum was organized around a series of consoles, where patrons could cue episodes of television and radio programs from the digitized catalog. Culling material from its vast collection, the museum also curated exhibitions, hosted screening and listening series on various topics of cultural interest, and organized seminars with industry veterans and educational classes for students from elementary to university levels.<sup>46</sup> Most programming was offered concurrently at both museum locations.

From the start, the museum's approach to curation has been fraught with inherent challenges, as the ephemeral nature of radio, television, and other modes of popular media has required the institution to constantly evolve and recast itself amid the rapid pace of technological change. This challenge had already reared its head once before, when in 1991 the decision was made to change the institution's name to account for a new generation of media technologies.

The advent of the Internet, cellular devices, podcasts, and other contemporary modes of communication once again led the museum to critically evaluate its name and its remit. In 2007, it was announced that the name of the institution would be changed from the Museum of Television and Radio to the Paley Center for Media, part of a larger overhaul that was intended to bring the museum into the thrust of the 21st century. "By no longer calling itself a museum," remarked the *New York Times*, the center "is playing down its archive of TV and radio programs and is recasting itself as a place for industry leaders and the public to discuss those shows and the role of media in society."<sup>47</sup> The institution continued to serve as a repository for television and radio shows, and patrons could still sit at console stations and cue up archived programs, but greater emphasis was placed on dialogue and other alternative forms of programming. Somewhat ironically, by constantly adapting to the swift evolution of media technology, the museum also served as something of a living testament to media obsolescence.<sup>48</sup>

The Paley Center vacated its Beverly Hills location in February 2020, and is reported to have set up new offices in Century City and transferred much of its television and radio archives to the Beverly Hills Public Library.<sup>49</sup> The New York location remains open to the public.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> "The Museum of Television & Radio," n.d., accessed via the Library of Congress, Jan. 2019.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Elizabeth Jensen, "New Name and New Mission for Museum of Television," *New York Times*, Jun. 5, 2007.

<sup>48</sup> Amy Holdsworth, *Television, Memory and Nostalgia* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 147-148.

<sup>49</sup> Michael Schneider, "Paley Center Moves Out of Beverly Hills, Lays Off Three; Finds New Home for Archives," *Variety*, Feb 18, 2020.

<sup>50</sup> It should be noted that at the time of this writing, the New York location of the Paley Center for Media is temporarily closed due to COVID-19.

## 4.4. Late Modern Architecture

The subject building exhibits characteristics of Late Modern architecture, and specifically a derivative of Late Modernism that is at times referred to as Neo-Corbusian. The Late Modern movement first emerged in the 1960s as a reaction against the orthodoxy and ubiquity of post-World War II Modernism, and exerted considerable influence on American architecture for the duration of the twentieth century.

Modernism is a broad term that is used to define an array of architectural styles and city planning principles that were conceived in the early twentieth century, honed after World War I, and became a dominant element of American architecture after World War II. The tenets of Modernism are extraordinarily broad and diverse, but in the most general sense the movement eschewed past traditions and called for an approach to design that embraced progress and technology.<sup>51</sup>

Swiss-French architect Charles-Edouard Jeanneret (known professionally as Le Corbusier) played an extraordinarily influential role in the development of an American dialect of Modernism. In the 1920s, he developed a set of architectural principles that dictated his technique and emerged as something akin to a manifesto of Modern architecture. Known as the Five Points of Architecture, his quintet of principles articulated many of the key ideas and philosophies underpinning the Modern architectural movement. They included: (1) the reinforced concrete column, or *piloti*, in lieu of a structural wall; (2) an open floor plan, which was made possible by the absence of large supporting walls; (3) gardens atop flat roofs; (4) the horizontal or ribbon window, which cuts a building's façade along its entire length; and (5) composition of the freed façade, which was made possible by a building's concrete skeleton frame.<sup>52</sup>

The principles of Le Corbusier and others wielded tremendous influence over the character of American architecture in the mid-twentieth century. In the period after World War II, International Style Modernism emerged as the dominant mode of domestic architecture, and its emphasis on authenticity and rationality permeated almost every facet of the American built environment at this time. Large, tall cubic boxes, devoid of superfluous ornament, became ubiquitous elements of the American cityscape.<sup>53</sup>

However, by the 1960s, architects and the American public alike had begun to grow weary of the Modern orthodoxy. The template for postwar Modernism had been so widely replicated, and so often compromised through cost cutting and value engineering, that it was increasingly perceived as cheap, generic, pedestrian, and effete.<sup>54</sup> In response, architects began to dabble in new modes of architectural expression that reacted to some of the most banal qualities of postwar Modernism. While some of these dissident architects – who would later be identified as “Postmodernists” – popularized an aesthetic that represented a radical departure from Modernism, others took the basic tenets of Modernism and reinterpreted them in new ways, typically by exaggerating a particular structural element or architectural feature. Those in this latter camp honed what became known as the “Late Modern” style.

The term “Late Modern” was coined in 1977 by architectural historian and theorist Charles Jencks. Jencks remarked that “there are many ways to characterize Late Modern architecture, and most of them

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<sup>51</sup> Alan Hess, “Everyday Modernisms: Diversity, Creativity and Ideas in L.A. Architecture, 1940-1990,” May 2013.

<sup>52</sup> Bernard Leupen, et al., *Design and Analysis* (Rotterdam, Netherlands: 010 Publishers, 1997), 51.

<sup>53</sup> Hess (2013).

<sup>54</sup> Charles Jencks, “Postmodern and Late Modern: The Essential Definitions,” *Chicago Review* 35.4 (1987): 31-58.

can be reduced to the single notion of exaggeration. Late Modernism takes Modern architecture to an extreme in order to overcome its monotony and the public's boredom with it."<sup>55</sup>

Several derivatives of the Late Modern movement emerged beginning in the 1960s, each of which had a distinctive architectural vocabulary and its own catalog of distinguishing features. Among the most common derivatives of Late Modern architecture in Southern California include Brutalism, which emphasized the structural and aesthetic merits of raw concrete; High-Tech/Structural Expressionism, in which structural, infrastructural, and operating systems are emphasized with dematerialized imagery; Sculptural, which utilized obscure shapes like chamfers, cuts, punchouts, sharp angles, and curves to break apart the rectilinear forms that characterized Modern buildings; and Glass Skin, in which the glass curtain wall method of construction expanded to cover the entire exterior surface of a building.<sup>56</sup>

Yet other architects associated with the Late Modern movement reacted to the perceived shortcomings of orthodox Modernism by revisiting and examining Modernism's pre-World War II roots. These architects looked back to the early development of Modernism – prior to its commercialization in the postwar era – and sought to reintroduce its fundamental principles to American architecture. The characteristically clean, chaste, and austere aesthetic that came out of this movement is often referred to as Neo-Corbusian, due in no small part to the fact that the architects most closely associated with the movement relied heavily on the pioneering work of Le Corbusier for inspiration.<sup>57</sup> They also made reference to European Modernism such as the De Stijl movement, the Bauhaus school, and Futurism.

Five architects in particular became closely associated with the Neo-Corbusian aesthetic: Peter Eisenman, John Hejduk, Charles Gwathmey, Michael Graves, and Richard Meier. These architects were collectively known as The New York Five, and later as “the Whites,” a reference to the relative starkness and lack of color that characterized their bodies of work.<sup>58</sup> Their work was widely publicized and became the focus of a considerable amount of critical attention beginning in the late 1960s. In 1973, the movement drew a sharp rebuke from a group of Postmodern architects (who called themselves “the Greys”), who lambasted Neo-Corbusian buildings as reactionary, indifferent, and divorced from reality.<sup>59</sup>

The New York Five were never an official group – and its members arguably “had as much dividing them as joining them” – but all shared the same commitment to pure and unaltered architectural forms, rooted in the early development of Modernism.<sup>60</sup> Over time, some of these architects – most notably, Michael Graves – veered away from the pure and chaste Neo-Corbusian style, but others would continue to hone its aesthetic for decades to come. The Neo-Corbusian derivative of Late Modernism remained popular for the duration of the twentieth century. The fundamental characteristics of the style continued to define the work of Richard Meier, whose architectural firm remains active to this day.

Character-defining features of Neo-Corbusian architecture include the following:

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<sup>55</sup> Charles Jencks, *Late Modern Architecture and Other Essays* (New York: Rizzoli, 1980).

<sup>56</sup> Derived from SurveyLA, “Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement, Context: Architecture and Engineering, Subcontext: Los Angeles Modernism, Theme: Late-Modern,” prepared by Daniel Paul, in-progress draft.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Paul Goldberger, “A Little Book That Led Five Men to Fame,” *New York Times*, Feb. 11, 1996.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

- Spatial and geometric complexity
- Exaggerated sense of abstraction; a sense of isolation within the surrounding environment
- Manipulation of two and three-dimensional compositional systems (such as grid patterns) to modulate space, structure, and surface
- Integration of a circular tower or rotunda element on an otherwise orthogonal form (particularly seen in Meier’s work)
- Flat roofs, often capped by gardens or other landscape features
- White exterior surfaces, occasionally softened by warmer material accents
- Overarching sense of transparency and ambiguity; abundant fenestration and ribbon windows
- Incorporation of Corbusian elements including ramps, pipe rails, accent curves, and *pilotis*
- Absence of historical references or superfluous ornament

## 4.5. Richard Meier and Partners

The subject building was designed by the architectural firm Richard Meier and Partners. Meier is a highly acclaimed architect and abstract artist who designed a number of high profile residential and institutional commissions – and particularly museums – in the latter decades of the twentieth century.

Richard Alan Meier (1934 - ) was born into a Jewish family in Newark, New Jersey. After matriculating at Cornell University and earning his Bachelor of Architecture degree in 1957, he travelled abroad to network with architects whose work he admired. While abroad, Meier attempted to join the office of his early idol Le Corbusier, but his advances were declined. Meier returned to the United States and settled in New York. He worked briefly for Gordon Bunshaft at the corporate architectural firm Skidmore, Owings and Merrill in 1959, and went on to work with the eminent Hungarian Modernist Marcel Breuer.

The fundamental tenets of Modernism – which was the dominant mode of American architecture as Meier came of professional age – played an influential role in defining his style. While in school, and during the formative years of his career, he was exposed to the seminal works of some of the world’s most highly influential Modern architects. In addition to Le Corbusier, Meier has credited Modern masters Frank Lloyd Wright, Mies van der Rohe, and Alvar Aalto as some of his foremost influences.<sup>61</sup>

Meier parted ways with Breuer and opened his own eponymous architectural practice in 1963.<sup>62</sup> His early commissions consisted primarily of custom single-family residences, which afforded him the opportunity to put his ideas into practice and hone his distinctive aesthetic. Meier’s first independent commission was a house that he designed for his parents in Essex Fells, New Jersey in 1965. The Jerome and Carolyn Meier Residence, set within a neighborhood of traditional, Colonial style houses, was notable for its “pure” monolithic masses painted white, both hallmark characteristics of Meier’s work.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>61</sup> The Pritzker Architecture Prize, “Richard Meier,” accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>62</sup> Richard Meier and Stan Allen, *Richard Meier: Architect* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1999), 12.

<sup>63</sup> Richard Meier and Partners Architects LLP, “Meier House, Essex Fells, New Jersey, 1963-1965,” accessed Jan. 2019.

The commission that propelled Meier and his aesthetic into the national spotlight was the Frederick J. Smith House in Darien, Connecticut, which was constructed between 1965-1967. Resembling an immaculate white villa set within the countryside, its cubic massing, complex geometric forms, smooth exterior walls painted white, and abundant fenestration evoked the chaste aesthetic of the International style and expressed the architect's emphasis on "space, form, light, and how to make them."<sup>64</sup> Its design attracted critical attention and received several awards. Another of Meier's notable residential commissions was the Jim and Jean Douglas House in Harbor Springs, Michigan, built between 1971-1973. Perilously perched atop a steep bluff amid dense vegetation, "this tall, vertically oriented, white and machine-like villa is dramatically juxtaposed with the unspoiled greenery of its idyllic site."<sup>65</sup> It, too, garnered a considerable amount of attention and helped to solidify Meier's professional reputation.

There were some common threads binding together the residential work of Meier with the work of four other architects who were similarly exploring architectural modes that were fundamentally rooted in the tenets of pre-World War II Modernism. Specifically, their work all pledged a common allegiance to the "pure" iteration of Modernism that was enumerated in the work of Le Corbusier and other exponents of the International style in the 1920s and '30s. The work of these architects – who were collectively known as the New York Five – was featured in a CASE (Committee of Architects for the Study of the Environment) meeting hosted by the Museum of Modern Art, and was later the subject of a book entitled *Five Architects* (1972).<sup>66</sup> Exposure in the CASE meeting and the associated book provided Meier and his aesthetic with additional brand recognition, particularly within the architectural realm.

Meier continued to design residential commissions, but his repertoire became increasingly defined by a series of high profile, critically acclaimed institutional projects that he designed in subsequent years. Two of his most significant early institutional commissions in the United States include the New Harmony Athenaeum in New Harmony, Indiana (1979) and the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, Georgia (1983). The former was constructed as a welcome center for visitors to the historic utopian colony of New Harmony, Indiana. Meier's design, which is centered on a sequenced approach through the use of ramps, frames views and provides users of the building with a strong and discernible sense of place.

These ideas are further developed and refined at the High Museum, which employs shifting grid patterns in both the pavement and cladding, in tandem with the generous use of curtain walls. In conjunction, these features create the types of large, white, light-filled spaces that have rendered Meier's work attractive to museums and other prominent cultural institutions. The High Museum of Art is considered to have "solidified Meier's reputation as a leading museum architect."<sup>67</sup>

Notable institutional commissions continued to pour in for Meier during the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1978, he added a small reading room to the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City; in 1981, he completed a building for the Hartford Seminary, a gleaming white edifice that was described by one critic as "the most unexpected building in Hartford"; and in 1982, he was selected to design an elementary school campus in the Midwest modernist mecca of Columbus,

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<sup>64</sup> "Biography: Richard Meier," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Claudia Conforti and Marzia Marandola, *Richard Meier* (Milan: Motta Cultura srl, 2009),21.

<sup>67</sup> Meier and Allen (1999), 108.



Indiana.<sup>68</sup> Meier also designed a line of furniture that was produced in 1982.<sup>69</sup> Through these commissions, Meier was provided the opportunity to further hone his aesthetic. His buildings were generally white or silver in color, made considerable use of glass and metal or porcelain panels, and had complex, elaborate compositions that were described as “almost picturesque in their sensibility.”<sup>70</sup>

In 1984, Meier was awarded the Pritzker Architecture Prize, considered to be the profession’s highest and most prestigious accolade. At age 49, Meier was the Pritzker’s youngest-ever recipient. In its citation, the jury remarked that it chose Meier because of “his single-minded pursuit of new directions in contemporary architecture. In his search for clarity and his experiments in balancing light, forms, and space, he has created works which are personal, vigorous, original.”<sup>71</sup>

Moving forward, Meier’s institutional work continued to increase in size, scope and complexity. One of his most enormously influential institutional commissions was the J. Paul Getty Center in the Brentwood community of Los Angeles, which took more than a decade to construct (1987-1996) and earned such widespread acclaim that it propelled him into the echelon of “starchitects,” at a time when the term and concept of a starchitect was just making its way into the American lexicon. The vast, sprawling 100-acre campus is an exceptionally articulated and fully fleshed out interpretation of Meier’s aesthetic vocabulary and distinctive approach to architecture, and is widely considered to represent Meier at his very best. Its design has been described as “a marriage of the austere and the sumptuous,” evincing a sense of dignity and esteem while also staying true to the prevailing sense of asceticism that so strongly defines Meier and his work.<sup>72</sup> The complex features crisp lines, stark geometries, white exterior walls with stone and marble accents, and a large rotunda – all hallmark characteristics of Meier.

At any scale, Meier’s buildings are notable for their consistent aesthetic expression. What can be tenuously referred to as his “style” has been repeatedly employed throughout a body of work that, following the completion of the Getty Center, has continued to win him commissions globally. Of paramount importance is the use of rectilinear massing, circular atria, undulating curvilinear walls, and complex spatial interpenetrations.<sup>73</sup> These features, when executed as part of a site design, typically result in compositions whose formality tends to appeal to designers, without reading as unapproachable or off-putting to laypeople. In terms of brute tectonics, Meier’s designs are structurally achieved with the use of concrete-frame open plans, with important spaces defined by walls of travertine, generous (glass skin) curtain walls, and a gridded exterior cladding of steel panels finished in white porcelain. With respect to defining features, the use of pipe railings are notable, in addition to the “characteristic trope” of a “fully glazed ramp hall that effectively converts a given elevation into a dynamic display of the circulation.”<sup>74</sup> These features draw upon the Five Principles enumerated by his early idol, Le Corbusier.

The Getty Center commission expanded Meier’s reach into the Western United States and, in doing so, cemented his reputation as a master architect of national acclaim. In 1985, Meier, who was then based

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<sup>68</sup> Paul Goldberger, “Richard Meier Gets the Pritzker Prize,” *New York Times*, Apr. 18, 1984.

<sup>69</sup> Goldberger (1984).

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Goldberger (1984).

<sup>72</sup> James Sterngold, “Getty Center Inaugurated in Los Angeles,” *New York Times*, Dec. 14, 1997.

<sup>73</sup> Benjamin Forgey, “The Getty Center Sets Its Site.” *The Washington Post*, Oct. 27, 1991.

<sup>74</sup> Richard Meier, *Richard Meier, Architect*, Vol. 2 (New York: Rizzoli, 1991).

in New York, opened a second office in Los Angeles to manage the design and construction of the Getty Center.<sup>75</sup> Michael Palladino, FAIA, an associate of Meier since 1979 and an accomplished architect in his own right, was tapped to lead the Los Angeles office, a role that he continues to hold to this day. Under the leadership and creative eye of Palladino, Meier's Los Angeles office has undertaken a number of notable commissions in Southern California including the Gagosian Gallery in Beverly Hills (1994-1995), the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Center at UCLA (1999-2006), a new visitor center (International Center for Possibility Thinking) at the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove (1998-2003), the New Pacific Realty Headquarters, also in Beverly Hills (2008-2010), and several single-family and multi-family residences.<sup>76</sup>

The Museum of Television and Radio (later the Paley Center for Media) in Beverly Hills was among the collection of smaller-scale projects that came out of Meier's Los Angeles office following its establishment in the mid-1980s. Palladino is credited as the building's Lead Designer.<sup>77</sup> Sited on a dense, compact urban lot at a gateway location on the edge of Beverly Hills's main commercial district, this building differed somewhat from other institutional commissions in Meier's oeuvre in that the high degree of attention to symbiotically orienting the building to its surrounding environment – the dramatic sense of isolation evident in projects like the High Museum of Art and the Getty Center – is not evident in this project and its urban setting. In addition, the building was essentially a remodel of two existing commercial buildings on the site. However, the resulting building itself is quintessentially Meier. It has the complex geometric forms, enameled white exterior walls with warm natural accents, and large rotunda that were used, in one form or another, in almost all of the institutional commissions to come out of his practice.

Notable features on the Museum of Television Radio Building were the entrance rotunda – Meier “managed to avoid making the obvious gesture of putting the cylinder at the corner,” and instead made a decision to orient it off center – and glazed interior stair that provides an unfettered view of circulation within the building from the street.<sup>78</sup> Meier explained that “the main purpose of the building, like that of the media it celebrates, is communication. We made it as open and transparent as possible, and devoid of mystery, so that people passing by can plainly see what happens inside.”<sup>79</sup>

When it opened in 1996, the museum was generally met with praise from architecture critics, but overall it appears to have been lauded more for its familiarity than as a particularly bold and revelatory architectural statement. Leon Whiteson, architecture critic for the *Los Angeles Times*, describes the building as a sophisticated addition to the Business Triangle, remarking that it “wears its sophistication lightly...its clean, simple lines have the good manners not to shame its neighbors while still making it clear that the building boasts a far more urbane architecture.”<sup>80</sup> And Paul Goldberger, architecture critic for *The New York Times*, notes that while the building has unequivocal visual appeal and a strong sense of vibrancy, in the body of Meier's work, it is acquiescent, not revolutionary:

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<sup>75</sup> Richard Meier and Partners Architects LLP, “Michael Palladino, FAIA, Design Partner,” accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Paul Goldberger, “And Now, Live from Beverly Hills, A New Museum,” *New York Times*, Apr. 7, 1996.

<sup>79</sup> Leon Whiteson, “TV Museum Both Formal and Inviting,” *Los Angeles Times*, Jun. 2, 1996.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

It is better to be good than original, Mies van der Rohe said, and his words could well apply to Richard Meier...the new Museum of Television and Radio, which opened last month in the center of Beverly Hills, is not going to convince anyone that there is a new Richard Meier waiting to be discovered. The building is as white and sleek as anything Mr. Meier has ever done, and it looks not terribly different from the many museums and institutional and commercial buildings he produced in the 1970s and '80s.<sup>81</sup>

Meier's firm continued to turn out noteworthy commissions in subsequent years, both domestically and abroad. Among the firm's most significant contemporary works include the Sandra Day O'Connor Courthouse in Phoenix, Arizona (2000); the Ara Pacis Museum in Rome (2006); San Jose City Hall (2007); the reconstruction of City Tower in Prague, Czech Republic (2008); new academic buildings on the campuses of the University of Scranton (2007) and Cornell University (2008); and Meier on Rothschild (2014), a skyscraper in Tel Aviv that is the second-highest residential building in Israel. Meier, who at this point was working on a semi-emeritus basis, took a leave of absence from the firm in March 2018 amid controversy related to allegations of sexual harassment. The firm continues to carry the name Richard Meier and Partners, and as of this writing, Meier continues to be listed on the company's website as an active partner.

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<sup>81</sup> Goldberger (1996).

## 5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation

### 5.1. National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation’s master inventory of known historic resources. Established under the auspices of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level. Eligibility for in the National Register is addressed in National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. NRB 15 states that in order to be eligible for the National Register, a resource must both: (1) be historically significant, and (2) retain sufficient integrity to adequately convey its significance.

Significance is assessed by evaluating a resource against established eligibility criteria. A resource is considered significant if it satisfies any one of the following four National Register criteria:<sup>82</sup>

- Criterion A (events): associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- Criterion B (persons): associated with the lives of significant persons in our past;
- Criterion C (architecture): embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- Criterion D (information potential): has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Once significance has been established, it must then be demonstrated that a resource retains enough of its physical and associative qualities – or *integrity* – to convey the reason(s) for its significance. Integrity is best described as a resource’s “authenticity” as expressed through its physical features and extant characteristics. Generally, if a resource is recognizable as such in its present state, it is said to retain integrity, but if it has been extensively altered then it does not. Whether a resource retains sufficient integrity for listing is determined by evaluating the seven aspects of integrity defined by NPS:

- Location (the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred);
- Setting (the physical environment of a historic property);
- Design (the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property);

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<sup>82</sup> Some resources may meet multiple criteria, though only one needs to be satisfied for National Register eligibility.

- Materials (the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular manner or configuration to form a historic property);
- Workmanship (the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory);
- Feeling (a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time);
- Association (the direct link between an important historic event/person and a historic property).

Integrity is evaluated by weighing all seven of these aspects together and is ultimately a “yes or no” determination – that is, a resource either retains sufficient integrity, or it does not.<sup>83</sup> Some aspects of integrity may be weighed more heavily than others depending on the type of resource being evaluated and the reason(s) for the resource’s significance. Since integrity depends on a resource’s placement within a historic context, integrity can be assessed only after it has been concluded that the resource is in fact significant.

## Criteria Consideration G

Generally, a resource must be at least 50 years of age to be eligible for listing in the National Register. NRB 15 explains that “fifty years is a general estimate of the time needed to develop historical perspective and to evaluate significance. This consideration guards against the listing of properties of passing contemporary interest and ensures that the National Register is a list of truly historic places.”<sup>84</sup>

However, the NPS acknowledges that on occasion, a resource less than 50 years of age may merit consideration for listing in the National Register. Criteria Consideration G offers guidance related to the evaluation of properties that may have achieved significance within the past 50 years, setting forth the conditions under which these resources may be eligible for listing. It provides that exceptions to the age threshold may be granted if it can be demonstrated that a resource less than 50 years of age if the individual resource is: (1) of exceptional importance, or (2) an integral component of a National Register-eligible historic district whose other component parts are predominantly 50 years or older.<sup>85</sup>

In justifying exceptional importance for individual resources (*i.e.*, outside of the National Register-eligible historic district context), NRB 15 cites the necessity of comparative analysis. Specifically, it states that “it is necessary to identify other properties within the geographical area that reflect the same significance or historical associations and to determine which properties *best* represent the historic context in question.” It continues, “Several properties in the area could become eligible with the passage of time, but few will qualify now as exceptionally important.”<sup>86</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VIII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

<sup>84</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Apply the Criteria Considerations.”

<sup>85</sup> The subject building is not an integral component of a National Register-eligible historic district whose other component parts are predominantly 50 years of age or older, therefore this report will not further evaluate the building under this consideration standard.

<sup>86</sup> NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Apply the Criteria Considerations.”



## 5.2. California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an authoritative guide used to identify, inventory, and protect historical resources in California. Established by an act of the State Legislature in 1998, the California Register program encourages public recognition and protection of significant architectural, historical, archeological, and cultural resources; identifies these resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The structure of the California Register program is similar to that of the National Register, though the former more heavily emphasizes resources that have contributed specifically to the development of California. To be eligible for the California Register, a resource must first be deemed significant under one of the following four criteria, which are modeled after the National Register criteria listed above:

- Criterion 1 (events): associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
- Criterion 2 (persons): associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;
- Criterion 3 (architecture): 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 4 (information potential): has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, state, or the nation.

Mirroring the National Register, the California Register also requires that resources retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing. A resource's integrity is assessed using the same seven aspects of integrity used for the National Register. However, since integrity thresholds associated with the California Register are generally less rigid than those associated with the National Register, it is possible that a resource may lack the integrity required for the National Register but still be eligible for listing in the California Register.

Certain properties are automatically listed in the California Register, as follows:<sup>87</sup>

- All California properties that are listed in the National Register;
- All California properties that have formally been determined eligible for listing in the National Register (by the State Office of Historic Preservation);
- All California Historical Landmarks numbered 770 and above; and
- California Points of Historical Interest which have been reviewed by the State Office of Historic Preservation and recommended for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission.

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<sup>87</sup> California Public Resources Code, Division 5, Chapter 1, Article 2, § 5024.1.

Resources may be nominated directly to the California Register. State Historic Landmarks #770 and forward are also automatically listed in the California Register.

Unlike the National Register's 50-year age requirement, there is no prescribed age limit for listing in the California Register. However, guidelines state that sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with a resource.

### 5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance

Historic preservation in Beverly Hills is governed by Title 10, Chapter 3, Articles 32 and 32.5 of the Beverly Hills Municipal Code (referred to hereinafter as “the Ordinance”). The Ordinance authorizes the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) to recommend the nomination of properties as local landmarks and historic districts to the City Council. To facilitate this process, the Ordinance establishes requirements a property must meet in order to qualify for designation as a landmark listed in the City of Beverly Hills Register of Historic Properties. The 2012 Ordinance was revised and updated in 2015, with an additional amendment in 2016; all criteria and definitions used in this document are effective as of April 1, 2016.

To be eligible for local designation as a historic landmark, a property must satisfy the following sets of requirements (A and B) as noted:

**A. A landmark must meet all of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance;
- (2) It possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period;
- (3) It retains substantial integrity<sup>88</sup> from its period of significance; and
- (4) It has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.

**B. In addition to those listed above, a landmark must meet at least one of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- (2) It is an exceptional work<sup>89</sup> by a master architect<sup>90</sup>;
- (3) It is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous;

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<sup>88</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “substantial integrity” as “Integrity that is considerable in importance, value, degree, amount, or extent, and that continues to exist, or would have continued to exist, but for work done without appropriate permits after the enactment of this article.”

<sup>89</sup> A 2016 amendment to BHMC 10-3-32 in Ord. 15-O-2700 defines “exceptional work” as “A remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community. At a minimum, the work's exceptional quality shall have been documented by at least one of the following: a) it was the subject of a major architectural award; b) it was substantively discussed (i.e., not just mentioned) and photographically depicted in a monograph on a master architect's career; or c) it was substantively discussed or photographically depicted in at least two (2) publications (e.g., a book, treatise, trade magazine article, film, or set of photographs made available to the public by an institutional archive) authored by acknowledged experts in the field of architecture. A monograph or publication made available to the public solely in electronic form and without any reasonable expectation of compensation to the author, or substantially authored by the architect of the work, shall not count toward this minimum.”

<sup>90</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “master architect” as “An architect of widely recognized greatness in the field of architecture whose individual genius influenced his or her age.”

- (4) It is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance;
- (5) It is an iconic property<sup>91</sup>; or
- (6) The landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).

Mirroring the National Register and California Register, the Ordinance requires that a resource retain integrity. The Ordinance defines integrity as “the ability of a property to convey its historical significance through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, relevant association, and character defining features.”<sup>92</sup> This builds upon the definition that is used by the National Register.

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<sup>91</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “iconic property” as “A property that has been visited and photographed so often by residents and visitors to the city that it has become inextricably associated with Beverly Hills in the popular culture and forms part of the city's identity to the world at large.”

<sup>92</sup> BHMC 10-3-3202, Definitions.

## 6. Evaluation of Significance

### 6.1. Previous Evaluations

461 North Beverly Drive does not appear to have been previously evaluated for historical significance. It is not listed in the California Historical Resources Inventory (HRI) database, and was also not identified in any of the City’s historic resource survey efforts (1985/86, 2004, 2006, 2013).

### 6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility

At only 25 years of age at this writing, the subject building is generally too young to be considered a historical resource. As previously enumerated, federal, state, and local eligibility criteria all have age requirements that safeguard against the designation of properties of “passing contemporary interest,” ensuring these designation programs remain lists of truly historical resources, by requiring – for properties fewer than 50 years of age – that individual properties have exceptional importance.

Illustrative of these guidelines, only an extremely small handful of properties younger than 30 years old have been successfully listed in the National Register of Historic Places as individual properties of exceptional importance. Among these are Michael Graves’s Portland Public Service Building (Portland Building), which was listed at 29 years of age; and E. Fay Jones’s Thorncrown Chapel, which was listed at only 20 years of age. Both of these resources were determined to possess exceptional importance because they were the best-known and most pivotal buildings of their respective architects’ careers.



**Name:** Portland Building  
**Architect:** Michael Graves  
**Date of Construction:** 1982  
**Date of NRHP Listing:** 2011

**Exceptional Importance (excerpted from the National Register Nomination Form):**

“Exceptionally important as one of the first large-scale manifestations of a new architectural style coming on the heels of the Modern movement.”

“One of the most notable works by internationally-known master architect Michael Graves and is widely credited as the design that established Graves’s preeminence in the field.”





**Name:** Thorncrowne Chapel  
**Architect:** E. Fay Jones  
**Date of Construction:** 1980  
**Date of NRHP Listing:** 2000

**Exceptional Importance (excerpted from the National Register Nomination Form):**

“Exceptional as a turning point in Fay Jones’s career.”

The chapel was “crucial to [Fay Jones’s] receipt of the AIA Gold Medal for his lifetime of achievement.”

“Arguably among the twentieth century’s great works of art.”

Nevertheless, due to the fact that the subject building was designed by an internationally acclaimed architectural partnership, it is evaluated herein for its potential to have exceptional importance such that it meets eligibility criteria despite its very young age.

## National Register and California Register

As described above in *Sections 5.1-5.2*, California Register criteria were modeled on those of the National Register, and therefore they are nearly identical in terms of language and the ways in which they are used to evaluate potential significance. Under both programs, in order to be eligible for listing a resource must meet the age requirement; be significant at the local, state, or national level under one or more of the eligibility criteria; and retain sufficient integrity to convey significance. It is in the application of an age requirement that the two programs differ. For listing in the National Register, resource fewer than 50 years of age are generally not eligible for listing unless they meet the requirements of Criterion Consideration G, whereas for listing in the California Register, regulations state that sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with a resource.<sup>93</sup>

What follows is an evaluation of the subject building against both National Register and California Register criteria, with distinction made when there is an issue of age due to the fact that the building is fewer than 50 years old.

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<sup>93</sup> California Office of Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Series #6: California Register and National Register: A Comparison (for purposes of determining eligibility for the California Register). Sacramento: Dept. of Parks and Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation.  
<https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1069/files/technical%20assistance%20bulletin%206%202011%20update.pdf>

ARG concludes that 461 North Beverly Drive is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources, as follows:

***National/California Register Criterion A/1: associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history.***

Built between 1994-1996, the subject building is associated with a relatively contemporary period of development in the Business Triangle district of Beverly Hills. It was one of many commercial and institutional buildings that were constructed in this area at this time, and its association with the glitz and glamour of Hollywood helped to augment the area's reputation as an epicenter of opulence, wealth, and high culture. On its own, the building does not signify important trends in the development of Beverly Hills that are not expressed in the many other commercial and institutional buildings that were constructed in this area of the City or in the Los Angeles region in the latter decades of the twentieth century.

As the longtime location of the Paley Center for Media, the building is also associated with broad patterns of cultural institutional development in the Southern California region. This museum is one of many new museums and cultural attractions that were established in the region during the latter twentieth century, and touched upon specific aspects of art and culture – in this case, television, radio, and other modes of mass media. The museum is known among media aficionados and others with an interest in the entertainment industry, but when compared against the broader pool of cultural institutions in greater Los Angeles, this particular institution appears to be more representative of these patterns than exemplary. Its presence in Beverly Hills has contributed to the rich cultural fabric of Southern California, but does not appear to have directly influenced arts and culture in the same vein as other locally renowned institutions including the County Museum of History, Science and Art (1913), the Southwest Museum (1914), LACMA (1961), and the Getty Center (1997). These other institutions had an indelible and transformative effect on the cultural institutional landscape of the Southern California region when they opened, because they were the first of their kind and/or because of their sheer scale. Almost immediately after opening, these institutions were touted as some of Southern California's foremost cultural attractions and drew international attention. As a much smaller institution with a more specialized program, the Paley Center – while a popular local attraction – lacks the gravitas of these other institutions that would render it historically significant under this criterion.

The building has been used as a venue for a number of galas, symposia, speaker panels, and other special events over the course of its 22 years in operation. Given the museum's function and its intrinsic association with entertainment moguls and television stars, many of these events have been highly profiled, celebrity-studded affairs. However, these types of events are fairly typical of museums, and especially of museums that bear such a strong and palpable association with the entertainment industry. There is not sufficient evidence to demonstrate that any event that has taken place within the building is, or will be, considered to be singularly significant in the annals of history.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion A/1.

***National/California Register Criterion B/2: associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.***

The Paley Center for Media is named for William S. Paley (1901-1999), the former chief executive of CBS and the driving force behind the institution's inception in the 1970s. The subject building – which is the sister location of the institution's counterpart in New York City – is named the Leonard Goldenson Building. Goldenson (1905-1999) was the former chief executive of ABC and played an influential role in the dissemination of television and radio programming. Both Paley and Goldenson are unquestionably significant because of their contributions to entertainment and broadcasting, but their association with the subject property is nominal at best. Paley's steadfast commitment to the Museum of Television and Radio and its overarching purpose paved the way for the subject building's construction in the 1990s, but he died several years before the decision was announced to construct a sister location in Beverly Hills. Goldenson's association with the subject building is commemorative only.

Robert Batscha was president of the Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center when the institution expanded beyond its original location in New York City and opened a branch location in Beverly Hills. A skilled administrator who was formally trained in political science and also dabbled in screenwriting, Batscha was important in the context of the institution, as it was under his directorship that it significantly grew from a small operation into a formidable institution with a bicoastal presence and an expanded program that encompassed other forms of media. Batscha is warmly remembered by those affiliated with the museum for expanding the institution in a way that stayed faithful to Paley's vision.

While Batscha is most certainly significant to the institutional development of the Paley Center, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that he should be considered a historically significant individual for purposes of this criterion. National Register Bulletin 15 states that "it must be shown that the [historically significant] person gained importance within his or her profession or group," and further states that "a property is not eligible under Criterion B if it is associated with an individual about whom no scholarly judgement can be made because either research has not revealed specific information about the person's activities and their impact, or there is insufficient perspective to determine whether those activities or contributions were historically important."<sup>94</sup> The latter point applies to Batscha. His contributions to the dissemination of media awareness generally, and the growth and expansion of the Paley Center specifically, are relatively recent. Most of the information that has been published about Batscha and his contributions toward these ends consist of obituaries that were published in the immediate aftermath of his death in 2003 and were thereby intended to pay homage to Batscha – not necessarily to frame him as a historically significant individual. Sufficient time has not elapsed, and sufficient perspective has not yet been developed, to assess whether it is appropriate to treat Batscha as a historically significant individual for purposes of this criterion.

The building has been patronized by scores of visitors during its 22 years in operation, and has been the site of numerous events that have drawn a fair number of celebrities. This is not uncommon for any museum, especially one that is dedicated to the entertainment industry. However, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the subject building bears a direct association with the productive period of any one individual in a manner that would merit consideration under this criterion.

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<sup>94</sup> NRB 15, Section VI: "How to Identify the Type of Significance of a Property," 15.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with the lives of persons important to local, state, or national history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion B/2.

**National/California Register Criterion C/3:** *embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.*

The subject building embodies characteristics of Neo-Corbusian architecture. The term “Neo-Corbusian” is generally used to describe the post-1980s work of Richard Meier and Partners, as it is clearly and directly influenced by the early modern work of Le Corbusier with its methodized geometries, exaggerated sense of abstraction, flat roofs, abundant fenestration, and white exterior walls. As a very recent iteration of late 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture, little scholarship exists on the development of the style, its essential characteristics, and its place in the context of Late Modern architecture. The late 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a number of idiosyncratic reactions to the ubiquity of post-World War II Modernism, including Postmodernism, High Tech, Glass Skin, and others yet to be classified. With the passage of time and increasing scholarship, the term Neo-Corbusian may or may not even continue to be used to describe these works, which are still being produced; rather, the character of the style may continue to coalesce in a way that will be better understood in the decades to come. In general, the subject building possesses features that stylistically align it with the work of Richard Meier and Partners; however, whether or not it is essential to a study of an architectural type or period cannot at this time be ascertained.

The building is also representative of the institutional work of architectural firm Richard Meier and Partners, whose myriad accomplishments between its inception in 1963 and the present day most certainly merit recognition of the firm as a master architect. It specifically relates to the reputation that Meier and his eponymous firm developed as a leading designer of museums. Its design – though not particularly transformative – is a good representation of how the firm’s aesthetic sensibilities and highly rigid, rational approach to design lent themselves especially well to museums and other cultural institutions. The building exhibits several of the features – geometric planes, white enameled exterior panels with warm stone accents, an entrance rotunda, and obfuscation of the line between interior and exterior spaces – that played such a definitive role in establishing Meier and Partners’ aesthetic and repertoire.

**National Register Age Requirement: Criteria Consideration G**

According to National Register Criteria Consideration G, it is not enough for a resource to simply meet the conditions enumerated in the criterion to justify eligibility for the National Register if the resource being evaluated is less than 50 years of age. For resources that are not yet 50 years of age, it must be demonstrated that the resource is not merely significant, but exhibits *exceptional* importance within its requisite historic context(s). This consideration “guards against the listing of properties of passing contemporary interest” and ensures that enough time has elapsed to develop historical perspective.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Apply the Criteria Considerations.”

Determining whether a resource is exceptionally significant for purposes of the National Register requires comparative analysis of the resource against contextually related properties. If, when the resource is compared to others, it becomes evident that (1) it is the property that *best* represents the historic context in question, or (2) represents a type so rare or fragile that extant examples of any age are unusual, it is generally considered to meet Criteria Consideration G.<sup>96</sup>

When the subject building is evaluated in the context of institutional projects in Richard Meier and Partners' portfolio using the above-listed criteria, it does not meet the definition of exceptional significance. As articulated by architectural critics who wrote about the building upon its completion in 1996, the building is quintessentially Meier and Partners in that it exhibits the same set of common characteristics that they applied, in varying degrees and at various scales, to almost all of their institutional commissions. Its design, while respectable, did not manipulate or combine these characteristics in a particularly unusual, inventive, or transformative manner. Overall, the subject building lacks the exceptional articulation, exaggerated sense of isolation, and degree of spatial complexity that called international attention to some of their other institutional works. Richard Meier himself described the project as being designed by himself and Michael Palladino "during a weekend charrette," and "on a very tight schedule and a limited budget."<sup>97</sup>

The building did not connote a watershed moment in the oeuvre of Meier and Partners, as did the Smith House (1967), which was widely studied and photographed and ultimately led to his canonization as a member of the New York Five; the High Museum of Art (1983), after which Meier was awarded the Pritzker Prize; and the Getty Center (1987-1996), which asserted the firm's presence on the West Coast, earned them international acclaim, and thrust them into the upper echelons of the world's greatest architects. According to NRB 15, "Several properties in the area could become eligible with the passage of time, but few will qualify now as exceptionally important."<sup>98</sup> In an evaluation of Meier and Partners' institutional work in Los Angeles, the Getty Center is the most exceptional example within this context. Notably, the subject building fails to exhibit a distinctive relationship to its surroundings, as do more notable buildings produced by Richard Meier and Partners.

Furthermore, the building is not a rare example of its type. Richard Meier and Partners designed many cultural/institutional buildings across Southern California after establishing an office in Los Angeles in 1985. These include the Getty Center, multiple buildings on the campus of UCLA, and a visitor's center for the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove. There are also several other Meier-designed buildings in Beverly Hills including the Gagosian Gallery and Gagosian Gallery Expansion, interior work at the historic Beverly Wilshire Hotel, and a mixed-use complex at 9200 Wilshire Boulevard. Therefore, even without the subject building, Beverly Hills would retain numerous examples of the work of Richard Meier and Partners.

It also bears mention that Richard Meier and Partners continues to operate active practices in New York and Los Angeles, and continues to be involved in the design of new buildings across the greater Southern California region. According to NRB 15, properties associated with living persons are usually

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Kenneth Frampton and Joseph Rykwert, *Richard Meier Architect*, New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1999: 288.

<sup>98</sup> NRB 15, Section VII: "How to Apply the Criteria Considerations."

not eligible for inclusion in the National Register, as “active participation in [this person’s] endeavor must be finished for this historic perspective to emerge.”<sup>99</sup> The story of Richard Meier and Partners, and its contributions to the architectural history of Southern California, are still unfolding, and the complete breadth of the firm and its work is not yet known. Though some commissions – such as the Getty Center – are obviously pivotal, it will likely take time for the significance of others to be fully grasped.

### ***California Register Age Requirement***

The California Register does not enumerate a minimum age requirement for listing, as does the National Register, but stipulates that sufficient time has to have elapsed to have a scholarly perspective on the historical significance of a resource to be eligible for listing. As stated above, the building’s relatively recent construction date (1994-96), coupled with the fact that Richard Meier and Partners remains an active architectural practice, hinder the ability to thoroughly and objectively evaluate its historical significance within a scholarly perspective. A review of monographs, articles and other materials related to Meier’s built projects does not suggest that the subject building is considered by critics, scholars, or the architectural community as a seminal work. In fact, the scholarly perspective on the subject building is that it is one of many museum projects to come out of Meier’s office from the late 1970s to the present day, and that there is nothing groundbreaking or pivotal about its design, as has been written about the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, the Getty Center in Los Angeles, or the Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona.

In conclusion, while the subject building generally represents the Neo-Corbusian derivative of the Late Modern style and the institutional work of architectural firm Richard Meier and Partners, it is not an exceptionally important example in either category. Taking into account the high eligibility thresholds associated with resources of the recent past, the building does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion C/3 at this time.

***Criterion D/4. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.***

As an archaeological assessment was not conducted as part of this study, the property’s potential for containing subsurface archaeological resources is unknown.

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<sup>99</sup> NRB 15, page 16.



## Local Eligibility

ARG concludes that 461 North Beverly Drive does not appear eligible for local listing as Beverly Hills Landmark, as follows:

### **Part A Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet all four of the following requirements):**

***Criterion A.1: it is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance.***

The subject building was constructed in 1996 and is not yet forty-five years of age. It is roughly 25 years of age. As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, it is not a property of extraordinary significance. Thus, it does not satisfy Criterion A.1.

***Criterion A.2: it possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period.***

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, the subject building embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Late Modern style, and specifically of the Neo-Corbusian derivative of the style. It therefore meets Criterion A.2.

***Criterion A.3: it retains substantial integrity from its period of significance.***

The subject building has been minimally altered since its construction between 1994-1996. It appears almost exactly as it did when it was built, and continues to express the aesthetic and architectural principles that influenced its original design. It therefore meets Criterion A.3.

***Criterion A.4: it has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.***

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, not enough time has elapsed to fully understand the significance of the subject building through the lens of history. The building is of relatively recent construction (1996), and compared to other works of Meier – including some in the Los Angeles area – it is not of exceptional importance. It is also not a rare example of a Meier and Partners building in Beverly Hills. Absent these qualities, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the building has historic value to the community. Thus, it does not satisfy Criterion A.4.

### **Part B Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet at least one of the following requirements):**

***Criterion B.1: it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.***

The subject building is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and therefore does not meet Criterion B.1.

**Criterion B.2:** *it is an exceptional work by a master architect.*

The subject building was designed by the architectural firm Richard Meier and Partners, which has been identified on the City of Beverly Hills’s List of Local Master Architects.

Although the building was designed by a master architect, it does not meet the Beverly Hills Municipal Code’s definition of “exceptional work.” A 2016 amendment to BHMC 10-3-32 in Ord. 15-O-2700 defines “exceptional work” as “a remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community,” meeting at least one of the following criteria:

Firstly, a work would be considered exceptional if “it was the subject of a major architectural award.” Research did not provide evidence that the subject building won any architectural awards.

Secondly, a work would be considered exceptional if “it was substantively discussed (i.e., not just mentioned) and photographically depicted in a monograph on a master architect's career.” As indicated in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3 and reiterated in *Section 8: Bibliography* of this report, much has been written about Meier, the arc of his work, and his contributions to architecture in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, including multiple monographs. The subject building is addressed in four of six monographs reviewed. The two monographs that do not depict the subject building are smaller, summary monographs that are curated to focus mainly on seminal works.<sup>100</sup> The fact that the Paley Center is omitted from these texts conveys that it was not considered important enough to include, while other museums – such as the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, the Museum for the Decorative Arts in Frankfurt, the Getty Center in Los Angeles, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona – were. Three additional monographs include the subject building in plates and with limited discussion of the building<sup>101</sup>; one includes it only in the comprehensive index of works without any photographs or discussion.<sup>102</sup> Not one of these monographs cites the subject building as being a seminal or pivotal work, nor was the building substantially discussed in comparison to other, more notable works.

Finally, a work would be considered exceptional if “it was substantively discussed or photographically depicted in at least two (2) publications (e.g., a book, treatise, trade magazine article, film, or set of photographs made available to the public by an institutional archive) authored by acknowledged experts in the field of architecture.” The subject building has been mentioned in a variety of sources including the monographs described above, newspaper and journal articles, and travel guides of the Southern California region. A small number of articles were written by architectural critics at the time of its opening. Leon Whiteson, architecture critic for the *Los Angeles Times*, describes the building as a sophisticated addition to the Business Triangle, remarking that it “wears its sophistication lightly...its clean, simple lines have the good manners not to shame its neighbors while still making it clear that the

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<sup>100</sup> Claudia Conforti, Marzia Marandola, and Richard Meier, *Richard Meier* 1. ed. Milano: Motta architettura, 2009; and Philip Jodidio and Peter Gössel, *Richard Meier & Partners: White Is the Light*. Köln: Taschen, 2010.

<sup>101</sup> Kenneth Frampton, *Richard Meier*. Milano: Electa Architecture, 2002 (pub in English in 2003); Philip Jodidio, *Richard Meier & Partners: Complete Works 1963-2013* Köln: Taschen, 2013; and Richard Meier, Germano Celant, and Massimo Vignelli, *Richard Meier: Museums: 1973/2006*. New York, NY: Rizzoli International Publications, 2006.

<sup>102</sup> Richard Meier and Stan Allen, *Richard Meier, Architect* New York: Monacelli Press, 1999.

building boasts a far more urbane architecture.”<sup>103</sup> Paul Goldberger, architecture critic for *The New York Times*, notes that the building “is not going to convince anyone that there is a new Richard Meier waiting to be discovered. The building is as white and sleek as anything Mr. Meier has ever done, and it looks not terribly different from the many museums and institutional and commercial buildings he produced in the 1970s and ‘80s.”<sup>104</sup> Deborah K. Deitsch wrote about the building in *Architecture* journal, noting that it is “classic Meier,” and that “Meier breaks no new ground with the museum.”<sup>105</sup> No architectural criticism published at the time of the building’s design or thereafter has lauded the building as being seminal, groundbreaking, noteworthy, or pivotal in the context of Meier’s work.

The absence of any deep discussion in these sources about the building’s design and contribution to an understanding of architecture and the overall arc of Meier’s body or work suggest that it is not considered to be a “remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community.”

For these reasons, the subject building does not meet the definition of an “exceptional work” per the Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance and thus does not meet Criterion B.2.

***Criterion B.3:*** *it is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous.*

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion B/2, there is insufficient evidence demonstrating that the subject building bears a meaningful association with the productive lives of historically significance individuals. Thus, the building does not meet Criterion B.3.

***Criterion B.4:*** *it is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance.*

As discussed, the subject building does not appear to have been associated with persons of great local importance in a manner that would merit consideration under this criterion. Thus, the building does not meet Criterion B.4.

***Criterion B.5:*** *it is an iconic property.*

The subject building is not an iconic property as defined by the Ordinance. Though as a cultural institution it has very likely been visited and photographed by many visitors to the City, the building does not appear to have become inextricably associated with Beverly Hills’s identity in a manner that would merit further consideration under this criterion. For this reason the building does not meet Criterion B.5.

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<sup>103</sup> Whiteson (1996).

<sup>104</sup> Goldberger (1996).

<sup>105</sup> Deborah K. Dietsch, “Broadcast News,” *Architecture*, November 1996, 100-101.

**Criterion B.6:** *the landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).*

The Landmark designation procedure is not known to have been initiated by any parties, and the owner(s) of the property have not expressly agreed to the initiation of such a procedure. As a result, the subject building does not meet Criterion B.6.

### **Summary of Local Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for local listing, a resource must meet all four of the above-listed Part A requirements, and at least one of the above-listed Part B requirements. The building does not meet Criterion A.1 and A.4, as required, and also does not meet any of the Part B requirements. In summary, the subject building does not meet local eligibility criteria.

## **6.3. Evaluation of Integrity**

For a property to be eligible for listing in the National and California Registers, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark, it must meet eligibility criteria and also retain sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance. *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* states that “only after significance is fully established can you proceed to the issue of integrity.”<sup>106</sup> In accordance with best professional practices, it is customary to apply this same methodology when evaluating resources at the state and local levels. Because the building does not meet the criteria for federal, state, or local listing, an assessment of integrity is not necessary.

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<sup>106</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

## 7. Conclusion

The Museum of Television and Radio/Paley Center for Media embodies characteristics of Late Modern/Neo-Corbusian architecture and is also a representative work of Richard Meier and Partners. Its design includes many of the characteristics that define Richard Meier and Partners' practice and approach to design. However, when evaluating the significance of buildings of the recent past, the bar is held particularly high to ensure that a resource is evaluated with an appropriate amount of historical perspective. Resources of the recent past – and especially resources like the subject building that were built in the very recent past (1994-96) – must demonstrably exhibit exceptional importance to be eligible for listing.

While the subject building is a representative work of Richard Meier and Partners, it does not appear to exhibit the exceptional level of historical and/or architectural significance needed to substantiate its eligibility for federal, state, or local listing. Therefore, the building is not eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark at this time, and is not considered to be a "historical resource" for purposes of CEQA.

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## 456 North Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills Historic Resource Assessment Report

*Prepared for:*

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP  
San Francisco, CA

*Prepared by:*



Architectural  
Resources Group

Architectural Resources Group  
Los Angeles, CA

June 24, 2020

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. Introduction ..... 1**
  - 1.1. Executive Summary ..... 1
  - 1.2. Preparer Qualifications ..... 2
- 2. Architectural Description..... 3**
  - 2.1. Site and Setting ..... 3
  - 2.2. Building Exterior ..... 4
  - 2.3. Landscape and Hardscape Features ..... 5
- 3. Development Chronology and Alterations..... 11**
  - 3.1. Development Chronology ..... 11
  - 3.2. Alterations..... 13
- 4. Historic Contexts ..... 14**
  - 4.1. Commercial Development in the Business Triangle ..... 14
  - 4.2. Owners and Occupants: 456 North Rodeo Drive ..... 15
  - 4.3. Architecture and Design..... 17
- 5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation ..... 21**
  - 5.1. National Register of Historic Places ..... 21
  - 5.2. California Register of Historical Resources ..... 22
  - 5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance ..... 23
- 6. Evaluation of Significance..... 25**
  - 6.1. Previous Evaluations ..... 25
  - 6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility ..... 25
  - 6.3. Evaluation of Integrity..... 31
- 7. Conclusion ..... 32**
- 8. Bibliography..... 33**

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Executive Summary

At the request of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) has prepared this Historic Resource Assessment Report for the property at 456 North Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills, California. The property contains a one-story commercial retail building that was constructed in 1948. This building has been occupied by a variety of commercial tenants over the years including electronics retailers, art galleries, and clothing and accessories boutiques. From circa 1961 to circa 1964, the building housed an art gallery that was operated by noted television actor Raymond Burr, who was also an art aficionado. The building is currently used as a retail store for Celine, a purveyor of high style accessories.

Original permits indicate that the building was not architect-designed, and that it was built by contractor Bernard Lindberg of Los Angeles. Lindberg is not included on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Local Master Architects.<sup>1</sup> Subsequent building permits and ARG's field observations indicate that the building has been extensively modified over time and bears little resemblance to its original appearance.

This report examines the history of the building and evaluates it against eligibility criteria for federal (National Register of Historic Places), state (California Register of Historical Resources), and local (Beverly Hills Landmark) listing, to determine if it satisfies the definition of a historical resource for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Preparation of this report included the following tasks related to research, documentation, and analysis:

- Site visit on May 5, 2020 to assess existing conditions and document the building's exterior features with digital photographs;
- Review of pertinent federal and state technical bulletins, local ordinances, and other reference materials related to the evaluation of historical resources;
- Review of applicable background materials including historical building permits and Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) data for the subject property;
- Primary and secondary source research to glean additional information about the property's development history, design, occupancy, and potential historical significance;
- Identification of applicable historic contexts and themes; and
- Evaluation of the building against eligibility criteria for the National Register, the California Register, and as a Beverly Hills Landmark.

Research materials were culled from the following sources: the Los Angeles Public Library; the Beverly Hills Public Library; the archives of the *Los Angeles Times* and other local periodicals; building permits obtained from the City of Beverly Hills's Community Development Department; technical bulletins

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<sup>1</sup> City of Beverly Hills, "List of Local Master Architects, Version 2.1," adopted Oct. 14, 2015, revised Jan. 13, 2016.



published by the National Park Service (NPS) and the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP); online repositories; and ARG's in-house collection of architectural books and reference materials. A complete list of sources is included in *Section 8: Bibliography* of this report.

In summary, ARG concludes that the building at 456 North Rodeo Drive does not meet eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register, California Register, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark. Therefore, the building is not a historical resource for purposes of CEQA. The following sections provide a contextual basis for analysis and a detailed discussion of how this determination was made.

## 1.2. Preparer Qualifications

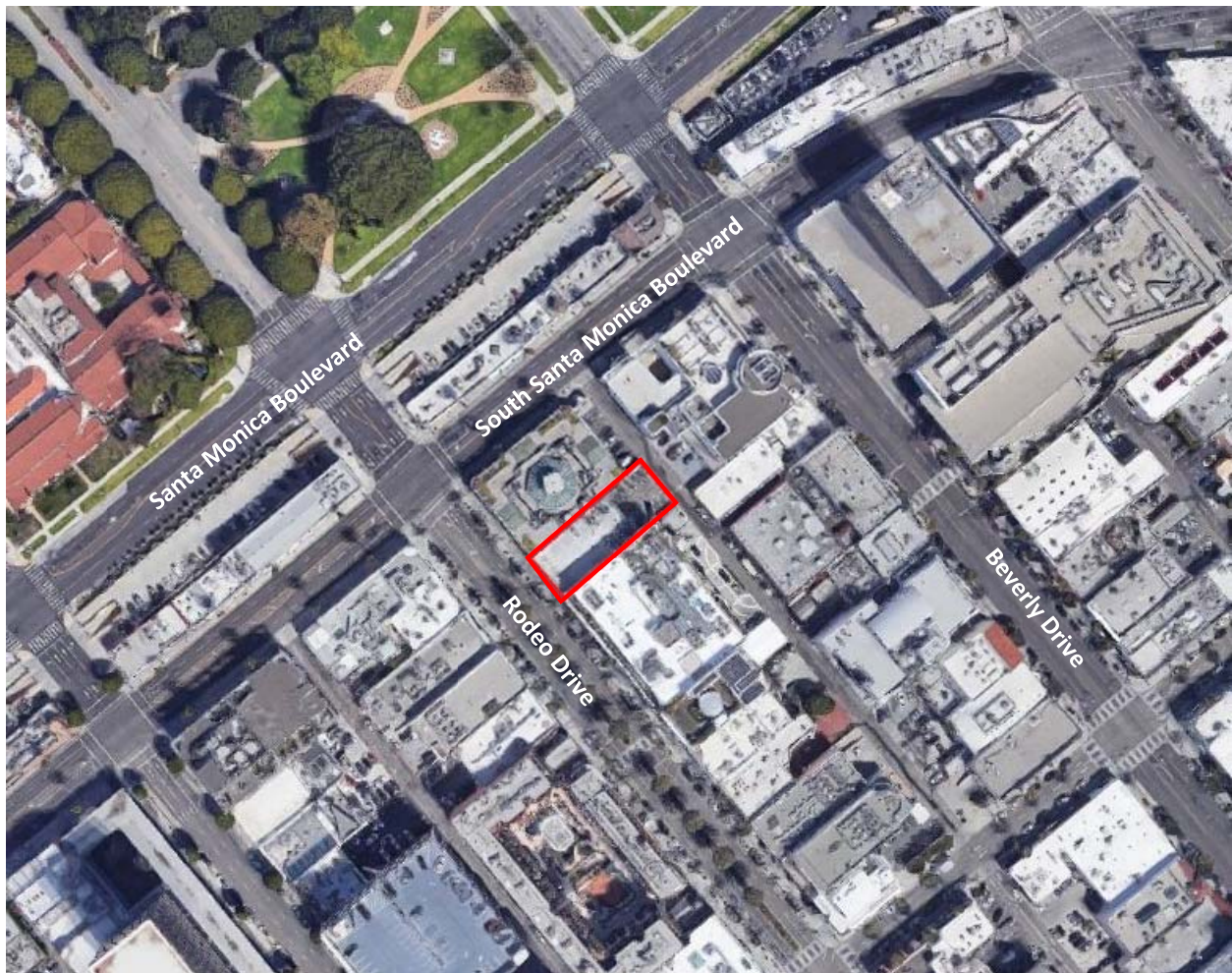
This report was prepared by Katie E. Horak, Principal, and Andrew Goodrich, AICP, Associate, both Architectural Historians and Preservation Planners. ARG intern Krista Gelev provided additional project support. Ms. Horak and Mr. Goodrich meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards*, 36 CFR Part 61, in the discipline of Architectural History.

## 2. Architectural Description

### 2.1. Site and Setting

The subject property is located near the northern edge of a triangular-shaped commercial district that is bounded by Santa Monica Boulevard (north and west), Wilshire Boulevard (south), and Canon Drive (east). This area serves as the central business district of Beverly Hills. Known as the Business Triangle, it is densely developed with a mix of low and mid-scale commercial buildings, many of which are occupied by some of the foremost purveyors of luxury retail goods. The circulation network ascribes to a grid that is oriented 45 degrees askew of the cardinal directions and contributes to the area's wedge-like form.

456 North Rodeo Drive occupies a flat commercial parcel that is located on the east side of Rodeo Drive, between South Santa Monica Boulevard and Brighton Way. The parcel is askew of the cardinal directions, is rectangular in shape, and measures 7,633 square feet. The southeast and northwest property lines abut adjacent buildings. The northeast property line abuts a service alley.



*Location map. The subject property, 456 N Rodeo Dr, is outlined in red (Google Maps)*

## 2.2. Building Exterior

Most of the parcel is occupied by a 5,000-square-foot commercial building that was constructed in 1948.<sup>2</sup> It was purpose-built as a retail store and continues to be used as such. The building is one story with mezzanine. It has a rectangular footprint, is constructed of brick, and sits on a concrete slab foundation. Like most of the commercial buildings on this stretch of Rodeo Drive, the subject building is set flush with the sidewalk. It is architecturally vernacular and lacks the distinctive characteristics of any particular style.

The building is capped by a flat roof and parapet. The roof was not accessible at the time of ARG's site visit, but is likely sheathed in a composition membrane. Publicly visible volumes of the roof are accentuated by a molded cornice. HVAC units and other pieces of mechanical equipment are installed atop the roof are obscured by corrugated metal decking. Exterior walls are clad in a smooth plaster finish. Score lines are incised into the plaster walls on the street-facing façade.

The primary façade faces southwest, toward Rodeo Drive. Features on this façade are symmetrically composed. This façade measures three bays wide, with each bay delineated by an embossed segmental arch that spans the full height of the building. At its center is an entrance that is slightly recessed into the face of the building. Ingress is provided by paired, fully glazed metal doors with a chrome finish. The doors are flanked on each side by a narrow, fixed, full-length sidelight and are surmounted by a fixed transom, also with a chrome finish. The entrance threshold is finished with stone.

On each side of the entrance bay is a storefront bay with a single, fixed plate glass window. Each window is set within one of the aforementioned embossed arches and is framed in chrome. Along the base of each window is a shallow bulkhead that is finished with the same stone that is applied to the entrance threshold. Overall, the building exudes a chaste, minimalist appearance and is generally lacking in decorative details. The only other feature of note on the primary façade is wall-mounted signage that reads "CELINE/PARIS" in a sans-serif font, which is affixed to the wall above the entrance.

The rear (northeast) façade is visible from a service alley. By virtue of its location at the rear of the building, this façade is less articulated and more utilitarian in appearance. It features two rear entrances: the first consists of a single, glazed metal door with a chrome finish; the second consists of a single, unarticulated solid metal door. Painted signage that reads "456 N RODEO" is located on the wall above the solid door. Adjacent to the glazed door is a pair of metal utility doors; adjacent to the solid door are metal utility boxes that are affixed to the building. Symmetrically positioned above the rear entrances are four multi-light fixed windows with articulated surrounds. These windows appear to have composite frames. At the far end of the rear façade is a painted metal utility ladder that is affixed to the exterior wall and provides access to the roof.

The two side (northwest, southeast) façades directly abut the footprints of adjacent commercial buildings and are thus not visible.

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<sup>2</sup> Original construction date obtained from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor.



## 2.3. Landscape and Hardscape Features

Since the building occupies almost the entirety of the lot, landscape and hardscape features are minimal. The only landscape feature is a single king palm tree that is planted in the parkway space along Rodeo Drive. Flax plants are planted around the king palm tree. The rear setback is occupied by a small surface parking lot that is accessed by the aforementioned service alley.

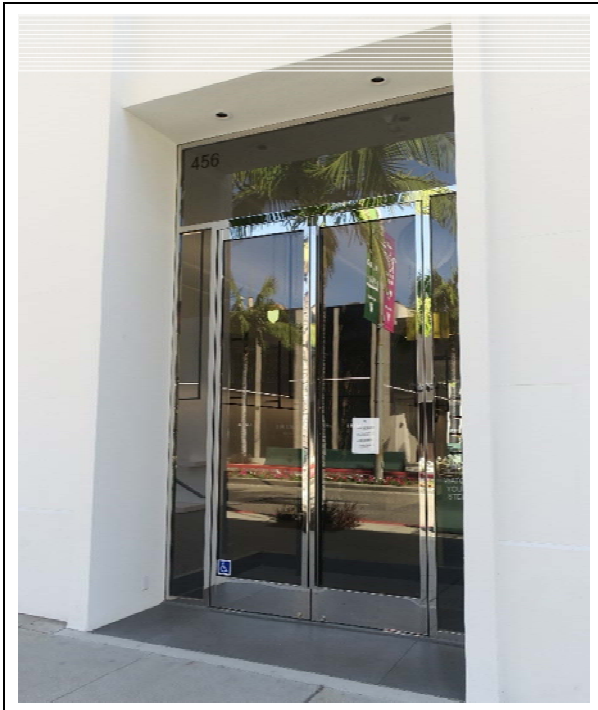
### Current Photos



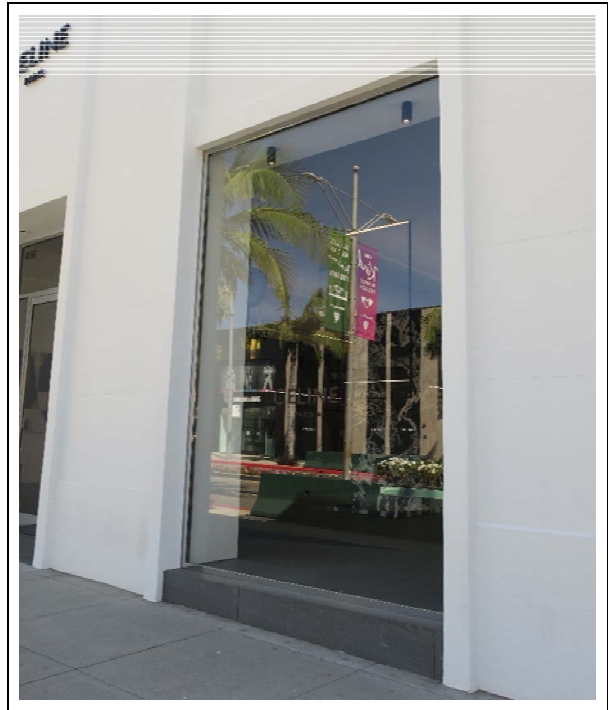
*Primary (southwest) façade, view east (ARG, 2020)*



*Primary façade, view northeast (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of entrance on primary façade (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of storefront window and stone bulkhead on primary façade (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of stone entrance threshold on primary façade (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of stone bulkhead on primary façade (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of wall-mounted signage on primary façade, above entrance (ARG, 2020)*



*Rear (northeast) façade, view south. Note parking lot in foreground (ARG, 2020)*



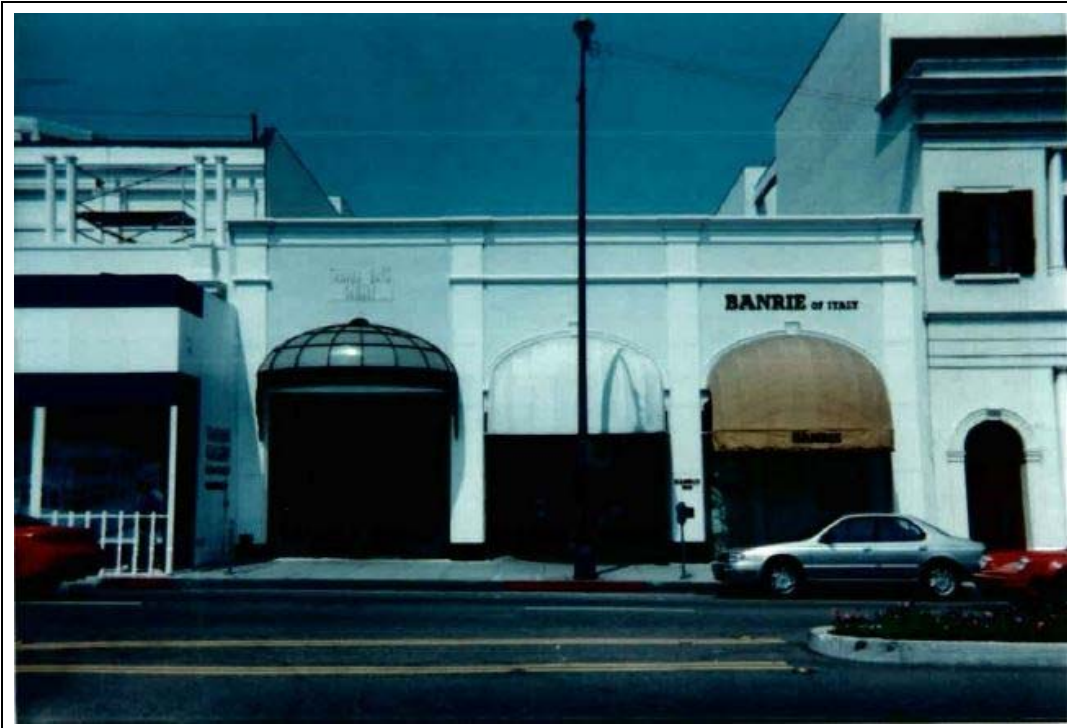
*Rear façade, view northwest (ARG, 2020)*



*Detail of upper-story windows and painted signage on rear façade (ARG, 2020)*



## Additional Photos



*Subject building, primary façade, 1997 (included in building permit record, City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department)*



*Subject building, primary façade, 1999 (included in building permit record, City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department)*

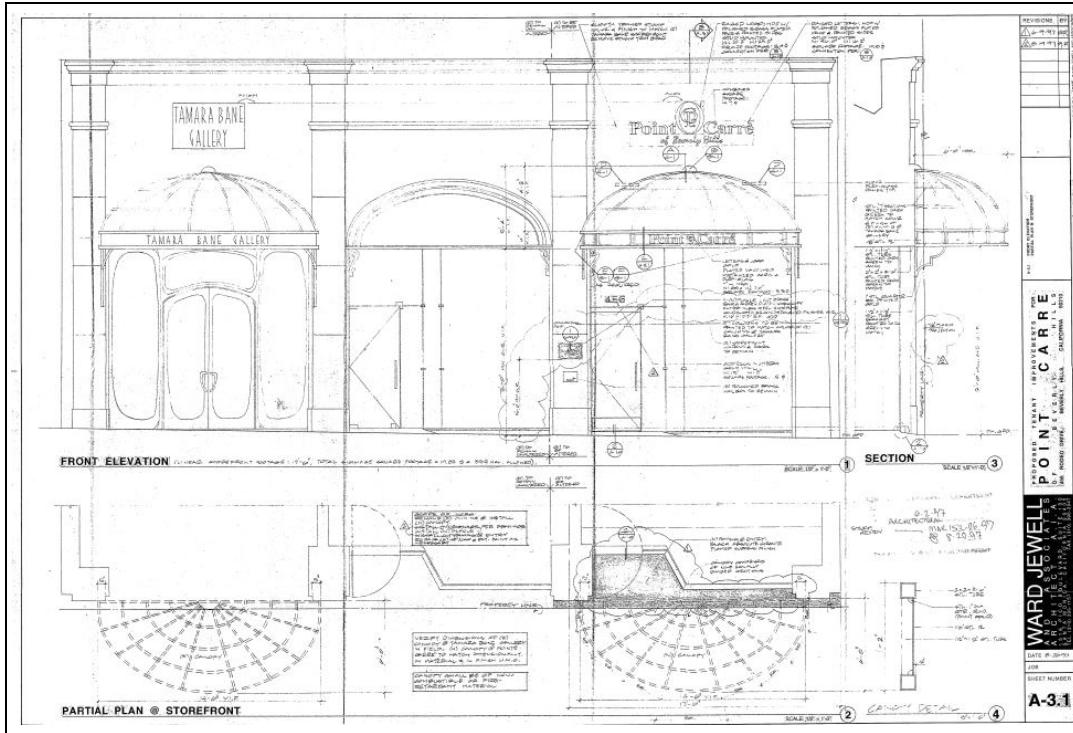




*Subject building, rear façade, 1999 (included in building permit record, City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department)*



*Subject building, primary façade, ca. 2000s. This photo was taken prior to the façade renovations commissioned by Juicy Couture in 2007 (loopnet.com)*

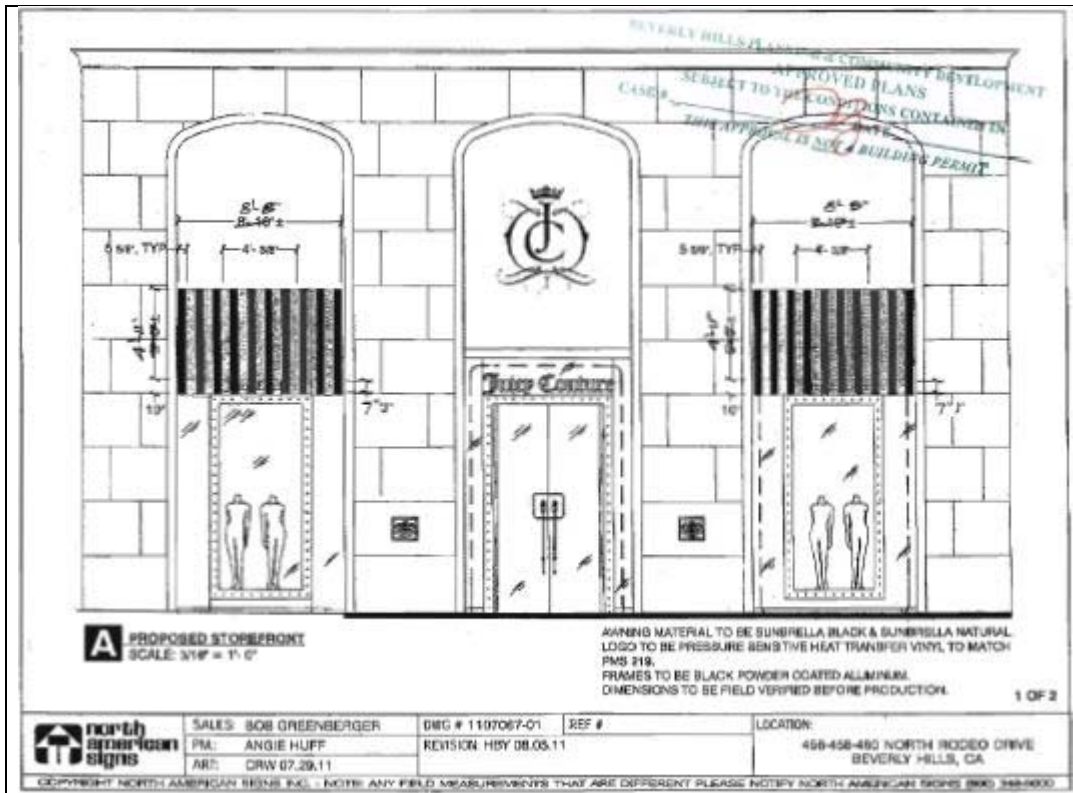


Elevation, primary façade, 1997. This was submitted as part of a permit application for tenant improvements related to Point Carré (City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department)

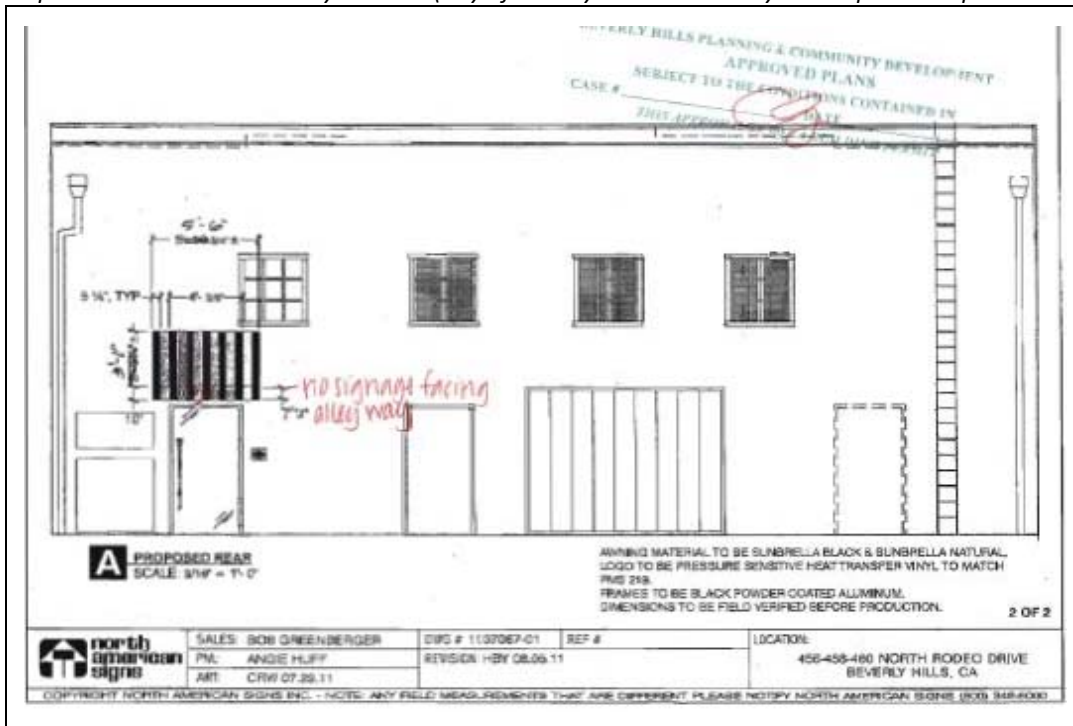


Rendering, primary façade, 2007. This was submitted as part of a permit application for tenant improvements related to Juicy Couture; the rendering depicts exterior alterations that resulted in the building's present-day appearance (City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department)





Elevation, primary façade, 2007. This was submitted as part of a permit application for tenant improvements related to Juicy Couture (City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department).



Elevation, rear façade, 2007. This was submitted as part of a permit application for tenant improvements related to Juicy Couture (City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department)

### 3. Development Chronology and Alterations

#### 3.1. Development Chronology

The following development chronology for 456 North Rodeo Drive summarizes key events in the property’s development history between its original construction in 1948 and the present-day. It was developed by reviewing historical building permits from the Beverly Hills Community Development Department, and was augmented by additional sources of information including historic photos and aerial images, parcel data from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor, the collections of the Beverly Hills Public Library and other local and online repositories, and other source materials.

<b>1947</b>	Original construction permit issued for the subject building. It was described as a 1-story-and-mezzanine store building with a concrete slab foundation and brick masonry walls. No architect is listed on the permit; Bernard Lindberg is listed as the contractor; Mrs. Maude Lloyd and A. Miller are listed as the owners (Permit No. 22394).
<b>1948</b>	Construction completed (Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor).
<b>1961</b>	Permit issued to “remodel existing building for art gallery.” The art gallery referenced in the permit was operated by actor Raymond Burr and was called the Raymond Burr Galleries. No architect is listed on the permit; Len Goldberg and G.E. Wolf are listed as the contractors; Karl B. Schurz is listed as the owner (Permit No. 611129).
<b>1971</b>	At the request of the City of Beverly Hills, an assessment of the building’s structural integrity was commissioned following the 1971 Sylmar Earthquake. The assessment was completed by the structural engineering firm of Hillman, Biddison & Loevenguth, and concluded that the building “has suffered no ill effects from the earthquake” (correspondence dated Mar 26, 1971, included in the permit file for the property).
<b>1982</b>	<p>Permit issued to remove non-structural interior walls and ceiling. No architect is listed on the permit; Samson Contractors is listed as the contractor; A.D. Hoppe is listed as the owner (Permit No. 820544).</p> <p>Permit issued for “alterations to existing building.” The scope of work appears to include the addition of insulation (interior) and storefront modifications (exterior). Claude Coyne, AIA is listed as the architect; Robert Coleman is listed as the contractor; Schurz Family Trust is listed as the owner (Permit No. 821018).</p> <p>Permit issued for interior alterations. The scope of work appears to relate to tenant improvements. Claude Coyne, AIA is listed as the architect; Robert Coleman Jr., Inc. is listed as the contractor; Lady Battaglia, Inc. is listed as the owner (Permit No. 821284).</p>
<b>1983</b>	Permit issued for interior alterations. The scope is described as “interior remodeling for leather goods.” Jorge Newbery Assoc. is listed as the architect; R.B. Coleman Jr. Inc. is listed as the contractor; Karl Schurz is listed as the owner (Permit No. 831586).

<b>1995</b>	Permits issued for interior alterations. The scope is described as “T.I. decorative walls and ceiling in existing retail store.” Twen Ma is listed as the architect; Shimiben International, Inc. is listed as the contractor; Karl B. Schurz Trust is listed as the owner (Permit Nos. 95005166, C9500851).
<b>1997</b>	Permits issued for interior alterations. The scope is described as “T.I. interior remodel of existing retail space.” Ward Jewell is listed as the architect; D’Escoto West is listed as the contractor; Arnaout/Point Carte [sic] and Karl B. Schurz Trust are listed as the owners (Permit Nos. C9700579, C9700481).
<b>1997</b>	<p>Permit issued for “exterior canopy and entry paving for ‘Point Carrè.’” Ward Jewell is listed as the architect; D’Escoto West is listed as the contractor; no owner is listed on the permit (Permit No. 97002988).</p> <p>Permit issued to “demolish interior walls and construct a new exit ramp at rear of store.” The scope appears to pertain to the interior. Ward Jewell is listed as the architect; Descoto West is listed as the contractor; no owner is listed on the permit (Permit No. 97003548).</p> <p>Various application materials are submitted, and approved, related to exterior façade modifications and awning alterations. The scope of work was requested to accommodate a new tenant, Point Carrè of Beverly Hills, which relocated to the subject building from 319 N Rodeo Dr. Gabriel Ruspini of Ward Jewell &amp; Associates is listed as the architect; Mike Witte of d’Escoto West is listed as the contractor; Bill Arnaout of Point Carrè (business owner) and Karl B. Schurz (property owner) are listed as the owners.</p>
<b>2007</b>	<p>Permit issued for various interior and exterior alterations. The scope is described as “alter 3 existing stores to 1, raise parapet, interior non-structural demolition, [and] interior renovation.” Drawings submitted with the permit application also indicate that the scope included new awnings. These improvements coincided with the arrival of a new tenant, Juicy Couture, and produced the building’s present-day façade treatment. Albert Gregor is listed as the architect; multiple construction firms are listed as the contractors; no owner is listed on the permit, though it does make reference to Juicy Couture (Permit No. BS0713419).</p> <p>Permit issued for the demolition of interior and exterior canopies. Albert Gregor is listed as the architect; National Contractors, Inc. is listed as the contractor; no owner is listed on the permit (Permit No. BS0715434).</p> <p>Application submitted to install a balconette and French doors in the place of an existing second floor window on the rear (northeast) façade. Global Arch, LLC is listed as the architect; John J Neeson is listed as the applicant; Carl B. Shurz [sic] is listed as the owner. It is not clear if this permit was approved, and based on evaluation of existing conditions this scope of work does not appear to have been completed (Case No. PL0861168).</p>
<b>2015</b>	Permit issued for interior alterations. The scope of work is described as “interior T.I. for Ralph Lauren temp. store.” Gruen Associates Architecture is listed as the architect; Shawmut Design & Construction is listed as the contractor; Ralph Lauren Corp. is listed as the applicant; no owner is listed on the permit (Permit No. BS1525804).



<b>2018</b>	Permit issued for interior alterations. The scope of work is described as “interior soft demo – finishes, flooring, ceiling, non-bearing walls,” and appears to be associated with tenant improvements for the current tenant, Celine. Gruen Associates Architecture is listed as the architect; Alain Hirsch Construction Corp. is listed as the contractor; no owner is listed on the permit (Permit No. BS1807305).
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### 3.2. Alterations

The following alterations were noted during a site visit conducted by ARG on May 5, 2020. Whenever possible, these alterations were corroborated by the building permits listed above, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, historic aerial images, parcel data from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor, and other source materials. The alterations listed herein pertain only to the exterior of the building.

- The primary façade and storefronts have been extensively modified, as follows:
  - The parapet has been elevated several feet, providing a sense of added height; a molded cornice was added to the parapet
  - Original wall cladding has been replaced with a smooth, scored plaster finish
  - Pilasters that historically delineated storefront bays have been removed or obscured
  - Embossed, full height arches have been added to each storefront bay
  - All doors have been replaced
  - All windows have been replaced
  - Fenestration patterns have been modified
  - Signage has been altered
- The rear façade has been extensively modified, as follows:
  - Exterior walls, originally exposed brick, have been clad in smooth plaster
  - The parapet, which appears to have originally been stepped, is now flat; a molded cornice has been added to the top of the parapet
  - All doors have been replaced
  - All windows have been replaced
  - Two upper-story windows – one at each end of the façade – have been infilled; the four extant windows appear to have been resized
  - Surrounds have been added to the windows
- Decking has been added to the roof to obscure mechanical equipment

Building permits indicate that almost all of these alterations date to 2007, when the building underwent an extensive renovation to accommodate then-tenant Juicy Couture. Together, these alterations have significantly changed the appearance of the building as to where it retains little original fabric aside from its essential form and structure, and does not retain the look or feel of a 1940s commercial building.

## 4. Historic Contexts

### 4.1. Commercial Development in the Business Triangle

456 North Rodeo Drive is located in an area of Beverly Hills that is known as the Business Triangle (and at times, colloquially, as the Golden Triangle) so named because of its distinctive, triangular form. Located near the center of Beverly Hills, between Santa Monica and Wilshire Boulevards and Canon Drive, the area is densely developed with various commercial and institutional uses. It serves as the City's central business district and civic center.

In spite of its present-day associations with luxury, glamour, opulence, and wealth, Beverly Hills had relatively inauspicious beginnings. The first house was constructed in 1907, but overall development activity in the nascent community was languid. The Beverly Hills Hotel was constructed between 1911-1912 in an attempt to lure in prospective buyers. In its early years, the sprawling Mission Revival style complex not only served as a luxurious hostelry, but also functioned as a *de facto* community center for area residents.<sup>3</sup> Since the hotel was located amid what was then a swath of peripheral, undeveloped land, an auxiliary rail line called The Dinky was built to convey people between the hotel and the Pacific Electric Railway line nearer the center of town.<sup>4</sup> The Dinky traveled down the center of Rodeo Drive, originating at its intersection with Santa Monica Boulevard and terminating at the hotel on Sunset Boulevard.

Beverly Hills formally incorporated as an independent city in 1914, but development – and particularly commercial development – remained sluggish. Aside from the hotel, the City's only commercial buildings were clustered near the intersection of Beverly Drive and Burton Way (now South Santa Monica Boulevard). At this time, the business district consisted of a small handful of one- and two-story business blocks that were occupied by grocers, barbers, hardware stores, a bank, a post office, and other enterprises that served residents' day-to-day needs. A Pacific Electric Railway station was located just to the north, on Santa Monica Boulevard. Elsewhere within the Business Triangle, the blocks were sparsely developed with a smattering of small, humble bungalows for those of more modest means.<sup>5</sup>

Just to the south of the business district and Business Triangle, where the Beverly Wilshire Hotel and Beverly Hills High School are located today, a wood plank track for automobile racing was built between 1919-1920. Known as the Beverly Hills Speedway, it became an immediate attraction and was ranked second in race quality only to the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway.<sup>6</sup> But as popular as the speedway was, rising real estate costs and mounting development pressures meant that it was a short-lived endeavor. The racetrack was demolished in 1924, and the land was subdivided shortly thereafter.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed May 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Water and Power Associates, "Early Views of Beverly Hills," accessed May 2020. Additional information about development patterns in Beverly Hills was gleaned from Sanborn Fire Insurance maps dated 1922.

<sup>6</sup> Susan King, "Speedway Brought Life in the Fast Lane to 1920s Beverly Hills," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 24, 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid; Pacific Coast Architecture Database, "Beverly Hills Speedway, Beverly Hills, CA (1919-1920)," accessed May 2020.

Like most communities in Southern California, Beverly Hills witnessed an unprecedented amount of growth and development in the 1920s. It was during this time that the community truly came of age, shedding its roots as a small, peripheral outpost and asserting itself as one of Southern California's premier residential communities. Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Will Rogers, Rudolph Valentino, and other A-list celebrities built stylish mansions in the community, cementing its reputation as a haven for the entertainment elite.<sup>8</sup> As Beverly Hills's population grew, its small commercial node evolved into a discernible central business district. A number of new commercial buildings arose in the triangular-shaped district between Santa Monica and Wilshire boulevards. Buildings like the exotic Beverly Theatre (1925, L.A. Smith, not extant) and the posh, Renaissance Revival style Beverly Wilshire Apartment Hotel (1928, Walker and Eisen) attested to the quality of architecture in the city at this time.

In the early 1930s, two resplendent civic buildings were constructed at the northeast corner of the triangular-shaped business district: the Spanish Renaissance style Beverly Hills City Hall (1932, William J. Gage and Harry G. Koerner), and the Italian Renaissance style Beverly Hills Post Office (1934, Ralph Flewelling and Allison and Allison). These buildings denoted the civic and political heart of the burgeoning city, and represented significant new additions to its commercial and institutional core.

Beverly Hills entered into another period of remarkable growth after World War II. Parcels that had remained undeveloped prior to the war were swiftly purchased and improved, and the City also expanded its physical reach by annexing a large tract of hillside land that became the Trousdale Estates.<sup>9</sup> The character of commercial development also began to visibly transform at this time, with Rodeo Drive as its focus. Historically a "fairly quiet suburban street with beauty shops, hardware stores, gas stations and bookstores," Rodeo Drive began to evolve into an internationally renowned locus of the cultural elite.<sup>10</sup> In 1967, fashion retailer Fred Hayman opened Giorgio Beverly Hills, the first high-end boutique to open on the street. Other luxurious retailers including Parisian jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels (1969) and coiffeur Vidal Sassoon (1970) followed suit.<sup>11</sup> Subsequent development on Rodeo Drive and nearby streets took on an increasingly posh and sumptuous character.

The subject building is associated with this latter period of commercial growth. Completed in 1948, its construction is associated with the wave of commercial development that took place in the early postwar period to serve the area's growing population, and culminated in an increasingly dense commercial streetscape along Rodeo Drive and other major streets within the City's business district.

## 4.2. Owners and Occupants: 456 North Rodeo Drive

Sanborn maps, permit records, historic aerial images, and other source materials indicate that prior to the construction of the subject building, its parcel was undeveloped. The original construction permit for the subject building was issued in 1947; construction was completed in 1948. Original permit records indicate that the building was erected by building contractor Bernard Lindberg, and that its original

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<sup>8</sup> City of Beverly Hills, "History of Beverly Hills," accessed May 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed May 2020.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Darling, "A Rodeo Drive Timeline," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 9, 2013.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

owners were Mrs. Maude Lloyd and A. Miller; no architect is identified on the permit.<sup>12</sup> Permit records describe the building as a “one-story and mezzanine” structure, and state that it was purpose-built as a single retail store. In 1952, the property was sold to Karl Schurz, a prominent Beverly Hills real estate developer and commercial landlord, for \$120,000.<sup>13</sup> Schurz owned a number of commercial properties within the Business Triangle.

The building’s first known commercial tenant was a retail store called Crawford’s, which sold an array of consumer electronics including televisions, transistor radios, stereo equipment, musical instruments, telephones, and vinyl records. Crawford’s closed in 1960.<sup>14</sup> The next tenant was a retail store called the Beverly Hills Music Company which, despite its name, also appears to have sold a similar variety of consumer electronics. The Beverly Hills Music Company remained in business until 1961. A *Los Angeles Times* advertisement from June 1961 announced the liquidation of its inventory, noting that the business “goes broke” and declaring that “everything must be sold...to the bare walls...immediately.”<sup>15</sup>

In September 1961, a permit was issued to renovate the store into an art gallery.<sup>16</sup> Known as the Raymond Burr Galleries, it appears to have opened by late 1961 and, as its name suggests, was operated by Raymond Burr, a noted Canadian-American actor best known for his title roles in the television dramas *Perry Mason* and *Ironside*. In addition to acting, Burr had an eclectic laundry list of hobbies that included flying, sailing, fishing, hybridizing orchids, cultivating grapes and making wine, importing and breeding Portuguese Water Dogs, and collecting art.<sup>17</sup> At his Rodeo Drive gallery, Burr displayed a rotating exhibit of art – mostly paintings – and hosted a number of star-studded receptions and other exclusive events. Ava Astaire, an aspiring artist and the daughter of dancer Fred Astaire, was among those employed at the gallery.<sup>18</sup> In 1963, the gallery hosted a fashion show in advance of that year’s Academy Awards, which was described as “a royal fete of stars and styles.”<sup>19</sup> The purpose of the event, notes the *Los Angeles Times*, was to provide film stars and others associated with the top brass of the entertainment industry with an opportunity to “view a collection of evening dresses and ball gowns that that will be registered as sold to avoid the embarrassment of duplication...red velvet, red roses and a 60-ft. red-carpeted runway have transformed the Burr Galleries for the evening”<sup>20</sup>

The Raymond Burr Galleries appears to have been a fleeting venture; references to the art gallery stop appearing in newspapers and other outlets of popular culture by early 1964. By 1967, the building had been reverted back into a store and was now occupied by a clothing retailer called Eres Couture, which remained in operation at this location until the early 1980s. Operated by Sam and Helene Rosenblatt, both from Paris, Eres Couture sold high-end women’s apparel, much of which was custom made by Sam Rosenblatt himself. The Rosenblatts renovated the building to exude a Parisian atmosphere. “From the gazebo centering the interior to the street signs that connote areas of merchandise...to the armoires and

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<sup>12</sup> City of Beverly Hills, Permit No. 22394, issued Aug. 1947.

<sup>13</sup> “Sales Volume Tops \$380,000,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 30, 1952.

<sup>14</sup> Display Ad, *Los Angeles Times*, Apr. 13, 1960.

<sup>15</sup> Display Ad, *Los Angeles Times*, Jun. 4, 1961.

<sup>16</sup> City of Beverly Hills, Permit No. 611129, issued Sept. 1961.

<sup>17</sup> William Grimes, “Raymond Burr, Actor, 76, Dies; Played Perry Mason and Ironside,” *New York Times*, Sept. 14, 1993.

<sup>18</sup> Hedda Hopper, “Ava’s Happy Birthday,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 30, 1963.

<sup>19</sup> Fay Hammond, “Everybody a Winner When Saks Unveils Oscar Award Ball Gowns,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 15, 1963.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

antique furniture, the accent is French,” remarks the *Los Angeles Times*.<sup>21</sup> Among the store’s regular customers included model Rosemary Bowe Stack, wife of actor Robert Stack; singer and actress Harriet Nelson, wife of actor Ozzie Nelson and co-star of the television sitcom *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*; and model and onetime Orange Bowl Queen Jeanne Martin, the wife of actor Dean Martin.<sup>22</sup>

Between late 1982 and early 1983, multiple permits were issued for tasks related to tenant improvements, connoting a change in tenancy at this time. Thereafter, the building was occupied by the Mila Schon boutique, a women’s clothing and accessories store operated by Giuseppe and Kay Battaglia. Unlike the previous tenant, whose brand identity was irrefutably French, the Mila Schon boutique capitalized on Italian haute couture. “The Mila Schon boutique caters to the very chic women of Milan,” once remarked a buyer for the company, “who are after all the chicquest [sic] in the world.”<sup>23</sup>

Other tenants who are known to have occupied the building in subsequent years include the Tamara Bane Art Gallery, a walk-in gallery that exhibited erotic paintings (1980s-1990s); Banrie of Italy (women and men’s apparel, 1990s); Point Carrè of Beverly Hills (men’s apparel, 1990s); Juicy Couture (women’s apparel, 2000s), and a temporary store for Ralph Lauren (women’s and men’s apparel, 2010s).<sup>24</sup> By the 1990s, the building had been divided into three separate storefronts, which were joined back together with the arrival of Juicy Couture in 2007.<sup>25</sup> Since 2019, the building has been occupied by a flagship store of French luxury brand Celine, which sells handbags and other accessories. Its interior, designed by the French photographer and creative director Hedi Slimane, is replete with artwork produced by noted contemporary artists, including “sculptures from David Nash and Virginia Overton. Other design elements include Basaltina, a Roman lava stone, alongside reclaimed oak and brass and gold mirrors.”<sup>26</sup>

In 2018, the property was sold by its longtime owner, the Karl B. Schurz Trust, to the Sterling Organization, a Florida-based private equity group that “obtained control of the property via a highly-structured, off-market deal first made public through the recording of a long-term ground lease with rights to purchase.”<sup>27</sup> The next day, the property was sold to LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton Inc.<sup>28</sup>

### 4.3. Raymond Burr

Arguably the single-most significant individual associated with the building was Raymond Burr, an acclaimed television actor who operated an art gallery in this space between circa 1961 and circa 1964.

Raymond William Stacy Burr (1917-1993) was born in British Columbia. Accounts of his early life are conflated with his own embellished descriptions, which are factually dubious. It is known that as a child, Burr moved with his family to China, then back to Canada, and finally settled in Vallejo, California with

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<sup>21</sup> Dorothy Harrington, “Boutique Beat: Clothes with French Accent,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 9, 1972.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> “Say Cheese,” *Los Angeles Times*, Jun. 25, 1984; Mary Lou Loper, “Organizers Barge In for L.A. Junior League,” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 13, 1986.

<sup>24</sup> Gleaned from building permit records, accessed May 2020 via the City of Beverly Hills Community Development Department.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Kavita Daswani, “Celine Brings its Hedi Slimane Charms to Beverly Hills With a New Store,” *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 21, 2019.

<sup>27</sup> Claran McEvoy, “LVMH Buys Rodeo Drive Retail Space for \$110M,” *Los Angeles Business Journal*, Mar. 29, 2018.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*



his mother after his parents divorced. He matriculated at the San Rafael Military Academy but soon dropped out to support his mother and siblings during the Great Depression, finding working on a cattle and sheep ranch in New Mexico.<sup>29</sup> Burr then returned to school but dropped out once again. He would only ever possess a junior high-level education.

Burr began his acting career on the Broadway theater circuit in the early 1940s, though he had picked up some occasional acting work during his youth. In 1941, he made his theater debut in the musical *Crazy With the Heart*, and appeared in various other live productions before enlisting in the Navy at the onset of World War II.<sup>30</sup> After he was discharged from the Navy in 1946, he returned to acting, and his burly, imposing appearance – at the time, he stood six feet tall, weighed approximately 350 pounds, and had a deep, commanding voice – led to numerous casting opportunities in motion pictures, typically as a villain. He began starring in films during the late 1940 and early 1950s; among the numerous productions in which Burr appeared were *Without Reservations* (1946), a comedy film starring John Wayne and Claudette Colbert; *Pitfall* (1946), a suspense film starring Dick Powell; *Rear Window* (1954), a thriller in which he played a heinous murderer; *San Quentin* (1947); *The Adventures of Don Juan* (1948); and *A Cry in the Night* (1956). By the end of his acting career, Burr had starred in some 90 motion pictures.<sup>31</sup>

Beginning in the 1950s, Burr found success as a television character actor – which is arguably the context in which he is best known. In 1957, he was cast as the lead in the CBS television drama series *Perry Mason*, which became immortalized in television history as one of the industry’s longest running and most successful television drama series. For the show’s duration, between 1957 and 1966, Burr starred as Perry Mason, a criminal defense attorney from Los Angeles. Episodes ascribed to the same basic formula: “aided by investigator Paul Drake (William Hopper) and secretary Della Street (Barbara Hale), Mason ferreted out the truth and foiled prosecutor Hamilton Burger (William Talman) at trial’s end, often with a dramatic courtroom confession from the real culprit.”<sup>32</sup> The program was consistently among the most popular on television, and for his role, Burr twice won Emmy Awards for best actor.<sup>33</sup>

Between 1967 and 1975, Burr once again found success on television, this time as the curmudgeonly, paraplegic police detective Robert T. Ironside in the NBC television drama series *Ironside*. *Ironside* was also an extraordinarily popular program, and its eponymous lead character is among the roles for which Burr is best remembered. Burr was nominated for six Emmy Awards and two Golden Globe Awards for his starring role in the series.<sup>34</sup> After *Ironside* went off the air, Burr appeared in a number of other popular television drama series including *Kingston: Confidential*, *Centennial*, and *Unsolved Mysteries*.<sup>35</sup>

Burr often bears mention as a *cause de celebre* in the context of the gay and lesbian (LGBT) rights movement. While he never officially came out as a gay man – at the time, such a proclamation would have irrefutably destroyed his career – and while his burly, stereotypically masculine characters were

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<sup>29</sup> William Grimes, “Raymond Burr, Actor, 76, Dies; Played Perry Mason and Ironside,” *New York Times*, Sept. 14, 1993.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> “Actor Raymond Burr Dies at 76,” *The Washington Post*, Sept. 14, 1993.

<sup>33</sup> IMBd, “Raymond Burr: Biography,” accessed May 2020.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> “Actor Raymond Burr Dies at 76,” *The Washington Post*, Sept. 14, 1993.

antithetical to popular opinion about the appearance and conduct of gay men, Burr's homosexuality is considered to be one of Hollywood's most open, yet best kept secrets. Burr's sexuality was supposedly well known among his peers, but they remained tight lipped in order to shield their friend and colleague from the discrimination that would have certainly come with being "outed" as a gay man at the time.<sup>36</sup> In 1960, on the set of *Perry Mason*, Burr met actor Robert Benevides, with whom he developed a close relationship with. Burr and Benevides were domestic partners for some thirty years until Burr's death. Burr died in 1993, at age 76, in Healdsburg, California. The cause of death was kidney cancer.<sup>37</sup>

#### 4.4. Architecture and Design

Historic photos depicting the building in its original state could not be found, but based upon descriptions of the building in permit records, newspaper articles, and other source materials the building appears to have originally been a vernacular commercial structure that was designed to be consistent with the scale and character of other commercial buildings in the vicinity but lacked the distinctive characteristics of a particular architectural style. Alterations have been made to the building over time to accommodate changes in tenancy; the building was extensively modified in 2007 to accommodate then-tenant Juicy Couture, which resulted in the building's present-day appearance. The building, in its present state, exudes a contemporary appearance but lacks the characteristics of a style.

A number of architects and builders are linked to the design and construction of the building over its history. Building contractor Bernard Lindberg (1893-1982) presided over its original construction. Lindberg was born in Sweden and appears to have emigrated to Wisconsin in 1912, becoming a United States citizen in 1919.<sup>38</sup> By 1924, Lindberg was living in California and working as a carpenter. By about 1930, Lindberg was working as a contractor in Los Angeles.<sup>39</sup> There is little information about Lindberg's career. What appears to have been his most notable commission was Park West, a luxury apartment building in Westwood (1441 S Beverly Glen Boulevard) which he built in 1954 in collaboration with architects I. Herman Kanner and Robert Mayer.<sup>40</sup> Lindberg died in Los Angeles in 1982 at the age of 89.<sup>41</sup>

Building permits indicate that architects Claude Coyne, Jorge Newbery, Twen Ma, Ward Jewell, Albert Gregor, and Gruen Associates were involved in various remodeling projects at the subject building over the years. Generally, there is very little information about the lives, careers, and legacies of these practitioners. Gruen Associates is notable as one of Southern California's most prolific architectural firms, but its association with this building is nominal – the firm was retained to design minor tenant improvements in 2015 and 2018, more than 30 years after the death of its founder and namesake, Victor Gruen. The firm's scope of work appears to have generally been confined to interior spaces.

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<sup>36</sup> "Excerpt: Hidden in Plain Sight," *ABC News*, May 29, 2008.

<sup>37</sup> William Grimes, "Raymond Burr, Actor, 76, Dies; Played Perry Mason and Ironside," *New York Times*, Sept. 14, 1993.

<sup>38</sup> "Bernhard Lindberg [sic]," U.S. Passport Applications, 1795-1925, accessed May 2020 via Ancestry.com.

<sup>39</sup> "Bernard Lindberg," California Voter Registrations, 1900-1968," accessed May 2020 via Ancestry.com.

<sup>40</sup> "Westwood's Newest Luxury Apartments Now Available," *Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 27, 1954.

<sup>41</sup> "Bernard Lindberg," California Death Index, 1940-1997, accessed May 2020 via Ancestry.com.

Coyne – another of the better-known architects listed above – was a longtime associate of trailblazing architect Paul R. Williams, but does not appear to have made notable contributions in his own right.

## 5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation

### 5.1. National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation’s master inventory of known historic resources. Established under the auspices of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level. Eligibility for in the National Register is addressed in National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. NRB 15 states that in order to be eligible for the National Register, a resource must both: (1) be historically significant, and (2) retain sufficient integrity to adequately convey its significance.

Significance is assessed by evaluating a resource against established eligibility criteria. A resource is considered significant if it satisfies any one of the following four National Register criteria:<sup>42</sup>

- Criterion A (events): associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- Criterion B (persons): associated with the lives of significant persons in our past;
- Criterion C (architecture): embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- Criterion D (information potential): has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Once significance has been established, it must then be demonstrated that a resource retains enough of its physical and associative qualities – or *integrity* – to convey the reason(s) for its significance. Integrity is best described as a resource’s “authenticity” as expressed through its physical features and extant characteristics. Generally, if a resource is recognizable as such in its present state, it is said to retain integrity, but if it has been extensively altered then it does not. Whether a resource retains sufficient integrity for listing is determined by evaluating the seven aspects of integrity defined by NPS:

- Location (the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred);
- Setting (the physical environment of a historic property);
- Design (the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property);

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<sup>42</sup> Some resources may meet multiple criteria, though only one needs to be satisfied for National Register eligibility.

- Materials (the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular manner or configuration to form a historic property);
- Workmanship (the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory);
- Feeling (a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time);
- Association (the direct link between an important historic event/person and a historic property).

Integrity is evaluated by weighing all seven of these aspects together and is ultimately a “yes or no” determination – that is, a resource either retains sufficient integrity, or it does not.<sup>43</sup> Some aspects of integrity may be weighed more heavily than others depending on the type of resource being evaluated and the reason(s) for the resource’s significance. Since integrity depends on a resource’s placement within a historic context, integrity can be assessed only after it has been concluded that the resource is in fact significant.

## 5.2. California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an authoritative guide used to identify, inventory, and protect historical resources in California. Established by an act of the State Legislature in 1998, the California Register program encourages public recognition and protection of significant architectural, historical, archeological, and cultural resources; identifies these resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The structure of the California Register program is similar to that of the National Register, though the former more heavily emphasizes resources that have contributed specifically to the development of California. To be eligible for the California Register, a resource must first be deemed significant under one of the following four criteria, which are modeled after the National Register criteria listed above:

- Criterion 1 (events): associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
- Criterion 2 (persons): associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;
- Criterion 3 (architecture): 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 4 (information potential): has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, state, or the nation.

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<sup>43</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VIII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”



Mirroring the National Register, the California Register also requires that resources retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing. A resource's integrity is assessed using the same seven aspects of integrity used for the National Register. However, since integrity thresholds associated with the California Register are generally less rigid than those associated with the National Register, it is possible that a resource may lack the integrity required for the National Register but still be eligible for listing in the California Register.

Certain properties are automatically listed in the California Register, as follows:<sup>44</sup>

- All California properties that are listed in the National Register;
- All California properties that have formally been determined eligible for listing in the National Register (by the State Office of Historic Preservation);
- All California Historical Landmarks numbered 770 and above; and
- California Points of Historical Interest which have been reviewed by the State Office of Historic Preservation and recommended for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission.

Resources may be nominated directly to the California Register. State Historic Landmarks #770 and forward are also automatically listed in the California Register.

Unlike the National Register's 50 year age requirement, there is no prescribed age limit for listing in the California Register. However, guidelines state that sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with a resource.

### 5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance

Historic preservation in Beverly Hills is governed by Title 10, Chapter 3, Articles 32 and 32.5 of the Beverly Hills Municipal Code (referred to hereinafter as "the Ordinance"). The Ordinance authorizes the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) to recommend the nomination of properties as local landmarks and historic districts to the City Council. To facilitate this process, the Ordinance establishes requirements a property must meet in order to qualify for designation as a landmark listed in the City of Beverly Hills Register of Historic Properties. The 2012 Ordinance was revised and updated in 2015, with an additional amendment in 2016; all criteria and definitions used in this document are effective as of April 1, 2016.

To be eligible for local designation as a historic landmark, a property must satisfy the following sets of requirements (A and B) as noted:

**A. A landmark must meet all of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance;

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<sup>44</sup> California Public Resources Code, Division 5, Chapter 1, Article 2, § 5024.1.

- (2) It possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period;
- (3) It retains substantial integrity<sup>45</sup> from its period of significance; and
- (4) It has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.

**B. In addition to those listed above, a landmark must meet at least one of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- (2) It is an exceptional work<sup>46</sup> by a master architect<sup>47</sup>;
- (3) It is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous;
- (4) It is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance;
- (5) It is an iconic property<sup>48</sup>; or
- (6) The landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).

Mirroring the National Register and California Register, the Ordinance requires that a resource retain integrity. The Ordinance defines integrity as “the ability of a property to convey its historical significance through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, relevant association, and character defining features.”<sup>49</sup> This builds upon the definition that is used by the National Register.

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<sup>45</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “substantial integrity” as “Integrity that is considerable in importance, value, degree, amount, or extent, and that continues to exist, or would have continued to exist, but for work done without appropriate permits after the enactment of this article.”

<sup>46</sup> A 2016 amendment to BHMC 10-3-32 in Ord. 15-O-2700 defines “exceptional work” as “A remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community. At a minimum, the work’s exceptional quality shall have been documented by at least one of the following: a) it was the subject of a major architectural award; b) it was substantively discussed (i.e., not just mentioned) and photographically depicted in a monograph on a master architect’s career; or c) it was substantively discussed or photographically depicted in at least two (2) publications (e.g., a book, treatise, trade magazine article, film, or set of photographs made available to the public by an institutional archive) authored by acknowledged experts in the field of architecture. A monograph or publication made available to the public solely in electronic form and without any reasonable expectation of compensation to the author, or substantially authored by the architect of the work, shall not count toward this minimum.”

<sup>47</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “master architect” as “An architect of widely recognized greatness in the field of architecture whose individual genius influenced his or her age.”

<sup>48</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “iconic property” as “A property that has been visited and photographed so often by residents and visitors to the city that it has become inextricably associated with Beverly Hills in the popular culture and forms part of the city’s identity to the world at large.”

<sup>49</sup> BHMC 10-3-3202, Definitions.

## 6. Evaluation of Significance

### 6.1. Previous Evaluations

456 North Rodeo Drive is not currently designated, and it does not appear to have been previously evaluated for historical significance. The property is not listed in the California Historical Resources Inventory (HRI) database for Los Angeles County (last updated 2012), and was not identified in any of the City's historic resource survey efforts (1985/86, 2004, 2006, 2013).

### 6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility

#### National Register and California Register

ARG concludes that 456 North Rodeo Drive is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources, as follows:

***National/California Register Criterion A/1: associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history.***

Constructed in 1948, the building at 456 North Rodeo Drive is loosely associated with broad patterns of commercial development that characterized Beverly Hills in the early postwar era. Its construction is indicative of how parcels within the city's wedge-shaped business district – and particularly along its main street, Rodeo Drive – were developed with low-scale commercial buildings that were compatible with the bulk, scale, and general appearance of the area's existing commercial building stock. These buildings were generally constructed to house everyday businesses like beauty parlors, hardware stores, bookstores, and others that catered to the local community, and represented how the pace of commercial development corresponded to the steady residential growth taking place in Beverly Hills at this time. The subject building ascribed to this trend. It was purpose-built as a retail store, and for about a decade after its construction it was occupied by an electronics retailer that sold televisions, transistor radios, and various other consumer electronic products at reasonable prices. Its business model was typical of a neighborhood-oriented enterprise and appears to have catered to a middle-income clientele – a distant cry from the critical mass of high-end retailers that define Rodeo Drive in the present day.

The building is also demonstrative of how, in subsequent years, the identity of the Business Triangle evolved from one defined by typical businesses that catered to the local community to a glitzy, internationally renowned shopping destination comprising boutiques, coiffeurs, and various other high-end specialty retailers. For a brief period in the early 1960s, the building was occupied by the Raymond Burr Galleries, which was operated by television actor Raymond Burr and hosted a cadre of special events that drew a star-studded audience. The gallery exuded a sense of celebrity and exclusivity that was reflective of the area's evolving character. After the gallery's departure circa 1964, the building was

occupied by a succession of boutiques that embodied popular trends in fashion and similarly reflect this area's evolution into an epicenter of high culture and haute couture.

National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* provides guidance related to the evaluation of properties that are associated with events. It specifically states that "mere association with historic events or trends is not enough, in and of itself, to qualify under Criterion A: the property's specific association must be considered important as well. For example, a building historically in commercial use must be shown to have been significant in commercial history."<sup>50</sup>

Applying this guidance, the subject building is more representative of broad patterns of commercial history than it is exemplary. Numerous examples of commercial buildings dating to the postwar period pepper the blocks within the Business Triangle, all of which convey the same broad patterns of development. The same can be said for the building's association with broad patterns of commercial history associated with the Business Triangle's evolution into an epicenter of high culture during the latter decades of the twentieth century. By the 1960s, the area was beginning to witness this transformation with the arrival of exclusive retailers like clothier Giorgio Beverly Hills and jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels in 1967 and 1969, respectively, and coiffeur Vidal Sassoon in 1970. The presence of these businesses had a cascading effect on the surrounding area, as other commercial buildings within the Business Triangle were increasingly leased by similarly exclusive retailers. The subject building was one of many in the area that reflected this trend by attracting higher-profile tenants than it had in previous years. There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that this building somehow exemplifies these broad patterns of commercial history in a way that is not equally expressed in the many other commercial buildings in the vicinity that date to the same general era and bear the same broad associative qualities.

There is also insufficient evidence demonstrating that the subject building is associated with an event that is singularly significant to history. When the building was occupied by Raymond Burr Galleries from circa 1961 to circa 1964, it was often used as a venue for receptions, fashion shows, and other events. Given the gallery's association with Burr, a noted television star, these events were typically exclusive affairs that were attended by a cadre of celebrities. However, events of this nature are not atypical of galleries, and especially those with a celebrity affiliation. While the events that took place at the gallery appear to have been well attended by Burr's celebrity friends, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that any one of these events contributed to an understanding of history in the spirit of this criterion. Celebrity-studded galas were commonplace in Southern California, and particularly in communities like Beverly Hills that had longstanding reputations as bastions of celebrity life and culture.

Furthermore, the building has been significantly altered since the mid-1960s, and no longer bears any visual association with the period during which Raymond Burr housed his gallery at this location. As noted, the building's current appearance largely dates to an extensive remodel that dates to 2007.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion A/1.

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<sup>50</sup> Derived from National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

***National/California Register Criterion B/2: associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.***

The building at 456 North Rodeo Drive has been continuously used for commercial purposes since its construction in 1948. It is typical for commercial buildings to be loosely associated with a considerable number of people, as these buildings are generally intended to be accessible to the public and are frequented by staff members. Many customers have patronized the various businesses that have operated out of this building over time; many business owners and shopkeepers have presided over these businesses. Between 1952 and 2018, the property on which the building is located was owned by Karl Schurz and his family's trust; Schurz and his son, also named Karl Schurz, headed the Karl B. Schurz Company, a prominent local real estate development firm and commercial landlord.

However, with the exception of Raymond Burr, who operated an art gallery in the building for a brief period in the 1960s (and is discussed below), there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that any one of the individuals associated with the building is historically significant in the spirit of this criterion. There is no evidence to demonstrate that any customers, proprietors, or landlords associated with the building made notable contributions to local, state, or national history in the spirit of this criterion.

The notable exception, of course, is Raymond Burr (1917-1993), a noted Canadian American television actor who was best known for his leading roles in the television programs *Perry Mason* and *Ironsides*. Burr had myriad hobbies that he pursued in his time away from the small screen, including art collection. Toward this end, Burr operated an art gallery out of the subject building between circa 1961 and 1964, during which time he displayed a rotating exhibit of paintings and other works of art that piqued his interest. Burr also hosted celebrity-studded galas and other events at his eponymous gallery.

This begs the question of whether the building is significant for its association with Burr. National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* provides guidance related to the evaluation of properties associated with significant people. It lists two benchmarks that must be met for a property to meet Criterion B: first, "the persons associated with the property must be individually significant within a historic context," and second, the property must be "associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he or she achieved significance."<sup>51</sup>

When this guidance is applied, the subject building does not appear to be significant for its association with Burr. Burr is, by all accounts, a historically significant individual, but there is insufficient evidence to substantiate the second benchmark – that this building somehow bears a direct and meaningful association with Burr's productive life as an entertainer. Burr's significance is derived from his accomplishments as a character actor. Research suggests that the building had very little to do with his professional career in this regard – he did not produce, write, or film episodes of his popular television shows here, and the goings-on in this building did not propel his acting career in any sort of meaningful way. The only association between this building and his acting career pertained to his hosting of special events that were attended by his celebrity friends – an association that is nominal at best..

Furthermore, as noted above, the building has been significantly altered since the mid-1960s, and no longer bears any visual association with the period during which Raymond Burr housed his gallery here.

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<sup>51</sup> Derived from National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.



For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with the lives of persons important to local, state, or national history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion B/2.

***National/California Register Criterion C/3: embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.***

The building at 456 North Rodeo Drive is vernacular and lacks the distinctive characteristics of a particular architectural style. Its present-day appearance largely dates to an extensive remodel that was completed in 2007 at the behest of its then-tenant, Juicy Couture. This remodeling project provided the building with a contemporary aesthetic that does not at all resemble a 1940s-era commercial building.

The building is not notable on account of its method of construction. Permits indicate that it was constructed of brick and featured a trussed wood roof – a common construction method for small-scale commercial buildings of its era. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that there is anything unusual, innovative, or otherwise noteworthy about that manner in which it was constructed.

The building does not represent the notable work of a master. The original permit identifies the builder as Bernard Lindberg, a contractor who was based in Los Angeles; no architect was identified on the permit. There is little information available about the life and career of Lindberg aside from that he was born in Sweden and arrived in Los Angeles by way of Wisconsin; there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that he made notable contributions to his craft in the spirit of this criterion. Lindberg is not mentioned in any of the standard literature about locally significant practitioners of his respective era. The building also does not appear in any architectural books, journals, or periodicals from its time of construction, indicating that it was not seen as a notable architectural work.

Other architects associated with alterations made to the building after its original construction include Claude Coyne, Jorge Newbery, Twen Ma, Ward Jewell, Albert Gregor, and Gruen Associates, all of whom were retained to complete various remodeling projects and tenant improvements over the years. Generally speaking, aside from Gruen Associates, there is very little information about the lives, careers, and legacies of these practitioners. Coyne was a longtime associate of Paul R. Williams, but he does not appear to have made significant inroads in his own right. Gruen Associates is also notable as one of Southern California's largest and most prolific architectural firms, but its association with this building is nominal and part of recent history – the firm was retained to design minor tenant improvements in 2015 and 2018, which were generally confined to interior spaces and did not significantly alter the appearance of the building. These minor alterations were completed more than 30 years after the death of the firm's founder and namesake, Victor Gruen, who died in 1980. With the exception of Gruen, none of the above-listed practitioners is included on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Master Architects; Gruen Associates' involvement in the design of this building is so nominal that it does not appear to merit any additional discussion for purposes of this evaluation.

Given its vernacular and heavily altered appearance, the building does not possess high artistic value, and given its status as a single property with no meaningful visual or associative relationship with its environs, the building does not represent a significant entity whose components lack individual distinction.

For these reasons, the subject building is not significant for reasons related to its architecture and physical design, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion C/3.

***National/California Register Criterion D/4.*** *Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.*

As an archaeological assessment was not conducted as part of this study, the property's potential for containing subsurface archaeological resources is unknown.

## Local Eligibility

ARG concludes that 456 North Rodeo Drive is not eligible for local listing as a Beverly Hills Landmark, as follows:

### **Part A Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet all four of the following requirements):**

***Criterion A.1:*** *it is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance.*

The subject building was constructed in 1948, making it about 72 years of age at this time of this evaluation. It surpasses the City's 45-year age threshold. Thus, the building meets local Criterion A.1.

***Criterion A.2:*** *it possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period.*

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, the subject building is a vernacular edifice that has been extensively altered over time. It does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a particular architectural style, type, or period, and does not possess high aesthetic or artistic value. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion A.2.

***Criterion A.3:*** *it retains substantial integrity from its period of significance.*

The subject building has been extensively altered, to the extent that it retains very little historic fabric and no longer retains the distinctive look and feel of a 1940s-era commercial building. Its primary façade has been modified over the years to accommodate the preferences of its individual tenants. The current appearance of the building largely dates to a 2007 remodel that, among other things, resulted in augmentation of the parapet and a complete remodel of the façade and storefronts. The building, then, does not retain integrity from its 1948 date of construction, and does not meet local Criterion A.3.

***Criterion A.4:*** *it has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.*

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register criteria, this building is a typical example of a commercial building from the early postwar era. It was constructed in a vernacular architectural style using common methods and materials, and has been occupied by a typical succession

of commercial tenants. There is nothing particularly remarkable about this building that would suggest that it has continued historic value to the community. For these same reasons, the building does not satisfy local Criterion A.4.

**Part B Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet at least one of the following requirements):**

***Criterion B.1: it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.***

The subject building is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and therefore does not meet local Criterion B.1.

***Criterion B.2: it is an exceptional work by a master architect.***

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, the building was not designed by an architect; it was constructed by a contractor named Bernard Lindberg about whom little is known. Other architects associated with the building, who completed renovations and tenant improvements in subsequent years, are not listed on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Master Architects aside from Gruen Architects, which carried out some minor tenant improvements in 2015 and 2018. The scope of work toward this end was so nominal and recent that it cannot be regarded as an exceptional work of Gruen Associates. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion B.2.

***Criterion B.3: it is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous.***

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion B/2, there is insufficient evidence demonstrating that the subject building bears a meaningful association with the productive lives of historically significant individuals. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion B.3.

***Criterion B.4: it is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance.***

As addressed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion B/2 and local Criterion B.3, the subject building does not appear to have been associated with persons of great local importance in a manner that would merit consideration under this criterion. For these same reasons, the building does not meet local Criterion B.4.

**Criterion B.5:** *it is an iconic property.*

The subject building is not an iconic property as defined by the Ordinance. It is a ubiquitous commercial building that complements the streetscape of Rodeo Drive but does not possess any architectural or contextual qualities that would render it iconic. The building therefore does not meet local Criterion B.5.

**Criterion B.6:** *the landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).*

The Landmark designation procedure is not known to have been initiated by any parties, and the owner(s) of the property have not expressly agreed to the initiation of such a procedure. As a result, the subject building does not meet Criterion B.6.

### **Summary of Local Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for local listing, a resource must meet all four of the above-listed Part A requirements, and at least one of the above-listed Part B requirements. As addressed above, the subject building does not meet Criterion A.2, A.3, and A.4, as required, and does not meet any of the Part B requirements. In summary, the building does not meet local eligibility criteria.

## **6.3. Evaluation of Integrity**

For a property to be eligible for listing in the National and California Registers, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark, it must meet eligibility criteria and must also retain sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance. *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* states that “only after significance is fully established can you proceed to the issue of integrity.”<sup>52</sup> In accordance with best professional practices, it is customary to apply this same methodology when evaluating resources at the state and local levels. Because the building does not meet the criteria for federal, state, or local listing, an assessment of integrity is not necessary.

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<sup>52</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

## 7. Conclusion

Per the above analysis, the building at 456 North Rodeo Drive does not meet any of the criteria for federal, state, or local listing. Therefore, ARG concludes that the building is not considered to be a “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA.

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# 468 North Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills, CA Historic Resources Assessment Report

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Executive Summary	1
1.2. Preparer Qualifications	2
<b>2. Architectural Description</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1. Site and Setting	3
2.2. Building Exterior	4
2.3. Landscape and Hardscape Features	5
<b>3. Development Chronology and Alterations</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4. Historic Contexts</b>	<b>13</b>
4.1. Commercial Development in Beverly Hills	13
4.2. 468 North Rodeo Drive	14
4.3. New Classicism	17
4.4. Allan Greenberg, Architect	19
<b>5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation</b>	<b>22</b>
5.1. National Register of Historic Places	22
5.2. California Register of Historical Resources	24
5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance	25
<b>6. Evaluation of Significance</b>	<b>27</b>
6.1. Previous Evaluations	27
6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility	27
6.3. Evaluation of Integrity	35
<b>7. Conclusion</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>8. Bibliography</b>	<b>37</b>

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Executive Summary

Architectural Resources Group (ARG) has prepared this Historic Resource Assessment Report for the property at 468 North Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills, California. The property is developed with a two-story commercial building that was constructed in 1997 as a flagship retail store for the clothing brand Tommy Hilfiger Corp. It later served as a flagship retail store for the Brooks Brothers clothing brand. The building is currently vacant.

The subject building was designed by Allan Greenberg. Greenberg is a prominent exponent of the modern architectural movement known as New Classicism, a neo-historicist paradigm that celebrates, emulates, and reinterprets classically derived architectural forms and motifs. His eponymous architectural practice, established in 1972, remains active, with offices in New York and Alexandria, VA.

ARG evaluated the subject building to determine whether it appears to be eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, and/or as a Beverly Hills Landmark. At only 23 years of age at this writing, the subject building is generally too young to be considered a historical resource. Federal, state, and local eligibility criteria all have age requirements that safeguard against the designation of properties of “passing contemporary interest,” ensuring these designation programs remain lists of truly historical resources. However, due to the fact that the building was designed by an acclaimed architect, it is evaluated herein for its potential to have exceptional importance such that it meets eligibility criteria despite its very young age.

Preparation of this report included the following tasks related to research, documentation, and analysis:

- Visited the property on February 19, 2019 to assess existing conditions and document the building with digital photographs;
- Reviewed pertinent federal and state technical bulletins, local ordinances, and other reference materials related to the evaluation of historical resources;
- Reviewed applicable background materials including historical building permits and Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) data for the subject property;
- Conducted supplemental research to glean additional information about the property’s development history, design, occupancy, and potential historical significance;
- Identified applicable historic contexts and themes; and
- Evaluated the building against eligibility criteria for the National Register, the California Register, and as a Beverly Hills Landmark.

Research materials were culled from the following sources: the Los Angeles Public Library; the Beverly Hills Public Library; the archives of the *Los Angeles Times* and other local periodicals; building permits obtained from the City of Beverly Hills’s Community Development Department; technical bulletins

published by the National Park Service (NPS) and the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP); online repositories; and ARG’s in-house collection of architectural books and reference materials. A complete list of sources is included in *Section 8: Bibliography* of this report.

Because the property is less than 50 years of age, the analysis herein incorporates the guidance enumerated by National Register Criteria Consideration G, a set of evaluative guidelines applied when assessing resources of the recent past (generally defined as those constructed in the past 50 years).<sup>1</sup>

In summary, ARG concludes that the subject building is not eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark, and is thus not considered to be a “historical resource” for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The following sections provide a contextual basis for analysis and a detailed discussion of how this determination was made.

## 1.2. Preparer Qualifications

This report was prepared by Katie E. Horak, Principal, Andrew Goodrich, AICP, Associate, and Lakan Cole, all Architectural Historians and Preservation Planners. ARG intern Rafael Fontes provided additional project support. Ms. Horak, Mr. Goodrich, and Ms. Cole meet the *Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards*, 36 CFR Part 61, in the discipline of Architectural History.

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<sup>1</sup> Derived from National Register Bulletin No. 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. Criterion Consideration G is addressed in greater detail in Sections 5 and 6 of this report.

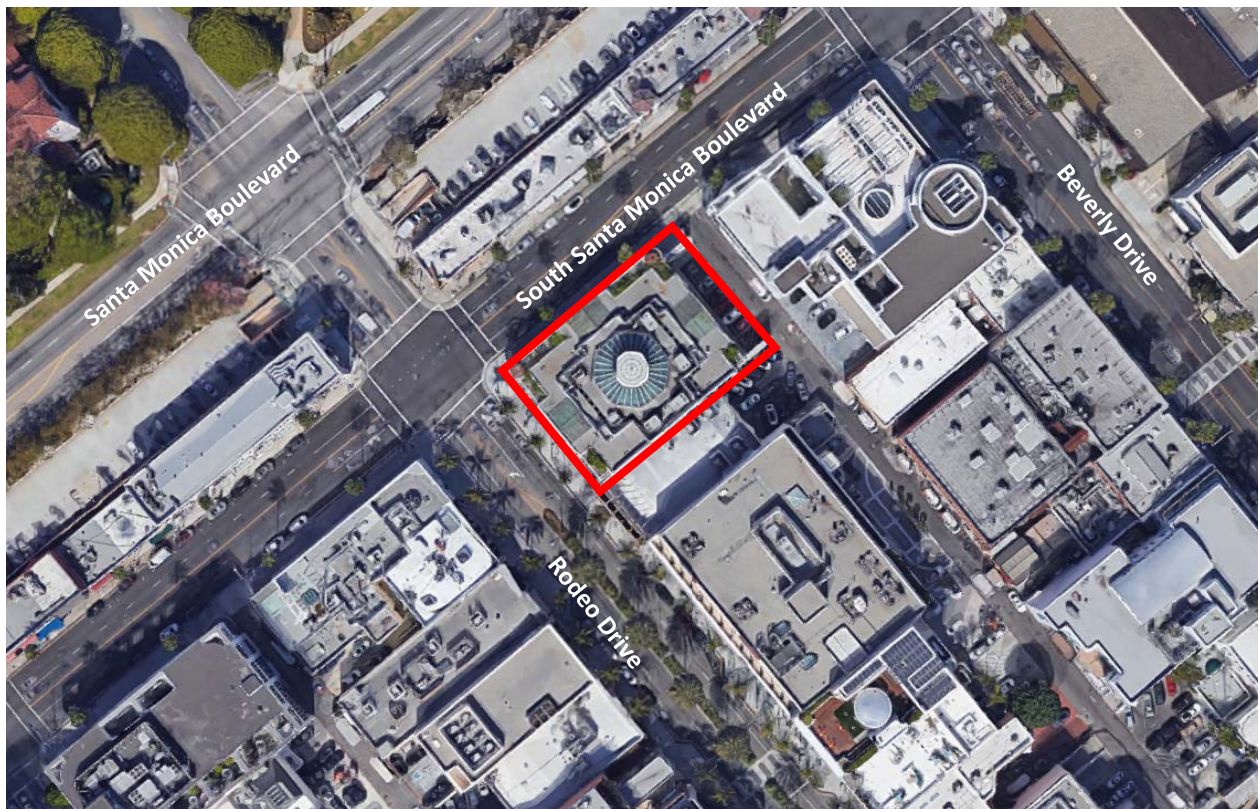


## 2. Architectural Description

### 2.1. Site and Setting

The subject property is located within a triangular-shaped commercial district that is bounded by Santa Monica Boulevard (north and west), Wilshire Boulevard (south), and Canon Drive (east). This area serves as the central business district of Beverly Hills. Known as the Business Triangle (or, the Golden Triangle), it is densely developed with a mix of low- and mid-scale commercial buildings, many of which are occupied by some of the world's foremost purveyors of luxury retail goods. The adjacent circulation network ascribes to a grid that is oriented 45 degrees askew of the cardinal directions and reinforces the area's wedge-like form.

468 North Rodeo Drive sits on a flat, compact commercial parcel that is located at the southeast corner of Rodeo Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard. The parcel is rectangular in shape and measures 15,255 square feet.<sup>2</sup> The southeast property line abuts an adjacent commercial building. The northeast property line abuts a service alley that runs parallel to, and is equidistant from, Beverly and Rodeo Drives.



*Location map. The subject property, 468 North Rodeo Drive, is outlined in red (Google Maps).*

<sup>2</sup> Parcel dimensions obtained from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor, Feb. 2019.



## 2.2. Building Exterior

The parcel contains a 23,509-square-foot commercial building that was built in 1997 as a flagship retail store for the clothing brand Tommy Hilfiger Corp.<sup>3</sup> The building extends to the edges of the lot lines. It rises two stories in height, is constructed of cast concrete, sits on a concrete foundation, and is roughly rectangular in plan. Its design reflects a contemporary interpretation of Classical architecture, and consistent with the tenets underpinning Classicism, it exudes a prevailing sense of symmetry, order, and balance. Given its prominent corner site, the building has two street-facing elevations: one faces southwest toward Rodeo Drive, and the other faces northwest toward South Santa Monica Boulevard.

The roof structure is predominantly flat and is spanned by parapet walls. The parapet walls obscure mechanical equipment that is placed atop the roof. There are also three gabled volumes that are placed at the center of the southwest, northwest, and northeast elevations. These gables frame large pediments that reinforce the building's overall sense of symmetry. The flat roof volumes were not visible during ARG's site visit, but are presumed to be sheathed in a composition membrane; the gabled volumes were partially visible and appear to be sheathed in copper sheets that are coated with an oxidized patina. A glazed octagonal volume projects from the center of the roof and caps a rotunda.

On the two street-facing (southwest and northwest) elevations, portions of the building's upper story are set back to form a series of exterior terraces. Each terrace is capped by a pergola structure that is affixed to the building's exterior walls and comprises painted wood rafters and notched beams. These pergolas are supported by slender concrete Doric columns, which are arranged in pairs.

Exterior walls consist of cast concrete panels that are painted white and incised with score lines, presumably to emulate the appearance of heavy masonry. Each exterior wall has a polished stone base.

The primary elevation of the building faces southwest, toward Rodeo Drive. This elevation is strictly symmetrical in its composition. It measures three bays wide, and features a prominent center bay that is surmounted by a pediment and raking cornice. At the base of this center bay is an articulated entranceway that serves as the building's main point of ingress. The entranceway is framed by Ionic columns, and is surmounted by an open pediment and raking cornice. An engaged keystone is set within the tympanum. Placed within the entranceway is a pair of glazed metal doors with metal hardware. The entranceway is flanked by multi-light fixed sidelights and surmounted by a multi-light fixed transom.

Fenestration on the primary elevation consists of fixed windows. Each window unit is composed of wood sash that is set within a metal frame. The center bay is dominated by several large, multi-light arched windows with decorative concrete molding. The arched windows on the ground floor are framed by pilasters and surmounted by keystones. On the two side bays, fenestration consists of fixed storefront windows that are delineated by Ionic columns and topped by multi-light clerestory windows.

Due to the dimensions of the lot, the northwest elevation is wider than the primary elevation, but it ascribes to a nearly identical architectural program. It, too, has a very visible street presence and is symmetrically composed. This elevation is also divided into three bays; features a pedimented central

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<sup>3</sup> Square footage and year of construction obtained from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor, Feb. 2019.

bay; is approached by an articulated entranceway with Ionic columns, open pediment, keystone, and glazed metal doors; and is fenestrated by a combination of single-pane and multi-light fixed windows, several of which are set within arched openings. Each end of this elevation terminates in a rounded bay.

There are multiple secondary entrances on the two street-facing (southwest and northwest) elevations, all of which are located on the upper story and lead to the aforementioned roof terraces. Each secondary entrance consists of a single, multi-light glazed door with narrow sidelights and a fanlight.

The southwest and northwest elevations are both replete with an assemblage of integral cast concrete moldings, trim, and other applied decoration that reference themes and motifs in Classical architecture. Classically derived details that are present on these two street-facing elevations include pediments, articulated cornices, columns, pilasters, arched window openings, keystones, and sections of spindled balustrade. Other decorative features include integral concrete planter boxes, which are placed at the base of each storefront window, and metal sconces that are affixed to the exterior walls.

The northeast elevation, which faces the service alley, is less articulated than the two street-facing elevations yet carries forward the building's architectural vocabulary. This elevation is also dominated by a central pediment, and its exterior walls consist of scored concrete panels that are painted white. There are three secondary entrances on this elevation. Two consist of single, glazed metal doors that are framed by engaged pilasters and surmounted by engaged pediments and abstracted keystones; the third consists of paired, paneled metal doors that are positioned off center. Fenestration is limited to a handful of fixed multi-light windows. Concrete moldings and trim frame arches and other abstracted details that afford a nominal degree of enunciation to the otherwise unarticulated façade. Metal sconces are affixed to the exterior walls. At the southeast end of the elevation is a small balcony that is capped by a wood pergola and enclosed by a wood trellis. The pergola is supported by slender columns.

Two wing walls project outward from the northeast elevation. The wing wall nearest the street is punctuated by an arched opening that is framed by pilasters and an entablature. The opposite wing wall, at the southeast corner of the building, is identically composed but for the fact that the arch is blind.

Since the southeast elevation directly abuts an adjacent commercial building, it is almost entirely obscured from view. There do not appear to be any notable architectural features on this elevation.

## 2.3. Landscape and Hardscape Features

Because the building occupies almost the entirety of the lot, landscape and hardscape features are minimal. The shallow setbacks on the two street-facing elevations feature a dark stone finish that effectively demarcates the property line. A small surface parking lot, which is accessed via the service alley, occupies the space between the two projecting wing walls on the northeast elevation.

Landscaping is limited to manicured box hedges that occupy the integral planter boxes on the southwest and northwest elevations, and semi-mature palm trees that are planted in the parkway space on both streets. Bougainvillea plants are woven into the rafters comprising the upper-story pergolas.

**Current Photos**



*Primary (southwest) and northwest elevations, view east (ARG, 2019).*



*Primary (southwest) elevation, view north (ARG, 2019).*



*Northwest elevation, view east (ARG, 2019).*



*Northwest elevation, view southwest (ARG, 2019).*



*Detail of pergola with column supports on northwest elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



*Detail of entrance on primary elevation, view northeast (ARG, 2019).*





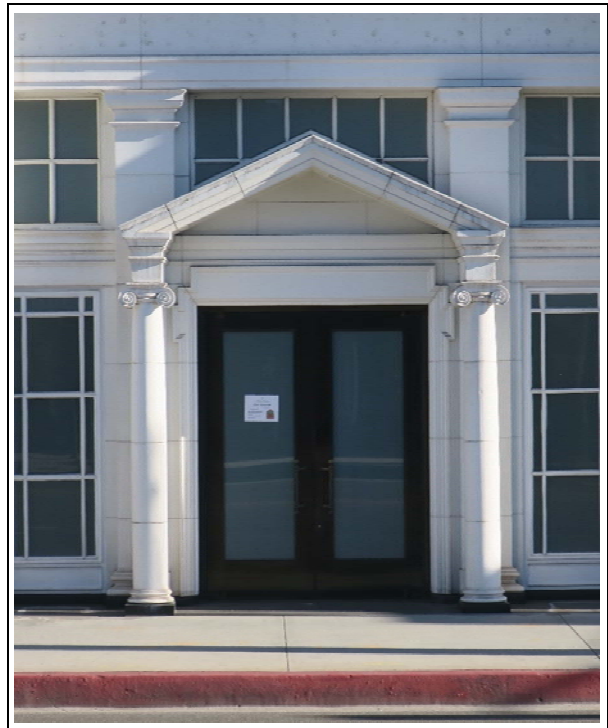
*Detail of entrance on primary elevation, view southeast. Note columns and pediment (ARG, 2019).*



*Detail of storefront system on primary elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



*Rounded bay at juncture between primary and northwest elevations, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



*Detail of entrance on northwest elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



*Prominent central bay with pediment on northwest elevation, view southeast (ARG, 2019).*



*Northeast elevation and parking, view southwest. Note wing wall with blind arch (ARG, 2019).*



*Southeast elevation, view northwest (ARG, 2019).*



*Projecting wing wall with rounded arch, pilasters, and entablature, view northwest (ARG, 2019).*



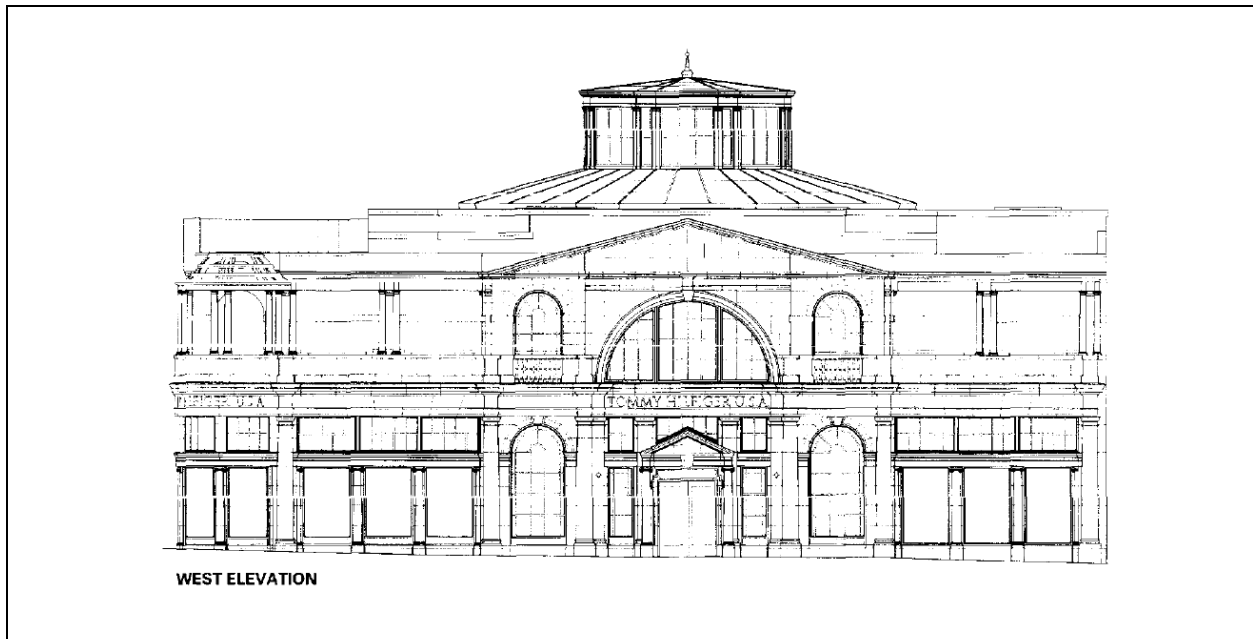
*Detail of polished stone at base of building (ARG, 2019).*



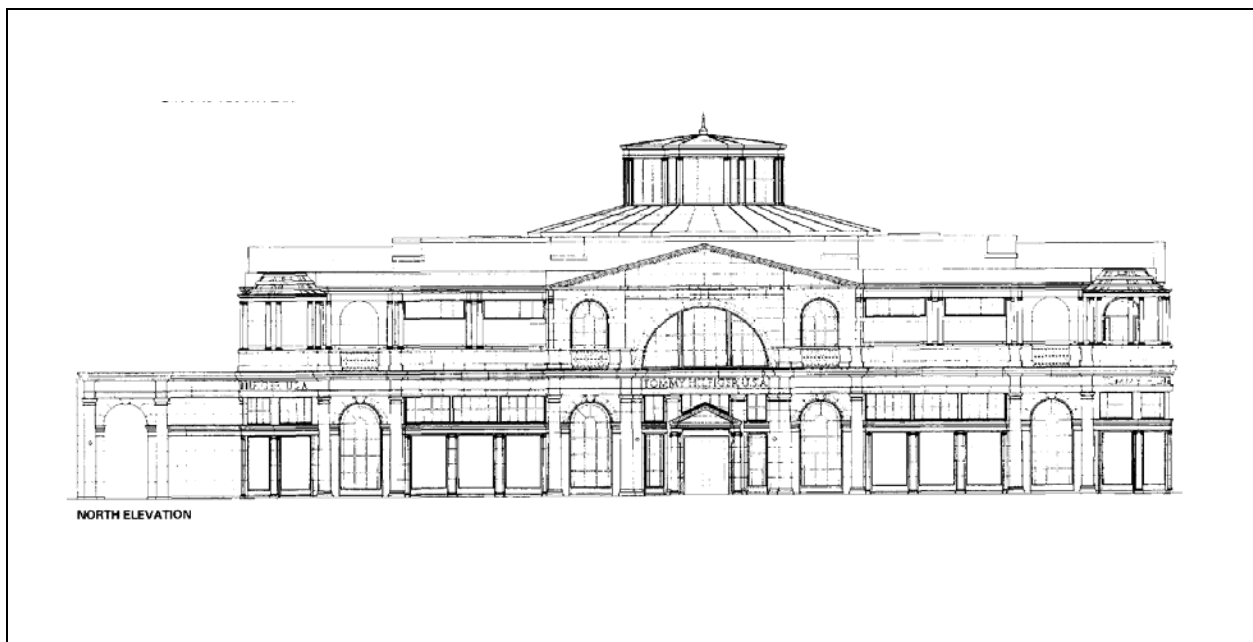
*Detail of integral concrete planter box on primary elevation (ARG, 2019).*



## Additional Images

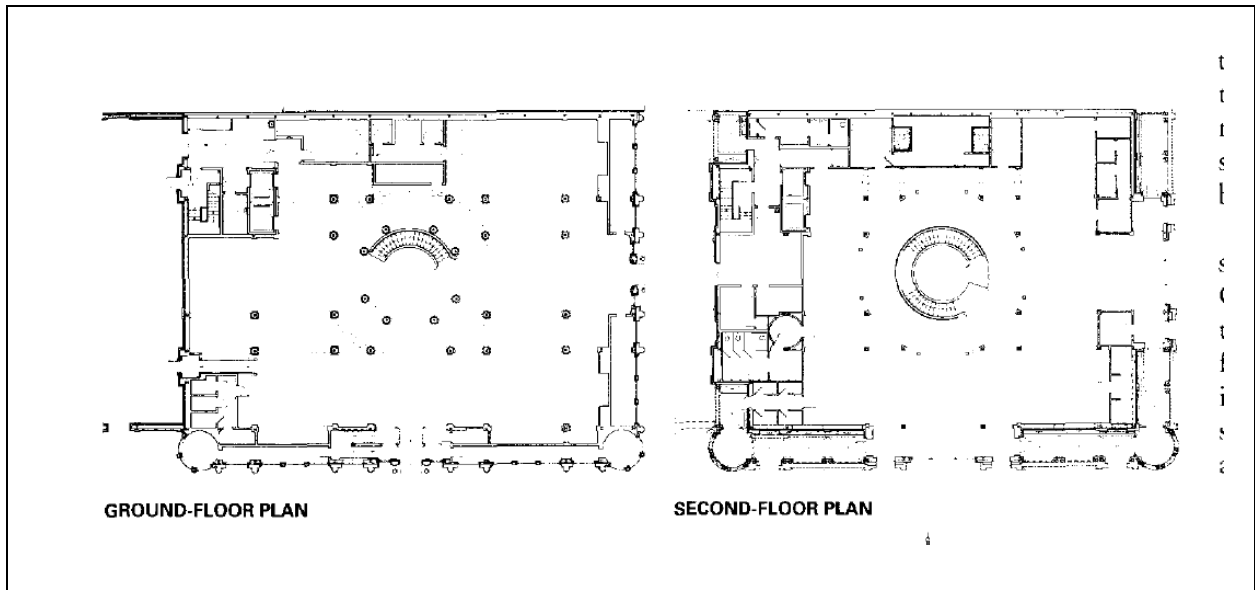


*Rendering of primary (west) elevation toward Rodeo Drive (Los Angeles Times Magazine, 1996).*



*Rendering of north elevation toward South Santa Monica Boulevard (Los Angeles Times Magazine, 1996).*





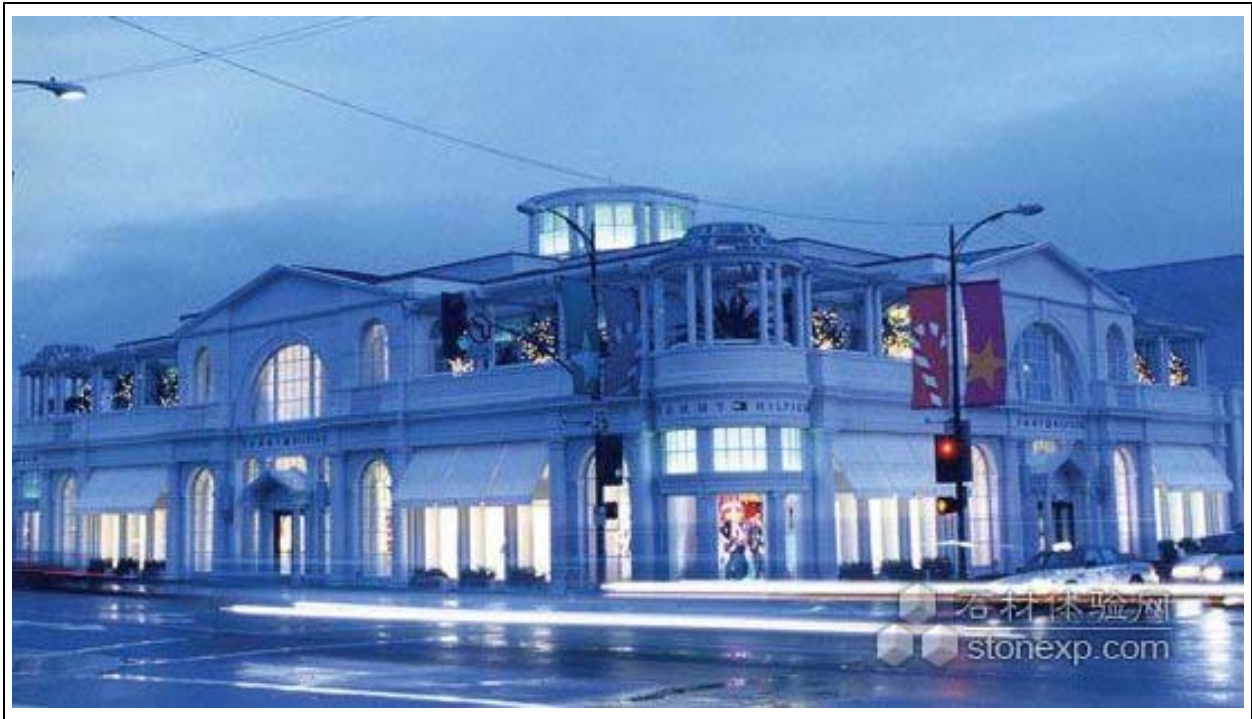
Floor plans (*Los Angeles Times Magazine*, 1996).



Images from the grand opening celebration of the Tommy Hilfiger flagship store, 1997 (Getty Images).



Primary (southwest) elevation of the subject building, n.d. (wiki.wildberries.ru)



View of subject building from the corner of Rodeo Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard, n.d. (stonexp.com).



### 3. Development Chronology and Alterations

The following development chronology for 468 North Rodeo Drive summarizes key events in the property’s development history between its original construction and the present-day. It was developed by reviewing historical building permits from the Beverly Hills Community Development Department, and was augmented by additional sources of information including historic photos and aerial images; parcel data from the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor; the collections of the Beverly Hills Public Library and other local and online repositories; and other archival materials.

<b>1996</b>	Tommy Hilfiger Corp., a popular apparel company and lifestyle brand, entered into a lease agreement with the owners of the property at the southeast corner of Rodeo Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard in February 1996. Hilfiger announced plans to open its first-ever flagship retail store on the site shortly after the lease agreement was executed. Allan Greenberg was selected to design the new flagship store.  An existing 14,400-square-foot commercial building, which had been occupied by the haberdashery Carroll and Co. since 1953, was demolished to make way for the new Hilfiger store. Carroll and Co. relocated to a new location nearby on Canon Drive.
<b>1997</b>	Construction completed. The Tommy Hilfiger flagship store officially opened to the public in November 1997 with a star-studded celebration.
<b>2000</b>	Tommy Hilfiger Corp. closed its Rodeo Drive flagship store. The closure was part of a restructuring aimed at increasing profitability and directing resources toward smaller stores.
<b>2003</b>	Brooks Bros., a New York based clothier, leased the vacant building as the site of its Southern California flagship retail store. The store opened in September 2003.
<b>2018</b>	Brooks Bros. permanently closed its Beverly Hills store in August 2018. The building has since remained vacant, with the exception of a temporary pop-up exhibition in 2019.

Based on its permit record and current appearance, the subject building appears to have been very minimally altered over time, and appears almost exactly as it did when it was built in 1997. Alterations are extremely minor, and are limited to the following:

- Awnings on storefront windows have been removed
- Signage bearing the name of the building’s former tenants has been removed
- Portions of the overhead trellises, which were originally painted white, have been repainted to emulate the appearance of wood
- Original sconces affixed to the exterior walls have been replaced with contemporary sconces

## 4. Historic Contexts

### 4.1. Commercial Development in Beverly Hills

468 North Rodeo Drive is located in an area of Beverly Hills that is known as the Business Triangle (also referred to colloquially as the Golden Triangle), so named because of its distinctive, wedge-shaped form. Located near the center of Beverly Hills, between Santa Monica and Wilshire Boulevards and Canon Drive, the area is densely developed with various commercial and institutional uses. It serves as the city's central business district and civic center.

In spite of its present-day associations with luxury, glamour, opulence, and wealth, Beverly Hills had inauspicious beginnings. The first house was constructed in 1907, but overall development activity in the nascent community was languid. The Beverly Hills Hotel was constructed between 1911-1912 in an attempt to lure in prospective buyers. In its early years, the sprawling Mission Revival style complex not only served as a luxurious hostelry, but also functioned as a *de facto* community center for area residents.<sup>4</sup> Since the hotel was located amid what was then a swath of peripheral, undeveloped land, an auxiliary rail line called The Dinky was built to convey people between the hotel and the Pacific Electric Railway line nearer the center of town.<sup>5</sup> The Dinky traveled down the center of Rodeo Drive, originating at its intersection with Santa Monica Boulevard and terminating at the hotel on Sunset Boulevard.

Beverly Hills formally incorporated as an independent city in 1914, but development – and particularly commercial development – remained sluggish. Aside from the hotel, the city's only commercial buildings were clustered near the intersection of Beverly Drive and Burton Way (now South Santa Monica Boulevard). At this time, the business district consisted of a small handful of one- and two-story business blocks that were occupied by grocers, barbers, hardware stores, a bank, a post office, and other enterprises that served residents' day-to-day needs. A Pacific Electric Railway station was located just to the north, on Santa Monica Boulevard. Elsewhere within the Business Triangle, the blocks were sparsely developed with a smattering of small, humble bungalows for those of more modest means.<sup>6</sup>

Just to the south of the business district and Business Triangle, where the Beverly Wilshire Hotel and Beverly Hills High School are located today, a wood plank track for automobile racing was built between 1919-1920. Known as the Beverly Hills Speedway, it became an immediate attraction and was ranked second in race quality only to the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway.<sup>7</sup> But as popular as the speedway was, rising real estate costs and mounting development pressures meant that it was a short-lived endeavor. The racetrack was demolished in 1924, and the land was subdivided shortly thereafter.<sup>8</sup>

Like most communities in Southern California, Beverly Hills witnessed an unprecedented amount of growth and development in the 1920s. It was during this time that the community truly came of age,

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<sup>4</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Water and Power Associates, "Early Views of Beverly Hills," accessed Jan. 2019. Additional information about development patterns in Beverly Hills was gleaned from Sanborn Fire Insurance maps dated 1922.

<sup>7</sup> Susan King, "Speedway Brought Life in the Fast Lane to 1920s Beverly Hills," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 24, 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid; Pacific Coast Architecture Database, "Beverly Hills Speedway, Beverly Hills, CA (1919-1920)," accessed Jan. 2019.

shedding its roots as a small, peripheral outpost and asserting itself as one of Southern California's premier residential communities. Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Will Rogers, Rudolph Valentino, and other A-list celebrities built stylish mansions in the community, cementing its reputation as a haven for the entertainment elite.<sup>9</sup> As Beverly Hills's population grew, its small commercial node evolved into a discernible central business district. A number of new commercial buildings arose in the triangular-shaped district between Santa Monica and Wilshire boulevards. Buildings like the exotic Beverly Theatre (1925, L.A. Smith, not extant) and the posh, Renaissance Revival style Beverly Wilshire Apartment Hotel (1928, Walker and Eisen) attested to the quality of commercial architecture in the city at this time.

In the early 1930s, two resplendent civic buildings were constructed at the northeast corner of the triangular-shaped business district: the Spanish Renaissance style Beverly Hills City Hall (1932, William J. Gage and Harry G. Koerner), and the Italian Renaissance style Beverly Hills Post Office (1934, Ralph Flewelling and Allison and Allison). These buildings denoted the civic and political heart of the burgeoning city, and represented significant new additions to its commercial and institutional core.

Beverly Hills entered into another period of remarkable growth after World War II. Parcels that had remained undeveloped prior to the war were swiftly purchased and improved, and the city also expanded its physical reach by annexing a large tract of hillside land that became the Trousdale Estates.<sup>10</sup> The character of commercial development also began to visibly transform at this time, with Rodeo Drive as its focus. Historically a "fairly quiet suburban street with beauty shops, hardware stores, gas stations and bookstores," Rodeo Drive began to evolve into an internationally renowned locus of the cultural elite.<sup>11</sup> In 1967, fashion retailer Fred Hayman opened Giorgio Beverly Hills, the first high-end boutique to open on the street. Other luxurious retailers including Parisian jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels (1969) and coiffeur Vidal Sassoon (1970) followed suit. Subsequent development on Rodeo Drive and nearby streets took on an increasingly posh and sumptuous character.

Construction of the subject building in 1997 corresponded with this trend toward luxury retail development within the Business Triangle. While its original tenant, Tommy Hilfiger Corp., arguably had more mainstream appeal than many of the higher-end design labels along Rodeo Drive, it was nonetheless envisaged as a vehicle for showcasing its higher-end lines and bolstering its brand identity.

## 4.2. 468 North Rodeo Drive

468 North Rodeo Drive has been occupied by two commercial tenants since its construction in 1997, both eminent American clothiers: Tommy Hilfiger Corp. (1997-2000) and Brooks Brothers (2003-2018).

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<sup>9</sup> City of Beverly Hills, "History of Beverly Hills," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Beverly Hills Historical Society, "Beverly Hills, A Brief History," accessed Jan. 2019.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Darling, "A Rodeo Drive Timeline," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 9, 2013.



## Tommy Hilfiger Corp.

The subject building was purpose-built as the first flagship store for the apparel brand Tommy Hilfiger Corp. (now known simply as Tommy Hilfiger). Founded in the 1980s, Hilfiger's eponymous line of casual clothing and accessories swiftly grew into one of the nation's most popular apparel brands, hitting its peak in the 1990s. The brand is often considered to be an icon of late twentieth century popular culture.

Thomas "Tommy" Hilfiger (1951- ) entered into the world of fashion design in the late 1960s. Responding to a dearth of trendy clothing options in his hometown of Elmira, New York, he jumpstarted his fashion career by buying jeans in Manhattan, repurposing them, and selling them at a markup out of a basement in Elmira. In 1971, he and two friends pooled their resources and opened a store called People's Place. People's Place was part clothier, part headshop, and "sold hippie supplies like bell bottoms, incense and records."<sup>12</sup> It eventually grew into a chain comprising a half dozen stores. However, the company was not able to weather an economic slump and went out of business in 1977.<sup>13</sup>

Hilfiger thereafter moved to Manhattan to find work as a fashion designer. He initially worked as a freelancer for a variety of clothing companies, and eventually landed a job designing jeans for Jordache.<sup>14</sup> However, the entrepreneurial designer was malcontent with the status quo, and instead wanted to develop a clothing line of his own. This opportunity presented itself in 1984 when Mohan Murjani, an Indian textile magnate and clothing manufacturer, approached Hilfiger about designing a new line of casual menswear akin to Calvin Klein and Ralph Lauren. In 1985, the Tommy Hilfiger brand was formally unveiled to the public. Its product portfolio included button-down shirts, chinos, and other modern takes on the classic "all American" look.<sup>15</sup>

Hilfiger's modern interpretation of the classic, American preppy look, with its trademark red, white, and blue logo, resonated with consumers and became an extraordinary commercial success. By the late 1980s, the Tommy Hilfiger brand had morphed into a multi-million dollar enterprise; in 1992, the company was taken public; and by the 1990s sales had ballooned to \$500 million. Pop stars and other ambassadors of popular culture donned Tommy Hilfiger garb on MTV and at highly publicized events, and as time passed Hilfiger expanded his brand to include women and children's lines, footwear, accessories, fragrances, and home furnishings. By the 1990s, Hilfiger had unequivocally "achieved a remarkable level of mass appeal, with everyone from bike messengers to CEOs dressed in his designs."<sup>16</sup>

Initially, Tommy Hilfiger-branded apparel was predominantly sold in major department stores. However, as the company grew, it incrementally opened freestanding retail stores. By 1995, the company operated six full-price and 16 discount outlet stores in addition to its lucrative license agreements with department store chains.<sup>17</sup> Also in 1995, Hilfiger dabbled in the possibility of opening a series of flagship stores that would carry higher-end lines, showcase the brand, and serve as an incubator where new

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<sup>12</sup> Biography, "Tommy Hilfiger Biography," accessed Feb. 2019.

<sup>13</sup> Michael D'Antonio, "Everything He Touches Turns to Tommy," *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 9, 1997.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Mimi Avins, "Take A Spin Inside Tommy Hilfiger's Fashion Cuisinart," *Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 25, 1996.

<sup>16</sup> "Tommy Hilfiger Corporation History," accessed Feb. 2019.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

concepts and products could be tested with consumers. He set his sights on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, one of the world's most esteemed retail districts, as the location of his first flagship store.

In 1996, Tommy Hilfiger Corp. signed a ground lease agreement with the owners of the property at the southeast corner of Rodeo Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard. Per the terms of the lease, the company demolished an existing commercial building on the site – which had been the longtime location of local haberdasher Carroll and Co. – and began construction of its first-ever flagship store.<sup>18</sup> Noted architect Allan Greenberg of New York, a leading exponent of classically derived architecture, was commissioned to design the new store. That Hilfiger selected Greenberg to design the public face of his eponymous company was logical, as Greenberg's penchant for precisely replicating historical architectural styles evinced the same sense of "all-American-ness" that permeated the Hilfiger brand.

Compared to other stores within the Hilfiger portfolio, most of which were smaller in size and were curated toward a middle-income clientele, the new Greenberg-designed flagship on Rodeo Drive was a behemoth that unapologetically showcased the company and its namesake designer for all their worth:

Inside the two-story, 20,000-square-foot store, Hilfiger will offer his mainstays – crisp but colorfully casual clothes for men – and a variety of departments. Sort of a department store for Tommy, it will look nothing like Sears. Themed areas will include one for golf, another for small leather goods and an exclusive "rock and roll" collection. And instead of a department store lunch counter or the ubiquitous coffee bear, it will feature a Wolfgang Puck café.<sup>19</sup>

The store opened in November 1997 amid a star-studded backdrop that included performances by singers Sheryl Crow and No Doubt, and a fashion show featuring actors Cuba Gooding, Jr., Harry Hamlin, and Cameron Diaz. The opening gala was a highly publicized affair that aired on network television.<sup>20</sup>

The Rodeo Drive flagship store was a testament to the company's remarkable ascent from a diminutive start-up fashion label to one of the world's most iconic apparel brands. The store was constructed at a time when the company was riding high on the wave of cultural relevance and economic success. However, the constantly evolving and relentlessly competitive nature of the fashion industry eventually caught up with the company. By 2000, sales had declined as image conscious consumers turned their attention away from Hilfiger's red, white, and blue garb and toward the latest and greatest trends in popular fashion. Attempts at revamping the company's image were maligned as belated and misguided.

In February 2000, just two years after opening, Tommy Hilfiger Corp. announced that it planned to permanently close the Rodeo Drive flagship store. The decision was part of a company-wide restructuring plan that aimed to eliminate glitzy flagship stores – which were generally not profitable – and replace them with smaller, less-costly specialty stores.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Mimi Avins, "A Legend's Move Gives an Upstart a Space," *Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 8, 1996.

<sup>19</sup> Michael D'Antonio, "Everything He Touches Turns to Tommy," *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 9, 1997.

<sup>20</sup> Teena Hammond, "Tommy Roars Into Rodeo," *New York Times*, Nov. 13, 1997.

<sup>21</sup> Mariano Willoughby, "Hilfiger to Close Flagship Rodeo Drive Store," *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 4, 2000.

## Brooks Brothers

The subject property sat vacant between 2000 and 2003. In April 2003, it was announced that Brooks Brothers, a prominent New York-based clothier best known as a purveyor of classic, buttoned-down shirts and suits, would open a flagship store in the former Hilfiger store at 468 North Rodeo Drive.<sup>22</sup>

Brooks Brothers is one of the nation's most enduring businesses and is generally considered to be the oldest operating haberdasher in the United States. Founded in 1818 in New York City by Henry Sands Brooks, the company was conceived as H. Brooks and Company. It made a name for itself by offering mass-produced, reasonably priced men's clothing that appealed to an extraordinarily broad cross-section of the American male population. "Ready-to-wear placed gentlemanliness within the reach of men who once inhabited the outer reaches of society, enabling them to subscribe to its tenants and tout its virtues," remarked Brooks about his guiding philosophy.<sup>23</sup> Brooks's four sons – Elisha, Daniel, Edward, and John – inherited the business upon their father's death and re-named it Brooks Brothers in 1850.<sup>24</sup>

Over the next 150 years, the company would finesse its product line to keep pace with advances in industrial production and evolutions in consumer taste, but would never stray from its conservative, buttoned-down aesthetic. To this day, it remains a very traditional clothier. The company was headquartered in New York City, but later expanded its reach to cities across the nation. Brooks Brothers arrived in Southern California in 1939 when it opened a shop in the Pacific Mutual Building in Downtown Los Angeles, allegedly at the behest of Fred Astaire and Clark Gable.<sup>25</sup> Though its location has changed several times, the company has maintained a presence downtown to this day.

The Rodeo Drive store, which opened in 2003, was one of several flagships within the company's portfolio. It remained in continuous operation at this location, and functioned as an important northern anchor to the Rodeo Drive commercial district, until it permanently closed its doors in August 2018.<sup>26</sup>

### 4.3. New Classicism

The subject building embodies characteristics that are associated with a contemporary architectural movement known as New Classicism. New Classicism, which is also sometimes referred to as Traditionalism, Neo-Traditionalism, or Neo-Historicism, is a historically derived idiom that emerged as one of several reactions against the ubiquity of post-World War II Modern architecture.

By the late 1960s, architects and the American public alike had begun to grow weary of the Modern orthodoxy. The template for postwar Modernism had been so widely replicated, and so often compromised through cost cutting and value engineering, that it was increasingly seen as cheap, generic, pedestrian, and effete.<sup>27</sup> In response, architects began to dabble in new modes of architectural

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<sup>22</sup> Hanah Cho, "Buttoned-Down Brooks Bros. to Open on Ritzy Rodeo Drive," *Los Angeles Times*, Apr. 3, 2003.

<sup>23</sup> Jenna Weissman Joselit, *A Perfect Fit: Clothes, Character and the Promise of America* (New York: Henry Holt and Co 2001), 79.

<sup>24</sup> Brooks Brothers, "Brooks Brothers Heritage and History," accessed Feb. 2019.

<sup>25</sup> Hanah Cho, "Buttoned-Down Brooks Bros. to Open on Ritzy Rodeo Drive," *Los Angeles Times*, Apr. 3, 2003.

<sup>26</sup> Shwanika Narayan, "Brooks Brothers to Close Rodeo Store," *Los Angeles Business Journal*, Aug. 21, 2018.

<sup>27</sup> Charles Jencks, "Postmodern and Late Modern: The Essential Definitions," *Chicago Review*, 35.4 (1987): 31-58.

expression that reacted to some of the most banal qualities of postwar Modernism in different ways. Some of these dissident architects – who would later be identified as “Late Modernists” – took the basic tenets of Modernism and reinterpreted them in new ways, typically by exaggerating a particular structural element or architectural feature. Others, known as “Postmodernists,” married exaggerated classical motifs with bold forms and vivid colors to criticize and counterbalance Modernism’s sterility.

Yet another group of architects reacted to the Modern orthodoxy through a regenerated interest in architectural styles that were rooted in historical precedent. Although many of the styles that had been popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were fodder for reinterpretation, many expressed a particularly profound interest in carrying forward and reinterpreting the practice of classical architecture. The aesthetic that these practitioners promoted became known as the New Classicism.

Various factors influenced these practitioners’ rekindled interest in classical precedents. The much-maligned 1963 demolition of Pennsylvania Station, an imposing Neoclassical landmark in New York, sparked a greater appreciation for the architecture of the past. By the mid-1960s, the modern historic preservation movement had been conceived, and architectural history was beginning to truly come of age as a legitimate field of study. Americans were also becoming much more cognizant of, and nostalgic for, their collective past as the nation was approaching its bicentennial celebration in 1976.

It was within these contexts – dissatisfaction with Modernism and its direction, and heightened awareness of and appreciation for the past – that the New Classical movement was born. Buildings that made overt reference to classical precedent began appearing in the United States in the early 1970s. It is generally emphasized that the New Classical movement was not derivative; rather, those who honed and championed the style sought to take those timeless elements of classical architecture and reinterpret them to the present-day. These architects “understand classical principles and architectural style well enough to subtly alter or rearrange elements to create New Traditional [buildings], not copies – [buildings] instantly familiar yet subtly distinct from the [buildings] that inspired them.”<sup>28</sup> Buildings associated with the movement, then, struck a careful and orchestrated balance between old and new.

New Classicism remained popular in the 1980s and 1990s, and early 2000s; it continues to exert influence over the design of buildings into the present day. Beginning in the 1990s, the aesthetic and philosophical principles associated with the style were also applied on a broader scale with the ascent of the New Urbanism movement. Among the American architects who are generally considered to be exponents of New Classicism are Thomas Beeby, Robert A.M. Stern, and Allan Greenberg. Many of these practitioners have been awarded the Driehaus Architecture Prize, which was founded in 2003 to honor excellence in contemporary classical architecture and is analogous to the modernist Pritzker Prize.

The subject building was designed by Greenberg in 1997, and exhibits the balance between historical precedents and contemporary massing, proportions, and materiality that characterize New Classicism.

Character-defining features of New Classical architecture include the following:

- Prevailing sense of symmetry, balance, proportionality, and order
- Formal arrangement of architectural elements

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<sup>28</sup> Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 725.

- Low-pitched hipped or gabled roof
- Roof balustrades
- Exterior walls clad with masonry veneer (commercial, institutional) or wood siding (residential)
- Pedimented entrance portico, usually supported by Classical columns
- Multi-light wood or metal windows
- Palladian, elliptical, and/or rounded window openings
- Eclectic synthesis of classically derived decorative details including columns, pilasters, dentils, entablatures, swags, garlands, urns, and grotesques

#### 4.4. Allan Greenberg, Architect

The subject building was designed by architect Allan Greenberg. Greenberg, who is often described as a “canonical classicist,” is a leading exponent of New Classicism, and has helped to promote and disseminate this movement since establishing his eponymous architectural practice in the early 1970s.

Greenberg (1938 - ) was born and reared in Johannesburg, South Africa. He matriculated at the University of Witwatersrand, located in Johannesburg, where he studied architecture and was trained in both classical and modern design. Early in his professional life, Greenberg was a self-described Modernist and a devotee of Le Corbusier. After earning his degree, Greenberg moved to Denmark to work in the studio of Scandinavian Modernist Jørn Utzon, who at the time was designing the Sydney Opera House.<sup>29</sup> He subsequently moved to Helsinki to work with Viljo Revell, a noted Finnish Modernist.

In 1963, Greenberg came to the United States to pursue a Master of Architecture degree at Yale University. There, he studied under Paul Rudolph, another prominent figure in the modern movement, and graduated from the program in 1965.<sup>30</sup> Upon graduating, he worked in civil service and also taught architecture at Yale before founding his own architectural firm, Allan Greenberg Architect LLC, in 1972.<sup>31</sup>

By the time that Greenberg had established his eponymous practice in the early 1970s, he had grown disillusioned with Modernism and its perceived banality. He instead turned his attention to the classicism that he had been introduced to as a university student in Johannesburg. His firm developed a reputation for skillfully combining classical architecture with contemporary construction technologies.

That an architect who admired, studied under, and worked with some of the world’s most esteemed Modern architects would embrace an aesthetic entrenched in historical precedent may appear to be something of an anomaly. But Greenberg came of professional age at a time when Modernism and its derivatives were falling out of favor, and new directions forward were being developed. While at Yale, Greenberg was introduced to, and influenced by the critiques of Modernism articulated by Postmodern masters Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, and became familiar with the work of contemporary classicists such as Edwin Lutyens and Mott B. Schmidt.<sup>32</sup> His architectural dialect was also shaped by his

<sup>29</sup> Arthur Lubow, “The Ionic Man,” *Departures* (May-June 1999), accessed Feb. 2019.

<sup>30</sup> Allan Greenberg Architect, “About Allan,” accessed Feb. 2019.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Lubow (1999).



appreciation for iconic American landmarks like The Mall in Washington, D.C., Pennsylvania Station, and Monticello, and the emotional response that these landmarks could elicit. Speaking to this point, he remarked that “I learned early on that people in America love and understand old American buildings.”<sup>33</sup>

One of Greenberg’s first independent commissions was an addition to a seventeenth century house in Connecticut, which “reinforced his growing belief in the adaptability and richness of Classical architecture.”<sup>34</sup> What he considers to have been one of his big breaks came in 1979, when industrialist and philanthropist Peter Brant commissioned Greenberg to construct a custom house in the “Mt. Vernon/George Washington style” in the affluent New York suburb of Greenwich, Connecticut.<sup>35</sup> Brant had been referred to Greenberg by architect Philip Johnson. Known as White Birch Firm, the Brant residence took a year to design and three years to build, and provided Greenberg with the perfect blank slate on which he could develop and hone his distinctively contemporary approach to classical design.

The construction of White Birch Firm cemented Greenberg’s reputation as a leader of the New Classical movement. It also established the young practitioner as one of the premier residential architects in the Northeast. A number of additional residential commissions were awarded to Greenberg during the 1980s and 1990s, almost all of which consisted of high style, custom single-family houses that skillfully incorporated elements of Federal, Georgian, Adam, and other classically derived American idioms. One of the more notable dwellings that Greenberg designed is known as Huckleberry House (1982), a sprawling, pedimented Palladian estate in New Canaan, Connecticut that was designed as the personal residence of George Lichtblau, the inventor of the clip-on anti-shoplifting tag.<sup>36</sup> The house is distinguished by its strict sense of symmetry, abundance of Palladian windows and Classical ornament, and three-story rotunda. It is about one of 20 houses in suburban Connecticut designed by Greenberg.<sup>37</sup>

The timeless aesthetic that defined Greenberg and his body of work, and his penchant for designing elaborate, high style custom residences, appealed to celebrities and rendered Greenberg a modern-day “architect to the stars.” Greenberg has designed the personal houses of actor Harrison Ford, businesswoman and television personality Martha Stewart, and fashion designer Carolyne Roehm.<sup>38</sup>

One of the most distinguishing qualities of Greenberg’s work is the melding together of historically derived architectural idioms with contemporary materials, methods, and building technologies. His work is also not, and was never intended to be, completely derivative, but rather represents a continuum of tried-and-true architectural methods and their adaption to the conditions of present-day life:

Let there be no confusion: the houses Greenberg designs, though not modernist, are modern. They have spacious bathrooms, display kitchens, large windows, and roomy closets, elements that were not part of an 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup>-century house. They have efficient plumbing and

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<sup>33</sup> Ted Loos, “Allan Greenberg Brings a Modern Eye to Classical Architecture,” *Introspective Magazine*, Jan. 15, 2014.

<sup>34</sup> Brooke Perry, “Successful Architecture is Not Simply a Building But an Elevation Design Process that Gives Form to a Client’s Dreams and Ideals,” *Suburban Classic* (2008).

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*; Lisa Prevost, “Estate of Tech Entrepreneur Who Invented an Anti-Theft Tag Lists for \$8.5 Million,” *New York Times*, Apr. 13, 2017.

<sup>37</sup> Prevost (2017).

<sup>38</sup> “New England Huckleberry House,” accessed Feb. 2019.

sophisticated, low-velocity air conditioning systems. Beyond that, though, the classical details that at first glance might seem authentic aren't – and aren't meant to be.<sup>39</sup>

Greenberg is known first and foremost as a designer of high style custom dwellings. However, he has also been awarded a number of institutional commissions, typically by university campuses or government agencies that aspire to project a sense of endurance and formality. Notable institutional commissions within Greenberg's portfolio include the Humanities Building at Rice University, Gore Hall and Dupont Hall at the University of Delaware, J. Wilson Newman Pavilion at the University of Virginia, and the Supreme Court Historical Society and the Luxembourg Embassy, both in Washington, D.C.<sup>40</sup> Like his residences, Greenberg's institutional commissions exemplify how the vocabulary of classical architecture can be skillfully transposed and modulated to meet the programmatic needs of the present.

Commercial architecture constitutes a smaller component of Greenberg's work, but on occasion the architect has been tapped by commercial clients. In 1983, he was asked to design a new, yet contextual, storefront system for the historic Bergdorf Goodman department store in Manhattan. Greenberg was selected for the job because of his extensive and highly nuanced knowledge of classicism.<sup>41</sup> He later designed the Simon and Shuster offices in Rockefeller Center and the D&D Annex, also in Manhattan.<sup>42</sup>

In 1996, Greenberg was selected to design the subject building, a flagship store for the popular apparel brand Tommy Hilfiger. Though he was not especially well known as a commercial architect, the "conservative chic" aesthetic that Greenberg had honed coincided nicely with the classic, all-American look that defined Hilfiger and his brand. Housing the flagship store in a classically derived building, then, served as a bold aesthetic manifestation of the brand and the values it stood behind.

For the Hilfiger store, Greenberg utilized architectural elements such as pediments, columns, and rotundas that were unequivocally classical, but elected to render the façade in fiber-reinforced concrete, a contemporary material.<sup>43</sup> He "experimented with 22 shades of white before arriving at a cream-colored aggregate with blue and black stone, to complement yet contrast with the adjacent Museum of Television and Radio," a stark, Neo-Corbusian edifice that was designed by Richard Meier and Partners.<sup>44</sup>

In 2006, Greenberg was the first American architect to be awarded the Driehaus Prize for Classical Architecture, a prestigious prize bestowed upon practitioners who make notable contributions within the context of contemporary classical or vernacular design. He maintains an active architectural practice, with offices in Alexandria, Virginia, and New York City, and is a prolific author and educator.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Lubow (1999).

<sup>40</sup> Allan Greenberg Architect, "Projects," accessed Feb. 2019.

<sup>41</sup> Perry (2008).

<sup>42</sup> Christopher Gray, "Streetscapes/The Bergdorf Goodman Building on Fifth Avenue; From Architectural Links to Common Ownership," *New York Times*, Aug. 30, 1998.

<sup>43</sup> "On the Boards: Tommy Hilfiger Store, Los Angeles, California, Allan Greenberg, Architect," *Los Angeles Times Magazine* (Dec. 1996), 43.

<sup>44</sup> Lubow (1999).

<sup>45</sup> Allan Greenberg Architect, "About Allan," accessed Feb. 2019.

## 5. Regulations and Criteria for Evaluation

### 5.1. National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation’s master inventory of known historic resources. Established under the auspices of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level. Eligibility for in the National Register is addressed in National Register Bulletin (NRB) 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. NRB 15 states that in order to be eligible for the National Register, a resource must both: (1) be historically significant, and (2) retain sufficient integrity to adequately convey its significance.

Significance is assessed by evaluating a resource against established eligibility criteria. A resource is considered significant if it satisfies any one of the following four National Register criteria:<sup>46</sup>

- Criterion A (events): associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- Criterion B (persons): associated with the lives of significant persons in our past;
- Criterion C (architecture): embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- Criterion D (information potential): has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Once significance has been established, it must then be demonstrated that a resource retains enough of its physical and associative qualities – or *integrity* – to convey the reason(s) for its significance. Integrity is best described as a resource’s “authenticity” as expressed through its physical features and extant characteristics. Generally, if a resource is recognizable as such in its present state, it is said to retain integrity, but if it has been extensively altered then it does not. Whether a resource retains sufficient integrity for listing is determined by evaluating the seven aspects of integrity defined by NPS:

- Location (the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred);
- Setting (the physical environment of a historic property);
- Design (the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property);

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<sup>46</sup> Some resources may meet multiple criteria, though only one needs to be satisfied for National Register eligibility.

- Materials (the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular manner or configuration to form a historic property);
- Workmanship (the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory);
- Feeling (a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time);
- Association (the direct link between an important historic event/person and a historic property).

Integrity is evaluated by weighing all seven of these aspects together and is ultimately a “yes or no” determination – that is, a resource either retains sufficient integrity, or it does not.<sup>47</sup> Some aspects of integrity may be weighed more heavily than others depending on the type of resource being evaluated and the reason(s) for the resource’s significance. Since integrity depends on a resource’s placement within a historic context, integrity can be assessed only after it has been concluded that the resource is in fact significant.

## Criteria Consideration G

Generally, a resource must be at least 50 years of age to be eligible for listing in the National Register. NRB 15 explains that “fifty years is a general estimate of the time needed to develop historical perspective and to evaluate significance. This consideration guards against the listing of properties of passing contemporary interest and ensures that the National Register is a list of truly historic places.”<sup>48</sup>

However, the NPS acknowledges that on occasion, a resource less than 50 years of age may merit consideration for listing in the National Register. Criteria Consideration G offers guidance related to the evaluation of properties that may have achieved significance within the past 50 years, setting forth the conditions under which these resources may be eligible for listing. It provides that exceptions to the age threshold may be granted if it can be demonstrated that a resource less than 50 years of age if the individual resource is: (1) of exceptional importance, or (2) an integral component of a National Register-eligible historic district whose other component parts are predominantly 50 years or older.<sup>49</sup>

In justifying exceptional importance for individual resources (*i.e.*, outside of the National Register-eligible historic district context), NRB 15 cites the necessity of comparative analysis. Specifically, it states that “it is necessary to identify other properties within the geographical area that reflect the same significance or historical associations and to determine which properties *best* represent the historic context in question.” It continues, “Several properties in the area could become eligible with the passage of time, but few will qualify now as exceptionally important.”<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VIII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

<sup>48</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Apply the Criteria Considerations.”

<sup>49</sup> The subject building is not an integral component of a National Register-eligible historic district whose other component parts are predominantly 50 years of age or older, therefore this report will not further evaluate the building under this consideration standard.

<sup>50</sup> NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Apply the Criteria Considerations.”

## 5.2. California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an authoritative guide used to identify, inventory, and protect historical resources in California. Established by an act of the State Legislature in 1998, the California Register program encourages public recognition and protection of significant architectural, historical, archeological, and cultural resources; identifies these resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The structure of the California Register program is similar to that of the National Register, though the former more heavily emphasizes resources that have contributed specifically to the development of California. To be eligible for the California Register, a resource must first be deemed significant under one of the following four criteria, which are modeled after the National Register criteria listed above:

- Criterion 1 (events): associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
- Criterion 2 (persons): associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;
- Criterion 3 (architecture): 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 4 (information potential): has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, state, or the nation.

Mirroring the National Register, the California Register also requires that resources retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing. A resource's integrity is assessed using the same seven aspects of integrity used for the National Register. However, since integrity thresholds associated with the California Register are generally less rigid than those associated with the National Register, it is possible that a resource may lack the integrity required for the National Register but still be eligible for listing in the California Register.

Certain properties are automatically listed in the California Register, as follows:<sup>51</sup>

- All California properties that are listed in the National Register;
- All California properties that have formally been determined eligible for listing in the National Register (by the State Office of Historic Preservation);
- All California Historical Landmarks numbered 770 and above; and
- California Points of Historical Interest which have been reviewed by the State Office of Historic Preservation and recommended for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission.

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<sup>51</sup> California Public Resources Code, Division 5, Chapter 1, Article 2, § 5024.1.



Resources may be nominated directly to the California Register. State Historic Landmarks #770 and forward are also automatically listed in the California Register.

Unlike the National Register's 50 year age requirement, there is no prescribed age limit for listing in the California Register, although guidelines state that sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with a resource.

### 5.3. City of Beverly Hills Historic Preservation Ordinance

Historic preservation in Beverly Hills is governed by Title 10, Chapter 3, Articles 32 and 32.5 of the Beverly Hills Municipal Code (referred to hereinafter as "the Ordinance"). The Ordinance authorizes the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) to recommend the nomination of properties as local landmarks and historic districts to the City Council. To facilitate this process, the Ordinance establishes requirements a property must meet in order to qualify for designation as a landmark listed in the City of Beverly Hills Register of Historic Properties. The 2012 Ordinance was revised and updated in 2015, with an additional amendment in 2016; all criteria and definitions used in this document are effective as of April 1, 2016.

To be eligible for local designation as a historic landmark, a property must satisfy the following sets of requirements (A and B) as noted:

**A. A landmark must meet all of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance;
- (2) It possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period;
- (3) It retains substantial integrity<sup>52</sup> from its period of significance; and
- (4) It has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.

**B. In addition to those listed above, a landmark must meet at least one of the following requirements:**

- (1) It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places;

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<sup>52</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines "substantial integrity" as "Integrity that is considerable in importance, value, degree, amount, or extent, and that continues to exist, or would have continued to exist, but for work done without appropriate permits after the enactment of this article."

- (2) It is an exceptional work<sup>53</sup> by a master architect<sup>54</sup>;
- (3) It is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous;
- (4) It is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance;
- (5) It is an iconic property<sup>55</sup>; or
- (6) The landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).

Mirroring the National Register and California Register, the Ordinance requires that a resource retain integrity. The Ordinance defines integrity as “the ability of a property to convey its historical significance through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, relevant association, and character defining features.”<sup>56</sup> This builds upon the definition that is used by the National Register.

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<sup>53</sup> A 2016 amendment to BHMC 10-3-32 in Ord. 15-O-2700 defines “exceptional work” as “A remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community. At a minimum, the work’s exceptional quality shall have been documented by at least one of the following: a) it was the subject of a major architectural award; b) it was substantively discussed (i.e., not just mentioned) and photographically depicted in a monograph on a master architect’s career; or c) it was substantively discussed or photographically depicted in at least two (2) publications (e.g., a book, treatise, trade magazine article, film, or set of photographs made available to the public by an institutional archive) authored by acknowledged experts in the field of architecture. A monograph or publication made available to the public solely in electronic form and without any reasonable expectation of compensation to the author, or substantially authored by the architect of the work, shall not count toward this minimum.”

<sup>54</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “master architect” as “An architect of widely recognized greatness in the field of architecture whose individual genius influenced his or her age.”

<sup>55</sup> In BHMC 10-3-3202, the Ordinance defines “iconic property” as “A property that has been visited and photographed so often by residents and visitors to the city that it has become inextricably associated with Beverly Hills in the popular culture and forms part of the city’s identity to the world at large.”

<sup>56</sup> BHMC 10-3-3202, Definitions.

## 6. Evaluation of Significance

### 6.1. Previous Evaluations

468 North Rodeo Drive does not appear to have been previously evaluated for historical significance. It is not listed in the California Historical Resources Inventory (HRI) database, and was also not identified in any of the City’s historic resource survey efforts (1985/86, 2004, 2006, 2013).

### 6.2. Evaluation of Eligibility

At only 23 years of age at this writing, the subject building is generally too young to be considered a historical resource. As previously enumerated, federal, state, and local eligibility criteria all have age requirements that safeguard against the designation of properties of “passing contemporary interest,” ensuring these designation programs remain lists of truly historical resources, by requiring – for properties fewer than 50 years of age – that individual properties have exceptional importance.

Illustrative of these guidelines, only an extremely small handful of properties younger than 30 years old have been successfully listed in the National Register of Historic Places as individual properties of exceptional importance. Among these are Michael Graves’s Portland Public Service Building (Portland Building), which was listed at 29 years of age; and E. Fay Jones’s Thorncrown Chapel, which was listed at only 20 years of age. Both of these resources were determined to possess exceptional importance because they were the best-known and most pivotal buildings of their respective architects’ careers.



**Name:** Portland Building  
**Architect:** Michael Graves  
**Date of Construction:** 1982  
**Date of NRHP Listing:** 2011

**Exceptional Importance (excerpted from the National Register Nomination Form):**

“Exceptionally important as one of the first large-scale manifestations of a new architectural style coming on the heels of the Modern movement.”

“One of the most notable works by internationally-known master architect Michael Graves and is widely credited as the design that established Graves’s preeminence in the field.”



**Name:** Thorncrowne Chapel  
**Architect:** E. Fay Jones  
**Date of Construction:** 1980  
**Date of NRHP Listing:** 2000

**Exceptional Importance (excerpted from the National Register Nomination Form):**

“Exceptional as a turning point in Fay Jones’s career.”

The chapel was “crucial to [Fay Jones’s] receipt of the AIA Gold Medal for his lifetime of achievement.”

“Arguably among the twentieth century’s great works of art.”

Nevertheless, due to the fact that the subject building was designed by an acclaimed architect, it is evaluated herein for its potential to have exceptional importance such that it meets eligibility criteria despite its very young age.

## National Register and California Register

As described above in *Sections 5.1-5.2*, California Register criteria were modeled on those of the National Register, and therefore they are essentially identical in their language and the ways in which they are used to evaluate potential significance. Under both programs, in order to be eligible for listing a resource must meet the age requirement; be significant at the local, state, or national level under one or more of the eligibility criteria; and retain sufficient integrity to convey significance. It is in the application of an age requirement that the two programs differ. For listing in the National Register, resources fewer than 50 years of age are generally not eligible for listing unless they meet the requirements of Criterion Consideration G, whereas for listing in the California Register, regulations state that “sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with a resource.”<sup>57</sup>

What follows is an evaluation of the subject building against both National Register and California Register criteria, with distinction made when there is an issue of age due to the fact that the building is fewer than 50 years old.

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<sup>57</sup> California Office of Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Series #6: California Register and National Register: A Comparison (for purposes of determining eligibility for the California Register). Sacramento: Dept. of Parks and Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation.

<https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1069/files/technical%20assistance%20bulletin%206%202011%20update.pdf>

ARG concludes that 468 North Rodeo Drive is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources, as follows:

***National/California Register Criterion A/1: associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history.***

Constructed in 1997, the subject building is associated with a relatively contemporary period of development in the Business Triangle district of Beverly Hills. It was one of many commercial and institutional buildings that were constructed in this area at the time, and its association with the glitz and glamour of Hollywood helped to augment the area's reputation as an epicenter of opulence, wealth, and high culture. On its own, the building does not signify important trends in the development of Beverly Hills that are not expressed in the many other commercial and institutional buildings that were constructed in this area of the city in the latter decades of the twentieth century.

The building has hosted a number of special events over the course of its history, most notably a celebrity-studded gala that marked the grand opening of the Tommy Hilfiger flagship store in November 1997. The gala was a widely publicized event and aired on network television. However, these types of high profile events are fairly typical advertising tactics employed by retailers, particularly those associated with the fashion industry. There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that any event that has taken place within the building are, or will be considered to be singularly significant to history.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion A/1.

***National/California Register Criterion B/2: associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.***

The subject building was commissioned by fashion icon Tommy Hilfiger as the site of his brand's inaugural flagship store. While Hilfiger was deeply invested in the building's construction and operation, and visited the building when it operated as a Tommy Hilfiger store between 1997 and 2000, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that it is the property best associated with the fashion mogul. There existed numerous retail stores, and several flagship stores, within the Hilfiger company's portfolio. The building bears a stronger association with the Hilfiger brand than with Hilfiger himself.

As a retail store that was occupied by two major tenants – Tommy Hilfiger and Brooks Brothers – the building has been patronized by scores of visitors since its construction in 1997. However, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the subject building bears a direct association with the productive period of any one individual in a manner that would merit consideration under this criterion.

For these reasons, the subject building is not associated with the lives of persons important to local, state, or national history, and does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion B/2.

***National/California Register Criterion C/3: embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.***



The subject building embodies distinguishing characteristics of New Classical architecture. Features of the building that are associated with the style include its symmetrical façade, balanced composition, formal arrangement of architectural elements, scored white concrete exterior walls that emulate the appearance of heavy masonry, articulated entrances with pediments and columns, multi-light windows, arched window openings, balustrades, and classically derived decorative elements.

The building is also representative of the work produced by architect Allan Greenberg and his eponymous firm. Greenberg is widely recognized as a leader of the New Classical movement, and has designed an array of notable and highly articulated residential, institutional, and commercial buildings across the nation. His myriad contributions have helped to steer the direction of contemporary architecture toward a more traditional aesthetic, and arguably elevate him to the status of a master architect. This particular building, while not especially transformative in the arc of his career to date, nonetheless exemplifies the careful balance between classical derivatives and modern technologies that so strongly characterize Greenberg and his work, and have provided him with international acclaim.

### ***National Register Age Requirement: Criteria Consideration G***

According to National Register Criteria Consideration G, it is not enough for a resource to simply meet the conditions enumerated in the criterion to justify eligibility for the National Register if the resource being evaluated is less than 50 years of age. For resources that are not yet 50 years of age, it must be demonstrated that the resource is not merely significant, but exhibits *exceptional* importance within its requisite historic context(s). This consideration “guards against the listing of properties of passing contemporary interest” and ensures that enough time has elapsed to develop historical perspective.<sup>58</sup>

Determining whether a resource is exceptionally important for purposes of the National Register requires comparative analysis of the resource against contextually related properties. If, when the resource is compared to others, it becomes evident that (1) it conveys unique extraordinary qualities that render it an extremely important example of its respective context, or (2) represents a type so rare or fragile that extant examples of any age are unusual, it is generally considered to meet Criteria Consideration G.<sup>59</sup> Conversely, resources that are more ordinary or representative of a given context are generally not considered to satisfy the “exceptional importance” benchmark.

When the subject building is compared to other examples of New Classicism, and particularly with other projects in Greenberg’s portfolio using the above-listed benchmark criteria, it does not appear to meet the definition of “exceptional importance.” Greenberg is best associated with residential and, to a lesser extent, institutional commissions, and it is through these types of residential and institutional projects that his skill and prowess are arguably best expressed. Other projects within his expansive portfolio, including White Birch Farm and Huckleberry House in Connecticut and his university buildings, arguably possess a higher degree of detail and articulation than the subject building.

Greenberg is not especially well known for his body of commercial work, largely because the ephemeral nature of consumer culture is usually better suited to bold, unabashed modern architectural idioms.

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<sup>58</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Apply the Criteria Considerations.”

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

Commercial buildings, and especially those associated with the retail industry, are often designed in contemporary styles in an effort to keep abreast with current trends. The building also does not appear to have represented a watershed moment in Greenberg's career, which by this point had been well-established for decades. Newspaper articles and other media about the building's construction were generally focused on the tenant (Tommy Hilfiger) and not the building itself.

There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the subject building is an exceptionally rare example of its type. Contemporary interpretations of Classical architecture and other historically idioms can be found in abundance across Southern California. There do not appear to be many examples of Greenberg's work in California, but that is because an overwhelming majority of his signature buildings are located on the East Coast, and particularly in the New York metropolitan area.

It also bears mention that Greenberg continues to operate active practices in New York City and Alexandria, Virginia, and so the complete breadth of his legacy is not yet known. It will likely take time for the significance of Greenberg's arc of work to be fully grasped. For this reason, it seems somewhat premature to evaluate the building through the lens of history at this moment in time.

Critically evaluating the contributions of a living architect is also challenging in that one's perception of the architect may be colored more by factors apart from their professional contributions, making it difficult to issue an objective and analytical judgment of their work that is free of emotional pretense.

#### ***California Register Age Requirement***

The California Register does not enumerate a minimum age requirement for listing, as does the National Register, but stipulates that sufficient time has to have elapsed to have a scholarly perspective on the historical significance of a resource to be eligible for listing. As stated above, the building's relatively recent construction date (1997), coupled with the fact that Allan Greenberg continues to operate an active architectural practice, hinder the ability to thoroughly and objectively evaluate its historical significance.

In conclusion, while the subject building represents the tenets underpinning New Classicism and the work of architect Allan Greenberg, it does not stand out as an exceptionally important example of either context. Compounding this is the fact that an insufficient amount of time has elapsed to truly understand the building through the lens of history. Taking into account the high eligibility thresholds associated with resources of the recent past, the building does not satisfy National/California Register Criterion C/3.

***Criterion D/4. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.***

As an archaeological assessment was not conducted as part of this study, the property's potential for containing subsurface archaeological resources is unknown.

## Local Eligibility

ARG concludes that 468 North Rodeo Drive does not appear eligible for local listing as Beverly Hills Landmark, as follows:

### **Part A Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet all four of the following requirements):**

***Criterion A.1:*** *it is at least forty five (45) years of age, or is a property of extraordinary significance.*

The subject building was constructed in 1997 and is not yet forty-five years of age. As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, it is not a property of extraordinary significance. Thus, it does not satisfy Criterion A.1.

***Criterion A.2:*** *it possesses high artistic or aesthetic value, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style or architectural type or architectural period.*

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, the subject building embodies the distinctive characteristics of New Classicism. It therefore meets Criterion A.2.

***Criterion A.3:*** *it retains substantial integrity from its period of significance.*

The subject building has been minimally altered since its construction between 1997. It appears almost exactly as it did when it was built, and continues to express the aesthetic and architectural principles that influenced its original design. It therefore meets Criterion A.3.

***Criterion A.4:*** *it has continued historic value to the community such that its designation as a landmark is reasonable and necessary to promote and further the purposes of this article.*

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion C/3, not enough time has elapsed to fully understand the significance of the subject building through the lens of history. The building is of relatively recent construction (1997), and when compared to other works of Greenberg it does not appear to be of exceptional importance. It is also not a rare example of a contemporary interpretation of a historical architectural style. Absent these qualities, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the building has historic value to the community. Thus, it does not satisfy Criterion A.4.

### **Part B Eligibility Criteria (resource must meet at least one of the following requirements):**

***Criterion B.1:*** *it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.*

The subject building is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and therefore does not meet Criterion B.1.

**Criterion B.2:** *it is an exceptional work by a master architect.*

The subject building was designed by architect Allan Greenberg. Greenberg, while a noted practitioner, is not currently included on the City of Beverly Hills's List of Local Master Architects.

Moreover, the building does not meet the Beverly Hills Municipal Code's definition of "exceptional work." A 2016 amendment to BHMC 10-3-32 in Ord. 15-O-2700 defines "exceptional work" as "a remarkably superior example of architectural work that has been recognized as such by members of the architectural community," meeting at least one of the following criteria:

Firstly, a work would be considered exceptional if "it was the subject of a major architectural award." Although the subject building was named the "Best Commercial Building of 1998" by the Precast/Prestressed Concrete Institute, research did not suggest that the building won any major architectural awards.<sup>60</sup>

Secondly, a work would be considered exceptional if "it was substantively discussed (i.e., not just mentioned) and photographically depicted in a monograph on a master architect's career." There is one monograph of Allan Greenberg's work, *Allan Greenberg: Classical Architect*, which was written by Greenberg. The subject building is photographically depicted and discussed in this monograph. However, the fact that the building is depicted in a monograph compiled by Greenberg himself does not provide scholarly or critical evidence that it is an exceptional work by a master architect.

Finally, a work would be considered exceptional if "it was substantively discussed or photographically depicted in at least two (2) publications (e.g., a book, treatise, trade magazine article, film, or set of photographs made available to the public by an institutional archive) authored by acknowledged experts in the field of architecture." The subject building was published in newspaper articles at the time of its design and construction. Notably, *Architecture* magazine published renderings of the building in the "On the Boards" section of the December 1996 issue.<sup>61</sup> However, nearly all newspaper articles and other media about the building's construction were generally focused on the tenant (Tommy Hilfiger) and not the building itself.

In summary, as a flagship store for an international clothing brand located in a prominent location, the building was a notable commission for Greenberg and subject of press and recognition at the time of its design and construction. However, as stated previously under National Register and California Register Criterion C/3, the building's relatively recent construction date (1997), coupled with the fact that the importance of Allan Greenberg's work in the overall context of late 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture is yet to be fully understood, hinder the ability to thoroughly and objectively evaluate its historical significance as an exceptional work by a master architect.

For these reasons, the building does not meet Criterion B.2.

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<sup>60</sup> "Allan Greenberg," University of Notre Dame School of Architecture, accessed June 2020. <<https://architecture.nd.edu/news-events/events/driehaus-prize/recipients/allan-greenberg/>>

<sup>61</sup> Ned Cramer, "On the Boards," *Architecture*, December 1996, 43.

**Criterion B.3:** *it is an exceptional work that was owned and occupied by a person of great importance, and was directly connected to a momentous event in the person's endeavors or the history of the nation. For purposes of this subsection B3, personal events such as birth, death, marriage, social interaction, and the like shall not be deemed to be momentous.*

As discussed in the evaluation against National/California Register Criterion B/2, there is insufficient evidence demonstrating that the subject building bears a meaningful association with the productive lives of historically significant individuals. Thus, the building does not meet Criterion B.3.

**Criterion B.4:** *it is an exceptional property that was owned and occupied by a person of great local importance.*

As discussed, the subject building does not appear to have been associated with persons of great local importance in a manner that would merit consideration under this criterion. Thus, the building does not meet Criterion B.4.

**Criterion B.5:** *it is an iconic property.*

The subject building is not an iconic property as defined by the Ordinance. Although, because of its location and use it has been visited by many, the building does not appear to have become inextricably associated with Beverly Hills's identity in a manner that would merit further consideration under this criterion. For this reason, the building does not meet Criterion B.5.

**Criterion B.6:** *the landmark designation procedure is initiated, or expressly agreed to, by the owner(s) of the property. (Ord. 15-O-2682, eff. 11-19-2015).*

The Landmark designation procedure is not known to have been initiated by any parties, and the owner(s) of the property have not expressly agreed to the initiation of such a procedure. As a result, the subject building does not meet Criterion B.6.

### **Summary of Local Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for local listing, a resource must meet all four of the above-listed Part A requirements, and at least one of the above-listed Part B requirements. The building does not meet Criterion A.1 and A.4, as required, and does not meet any of the Part B requirements. In summary, the subject building does not meet local eligibility criteria.



### 6.3. Evaluation of Integrity

For a property to be eligible for listing in the National and California Registers, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark, it must meet eligibility criteria and retain sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance. *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* states that “only after significance is fully established can you proceed to the issue of integrity.”<sup>62</sup> In accordance with best professional practices, it is customary to apply this same methodology when evaluating resources at the state and local levels. Because the building does not meet the criteria for federal, state, or local listing, an assessment of integrity is not necessary.

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<sup>62</sup> Derived from NRB 15, Section VII: “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.”

## 7. Conclusion

The building at 468 North Rodeo Drive embodies characteristics of New Classicism, a contemporary architectural idiom, and is also a representative work of architect Allan Greenberg. However, when evaluating the significance of buildings of the recent past, the bar is held particularly high to ensure that a resource is evaluated with an appropriate amount of historical perspective. Resources of the recent past – and especially resources like the subject building that were built in the very recent past (1997) – must demonstrably exhibit exceptional importance to be eligible for listing.

The building does not exhibit the exceptional level of historical and/or architectural significance needed to substantiate its eligibility for federal, state, or local listing. Therefore, the building is not eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, or as a Beverly Hills Landmark at this time, and is not considered to be a “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA.

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## **Appendix D.3**



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SCCIC Cultural Resources Records Search

**South Central Coastal Information Center**

California State University, Fullerton  
Department of Anthropology MH-426  
800 North State College Boulevard  
Fullerton, CA 92834-6846  
657.278.5395

*California Historical Resources Information System*  
*Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura and San Bernardino Counties*  
[sccic@fullerton.edu](mailto:sccic@fullerton.edu)

12/8/2020

SCCIC File #: 21768.7992

Stephanie Eyestone-Jones  
Eyestone Environmental  
2121 Rosecrans Avenue, Suite 3355  
El Segundo, CA 90245

Re: Record Search Results for the Cheval Blanc Beverly Hills Project

The South Central Coastal Information Center received your records search request for the project area referenced above, located on the Beverly Hills, CA USGS 7.5' quadrangle. The following summary reflects the results of the records search for the project area and a ½-mile radius. The search includes a review of all recorded archaeological and built-environment resources as well as a review of cultural resource reports on file. In addition, the California Points of Historical Interest (SPHI), the California Historical Landmarks (SHL), the California Register of Historical Resources (CAL REG), the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and the California State Built Environment Resources Directory (BERD) listings were reviewed for the above referenced project site and a ¼-mile radius. Due to the sensitive nature of cultural resources, archaeological site locations are not released.

**RECORDS SEARCH RESULTS SUMMARY**

<b>Archaeological Resources* (*see Recommendations section)</b>	Within project area: 0 Within project radius: 0
<b>Built-Environment Resources</b>	Within project area: 0 Within project radius: 37
<b>Reports and Studies</b>	Within project area: 0 Within project radius: 23
<b>OHP Built Environment Resources Directory (BERD) 2019</b>	Within project area: 0 Within ¼-mile radius: 45
<b>California Points of Historical Interest (SPHI) 2019</b>	Within project area: 0 Within ¼-mile radius: 0
<b>California Historical Landmarks (SHL) 2019</b>	Within project area: 0 Within ¼-mile radius: 0
<b>California Register of Historical Resources (CAL REG) 2019</b>	Within project area: 0 Within ¼-mile radius: 13
<b>National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) 2019</b>	Within project area: 0 Within ¼-mile radius: 1

<b>Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility (ADOE): 2012</b>	Within project area: 0 Within project radius: 0
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**HISTORIC MAP REVIEW** – Santa Monica, CA (1902, 1921) 15’ USGS historic maps indicate that in 1902 there was no visible development within the project area. The Pasadena and Pacific Electric R.R. ran directly adjacent to the project area. Two roads were within the project search radius which was located within the historic place name of Rodeo de las Aguas. In 1921, there was one building within the project area. There were several new roads, buildings and the historic place name of Beverly within the project search radius. All previously mentioned features still remained.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

\*When we report that no archaeological resources are recorded in your project area or within a specified radius around the project area; that does not necessarily mean that nothing is there. It may simply mean that the area has not been studied and/or that no information regarding the archaeological sensitivity of the property has been filed at this office. The reported records search result does not preclude the possibility that surface or buried artifacts might be found during a survey of the property or ground-disturbing activities.

The archaeological sensitivity of the project location is unknown because there are no previous studies for the subject property. Additionally, the natural ground-surface appears to be obscured by urban development; consequently, surface artifacts would not be visible during a survey. While there are currently no recorded archaeological sites within the project area, buried resources could potentially be unearthed during project activities. Therefore, we recommend that a qualified archaeologist be retained to monitor ground-disturbing activities. In the event that any evidence of cultural resources is discovered, all work within the vicinity of the find should stop until the archaeological consultant can assess the find and make recommendations. Excavation of potential cultural resources should not be attempted by project personnel. It is also recommended that the Native American Heritage Commission be consulted to identify if any additional traditional cultural properties or other sacred sites are known to be in the area. The NAHC may also refer you to local tribes with particular knowledge of potential sensitivity. The NAHC and local tribes may offer additional recommendations to what is provided here and may request an archaeological monitor. Finally, if the built-environment resources on the property are 45 years or older, a qualified architectural historian should be retained to study the property and make recommendations regarding those structures.

For your convenience, you may find a professional consultant\*\*at [www.chrisinfo.org](http://www.chrisinfo.org). Any resulting reports by the qualified consultant should be submitted to the South Central Coastal Information Center as soon as possible.

\*\*The SCCIC does not endorse any particular consultant and makes no claims about the qualifications of any person listed. Each consultant on this list self-reports that they meet current professional standards.

If you have any questions regarding the results presented herein, please contact the office at 657.278.5395 Monday through Thursday 9:00 am to 3:30 pm. Should you require any additional information for the above referenced project, reference the SCCIC number listed above when making inquiries. Requests made after initial invoicing will result in the preparation of a separate invoice.

Thank you for using the California Historical Resources Information System,

*Stacy St. James*

Stacy St. James

Digitally signed  
by Stacy St. James

Date: 2020.12.08

18:46:42 -08'00'

Isabela Kott  
GIS Technician/Staff Researcher

James

Enclosures:

(X) Invoice # 7992

*Due to processing delays and other factors, not all of the historical resource reports and resource records that have been submitted to the Office of Historic Preservation are available via this records search. Additional information may be available through the federal, state, and local agencies that produced or paid for historical resource management work in the search area. Additionally, Native American tribes have historical resource information not in the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) Inventory, and you should contact the California Native American Heritage Commission for information on local/regional tribal contacts.*

*The California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) contracts with the California Historical Resources Information System's (CHRIS) regional Information Centers (ICs) to maintain information in the CHRIS inventory and make it available to local, state, and federal agencies, cultural resource professionals, Native American tribes, researchers, and the public. Recommendations made by IC coordinators or their staff regarding the interpretation and application of this information are advisory only. Such recommendations do not necessarily represent the evaluation or opinion of the State Historic Preservation Officer in carrying out the OHP's regulatory authority under federal and state law.*