

Louis P. Caravella, President
Matthew Quiocho, Vice President
Eugenia Bulanova, Treasurer
Barbara St. John, Communications Officer



A City of Los Angeles
Neighborhood Council
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www.centrialsanpedronc.org • 1840 S. Gaffey Street, #212, San Pedro, CA 90731 • 310-918-8650 • info@centrialsanpedro.org

February 28, 2022

Sent Via Email To: chc@lacity.org

Re: Walker's Cafe – Case: CHC-2021-10727-HCM

Dear Commissioners,

We are writing in support of Cultural-Historic Monument designation for Walker's Cafe at 700 W Paseo del Mar in San Pedro.

Walker's Cafe has been serving the community for almost eighty years, with its origins going back more than a century. Walker's is one of the oldest restaurants in San Pedro—and indeed in the Los Angeles area—and played a formative role in the early development of the Point Fermin neighborhood. Its founder, the late Bessie Mae Petersen, is still remembered fondly by many for her unflinching generosity to those in need and for creating a welcoming community gathering place that has stood the test of time.

As a long-standing local institution, the cafe's diverse clientele is a microcosm of San Pedro's community, with longshoremen, fishermen, service members and others all coming together. Generations of San Pedrans have come to Walker's to eat the famous "Bessie Burgers," enjoy the unrivaled view of the Pacific Ocean and Catalina Island, and talk as neighbors and friends. People have gotten married there, brought their children and grandchildren there.

From the original neon sign to the friendly yellow stucco building and the time-warp interior, Walker's is a fully intact slice of 1940s Americana. Its high-integrity period features have made it a popular filming location for countless iconic productions such as *Chinatown*, *Inherent Vice* and *Gods and Monsters*, and—importantly—a touchstone for people wishing to connect with San Pedro's past.

Walker's is on a par with other historic businesses such as Cole's (LA HCM No. 104) and The Original Pantry Cafe (LA HCM No. 255) in downtown Los Angeles, Tom Bergin's (LA HCM No. 1182) in Wilshire, and Rod's Grill in Arcadia—places that transport present-day patrons to a different time and narrate the story of the earliest days of the city's development.

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In short, under Criterion 1, Walker's exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic and social history of the city and community, while under Criterion 2, it is associated with two significant figures in local history in Felicien Landier and Bessie Mae Petersen. Losing it would significantly impoverish the heritage of San Pedro. We urge you to protect this San Pedro landmark for future generations by supporting the nomination for this extraordinary place.

Please include a copy of this letter in the case file.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Louis P. Caravella". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Louis P. Caravella

President

On behalf of the Central San Pedro Neighborhood Council

This letter approved by the board on 2/15/22

CC: Melissa.Jones@lacity.org, ken.bernstein@lacity.org, councilmember.buscaino@lacity.org