

DESIGN ASSISTANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

March 7, 2007, 3:00 pm – 5:30
4th Floor Conference Room
City Administration Building
202 C Street, San Diego, CA

MEETING NOTES

1. ATTENDANCE

Boardmembers: David Marshall (Chair), Delores McNeely, Otto Emme and John Eisenhart

Staff: Marianne Greene, City Attorney's Office; Michael Tudury and Cathy Winterrowd, HRB

Guests: 7757 Sierra Mar, La Jolla: Architect John Olenik
1261-63 1538 Kearsarge La Jolla: Architect John Olenik
Nationalhaus Retail/Artist Studios/Residential Project: Architects Graham Downes and Kent Coston
Baldwin Residence: Greg Friesen and Tony Crisafi, Island Architects
4319 Arista Street: Scott Moomjian, attorney; Joan Greenhood, owner
6736 Mission Gorge Road: Architect Ione Steigler; Tomas and Claudia Gonzales, owners
Maryland Hotel Blade Signs: Presented by HRB Staff Mike Tudury on behalf of the owner, Louise Kelley
Other: None (per Meeting Attendance list)

2. Public/Staff Comment

None

3. Projects

- 7757 Sierra Mar, La Jolla:
Architect John Oleinik presented proposed modifications to this potentially historic house on behalf of owner Phil Stewart who was unable to attend. The owner wishes to seek designation and wants to assure that the proposed alterations are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (the Standards). It was noted that the architect and owner previously met with HRB staff regarding this property. The architect said that the proposed project on a very large lot in La Jolla will approximately triple the size of the existing 1927 Herbert Palmer-designed house from 5,200 to 12,000 +- sq. ft.
The landscaping was rumored to have been done by the brother of Kate Sessions.

The tennis court is existing but would be removed, and a portion of the new addition would be located in that area.

Mr. Olenik noted that the original house was to be kept primarily intact, with portions of the addition to be located over some flat roof sections of the existing house. The kitchen is proposed to be remodeled.

The house is sited on a peninsular lot, with three elevations visible. However, the primary area that is visible to the public is the front elevation that currently has a hedge screening a portion of the house and a large front lawn. This would not change, except that the hedge would be trimmed down to a height that would allow better visibility. The other sides of the house are somewhat screened by a 6-7 foot tall stucco site wall or are adjacent to neighboring property.

Board Comment:

Otto Emme stated that the public will be primarily aware of the very large addition, not the original house. He felt that the addition will dominate the potential resource.

Delores McNeely stated that the proposed size of the enlarged house would be problematic, not only with respect to the existing residence, but also with respect to neighborhood compatibility.

John Eisenhart also was concerned with the proposed size of the addition. He stated that it was important to maintain a separation and clarity between the potentially historic house and the proposed new addition. He suggested that the roof massing/height of the garage that is adjacent to the street behind the site wall be reduced.

The DAS unanimously stated that, done correctly, however a very large addition could potentially be consistent with the Standards.

David Marshall said that the keys to meeting the Standards in this case would be the following: A more clear differentiation and separation between the existing house and the proposed addition including a differentiation of building profile and roof forms (not utilizing circular towers that compete with the original tower); a differentiation in detailing; a simplification in the design of the proposed addition that would be clearly new but compatible, and maintain the prominence of the original house.

DAS members and HRB staff both stated that the proposed design was headed in the right direction, particularly with respect to the location of the new elements and the breakup of massing. All stated that the impact of the new addition needed to be toned down in terms of elements that compete with the original house, the massing, detailing and design.

Other Comment:

None.

- 1538 Kearsarge, La Jolla:

On behalf of owner Phil Stewart, architect John Oleinik was looking for guidance from the DAS regarding reversing inappropriate modifications made to this potentially historic house. Building permits were issued for the modifications prior to 2000 so there was no Over-45 review. The owner wishes to seek designation and wants to reverse the inappropriate modifications consistent with the Standards.

Mr. Olenik stated that approximately 4,500 sq. ft had been added to the house, much but not all of it at the rear of the house. He also noted that a substantial amount of the newly-

added area was behind the front façade, stepping down the hill behind. He acknowledged that the rear of the house was particularly visible from the directly-adjacent street below. He reviewed the changes that have occurred at the front elevation: the removal of a window and shutters and its replacement with a new arched masonry-framed French door; modifications to the stucco columns at the entry patio; the removal of a window grille and light fixture; the addition of the site wall and arched entry gate; and the planting of a large new tree to mitigate the set-back cylindrical new addition to the left side of the house.

He noted that no changes were proposed at this time, but asked what would be needed to be done in order to gain support for historic designation.

Board Comment:

David Marshall stated that, at the front elevation, it would be desired to reverse all the modifications except perhaps the missing window grille and the light fixture. He stated that the return of the simplified design of the columns was needed, that the French door would need to be removed and the window would need to be returned, and that the site wall and gate should be either eliminated or reduced in visual impact by reducing the height of the solid wall and utilizing an open wrought iron grill above. He also stated that the gate should be reduced in height. All would contribute to better visibility of the house.

John Eisenhart stated that the solid portion of the site wall would have to be reduced to 18". However, John stated that the prominent visibility of the house from the street below would be impossible to correct and that he could not support designation of the house even with changes to the front. He felt that the character of the site had been overwhelmingly compromised not only by the changes to the front, but in particular at the rear of the structure.

Delores McNeely and Otto Emme agreed with Mr. Eisenhart.

David Marshall summed up the comments by stating that, in this case, it was impossible to "un-ring the bell" regarding the previous modifications to the visible rear facade. He agreed with the other DAS members that the house could not be supported for designation even with changes to the front.

Other Comment:

Architect Ione Steigler reiterated that the rear of the house is particularly visible from the lower street.

- Nationalhaus Retail/Artist Studios/Residential Project: (John Eisenhart recusal)
This mixed-use (affordable housing and retail) project, located at 1701 National Avenue in Barrio Logan, includes a brick commercial structure that was historically designated at the January 2007 HRB meeting. The designation is being appealed. The applicant is including in the new proposed project design the portion of the structure that was identified to be retained in the November 1, 2006 DAS meeting. The architect, Graham Downes of Graham Downes Architecture, presented a new design in response to comments made in November. Specifically, the design of the proposed new structure has incorporated a glass one-floor "reveal" above the historic brick structure that is set back from the historic façade three feet, providing a clear separation between the historic and the new. This three-foot

setback of the new structure also occurs at the street level. In addition, at the new second level, there is a cut-out/recessed corner that will be used as a balcony for the adjacent housing unit that allows the corner entry of the historic store to be more clearly defined. Above the second floor set-back glass structure, there are two floors of a stucco and glass structure located on the property line, in line with the historic facade.

Mr. Downes stated that the proposed project intends to preserve all of the front street facade on National Avenue and to save the majority of the street side facade on Sigsbee Street. The interior will be removed and a new structure will occur at the interior.

Board Comment:

The consensus of the DAS with one dissenting opinion was to support the proposed project. HRB staff concurred with the consensus opinion.

Chair David Marshall stated that, at November 2006 DAS meeting, the DAS had supported the reduction in length of the street side facade on Sigsbee Street that reduced this secondary facade to approximately two-thirds of its original length. Mr. Marshall noted that the new parapet wall crenellation at the end of the shortened wall should be similar, but clearly new, perhaps without the decorative pattern that exists on the other crenellations. The applicant agreed.

Otto Emme stated that he did not believe that the proposed project met Rehabilitation Standards 9 and 10.

Delores McNeely compared the proposed project to what was done at the historic T. R. Produce Building, and stated that the proposed project "blended well" with the portion of the historic resource to be retained.

David Marshall summarized the review, stating that several good decisions had been made in developing the new design that responded to the previous DAS comments. He stated that he believed that the proposed new design met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (the Standards) or at least was an appropriate compromise in order to protect the visibility of the historic resource. He indicated that that consistency with the Standards, as well as the retention of the agreed-upon portion of the structure, was adequate mitigation for the loss of a portion of the historic resource. He stated that the design was successful in respecting the historic resource by making it a special element of the design. He noted that the historic storefront facades were to be restored, including visually opening the clerestories to light, and that he would support the proposed project. He suggested that the architect investigate ways to incorporate remnants of the removed portion of the Sigsbee Street brick facade, possibly as a planter bed or seatwall, rather than just chopping it off in a straight line. Mr. Marshall also asked that if rooftop railings were required above the historic structure, they be setback to reduce their visibility. Delores McNeely concurred.

- Baldwin Residence, 325 Dunemere, La Jolla:
Greg Friesen and Tony Crisafi of Island Architects discussed minor changes to the DAS-agreed-upon design at this historic resource (popularly known as the Cliff Robertson residence). The changes included a modification to the roof profile/plan as well as simplifications to the design of the side elevations of the structure. It was noted that the sightline angles for public visibility of the minor change to the front roof profile would

preclude its visibility from the vantage point of the photo. The substantial distance from the structure to the street mitigates visibility from that location.

Board Comment:

David Marshall stated that the proposed changes were consistent with previous DAS direction.

Otto Emme stated that the proposed project design was very responsive to previous DAS comments.

Delores McNeely indicated that she was OK with the proposed design.

John Eisenhart stated that the south (side) elevation was considerably improved from what was previously presented and that the proposed design was good.

David Marshall indicated that the currently-proposed design was only minor fine-tuning and that the proposed project was a good solution.

All agreed that the proposed project was consistent with the Standards.

- 4319 Arista Street:

Scott Moomjian, on behalf of owner Joan Greenhood, discussed a single window treatment option for the focal window of the front façade 4319 Arista Street, a single-family residence.

Specifically, in light of the fact that the property will be going to the full HRB on March 22nd for consideration of designation, the owner wished to discuss possible options for the replacement of a main, focal window. This window currently has an aluminum frame, and the owner wishes to replace it with a sensitive wood window to respect the historic integrity of the property. No historic photos have been found that indicate what the original window looked like.

Board Comment:

David Marshall and John Eisenhart discussed options and concluded that, absent a historic photo, the appropriate window would probably be a wood framed double casement window without divided lites or screens.

Mr. Emme and Mrs. McNeely concurred.

Other Comment:

None.

- 6736 Mission Gorge Road:

This property is the approved receiver site for the relocation for the historically-designated Cliff May-designed structure from Hillside Drive in La Jolla. The reconstruction program was approved by the HRB and the City in 2002, and is available for implementation by the new owner of the site. Unfortunately, in the intervening years, the pieces of the relocated structure have been allowed to deteriorate and it is not clear how much of the relocated historic fabric is reusable. The new owner's representative, architect Ione Steigler, asked the DAS to consider whether there is enough usable historical material left to satisfy the requirements of the Mitigation Plan.

Mrs. Steigler noted that the approved method for relocation, cutting the house into wall and roof panels, was inappropriate for relocation. She indicated that the correct method

of relocation would be to move the house whole, a method that is problematic with a slab-on-grade house. The DAS concurred.

Mrs. Steigler noted that the masonry chimney and the tile flooring were demolished and would be reconstructed per the as-built drawings. She reviewed the reusable wall panels on a panel-by-panel basis, stating that only the entry panel was unusable due to the cutting of this panel at the entry door lintel. She pointed out that, where the wall panels were to be joined, some flexibility in the connections would be needed to achieve structural integrity. She stated that the existing windows were reusable, except for the central large pane window that would be reconstructed. She noted that the roof panels were too flexible to be reused and proposed that the rafters and sheathing that is visible at the eaves and the interior be used in the reconstruction, but that the roof would not be reconstructed using panels. She noted that there was some damage due to termites and dry rot, but stated that the termite damage may have occurred when the house was on its original site. Finally, she stated that the existing exterior stucco finish at the wall panels to be reused is fractured and will have to be redone.

Board Comment:

David Marshall indicated that the intent of the permit-required mitigation still exists.

Mr. Marshall stated that he has no objection to utilizing the wall panels as stated and no issue with the reconstruction of the roof using the existing materials (rafters and sheathing) to the extent possible. He noted that, in order to retain visibility of the sheathing at the interior, rigid insulation on top of the sheathing would meet the Title 24 requirements. If this is done, he recommended tapering the rigid insulation at the eaves so that a thickened edge is not visible at the exterior.

John Eisenhart indicated that he felt that Ione Steigler's approach to reconstructions was good. He and Mr. Marshall stated that the proposed method would meet the Standards. Delores McNeely asked what the approximate percentage of the front façade would be reused original material. Ms. Steigler stated that it was approximately 80%.

Since wood shakes were the original roofing material, and the structure will retain its historic designation, the State Historic Building Code would allow the use of fire-treated wood shakes. This material was recommended by the DAS.

In summary, the DAS supported the project as proposed by Ms. Steigler and felt the construction of the resource as noted would continue to meet the required mitigation. Staff indicated that the recommendations in the report would have to be incorporated into the building permit to assure compliance. Staff also stated that the outcome of this meeting and the DAS recommendation will be provided to Code Enforcement and EAS staff for their final determination on mitigation compliance.

- Maryland Hotel Blade Signs: (David Marshall left early and John Eisenhart recused himself)

Per previous direction at the September 2005 DAS meeting, Louise Kelley wished to present the proposed design of the blade signs for the subcommittee's comments regarding consistency with the Standards. However, a previous commitment conflicted with this meeting and she sent design information to HRB staff and asked staff to present the design on her behalf.

Two blade signs, located at the Sixth and Seventh Avenue corners of F Street were proposed. The historic signs no longer existed, and the available historic photo indicated only a single blade sign at the Sixth Avenue corner. Ms. Kelley stated to staff that there was evidence of a previous blade sign on Seventh.

HRB staff presented the proposed design of the blade sign(s). Staff noted that the proposed design was similar in location, size (two feet less tall) and color (dark brown) to the historic blade sign. The background sign material was proposed to be small-scale vertical striations of Z-shaped (in plan) metal that will be perforated at the interior of the Z to reduce wind loads. The Ivy Hotel lettering will be at the bottom of the blade sign, with up-lighting below the lettering (two lamps per side). The source of the lighting will not be visible to the public.

Board Comment:

Delores McNeely and Otto Emme discussed the design and had no objections to the color, size and Sixth Avenue corner location. However, Mr. Emme expressed concern that there was no historic documentation of the second blade sign proposed at the Seventh Avenue corner. Mr. Emme also stated that a condition of the signage recommendation of consistency with the Standards is that the open area of the blade sign above the Ivy Hotel lettering and logo preclude the sale of additional advertising in the blank space of the sign.

HRB staff Cathy Winterrowd wondered why the owner was not retaining the historic name of the hotel, the Maryland Hotel. HRB staff Mike Tudury indicated that although it is known that the historic name of the hotel is the Maryland Hotel, no existing constructed Maryland Hotel signage exists unlike, for instance, the El Cortez Hotel signage. For that reason, staff believes that the owner has the prerogative to change the name of the hotel. It was suggested and recommended by the DAS that the owner consider "background" dark outline Maryland Hotel lettering on the blade sign in addition to the highlighted Ivy Hotel sign in order to pay homage to the historic name. It should be noted that there is an existing Maryland Hotel sign that is painted on the existing rear brick wall that is to be retained.

The DAS members also asked HRB staff to contact Bruce Coons regarding this issue. Staff talked with Mr. Coons regarding the issue and, although he would have preferred retaining the Maryland Hotel name, he believed that it was OK to change the name to the Ivy Hotel.

Subsequent to this DAS meeting, HRB staff has viewed the Seventh Avenue corner and adequate evidence of a blade sign at this corner does not exist, although the attachment holes that currently exist at the Sixth Avenue corner may have been filled in on the Seventh Avenue corner. For that reason, only a single sign at the corner of Sixth Avenue and F Street is approved absent further historic photographic or other documentation, or full HRB review and approval would be required.

4. Adjourned at 5:30

The next DAS Meeting is a Special Meeting scheduled for March 14, 2007 at 3:00-4:30 p.m. regarding the 777 Beech St. project associated with the El Cortez Hotel.

The next regularly scheduled DAS Meeting is April 4, 2007 at 3:00 p.m.