

Name: California Country Club Planning District



Description:

The California Country Club Planning District is located in West Los Angeles in the neighborhood now called Cheviot Hills. The trapezoidal-shaped area is bounded by on the north by a straight tract boundary line that approximately follows Forrester Drive and continues to the east north of Bridlevale Drive and Club Drive; on the east by Shelby Drive; on the south by Manning Avenue; and on the west by Queensbury Drive. The topography ranges widely from generally flat to mildly hilly, and many of the front yards slope down toward the street. One- to three-foot retaining walls clad with stone or brick are common. The street pattern is a mixture of curvilinear and orthogonal forms that create irregularly shaped blocks and impart a quiet residential character to the area. Consisting of approximately 138 acres, the approximately 475 district parcels range from rectangular to irregular in shape and are generally somewhat larger than those in the surrounding tracts. Traditional custom Ranch-style houses are typical of the neighborhood, many with wood board-and-batten siding, exposed rafter tails, brackets, and dovescotes. However, many individual residences have been altered with an additional story and non-original stone or stucco cladding. The wide streets, large lots, sidewalks, and setbacks give the neighborhood an open, spacious feel. Attached garages and driveways dominate the front elevations throughout the district. Original features of the tract include streetlights with cast iron posts and mass plantings of mature street trees, such as ficus and palms, which line various streets. The period of significance is 1952 to 1955.

Significance:

The California Country Club Planning District is a good example of the work of a merchant builder of mid-century era residential properties in West Los Angeles. It is associated with Los Angeles merchant builder Sanford D. Adler. Adler was active in Florida and also developed a small tract called Northridge Living Conditioned Homes in the San Fernando Valley designed by modernist architectural firm Palmer & Krisel. His organization owned the Del Mar Hotel as well as other holdings. In 1951, Adler subdivided an approximately 100-acre portion of the California Country Club golf course, which had been developed by Harry Culver. The new California Country Club Estates consisted of 410 Ranch-style single-family residences, which were initially sold from 1952 to 1955. Around the same time, the California Country Club Homes Association (still in operation today) was created to maintain restrictions and construction standards. Appealing to individuals with middle class incomes who worked in the entertainment industry, the California Country Club Estates development—then valued at \$15,000,000—was sold out by 1955.

Ads by the Hillcrest Construction Co. for the tract depicted a Ranch-style house with a low-pitched roof, decorative shutters, and a garage projecting toward the front of the property. The typically 2,000-square-foot houses priced at \$29,250 featured “Hillcrest’s famous warm modern construction.”

Many of the houses have been enlarged with the addition of a second story, and the original wood and brick cladding has sometimes been replaced by stone, stucco, or clapboard. These alterations impact the overall integrity of the neighborhood, and therefore it does not appear to be eligible for listing as a historic district. However, many of the houses retain the original wood board-and-batten siding, exposed rafter beams, porch brackets, diamond-pane windows, and dovescotes. The spacious feel of the 1950s-era development oriented toward the automobile with its wide streets and prominent garages and driveways is retained. Moreover, original features of the tract such as streetlights with cast iron posts and mature street trees remain. Therefore, the district may warrant special consideration in the local planning process.



Context 1:

Context:	Residential Development and Suburbanization, 1850-1980
Sub context:	No Sub-context
Theme:	Developers and the Development Process, 1888-1975
Sub theme:	Merchant Builders, 1940-1975
Property type:	Residential Suburb
Property sub type:	Subdivision(s)
Criteria:	A/1/1
Status code:	6LQ
Reason:	A good example of a residential subdivision from the mid- 20th century. Represents residential patterns of development in West Los Angeles.