



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: August 11, 2022 REPORT NO. HRB-22-028

HEARING DATE: August 25, 2022

SUBJECT: **ITEM #02 – John and Zelda Schelling/ William Wahrenberger House**

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

APPLICANT: Jason R. & Linda N. Woo; represented by Landmark Historic Preservation

LOCATION: 4277 Cosoy Way, Uptown Community, Council District 3
APN 442-670-1400

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the John and Zelda Schelling/ William Wahrenberger House located at 4277 Cosoy Way as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the John and Zelda Schelling/ William Wahrenberger House located at 4277 Cosoy Way as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1936 under HRB Criteria C and D. The designation excludes the 1940s-1950s rear second-story addition, the 1970 rear addition and the detached rear guest house. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Colonial Revival style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits a side gable roof, two-story massing with attached garage, symmetrical front façade, elaborated door surround, paneled front door and entryway, brick veneer detailing, bay windows, multi-lite wooden windows, louvered wooden shutters and end brick chimney.
2. The resource is representative of a notable work of Master Builder William Wahrenberger and retains integrity as it relates to the original 1936 design. Specifically, the house is notable as an example of Wahrenberger's work in the Colonial Revival style.

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. The resource is a two-story, single family house with attached garage located in the Mission Hills neighborhood directly across from Presidio Park.

The property was identified in the 2016 Community Plan Update and given a Status Code of 5S3, "appears to be individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation."

The historic name of the resource, the John and Zelda Schelling/ William Wahrenberger House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of John and Zelda Schelling, who constructed the house as their personal residence and the name of William Wahrenberger, a Master Builder.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Landmark Historic Preservation, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria C and D and staff concurs. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows.

CRITERION C - Embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of natural materials or craftsmanship.

The subject resource is a two-story, single family house constructed in the Colonial Revival style in 1936. The exterior of the L-shaped house is clad in stucco with a brick veneer detail on the front façade. A side facing, gable roof with asphalt shingles covers the main massing of the building as well as the attached garage. The main entrance is approached from the street by a curvilinear brick path and is sheltered behind a low brick site wall. The paneled door is emphasized by pilasters and an entablature with dentil cornice. Bay windows sheltered by an asphalt shingle roof flank the centrally located front door. Fenestration mostly includes wood, multi-lite, double hung windows. Colonial Revival detailing includes the shutters on the second floor of the front façade and red brick end chimney.

Several modifications have been made to the house since its 1936 date of construction. In the late 1940s or 1950s a second-story addition was constructed on the rear of the building. Another small rear addition was constructed in 1970 with the pool and a retaining wall added in 1975. In 1984, a rear detached workshop was converted to a guest quarters. Recently, the property owners modified the non-original front walkway by replacing the existing slate with brick and constructed a fence in the front yard. The prominent tree in the front yard is not original to the date of construction and was added sometime after 1981. These modifications do not impact integrity of design, materials, workmanship or feeling as it relates to Criterion C.

Following the Centennial Exposition of 1876 America experienced a rebirth of interest in its colonial past. Primarily popular from 1880 to 1955, Colonial Revival buildings reference the early English and Dutch homes of the Atlantic seaboard, particularly the Georgian and Adam styles. As with their prototypes, Colonial Revival structures generally have a symmetrical front façade with the principal areas of elaboration being entrances, windows and cornices. Roofs can be hipped, gable or gambrel and some variations feature a center gable projecting slightly from the primary façade. One-story side wings are common. Windows are typically double-hung sash with multi-lite glazing in one or both sashes and are commonly found in pairs, triples or bay windows.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Colonial Revival style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including a side gable roof, two-story massing with attached garage, symmetrical front façade, elaborated door surround, paneled front door and entryway, brick veneer detailing, bay windows, multi-lite wooden windows, louvered wooden shutters and end brick chimney. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion C.

CRITERION D - Is representative of a notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.

William Fredrick Wahrenberger was born in Colorado in 1892 to John J. and Emilie Wahrenberger. The family relocated to San Diego in 1910. His father became Secretary of the Bay City Construction Company in 1911. William was a draftsman and followed his father into the construction business, working with him until his father's death in 1918. Although William Wahrenberger designed many houses, his occupation is listed as contractor and he never obtained an architect's license.

William designed all the homes he built and completed some of the interior finish work himself. The houses that he designed and built are found throughout San Diego, including Mission Hills, Inspiration Heights, Fleet Ridge, La Jolla, Loma Portal and Point Loma. Since he constructed houses for more than a half-century, his work evolved, employing several styles including Craftsman, Spanish Revival and Modern. Hallmarks of William Wahrenberger's work were high-quality design and solid functional construction that utilized appropriate detailing and built-ins, and openings that introduced natural light into the interior of each house. The large, comfortable rooms flowed together, a feature that makes the houses very livable and functional even under today's standards. Wahrenberger's status as a Master Builder was established in 2004 with the designation of HRB #680, 4277 Trias Street. There are currently eight of Wahrenberger's works designated on the San Diego Register.

John and Zelda Schelling hired Wahrenberger in 1936 to construct their house on Cosoy Way. The property is a rare example of Wahrenberger's work in the Colonial Revival style and helps to illustrate the progression of his work over the fifty-year span of his career.

Significance Statement: The subject resource retains excellent integrity and continues to reflect Wahrenberger's original design, intent and aesthetic. The house is notable as an example of Wahrenberger's work in the Colonial Revival style. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion D as a notable work of Master Builder William F. Wahrenberger.

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 John and Zelda Schelling/ William Wahrenberger House located at 4277 Cosoy Way be designated with a period of significance of 1936 under HRB Criterion C as a resource that exhibits the distinctive characteristics of the Colonial Revival style and HRB Criterion D as a resource that is representative of a notable work of Master Builder William F. Wahrenberger. The designation excludes the 1940s-1950s rear second-story addition, the 1970 rear addition and the detached rear guest house.



Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison
Development Services Department

SS/ss

Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution
2. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 8/25/2022

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 8/25/2022, to consider the historical designation of the **John and Zelda Schelling/ William Wahrenberger House** (owned by Jason Ronald Woo & Linda Nguyen Trust 12-09-20, 4277 Cosoy Way, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **4277 Cosoy Way, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **442-670-14-00**, further described as BLK D LOT 23 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 the John and Zelda Schelling/ William Wahrenberger House on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Colonial Revival style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits a side gable roof, two-story massing with attached garage, symmetrical front façade, elaborated door surround, paneled front door and entryway, brick veneer detailing, bay windows, multi-lite wooden windows, louvered wooden shutters and end brick chimney. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

(2) The property is historically significant under CRITERION D as a notable work of Master Builder William Wahrenberger and retains integrity as it relates to the original 1936 design. Specifically, the house is notable as an example of Wahrenberger's work in the Colonial Revival style. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

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 shall exclude the rear 1940s-1950s rear second-story addition, the 1970 rear addition and the detached rear guest house.

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: _____
DAVID MCCULLOUGH, 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

SPACE ABOVE THIS LINE FOR RECORDER'S USE

RESOLUTION NUMBER **N/A**

HISTORICAL DESIGNATION OF PROPERTY ON

4277 Cosoy Way, San Diego, CA 92103

ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER **442-670-14-00**

HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD NUMBER **0**