

DESIGN ASSISTANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

October 3, 2007, 3:00 pm – 6:30
4th Floor Conference Room
City Administration Building
202 C Street, San Diego, CA

MEETING NOTES

1. ATTENDANCE

Boardmembers: David Marshall (Chair), Otto Emme and John Eisenhart. Note: Mr. Eisenhart recused on 4330 Witherby Street

Staff: Marianne Greene, City Attorney's Office; Michael Tudury, HRB; Myra Herrmann, DSD

Guests: 4330 Witherby Street, Mission Hills: Ron and Dale May
4430 Witherby Street, Mission Hills: (Staff Report)
4251 Sierra Vista: Tom and Amy Stripe O'Regan
1104 Missouri Street, Pacific Beach: C. A. Marengo, architect
Ivy (Maryland) Hotel Signage: Louise Kelley, owner
2411 Second Avenue Office Building: Scott Moomjian, attorney; Doug Cook, contractor; Jeanne Martin, Bad Boy Brands, Offner Uptown LLC
Balboa Park House of Hospitality Restaurant Heaters: David Cohn, owner
Proposed balcony expansion at the La Valencia Hotel: Paul Benton, architect

2. Public/Staff Comment: None

3. Projects:

- 4330 Witherby Street, Mission Hills:
(John Eisenhart recused himself on this item and left the room.)
Ron May requested that the DAS review and comment on a proposed architectural restoration of this house. He presented historical and contemporary photos of the house and a rendering of a proposed restoration solution by the architect for DAS comment and guidance. He noted that in order to be more consistent with the historic character, the rounded rafter tails at the right side of the building would be removed and replaced with a trim piece to recall the historic photo and that wall would be faithfully reconstructed. He said that the reconstruction of the site wall would shorten the porch and that the new lower site wall would be capped and would have a low gate. He noted that a house in the same block had a similar scrollwork element to that shown in the historic photo and that it could be duplicated. He showed an 8 ½"x11" color rendering of the proposed new front elevation

Board Comment:

Chair David Marshall stated that the proposal to return the right side of the street-facing site wall to its historical appearance was good and asked that the vertical windows be further investigated. As it is not clear from the historical photos, if these vertical windows were clear glass, it would be OK to replace the existing stained glass windows there with clear glass. Mr. Marshall encouraged the reconstruction of the original unusual parapet at the wall behind the porch and the addition of the garland scrollwork, but said that this was not required. He said that if the owner chose to retain the existing plain parapet wall, that the top of the wall should be left alone and a new tile "cap" should not be introduced at the top of the wall.

Boardmember Otto Emme stated that he was pleased with the change of the use of the front yard back to its historic use and character. He was pleased that the awning at the porch was to be removed. He also encouraged, but did not require, that the porch wall parapet and garland be restored. It was noted that there was no guarantee that the house would be designated in the future, regardless of the scope of restoration work.

Other Comment: None

- 4430 Witherby Street, Mission Hills: (Boardmember John Eisenhart returned)
This 1917 property was found by the Board to be a non-contributing resource to the Fort Stockton Line Historic District and was given a status code of 6L. The owners, Steve and Barbara McGee, would like to consider possible restorations to their property which might make it eligible for designation as a contributing resource. A packet of information provided by staff Kelley Saunders was presented by staff Mike Tudury.

Board Comment:

Chair David Marshall wanted to confirm if the stucco was over wood siding or if the stucco was original. The notes indicate stucco over hollow clay tile, but the DPR form states "probably wood siding or shingle, but stuccoed over." Post-meeting, staff Kelley Saunders confirmed that it was stucco over clay tile -- the original material, but not the original texture.

Boardmember Otto Emme stated that, if the stucco is not original, the property might be too far gone, requiring multiple changes to be a contributor to the district. He noted the car parked in the front yard and the elimination of the original driveway beyond.

Boardmember John Eisenhart indicated that he agreed with staff that the arbor should be removed and the front yard restored.

The boardmembers all agreed that, if the stucco is the original façade material, if the following three things were done they could support it as a contributor to the district: change the stucco to an historically appropriate texture; remove the arbor and return the front yard to its historic look; and extend a split (Hollywood style) driveway to (at least) the side of the house in order to not have a car parked illegally in the front yard. It was noted that there was no guarantee that the house would be designated as a contributor in the future, regardless of the scope of restoration work.

Other: None.

- 4251 Sierra Vista:
This remodeled 1921 property is currently a non-contributor to the Fort Stockton Line Historic District. The owners would like to restore their property so that it may be

considered for designation as a contributor to the district. This item was briefly discussed at the September DAS meeting and requested to be re-docketed for this DAS meeting. The 1989 addition/remodel drawings done by Strona Architecture that show the previously existing conditions were presented for boardmember review. A 1927 aerial photo was also presented. The structure was originally a one-story residence, and a second-story master bedroom suite was added by a previous owner, increasing the square footage by approximately 35%. The property was given a code of 6L, which indicates that the new work done is reversible. The primary issue is a large curved skylight that is visible from all streets which is not consistent with the Standards. HRB staff Kelley Saunders previously noted that the original architect may have been Alexander Schrieber.

Board Comment:

David Marshall, John Eisenhart all agreed that although the dominant skylight was the primary issue, the street-visible windows at the addition needed to be clearly new per The Standards, but currently matched the historic windows. Mr. Marshall summarized the DAS consensus regarding the work that would need to be done in order to reconsider this property for designation as a contributor. First, the three upper windows of the addition that are visible from the street would need to be modified or changed out to be clearly new. These could be the same size, but should be of wood frame construction and should be distinguished as not historic, perhaps by utilizing a single pane of glass instead of divided lites. Second and last, a skylight could be retained where the existing skylight is located, but it should be a low, single minimally sloping flat plane of glass (could be multiple panes) and a new stucco surfaced flat parapet should be constructed in order that the new skylight cannot be seen from the street. It was noted that there was no guarantee that the house would be designated as a contributor in the future, regardless of the scope of restoration work.

Other Comment: None.

- 1104 Missouri Street, Pacific Beach:

This 1927 two-story Victorian residence and detached garage is potentially historic. The architect, CA Marengo, discussed proposed interior and exterior alterations to the existing residence as well as a 661 sq. ft. addition to the structure and new site work. Proposed changes to the house included a second story dormer and ground level shed addition at the rear of the house as well as changes to the fenestration at the front of the house as viewed from Missouri Street, together with an attendant trellis structure with planters. There would be a new addition on the left side of the house that would be set back 6" from the front façade. The existing fireplace and chimney at the rear of the house would be removed. On the opposite side of the house on Missouri Street, a new garage in front of the existing garage would be constructed approximately 14 feet closer to the street. The garage door would be new. Regarding the site walls, the existing tall CMU site wall along Dawes Street would be reduced to 36" height and coated with stucco, with a 75% open picket fence above to a full height of six feet.

Board Comment:

Otto Emme indicated that he felt it was OK to move the garage forward 14 feet, but the garage door should be horizontal wood siding similar to what was there originally. He said that at the new windows, a new French door in lieu of the 4'x5' window would be more appropriate. He said that he was OK with the proposed new planters as they were

clearly new and differentiated from the main house. Mr. Emme also said that he felt that the proposed rear shed and rear dormer were OK.

John Eisenhart concurred with Mr. Emme regarding the proposed new rear dormer and shed additions being consistent with the Standards. He said that he was OK with the 6" setback at the southern addition. He felt that the trellis at the front of the house would not be consistent with the Standards, but he was OK with the related proposed deck.

Regarding the doors and windows at this deck, he said that the double-hung window should be retained, but a new narrow French door could be added on one side to access the deck. Mr Eisenhart indicated that along Dawes Street, he felt it was consistent with the Standards to have a 36" ht. stucco site wall with pickets above. He felt that along Missouri Street, it should be only a 36"ht. picket fence. He was not comfortable with the proposed new garage location, being connected to the main house as the original garage was clearly detached. Mr. Marengo said he would study other options for the garage. David Marshall agreed with Mr. Eisenhart regarding the detached garage and window and door changes to the front of the house and the deck. He also said that the trellis was inconsistent and should not be added. He said that the fences proposed were consistent with the Standards, but that the entry arbor should not be built. Mr. Marshall stated that since the existing fireplace/chimney was at the rear of the house and minimally visible, it would be OK to remove it. He also felt that a new outdoor fireplace/chimney, detached from the house and located to the rear of the house would be OK. He stated that he felt that the proposed new ground level additions at the side and rear, as well as the second level dormer at the rear were consistent with the Standards.

After some discussion about the 6" setback, both he and Mr. Eisenhart said they were OK with it. Mr. Marshall remarked that the profile of the siding on the new additions should be complementary but different. He stated that a flat roof on the garage was OK.

Other Comment: None.

- Ivy (Maryland) Hotel Signage:

The corner blade sign is in place and is similar but not exactly what was approved by the DAS. The blade sign is made of a filmy metal mesh, not the solid perforated metal panels anticipated. The new sign has a tendency to move in the wind more than anticipated by both the DAS and the owner. The Boardmembers reviewed photos of the new sign and the owner, Louise Kelley wanted the DAS to determine if the sign is acceptable. In addition, the painted "Maryland Hotel" sign that was located on the north masonry (party) wall of the hotel was intended to remain as a homage to the original hotel name. However, it was inadvertently painted over with a much larger Ivy Hotel sign. Ms. Kelley stated that it was important to "brand" the structure with its new name, and that the restoration of the historic hotel speaks for itself.

Board Comment:

Regarding the Blade Sign:

Otto Emme stated that both the originally approved and the existing blade sign were of modern design, which he was comfortable with.

Both John Eisenhart and David Marshall stated that the new blade sign was consistent with the Standards. However, both suggested a "containment/closure" or weighting of the bottom of the mesh portion of the sign in order to reduce its ragged appearance. Ms. Kelley stated that she would like to do this and would explore options with the designer

regarding securing the bottom of the sign, without significantly changing the look of it. She stated that she has had many compliments on the design of the blade sign.

Regarding the North Wall Sign that was painted over:

Both Mr. Emme and Mr. Eisenhart stated that “It’s gone, it’s done”. However, Mr. Eisenhart and Mr. Marshall stated that the loss should be mitigated by reducing the dominant black background of the new Ivy Hotel sign and recreating all or a portion of the much smaller Maryland Hotel sign – to be done in conjunction with retaining a significant portion of the new Ivy Hotel sign. Mr. Marshall suggested perhaps stating “formerly the Maryland Hotel.” He noted that the wall sign had been the last remaining indication of the hotel’s name for the previous 92 years because the mosaic floor tiles at the entries had also been demolished. Mr. Marshall and Mr. Eisenhart stated that a horizontal format for the black background would have less impact. It was also suggested that some of the new sign be painted out with a red matching the brick color to reduce its visual impact. Ms. Kelley said that she would have her graphic designer provide options and return to the DAS for their direction.

Other Comment: None

- 2411 Second Avenue Office Building:

This Modern style one-story office structure was originally constructed at the northeast corner of Second Avenue and Kalmia Street as the offices of the well-known modernist architectural firm of Tucker Sadler. Owner Robin Offner appreciates the Modern style of architecture and has attempted to be sympathetic to the building. The DAS discussed the trellis at the north side of the structure as well as options for required disabled access (lift/ramp/doors) that do not currently exist. Photos and drawings were provided for the DAS review.

Board Comment:

North Trellis:

The north side trellis was removed due to dry rot that made the trellis unsafe structurally. Chair David Marshall noted that although the trellis in question is at the rear of the building, that due to the slope of Second Avenue, it is visible from the public right-of-way and should be reconstructed. A number of structural options were explored including internal fitch plates. Specifically, Mr. Marshall stated that no new columns should be introduced and no material alternatives such as plastic or exposed metal should be considered. Mr. Eisenhart indicated that it was important to keep all (10-11) of the bays of the trellis and its original depth. Contractor Doug Cook indicated that he would consider several attachment methods and return to the DAS at a later meeting with a proposed solution or solutions.

Front Trellis:

The new visible bolt connection at the front trellis was discussed and it was felt that, if the bolt heads were recessed and plugged, the existing solution would be OK. Mr. Cook indicated that this was an easy fix and would be done.

Required New Ramp for the Disabled:

Since the building use has not changed (office to office) and no building area has been added, staff asked the contractor to ask the city dept that is requiring a disabled ramp or lift whether or not this would be required if the building was historically designated.

The DAS discussed options for the location of the ramp or lift, if it is required. Mr. Eisenhart indicated that his preference would be to further recess the existing concrete steps at the right side entry to allow a new ramp that began to the right of the planter and proceeded next to the exterior wall at the rear of the planter to the front door. A small section of the original handrail would be required to be removed with this solution. Again, Mr. Cook indicated that he would consider the options and return with a proposal drawing. Mr. Marshall preferred it if the entry landing remained as-is and a small landing and wheelchair lift be added to the east end of the front façade with a new all-glass entry. This would avoid a ramp being inserted in the east planter. There were several questions about whether a ramp of sufficient height could even fit. The applicant said they would study the alternates and return to the DAS at a future date.

Other Comment: Architect/Engineer Paul Benton suggested that the cantilever could be accomplished with new steel connectors.

- Balboa Park House of Hospitality Restaurant Heaters:

Several permanent heaters have been installed at the outside trellis structures at the south terrace, as well as at the ceiling of the ground floor arcade at the central courtyard. Staff believes that these heaters are not consistent with the Standards. The DAS discussed alternatives at their September 2007 meeting and gave direction to the restaurateurs. The DAS directed HRB staff to place this on the October 3, 2007 DAS agenda in order to further discuss this issue with the benefit of the operators' interim research for alternatives. The owner, David Cohn, pointed out that, although the three heaters at the interior courtyard were added one year ago, most of the heaters have been in place for 8 years. All the heaters are gas-fired and are fixed in place by permanent piping, including the vertical heaters in the open area of the south terrace. Mr. Cohn also responded to Mr. Marshall's comments regarding what appeared to be an overabundance of heaters, stating that it was important to have the number of heaters that currently exist, in order to adequately provide warmth for the restaurant's patrons. Mr. Cohn addressed the heaters in the arcade, indicating that the new linear matt-finish stainless steel heaters needed to be placed in the center rather than as suggested by the DAS, at the juncture between the wall and the ceiling. He noted that these heaters would be kept a minimum of three feet from the pendant lights.

Board Comment:

Arcade Heaters:

Mr. Marshall discussed the arcade heaters, saying that it would be OK to have surface-mounted ceiling heaters at the centerline of the space, between the original light fixtures. He stated that this would be better than the frame-mounted heaters that are currently hanging down between the light fixtures. It was previously agreed that the gas piping will be concealed under the stucco finish.

Terrace Heaters:

Mr. Marshall also stated that in the south terrace, if the frame-mounted heaters are to be retained, that removal of the scrollwork at these fixtures would be desirable in order to reduce their visibility. Mr. Marshall stated that the linear heater boxes at the periphery of the trellis structures were the most obtrusive of the three types of heaters (freestanding,

frame-mounted and linear box) that currently exist there. Mr. Marshall suggested that the hanging straps, pipe, and conduit for the linear box heaters would be less obtrusive if painted black, and Mr. Cohn said that could be done. Mr. Cohn suggested that the DAS members visit the south terrace and look at the heaters there. After they have been able to do that, he would like to further discuss the terrace heaters at a future DAS meeting.
Other Comment: None

- Proposed balcony expansion at the La Valencia Hotel:

An existing 3'-6" deep x 7'-0" wide tenth floor balcony at the west façade of the building is proposed to be expanded to 5'-6" deep x 10'-0" wide. The expansion includes added structural corbels where none previously existed. The architect, Paul Benton, presented the proposal for the DAS to consider, with the objective that this proposal be consistent with the Standards. Mr. Benton indicated that the use of the larger balcony would be to accommodate a special dining area adjacent to the existing adjacent interior kitchen area. Mr. Benton indicated that although there are other similar balconies, this one balcony expansion was not intended to be replicated at other historic balconies and should not be construed as a precedent. Although, if approved, the other balconies might also be enlarged in-kind.

This project was requested by DSD staff, Myra Herrmann to be considered by the DAS.

Board Comment:

Chair David Marshall indicated that the proposal to increase the size of the historic balcony would not be consistent with the Standards, specifically Standard #2. He stated that the Standards require keeping historic fabric intact, unless the proposed change is absolutely necessary. This exterior alteration would be readily visible to the public. He noted that the reason for this proposal was simply the desire of the owner to do it and not required for public safety or triggered by needed repairs.

John Eisenhart agreed with Mr. Marshall.

Otto Emme also agreed with Mr. Marshall.

DSD staff Myra Herrmann noted the need to add this wing of the La Valencia Hotel to the historical site list as it is not clearly stated. Specifically, the APN# associated with this wing should be entered into the list.

4. Adjourned at 6:30

The next DAS Meeting is scheduled for November 7, 2007 at 3:00 p.m.