



# Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



**Amy J. Bodek, AICP**  
Director of Regional Planning

**Dennis Slavin**  
Chief Deputy Director,  
Regional Planning

October 13, 2020

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**MILLS ACT EXEMPTION FROM DISQUALIFICATION ANDERSON HOUSE  
PROJECT NO. 2020-000311-(3) CASE NO. RPPL2020004010  
(THIRD SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT) (3-VOTES)**

**SUBJECT**

This action is to approve a request for an exemption from disqualification for a Mills Act historical property contract (Mills Act Contract) pursuant to Section 22.168.60 of the Los Angeles County Code (County Code) for a property located at 19974 Sischo Drive within the Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone (subject property).

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:**

Adopt a resolution exempting the subject property from disqualification for a Mills Act Contract.

**PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

The purpose of the recommended action is to exempt the subject property from disqualification due to property valuation so that the Department of Regional Planning (DRP) may grant the property owner the requested Mills Act Contract.

**Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

This action implements Strategic Plan Goal No. 2 (Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities). The Mills Act program preserves the unincorporated communities'

architectural and cultural heritage by encouraging property owners to maintain and restore their historical properties, thereby fostering community vibrancy.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

Owners of properties with a Mills Act contract typically receive a property tax reduction of approximately 50 percent. If the property owner in this case is granted a Mills Act Contract, the taxes for the property will be reduced approximately \$13,741 a year. The County receives a portion of property taxes. Therefore, if the property is granted a Mills Act Contract, the County's property tax revenue will decrease by less than \$13,471 a year.

### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

Pursuant to County Code Section 22.168.020, the Mills Act Program ("Program") provides an incentive for owners of qualified historical properties within the unincorporated areas of the County to preserve, restore, and rehabilitate the historic character of such properties, thereby providing an historical, architectural, social, artistic, and cultural benefit to the residents of the County, as authorized by the provisions of Article 12 (commencing with Section 50280) of Chapter 1 of Part 1 of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Government Code, which provisions are commonly known as the "Mills Act."

County Code Section 22.168.050 states that the Director shall propose provisions to control the cost to the County of the operation of the Program, including, but not limited to, provisions designed to limit the total reduction in unrealized property tax revenue to the County resulting from historical property contracts.

On November 16, 2013, the Board established cost control provisions for the Program that included a maximum assessed value for single-family residents of \$1,000,000. The subject property includes a single-family residence and has an assessed value of \$2,435,470 for 2021.

Pursuant to County Code Section 22.168.090, where a qualified historical property is ineligible to participate in the Program because of any approved provisions described in County Code Section 22.168.050, the owners or other persons authorized by the owners may file a request with the Director for an exemption from the disqualifying provisions.

On July 6, 2020, Beatrice Faverjon, owner of the subject property, filed a Mills Act Contract application and attached request from disqualification for the property with the Director.

Pursuant to County Code Section 22.168.090.A the exemption request shall include evidence that the subject property is deserving of an historical property contract due to its exceptional nature, or because it is subject to special circumstances not generally

applicable to other qualified historical properties. The submitted evidence includes analysis and an attached Historic Structures Report (HSR) prepared by Architectural Historian, Architectural Resources Group. An HSR describes a building's architectural history and provides guidance regarding the proposed work.

Pursuant to County Code Section 22.14.130, "qualified historical property" is defined in Section 50280.1 of the California Government Code and is located within the unincorporated areas of the County.

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 50280.1, "qualified historical property" means privately owned property, which is not exempt from property taxation and which meets either of the following:

- (a) Listed in the National Register of Historic Places or located in a registered historic district, as defined in Section 1.191-2(b) of Title 26 of the Code of Federal Regulations.
- (b) Listed in any state, city, county, or city and county official register of historical or architecturally significant sites, places, or landmarks.

On June 16, 2020, the Board designated the subject property as a County landmark because the property:

- Represents the work of an architect whose work is of significance to the County. Both the residence and utility shop were designed by architect W. Earl Wear for George Robert and Jean Anderson, who owned the subject property; and
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of the architectural style, Organic Modernism (or Organic Architecture), which was founded by the architect Frank Lloyd Wright and is generally characterized by the following: its use of natural materials, often left raw or exposed, in combination with modern materials (glass, concrete, and steel) and technologies (prefabricated elements); its careful siting in relation to its natural surroundings; a visual and physical connection to the exterior environment; and sometimes, its application of highly dramatic, biomorphic forms.

The subject property is listed as a landmark on the County's Register of Landmarks and Historic Districts, and therefore the property is a qualified historical property.

Pursuant to County Code Section 22.168.090.C, the Board may grant an exemption request if it finds that the subject property is deserving of an historical property contract due to its exceptional nature, because it is subject to special circumstances not generally applicable to other qualified historical properties, and because the proposed work is necessary for and will result in the preservation and, when necessary, the restoration and/or rehabilitation of the subject property.

DRP historic preservation consultant, Sapphos Environmental, prepared analysis and states in the attached memo (March 13, 2020), that they support the exemption from disqualification.

The subject property is eligible for an exemption from disqualification for the following reasons:

- The subject property is exceptional because it is one of only several houses designed by architect, William Earl Wear, that have not been significantly altered;
- The subject property is subject to special circumstances not generally applicable to other qualified historical properties because the property requires extensive maintenance and repairs that are estimated to cost in excess of \$1.1 million to complete; and
- The proposed work is necessary for and will result in the preservation and restoration of the subject property. The necessary proposed work includes repairing the cantilevered carport that is detaching from the house, replacing deteriorated old growth redwood siding, and installing a new roof and waterproofing to stop water infiltration that is causing wood rot and damage to the original interior finishes.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION**

Pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 21065 of, a “project” is an activity which may cause either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and which is any of the following:

- (a) An activity directly undertaken by any public agency.
- (b) An activity undertaken by a person which is supported, in whole or in part, through contracts, grants, subsidies, loans, or other forms of assistance from one or more public agencies.
- (c) An activity that involves the issuance to a person of a lease, permit, license, certificate, or other entitlement for use by one or more public agencies

The proposed action will not cause a direct physical change in the environment nor a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. Therefore, the proposed action is not a project according to California Environmental Quality Act and no environmental documentation is required.

### **IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)**

The proposed action will not impact current services or projects.

The Honorable Board of Supervisors

October 13, 2020

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For additional information regarding this item, please contact Dean Edwards at (213) 974-0087 or [dedwards@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:dedwards@planning.lacounty.gov).

Respectfully submitted,



AMY J. BODEK, AICP  
Director of Regional Planning

AJB:BS:CC:BD:DE:el

Attachments:

1. Resolution
2. Exemption Request
3. Historic Structures Report
4. Sapphos' Memorandum

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel  
Chief Executive Office (Christine Frias)  
Assessor

**RESOLUTION**  
**LOS ANGELES COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
**MILLS ACT EXEMPTION FROM DISQUALIFICATION**  
**ANDERSON HOUSE**  
**PROJECT NO. 2020-000311-(3)**  
**CASE NO. RPPL2020004010**

**WHEREAS**, the Los Angeles County ("County") Board of Supervisors ("Board"), on October 13, 2020, in the matter of Project No. 2020-000311-(3), considered a request for an exemption from disqualification for a Mills Act historical property contract pursuant to Section 22.168.60 of the Los Angeles County Code ("County Code") for a property located at 19974 Sischo Drive within the Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone ("subject property"); and

**WHEREAS**, the Board finds:

1. Pursuant to County Code Section 22.168.020, the Mills Act Program ("Program") provides an incentive for owners of qualified historical properties within the unincorporated areas of the County to preserve, restore, and rehabilitate the historic character of such properties, thereby providing an historical, architectural, social, artistic, and cultural benefit to the residents of the County, as authorized by the provisions of Article 12 (commencing with Section 50280) of Chapter 1 of Part 1 of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Government Code, which provisions are commonly known as the "Mills Act."

2. County Code Section 22.168.050 states that the Director shall propose provisions to control the cost to the County of the operation of the Program, including, but not limited to, provisions designed to limit the total reduction in unrealized property tax revenue to the County resulting from historical property contracts.

3. On November 16, 2013, the Board established cost control provisions for the Program that included a maximum assessed value (MAV) for single-family residents of \$1,000,000.

4. Pursuant to County Code Section 22.168.090, where a qualified historical property is ineligible to participate in the Program because of any approved provisions described in County Code Section 22.168.050, the owners or other persons authorized by the owners may file a request with the Director for an exemption from the disqualifying provisions.

5. On July 6, 2020, Beatrice Faverjon, owner of the subject property, filed a Mills Act contract application and request from disqualification for the property with the Director.

6. Pursuant to County Code Section 22.168.090.A the exemption request shall include evidence that the subject property is deserving of an historical property contract due to its exceptional nature, or because it is subject to special circumstances not generally applicable to other qualified historical properties. The submitted evidence includes analysis and a Historic Structures Report (HSR) prepared by Architectural Historian, Architectural Resources Group. A HSR describes a building's architectural history and provides guidance regarding the proposed work.

7. The subject property includes a single-family residence and has an assessed value of \$2,435,470 for 2021.

8. Pursuant to County Code Section 22.14.130, “qualified historical property” is defined in Section 50280.1 of the California Government Code and is located within the unincorporated areas of the County.

9. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 50280.1, “qualified historical property” means privately owned property which is not exempt from property taxation and which meets either of the following:

(a) Listed in the National Register of Historic Places or located in a registered historic district, as defined in Section 1.191-2(b) of Title 26 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) Listed in any state, city, county, or city and county official register of historical or architecturally significant sites, places, or landmarks.

10. On June 16, 2020, the Board designated the subject property as a County landmark because the property:

a. Represents the work of an architect whose work is of significance to the County. Both the residence and utility shop were designed by architect W. Earl Wear for George Robert and Jean Anderson who owned the subject property; and

b. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of the architectural style, Organic Modernism (or Organic Architecture), which was founded by the architect Frank Lloyd Wright and is generally characterized by the following: its use of natural materials, often left raw or exposed, in combination with modern materials (glass, concrete, and steel) and technologies (prefabricated elements); its careful siting in relation to its natural surroundings; a visual and physical connection to the exterior environment; and sometimes, its application of highly dramatic, biomorphic forms.

11. The subject property is listed as a landmark on the County’s Register of Landmarks and Historic Districts, and therefore the property is a qualified historical property.

12. Pursuant to County Code Section 22.168.090.C, the Board may grant an exemption request if it finds that the subject property is deserving of an historical property contract due to its exceptional nature, because it is subject to special circumstances not generally applicable to other qualified historical properties, and because the proposed work is necessary for and will result in the preservation and, when necessary, the restoration and/or rehabilitation of the subject property.

13. The Department of Regional Planning’s historic preservation consultant, Sapphos Environmental’s memo, dated March 13, 2020, states that they support the exemption from disqualification.

14. The subject property is eligible for an exemption from disqualification for the following reasons:

a. The subject property is exceptional because it is one of only several houses designed by architect, William Earl Wear, that have not been significantly altered;

b. The subject property is subject to special circumstances not generally applicable to other qualified historical properties because the property requires extensive maintenance and repairs that are estimated to cost in excess of \$1.1 million; and

c. The proposed work is necessary for and will result in the preservation and restoration of the subject property. The necessary proposed work includes repairing the cantilevered carport that is detaching from the house, replacing deteriorated old growth redwood siding, and installing a new roof and waterproofing to stop water infiltration that is causing wood rot and damage to original interior finishes.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DOES HEREBY RESOLVE, DETERMINE AND ORDER AS FOLLOWS:**

The qualified historical property located at 19974 Sischo Drive within the Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone is exempted from disqualification for a historical property contract because:

1. The property is unique and has an exceptional nature;
2. The property is subject to special circumstances not generally applicable to other qualified historical properties; and
3. The proposed work is necessary for and will result in the preservation and restoration of the subject property.

CELIA ZAVALA  
Executive Officer-Clerk of the Board of  
Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
MARY C. WICKHAM  
County Counsel

Thomas R. Parker, 9/29/2020  
By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy



## **Request for Exemption from Disqualification on Eligibility for Mills Act Historical Property Contract**

Architectural Resources Group (ARG) has prepared this written request for the Anderson House's exemption from disqualification on eligibility for a Mills Act Historical Property Contract. The Anderson House is located at 19974 Sischo Drive, in the unincorporated Los Angeles County community of Topanga Canyon.

The tax assessed valuation for the property is roughly \$2.34 million, and therefore it exceeds the County's valuation cap of \$1 million for single-family residential properties applying for Mills Act contracts. Pursuant to County Code Sect. 22.168.090, the County Board of Supervisors may grant an exemption from the valuation cap if it finds that "the subject property is deserving of an historical property contract due to its exceptional nature, or because it is subject to special circumstances not generally applicable to other qualified properties."

It is ARG's professional opinion that the property is both highly exceptional in nature as well as subject to special circumstances related to its maintenance and rehabilitation. What follows is a detailed justification of this finding.

### **Exceptional Significance**

The Anderson House represents the work of architect William Earl Wear. A Canadian national, Wear moved to Boston to work for the firm Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch & Abbott (H.H. Richardson's successor firm) after receiving his architecture degree from the University of Toronto. After a few years in Boston he moved to Long Beach, California and worked with John Lautner before setting up his own eponymous practice. An avid admirer of the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and the principles of organic architecture, Wear designed a series of custom houses in the Los Angeles region in the 1950s through the 1980s that convey the influence of organic architecture, while also showing his own growth and maturity as an architect. His work was both inspired by and built in reverence to the natural environment, with large expanses of glass, deep overhangs offering protection from the sun, extensive use of unpainted, old-growth redwood, inside and out, and the integration of local stone in walls and paving. Wear was a resident of Topanga Canyon in the 1950s, and much of the work he designed is in the Topanga/Malibu area. He designed approximately nine houses during his Southern California career.

The work of Wear is relatively unknown compared to some of his contemporaries, which is likely a reflection of the limited quantity of his work, as there is no question of his mastery as an architect. He appears to have spent significant time and effort on each commission. Although there are several online articles and essays celebrating the work of Wear in the Los Angeles region, the Anderson House is the first to pursue designation, and we have much to learn about the architect and his work.

The Anderson House is one of only two or three houses that Wear designed that have not been significantly altered. Most of Wear's houses have been modified through extensive interior remodeling and/or the construction of small additions, as indicated in the table below.

| <b>Property</b>   | <b>Year Built</b> | <b>Alterations</b>   |
|---|-------------------|--|
| Ware Residence, 20015 Sischo Drive, Topanga Canyon                    | 1954              | Small addition and major interior remodeling in 2013 (building permits). The remodeling was not sympathetic to Earl Wear's design.   |
| Anderson House (subject property), 19974 Sischo Drive, Topanga Canyon | 1958              | Slight expansion of second story bathroom in 1993 by Dr Bolinger, new tile/fixtures in the bathroom (building permits; correspondence with owner). The owner is currently working to restore original finishes and reinstall original plumbing fixtures. |
| Dr. Fong Q. Jing Residence, 4144 Palmero Drive, Mt. Washington        | 1958              | Re-roof, wood siding repair, historic restoration in 2016 (building permits). The old growth red wood is not stained anymore, but painted, and original hardware has been replaced.  |
| Wear Residence, 2440 Minard Road, Topanga Canyon                      | 1963              | Substantial interior remodel (new kitchen/bathrooms, partitions, staircase, etc.) and new hardscape in the early 2000s (building permits and photographs from ca. 2020 real estate listing).   |
| 3555 Locust Drive, Calabasas  | 1979              | Interior remodel, including new tile flooring in multiple rooms (photographs from ca. 2015 real estate listing)  |

|   |      |  |
|---|------|--|
| Shubin Residence, 6670<br>Wildlife Road, Malibu                     | 1980 | Substantial interior remodel, including demolition of interior walls and room conversion, and new hardscape and garage in 2001-2003 (building permits) |
| Goldberg Residence, 8637<br>Valley Circle Boulevard,<br>Canoga Park | 1981 | New addition in 2020 (correspondence with owner)   |

In addition to being one of his first major commissions, the subject property is one of the most intact and best remaining representations of Earl Wear's portfolio. A Mills Act contract would ensure the preservation of the Anderson House and would protect the legacy of Wear's work.

### **Special Circumstances Related to Maintenance and Rehabilitation**

The Anderson House is over 60 years of age and in need of maintenance and repair as is typical of a house of this vintage. However, the house is by no means typical, and there are special circumstances related to its design and construction that need immediate attention in order to protect the design and structural integrity of the house, as well as occupant safety.

Wear designed the house with dramatic cantilevered balconies and eaves – some stretching 10-12 feet or more – and all are in need of reinforcement. The carport, which originally cantilevered some 30 feet is currently held up by a small, insufficient post, installed by a previous owner, and the carport overhang itself is detaching from the house wall. Furthermore, the house is clad entirely in old-growth redwood, throughout the interior walls and ceilings as well as the exterior. The majority of the wood at the exterior is deteriorated to the extent that it will need to be replaced. Replacement in kind, with old-growth redwood, as is the intention of the owner, is an extremely costly, laborious process requiring highly trained carpenters. The house is also experiencing a considerable amount of water infiltration, which has caused wood rot and damage to original interior finishes, necessitating a new roof and waterproofing.

As delineated in the Mills Act Work Program, the cost of required maintenance and repair of the Anderson House is substantial, over \$1.1 million. A Mills Act contract is crucial to carrying out the necessary repair and ongoing maintenance to ensure the preservation of this highly unique property. The Anderson House's owner, Beatrice Faverjon, is dedicated to the protection and meticulous stewardship of the residence, down to the smallest original detail.



Architectural  
Resources Group

Architecture  
Planning  
Conservation



# Anderson House

## Historic Structures Report

*Prepared for*

Beatrice Faverjon

*Prepared by*

Architectural Resources Group

June 26, 2020

*View southwest of the Anderson House (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)*

## Project Team

### Principal Preparers

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Sarah Devan, RA, PA/AIC, Associate, Architect and  
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#### *Owner*

Beatrice Faverjon

19974 Sischo Drive

Topanga Canyon, CA

### Consultants

#### *Holmes Structures*

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Jacqueline Chan, President

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# Introduction

*View southeast of the Anderson House (ARG, 2019)*

### Purpose of the Report

This Historic Structures Report (HSR) was completed by Architectural Resources Group (ARG) at the request and of Beatrice Faverjon, owner of the Anderson House at 19974 Sischo Drive in Topanga Canyon, Los Angeles County. The purpose of the HSR is to document the subject building's history, significance, and existing conditions, and to appropriately guide its rehabilitation and maintenance. This HSR is associated with a Mills Act Property Tax Abatement Program contract application that is being submitted for the subject building and is a required component of the application.

An HSR establishes a valuable foundation for the rehabilitation of historic properties. It is a planning tool that will direct the future of the subject building in a manner that retains significant features, materials, spatial relationships, and interiors. The prevailing goal of this document is to provide a clear understanding of the subject building's significance and condition, and to establish a basic framework for decision making that shall be used by current and future stewards of the building.

Designed by Los Angeles architect W. Earl Wear, the Anderson House was constructed in 1958-59 as a single-family residence for George Robert and Dr. Jean Anderson.

In April 2020, the Los Angeles County Landmarks Commission voted unanimously to designate the Anderson House and Historic Landmark.

### Preservation Objectives

According to *Preservation Brief 43: The Preparation and Use of Historic Structure Reports*, an HSR provides documentary, graphic, and physical information about a property's history and existing

conditions. Broadly recognized as an effective part of preservation planning, an HSR also provides a thoughtfully considered argument for selecting the most appropriate approach to treatment prior to the commencement of work. The report serves as an important guide for all changes made to a historic property and outlines a scope of recommended work.

This HSR shall guide the rehabilitation, restoration, and maintenance of the Anderson House.

### Methodology

The HSR has been developed using information gathered through background document review, archival research, and field investigation. The methodology that was employed for this report ascribes to the guidelines, standards, and best professional practices that are enumerated in the following reference materials:

- *Preservation Brief 43: The Preparation and Use of Historic Structure Reports*
- *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*
- *National Register Bulletin 39: Researching a Historic Property*

The report conveys information about the design and construction of the Anderson House in two parts: 1) Developmental History and 2) Treatment and Work Recommendations. Part 1, Developmental History, comprises a historical background and context; a chronology of development and use; a physical description and list of character-defining features and materials; and a discussion of significance. The Developmental History section also provides a comprehensive analysis of the building's interior and exterior conditions, and examines the building's systems.

Part 2 provides a comprehensive set of treatment and use recommendations for the building, including the conservation of significant materials. The proposed treatment was developed in accordance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings*.

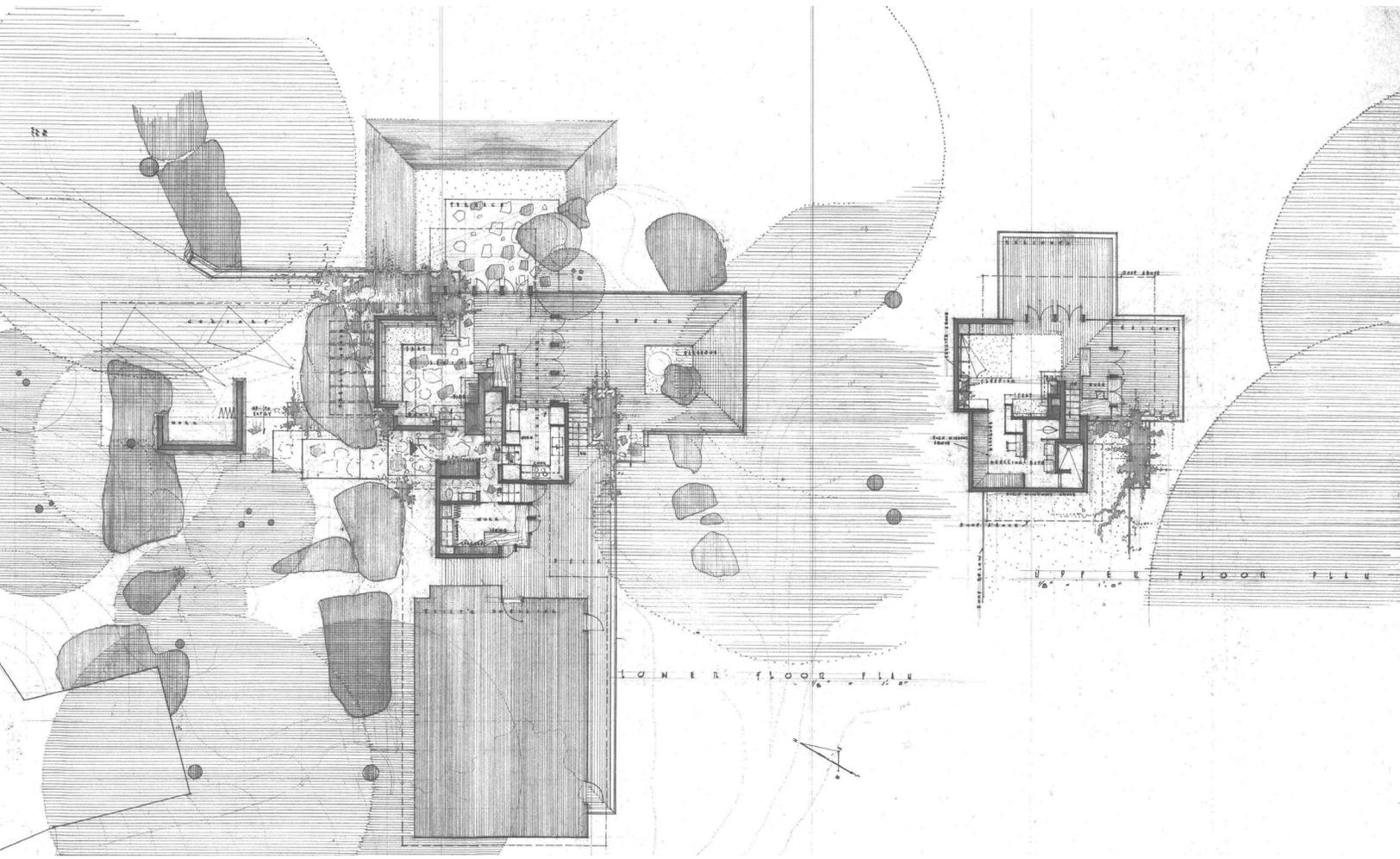
### *Conditions Assessment & Document Review*

ARG conducted a site visit and conditions assessment in November 2019 along with structural engineers from Holmes Structures. The building's exterior spaces, interior spaces, and surrounding site were examined and documented with digital photographs. ARG staff conducted a second site visit in December 2019, during which original drawings (dated 1958/59), prepared by Wear, were obtained. The drawings were then used to supplement the team's assessment of existing conditions.

Holmes Structure's structural analysis is included as an appendix at the end of this HSR.

### *Research*

ARG reviewed primary and secondary source materials related to the history and development of the building. Sources include books, journals, and periodicals; original drawings held by the owner; historical building permits from the County of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety; and an interview conducted by journalist Andrew Romano with Earl Wear's daughter, Hannah Wear. These materials aided in the preparation of the Developmental History section of this report.

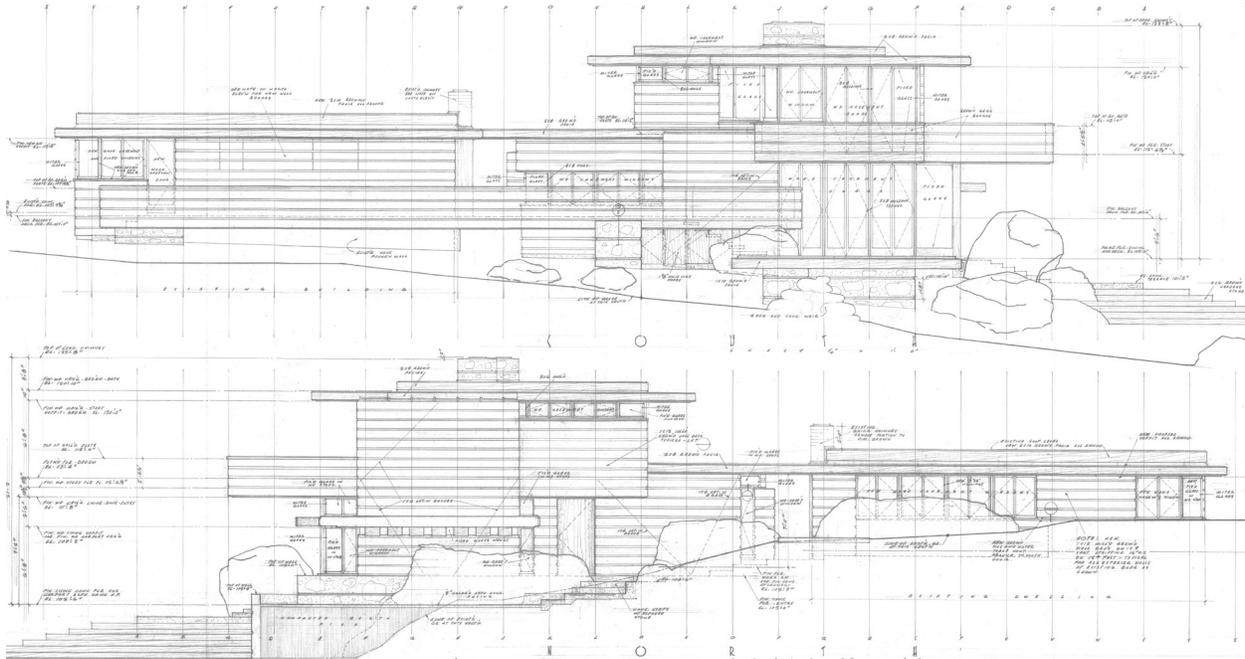


*Part I*

# Developmental History

*Preliminary site plan for the Anderson House, prepared by Earl Wear, undated (courtesy Beatrice Faverjon)*

## Historical Background and Context



Earl Wear's 1958 north and south elevations drawings (courtesy Beatrice Faverjon)

## Historical Background and Context

### *Residential Development of Topanga Canyon*

Prior to the Spanish arrival in the late 18th century, Topanga and the Santa Monica Mountains were home to the Tongva tribe, a Native American tribe who occupied much of what is now Los Angeles County. The Tongva lived a semi-sedentary lifestyle that relied on seasonally available foods and establishing permanent villages near stable water sources. In 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American War and established California as a United States territory. However, it was not until 1862 with the passage of the Homestead Act that Topanga Canyon, then public domain, was opened for settlement. In 1878, Jesus Santa Maria, born in

Sonora, Mexico to Spanish immigrants, and his wife, Elena Valenzuela, became the first settlers in what is now known as Topanga Canyon.<sup>1</sup>

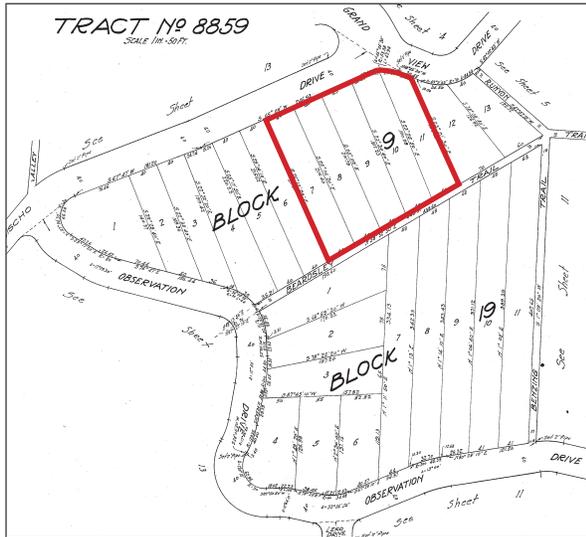
At the turn of the 20th century, Topanga became home to a number of resort hotels which advertised the mineral springs and natural beauty of the canyon. One of these resorts, the Topanga Tavern, was built around 1909 by the Topanga Development Company which "early saw the possibilities of development in Topanga..."<sup>2</sup> The completion of a road through the canyon in 1917 slowed the growth of these retreat centers, as day and weekend excursions, as opposed to long-term vacations, became the norm.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Louise Armstrong York, *The Topanga Story* (Topanga, CA: The Topanga Historical Society, 1992), 19, 25-27.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 47-48.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 51.

## Historical Background and Context



Tract No. 8859, subject property outlined in red (Los Angeles County Assessor)

Several subdivisions were made in the canyon during the mid- to late 1920s. Though some, such as the Topanga Del Mar, a 240-acre development subdivided by the John A. Vaughan Corporation in 1928, were improved and sold by private developers, title companies handled the majority of the real-estate transactions in Los Angeles County, including Tract No. 8859 in which the subject property is located.<sup>4</sup>

As with much of Southern California, Topanga experienced a population boom in the years leading up to and following World War II. Defense workers inundated Southern California during the war, and extreme housing shortages in more convenient locals led some to take up residence in the canyon. In the postwar period, “The trickle of writers, musicians, artists and craftsmen who had long been attracted by Topanga’s ambiance (and cheap housing) became

<sup>4</sup> “Topanga Land Purchased: Canyon Acreage to be Placed on Market Near Ocean Next Sunday,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 29, 1929, E7; “January Tract Openings Cited,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 3, 1929, E3.

a steady stream.”<sup>5</sup> Those seeking a more alternative lifestyle also sought refuge in the canyon due to its “closeness to nature, the community’s traditional attitude of tolerance, cheap rents, absentee landlords and lack of law enforcement.”<sup>6</sup> Major improvements to the area’s utilities, in addition to a stable water source following the community’s vote to join the Metropolitan Water District in 1954, improved livability in the canyon.<sup>7</sup>

By the 1960s, Topanga faced an increasing number of proposed developments such as an 11,300-acre planned community designed by noted architecture firm William Pereira and Associates as well as smaller 75- to 300-acre residential tracts. The massive Pereira-designed community plan was never realized due to opposition by the Santa Monica Regional Park Association and Topanga residents and the geology of the steep hillsides which proved unsuitable for such dense growth. However, pressures to increase development persisted, spurring Topanga residents into action. In 1963, the Topanga Association for a Scenic Community (TASC) was formed in opposition to the Los Angeles Regional Planning Commission’s proposed Topanga Canyon Master Plan. Written by architect Bob Bates, the TASC’s by-laws stated: “The purpose of this organization is to endeavor to maintain an orderly development of Topanga in keeping with the natural terrain and intrinsic beauty.”<sup>8</sup> Architect W. Earl Wear was elected chairman and Dr. Charles Ackerman served as vice-chairman.<sup>9</sup>

Though development pressures continued through the 1990s, Topanga residents and the TASC deterred many large-scale development efforts and have managed to maintain the canyon’s “small-town” feel.

<sup>5</sup> York, 77.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 86.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 77.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 90.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 90.

## Historical Background and Context

### *Ownership/Occupant History*

The first known occupants of the subject property were Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Curtis, who owned and lived in the ca. 1947 residence upon its completion. Research did not produce substantial information about the Curtis family, other than that Mr. Curtis worked as a teaching assistant in the School of Engineering at the University of Southern California.<sup>10</sup> The family lived in the house until at least 1954.<sup>11</sup>

Around 1957, the property was sold to George Robert and Dr. Jean Anderson, who commissioned Wear to greatly expand the existing dwelling on site. George Anderson was the inventor of a clamping device, filed with the United States Patent Office in 1962, and Jean Anderson may have worked as a psychologist.<sup>12</sup> No additional information was found on the Andersons.

By 1976, the house was occupied by director William A. Graham. Born in New York in 1926, Graham served in the U.S. Navy and attended Yale University before beginning his career as a director of television and movies in the mid-1950s. Graham started directing segments of television anthologies such as Kraft Theater and Omnibus before taking on larger projects for TV series including Breaking Point, The X-Files, and Batman. Throughout his nearly 50-year career, he directed dozens of small films, including *Where the Lilies Bloom* (1974), *Billy the Kid* (1989), and *Return to the Blue Lagoon* (1991). He is often cited for changing Elvis' hair style for his role in the motion picture *Change of Habit*.<sup>13</sup> Research did not indicate the extent of Graham's ownership of the

property; however, by 1979, Dr. Robert J. Bolander, an anesthesiologist, owned the house.<sup>14</sup> The Bolander family owned the house into the early 2000s. Beatrice Faverjon, the current owner, acquired the property in 2016.

<sup>10</sup> University of Southern California, "USC Register," Los Angeles, CA, 1950.

<sup>11</sup> Index to Register of Voters, Topanga Precinct No. 2, Los Angeles County, California, 1954.

<sup>12</sup> United States Patent Office, *Official Gazette of the United States Patent Office*, vol. 782 (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1962).

<sup>13</sup> "William A. Graham Biography," *IMDb*, accessed January 9, 2020, [https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0334353/bio?ref\\_=nm\\_ov\\_bio\\_sm](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0334353/bio?ref_=nm_ov_bio_sm).

<sup>14</sup> "A Redwood Contemporary in California," *The Wall Street Journal*, accessed January 2020, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10000872396390444554704577643592488153950>.



Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin West. The building's concrete walls with embedded stone likely served as inspiration for Earl Wear's design of the Anderson House (courtesy Huntington Library)

## *Origins and Development of Organic Architecture*

### Defining Organic Architecture

While concepts of “organic” have been described by many architects and theorists before and after Frank Lloyd Wright, the term is indelibly associated with him as “the North Star of Organic architecture.”<sup>15</sup> This is in large part owing to his outsized influence over the broader development of the architectural profession in the United States. While best defined as a philosophy rather than a style, organic architecture constitutes a sort of naturalistic Tao in that it does not adhere to a strict set of dogmas or orthodoxies. Wright's various writings and lectures are themselves rather oblique when it comes to defining what organic architecture is and is not, and it is generally assumed that his built work would stand as the strongest means of support for his arguments.<sup>16</sup> Rather, organic architecture implies a flexible set of values that, when architecturally expressed, should work to successfully respond to nature. Moreover, resultant designs should seek to grow from, and integrate with, nature and place itself.

Organic architecture owes much to romanticism in that it not only centers the individual, but also prizes their capacity to respond to – and be inspired by – the environment. Within an architectural context, the designer, builder, or practitioner's own intuition is a principle source of value and meaning in the work produced. Because of this, organic architecture is often difficult to reduce to any sort of formal

<sup>15</sup> Alan Hess, *Frank Lloyd Wright: The Houses* (New York, NY: Rizzoli, 2005), 234; Alan Hess, *Organic Architecture: The Other Modernism* (Salt Lake City, UT: Gibbs Smith, 2006), 8.

<sup>16</sup> Adapted from “Wright – Organic Architecture,” *Frank Lloyd Wright Trust*, last modified 2015, <http://www.flwright.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Wright-Organic-Architecture.pdf>.

## Historical Background and Context

orthodoxy. The resulting openness to interpretation ultimately lays the groundwork for a flexibility that has helped to make organic architecture a critical, if subaltern, component of modern architecture in the U.S. In the words of architect and historian Alan Hess, “Organic architecture is a style wide ranging enough to defy easy definition, yet vivid enough for people to know it when they see it.”<sup>17</sup>

### Post-World War II Organic Architecture/ Organic Modernism

Mirroring Frank Lloyd Wright’s career and reputation, organic architecture was largely cast aside and marginalized in the years following the First World War. Having met with little success in the building boom of the 1920s, Wright would go on to found the Taliesin fellowship following the onset of the Great Depression. While this endeavor was a practical means of financial survival during a period when building commissions had ground to a halt nationwide, it was also a means of creative renewal for Wright and organic architecture.<sup>18</sup> Wright’s projects built during this period, culminating in the Kauffman residence (Fallingwater) in 1938, set the stage for a comeback. The renewed media exposure and critical attention that Wright’s proposals received in this period is credited as a source for disseminating notions of organic architecture nationwide. Additionally, it was during this time that Wright founded Taliesin West in the Arizona desert, where he developed an organic style more in tune with the climate and materials of the western U.S. and inspired younger generations of emerging architects who would go on to establish careers in the more active and prosperous postwar economy.

Many mainstream postwar buildings – from small-scale residential to larger commercial and institutional

<sup>17</sup> Hess, *Organic Architecture*, 6.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 60.

projects – began to incorporate aspects of organic design. At the same time, works considered to be organic architecture in their design and conception continued to evolve beyond the conformist tendencies of the postwar period to embody what some have referred to as organic modernism.<sup>19</sup> At the professional level, this stylistic evolution of organic architecture resulted from prominent practitioners, led by Taliesin alumni and others like John Lautner and Bruce Goff, respectively, coming into their own and honing their work beyond the formal example of Frank Lloyd Wright. At the broader level of culture and society, the exuberant and expressive tendencies of this new period of organic architecture was tied to a growing interest in the space age, which reflected the influence of science fiction and is evident in Lautner’s work.

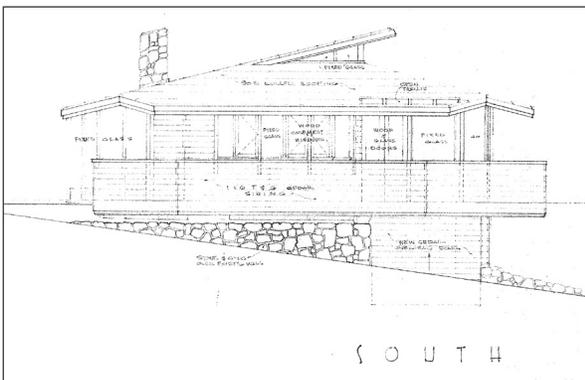
Organic modernism is generally characterized by its use of natural materials, often left raw or exposed, in combination with modern materials (glass, concrete, and steel) and technologies (prefabricated elements); its careful siting in relation to its natural surroundings; a visual and physical connection to the exterior environment; and sometimes, its application of highly dramatic, biomorphic forms.

<sup>19</sup> Virginia McAlester, *A Field guide to American Houses* (New York NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 660.

## Historical Background and Context



Wear's Calabasas house was featured in the *Los Angeles Times* shortly after its construction ("Organic Architecture Used in New Calabasas Home," February 23, 1980)



Wear's south elevation drawing for the Goldberg Residence, 1981 (courtesy Bob Goldberg)



Wear's Dr. Fong Q. Jing Residence in Mt. Washington (courtesy valleymodern.com)

### *William Earl Wear, Architect*

William Earl Wear was born in Windsor, Ontario in 1925. During World War II, Wear served as a bombardier navigator in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Upon returning home, he took an aptitude test provided by the military, which indicated his potential in the architectural profession. After graduating from the University of Toronto, Wear moved to Boston and gained employment with the architecture firm of Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch & Abbott and worked on the restoration of H.H. Richardson's Trinity Church, among other projects. In 1952, he moved to Long Beach, California, where his mother then lived. Two years later, he began renting a small house in Topanga.<sup>20</sup> During his time in Topanga, Wear became an impassioned proponent for the environment. In 1963, he helped found the Topanga Association for a Scenic Community (TASC), an organization that advocated for the preservation of Topanga's natural scenery. Wear served as the TASC's first chairman.

It was during his studies at the University of Toronto that Wear became acquainted with the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and the principles of organic architecture, which largely guided his own residential work. Wear's interest in organic design may have led to his connection with Los Angeles architect and former Frank Lloyd Wright apprentice, John Lautner, with whom he purportedly worked before establishing his own practice. Wear designed approximately nine houses throughout his 30-year career. A meticulous person, Wear was deeply involved with the construction of all his projects and gave no less attention to interior finishes and details than he did to those of the exterior. He customized a concrete mixture made of local materials and designed built-in furniture and cabinetry that were tailored to the

<sup>20</sup> "William Earl Wear (1925-2011)," *U.S. Modernist*, accessed January 9, 2020, <https://www.usmodernist.org/wear.htm>; Andrew Romano, interview with Hannah Wear, October 2019.

## Historical Background and Context

homeowner.<sup>21</sup> It is perhaps due to this incredible attention to each commission that his body of work is relatively small. Following the principles of organic design, he utilized natural materials such as redwood, cedar, and local stone to create architectural forms that seamlessly integrated with, even seeming to grow out of, the surrounding landscape.

In 1986, Wear retired from his practice and moved to Aptos, CA near Santa Cruz. He died at his home on March 26, 2011.<sup>22</sup>

### *Development of the Anderson House*

In 1954, Wear completed a remodel of an existing house in Topanga for Harold G. and Joan B. Ware. However, one of his first major commissions (involving substantial new construction) came four years later, when Wear was hired by George Robert Anderson and Dr. Jean Anderson to design a new two-story residence and extensively remodel their modest one-story dwelling at 19974 Sischo Drive.<sup>23</sup> As described by Wear's daughter, Hannah, also an architect, the Anderson House "put [her] dad on the map."<sup>24</sup> Wear designed a handful of other houses in Southern California, including the Dr. Fong Q. Jing Residence in Mt. Washington (1958), the Shubin Residence in Malibu (1980), a single-family residence in Calabasas (1979), the Goldberg Residence in Canoga Park (1981), and his own house in Topanga (1963).<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Andrew Romano, interview with Hannah Wear, October 2019.

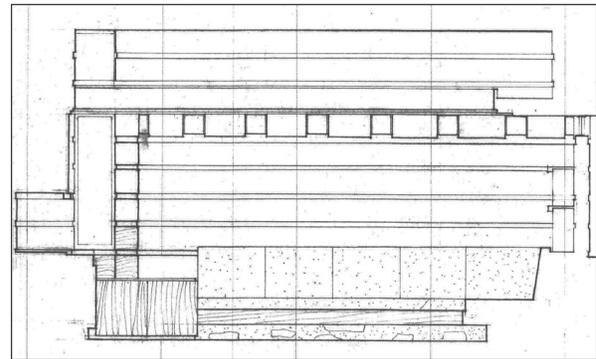
<sup>22</sup> "William Earl Wear (1925-2011)," *U.S. Modernist*.

<sup>23</sup> Research indicates Wear's work on the Dr. Fong Q. Jing Residence occurred concurrently with work on the subject property.

<sup>24</sup> Andrew Romano, interview with Hannah Wear, October 2019.

<sup>25</sup> Though real estate listings indicate Wear built the Calabasas home for himself, a *Los Angeles Times* article notes the house was up for sale shortly after construction was completed. "Organic Architecture Used in New Calabasas Home," *Los Angeles Times*, February 23, 1980; "William Earl Wear (1925-2011)," *U.S. Modernist*.

In addition to being one of his first major commissions, the subject property is one of the most intact, and best remaining representations of Earl Wear's work.<sup>26</sup> As indicated in the Integrity section below, the house retains all of its exterior and the majority of its interior character-defining features, including redwood ceiling and wall finishes, concrete floors with embedded stone, and built-in furniture and cabinetry. These features convey Wear's deft craftsmanship and original design intent.



Section drawing of the Anderson House main living room showing Earl Wear's custom built-in furniture and cabinetry (courtesy Beatrice Faverjon)

<sup>26</sup> The Dr. Fong Q. Jing Residence, which underwent an extensive historic restoration in 2016, is also largely intact from its original construction.

## Chronology of Development and Use

### Chronology of Development and Use

ca. 1947 Originally subdivided as part of Tract No. 8859, the property was improved with a one-story, single-family residence for Thomas Curtis.

ca. 1957 The property was sold to George Robert and Jean Anderson.

1958 The Andersons hired architect and neighbor, W. Earl Wear, to completely remodel and add onto the 1947 residence. The original building was adjoined to the new construction by a shared roof and vestibule. A new carport was added, attached to the north façade of the residence.

1964 Wear designed a utility shop for the Andersons, located at the northern edge of the property. The building was designed in the same style and with the same materials as the house.

1976 Director William Graham was living at the house.<sup>27</sup>

ca. 1979 Dr. Robert J. Bolander acquired the residence.<sup>28</sup>

1981 Permit pulled by Bolander for electrical work.<sup>29</sup> The Bolander family owned the house into the early 2000s.

1993 The second story bathroom was slightly enlarged by moving the south wall approximately 30 inches further south and the north clerestory windows slightly further north.<sup>30</sup>

2017-2018 Permits pulled by the current owner, Beatrice Faverjon.<sup>31</sup>

Windows at the second story, where the bathroom was expanded, were replaced to match the original in design, profile, and materials.

New finishes and fixtures replaced non-original finishes and fixtures in the restrooms.

The kitchen was restored to remove previous incompatible alterations; new millwork was installed based on the original design.

2019 An addition to the utility shop, begun by the previous owner, was completed on the west side. It is sympathetic to the original design and materials. A portion of the building is currently used as a pottery studio.

<sup>27</sup> Directors Guild of America, "Directory of Members," 1976.

<sup>28</sup> "A Redwood Contemporary in California," *The Wall Street Journal*.

<sup>29</sup> County of Los Angeles Building and Safety, Application for Electrical Permit, August 28, 1981.

<sup>30</sup> Beatrice Faverjon, email correspondence with ARG, January 25, 2020.

<sup>31</sup> County of Los Angeles Building and Safety, building and mechanical/electrical/plumbing permits, January 19, 2017.

## Physical Description



Aerial view with the subject property outlined in red (courtesy Google Earth)

## Physical Description

### *Site*

The property at 19974 Sischo Drive, historically known as the Anderson House, is located in Topanga Canyon, a small unincorporated residential community nestled in the Santa Monica Mountains, in west Los Angeles County. Consistent with the character of the Topanga Canyon area, the topography of the property is steep and sloping, and the area is densely vegetated. The property is surrounded by single-family residences dating from the 1920s through the 1970s.

The property comprises a two-story single-family residence and one-story utility shop (currently used as

a pottery studio) on a large irregularly shaped parcel. The utility shop is located to the north and uphill from the house. The site is terraced and slopes downward to the south. Original walkways, steps, retaining walls, and planters made of poured concrete embedded with local stone surround the house and utility shop. Mature shade trees such as oak and myriad low-lying species are planted throughout, and a non-historic stacked stone perimeter wall encloses the property. Non-historic paving and various small stone structures are located to the east and downslope from the house.

The main entrance to the property is through a pair of redwood driveway gates on the south side of Sischo Drive. The driveway is paved with stone, and a poured concrete and stone planter and entrance marker are

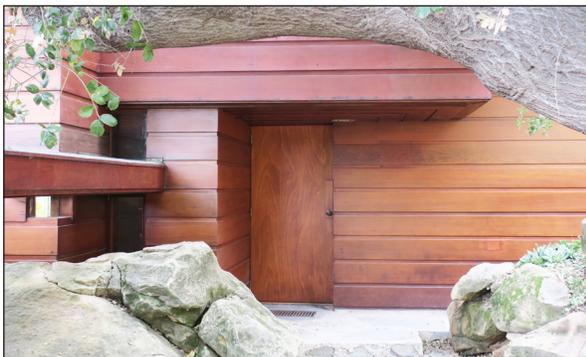
## Physical Description



Cantilevered carport attached to the primary (north) façade (ARG, 2019)



Carport storage, consisting of poured concrete walls embedded with stone and featuring horizontal channels and a fully glazed wood door (ARG, 2019)



Recessed main entrance, comprising a flush wood door (ARG, 2019)

located to the west of the driveway. To the west of the driveway gates, north of the perimeter wall, is a concrete-paved parking area bounded by a poured concrete and stone retaining wall surmounted by a wall clad in redwood channel siding.

### *Anderson House*

#### Exterior

The house is roughly rectangular in plan and of wood-frame construction. It is covered with a flat roof with wide boxed eaves and built-up/gravel roofing. Its walls are clad with redwood channel siding. All windows are made of redwood and are single-light.

The building was constructed in two phases. The one-story west half was constructed ca. 1947; its architect is unknown. In 1958-59, architect W. Earl Wear remodeled the west half and designed the two-story east half for George Robert and Jean Anderson. The two halves were connected by a small vestibule; the ca. 1947 portion was remodeled to match the two-story half in design and materials.

The building's primary façade faces north towards the entrance drive. A large, partially cantilevered carport/entrance canopy extends from the east end of the façade. Near the center of and supporting the canopy is an L-shaped wall constructed of poured concrete embedded with local stone and marked with horizontal channels ("architectural markings" according to Wear's drawings) and a small glass-enclosed storage structure. The canopy is connected to the north façade by a series of evenly spaced redwood slats. Between each slat, along the façade, are small square fixed windows. To the west of the canopy is the main entrance to the house. The entrance is unassuming and recessed with a flush redwood door.

To the west of the entrance is another recessed niche marking the location where the ca. 1947 and 1958-59 buildings were connected. The niche contains a floor-

## Physical Description

to-ceiling casement window, two smaller windows, and a built-in wood cabinet. Wood fixed and casement windows are grouped above the main entrance, at the second story, and at the westmost corner of the north façade.

The north end of the east façade, first story contains grouped fixed and casement windows fronted by a deep poured concrete and stone planter; the north end, second story is devoid of fenestration. The south half of the east façade is glazed at both the first and second stories with narrow fixed and casement floor-to-ceiling windows. The casement windows/doors provide access to a wide cantilevered balcony at the second story and a wood patio deck at the first story.

The east end of the south façade is similar to that of the south end of the east façade, with grouped windows/doors at both the first and second stories and a wide balcony cantilevered at the second story. To the west of the second story windows and balcony is a group of replacement windows marking the location of a second story bathroom addition. Additional groupings of fixed and casement windows line the west half of the façade. The south façade is fronted by a two-level wood deck. The lower level at the east end contains a built-in hot tub.

The west façade contains grouped fixed and casement windows at its north and south ends. The center of the façade is devoid of fenestration.



East façade, view southwest; note fixed and casement windows/doors and cantilevered balcony (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



East end of the south façade, view north; note redwood fixed and casement windows and wide balcony (ARG, 2019)



West façade, view northeast (ARG, 2019)



South façade, view northeast; note wide wood patio deck (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

## Physical Description



Main entry, view north (ARG, 2019)



Quarter bathroom west of entry hallway, showing original toilet (ARG, 2019)

## Interior

The east half of the house was constructed between 1958-59. It is generally divided into communal spaces at the first floor and private spaces on the second floor. The first floor, east half contains a kitchen, living room, dining room, and bathroom. The master bedroom, a bathroom, and study are located on the second floor. The west half of the house was built ca. 1947 as a standalone residence and redesigned by Wear to function as guest quarters. It contains a kitchenette, living room, two bedrooms, and a bathroom.

## *Entry*

The front door of the house leads to a narrow hallway in the east portion of the building. The hallway has a redwood channel ceiling and wall finishes and a poured concrete floor embedded with local stone. A square recessed ceiling fixture lights the hallway.

A narrow, flush wood door on the west side of the hallway accesses a quarter bathroom. The bathroom contains an original built-in wood cabinet with a sink and an original pink-colored toilet; it has a redwood channel ceiling and walls and poured concrete and stone flooring. The ceiling contains a square recessed light fixture.

## Physical Description

### *East (Main) Living Room*

A rectangular opening on the east side of the hallway leads to the living room, which sits five steps below. The living room features a built-in, L-shaped sofa bookended by redwood cabinetry. A fireplace is located in the southwest corner of the living room. The fireplace is made with concrete embedded with local stone and marked with horizontal channels. The room is finished with a redwood channel ceiling and walls and concrete and stone flooring. Light fixtures are square and recessed in the ceiling.



Sunken main (east) living room, view northeast (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

### *East (Main) Dining Room*

To the south of the entrance hallway and living room are the kitchen and original dining room. The dining room, which does not currently serve its original function, is open to the living room to the north and to the kitchen to the west. Its south and east walls comprise floor-to-ceiling windows/doors overlooking the yard. It has a redwood channel ceiling and wood strip flooring. A built-in concrete and stone planter is located at the northeast corner of the room. Square, recessed ceiling fixtures providing lighting in the space. According to 1958 drawings of the house, a built-in table may have been removed from the dining room.



Poured concrete and embedded stone fireplace in the main living room (ARG, 2019)



Main (east) dining room, view northeast (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

## Physical Description



Kitchen, view east; note built-in cabinets (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

### *Kitchen*

The kitchen comprises a long wood countertop with built-in cabinets and appliances on the south side and a group of full-height wood doors leading to a pantry on the north side. The kitchen is finished with a redwood channel ceiling and wood strip flooring. Square recessed light fixtures are placed throughout the ceiling.

### *Breakfast Nook*

Between the dining room and kitchen is a breakfast nook with a built-in, L-shaped seat and wood table top, as well as a built-in workspace consisting of a wood desk and cabinetry. This space is reached via three wood steps from the dining room and sits level with the kitchen.



Built-in breakfast nook east of the kitchen (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Workspace east of the kitchen (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

## Physical Description

### *Master Bedroom*

At the east end of the kitchen, a flight of wood steps with a concrete handrail leads to the second floor. To the south of the stair landing is an open study comprising a narrow built-in wood desk and cabinetry. To the north of the landing is the master bedroom. The bedroom contains a built-in wood bed bounded by built-in nightstands. Built-in shelving lines the east wall of the bedroom, and a poured concrete and stone fireplace with horizontal channels sits in the southwest corner. The bedroom is finished with a redwood channel ceiling and walls and wood strip flooring; it has square recessed light fixtures in the ceiling.

### *Master Bathroom*

To the west of the bedroom is a narrow dressing area lined on either side with built-in wood cabinets and drawers. The space provides access to the master bathroom. The bathroom contains a wood vanity and a water closet accessed by a flush wood door. The shower and sink are open to the dressing area. In 1993, the bathroom was slightly enlarged by moving the south wall approximately 30 inches further south and the north clerestory windows slightly further north.<sup>32</sup> Original redwood fixed and casement windows were replaced in kind. The bathroom retains an original redwood channel ceiling with new tile wall and floor finishes and new fixtures.



Built-in bed in the master bedroom (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Open study (left) (ARG, 2019) and concrete and stone fireplace (right) at the master bedroom (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Dressing area with built-in cabinets (left) and master bathroom vanity (right) (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

<sup>32</sup> Beatrice Faverjon, email correspondence with ARG, January 25, 2020.

## Physical Description



West living room/den, view northwest; note built-in sofa and shelving (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



West living room concrete and stone fireplace (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Kitchenette, view east (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

### *West Living Room/Den*

At the west end of the first floor kitchen, a small vestibule with a wood ceiling and walls and concrete flooring connects the 1958-59 half of the building to the ca. 1947 portion. The vestibule leads to an open living room/den with a built-in wood sofa, shelving, and cabinets. A poured concrete and stone fireplace with horizontal channels is located on the east wall of the room. A square-shaped soffit with lighting hovers above the living space.

### *West Dining Room and Kitchenette/Bar*

To the south of the living room is an open area with a wood table and chairs. Presumably originally the dining space, it is now used as a children's play area. To the east of this area is a kitchenette/bar with wood cabinets and a built-in sink and stovetop. The living room, kitchenette/bar, and dining/play area have a redwood channel ceiling and walls. The concrete flooring is embedded with coarse aggregate, different from the large stones in the flooring of the east half of the house.

## Physical Description

### *West Bedrooms*

Two smaller bedrooms are located to the west of the living room. The bedrooms, comprising the westmost end of the house, retain redwood channel ceilings and walls, concrete flooring with coarse aggregate, and closets with flush wood doors. The current owner added new built-in beds and desks where the original built-ins had been removed. Square-shaped soffits with uplighting illuminate the bedrooms.

### *West Bathroom*

The bathroom, just east of the bedrooms, contains original built-in shelving and a cabinet with a new sink, walk-in shower, and toilet. The ceiling and walls are finished with redwood and non-original tile (in the shower), and the flooring is concrete with coarse aggregate.

### *Utility Shop*

Constructed in 1964, the original utility shop, now a pottery studio, is located uphill from the house, at the northwest corner of the property. The shop is irregular in plan and partially built into the hillside on the north and west sides. It has a flat roof with built-up/gravel roofing, and its walls are primarily made of poured concrete embedded with local stone.

The primary (east) façade is fronted by a concrete and stone patio and steps. The main entrance consists of a fully glazed redwood door and butted glass sidelight sheltered by a wide canopy.

The south façade features a single casement window near its east end. To the west of the window is a group of floor-to-ceiling casement windows/doors marking the location of a 2019 addition. These windows/doors and the concrete block walls comprising the rest of the addition are compatible with the design and materials of the original building.

The north and west sides of the original building and addition are devoid of fenestration.



Southwest bedroom, view southwest (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Close-up of the built-in cabinetry in the west bathroom (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Utility shop, view northwest (ARG, 2019)

## Evaluation of Significance

### *Overview of Significance*

The Anderson House embodies the distinctive characteristics of postwar organic architecture designed by architect William Earl Wear (more commonly known as Earl Wear). Its strong horizontal emphasis, integration into the natural terrain of the site, use of natural materials (redwood, stone) in combination with modern materials (concrete), and physical and visual connection to the outdoors through its grouped fenestration, patio decks, and cantilevered balconies, make the residence an excellent example of organic modernism. Wear's portfolio of completed works is relatively small, with only about nine known completed residential projects; as one of his first, the subject property is an extraordinarily important component of his canon. It represents Wear's mastery of organic modernism, marking his place in a very small class of master architects who perfected the style during the postwar period.

The subject property's period of significance begins in 1958 with the construction of the house (designed by Wear) and ends in 1964 with the construction of the utility shop.

In April 2020, the Los Angeles County Landmarks Commission voted unanimously to approve the Anderson House's landmark designation.

## Evaluation of Significance

### *Character-Defining Features*

#### Site

- Large, irregularly shaped site that is terraced and slopes downward towards the south
- Dense, mature vegetation, including oak trees and other low-lying plant species
- Walkways, steps, retaining walls, and planters made of poured concrete embedded with local stone
- Concrete, stone, and metal driveway entrance marker and wood driveway gates

#### Anderson House

##### *Exterior*

- Strong horizontal forms, built into the natural terrain of the site
- Roughly rectangular plan with one-story volume to the west and two-story volume to the east
- Flat roof with wide boxed eaves and built-up/gravel roofing
- Redwood channel siding
- Grouped fixed and casement wood windows/doors
- Small square fixed windows at the carport trellis connection with the north façade
- Unassuming recessed flush wood front door
- Wide cantilevered carport/entrance canopy at the north façade
- Wide cantilevered balconies at the south and east façades
- Expansive wood patio deck with built-in hot tub at the south and east façades



Concrete walkways embedded with stone (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Concrete, stone, and metal entrance marker (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Dense vegetation beyond the wood patio deck and built-in hot tub (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

Evaluation of Significance



Flat roofs and strong horizontal forms built into the hillside (ARG, 2019)



Redwood channel siding and unassuming recessed front door at the north façade (ARG, 2019)



Grouped fixed and casement windows and doors at the south façade and seen throughout the house (ARG, 2019)



Built-in concrete and stone planter, cantilevered carport, carport roof trellis, and small fixed windows at the north façade(ARG, 2019)



Large wood patio deck at the south side of the house (ARG, 2019)



Cantilevered balcony at the south (shown) and east façades (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

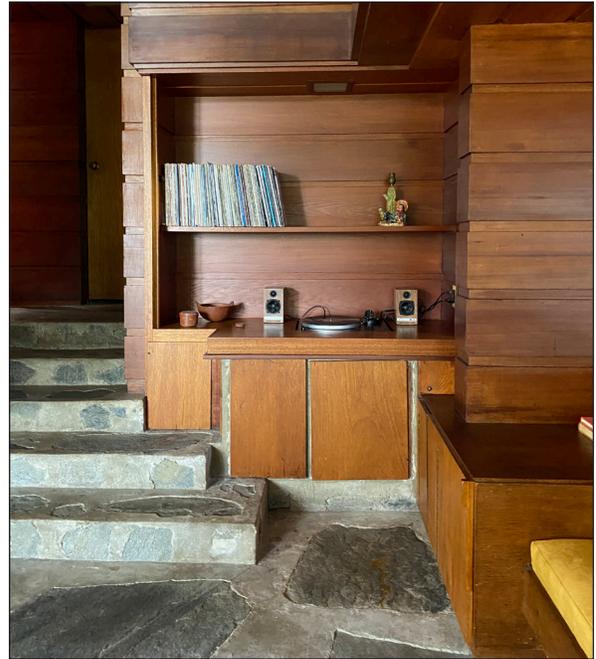
## Evaluation of Significance

### *Interior*

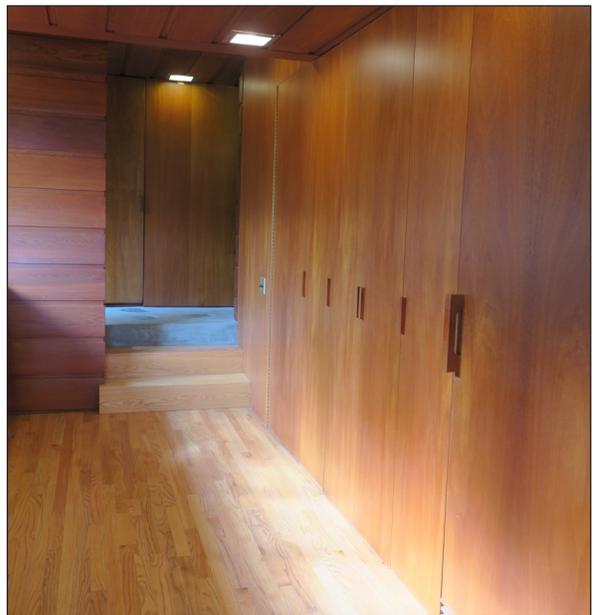
- Redwood channel ceilings and walls throughout
- Concrete floor with large embedded stones in the entry, main (east) living room, and quarter bathroom
- Wood strip flooring in the main (east) dining room, kitchen, breakfast nook, and master bedroom
- Concrete floor with small aggregate in the west living room, west dining room and kitchenette/bar, and west bedrooms
- Sunken main (east) living room
- Concrete and stone fireplaces with horizontal channels in the living rooms and master bedroom
- Built-in redwood furniture, including sofas, desks, seating, shelving, and cabinetry
- Square recessed ceiling light fixtures throughout
- Soffit lighting in the living rooms and bedrooms
- Skylight in the master bedroom
- Concrete railing at stairs to second floor
- Built-in concrete and stone planter in the main dining room



Detail of the concrete handrail of the stair to the second floor (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Redwood channel ceiling and walls (typical throughout) and concrete floor with embedded stone in the entry and main living room (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Redwood channel ceilings and walls, recessed ceiling lights, and built-in cabinets in the kitchen (ARG, 2019)

Evaluation of Significance



Concrete and stone fireplace in the main (east) living room (ARG, 2019)



Cantilevered concrete and stone fireplace in the master bedroom (ARG, 2019)



Built-in cabinetry bookending the sofa in the main living room (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Built-in sofa in the main living room (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

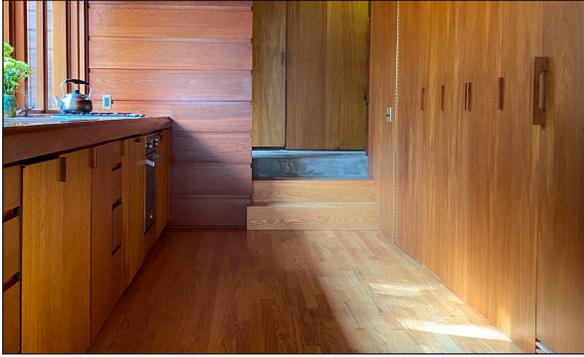


Built-in concrete and stone planter in the main (east) dining room (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Built-in tables, seating, and cabinetry at the breakfast nook and workspace by the kitchen (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

## Evaluation of Significance



Built-in cabinets, drawers, and wood strip flooring in the kitchen (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Built-in bed, nightstands, and shelving and skylight in the master bedroom (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Built-in desk and original wood chair at the open study south of the master bedroom (ARG, 2019)



Built-in sofa, shelving, and concrete floor with small aggregate in the west living room (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Built-in closet in the northwest bedroom (also in the southwest bedroom) (ARG, 2019)



Soffit lighting in the northwest bedroom (also in the southwest bedroom and living rooms) (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

## Evaluation of Significance



Flat roof, partially built into the hillside (ARG, 2019)

### Utility Shop

- One-story height, partially built into the hillside
- Flat roof
- Exterior walls of poured concrete with embedded stone and horizontal channels
- Primary entrance comprising a fully glazed wood door sheltered by a wide wood canopy



Poured concrete walls with embedded stone and fully glazed wood front door with wide canopy (ARG, 2019)

## Existing Conditions



East façade, view northwest (ARG, 2019)

## Existing Conditions

### *Introduction*

The following architectural conditions assessment has been prepared for the Anderson House in order to document existing conditions and develop recommendations for repairs and maintenance. This assessment is based on site visits and review of background documentation, including original drawings, building permits, and other historical information. The project team, comprising an architect/conservator and architectural historian from ARG and a structural engineer from Holmes Structures

(Holmes), conducted a site visit in November 2019. The goal of this visit was to determine the scope of work needed to address ongoing structural and material deterioration at the house, as well as scope needed to reverse incompatible alterations completed by previous owners.

For the purposes of this report, existing conditions have been broadly grouped into the following categories: structural systems, exterior walls and features, roofing and drainage, exterior windows and doors, interior finishes and features, building systems, and site and landscape features. The main residence and the detached utility shop will be discussed separately within each section.



## Existing Conditions

of the one-story building, architect Wear added 2x8 outriggers around the full perimeter of the building to create the 2 1/2-foot deep overhang.

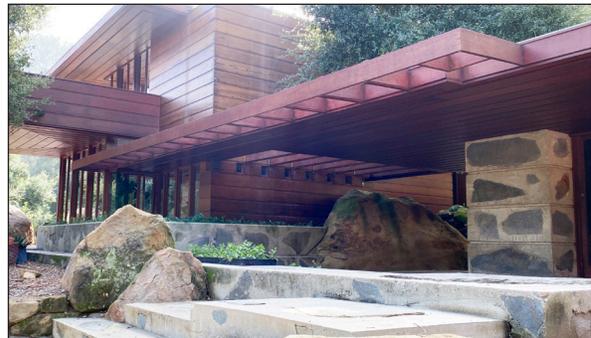
The house has an expansive exterior wood deck which wraps around the south and east façades at the first floor level. The deck is framed with 2x8 joists at 16-inches on center. The joists are supported on reinforced concrete walls, which extend as foundation walls below grade with continuous reinforced concrete footings. The deck has a wide double-cantilevered overhang (cantilevers in two directions).

The carport has a wide cantilevered roof structure, composed of concealed steel beams and wood joist framing. The beams are supported on the concrete walls below, which are 8-inch thick reinforced concrete with the exposed stone finish. The concrete walls extend below-grade as foundation walls with continuous reinforced concrete footings. The carport paving consists of a 4-inch thick reinforced concrete slab, similar to the house's concrete floors.

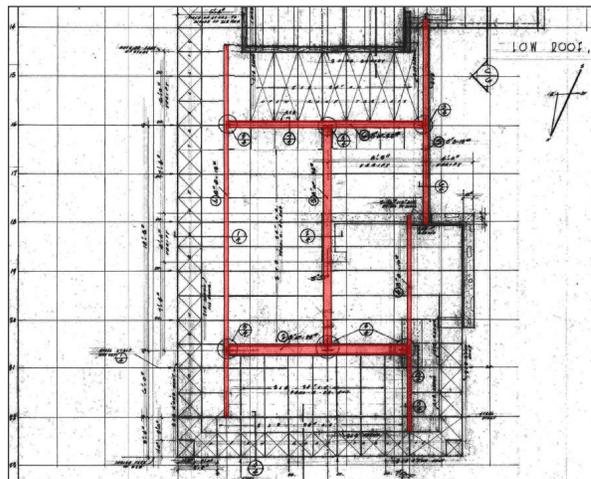
The lateral force resisting systems in the building typically consist of wood shear walls or diaphragms. The roof framing is sheathed with 3/4-inch plywood decking. The floor framing is similarly sheathed with plywood as a sub-floor. It is unclear if exterior walls have similar sheathing; details show redwood siding over 15# felt only. However, the elevation drawings do show 1x4 let-in diagonal braces, presumably for lateral support. According to details, the wood-framed walls are bolted to the foundation, and the roofs are bolted to the walls, but the extent and condition of these connections are unknown at this time. Details also show steel straps and diagonal bracing at portions of the roof framing, including the following: at the low roof/carport perimeter edge (three sides); at the high roof master bedroom skylight; and at the open roof trellis between the house and carport.



Exterior wood deck on the south side of the house (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Cantilevered carport with exposed wood framing at the connection to the house (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Original structural drawing of carport, highlighting the steel beam framing (courtesy Beatrice Faverjon)

## Existing Conditions



Wood decay/rot at the carport trellis (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Carport roof beams pulling away from the house exterior wall (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Wood post added at the northeast corner to support the carport (ARG, 2019)

In general, the residence structural systems are intact and remain in fair condition overall, with some areas in need of repair. The carport structural system is in poor condition overall, and in need of significant repair.

The dramatic cantilevered roofs, while being a key component of Wear's design, have not fared well over time. The carport roof to the north has significant deflection and most likely loss of structural strength. The exterior deck to the south, with the wide double-cantilevered overhang, has similar structural deflection. Where framing was observed, wood joists at these locations have warped and deflected downward, and wood decay/rot was observed in some locations. The carport roof is also pulling away from the north residence wall, and a wood post has been added near the northeast corner as a secondary means of support. In other locations throughout the house, persistent roof leaks and flashing issues, as well as inappropriate alterations, have led to water damage and wood decay/rot at wood structural framing (see "Roofing and Drainage" section below for more information).

The condition of existing steel beams, steel straps, diagonal bracing, and bolted connections is unknown at this time. These materials are concealed from view by other wood framing, siding or trim, and exploratory investigation is needed to confirm their condition. However, ARG assumes that based on the level of water damage and deterioration observable at wood framing, that the steel framing will be similarly impacted, resulting in corrosion of steel surfaces, rust jacking and damage to surrounding materials, and possible section loss.

## Existing Conditions

### *Utility Shop Structural System*

The utility shop is a detached one-story structure near the northwest corner of the property. It is currently used as a pottery studio. It was also designed by Wear, using similar construction materials and methods, and constructed five years later in 1964. The shop is irregular in plan and partially built into the hillside on the north and west sides. The exterior walls are 6-inch or 8-inch thick reinforced concrete with the same exposed stone finish as the house's concrete walls. The concrete walls extend below-grade as foundation walls with continuous reinforced concrete footings, and the floor is a reinforced concrete slab-on-grade. The roof is flat and framed with 2x8 roof joists at 16-inches on center. The roof diaphragm is sheathed with 1/2-inch PlyScord sheeting (Douglas Fir plywood), and the joists are bolted to the exterior walls.

In 2019, an addition was completed at the west side of the utility shop; it was begun by the previous owner. The addition is sympathetic to the original design and materials. Walls are constructed with concrete masonry units (CMU). The floor slab is concrete slab-on-grade similar to the original. The roof is also concrete, and there is a redwood boxed eave.

In general, the utility shop is in fair structural condition with some localized areas in need of repair at concrete walls. Leaks have been observed in multiple locations, including the roof slab and walls. Concrete spalling and exposed/corroded steel reinforcement were noted at some interior locations (see "Interior Finishes and Features" section below). Some localized/ differential settlement may have also occurred based on inoperability of one of the original windows.

*Note: See attached report by Holmes Structures for additional information regarding the structural systems for both the residence and utility shop.*



Utility shop, view northwest (ARG, 2019)



Addition to west side of utility shop (ARG, 2019)



Concrete spalling and exposed/corroded steel reinforcement inside the utility shop (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

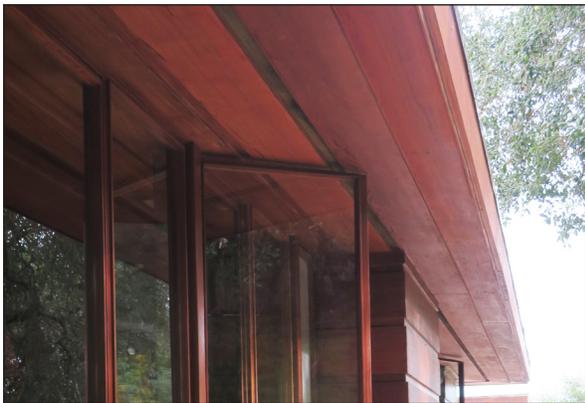
## Existing Conditions



Old growth redwood channel siding (ARG, 2019)



Boxed eaves with redwood siding and mitered corners (ARG, 2019)



Mesh screen visible at the soffit side/eave (ARG, 2019)

## Exterior Walls and Features

### *Residence Exterior Walls and Trim*

The exterior walls of the residence and carport are clad in old growth redwood siding. The 1x12 siding is installed as wide horizontal boards with a channel profile at the overlap. The channel siding at the elevations further emphasizes the horizontality of the building's design. Similar channel siding is installed at the soffit side of roof and balcony overhangs. However, in this application, the siding follows the building plan and has mitered corners where it changes direction/orientation. The roof eaves are enclosed (boxed) with 2x redwood fascia boards, trellis framing, and trim. The eaves are also vented at the soffit side with a small continuous strip of mesh screen.

According to original drawings, exterior walls are framed with 2x wood studs at 16-inches on center (stud size varies by location). Exterior walls are also shown to have batt insulation between wall studs. The channel siding at the two-story eastern portion of the house is typically fastened with nails to the wood studs over a layer of 15# felt (an asphaltic sheet waterproofing layer). There does not appear to be exterior plywood sheathing, but the elevations do mention 1x4 let-in diagonal braces, presumably for lateral support. In some locations, such as at balcony railings, there is also an under layer of plywood sheathing at one or both sides (see "Residence Balconies and Decks" section below). At the western portion of the house (the existing building that was remodeled by Wear), the existing walls were clad with 1x12 milled redwood siding, which was installed on 1x3 vertical stripping and over a layer of 15# felt. The perimeter of the existing building also received a new redwood sill and water table, and a new roof overhang, framed by 2x8 outriggers and finished with 2x10 redwood fascia boards.

## Existing Conditions

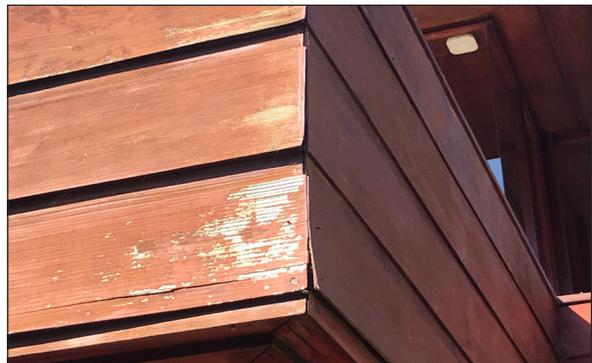
In general, the redwood siding and trim is in fair condition throughout. ARG noted many areas of wood decay/rot and heavy splitting of boards. The deterioration is typically observed at mitered siding at building corners, and at joints between wood components or between wood and other materials. Many siding boards are also bowed and cupped in shape, leading to water intrusion. Splits and rust stains were noted at corroded nail fasteners. Drip stains were also noted at the building face from roof water overflow (see “Roofing and Drainage” section below). Wall flashings were noted in some areas, such as the carport roof-to-house connection. In other areas, such as the carport roof trellis, there was no flashing provided, and the wood is heavily deteriorated as a result. Sealant has been installed in some locations as a temporary measure, but the sealant has failed.

There have been some incompatible alterations and previous repairs performed at the residence exterior walls. At several locations, original old growth siding was previously replaced with new growth redwood or even stained pine siding. These boards are non-matching and have deteriorated much faster than the old growth lumber. Between 2017-19, some non-original pine siding was replaced with old growth redwood. In 1993, the south wall of the master bathroom (second floor) was heavily modified. The original wall containing redwood siding and high clerestory windows was removed, and a new wall was constructed 30 inches further south, thereby increasing the size of the bathroom. The wall height was also lowered, and larger casement windows were installed. The wall modifications, along with roofing/ flashing deterioration, have resulted in leaks into the interior at this location, and at the dining room below.

The exterior walls of the carport storage consist of cast-in-place reinforced concrete which has been embellished with stone and cast details. The walls are very reminiscent of the “desert stone” construction



Wood decay/rot at mitered siding (left) and building corner (right) (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Deteriorated non-compatible siding (ARG, 2019)



Water infiltration at ceiling of dining room, most likely associated with leaks at master bathroom/roof above (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

## Existing Conditions



Exterior concrete and stone walls at the carport storage (ARG, 2019)



Cantilevered balcony at the south façade; note incompatible siding (ARG, 2019)



Waterproofing membrane and drain at balcony floor, and drain stub at soffit side (ARG, 2019)

technique used earlier by Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin West. At the exterior side, the walls feature large flat stones that are embedded in the concrete and set flush with the face of the wall. At 20-inch height intervals, there are continuous horizontal channels cast into the walls (called “architectural markings” by Wear). The carport has a wide cantilevered roof structure, supported by concealed steel beams and wood joist framing. The roof eaves have 2x redwood fascia and open trellis framing constructed with 1x or 2x redwood boards. Other than the gravel stop flashing at the roof, there does not appear to be any other flashing provided at the wood framing or between the wood framing and the concrete walls.

Overall, the exterior concrete walls remain intact and in fair condition. Surfaces are soiled and some minor hairline cracking was observed. The wood framing at the roof eaves is heavily deteriorated, with wood decay/rot, splitting, and material loss noted. (See “Structural Systems” and “Roofing and Drainage” sections for associated conditions.)

### *Residence Balconies and Decks*

The second floor of the residence has wide cantilevered balconies at the south and east façades. The balconies are wood-framed, similar to the floors, using 2x8 joists. The floors are sheathed with 3/4-inch plywood and covered with a continuous waterproofing membrane, which appears to be a polyurethane-based fluid-applied traffic coating. The membrane slopes to a series of small drains that are located inside the perimeter walls. The drains are 1-1/8-inch square galvanized sheet metal pipes that are stubbed through the balcony framing and can be seen from the soffit below. The soffit is also clad with redwood channel siding. The siding orientation follows the building plan, with mitered joints where the boards change orientation/direction.

## Existing Conditions

The balconies are enclosed on three sides by wood-framed railings, approximately 40-inches high. The railings are typically sheathed with plywood on one or both sides (depending on location). They are clad on both sides with redwood channel siding and have a 2x redwood cap rail. The south balcony also features a built-in planter. The planter box is framed with 2x wood framing, sheathed in plywood, and lined with 22-gauge galvanized sheet metal.

In general, the redwood siding and trim at the balconies is in poor condition throughout. Most boards throughout are bowed and cupped in shape, leading to water intrusion and leaks to the interior. At several locations, original old growth siding has been previously replaced with new growth redwood or stained pine siding. These boards are non-matching and have deteriorated much faster than the old growth lumber. In other areas, ARG noted wood decay/rot, and splitting of boards, in particular at corroded nail fasteners. Water stains/damage were also noted. The master bedroom balcony at the east elevation appears to have significant water and termite damage at the floor joists and railing.

The traffic coating membrane at the balconies are in poor condition. The membrane is deteriorated, with tears and perforations in several locations, allowing for water infiltration. The small drains are in tact and appear operational.



Built-in planter at the south balcony (ARG, 2019)



Damaged/split siding at balcony (left) and wood rot/decay at built-in planter (right) (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Wood rot/decay at built-in planter (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Deteriorated membrane at balcony (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

## Existing Conditions



Wood deck on the south side of the house (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Localized area of wood decay at deck (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Original hot tub clad in ceramic tile (ARG, 2019)

At the first floor level, the residence has an expansive exterior wood deck which wraps around the south and east façades. The deck is framed with 2x8 joists, supported on the concrete foundation system. It extends wide in two directions as a double cantilever. The deck edges are not enclosed by railings. The deck floor consists of 2x4 redwood boards, installed with open joints. The deck boards are oriented to follow the building plan, with mitered joints where boards change orientation/direction.

In general, the exterior deck is in fair condition. There is noticeable structural deflection at the double cantilevered framing to the south (see “Structural Systems” section above for information). Other framing appears to be intact, with localized areas of wood rot/decay and splitting. The deck boards appear to be in good condition but will require clear coat maintenance due to the outdoor exposure to weather and UV radiation. Some boards have splits at corroded fasteners.

At the south deck, there is a cut-out section for an original hot tub/spa, which is constructed of reinforced concrete. The upper ledge features large embedded stone, similar to the concrete walls; and the basin and interior steps are clad with variegated blue ceramic tile. Spa equipment is located below deck adjacent to the concrete foundation wall. The spa appears to be in fair condition overall. Surfaces are soiled and tile grout joints are deteriorated or missing in some areas. Though Wear’s drawings show the entire spa opening as concrete with embedded stones, the existing tile appears to be original or added shortly after construction.

## Existing Conditions

### *Utility Shop Exterior Walls and Trim*

The utility shop exterior walls consist of cast-in-place reinforced concrete. Similar to the carport walls, the exterior side features large flat stones that are embedded in the concrete and continuous horizontal channels cast into the walls (“architectural markings”). In 2019, an addition was constructed at the west side of the building, with reinforced concrete masonry unit (CMU) walls. The addition is sympathetic to the original design and materials. The roof is flat and framed with 2x8 joists. The roof eaves have a 2x redwood fascia. According to the original drawings, the fascia was fastened to the roof framing, and the lower joint with the exterior concrete walls was sealed with sealant; no flashing was specified.

In general, the exterior concrete and stone surfaces of the utility shop walls are in fair condition with some localized cracking and spalling noted, at interior surfaces, along with associated water penetration (see “Interior Finishes and Features” for information).

### Roofing and Drainage

#### *Residence Roof*

The house and carport roofs are flat and framed with 2x8 joists. They feature wide overhangs and boxed or open trellis eaves composed of redwood (see “Exterior Walls and Trim” section above for information). The eaves are also typically vented at the soffit side with a small continuous strip of mesh screen. The western portion of the house was constructed ca. 1947 and remodeled by Wear in 1958-59; that work included resurfacing of the existing roof, and construction of a new wide overhang.

The roof framing is typically sheathed with 3/4-inch plywood decking, and the roofs are covered with a built-up membrane (hot-mopped asphalt) with



Cast-in-place reinforced concrete walls at the utility shop (ARG, 2019)



Water penetration at inside of utility shop (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Flat roof with gravel surface at the residence; note sheet metal flashing at eave (ARG, 2019)

## Existing Conditions



Close-up of damaged gravel stop flashing and deteriorated wood (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Drip stains on redwood siding (ARG, 2019)



Deteriorated roof membrane and surviving remnant of original copper base flashing at low roof (ARG, 2019)

a decorative green gravel surface. Drainage at the residence roofs is typically by surface water flow only; there are no visible gutters, downspouts, scuppers or other internal drains. Almost all existing flashings are painted galvanized sheet metal, which replaced the original copper flashings. The piece of copper flashing at the low carport roof connection to the house (see photo) is the only remnant of the original flashing specified by Wear. Flashings include gravel stop flashing at eaves, and wall flashings at uprising walls and the chimney. Gravel stop flashings were designed so that surface water would run over the redwood fascia, not behind it, and the redwood trim served as a drip edge.

There is a custom skylight at the north wall of the master bedroom (second floor) which was designed by Wear. The skylight is framed in redwood and has acrylic glazing (plexiglas). There is also a contemporary prefabricated unit skylight at the roof of the one-story building to the west, over the den area. This skylight was added by a previous owner. Also visible at the roofs are various vent penetrations and conduit piping for the fire suppression system (see “Building Systems” section below for more information).

In general, the asphalt/gravel roofing systems are in poor condition overall. The house roof appears to have been re-surfaced (date unknown); however, conditions have deteriorated and there are leaks. Roof drainage appears to be a concern. Based on the drip stains visible at the redwood siding, there is roof water overflow near the northeast corner. Leaks were reported by the owner at the south wall of the master bathroom, where the wall and roof flashings were reconfigured in 1993 to enlarge the bathroom. Leaks were also reported at the north wall of the master bedroom, at the custom skylight. The skylight could not be observed from the roof side; additional survey is needed.

## Existing Conditions

### *Utility Shop Roof*

The utility shop roof is also flat and framed with 2x8 roof joists supported on the concrete walls. The roof is sheathed with 1/2-inch PlyScord sheeting (Douglas Fir plywood) and covered with a similar built-up membrane roof (hot-mopped asphalt) with a decorative green gravel surface. Drainage is typically by surface water flow only; there are no visible gutters, downspouts, scuppers or other internal drains. There is one prefabricated unit skylight at the roof.

Currently, the utility shop roof is in poor condition. The roof surfaces are deteriorated and near the end of their useful service life. The gravel is eroded or missing in several areas, with a desiccated and cracked asphalt/tar layer visible. The concrete portion of the roof is leaking, with cracking and stains visible at the interior ceiling below.



Gravel roof at the utility shop; note areas of wear and skylight (skylight beyond is at the residence roof) (ARG, 2019)

## Exterior Windows and Doors

### *Residence Windows and Doors*

The Anderson House has numerous custom redwood windows and doors throughout the house. The windows vary in size from small fixed glazed openings at the north elevation of the living room, to entire floor-to-ceiling fixed or casement openings. Doors vary from the simple, solid, flush panel entrance door to the floor-to-ceiling glazed doors that exit onto balconies or decks.

According to the original drawings, windows and doors are solid wood construction. Frames are 2x single-rabbeted or double-rabbeted frames (depending on configuration). Sills are solid red oak, consisting of a single piece cut from a 2x8 or 2x10 depending on size. Intermediate structural mullions between grouped window bays are 3x8 redwood



Floor-to-ceiling glazed windows and doors at the south façade (ARG, 2019)



Solid flush panel front entrance door (ARG, 2019)

## Existing Conditions



Small fixed windows at living room north wall; note water infiltration at sill (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Water damage and wear at sills at exterior doors (ARG, 2019)



New doors (left) and original window (right) at utility shop (ARG, 2019)

posts. Window sash and glass doors are glazed with clear single pane glass, set with wood stops. Some areas also have glazed corners, with mitered glass set in silicone sealant. The one-story western portion of the house was existing and remodeled by Wear in 1958-59. At that time, the existing house received new wood fixed and casement windows, similar in construction to the two-story portion of the house.

Most of the windows and exterior doors at the residence are original and remain intact and unaltered. New casement windows were installed at the south wall of the master bathroom when the wall was reconfigured to enlarge the space (see “Exterior Walls and Features” section above). The original fixed and casement clerestory windows were removed at that time and were not salvaged. Between 2017-19, the current owner also restored the existing redwood windows in the kitchen, living room, and master bathroom.

The remaining windows and doors are in fair condition overall. Some wood components are split and have minor wood rot/decay. Red oak sills at exterior doors are deteriorated from water damage and wear. Also, leaks were noted at the small fixed windows below the trellis at the north elevation (living room).

### *Utility Shop Windows and Doors*

The original window and door openings at the utility shop are few, including a fully glazed redwood entrance door and sidelight at the east elevation; and a single casement window at the south elevation near the east end. During construction of the 2019 addition, the west side of the south elevation was enclosed with floor-to ceiling glazed redwood doors for the pottery studio. The doors were based on the design of those in the residence dining room. All windows and doors are similar in construction to the residence (see above). The original windows and doors are in fair condition, with some signs of wear. The new doors are in good condition.

## Interior Finishes and Features

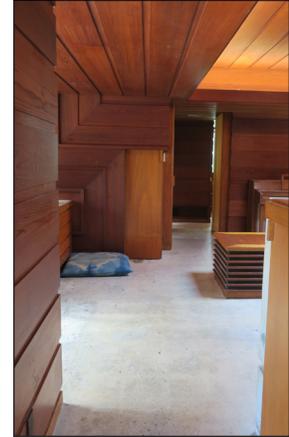
### *Residence Interior Finishes*

The eastern two-story portion of the house was designed by Wear and constructed in 1958-59. It is generally divided into communal spaces at the first floor and private spaces on the second. The first floor contains a kitchen with breakfast nook, living room, dining room, and a bathroom. The second floor contains the master bedroom, master bathroom, dressing area and an open study at the stair landing. Floor finishes are one of two options, based on location within the house. The second floor spaces and portions of the first floor are constructed with wood-framed floors elevated over a crawl space. In these areas, the floor framing is sheathed with a 3/4-inch thick plywood sub-floor, and has a finish floor of tongue-and-groove wood strip flooring.

The interior floors of the one-story ca. 1947 portion of the house were not modified by Wear. They are all concrete slab-on-grade, and the floor is finished with small coarse aggregate. Previous owners installed tile throughout, which has since been removed.

Interior wall finishes for both portions of the building date to 1958-59, and are typically redwood paneling. The paneling is milled and detailed similar to the exterior siding, with horizontal channels. The interior ceilings are also redwood channel paneling, with mitered corners similar to exterior soffits. At some locations, there is a dropped ceiling with indirect lighting at the alcoves; these include the living rooms, master bedroom, and secondary bedrooms. These alcoves (called “lite decks” in Wear’s drawings) are 8-inches deep with redwood fascia trim. They are framed as hung ceilings, with 2x4 ceiling runners and 1x4 hangers.

Bathrooms within the residence typically have non-original tile finishes. During the expansion of the master bathroom in 1993, the original quarry tile floor, walls, curb and cabinet base were replaced



Redwood channel walls and concrete floors with embedded stone in the 1958-59 east portion (left) and redwood channel walls and concrete floors with small aggregate in the ca. 1947 west portion (right) (ARG, 2019)



Non-original tile in the bathrooms (ARG, 2019)

## Existing Conditions



Kitchen interior wood ceiling finishes have been removed due to water damage (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Refinished concrete floor in the west portion of the house where the owner removed non-historic tile (ARG, 2019)



Restored redwood walls, ceilings, and cabinets in the kitchen (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

with ceramic tile. The 1993 tile was replaced by the current owner with new tile. The bathroom retains its original redwood channel ceiling. The bathroom in the one-story portion of the residence also has a walk-in shower with non-original tile. Fixtures in most bathrooms are replacements.

Apart from the bathrooms, the remainder of the interior finishes remain largely intact and original. Water leaks have damaged some areas of redwood paneling at walls and ceilings. Paneling was removed in the kitchen and dining room temporarily due to damage. Some redwood wall and ceiling paneling was painted white at one time, but the current owner has stripped the paint and restored the original finishes. The master bedroom redwood paneling has also been finished with a lacquer instead of a clear satin finish. Also between 2017-19, the owner restored all of the interior floors, including refinishing wood strip flooring, removing non-original tile at concrete floors, and grinding and sealing concrete floors. Other wall and ceiling finishes are in need of cleaning and refinishing due to deterioration from age and use, including the living room, original dining room, master bedroom and bathroom.

### *Residence Interior Doors and Millwork*

The Anderson House contains numerous interior flush-panel doors, built-in furnishings and custom millwork throughout. Much of the millwork and flush panel doors were specified to be finished with 3/4-inch mahogany plywood. Other trim is typically 1x or 2x redwood.

Interior doors and custom millwork include the following:

- Quarter bathroom (near the entrance hallway): contains a built-in wood cabinet with a sink.
- East (main) living room: features a built-in L-shaped sofa bookended by redwood cabinetry.

## Existing Conditions

- Dining room: contains a built-in concrete and stone planter; also according to original drawings, there was a built-in table which is no longer extant.
- Breakfast nook: features a built-in L-shaped seat and wood table top, as well as a built-in workspace consisting of a wood desk and cabinetry.
- Kitchen: contains a long wood countertop with built-in cabinets and appliances along the south wall, and flush panel pantry doors on the north wall.
- Open study at second floor stair landing: contains a narrow built-in wood desk and cabinetry.
- Master bedroom: features a built-in wood bed platform, flanked by built-in nightstands; built-in shelving also lines the east wall.
- Dressing area (between master bedroom and master bath): features built-in wood cabinets and drawers along both sides.
- Master bathroom: contains a wood vanity and a water closet accessed by a flush wood door.
- West living room/den: contains two built-in wood sofas, shelving, and cabinets.
- Children's play area: contains a wood table and chairs; presumably originally a dining space.
- Kitchenette/bar: contains wood cabinets and a built-in sink and stovetop.
- West bedrooms (2): feature closets with flush wood doors; the current owner also added new built-in bed platforms and desks where the original built-ins had been removed.
- Bathroom: contains built-in shelving and a cabinet with a sink.



Built-in seating and table at the breakfast nook (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Built-in sofa in the main living room (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Built-in wood sofas and shelving in the west living room/den (ARG, 2019)

## Existing Conditions



Recreated built-in furniture in the southwest bedroom (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Concrete fireplace with embedded stone in the main living room (ARG, 2019)



Cantilevered fireplace in the master bedroom (ARG, 2019)

In general, the interior doors and millwork are intact, original and remain in good condition. The current owner restored the mahogany cabinets in the kitchen, bathroom, and small bedrooms. Some minor modifications have occurred in the kitchen and bathrooms. The kitchen countertops were originally formica (plastic laminate) with a hardwood edge. At some point, they were replaced with granite. Between 2017-19, the current owner replaced them with wood. Also, all kitchen appliances and fixtures, as well as bathroom fixtures, have been replaced with contemporary ones.

Some original millwork is missing, including a table at the original dining room and built-ins at the smaller bedrooms in the west portion of the house. Between 2017-19, the current owner added new built-in bed platforms and desks where the original built-ins had been removed, but some work still remains.

### *Residence Chimneys and Fireplaces*

The residence has two wood-burning chimneys. There is a two-story chimney located near the center of the two-story portion of the house. It has stacked fireplaces at the main living room (first floor) and master bedroom (second floor). There is also a one-story chimney located at the east wall of the original ca. 1947 portion of the house; it has a fireplace at the west living room/den. It appears to have been constructed along with the two-story portion of the building using similar construction materials and techniques; however, the original drawings show a more traditional masonry chimney as existing. Both chimneys and all fireplaces are constructed of reinforced concrete and are integral to the design of the house. Similar to the exterior walls, the concrete is embellished with large stones at the face and architectural markings (horizontal channels). Both chimneys are capped with sheet metal chimney caps with mesh screening, and both have painted sheet metal flashing at roofs (original flashing was copper).

## Existing Conditions

The fireplaces are asymmetrical in design, with open fireboxes. Each has a slightly different hearth configuration. The west living room/den fireplace hearth is elevated above the existing floor, most likely added when the building was renovated, and the chimney was constructed. The main living room hearth is cast integral with the concrete floor and is recessed below floor level. The master bedroom hearth is elevated above the wood floor, as a cantilevered concrete slab. All fireboxes were originally constructed with a row of andirons (bracket supports for logs) which are embedded in the concrete and elevated above the earth.

The chimneys and fireplaces are in fair condition overall. They appear to be operational and have been used in recent years. The two-story chimney was leaking smoke into the interior, and has been temporarily patched with concrete. Chimney caps and flashings are intact and in good condition. The concrete at fireplaces and hearths is heavily soiled with soot and ash. The andirons remain at the master bedroom fireplace but have been cut and removed from the other two fireplaces. Simple non-original log holders have been placed at both locations.

### *Utility Shop Interior Finishes*

Interior finishes within the utility shop are simple and utilitarian. The concrete floor slabs are bare and unfinished throughout, except for a small vestibule area at the entrance where the slab is embellished with embedded stones, similar to the exterior walls. Interior wall surfaces are also bare concrete. The walls show evidence of their construction technique, including form lines and voids/air holes from poured in place concrete construction. Wood-framed ceilings at the entrance are finished with redwood channel siding and trim, similar to the residence. Wood-framed ceilings in other areas remain unfinished with open joists visible. Concrete ceilings are bare, similar to the interior walls. The interior spaces also include simple built-in wood millwork, including desks and shelving.



Concrete fireplace with embedded stone in the west living room/den (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Soiled concrete and missing andirons in the main living room (ARG, 2019)



Simple raw finishes in the utility shop (ARG, 2019)

## Existing Conditions



Leaking at the wood ceiling in the utility shop (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Localized concrete cracking and water damage at the utility shop ceiling (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Electrical panel and equipment below deck for hot tub (ARG, 2019)

In general, the interior finishes and millwork within the shop remain in fair condition. The shop is actively used as a pottery studio, and surfaces are heavily soiled as a result. Some localized cracking and spalling was noted at the concrete finishes, and there are active leaks at the concrete roof slab. At the spall areas, there is visible corroded steel reinforcement.

## Building Systems

### *Mechanical*

According to the original mechanical plans, the residence is heated and cooled with a heat pump split system, consisting of an outdoor condensing unit, located north of the kitchen below the deck, and an indoor unit located in the crawl space area below the kitchen floor. Heated or cooled air is distributed by concealed ductwork running horizontally below floors and vertically through built-in risers. Custom vents are provided with mesh screening at walls and millwork.

### *Electrical*

The existing electrical service (200 amp) is provided from the street via underground conduit. The service enters at the northwest corner of the hallway between the two sections of the house and feeds the main circuit panel located at the closet wall. Sub-panels are located outside the utility shop and inside a pantry at the kitchen. Another service panel has been provided below the south deck for the hot tub/spa. Electricity upgrades were performed in 1981 and again in 2017-19. The system is reportedly in good condition, but will require maintenance.

The original electrical plan provided some information on original lighting and fixtures, including the following:

## Existing Conditions

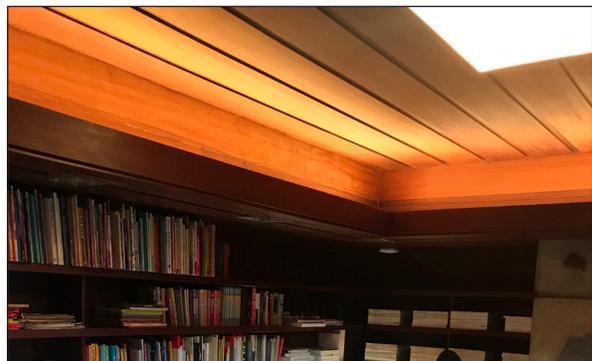
- Flush ceiling or soffit fixtures throughout the house were manufactured by “MARCO” and supplied in four different types, in 100 and 150W configurations. Many of these fixtures are now missing, but some remain and may be used as examples for replacements.
- Indirect lighting at the ceiling alcoves at the main living room and master bedroom were specified to be “Western Lighting Slimline Strip Lighting”, series 250 with remote ballast. Currently, there is lighting in these locations but it is not original.
- Under cabinet lighting at the kitchen was also specified to be “Western Lighting Slimline Strip Lighting”, series 250 with remote ballast or narrow fluorescent strips. This lighting is no longer extant.
- A ceiling heat lamp was specified for the master bathroom ceiling; manufactured by “Pryne”, it was a 250W red lamp. This fixture is no longer extant.
- Simple pull cord fixtures with standard porcelain sockets were specified for closets and other ancillary spaces. These fixtures are no longer extant.
- The residence was specified to have a push button door bell, with the bell mounted in the light deck above. This no longer remains.
- Landscape lighting was specified, as well as “flush under water light in conc. wall below” for the hot tub/spa. This lighting is not operational.



Flush ceiling fixture in the master bathroom (ARG, 2019)



Under-cabinet lighting at the kitchen (ARG, 2019)



Soffit lighting in the west living room/den (ARG, 2019)

## Existing Conditions



Non-original plumbing fixtures and original wood cabinet in the west bathroom (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)



Original plumbing fixture in the quarter bathroom (ARG, 2019)

### *Plumbing*

Most of the original plumbing fixtures in the bathrooms have been replaced with contemporary fixtures. There is one original toilet in the quarter bathroom adjacent to the entrance hall. Other plumbing upgrades have occurred between 2017-19. The system is reportedly in good condition, but will require maintenance. The owner is also interested in replacing non-original plumbing fixtures with period-appropriate fixtures.

### *Fire Suppression*

The area of Topanga Canyon surrounding the property is at high risk of seasonal wild fires. Between 2017-19, the owner took the preventative step of installing a new exterior fire suppression system to protect the house. The system was provided by Phos-Chek Wildfire Home Defense, and includes piping conduits and sprinklers, mounted at the roof levels and other areas, which contain a fire retardant. The system is reportedly in good condition but will require maintenance.

## Existing Conditions

### Site and Landscape Features

The property is located in Topanga Canyon, a small unincorporated residential community nestled in the Santa Monica Mountains, in west Los Angeles County. Consistent with the character of the Topanga Canyon area, the topography of the property is steep and sloping, and the area is densely vegetated. The site is terraced and slopes downward to the south and east. Original walkways, steps, retaining walls, and planters made of reinforced concrete surround the residence and utility shop. Mature shade trees such as oak and myriad low-lying species are planted throughout, and a non-historic stacked stone perimeter wall encloses the property. Non-historic paving and various small stone structures are located to the east and downslope from the house.

The main entrance to the property is through a pair of redwood driveway gates on the south side of Sischo Drive. The driveway is paved with stone, and a poured concrete and stone planter and entrance marker are located to the west of the driveway. To the west of the driveway gates, north of the perimeter wall, is a concrete-paved parking area bounded by a concrete retaining wall surmounted by a wall clad in redwood channel siding.

The reinforced concrete construction used for site retaining walls and pavings is very similar to that of the residence, with the concrete embellished with large flat embedded stones. Some walls also feature the cast horizontal channels (“architectural markings”). Custom planters are located throughout, including cast concrete and redwood.

In general, the landscape features are intact and in good condition. ARG noted some minor cracking and spalling of concrete at retaining walls. The concrete planters at the carport and utility shop are in need of repair. There is also a missing redwood planter outside the kitchen.



Original concrete, stone, and metal entrance marker at the entrance gates to the house (ARG, 2019)



Original concrete and stone paving (ARG, 2019)



Spalling at concrete planter (Beatrice Faverjon, 2020)

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*Part II*

# Treatment and Work Recommendations

*View west of the carport (ARG, 2019)*

## Historic Preservation Objectives

### *Selection of a Treatment Approach*

As a highly intact example of postwar Organic Modernism designed by architect W. Earl Wear, the repair and maintenance of the Anderson House is of the utmost importance. Most of the houses Wear designed have been significantly altered, and this house is one of only two or three houses that remain intact and continue to convey his craftsmanship. Repair and protection of the house is essential in order to protect his legacy.

Future work on the building will be guided by the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* ("the Standards"). The Standards provide general information for stewards of historic resources to determine appropriate treatments. They are intentionally broad in scope so that they can be applied to a wide range of circumstances, and are designed to enhance the understanding of basic preservation principles. The Standards identify four defined levels of treatment for a property. Each level of treatment is accompanied by its own set of standards that serve to guide the approach to work.

Generally, in planning for anticipated work on a historic property, one of the four treatment levels is selected as the overall treatment approach.

The four approaches to treatment are as follows:

**Preservation** is the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of a historic property.

**Rehabilitation** is the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

**Restoration** is the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period.

**Reconstruction** is the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.

Based on ARG's understanding of the Anderson House's significance, its existing conditions, and the owner's goals, ARG recommends the **Rehabilitation** approach to treatment. To comply with the Standards for Rehabilitation, all interventions should be designed and constructed with a minimal loss of historic material. Additionally, they should be designed with an eye toward restoring altered or missing features from the building's period of significance.

### *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*

Following are The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. These standards guide all repair and maintenance recommendations herein, and should inform all future work on the Anderson House.

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

### Work Recommendations

The residence is over 60 years of age and in need of maintenance and repair as is typical of a house of this vintage. However, the house is by no means typical, and there are special circumstances related to its design and construction that need immediate attention in order to protect the design and structural integrity of the house, as well as occupant safety. Several original character-defining features are in poor condition and require repair in the near future to avoid further deterioration and mitigate loss of original fabric. In addition, there are several restoration opportunities that ARG discussed with the owner, which are recommended for authenticity and preservation of this historic landmark. As a rule, all repair work should comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, and should be undertaken only by experienced restoration contractors under the guidance of a historic preservation professional. All missing features should be replaced in-kind, and any new features should be designed to be compatible with the existing design.

The current owner is dedicated to the protection and stewardship of the Anderson House, down to restoration of the smallest detail and to Wear's original design and specification. They have already invested a significant amount of money into the restoration and maintenance of the residence, to upgrade electrical and plumbing systems and reverse incompatible alterations completed by previous owners.

Repair and maintenance recommendations have been grouped into the following categories: structural systems, exterior walls and features, roofing and drainage, exterior windows and doors, interior finishes and features, building systems, and site and landscape features.

## Structural Systems

### *Residence Structural System*

In general, the residence structural systems are intact and in fair condition, with some areas in need of significant repair. The carport structural system is in poor condition. The dramatic cantilevered carport roof has significant structural deflection and most likely loss of structural strength. It is also pulling away from the north residence wall, and a temporary wood post has been added for secondary support until the structure can be properly repaired. The condition of the concealed steel beams is unknown at this time, but likely deteriorated based on visible conditions of surrounding wood framing. Additional exploratory investigation is needed to confirm. The exterior cantilevered deck has similar structural deflection (see “Residence Balconies and Decks” section below for information). At these and other locations, wood framing was warped and deflected downward, and wood decay/rot was observed in some locations. Persistent roof leaks and flashing issues have contributed to the damage.

Based on existing documentation, it does not appear that the structure has been updated for current seismic needs. Wear’s original design included bolting of walls to foundations and roofs to walls; steel straps and diagonal bracing at open roof areas such as skylights and trellises; let-in diagonal braces at exterior wall framing; and plywood sheathing at roofs and floors. However, the condition of these lateral force resisting systems is unknown at this time. Additional survey and study by a structural engineer are needed.

ARG recommends the following for the residence structural systems:

- Engage a structural engineer to perform exploratory investigations at areas of structural deflection or movement (carport roof framing and south deck framing) to confirm the condition of underlying structural systems and recommend repairs. For this work, we highly recommend performing these investigations with a conservator’s oversight. The investigations will likely include some material removal/salvage and possible destructive removal of existing wood framing and trim in order to assess underlying conditions. A contractor should also be present to assist with removals, to temporarily shore up any framing as needed for safety, and to enclose inspection openings for weather protection following the investigation.
- Based on results of the investigation, perform structural repairs and strengthening of the carport roof. This work should be performed in concert with roof replacement (see “Roofing and Drainage” section below). This work will likely include removal of the existing roof system and associated flashings; removal and salvage of existing redwood framing, soffit siding, and trim; removal of the temporary support post; surface preparation, corrosion treatment and painting of existing steel beams; possible cutting, welding or splicing of steel at areas of heavy corrosion/section loss; possible addition of new steel beams for additional structural support; repair and reinstallation of redwood framing and trim, including replacement of heavily deteriorated wood in kind; and installation of a new roof system and flashing.

## Treatment and Work Recommendations

- Based on results of the investigation, perform structural repairs and strengthening of the south deck. This work will likely include removal and salvage of existing redwood framing, decking and trim to expose framing conditions; replacement of heavily deflected or deteriorated wood framing; possible addition of new steel beams for additional structural support; and repair and reinstallation of redwood framing, decking and trim.
- Engage a structural engineer to perform a Tier 1, and possibly Tier 2, analysis of the existing residence and carport, and recommend the necessary retrofits for seismic strengthening. Work will include additional survey and possible exploratory investigation to confirm the condition of existing lateral for resisting systems noted above.
- Based on results of the analysis, install recommended seismic retrofitting measures. Work to be concealed from view wherever possible to limit impacts to the historic building. Work may include installation of additional seismic anchors or straps at wall to floor and roof to wall connections; additional diagonal bracing; additional plywood sheathing for shear, etc.
- Where significant water damage or termite damage is observed to wood structural elements, the damaged components should be removed and replaced in kind. Minor to moderate repair may be performed using wood-compatible epoxy fill materials so that original wood materials may remain wherever possible.

## Exterior Walls and Features

### *Residence Exterior Walls and Trim*

The residence exterior walls are almost entirely clad with old-growth redwood, in the form of 1x12 channel siding, fascia boards, trellis framing, and other trim. The wood is in fair to poor condition overall, with many areas of wood decay/rot noted, and splitting of boards. The deterioration is typically observed at mitered building corners, and at joints between components. Splits are typically found at corroded nail fasteners. Many boards are also warped or cupped in shape, leading to water infiltration.

Drip stains were noted at the building face from roof water overflow, and wall flashings, where provided, are deteriorated (see “Roofing and Drainage” section below). Sealant has been installed in some locations as a temporary measure, but the sealant has failed.

Many boards are also finished with an incorrect stain. In some locations, there have also been incompatible previous repairs. Original old growth siding was replaced with new growth redwood or stained pine siding. These boards are non-matching and have deteriorated much faster than the old growth lumber. In 2017-19, the current owner began replacing the pine siding with old-growth redwood.

In general, wood siding and trim should be repaired as follows:

- Minor to moderate wood repairs may be performed using wood-compatible epoxy fill materials so that original wood materials may remain where possible.
- Where significant splitting, cupping, water damage or termite damage is observed, the damaged components should be removed and replaced in kind with old growth redwood. Replacement with

old growth (rare) wood will include storage and seasoning (drying) of wood for a period of up to six months prior to replacement, and milling and finishing by skilled carpenters.

- When repairing or replacing wood finish materials, replace underlayments and incorporate flexible or sheet metal flashings where possible, without detracting from the original design.
- Refinish original siding to remain where possible through multiple rounds of sanding, and application of an appropriate finish (Deft “Defthane Polyurethane” clear satin or similar).
- When repairing or replacing wood finish materials, replace fasteners with new stainless steel fasteners. This is particularly important for redwood, which has a higher amount of tannin and can expedite corrosion of ferrous fasteners, leading to splitting of wood and staining of natural finishes. At easily observable locations, finish nails may be set below the wood surface and the nail heads covered with wood putty to hide the metal.

The south wall of the master bathroom (second floor) was heavily modified in 1993, and the current owner has expressed an interest in returning to the original design configuration. The original wall, containing redwood siding and high clerestory windows, was removed, and a new wall was constructed 30 inches further south to increase the size of the bathroom. The wall height was also lowered, and larger casement windows were installed. The wall modifications, along with adjacent roofing/flushing deterioration, have resulted in leaks into the house wall and bathroom interior.

## Treatment and Work Recommendations

Based on this information, we recommend the following:

- Reconstruct the south wall at the master bathroom to the original design configuration, including new windows, redwood siding, and copper wall flashings (see “Exterior Windows and Doors” section below).
- Salvage existing redwood window sash and frames for potential future repairs elsewhere.
- Provide new concealed wall flashing behind redwood siding and integrate with roofing. Perform work concurrent with residence roof replacement (see “Roofing and Drainage” section below).

### *Residence Balconies and Decks*

The residence balconies at the south and east elevations are in poor condition overall. The master bedroom balcony appears to have significant water and termite damage at the floor joists and railing. At other locations throughout, ARG noted wood decay/rot, splitting and cupping of boards, corroded nail fasteners, water stains/damage, and incompatible previous repairs using new growth redwood or pine. The traffic coatings are in poor condition, with multiple perforations and water infiltration. The small drains appear operational, but will require some maintenance.

Wood framing and trim at residence balconies should be repaired as noted above for exterior walls. In addition, we recommend the following for balcony waterproofing and drainage:

- Remove existing balcony membranes down to sheathing. Repair sheathing as required, and install new polyurethane traffic coating with a textured top coat. Integrate coating to provide flexible flashing at uprising walls, door thresholds and drains.

- Maintain balcony surfaces and drains free and clear of debris. Sweep regularly and flush drains as required.
- The exterior deck that wraps around the south and east façade is in fair condition, and in need of structural repair to correct deflection at the double cantilevered overhang (see “Structural Systems” section above for information). The decking boards and inset hot tub/spa will require some general maintenance as follows:
  - Maintain deck surfaces through regular cleaning and debris removal.
  - Re-coat wood deck surfaces with an oil-based or alkyd-based clear penetrating sealer appropriate for exterior redwood.
  - Clean and re-grout existing ceramic tile at spa.

### Roofing and Drainage

The existing roofing systems for the residence and utility shop are in fair condition overall. The built-up asphalt and gravel roof at the residence appears to have been resurfaced. The utility shop roof is showing signs of wear, including eroded/missing gravel and exposed tar surfaces. Some flashings are in need of repair or replacement due to roof leaks, in particular at the south wall of the master bathroom and at the skylight at the master bedroom. Other areas will need to be replaced concurrent with adjacent invasive work, in particular the carport roof.

The following is recommended for roofing and drainage systems repair and maintenance:

- Replace existing built-up asphalt and gravel roof at carport in conjunction with structural repairs and wood eave restoration (see above).
- Replace existing built-up asphalt and gravel roof at utility shop in conjunction with structural repairs (see above.)
- Replace existing gravel stop flashings and wall flashings at roofs, preferably with copper sheet metal.
- Install additional flashings (copper sheet or flexible membrane flashings, concealed where possible) to further protect wood framing and trim at the carport eaves and trellis between house and carport.
- Further investigate existing conditions at skylight at north wall of master bedroom (preferably up-close from lift or ladder). Determine location of water entry, and repair as required. Work will most likely include removal and salvage of existing acrylic panels; repair or replacement of redwood framing; replacement of flashings; and reinstallation of panels with new sealant.
- Repair existing roof and flashings at second floor, south elevation, in conjunction with reconstruction of south wall at master bathroom.
- Maintain roof surfaces free and clear of debris.
- Monitor roof surface drainage during/following rainstorms and determine if additional slope or drainage may be required to control surface water flow.
- Monitor roof skylights, and re-seal as required to prevent leaks. Consider removing non-original prefabricated unit skylights, and roofing over when roof replacement occurs.
- Near term: re-surface utility shop roof and replace gravel stop flashings with new copper.
- Long-term: re-surface residence roof and replace gravel stop flashings with new copper.

### Exterior Windows and Doors

In general, the existing redwood windows and doors at both the residence and the utility shop are in fair to good condition. ARG noted some signs of wear and age, along with localized areas of damage including splits and minor wood rot/decay. Window restoration work has already been completed at the Kitchen, living room and master bathroom. Additional restoration and maintenance of other remaining windows and doors is recommended. Also, as part of the reconstruction of the south master bathroom wall, we recommend installing new fixed and casement clerestory windows per the original design.

The following is recommended for exterior windows and doors:

- Repair and refinish existing original windows in other spaces of the residence. Repairs to include wood-compatible epoxy fill repairs, cleaning and refinishing wood surfaces, sealing glass with new silicone, cleaning and lubricating hardware, and adjusting for operability.
- Repair and refinish existing original exterior doors. Repairs to include wood-compatible epoxy fill repairs, replacement of deteriorated red oak sills, cleaning and refinishing wood surfaces, sealing glass with new silicone, cleaning and lubricating hardware, and adjusting for operability.
- Reconstruct the south wall at the master bathroom to the original design configuration, including installation of new clerestory windows. Clerestory windows include one pair of operable casement sash, one fixed sash, and two corner fixed sash with mitered glass, according to original drawings.

## Interior Finishes and Features

### *Residence Interior Finishes*

The interior finishes at the residence are generally in good condition. Apart from the bathrooms, the finishes remain intact and original. Some redwood wall and ceiling paneling was painted white at one time, such as at the kitchenette/bar area. Between 2017-19, the current owner stripped the paint and restored the original finishes. At that time, the owner also restored all of the interior floors. Other areas are in need of cleaning and refinishing due to deterioration from age and use. Bathroom finishes can also be returned to original configurations if desired.

The following is recommended for treatment of interior finishes:

- Clean and refinish interior redwood paneling in living room, dining room, master bedroom and bathroom. Work will include multiple applications of sanding and refinishing with an appropriate finish (clear satin polyurethane).
- Replace non-original ceramic tile with quarry tile in the master bathroom and the bathroom in the west portion of the house, per Wear's original specifications. Perform work at master bathroom in conjunction with reconstruction of south wall (see "Exterior Walls and Features" for information).

### *Residence Interior Doors and Millwork*

In general, the interior doors and millwork are intact, original and remain in good condition. Some work is recommended to restore missing custom millwork, including the following:

- Fabricate and install missing table at dining room per Wear's original drawings.
- Fabricate and install missing built-in desks at small bedrooms per Wear's drawings.

### *Residence Chimneys and Fireplaces*

The residence chimneys and fireplaces are unique in design and integral to the character of the house. All are operational but require some maintenance for continued use. There is also the potential to restore missing elements, such as the andirons. ARG recommends the following:

- Engage a chimney professional to clean and inspect both chimneys and determine if repairs are needed. In particular, investigate smoke intrusion into building interior at temporary concrete patching locations.
- Based on the chimney professional's assessment, the existing interior flues may need to be sealed or lined for protection. Wood-burning residues and gases can be caustic to cementitious materials and requires maintenance.
- Concurrent with roof replacement projects, replace existing chimney flashing with new copper.
- Clean interior concrete surfaces at fireplaces and hearths.
- Clean, prep and repaint existing andirons at master bedroom fireplace.
- Fabricate and install new andirons to match at main living room and west living room/den fireplaces.

### *Utility Shop Interior Finishes*

In general, the utility shop interior finishes remain in fair condition. Some concrete spalling was observed at interior walls and ceilings, including corroded reinforcement. Concrete should be repaired as follows:

- Chip out and remove deteriorated concrete from spall areas to sound concrete.

## Treatment and Work Recommendations

- Clean and prepare surfaces of exposed reinforcement to remove corrosion and treat with a corrosion inhibitor.
- At areas of section loss, cut out deteriorated rebar and weld in a new rebar splice.
- Patch concrete with a cementitious repair mortar. Match existing color, aggregates and finish.

## Building Systems

### *Mechanical*

The existing heat pump split HVAC system will require regular maintenance and eventual replacement when it is beyond its useful service life.

### *Electrical*

The existing electrical system was recently upgraded in 2017-19. Regular system maintenance is recommended.

### *Plumbing*

Most of the original plumbing fixtures in the bathrooms have been replaced with contemporary fixtures. Other plumbing upgrades have occurred between 2017-19. The owner is interested in replacing non-original plumbing fixtures with period-appropriate fixtures. Regular system maintenance is also recommended.

### *Fire Suppression*

The area of Topanga Canyon surrounding the property is at high risk of seasonal wild fires. Between 2017-19, the owner took the preventative step of installing a new exterior fire suppression system to protect the house. The system includes piping conduits and sprinklers mounted at the roof levels and other areas. Regular system maintenance is recommended.

## Site and Landscape Features

In general, the landscape features are intact and in good condition, with some localized areas requiring repair, and others missing. Recommended work includes the following:

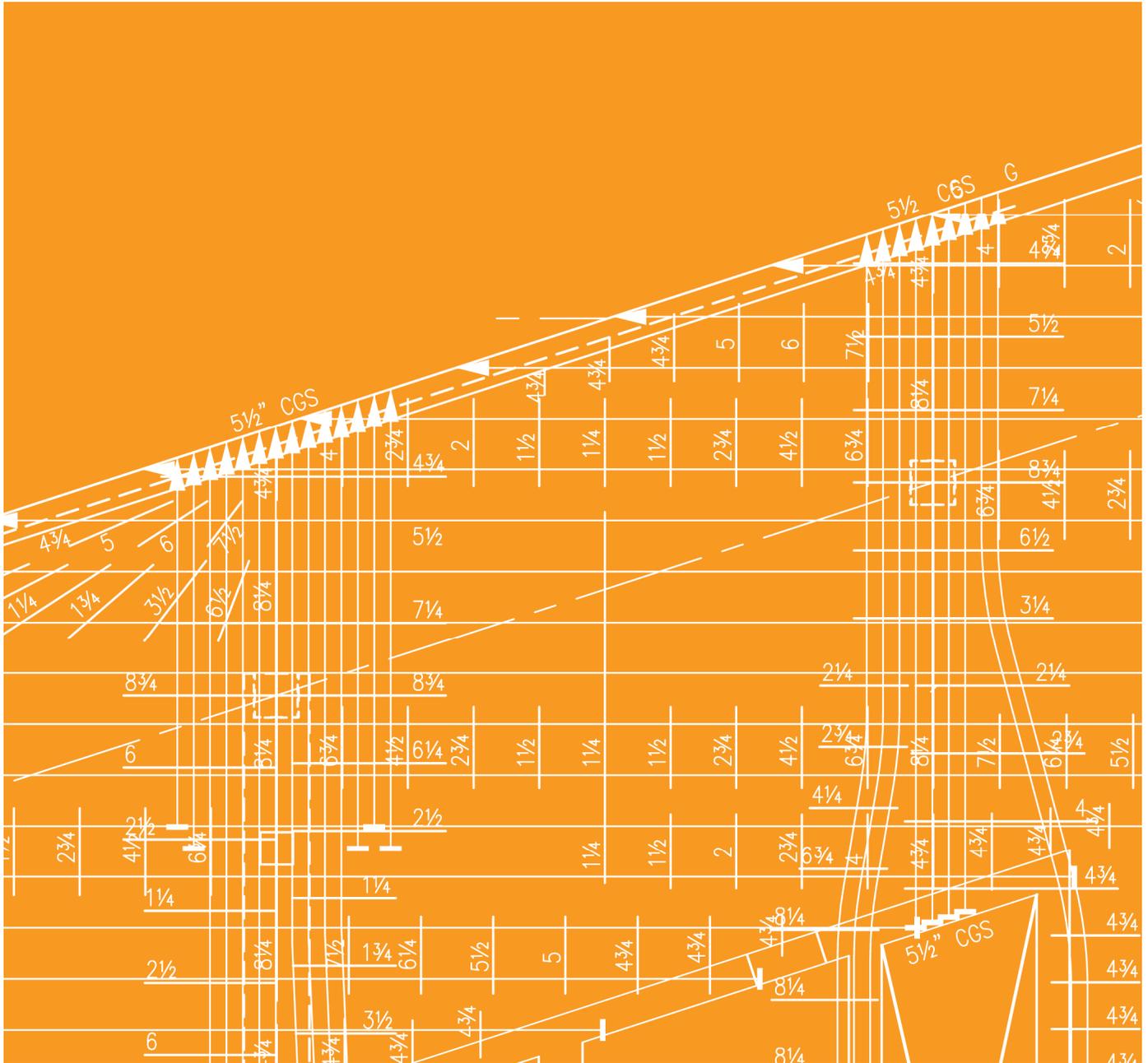
- Repair exterior concrete at planters at the carport and utility shop.
- Fabricate and install new redwood planter outside kitchen per Wear's original specifications.

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# Structural Evaluation Report

## Sischo Dr. Residence

19974 Sischo Drive  
 Topanga, CA  
 90290

### Structural Assessment Report

Revision 1.0 / May 11 2020  
 Job # 19467.10

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

Holmes Structures has been engaged to perform a historical structural assessment of the existing residence at 19974 Sischo Drive in Topanga, CA on behalf of the project Architect, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) and the current owners of the residence.

### Scope of Work

Aaron Boucher performed a walk-through of the residence on November 6th, 2019, with Architectural Resources Group and Richard Holz, Inc., to visually assess the condition of the main residence. A written summary of our findings is presented in this report.

### Recommendations

Holmes recommends that several items throughout the residence be strengthened/repared to maintain the integrity of the structure. See section 7 for detailed recommendations.

Prepared by:

Reviewed by:



Aaron Boucher, P.E.  
PROJECT ENGINEER

Denny Kwan, S.E.  
PRINCIPAL

|            |  |           |
|------------|--|-----------|
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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Holmes Structures has been engaged to perform a historical structural assessment of the existing residence at 19974 Sischo Drive in Topanga, CA on behalf of the project Architect, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) and the current owners of the residence, for the purpose of applying for a Mills Act exemption.



Figure 1: Sischo Drive Residence

## 2 SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work for this project is to provide structural engineering consulting services for the structural assessment of the existing residence at 19974 Sischo Drive in Topanga, CA to assist the owner in applying for a Mills Act exemption. This is a qualitative, visual assessment of the existing residence to determine if structural repairs are necessary to maintain the structure. The specific tasks we have performed as part of this scope are as follows:

- Perform a visual walk-through of the residence during a site walk on November 6, 2019.
- Evaluate the building's existing structural configuration for deficiencies and prepare recommendations to mitigate them.
- Prepare a written summary of our findings in this report.

Our review is qualitative in nature and does not include any quantitative analysis of the existing building, the structural system, or components. As such, our findings and conclusions are based upon our engineering judgment and experience with this type of building structure.

## 3 LIMITATIONS

Findings presented as a part of this report are for the sole use of ARG and the current owners of the residence. The findings are not intended for use by other parties, and may not contain sufficient information for the purposes of other parties or other uses. Our professional services are performed using a degree of care and skill normally exercised, under similar circumstances, by reputable consultants practicing in this field at this time. No other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice presented in this report.

No material sampling or destructive testing has been undertaken. Please note that the scope of this review was solely visual, and that no calculations or analysis have been made to verify the capability of any member to resist prescribed lateral or vertical loading. Our conclusions are based on our visual observations and experience with similar types of buildings. Suggested recommendations to maintain the structure do not imply that the entire building will conform to current codes.

## 4 DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

The following documents were reviewed:

- *Drawing Set\_1958*
- *Utility Shop\_1964*

## 5 EXISTING BUILDING SUMMARY

The structure is a two-story wood framed building with a covered carport and standalone workshop. The workshop consists of concrete retaining walls with a partial concrete roof. The remainder of the workshop structure is typical wood framing. The structure was built in 1958 by W. Earl Wear.

### 5.1 Gravity Load Resisting Structure

Most of the existing framing of the structure could not be directly observed during our site visit. Thus, our understanding this building is based on site observations and general knowledge of similar residential construction.

The gravity system appears to consist of wood joist and beam framing spanning between wood stud walls. There are several areas with significant cantilevers, including over the carport and at the balconies. We have assumed that there are steel beams in the carport framing to support the cantilever.

### 5.2 Lateral Load Resisting Structure

The lateral force resisting system appears to be typical wood shear wall framing. At the time of construction, shear walls were typically built with straight or diagonal sheathing (i.e. 1x6 wood members nailed to wood studs).

The foundation framing appears to consist of shallow concrete footings bearing directly on the soil.

## 6 CONDITION ASSESSMENT

This section provides a summary of the structural issues we have observed in our evaluation of the residence.

- The carport has significant deflection at the cantilevered end. A temporary column has been placed to shore the structure. (figure 2) Additionally, water/termite damage has been observed at the carport structure. (figure 3)
- The roof balcony at the master bedroom shows significant water damage to the wood structure. (figure 4)
- The deck near the jacuzzi appears to be significantly deflecting at the double cantilever.

- The concrete walls/roof in the workshop show spalling and cracking indicative of water damage. The reinforcing has been exposed in several areas due to concrete spalling.

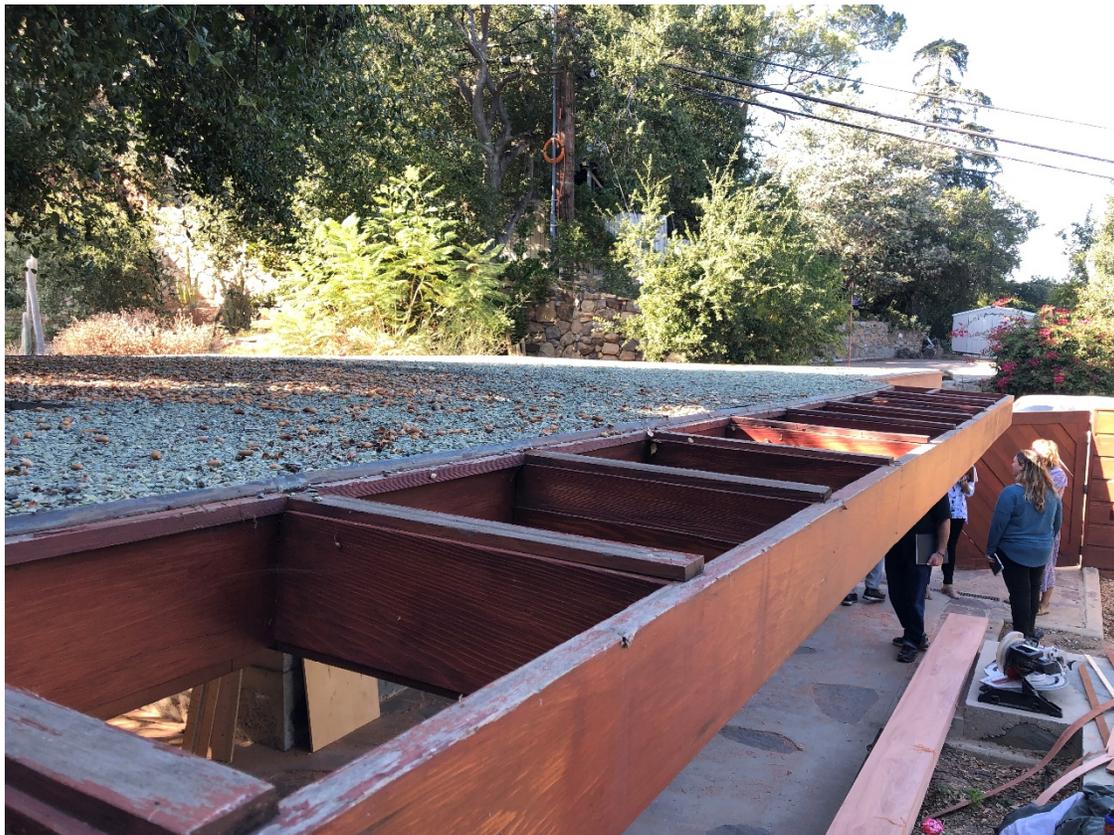


Figure 2: Deflection at carport framing



Figure 3: Temporary column to support carport.



Figure 4: Water damage at master bedroom balcony.



Figure 5: Jacuzzi deck deflection.



Figure 6: Concrete spalling and exposed reinforcing at workshop.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Holmes recommends the following areas be strengthened/repared to maintain the structural integrity of the building. Suggested recommendations below are intended to maintain the structure, and do not imply that the building will conform to current codes once implemented.

|    |                             |  |
|----|-----------------------------|--|
| A* | Carport repair              | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The carport roof structure should be exposed, the existing beams removed, and new wood/steel beams installed to support the deflecting corner.</li> <li>2. The temporary post should be removed, if additional beams are added per recommendation 1 above. Based on the geometry of the carport, the structural engineer may recommend installing a permanent post to improve performance.</li> <li>3. Where wood structural elements have been damaged by water/termites, the elements should be replaced in kind.</li> </ol> |
| B  | Master balcony repair       | The master bedroom balcony appears to have significant water/termite damage at the floor joists and railing, while the main structural elements appear to be performing adequately. The damaged elements should be removed and replaced in kind.   |
| C* | Jacuzzi deck repair         | The wood deck should be shored and structural wood beams or a structural post installed to mitigate the deflection issues at the corner. If a structural post is installed, a pad foundation should be installed to support it. If beams are installed, they should be attached to the existing concrete wall under the deck.  |
| D  | Concrete repair at workshop | All exposed steel reinforcing should be cleaned of corrosion and sealed with (2) coats of Sika "Amaratec-110". If less than 90% of the original reinforcing diameter remains, cut and replace the bar with new reinforcing epoxied into the existing concrete. The concrete should then be patched and sealed. All concrete cracks should be patched and sealed.   |
| E  | Water/termite damage repair | Where water/termite damage is observed to the wood structural elements, the damaged elements should be removed and replaced in kind.   |

\*Recommendations A & C should have permit drawings and calculations prepared by a licensed structural engineer.

March 13, 2020  
Project No. 1005-016  
Mills Act Exemption from Disqualification  
for the Anderson House

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD**

2.6 1005-016.M02

**TO:** Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning  
(Mr. Dean Edwards)  
320 W. Temple Street Room 1346  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 974-0087 x278

**FROM:** Sapphos Environmental, Inc.  
(Ms. Kasey Conley)

**SUBJECT:** Mills Act Exemption from Disqualification for the  
Anderson House

**ATTACHMENT:** 1. Location Map

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This Memorandum for the Record (MFR) recounts the research completed for the Mills Act exemption from disqualification for the property located at 19974 Sischo Drive, historically known as the Anderson House. Sapphos Environmental, Inc. (Ms. Kasey Conley and Ms. Carrie Chasteen) was retained by the County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning to review the property's current condition and complete the exemption determination. Methods included a site visit completed on February 13, 2020, a review of previous work completed, and a review of the future work plan needed to preserve the property.

From this review, Sapphos Environmental, Inc supports the exemption from disqualification from the Mills Act Program in order to restore the character-defining features of the buildings for which the property was deemed eligible for listing in the County Register of Landmarks and Historic Districts.

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## INTRODUCTION

This Memorandum for the Record (MFR) recounts the research completed for the Mills Act Program exemption from disqualification for the property located at 19974 Sischo Drive. Architectural Resources Group completed the Los Angeles County Landmark nomination for the property located at 19974 Sischo House, historically known as the Anderson House, in January 2020. The nomination found the property significant under Los Angeles County Criteria A.3 as a significant example of Organic architecture and as the work of a master architect, W. Earl Wear (more commonly known as Earl Wear). Sapphos Environmental, Inc. (Ms. Kasey Conley and Ms. Carrie Chasteen) was retained by the County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning to peer review the nomination completed by Architectural Resources Group. Ms. Kasey Conley and Ms. Carrie Chasteen meet the Secretary of the Interior's *Professional Qualifications Standards* in the field of Architectural History and History. A site visit was completed on February 13, 2020, where the condition of the building and the site was ascertained. Additionally, research was conducted to verify the information provided by Architectural Resources Group in the Landmark nomination to inform the justification for a Mills Act Program exemption documented in this MFR.

## REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

### **County of Los Angeles Mills Act Program (*Chapter 22.168.090 Exception from Disqualification*)**

Where a qualified historical property is ineligible to participate in the Program because of any approved provisions described in Section 22.168.050 (Program Implementation), the owners or other persons authorized by the owners may file a request with the Director for an exemption from the disqualifying provisions pursuant to this Section.

- A. Requirements for Exemption Request. A request for an exemption shall be accompanied by the applicable application fee and the applicable exemption request fee. The exemption request shall contain the information and evidence required by Section 22.168.060 (Application). In addition, the exemption request shall include evidence that, notwithstanding the disqualifying provisions, the subject property is deserving of an historical property contract due to its exceptional nature, or because it is subject to special circumstances not generally applicable to other qualified historical properties. After the Director determines that the exemption request application is complete, the Director shall inspect the property pursuant to Section 22.168.070 (Inspection of the Property) for the purposes described therein and to evaluate whether the exemption is warranted due to the exceptional nature of the subject property or because the subject property is subject to special circumstances not generally applicable to other qualified historical properties.
- B. Director's Recommendation. Upon completion of the review of the exemption request and inspection of the subject property, the Director shall make a recommendation to the Board to approve or deny the request based on the criteria set forth in Section 22.168.080.A (Grant of Application), and also based on whether there is sufficient evidence showing that the subject property has an exceptional nature or is subject to special circumstances not generally applicable to other qualified historical properties that warrant the exemption.

- C. Decision of the Board. The Board may grant the exemption request if it finds that the applicant has substantiated the information and evidence required under Subsection A, above, and that the work proposed as part of the plan required by Section 22.168.060.B is necessary for and will result in the preservation and, when necessary, the restoration and/or rehabilitation of the subject property. If the Board grants the exemption request, the Director and all owners shall execute an historical property contract as described in Section 22.168.080.A (Grant of Application).

(Ord. 2019-0004 § 1, 2019)

## **19974 SISCHO DRIVE**

### **Property History**

The Anderson House is in Topanga Canyon within a small community of winding roads situated in the Santa Monica Mountains (Attachment 1, *Location Map*). The setting surrounding the property is filled with heavy vegetation, and the site slopes steeply towards the south from Sischo Drive. The driveway is covered by a redwood gate and a stone and concrete retaining wall extended north and south on either side of the driveway.

The subject property is in Tract #8859, which was subdivided in 1926 for owners Title Insurance and Trust Company.<sup>1</sup> Thomas Curtis and his wife Jean owned the original single-family one-story residence, which was constructed ca. 1948 by an unknown architect. The original building permit was not available, but a newspaper article from 1948 in the *Valley Times* welcomed “Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Curtis to 19974 Sischo Dr., Topanga Canyon, Nov 21, and son.”<sup>2</sup> The eastern two-story half of the residence was designed and constructed in 1958–1959 for then-owners George Robert and Jean Anderson by architect Earl Wear. The western portion, the original residence, was remodeled to match the new construction, and a vestibule was added between and connecting the two halves. The home is currently owned by ceramicist and designer Beatrice Faverjon and architectural preservationist, consultant, and designer Ryan Soniat.

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<sup>1</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. May 1926. Land Records Information. Tract Map No. 126-001. Available at: <https://pw.lacounty.gov/sur/nas/landrecords/tract/MB0126/TR0126-001.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> “Our New Citizens.” November 25, 1948. *Valley Times* (North Hollywood, California), p. 19.

## Description

### Character-Defining Features: *Exterior*

| Feature   | Ranking |
|---|---------|
| Horizontal form built into the site                     | MS      |
| Rectangular footprint                                   | S       |
| Flat roof with boxed eaves and built up gravel          | MS      |
| Redwood channel siding                                  | MS      |
| Recessed wood front door                                | S       |
| Cantilevered carport/entrance canopy at northern façade | MS      |
| Wide cantilevered balconies on southern façade          | MS      |
| Wood cantilevered balcony on southern façade            | MS      |
| Single light casement and fixed windows                 | S       |

### Character-Defining Features: *Interior*

| Feature   | Ranking |
|---|---------|
| Redwood channel ceilings and walls  | MS      |
| Poured concrete floors  | MS      |
| Wood strip flooring   | MS      |
| Sunken living room  | MS      |
| Concrete and stone fireplaces in living room and master bedroom             | MS      |
| Built in furniture including sofas, desks, seating, shelving, and cabinetry | MS      |

### Character-Defining Features: *Utility Shop*

| Feature                                       | Ranking |
|---|---------|
| Flat roof                                     | MS      |
| Poured concrete walls with embedded stone     | MS      |
| Fully glazed wood door with wood canopy cover | MS      |

**KEY:** MS = Most Significant; S = Significant; C = Common and Significant; NS = Not Significant; NHNS = Not Historic; Not Significant.

## Previous Work Completed

Previous work completed by the current owners, with a dollar value totaling \$260,000, includes

- Replacement of interior and exterior redwood siding including striping of white paint. Replacement of nonoriginal pine siding with old-growth redwood; restoration of walls, cabinets, and ceilings in the kitchen
- Restoration of interior floors: original hardwood refinished, and original exposed concrete restored
- Restoration of mahogany cabinets in kitchen, powder room, and kids' bedroom
- Restoration of redwood windows in kitchen, living room, and master bathroom
- Installation of fire suppression system on the perimeter of the property and the house
- Electricity and plumbing upgrades

## Future Work Plan

The property was walked on February 13, 2020, with the property owners. Various items were pointed out and noted as work still needing to be completed on the property for restoration and to ensure longevity and structural soundness (Table 1, *Future Work Plan*). The proposed work was given a status code of either *critical*, *phase 1*, *phase 2*, or *maintenance*. Critical items are associated with structural soundness of the property and need to be addressed immediately once work is started. Items identified as phase 1 are associated with water leakage or damage and will need to be addressed soon after work is started to ensure larger issues do not occur. Items identified as phase 2 need to be addressed but will not cause further structural or water damage to the property. Items identified as maintenance will be ongoing to ensure the work completed has longevity.

**TABLE 1  
FUTURE WORK PLAN**

| Proposed Work  | Reason  | Critical | Phase 1 | Phase 2 | Maintenance |
|--|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Replace beams on cantilevered carport/entrance cover with metal beams and re-clad in old-growth redwood                            | Wood interiors of beams are rotting and pulling away from house causing water leakage and structural damage                       | X        |         |         |             |
| Replace new-growth redwood channel siding throughout house where needed (primarily southern and eastern façades)                   | Nonoriginal and new-growth siding is warping and causing water leakage into the house   |          | X       |         |             |
| Sanding and staining of old-growth siding replacement every 1–2 years  | Ensure longevity of the siding  |          |         |         | X           |
| Reinforcement of cantilevered wood deck on southern façade   | Wood deck is sagging and pulling away from the residence  | X        |         |         |             |
| Repair leakage in hot tub located in the wood deck   | Source of leak unknown  |          |         | X       |             |
| Repair cracks in poured concrete flowerbeds throughout site  | Concrete cracking in multiple locations; cracked flowerbeds abutting the residence allow water leakage into the house             |          | X       | X       |             |
| Repair of degrading concrete and rusting rebar in utility shop; addition of waterproof membrane on roof to prevent further leaking | Flat roof with little runoff has allowed water leakage into the interior, which is degrading the concrete and rebar reinforcement |          | X       |         |             |
| Repair structural cracks in living room fireplace extending into master bedroom  | Structural damage within fireplace  |          | X       |         |             |
| Repair water leaking through fireplaces, presumably from chimney, causing degrading of concrete                                    | Lack of flashing and proper water sealant on chimney  |          | X       |         |             |

**TABLE 1  
FUTURE WORK PLAN**

| <b>Proposed Work</b>  | <b>Reason</b>   | <b>Critical</b> | <b>Phase 1</b> | <b>Phase 2</b> | <b>Maintenance</b> |
|---|---|-----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Restore metal andirons missing from living room fireplace   | Original feature removed at unknown date  |                 |                | X              |                    |
| Repair first-floor interior leak coming from cantilevered southern façade second-story balcony  | Balcony is not properly hot mopped with no proper water drainage  |                 | X              |                |                    |
| Restore second-story bathroom to original size  | Bathroom extension to the south and west removed the eave overhang that protected the window and interior from water leakage and damage |                 | X              |                |                    |
| Replace metal flashing around the perimeter of the roof; add waterproof membrane; replace gravel on upper roof ( <i>eventual roof replacement needed</i> )      | Better roof protection; better water drainage; better interior water leakage protection   |                 |                | X              |                    |
| Restoration of original built-in features missing and visible on architectural drawings and original fixtures, such as kitchen appliances, throughout residence | Original details  |                 |                | X              |                    |
| Restoration of windows to ensure all function and no water leakage  | Original details  |                 |                | X              |                    |
| Restoration of casement doors in living room to function  | Original detail   |                 |                | X              |                    |

A historic structures report will also be completed by Architectural Resources Group in partnership with the current owners to ensure restoration efforts comply with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. A cost estimate will also be generated with the preparation of the historic structures report, upon which the property tax reduction will be based.

## **FINDINGS**

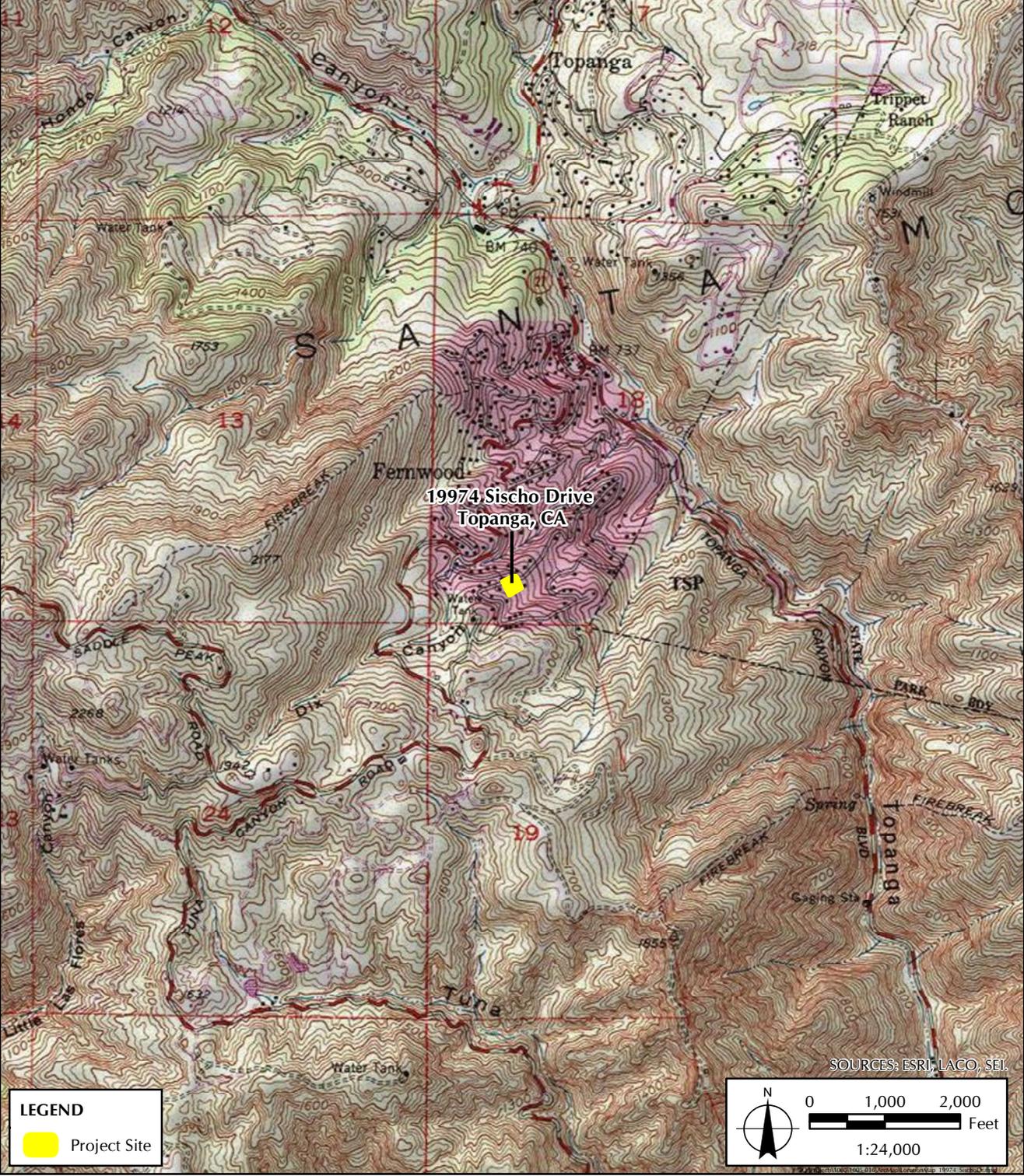
The Anderson House is nominated for listing as a Los Angeles County Landmark under Criterion A.3 as an excellent example of Organic architecture and for being the work of a master architect, W. Earl Wear. The Anderson House is an exceptional and highly intact example of the Organic style of architecture in Los Angeles County and one of the few remaining examples of the work of master architect W. Earl Wear. Future necessary restoration and preservation work, as outlined above, is estimated to cost between \$1.5 million and \$2 million. The unique construction and materials used in Organic architecture make the preservation and maintenance of this residence more expensive, thus creating a need for exemption from disqualification. The Mills Act program is meant to offset

the unique costs of maintaining an exceptionally significant property, and thus the Anderson House is an exceptional candidate for this program.

From this research, Sapphos Environmental, Inc. supports the exemption from disqualification from the Mills Act Program for the Anderson House located at 19974 Sischo Drive.

If there are any questions regarding the contents of this MFR or additional information is required, please contact Ms. Conley at (626) 683-3547, extension 135, or email at [kconley@sapphosenvironmental.com](mailto:kconley@sapphosenvironmental.com).





19974 Sischo Drive  
Topanga, CA

**LEGEND**

 Project Site

SOURCES: ESRI, LACO, SEI.

 0 1,000 2,000 Feet

1:24,000