



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: October 12, 2023 REPORT NO. HRB-23-033

HEARING DATE: October 26, 2023

SUBJECT: **ITEM #2 – Walter and Judith Munk House**

RESOURCE INFO: [California Historical Resources Inventory Database \(CHRID\) link](#)

APPLICANT: Scott Family Trust 09-29-17; represented by IS Architecture

LOCATION: 9530 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla Community, Council District 1  
APN 344-050-15-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Walter and Judith Munk House located at 9530 La Jolla Shores Drive as a historical resource.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Walter and Judith Munk House located at 9530 La Jolla Shores Drive as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1953-1971 under HRB Criterion E. The designation includes the guest house, the landscape including two gardens designed by Judith Munk, a swimming pool, and eight sculptures constructed by Judith Munk. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the California State Register of Historical Resources under Criteria A and C at the local level of significance on July 12, 2021.

### BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with the owner's desire to have the site designated as a historical resource on the San Diego Register. On July 12, 2021, the Walter and Judith Munk House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. As a result of being placed on the National Register, the resource was also listed in the California Register of Historical Resources, pursuant to Section 4851(a)(2) of the Public Resources Code.

Although the property was listed on the National and California Registers as a "District" property type that includes multiple contributing resources, the subject property encompasses a single, privately owned parcel. The property more closely resembles an individual historic resource than a

historical district. Therefore, staff recommends considering this resource for individual historic designation, with multiple elements included in the designation.

The Walter and Judith Munk House includes various contributing elements. The National Register listing includes these contributing features: a single-family house, a guest house, the landscape, a swimming pool, and eight sculptures. Noncontributing features include an outdoor theater and artworks constructed outside the period of significance.

The single-family house was designed by Judith Munk and constructed between 1953 and 1954, containing additions built between 1959 and 1985. Its Modern architectural design exhibits Organic-Geometric and Post-and-Beam features. The guest house was built in 1953, is clad in exposed concrete block and board-and-batten siding and is located east of the single-family house. The historic landscape elements include two gardens designed by Judith Munk, sited east and west of the single-family house. The swimming pool was built in 1965 with gunite material and is located north of the east garden. The eight sculptures throughout the property were designed by Judith Munk and include painted and unpainted terracotta figures and medallions.

The historic name of the resource, the Walter and Judith Munk House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the resource's name as it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources.

#### ANALYSIS

A National Register of Historic Places Nomination Report was prepared by IS Architecture and submitted to the State Office of Historic Preservation which concludes that the resource is significant under National Register Criteria A and C. Given that the Walter and Judith Munk House has been found eligible for listing on the National Register at the local level of significance, staff recommends local designation under HRB Criterion E. This determination is consistent with the [Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria](#), as follows.

*CRITERION E - Is listed or has been determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or is listed or has been determined eligible by the State Historical Preservation Office for listing on the State Register of Historical Resources.*

The Walter and Judith Munk House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on July 12, 2021, following an action by the State Historical Resources Commission to approve the nomination on April 30, 2021. The Walter and Judith Munk House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development for its association with residential development related to the Scripps Estates Associates subdivision; in the areas of Science and Education for its association with scientific and academic advancements, including the work of Dr. Walter H. Munk; and in the area of Social History for development of and contribution to the social history of Scripps, the University of California San Diego, and the La Jolla community. The property was also listed on National Register at the local level of significance under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Art. As an excellent example of the Modern Movement, the buildings exhibit distinctive characteristics associated with the Organic-Geometric and Post-and-Beam subsets of the Modern style. The property is the work of regionally prominent artist and architectural designer Judith Munk, who

designed the buildings, landscape, theater, and associated works of art. The 1953 to 1971 period of significance encompasses design and construction of the two houses, two additions to the main house, landscape, and sculptures, all designed by Judith Munk.

Walter and Judith Munk were among the first to begin building their home in the tight-knit Scripps Estates Associate community, which was predicated on reversing long-standing restrictive covenants in La Jolla, breaking the trend of illegal housing discrimination and antisemitism, and establishing housing for a diverse community of scientists and for prospective faculty for the early development of Scripps Institution of Oceanography and the University of California San Diego (UCSD). The property is also significant for its association with Science and Education as it relates to Dr. Walter Munk, a prominent physical oceanographer and geophysicist who made demonstrable contributions to the foundation of twenty-first-century oceanography, US war efforts in WWII, and later in national defense. The property also frequently served as a meeting place where students, visiting intellectuals, artists, and scientists convened. In addition, the property was listed as significant under National Register Criterion C for significance in Architecture, Art, and Landscape Architecture. The property exhibits distinct characteristics of Post-and-Beam and Organic-Geometric styles and retains its vernacular cultural landscape – all as envisioned by Judith Munk, the architect and designer of the property. She was an architectural designer and artist whose artistic work was displayed in various exhibitions in La Jolla and architectural work realized via projects such as Villa Surf, a site-specific private residence.

According to the National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheets dated July 2022, five contributing sculptures designed by Judith Munk were removed from the property, likely during the change of ownership. Even accounting for the removed items, extant features, including the house, pool, landscape features, and remaining sculptures, continue to retain significance and integrity as it relates to the National Register of Historic Places listing.

Given that the Walter and Judith Munk House has been found to be eligible for listing on the National Register, and given that the Historical Resources Board designation criteria provide for the local designation of resources listed on or determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, staff recommends designation of the Walter and Judith Munk House under HRB Criterion E.

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Designation brings with it the responsibility of maintaining the building in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The benefits of designation include the availability of the Mills Act Program for reduced property tax; the use of the more flexible Historical Building Code; flexibility in the application of other regulatory requirements; the use of the Historical Conditional Use Permit which allows flexibility of use; and other programs which vary depending on the specific site conditions and owner objectives. If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Walter and Judith Munk House located at 9530 La Jolla Shores Drive be designated with a period of significance of 1953-1971 under HRB Criterion E. The designation includes the guest house, the landscape including two gardens designed by Judith Munk, a swimming pool, and eight sculptures constructed by Judith Munk.



Alvin Lin  
Assistant Planner



Suzanne Segur  
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison  
City Planning Department

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Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution
2. National and State Register Listing, signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer, under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A  
ADOPTED ON 10/26/2023

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 10/26/2023, to consider the historical designation of the **Walter and Judith Munk House** (owned by Scott Family Trust 09-29-17, 1355 Muirlands Vista Way, San Diego, CA 92037) located at **9530 La Jolla Shores Drive, San Diego, CA 92037**, APN: **344-050-15-00**, further described as PAR 2 in the City of San Diego, County of San Diego, State of California; and

WHEREAS, in arriving at their decision, the Historical Resources Board considered the historical resources report prepared by the applicant, the staff report and recommendation, all other materials submitted prior to and at the public hearing, inspected the subject property and heard public testimony presented at the hearing; and

WHEREAS, the property would be added to the Register of Designated Historical Resources as **Site No. 0**, and

WHEREAS, designated historical resources located within the City of San Diego are regulated by the Municipal Code (Chapter 14, Article 3, Division 2) as such any exterior modifications (or interior if any interior is designated) shall be approved by the City, this includes but is not limited to modifications to any windows or doors, removal or replacement of any exterior surfaces (i.e. paint, stucco, wood siding, brick), any alterations to the roof or roofing material, alterations to any exterior ornamentation and any additions or significant changes to the landscape/ site.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Historical Resources Board based its designation of Walter and Judith Munk House on the following findings:

The resource was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the California State Register of Historical Resources on July 12, 2021 at a local level of significance under National Register Criteria A and C. The property was listed under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development for its association with residential development related to the Scripps Estates Associates subdivision; in the areas of Science and Education for its association with scientific and academic advancements, including the work of Dr. Walter H. Munk; and in the area of Social History for development of and contribution to the social history of Scripps, the University of California San Diego, and the La Jolla community. The resource was listed under National Register Criterion C in the areas of Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Art. As an excellent example of the Modern Movement, the buildings exhibit distinctive characteristics associated with the Organic-Geometric and Post-and-Beam subsets of the Modern style. The property is the work of regionally prominent artist and architectural designer Judith Munk, who designed the buildings, landscape, theater, and associated works of art. The 1953 to 1971 period of significance encompasses design and construction of the two houses, two additions to the main house, landscape, and sculptures, all designed by Judith Munk.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in light of the foregoing, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego hereby approves the historical designation of the above named property. The designation includes the parcel and exterior of the building as Designated Historical Resource **Site No. 0**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the designation includes the guest house, the landscape including two gardens designed by Judith Munk, a swimming pool, and eight sculptures constructed by Judith Munk.

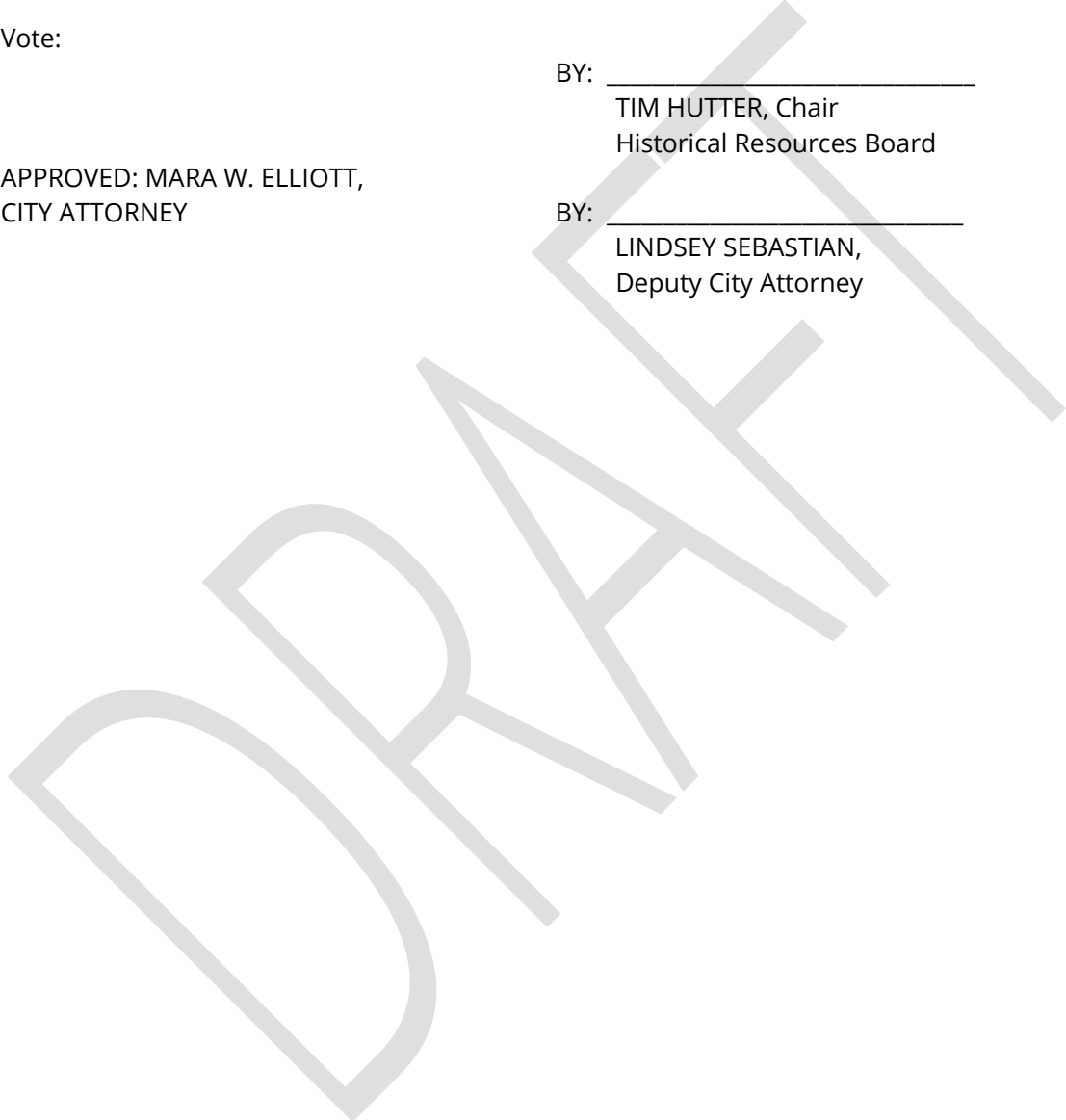
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Secretary to the Historical Resources Board shall cause this resolution to be recorded in the office of the San Diego County Recorder at no fee, for the benefit of the City of San Diego, and with no documentary tax due.

Vote:

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
TIM HUTTER, Chair  
Historical Resources Board

APPROVED: MARA W. ELLIOTT,  
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
LINDSEY SEBASTIAN,  
Deputy City Attorney



RECORDING REQUESTED BY  
CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

**WHEN RECORDED MAIL TO**

HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD  
ATTN: HRB SECRETARY  
1222 FIRST AVENUE, MS 501  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101

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SPACE ABOVE THIS LINE FOR RECORDER'S USE

RESOLUTION NUMBER **N/A**

HISTORICAL DESIGNATION OF PROPERTY ON

**9530 La Jolla Shores Drive, San Diego, CA 92037**

ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER **344-050-15-00**

HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD NUMBER **0**