

Pier Rates Historical Notability

By Maresa Archer

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The Huntington Beach Municipal Pier is now a national historic landmark.

The pier was awarded its place in history Friday, when the state Historic Resource Commission accepted its nomination from the Huntington Beach Historical Society.

The designation was opposed by City Council. The agency even sent Louis Sandoval, the city's public works director, to Friday's hearing to try to dissuade the commission from placing the pier on its historical list.

"The council was concerned
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HB Pier Designated Landmark...

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that being placed on the register might delay or obstruct construction of the new pier. But the chairman of the commission assured me it would in no way hinder construction of the new pier.

"However, I'm not convinced of that, so we'll see what happens," Sandoval said.

Historical Society members are pleased with the commission's decision.

They have been working since March to secure national landmark status for the pier, according to Barbara Milkovich, president of the society.

To be deemed a national landmark, a structure must be nominated by the state historical commission, not regional groups.

It will take two to three months before the paperwork is complete and the pier appears on the

nation's list of treasured structures.

"This designation is acknowledging that the pier has state historical significance rather than just local significance," Milkovich said.

The pier's new status does not add any protection to the landmark, she added.

Since 1904, when the first 1,300-foot municipal pier was built of wood, the city has had a difficult time with its investment.

The pier's history is clouded with damage reports, escalating costs and bandage-like rebuilding

efforts.

Despite problems, it has remained a popular symbol of this beach-side city.

Public outcry was far from subdued when city officials closed the landmark in July because of extensive damage incurred in a January 1988 tempest that swept away a 250-foot portion of the 84-year-old pier.

The city is currently exploring plans for a new structure that can withstand the constant beating of the Pacific.

The pier is expected to be reopened in 1991.

