



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: November 15, 2012 REPORT NO. HRB-12-075

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of November 29, 2012

SUBJECT: **ITEM #11 – The John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #3**

APPLICANT: Shea Family Trust represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 4386 Trias Street, 92103, Uptown Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #3 located at 4386 Trias Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #1 located at 4386 Trias Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1926 under HRB Criterion C as a good example of a Spanish Eclectic style house and Criterion D as a notable work by Master Designer Ralph E. Hurlburt and Master Builder Charles H. Tifal. The designation excludes the rear one story addition. This recommendation is based on the following findings.

1. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Spanish Eclectic Style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1926 period of significance. Specifically, the resource retains its sand finish stucco exterior, gable roof with exposed rafter tails sheathed with clay tile, inset front porch, wood windows and main arched focal window.
2. The resource is representative of a notable work of Master Designer Ralph E. Hurlburt and Master Builder Charles H. Tifal and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource embodies the distinctive characteristics related to Spanish Eclectic style with sand finish stucco exterior, clay tile roof, wood divided light casement windows, an inset porch under the main roof with a wood beam, and a front door with clipped corners.

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 property is located on an interior lot in a predominately single family neighborhood. The surrounding homes are one and two stories and were completed in a variety of styles.

The historic name of the resource, the John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #3, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of John Snyder who constructed the house as a speculation house and the name of Ralph E. Hurlburt a Master Designer and Charles H. Tifal, a Master Builder.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research was prepared by Legacy 106, Inc. which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria C and D. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criteria C and D. 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.

Constructed in 1926, the house features a gable roof and exposed rafter tails sheathed with clay tile and a flat roof with parapets located at the rear. The house has a sand finish stucco exterior and wood divided light casement windows. The front porch is inset under the main roof. The porch is supported by a large wood beam. The inset porch features a fixed window flanked by 10-light casement windows. The front entrance located to the right of window is flush with clipped corners and a decorative window. Also within the front porch and to the left of the main window is a single 6-light casement window.

The south elevation features windows evenly spaced on the wall plane. A single French door provides access to the driveway on this side of the house. This portion of the lot also features the detached garage. The garage is attached the main house via an arched gate. The north elevation also features evenly spaced windows with a stuccoed chimney. The chimney is located near the front of the house and features an arched top.

There have been some alterations to the property. A rear addition that is not visible from the public right of way was added in 1995. It appears that a small oriel window was added to the south façade. The oriel window features a clay tile shed roof with exposed rafter tails and is supported by decorative rafter ends. The rafter tails are rounded at the edge unlike the straight angle used on the rest of the house. It is not clear when this alteration was completed. It also appears that a number of the windows on the house have been modified. The recessed porch features 6-light and 10-light windows while the remainder of the house has 2 and 3 light windows. The muntin profile is also distinctly different on the 2 and 3 light windows. While some of the windows have glazing putty, there are a number of windows that have a rounded

wood stop. The rear detached garage had a roof deck added with access stairs in the rear yard. Tile has also been added to the front porch and the side walk has been modified with brick edging. While there are a number of modifications, they do not detract from the character-defining features of the house.

Hugely popular following the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition which revived the romantic ideal of Spanish and Latin American architecture; the Spanish Eclectic style 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. The subject house continues to convey the historic significance of the Spanish Eclectic style by embodying the character-defining features associated with the style, including the sand finish stucco exterior, gable roof with exposed rafter tails sheathed with clay tile, inset front porch, wood windows and main arched focal window. Therefore, staff recommends designation of the subject property 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.

Constructed in 1926 by Master Builder Charles H. Tifal and designed by Master Designer Ralph E. Hurlburt, the house was marketed by John Snyder as a speculation house.

Charles H. Tifal was born in 1882 in Wisconsin and relocated to San Diego in approximately 1920. In the early 20s, Hurlburt and Tifal designed and constructed structures, primarily high-end custom residences, in a myriad of styles. In 1942 Tifal was no longer working with Hurlburt but was partnered with Scott King. The firm of Tifal and King installed the Alvarado Road Pump House, cottage, and garage. Charles Tifal died at the age of 86 in 1968. There are currently 7 houses built by Tifal and listed on the local register.

- HRB Site #613-Alfred LaMotte/Hurlburt and Tifal House, 3557 3rd Avenue
- HRB Site #697-Edwin and Rose Emerson/Hurlburt and Tifal House, 2645 28th Street
- HRB Site #824-Sam and Mary McPherson/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal House, 3133 28th Street
- HRB Site #904-Frederick and Helen Thompson/Charles H. Tifal House, 1232 Myrtle
- HRB Site #906-John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #1, 2315 Fort Stockton Drive
- HRB Site #933-John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #2, 4370 Trias
- HRB Site #1008-054-North Park Dryden Historic District Contributor, 3404 Pershing

Ralph E. Hurlburt was born in 1888 in Nebraska. He was trained by his grandfather in the construction trade. In 1916, he married and relocated to San Diego. Upon arrival, he was

involved in real estate financing and law and later transferred to architectural design. Early in his career, Hurlburt partnered with builder Charles H. Tifal, a partnership that lasted until shortly before Hurlburt's death in 1942. There are currently 10 houses designed by Ralph E. Hurlburt listed on the local register.

- HRB Site #464-The Wonder House of Stone, 4386 Adams Avenue
- HRB Site #523-James C. & Lillie Byers / Ralph E. Hurlburt House, 4230 Arguello Street
- HRB Site #613-Alfred LaMotte/Hurlburt and Tifal House, 3557 3rd Avenue
- HRB Site #697-Edwin and Rose Emerson/Hurlburt and Tifal House, 2645 28th Street
- HRB Site #824-Sam and Mary McPherson/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal House, 3133 28th Street
- HRB Site #906-John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #1, 2315 Fort Stockton Drive
- HRB Site #929- Ralph Hurlburt/ Alexander Schreiber Spec House # 1, 3917 Hawk Street
- HRB Site #933-John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #2, 4370 Trias
- HRB Site #948- Ralph Hurlburt/ Alexander Schreiber Spec House #2, 3907 Hawk Street
- HRB Site #1008-054-North Park Dryden Historic District Contributor, 3404 Pershing

The subject property, 4386 Trias Street, is a notable work of Master Designer Ralph E. Hurlburt and Master Builder Charles H. Tifal, in the Spanish Eclectic style. Based on the research provided in the applicant's historical report, as well as staff's own research and field visit, staff recommends designation of the John Snyder./Hurlburt and Tifal Spec. House #3 as a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion D.


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 John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #3 located at 4386 Trias Street be designated with a period of significance of 1926 under HRB Criterion C as a good example of a Spanish Eclectic style house and Criterion D as a notable work by Master Designer Ralph E. Hurlburt and Master Builder Charles H. Tifal. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Spanish Eclectic Style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1926 period of significance. Specifically, the resource retains its sand finish stucco exterior, gable roof with exposed rafter tails sheathed with clay tile, inset front porch, wood windows and main arched focal window. The designation excludes the rear one story addition. 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.



Jodie Brown, AICP
Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Assistant Deputy Director/HRB Liaison

JB/cw

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 11/29/2012

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 11/29/2012, to consider the historical designation of the **John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #3** (owned by Shea Family Trust 10-07-97, 1709 Brant Circle, St. Paul, MN, 55122) located at **4386 Trias Street, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **443-061-36-00**, further described as LOT 2 BLK 524 ELY 98.46 FT 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 Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #3 on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Eclectic style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1926 period of significance. Specifically, the resource retains its sand finish stucco exterior, gable roof with exposed rafter tails sheathed with clay tile, inset front porch, wood windows and main arched focal window. 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 Designer Ralph E. Hurlburt and Master Builder Charles H. Tifal and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource embodies the distinctive characteristics related to Spanish Eclectic style with sand finish stucco exterior, clay tile roof, wood divided light casement windows, an inset porch under the main roof with a wood beam, and a front door with clipped corners. 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 one story addition.

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: _____
KEITH BAUERLE
Deputy City Attorney