

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Angelus Funeral Home

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 1010 East Jefferson Boulevard N/A not for publication

city or town Los Angeles N/A vicinity

state California code CA county Los Angeles code 037 zip code 90011

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the
National Register
 See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the
National Register

removed from the National
Register

other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

Historic Resources Associated with African Americans in Los Angeles

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

FUNEARY – Mortuary

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS – Spanish Colonial Revival, Georgian Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
roof Synthetic, Clay Tile
walls Stucco
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage - Black

Period of Significance

1934 - 1958

Significant Dates

1934 – Building Constructed

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Williams, Paul R., architect

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

City of Los Angeles, Office of Historic Resources

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property

Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	—	_____	_____	3	—	_____	_____
2	—	_____	_____	4	—	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Assessor Parcel Number 5114-015-010, which corresponds to the attached map.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) The legal lot the building historically and currently occupies.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Teresa Grimes

organization Christopher A. Joseph & Associates date 6/01/08

street & number 523 W. 6th Street, Suite 1134 telephone (213) 417-4400

city or town Los Angeles state CA zip code 90014

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name CRA/LA

street & number 354 S. Spring Street, Suite #800 telephone _____

city or town Los Angeles state CA zip code 90013

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Angelus Funeral Home
Los Angeles, California

DESCRIPTION

The Angelus Funeral Home is located in the City of Los Angeles on a triangular lot that is bounded by Jefferson Boulevard on the northeast, East 35th Street on the south, and a surface parking lot associated with the building on the west. The apex of the triangle points toward Central Avenue. The two-story wood-framed structure has an irregular plan composed of a series of rectangular masses finished with stucco. The main mass is oriented toward Jefferson Boulevard and is covered by a side-facing gabled roof fit with red clay tiles. Primarily Spanish Colonial Revival in style, Art Deco, and Georgian Revival style features are also employed. The other masses have flat roofs and few details. The building retains all aspects of integrity.

The primary (northeast) elevation is asymmetrically organized. The main entrance is centered on a bay at the east end of the elevation. It is marked by a front-facing gable punctuated by an oval vent. The entire bay projects slightly from the façade, and the gable appear to be supported by fluted pilasters. The entrance features a six-panel door with a Georgian tabernacle frame and diamond pattern molding on architrave, crowned by a swan's neck pediment that has a small finial between the scrolls. On the west end of the elevation there is a recessed balcony on the second story. Below is a secondary entrance, which has a three-panel door, topped by a transom. The doorway is set in a tabernacle frame surmounted by a pediment. Additional design elements include a stringcourse between the first and second stories and French doors opening onto a second-story wrought iron balcony at the far west end. Centered on the apex of the triangle is a fluted, semi-circular bay flanked by pilasters. A fountain once stood inside the semi-circle. The south and west elevations are unadorned. The windows throughout are wood-framed casements in a variety of sizes.

The lobby features a circular staircase with an ornamental railing, a Georgian cornice with dentil molding, and a slender fluted square Doric column.

There are no apparent exterior alterations. The building permit records indicate that the exterior of the building was sandblasted in 1953, and that fire damage was repaired in 1959.

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Angelus Funeral Home
Los Angeles, California

SIGNIFICANCE

The Angelus Funeral Home is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. It meets the registration requirements for commercial buildings outlined in the Multiple Property Documentation (MPD) Form for Historic Resources Associated with African Americans in Los Angeles. Constructed in 1934, the Angelus Funeral Home is significant as an example of a successful commercial enterprise founded by African Americans.

As African Americans were excluded from employment in many sectors of the economy out of racial prejudice, they were forced to open their own businesses as a means of employment. The people who ran these businesses often emerged as community leaders. People of color were often denied services at hotels, restaurants, retail stores, mortuaries, insurance companies, dentist and doctors offices, etc. Black entrepreneurs and professionals filled the need by founding these and other businesses to serve the growing community. Successfully black-owned businesses, such as the Angelus Funeral Home, were a great source of pride for the community.

The first black-owned funeral home was established in 1899 as the Porter-Roberts Company. Created in response to the discriminatory practices of white funeral homes, A.J. Roberts sold his Los Angeles Van, Truck, and Storage Co. to open the A.J. Roberts Funeral Home at 14th Street and Central Avenue. Roberts also ran an apprenticeship program for morticians in addition to its other services. A.J.'s son, Frederick Roberts, took over the company and was the first African American elected to the statewide assembly in 1918. His election was in part a testament to the prominence of African American morticians within their community. Even the necessary accoutrements of the business, the property and the vehicles, elicited admiration. The reputation of morticians was further bolstered by their business connections with pastors, since the church was the established center of the African American community.

Angelus Funeral Home was founded in 1922 without much initial success due to competition within the community, but was sold and came under the leadership of new owners including Louis George Robinson, Lorenzo Bowdoin, and John L. Hill. Eventually Hill assumed full ownership of the business and grew the company into one of the most successful and prominent black-owned businesses in Los Angeles. In 1942, John L. Hill Jr. became the president of the company upon his father's death. In 1954, he became the first African American to serve on the five-member California State Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers. He served on the board for 20 years. Hill was responsible for moving the business from Jefferson Boulevard to Crenshaw Avenue in 1951. He saw the business's clientele moving west during the late 1940s and knew that the funeral home needed to follow.

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Angelus Funeral Home
Los Angeles, California

Although the building is not being nominated under Criterion C, it is important to note that it was designed by architect Paul R. Williams. One of the most successful and talented architects to practice in Los Angeles during the middle of the 20th century, Williams worked his way through the University of California by teaching art until he became a certified architect in 1915. He was the only African American licensed west of the Mississippi as early as the 1920s. Much of his work was residential and included mansions for film stars including Lon Chaney, Lucille Ball, and Tyrone Power. He also designed a number of important landmarks associated with the African American community including the 28th Street YMCA (1926), the Second Baptist Church (1926), the Hudson-Liddell Building (1928, demolished) the Golden State Lodge for the Order of the Elks (1930, demolished), and the second building for Golden State Mutual Life Insurance (1948-49).

REFERENCES

Building Permits

Sanborn Map, 1950, vol. 4

Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument Application, 2003

Bunche, Lonnie. *Black Angelenos: The Afro-American in Los Angeles, 1850-1950*. Los Angeles: California Afro-American Museum, 1988.

Flamming, Douglas. *Bound for Freedom: Black Los Angeles in Jim Crow America*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

Mason, William and James Anderson. "The Los Angeles Black Community, 1781-1940" in *Bulletin No. 5*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, 1969.

Parker, Emanuel, "John Lamar Hill Dies at Age 75," *Los Angeles Sentinel*, 10/15/1998, p. A3.

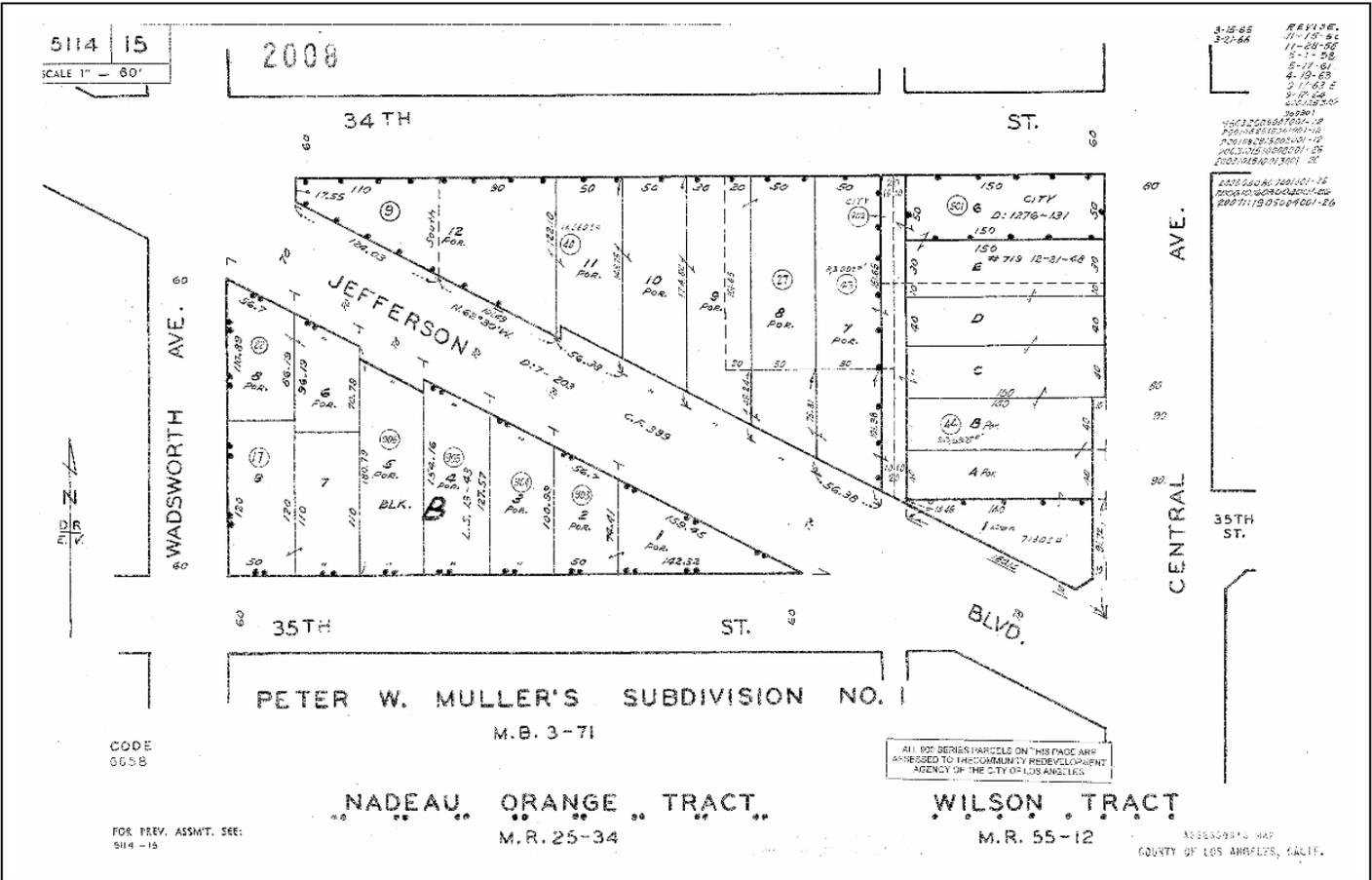
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Angelus Funeral Home
Los Angeles, California

SKETCH MAP



Property boundary outlined in bold
Source: Los Angeles County Tax Assessor