



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: September 13, 2012 REPORT NO. HRB-12-053

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board  
Agenda of September 27, 2012

SUBJECT: **Item #13 – 1004 Devonshire Drive**

APPLICANT: Paul Buss represented by Scott Moomjian

LOCATION: 1004 Devonshire Drive, Peninsula Community,  
Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property located at 1004 Devonshire Drive  
as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the property located at 1004 Devonshire Drive under any adopted HRB Criteria, due to a lack of integrity.

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 subject building is a two-story home with a detached garage. The house is located in the Sunset Cliffs subdivision within the Peninsula Community.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report (dated June, 2009) and an addendum to the report (dated June, 2012) was prepared by Scott A. Moomjian, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria A and C. Staff finds that the site is not a significant historical resource under any HRB Criteria, due to a lack of integrity. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows.

**Development Services Department**

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*CRITERION A - Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's, a community's or a neighborhood's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development.*

Although the Historical Assessment Addendum (dated June, 2012) provides information regarding the existing structure at the subject property being one of the oldest homes in the Sunset Cliffs subdivision (3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> home constructed), it appears that the home only reflects early development in the subdivision, and does not do so to any greater extent than other early homes. There is no documentation to show that this home was intended to serve as a model for the tract or to stimulate development. It was not commissioned by the tract developers, nor was it featured in ads or articles promoting the Sunset Cliffs subdivision. Rather, the home was built as a spec home by John Steven McGroarty, whose own home at Cordova and Hill streets was well publicized. It appears that the house was simply a speculative venture by an early investor. This is not sufficient for eligibility under Criterion A, which requires that a property reflect a special element of a community's development. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under Criterion A.

It should also be noted that the designation of the property at 4423 Alhambra Street (HRB Site #533) referenced by the applicant in the research report (page 7 of 12) occurred in 2002 prior to the adoption of the Criteria Guidelines, which more specifically and narrowly outline eligibility under Criterion A. Additionally, that property was directly related to the tract developers.

*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 house is a two-story, Spanish Eclectic style home constructed in 1927. The roof is low-pitched with a small eave overhang and exposed rafters. Roofing material consists of red, Mission tile. The main roof section is hipped, with several front-facing gables, particularly on the first floor along the southern or main elevation and the second floor along the northern elevation. Large and small circular roof vents exist underneath the roofline. The exterior of the structure consists of white stucco. A prominent arched, focal window exists along the south elevation. A shed section along the south elevation forms the front entryway. This entry features two small arched windows along its south face with decorative iron grillwork. The entry consists of a thick wooden door. Along the east elevation, there is an arched breezeway/colonnade which connects the home to the detached, two-car garage which is located along the northeast corner of the property. The garage is front-gabled with three circular roof vents, red Mission tile and two bay sections with two wooden garage doors. Fenestration is varied and generally consists of wood casement windows or arched, multi-paned windows.

Modifications to the house are significant and include a one-story addition that was constructed on the eastern elevation just to the right of the projecting bay adjacent to the main entry. A historical photograph was provided in the original historical report which shows a balcony at the second floor of the southern elevation that is no longer present. The applicant's report addendum states that at some point in time all original windows were replaced with aluminum windows, and that these aluminum windows were replaced with "historically accurate and appropriate

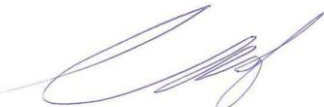
wood windows.” However, the report does not state how historically accurate windows were determined or if historic photos were used during the replacement. These modifications to the structure are substantial and have greatly impacted the architectural integrity of this Spanish Eclectic style home. These modifications have compromised the original design, materials and workmanship of this structure. Due to this substantial loss of integrity of the original 1927 Spanish Eclectic style design and construction, staff is unable to recommend designation under HRB Criterion C.

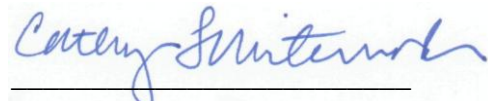
OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

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 property located at 1004 Devonshire Drive not be designated under any HRB Criteria due to a lack of integrity. 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.

  
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Assistant Deputy Director/  
HRB Liaison

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Attachments:

1. Applicant's Historical Report and Addendum under separate cover