

HRB Meeting of February 22, 2024

First Name	Last Name	Meeting Date	Agenda Item Number	Position	I would like to speak on the item during public testimony.	Comments	Attachments
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Non-Agenda Comment

Clint	Daniels	2/22/2024	Non-Agenda Comment	In Opposition to Item		<p>An appeal was filed on the Talmadge Park Estates Historic District National Register Nomination from the January 25, 2024 HRB meeting. The recommendation HRB directly made to the State Office of Historic Preservation was in violation of San Diego Municipal Code Section 123.0206. The municipal code states that only the City Council can make such a recommendation for state or national historical designation. This did not happen.</p> <p>Section 123.0206 states, "State and National Register: The City Council shall consider endorsing the nomination of a historical resource for inclusion in the California Register of Historic Resources and the National Register of Historic Places upon recommendation of the Historical Resources Board."</p> <p>The Historical Resources Board overstepped its mandated authority under the municipal code and potentially puts all properties in limbo when they apply to the city for local designation. While the State Historic Resource Commission's General Counsel argued during their February 2, 2024, meeting that the Commission did comply with federal and state noticing guidelines by contacting the Mayor and the local historic body (i.e., HRB). The State's lawyer did not comment on whether local processes were followed according to local municipal code.</p> <p>In addition, staff was made aware of their oversight on Friday January 26, 2024 via email. Staff did not respond to questions requesting additional clarity on City Council deliberations, so an appeal was filed on January 29, 2024. Staff summarily ignored the appeal and let the item proceed to the state commission while knowing of a potential violation. Now, this violation of municipal code is largely moot, it does raise questions about how it will affect local designations in Talmadge moving forward.</p> <p>It would be appreciated if staff could clarify what authority the HRB had to make such a recommendation directly to the State Historic Resource Commission and how any such recommendation directly from HRB is compatible with San Diego Municipal Code Section 123.0206. (NO ATTACHEMENTS)</p>	
Debbie	Sanders		Non-Agenda Comment			<p>As a member of the Talmadge Historical Society and assessment sub-committee, I'd like to share my experience of the architectural review process.</p> <p>In order to evaluate contributor vs non-contributor status, I stood before each house for 15-30 minutes. I compared Sanborn maps and SANDAG maps. I scrutinized and documented every little detail into our database.</p> <p>I've gained so much knowledge of the architects and builders that put their touch on this unique neighborhood. I developed a particular affinity for the Minimal Traditional style homes and what they represent historically and architecturally. While this style home was common for the time period, the Talmadge district was fortunate to avoid the infill of the 60's and 70's and has managed to retain its architectural integrity.</p> <p>Architects and builders embraced the post depression MT style and it worked well with the lot sizes offered in the Talmadge subdivisions. As was typical for this time frame, prospective homeowners would purchase an individual lot, select a builder, and work directly with that builder in design and construction.</p> <p>Over 80 builders constructed homes in the district. Close observation of the MT's reflect that - while adhering to the FHA guidelines - the architects and builders continued to apply their skill, unique design & craftsmanship to each individual home. The resulting outcome was a district of cohesiveness and variety that one sees today. In my opinion, MT'S are our subtle, understated beauties.</p> <p>I now share my enthusiasm by offering guided walking tours of the district. The tours have been well attended with about 100 participants to date. Attendees leave with new appreciation for the multitude of subtle details - such as decorative rafter tails, accent windows, decorative support posts and porch railings.</p> <p>As I mentioned at the beginning, this well preserved neighborhood represents a bygone era; subdivisions designed by multiple architects & builders ceased to exist with the onset of developer designed, rapidly built cookie cutter housing tracts of the 1950's and later.</p> <p>Lastly, I'd like to acknowledge this board for its recognition of the historic architectural value of this district - it's truly appreciated. Thank you. (NO ATTACHEMENTS)</p>	

LAURA	HENSON	2/22/2024	Non-Agenda Comment	<p>Wes Morgan, AdComms Committee Chair for YIMBY Dems, submitted a letter at the HRB meeting on January 25, 2024, disapproving of Talmadge Park Estates Historic District due to its racial covenants. According to Guidelines for the Application of Historic Resources Board Designation Criteria, "Such restrictions play no role in the Board's designation actions." He used inaccurate data and gross exaggerations to attack the district as being one of most racist neighborhoods in all of San Diego and then exaggerating how white and affluent we are today to imply that we are still racist. This inaccurate and grossly exaggerated information was then shared with LISC and OTTA that then also used these inaccurate talking points in their letters of disapproval. Sadly, this information was then used in the press to malign the district and its volunteers as racist. An article in the University of Pennsylvania Law Review titled, the Perils of Land Use Deregulation states these attacks on historic districts are a YIMBY nationwide strategy to deregulate the housing industry. Not surprisingly, the report goes on to say that when you deregulate the housing industry, which has a long history of racial discrimination, you end up lowering housing affordability and harming people of color. Please see attached correction to Mr. Morgan's letter. Corrections are written in red.</p> <p>Laura Henson, President Talmadge Historical Society</p>	https://www.sandiego.gov/system/files/webform/webform_994112/20802/corrrection_of_record_hrb_1-26-24.pdf
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ITEM 1

Clint	Daniels	2/22/2024	1	In Opposition to Item	No	<p>In the City of San Diego, there are 122 identified "Masters" (e.g., architects, designers, builders). The city asserts that 97 percent of the most important contributors to the built environment are men. Of the 122 "Masters", only 4 are women. I'm sure some on this board would say that is just the way history is. History benefited men over women, and that was wrong. This is the same argument this board uses to sweep the uncomfortable truth of redlining and restrictive covenants under the rug. This is just an excuse.</p> <p>On top of that half of the identify "Master" women were designated in the shadow of their husbands— Florence (and Herbert) Palmer and Corinne (and Wayne) McAllister.</p> <p>Yes, history benefited men over women, there is no denying that. However, this board has taken no action to affirmatively identify women who have contributed to this city. The city could look to identify contemporary women "Masters". The city has identified other contemporary masters like Jonathan Segal.</p> <p>A designation under Criterion D continues the narrative that women are less important to the history of San Diego than its forefathers. Not just that women are less important, but their city (our city) actually codifies a list of men as contributors worthy of preservation and tax incentives. This is appalling. Until this board takes equity seriously, we are perpetuating a narrative to women and girls that their contributions are not noticed.</p> <p>Rather than designate this property today, take an opportunity to look for how we raise the story of all the people who contributed to our community, not just the men. (NO ATTACHEMENTS)</p>
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ITEM 2

Clint	Daniels	2/22/2024	2	In Opposition to Item	No	<p>This property should not be designated historic without consideration of other city priorities and needs. This property is within one block of an elementary school, along a major bike facility, and within three blocks of a high priority transit stop. Any consideration of historic designation of a single-family home in this type of educational-rich and transportation-rich environment should be considered in the context of the city's housing, transportation, and climate goals.</p>
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ITEM 3

Clint	Daniels	2/22/2024	3	In Opposition to Item	No	<p>In the September 28, 2023 meeting on a similar item regarding whether a non-historical front porch should be disqualifying to another “British Arts and Crafts” home in Bankers Hill, Ms. Coyle set the precedent of a “squint test” for determining whether a property should be designated. She said she sometimes thinks about the “squint test” and for her that item passed the “squint test”. We can only assume a “squint test” is just that, close your eyes enough, and any structure can be anything you want it.</p> <p>In the end, the Board disregarded the staff recommendation designated the property. Staff recommended against designation in that case, in part, due to disqualifying alterations to the front porch. However, the “squint test” proved an effective tool that day to provide the grounds for designation.</p> <p>It is good to see that the same test is being applied to the front porch of this property for consistency with precedent. In today’s report, staff admits the front porch alterations are not up to Department of Interior standards, but are generally minor. These seems to be the polite way of saying they pass the “squint test.” There is no quantitative rule of thumb in this decision. Is it 1 foot wider and it would detrimental? Is it 5 degrees more askew? No, it is a squint to see if it fits. This is setting policy based on a feeling with no grounding in objective decision making. In fact, as Ms. Coyle noted, the test is arbitrary and it is capricious saying the “squint test” is “not very scientific”.</p> <p>Due to the lack of objective criteria in determining a detrimental addition or modification this property should not be designated. (NO ATTACHEMENTS)</p>
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ITEM 4

Clint	Daniels	2/22/2024	4	In Opposition to Item	No	<p>In the City of San Diego, there are 122 identified “Masters” (e.g., architects, designers, builders). The city asserts that 97 percent of the most important contributors to the built environment are men. Of the 122 “Masters”, only 4 are women. I’m sure some on this board would say that is just the way history is. History benefited men over women, and that was wrong. This is the same argument this board uses to sweep the uncomfortable truth of redlining and restrictive covenants under the rug. This is just an excuse.</p> <p>On top of that half of the identify “Master” women were designated in the shadow of their husbands— Florence (and Herbert) Palmer and Corinne (and Wayne) McAllister.</p> <p>Yes, history benefited men over women, there is no denying that. However, this board has taken no action to affirmatively identify women who have contributed to this city. The city could look to identify contemporary women “Masters”. The city has identified other contemporary masters like Jonathan Segal.</p> <p>A designation under Criterion D continues the narrative that women are less important to the history of San Diego than its forefathers. Not just that women are less important, but their city (our city) actually codifies a list of men as contributors worthy of preservation and tax incentives. This is appalling. Until this board takes equity seriously, we are perpetuating a narrative to women and girls that their contributions are not noticed.</p> <p>Rather than designate this property today, take an opportunity to look for how we raise the story of all the people who contributed to our community, not just the men.</p> <p>Deny this application. (NO ATTACHEMENTS)</p>
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Jennifer	Stropes	2/22/2024	4	In Support of Item	No	As the BFSA representative, I will be available via Zoom for questions during the hearing.
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ITEM 5

Ginger	Weatherford	2/22/2024	5	In Support of Item	No	<p>I fully support this amendment to the Historical Resources Board Procedures. This streamlined approach has been needed for quite some time.</p>
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Clint	Daniels	2/22/2024	5	In Support of Item	No	<p>I appreciate the Board decision here today, and I'm surprised it has taken this long to bring about change. Unfortunately, for all the talk of this board to prioritize equity in designations and making historical designations more obtainable to folks with lesser means, this board has chosen to use its resources to speed up its perfunctory role in designating properties and enabling property tax rebates for the wealthiest property owners in the city.</p> <p>You've used me as foil to make this decision today. I've never once spoken for more than 1 minute on any item before you. In many cases, I've simply expressed my concerns in writing and not taken any of the board's time. This board has expanded their own meetings deliberating for long periods of time on items that were on consent. If the items were on consent, you could simply hear an abbreviated staff presentation, listen to public testimony, and vote with no deliberation. Your meetings are long, because you have long, one-sided debates about items that you've intended to put on consent. If you need to deliberate or justify decisions on items, they should not be on consent.</p> <p>As you move forward, I would encourage you to review all items that come before you openly in this forum. The decisions you make have an impact on the availability of housing in our city, our ability to meet our climate goals, and creating affordable communities that are welcoming to all income levels. Items should not be on consent if you would otherwise spend time discussing them. I've simply given you the opportunity to talk in an open forum about the merits of designation.</p> <p>If you choose not to use your platform to have those deliberations, then put items on consent and simply be a perfunctory, rubber-stamp for staff recommendations. (NO ATTACHEMENTS)</p>
Geoffrey	Hueter	2/22/2024	5 - Changes to HRB Consent agenda procedures	In Support of Item	Yes	<p>I support the goal of streamlining the HRB consent agenda procedures, but have some questions about the intent and drafting of some of the sections, as attached.</p> <p>https://www.sandiego.gov/system/files/webform/webform_994112/20804/item_5_changes_to_hrb_consent_agenda_procedures.pdf</p>