

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA

ACADEMIC SENATE

RESOLUTION

Resolution for Cal Poly Pomona to Retain Ownership of the Richard and Dion Neutra VDL Research House II 2300 Silver Lake Blvd., Los Angeles

- WHEREAS, The studio and residences of famed modernist architect Richard Neutra (VDL House) was deeded to the Cal Poly Pomona Foundation (a 501(c)(3) tax exempt not-for-profit organization) in 1979 by Mr. Neutra's widow, who also provided a small endowment; the Foundation became the legal owner of VDL in August 1991; and
- WHEREAS, The College of Environmental Design (ENV), using proceeds from the endowment, has acted as steward of the VDL House to ensure its use for educational purposes and public access – as stipulated in the bequest, and
- WHEREAS, The VDL House has been the site for (and subject of) classes, public lectures, receptions, and housing important university guests and international visitors, and serves as a highly visible and prestigious representation of California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, and a publicly accessible resource, in the greater Los Angeles community; and
- WHEREAS, The VDL House is integral to the legacy of all three ENV accredited professional degree programs, and is highly valued by them, as it is also a critical resource for the Architecture Department's multidisciplinary historic preservation program; and
- WHEREAS, Despite the best efforts of ENV to preserve and maintain the property, but without adequate institutional support towards fundraising, the property has deteriorated. As a result, the VDL House is currently in need of repair and funds to ensure its long-term preservation; and
- WHEREAS, President J. Michael Ortiz entered into an agreement stipulating that Raymond Neutra (youngest son of Richard Neutra), representing the Friends of the Neutra VDL Research Committee, and working with Cal Poly Pomona, be permitted to identify an institutional co-steward and raise money for the property; and


WHEREAS, Terms of the agreement require raising \$30,000 by October 1, 2008, and an additional \$1,000,000.00 by December 2009 as reported in the *Los Angeles Times*, April 17, 2008, which also reported that a failure to raise \$1.5 million would threaten imminent closure and possible sale to a private party (see also www.neutra-vdl.org); and

WHEREAS, Department of Architecture faculty produced a promotional DVD for the Neutra House with funds they raised, created a website, continue to offer classes and train students as docents and in historic preservation and sustainability research, and are unanimously committed to their own stewardship of the house including lending their expertise to its physical restoration; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Academic Senate joins the ENV faculty in recognizing the importance of the VDL House in promoting the Neutra legacy of professional environmental design education and public access and strongly opposes any closure of the house or transfer of ownership or control, partial or complete; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Academic Senate supports Department of Architecture and ENV faculty's commitment to continue academic programs and related fundraising efforts to repair and maintain the VDL House, and urges the President to clarify the University's commitment to retain the property and enhance its investment in fundraising.

Adopted by the Academic Senate of
California State Polytechnic University,
Pomona on July 16, 2008.



Dr. Martin F. Sancho-Madriz, Chair
Academic Senate