



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: September 19, 2008 REPORT NO. HRB-08-063

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of September 25, 2008

SUBJECT: **ITEM #10 – 7365 Remley Drive**

APPLICANT: Vonn Marie May on behalf of the owner

LOCATION: 7365 Remley Drive, La Jolla Community, Council District 1

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property at 7365 Remley Drive as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the property at 7365 Remley Drive as a historical resource under any adopted HRB criteria due to a loss 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 property is located in the La Jolla community, in the La Jolla Country Club Heights residential subdivision. The property includes a multi-story Spanish Eclectic style residence, built in 1932 with successive additions over the next several decades. The residence is perched on a canyon overlooking the Pacific Ocean, a two story detached garage is located upslope on



Remley Drive, and several detached structures are located in the canyon behind, including large decks and a fallout shelter.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Vonn Marie May, which concludes that the property is significant under HRB Criteria A, B, C and D. Staff disagrees and finds that the site is not significant under any HRB Criteria as follows.

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.

The residence is located in the La Jolla Country Club Heights subdivision; however it was not among the first houses constructed in the subdivision, as the La Jolla Country Club Heights subdivision was filed 6 years earlier in 1926. While it is notable that the start and completion of construction of the house took place during a time of economic hardship in the community, the historic report notes that it was not the only construction taking place in the community that year. Additionally, the construction of the house does not appear to be catalyst for the future development of the neighborhood, community or City. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation of the property under HRB Criterion A.

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

The owners of the property at the time of construction were Grace Arlington Owen and Belle Plumb Lee, both originally from the Mid-West. Belle Plumb Lee had moved with her husband Walter to San Diego as a retiree sometime in the 1920's. The Lee's are listed in 1925 at an address on Puterbaugh in Uptown. The following year, Grace Arlington Owen is listed at the same address. Owen continued to live with Mrs. Lee after her husband's death, and in 1931 Lee and Owen purchased the property in La Jolla and commissioned the construction of a residence there. Belle Plumb Lee occupied the house on Remley Drive until 1938, Grace Arlington Owen until 1940. Owen sold the property in 1946. A successful teacher, speaker and writer, Grace Owen was employed by the San Diego Public Library from 1926 until her retirement in 1953. While Grace Owen was noted for her help in the development of the San Diego Public Library, there is no evidence to suggest either Owen or Lee were significant in local, state or national history and staff does not recommend designation 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 house at 7365 Remley Drive is an example of Spanish Eclectic style architecture. The multi-story main residence as well as the detached garage with an upstairs apartment exhibit

characteristics of the style. Both are finished in white stucco, and topped with side gabled mission tile roofs with exposed beams at the eave line. Other details present on the main entrance include the cantilever of the second floor with exposed beams below, original casement windows, an iron window grille, iron light fixtures, and stucco detailing such as a window grille, a spyhole at the entry, and a unique scalloped effect at the roofline of the gable ends and on the original portion of the perimeter wall. Two original elaborated chimneys are present; one at the front elevation at the east end of the original portion of the main house, and the other is visible at the west end gable of the second floor.

The front entry of the house is accessed through a wrought iron gate in the stucco perimeter wall, which runs downslope from the garage to the neighboring property at the west. A paneled wood entry door is inset from the façade. Windows on this façade are original steel casement windows; and wood shutters are present on the first and second floor. On the west, north, and east facades, non-historic windows and doors have been added where additions and remodels have taken place.

The construction history of the property spans several decades and is summarized here as well as documented in Attachment A of the submitted historical report. The original 2,033 square foot portion of the 2 story house and the 441 square foot detached single story garage were constructed in 1932. In 1961, a 376 square foot addition is present at the east end of the main residence. This two story addition is visible just east of the chimney on the front elevation. Also at this time a 210 square foot room is added to the single story garage, and a fallout shelter is constructed in the canyon. Not including the detached fallout shelter, this brings the square footage of the main residence to 2,409, and that of the garage to 651. In 1966 a 332 square foot expansion was added to the first and second floor of the main residence at the rear, and a 925 square foot addition was made to the garage. This garage addition includes the 694 square foot second floor apartment and a 231 square foot addition to the first floor. In 1968 a sunroom was added to second floor of the garage, bringing the total square footage of the garage to 1,624. The final additions to the main residence, in 1969 and 1970, include the bay window room at the west end of the first floor at the living room and an addition to the rear of the residence, bringing the total square footage of the main residence to 3,246. Outdoor deck additions behind the house and the addition of a 171 square foot hobby room behind the garage were also made at this time.

The property retains the characteristics of the Spanish Eclectic style, including the asymmetrical façade, stucco exterior, mission tile roof, and details such as iron and stucco window grilles, elaborated chimneys, and exposed beams. The additions to the property were tastefully designed, in keeping with the Spanish Eclectic style and with the exception of the second story garage apartment, largely located at the rear. However, cumulatively, these successive additions to the structures have had a substantial impact on the material integrity of the property. The main residence has increased in size by more than 50%, from 2,033 square feet to 3,246 square feet. The front façade largely retains its original appearance; however the other three elevations have all been impacted by additions. Additionally, the detached single story garage has more than tripled in square footage with the addition of the second floor apartment and additions to the rear. These substantial increases in square footage and alterations to most elevations of the structures result in a loss of material integrity such that staff does not recommend designation 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.


The subject property was designed by architect Alberto Owen Treganza and built by Frank L. Stimson. Treganza was raised in the San Diego area, studied architecture at Cornell University, and worked in San Diego under William Heberd after he completed his studies there. After working for Heberd in San Diego, Treganza moved to Salt Lake City, and developed a successful architectural practice there in partnership with Walter E. Ware. Treganza is noted for many buildings in Salt Lake City, and is credited with introducing the Prairie Style to that city. In 1922 Treganza left Salt Lake City to find opportunity elsewhere. He traveled to Tampa, Florida, but ultimately settled with his family in Lemon Grove sometime around 1926. Over the next decade, Treganza was commissioned for architectural work throughout the San Diego region including Lemon Grove, Bonita, San Diego, Rancho Santa Fe, and La Jolla. Treganza worked as a draftsman for local architectural firm Jackson & Hamill, and his own firm had a business relationship with the La Jolla Land & Investment Company, which may have led to the commission by Grace Arlington Owen and Belle Plumb Lee to build the house at 7365 Remley Drive. In partnership with the Quayle Brothers Architects, Treganza designed his most notable work in San Diego, the Old Police Headquarters. The building was financed with Works Progress Administration funds and was completed in 1939. Another notable work in cooperation with the Quayle Brothers was the Jacumba Civic Center, 1937, and during the last years of his life Treganza worked on a design for a plan for the La Mesa Civic Center.

Alberto Owen Treganza was a successful architect in both Utah and California, designing notable works in both states and surely influencing future architects. Status as a Master Architect may be well deserved, and the information presented in the historical report for 7365 Remley Drive thoroughly documents his life and work. However, staff does not recommend that Treganza be established as a Master Architect with a designation of the property at 7365 Remley Drive, because the property has been substantially altered from his original design and no longer is representative as a notable work. Therefore staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion D.

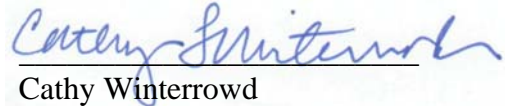
CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the property at 7365 Remley Drive not be designated as a historical resource under any adopted HRB Criteria due to a loss 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.



Tricia Olsen
Associate Planner



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TO/cw

Attachment: Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover