

September 13, 2005

Santa Monica, California

## INFORMATION ITEM

To: Mayor and City Council  
From: City Staff  
Subject: Status of Shotgun House

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to update the Council on the status of a privately-owned historic structure temporarily located at the Santa Monica Airport. This report is a follow-up to previous Council updates on February 9 and June 9, 2005.

### BACKGROUND

As previously described, a Shotgun House (the House) was located at 2712 Second Street in Ocean Park. Efforts to preserve the House began in 1998 when the owner of the subject property filed an application for demolition and the Santa Monica Landmarks Commission designated the house a City Landmark. The designation allowed for demolition of the house within 60 days of the hearing date, with the requirement that the applicant submit photographs and floor plans documenting the structure and provide evidence to prove that attempts were made to relocate the House. This determination was appealed by both the Ocean Park Community Organization (OPCO) and the Church in Ocean Park and focused on the Landmark's Commission's decision to allow the house to be demolished.

City Council considered the matter on February 16, 1999, upheld the Landmark Commission action to designate the building a landmark and directed staff to prepare an

analysis in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to determine if demolition would create a significant adverse impact on the historic resource. On September 26, 2000, the City Council certified the Final Environmental Impact Report and adopted a Statement of Overriding Considerations allowing for the demolition of the structure. Subsequently in an effort to save the House from immediate demolition, it was relocated by OPCO to the Santa Monica Airport in July 2002 to enable that organization's Shotgun House Relocation Committee (the Committee) sufficient time to identify a site for permanent relocation, explore reuse alternatives and raise funds for the relocation and rehabilitation efforts.

Over the last several years at the request of the Committee, City staff have met with its members to review a range of relocation options on public property. Discussions with impacted community members and the Landmarks and Recreation and Parks Commissions have been organized to obtain community input on the viability of various relocation options. These efforts are summarized below.

- The Committee prepares a report identifying 15 possible locations for the House. Of all public sites identified, staff indicates that the parking lot adjacent to Main Street Community Gardens may be viable with the understanding that input and support from community gardeners would be necessary for a successful relocation to this site.
- February 14, 2005: The Landmarks Commission meets to discuss the status of the House. The Committee indicates they have applied for a historic preservation grant from the Getty Trust. The Commission approves an action to produce a resolution of support for the House project.
- March 21, and May 9, 2005: Community Gardener meetings are convened by City staff regarding the proposal to relocate House to adjacent Main Street parking lot or within the Main Street gardens. No formal support is obtained for either option.

- April 21 and May 12, 2005: The Recreation and Parks Commission considers the Community Gardens proposal. On May 12, the Commission recommends that the House not be located on the parking lot adjacent to Community Gardens but that a conscientious effort be made to preserve the House at an alternative location (public or private) and that the House be relocated to the Fisher Lumber site in the interim.
- In response to community inquiries, Staff renews requests to the Committee to provide documentation on House ownership and the legal standing of OPCO as the stated owner. No documentation of ownership has been received in spite of repeated written verbal requests.
- The Committee organizes a number of meetings with groups of Main Street Community Gardeners in an effort to gain support for their proposal.
- June 9, 2005: An Information Item is sent to City Council indicating that absent additional Council direction, staff plans to send the OPCO House Relocation Subcommittee a letter requesting that the House be removed from the Airport property prior to construction start.
- August 8, 2005: The Landmarks Commission adopts a motion recommending to the City Council that it authorize the temporary relocation of the House to the Fisher Lumber site for a maximum of one year in order to allow for the Airport Park project to move forward and to enable the Committee additional time to find a permanent location for the House. This recommendation was communicated in a letter from the Chairperson of the Landmarks Commission to the Council. (Attachment A)
- August 15, 2005: A certified letter is sent to OPCO requesting that the House be removed from Airport property by October 1, 2005 since it is not possible for the house to remain at the airport once construction site preparations for the Airport Park are commenced. This letter was returned as undeliverable.
- September 19, 2005: A follow-up certified letter is sent to OPCO attaching the August 15, 2005 letter, requesting that the House be removed from the Airport by November 1, 2005, and stating that if the house is not moved by the commencement of site preparations for the park, the City will carry out the September 26, 2000, Council action authorizing demolition of the property.

## DISCUSSION

Despite diligent efforts by the committee and staff, no viable options have been identified for assisting in the implementation of OPCO's offer to preserve the House. The timeline for construction of Airport Park requires timely action. In the event that the House is not moved by OPCO on November 1, 2005, and absent additional direction, staff will implement the Council decision of September 26, 2000, to authorize demolition of the property.

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#### Attachments

A: August 9, 2005 Landmarks Commission Letter to City Council

August 9, 2005  
Mayor O'Connor  
Santa Monica City Council  
1685 Main Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90401

Dear Mayor O'Connor and The City Council:

The Santa Monica Landmark "Shotgun House" originally located at 2712 2<sup>nd</sup> has been temporarily located at the Santa Monica Airport for the past few years. Due to the imminent redevelopment of the Airport sight, the 'House' must be moved.

At its meeting of August 8, 2005 The Landmarks Commission voted unanimously to recommend City Council approval for the temporary relocation of the "Shotgun House" to the The Fisher Lumber site for a period not to exceed I year. The purpose of this relocation is to accommodate the Airport redevelopment and to also allow the "Shotgun Committee" additional time to find a permanent location. A permanent location will also expedite fundraising.

The temporary relocation at The Fisher Lumber site was also recommended by the Recreation and Parks Commission at its meeting on May 19, 2005.

The Landmarks Commission reaffirmed its support for the house and once again acknowledged its historic relevance to the City at its meeting of June 13, 2005.

The goal of the Landmarks Commission is to save this historic resource and to facilitate its permanent placement in an appropriate location that is close to its original site.

Roger Genser  
Chair, Santa Monica Landmarks Commission