



Community & Economic Development Department

Planning Division

3900 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92522 | Phone: (951) 826-5371 | RiversideCA.gov

CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 17, 2018
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 5

LANDMARK DESIGNATION

I. CASE NUMBER(S): P18-0578

II. PROJECT SUMMARY:

- 1) **Proposal:** Proposed historic designation of E.T. Wall Packing House as a City Landmark
- 2) **Location:** 3280 Vine Street
- 3) **Ward:** 1
- 4) **Applicant:** Rick Scott of Corman Leigh Companies
- 5) **Case Planner:** Scott Watson, Associate Planner

III. RECOMMENDATION:

That the Cultural Heritage Board recommend that the City Council:

1. **DETERMINE** that Planning Case P18-0578, City Landmark Designation, is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per Sections 15061(b)(3) and 15308 of the CEQA Guidelines as it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment, said action is intended to preserve the historic character of the building and site, and to provide notice of the historic status; and,
2. **APPROVE** Planning Case P18-0578, based on the attached facts for findings and thereby designate E.T. Wall Packing House as a City Landmark.

IV. BACKGROUND:

In 1992 and 1996, the property, located at 3280 Vine Street, was surveyed by Myra L. Frank & Associates (MFA) as part of the Caltrans I-215 Improvement Project (1996) for Section 106 compliance. The property was found to be eligible for local designation as a City Landmark and for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CR) prior to Title 20, and eligibility criteria, revisions in 2010 (Exhibit 4).

Further assessment by PCR Services Corporation (PCR) was conducted in 2000. Further research and analysis was conducted by Staff and corrections to the details documented in the 1992 and 1996 surveys are incorporated into the architectural description and significance statement below (Exhibit 3). An application for the designation of E.T. Wall Packing House was received in August 2018.

V. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

This large, one- and two-story industrial building with an elevated basement covers most of the paved lot on the northeast corner of Vine and Third Street. The unpainted, stacked concrete one-story packing house portion, and later warehouse, on the south is topped by a saw-toothed roof with clerestory and anchored by two Western False Front style stepped parapet walls with coping on the east and west elevations.

Fenestration consists of boarded double-hung, one-over-one sash without lintels or sills. Three loading bays with roll-up metal doors and a pedestrian door are found on the rear (east) elevation, which once faced the railroad tracks, and a red tiled hood has been removed over a side pedestrian-door entrance. The two-story, wood-framed stucco office/administration portion on the north is topped by a flat roof. This addition appears to be an early addition, circa 1930s, but the windows have been replaced with vinyl-framed double-hung windows within the original openings.

Building permits and previous surveys document a 1945-46 cull bin, and in 1966 the enclosure of the west canopy and a partial second story addition at the canopy enclosure. Although the west canopy was enclosed after 1952, the cull bin has since been removed and partial second story addition does not appear to be extant. It is possible that the second story addition was not completed. The E.T. Wall Citrus Warehouse Packing House is in good condition and retains sufficient integrity for Landmark Designation.

VI. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

E.T. Wall Packing House was originally constructed in 1921-1922 as a packing house for the Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad by Cresmer Manufacturing Company, a prolific local builder, for an estimated cost of \$24,000. The establishment of canal irrigation and railroad lines converged the navel oranges in Riverside's earliest years to launch citriculture as the defining and lasting economic industry of the City. This Citrus Industry which flourished from the late-19th to the mid-20th century. Soon after construction, the structure was purchased by Edgar T. Wall and Arthur McDermont, both previously serving on the Board of Directors for Riverside Blue Ribbon Groves. In the 1930s, the two parted ways and Wall continued to operate at this location and expanded into the adjacent packing house at 3230 Vine Street.

E. T. Wall was a prominent citrus grower in Riverside and in California. By the 1920s, Wall owned 200 acres of citrus groves, mostly navel oranges, in Riverside, as well as an 800-acre ranch in Fresno County. He also served as the chairman of the Independent Citrus Growers & Shippers Association in the 1940s. According to City Directory research, the E.T. Wall Company retained ownership of the property through the 1960s.

The building continued to be in citrus-related use through the 1940s when a cull bin was added for then tenant Zilen Citrus Association (according to building permits) by another prominent local builder, Eric W. Emtman. Gulf & Western enclosed the canopy and added a small second story constructed by contractor Les Carothers to facilitate use as a warehouse in 1966.

One feature of the building, which demonstrates its connection to the industry is the basement. The basement of the packing house was often used as a "coloring" room. This is where green oranges would "color" before being shipped to eastern markets. The temperature and humidity levels of the basement made this a prime location for "coloring." The ventilation windows throughout the basement demonstrate this use.

The citrus-related industrial building was previously found eligible for local designation as a City Landmark and for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CR) as an "extant representative building type of the agricultural industry most closely associated with Riverside's economic and civic reputation" (MFA in 1992 & 1996). Under Title 20 designation criteria (revised 2010), the property continues to be eligible for local designation as a City Landmark primarily as it reflects special elements of the City's cultural and economic history (Criterion 1) and embodies distinctive characteristics of citrus-related industrial buildings constructed from the late-19th century to the early-20th century (Criterion 3). Although mid-20th century modifications appear minor, the modifications were completed in a compatible manner compatible, and were constructed to facilitate continued industrial use.

Constructed along the railroad, the industrial building was fitted into the citrus area of the time in a corridor, the eligible Citrus Thematic Industrial Historic District, that still retains many citrus-related industrial buildings (Exhibit 2). The E.T. Wall Packing House retains sufficient integrity in essential aspects of design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, association, and location

VII. PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS:

Public notices were published in one newspaper of general circulation within the City, and mailed to property owners and occupants within 300 feet of the site, at least ten (10) days prior to the scheduled hearing. No responses were received to date.

IX. EXHIBITS:

1. Staff Recommended Findings
2. Aerial/Location Map
3. Designation Application
4. Previous Surveys 1992, 1996
5. Historic Resource Assessment Report, 2000
6. Site & Historic Photos



EXHIBIT 1 – STAFF RECOMMENDED FINDINGS

CASE NUMBER: P18-0578

MEETING DATE: October 17, 2018

FACTS FOR FINDINGS: (From Section 20.20.040 of the Riverside Municipal Code)

At a public hearing the Board shall make written a recommendation based upon the applicable criteria from Chapter 20.50. The Board shall forward its recommendation to the City Council.

FINDINGS: Criterion 1: Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, architectural, or natural history.

FACTS: From its construction in 1921 through the mid-20th century, the E.T. Wall Packing House was strongly associated with the Riverside citrus industry. This period of time was the industry's heyday from the late-19th century to the early-20th century, which was instrumental in the cultural and economic development and prosperity of the City. Therefore, the E.T. Wall Packing House represents a special element in the City's cultural and economic history.

FINDINGS: Criterion 3: Embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.

FACTS: The E.T. Wall Packing House embodies distinctive characteristics of citrus-related industrial buildings constructed from the late-19th century to the early-20th century. These characteristics include a large open plan, utilitarian design, generally concrete or brick construction, a saw-toothed roof with clerestory windows to provide natural lighting, adjacency to a railroad or spur line, a loading dock, and a basement with adequate ventilation for "coloring."