



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: October 10, 2013 REPORT NO. HRB-13-050

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of October 24, 2013

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – Dr. Andrew and Augusta Wessels House**

APPLICANT: Mathew L. Richardson Trust represented by Vonn Marie May

LOCATION: 4274 Randolph Street, Uptown Community, Council District 3

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Dr. Andrew and Augusta Wessels House located at 4274 Randolph Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Dr. Andrew and Augusta Wessels House located at 4274 Randolph Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1927 under HRB Criterion C. The designation excludes the detached pool house at the south end of the property. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Spanish Eclectic style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1927 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features an irregular plan and asymmetrical façade; smooth finish stucco cladding; hipped Mission clay tile roof with moderate eave overhang and exposed rafters; wrought iron balconies; and original accented entry with oversized paneled wood door.

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 Spanish Eclectic style single family residence constructed in 1927 on the west side of Randolph Street in the Randolph Terrace subdivision of the Uptown Community.

The historic name of the resource, the Dr. Andrew and Augusta Wessels House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the names of Dr. Andrew and Augusta Wessels, who constructed the house as their personal residence.

Development Services Department

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ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Vonn Marie May, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria B and C. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion C, but not HRB Criterion B. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows.

CRITERION B - Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.

James Dallas and Mary Hollis Clark owned and occupied the subject property between 1956 and 2010. Mr. and Mrs. Clark were both highly active in numerous philanthropic endeavors around San Diego. The Clarks generously awarded a great deal of their money and time to a myriad of organizations including the Old Globe Theater, the San Diego Zoo, the Natural History Museum, and a number of other cultural, educational and research institutions.

The Clarks may very well have put their wealth and time toward a great number of altruistic pursuits all over San Diego, however the applicant's report falls short of indicating how these relatively recent contributions made by the Clarks were/are demonstrably important to history, local or otherwise. Many of the organizations the Clarks were involved in rely heavily on the contributions of numerous donors. The applicant's report does not adequately demonstrate the historical significance of the achievements and contributions of the Clarks, nor does it detail the associative integrity of the subject property, and the role it may have played in their philanthropic activities. Therefore staff does not recommend designation of the subject property under HRB Criterion B.

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 Spanish Eclectic style single family residence with attached one story garage constructed in 1927. The house is built of above standard wood frame construction on a reinforced concrete foundation. The building is clad in smooth finish stucco and features a medium pitch hipped roof sheathed in Mission clay tile with moderate eave overhang and exposed rafters. The building's irregular plan form is somewhat linear, running north to south along Randolph Street. The attached two car garage makes up the south end of the building and is oriented for direct entry from the street. The north portion of the building is set back, allowing generous front garden space. The east facing primary elevation is anchored by an oversized paneled wood entry door set in a recessed stucco frame topped by an austere cornice. Other original detailing is seen in the wrought iron balconies, wood shutters, multi-lite French doors, and exterior light fixtures.

Following the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition, the romantic ideal of Spanish and Latin American architecture was revived. What resulted was the Spanish Eclectic style which was the predominant style in Southern California between 1915 and 1940, significantly altering the architectural landscape until the Modernist movement took hold during and after WWII. The

style uses decorative details borrowed from the entire history of Spanish architecture. These may be of Moorish, Byzantine, Gothic, or Renaissance inspirations, an unusually rich and varied series of decorative precedents. The style employed a variety of floor plans, as well as gabled, cross-gabled, gabled and hipped, hipped and flat roof forms with parapets. Other character defining features include Mission and Spanish clay tile; focal windows; arched windows and other openings; and accented entries.

Some of windows seen on the architectural drawings and in the circa 1930 photographs indicate multi-lite wood casement windows that were changed out to single-lite steel casement windows. The only indication that this may have been a relatively early alteration is provided by the fact that the metal casements are shown on the Residential Building Record – a document typically created around the 1950s and in this case, sometime after 1956 since Dallas Clark's name appears on it.

A number of discrepancies are seen between the undated, unattributed architectural drawings and the transitional photographs from circa 1930. Some of these discrepancies are indicated by hand drawn markings on the architectural drawings. It is not known whether these drawings were merely conceptual in nature or were in fact used as part of construction plans. Assuming these were construction documents, it appears a number of field changes were made with regard to the design of the oversized window above and to the left of the main entry, the location of the grille to the left of the entry, the shape of the exterior chimney to the right of the entry, and the design of the lower story window at the extreme north end of the building. It is unclear what is indicated by the hand drawn markings made on the plans where three wall openings are located above the garage – the circa 1930 photograph does not clearly show whether those openings were left open or fitted with windows. Presently, these openings are equipped with steel casement windows matching the other replacement windows. Most of these changes are easily seen in the circa 1930 photographs and are not considered detrimental to the buildings integrity to its 1927 period of significance.

Other modifications include the installation of a contemporary garage door; in-kind replacement of the roof tile; installation of a roof-mounted photovoltaic system; replacement of a utilitarian door on the east elevation between the garage and the main entry; and finally the construction of a rear yard pool with detached pool house at the far south end of the property. Also at the west (rear) elevation, a pair of double hung windows appears to have been replaced with a set of French doors with sidelights and transom. The aforementioned replacement steel windows were primarily made in original openings, retained original operations and do not severely impact the character defining features of the property. The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Spanish Eclectic style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style including the irregular plan and asymmetrical façade; smooth finish stucco cladding; hipped Mission clay tile roof with moderate eave overhang and exposed rafters; wrought iron balconies; and original accented entry with oversized paneled wood door. Therefore, staff recommends designation of the subject property under HRB Criterion C.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

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 Dr. Andrew and Augusta Wessels House located at 4274 Randolph Street be designated with a period of significance of 1927 under HRB Criterion C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Eclectic style of architecture. The designation excludes the detached pool house at the south end of the property. 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.



Camille Pekarek
Planning Intern



Cathy Winterrowd
Interim Deputy Director/HRB Liaison

CP/cw

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 10/24/2013

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 10/24/2013, to consider the historical designation of the **Dr. Andrew and Augusta Wessels House** (owned by Mathew L. Richardson Trust 05-27-99, 4274 Randolph Street, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **4274 Randolph Street, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **443-190-07-00**, further described as LOTS 2 & 3 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 Dr. Andrew and Augusta Wessels 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 Spanish Eclectic style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1927 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features an irregular plan and asymmetrical façade; smooth finish stucco cladding; hipped Mission clay tile roof with moderate eave overhang and exposed rafters; wrought iron balconies; and original accented entry with oversized paneled wood door. 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 detached pool house at the south end of the property.

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: N/A

BY: _____
JOHN LEMMO, Chair
Historical Resources Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND
LEGALITY: JAN I. GOLDSMITH,
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: _____
CORRINE NEUFFER,
Deputy City Attorney