

FACTS ABOUT THE BALDWIN HILLS VILLAGE NOMINATION

1. This nomination covers the 300 year-impact of the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain and the United States. It also studies the related movement in support of human rights.

Specifically, this work describes the early 20th Century efforts of architect Clarence Stein and his colleagues in designing modern communities that would support fully the tenets of human rights. This resulted in the creation of Baldwin Hills Village and six other major planned communities. These sites helped to lay the foundation for the field of urban planning on a global level.

2. The United States Department of Interior (National Parks Service) stated that this nomination was too expensive for it to prepare (1994 and 1996). Special funding would be required to complete a theme study for town planning before the Baldwin Hills Village nomination could be prepared.

3. Dorothy Fue Wong, resident of Baldwin Hills Village (Village Green) and retired teacher, prepared this nomination along with the required theme study. Cornell University provided technical help, along with the Department of Interior.

4. Wong took six years (full-time) to complete the Baldwin Hills Village nomination—1994 to 2000. Wong first had to gain political support. Then she traveled 30,000 miles to collect historic data at six Stein communities on the east coast and one in British Columbia. She also consulted archives in New York City, Washington D.C. and the Clarence Stein archives in Ithaca, New York.

5. This nomination was supported by Cornell University, the California State Office of Historic Preservation, and the United States Department of Interior. Twenty-nine letters of recommendation were written by preservation professionals and elected government leaders on the local, state, and federal levels.

6. The Village Green community voted two times to become a National Historic Landmark (1996 and 2000). The second election was conducted by the United States Department of Interior. Not one of the approximate 400 homeowners objected to this designation. Seventy percent signed petitions to demonstrate support. The Village Green Board wrote a letter of support.

7. The United States Department of Interior placed the Baldwin Hills Village nomination on its official National Historic Landmark website. Currently, only nine nominations have been selected from California's 136 National Historic Landmarks for this honor.

8. In 2005, this nomination helped two other Stein communities (Radburn in New Jersey and Chatham Village in Pennsylvania) become National Historic Landmarks. The United States Department of Interior was able to fund these two nominations because the Baldwin Hills Village nomination provided the required theme study in town planning.

Later, this same nomination helped to save two related Los Angeles City's planned communities from demolition by speculators (2000-2005).

In 2007, the Baldwin Hills Village nomination advanced the New York City Landmark certification of two related Stein Communities (Sunnyside Gardens and Phipps Garden Apartments) in New York City.

9. Baldwin Hills Village is the largest National Historic Landmark in Los Angeles City (one out of 10) and Los Angeles County (one out of 20).

During the last decade (1999 to 2009), Baldwin Hills Village became the second largest of the twelve National Historic Landmarks listed in the state of California. The largest is the Fresno Landfill, which contains 145 acres. Also, Baldwin Hills Village is the most complex in this group; it contains 97 buildings, a site plan, and 64 structures shared in common by approximately 500 homeowners.

10. Except for the Baldwin Hills Village nomination (funded largely by Wong), all the other California National Historic Landmarks during the last decade were funded by various agencies and completed by professionals.

During the mid-1990s, the United States Department of Interior increased the standards for preparing the National Historic Landmark nominations in order to maintain the number of 2,500 Landmarks. Landmarks represent 3% of the approximate 85,000 sites on the National Register of Historic Places.

11. In Los Angeles City, only two National Historic Landmark nominations were not fully funded. The other is Watts Towers completed in 1990. It contains 23 pages in contrast to the Baldwin Hills Village nomination of 78 pages.

12. The successful Baldwin Hills Village nomination dramatically raised the property values of the approximate 400 Village Green homeowners. Professional studies and interviews have demonstrated that the homeowners as a group received increases of millions of dollars by 2006.

13. The Baldwin Hills Village nomination continues to create additional financial incentives for the homeowners and the community.

One is the Mills Act (property tax reduction for homeowners of historic properties). One board member wrote in 2010: "By our participation in the Mills Act, homeowners could see a collective property tax savings of around \$450,000 to \$600,000 annually".

The other major incentive is special disaster funding for National Historic Landmarks. This is particularly important as the Village Green is located less than three miles from the Newport-Inglewood fault, which is one of the most dangerous earthquake faults in Los Angeles County.

In addition, the Village Green board during the last decade has applied for close to 20 grants using its National Historic Landmark status.

14. The successful Baldwin Hills Village nomination has encouraged Cornell University's Clarence Stein Institute to fund fellowships to preserve Baldwin Hills Village and the other six major Stein communities.

In 2008, Dorothy Fue Wong received a Stein fellowship to establish preservation strategies and standards to help these historic communities maintain their National Historic Landmark status and to attract funding. In February 2010, the completed project was sent to Los Angeles City for the purpose of assisting Baldwin Hills Village (Village Green) with its Mills Act application.

In July 2010, Wong received a second Stein fellowship to develop a disaster plan for four Stein communities. Also, three other Stein communities received fellowships for preservation activities.

