

CITY OF GLENDALE
INTERDIVISIONAL COMMUNICATION
STAFF REPORT

Date: October 21, 2021

To: Historic Preservation Commission

From: Jay Platt, Senior Urban Designer

Subject: Recommendation regarding Mills Act Contract for 3021 E. Chevy Chase Drive (Calori House, GR No. 23)

Property Owner: Blake Mills

Property Legal Description: Lot 11 in Block 5 of Tract No. 8842, in the City of Glendale.

INTRODUCTION

The owner of the single family house at 3021 E. Chevy Chase Drive requests to enter into a Mills Act contract with the City of Glendale for the benefit of property tax savings in exchange for continued preservation of the property. The property, known as the Calori House, was listed on the Glendale Register of Historic Resources in 1997 (GR No. 23) as one of the first thirty-seven properties included at the time of the Register's initial adoption. Listing on the register is a prerequisite for consideration of granting a Mills Act contract.

BACKGROUND

The Calori House was designed by architect Lloyd Wright and built in 1926. Wright, one of Los Angeles' early Modernist masters and also the son of Frank Lloyd Wright, merged aspects of the Spanish Colonial Revival and Art Deco styles to create this singular design. Bert Farrar, the developer of the Chevy Chase Estates subdivision, included Wright as part of a team of planners and designers that helped visualize and layout the neighborhood. An advertisement for the area boasted that Wright, along with his father, "has constructed many of the most beautiful residences in the entire world." The Calori House is one of three Wright-designed houses in the neighborhood. It is joined by one of his most famous designs, the Derby House (GR No. 22), also on Chevy Chase Drive, which was built in 1926 and partially incorporates the textile-block construction system that the father-son team developed for Frank Lloyd Wright's five block houses built in Los Angeles in 1923. The E. R. Lewis House on Graceland Way has been altered but still contains distinctive features reflective of the original design (as well as interior features reminiscent of the Calori design). In addition to these houses, Wright produced some remarkable-looking designs for a number of other houses that were unfortunately never built.

The subject property was built for Ernest E. and Lula Calori. Mr. Calori and his three brothers were the proprietors of Calori Brothers, a company that produced window sash and doors in the Glassell Park neighborhood of Los Angeles. By 1935, the Caloris had moved and a series of other owners occupied the house over the years. As with many properties listed in the early years of the Glendale Register, there is not a lot of historical information in

the City's files. It is clear the house was listed for its architectural design rather than any association with important people or events.

The property retains a high level of historic integrity and remains one of the key examples of Modern-style design in the city. Staff believes it is an excellent candidate for a Mills Act contract to assist with the property's ongoing maintenance needs over the years. Currently, there are several areas that require repair to prevent further deterioration and staff recommends these be addressed with the following Mills Act contract conditions:

1. Repair deteriorated portions of the wood lintels at the south façade, and smaller areas at several window sills at the west facade, and repaint.
2. Replace deteriorated wood window at the second-floor bathroom shower with a new wood window to match the design details of the historic windows.
3. Repair the crack in the projecting stucco volume at the base of the northeast corner of the house. If possible, determine the cause of the cracking and consult with Planning staff to determine an appropriate repair.
4. Fill in the gaps around the garage door with wood strips and paint to match the door frame.
5. Extend the downspout at the south side of the garage to provide proper drainage directed away from the house.

Recommended Action by the Historic Preservation Commission

The Planning Division recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission recommend to City Council that the City Manager be authorized to enter into a "Mills Act" historical property contract, including the conditions noted above, between the City and the property owner under the Section 15.20.070A of the Glendale Municipal Code.

Exhibits

Exhibit A: Mills Act Application

Exhibit B: Photographs