



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: May 15, 2009 REPORT NO. HRB-09-031

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of May 28, 2009

SUBJECT: **ITEM #5 – Remington Rand Company Building**

APPLICANT: Trican Partnership, owner; represented by Brant Candelore

LOCATION: 926-928 C Street, Centre City Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the rescission of the designation of the Remington Rand Company Building located at 926-928 C Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Rescind the historical designation of the Remington Rand Company Building as a historical resource under HRB Criteria C. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

1. The building does not retain sufficient material integrity to embody distinctive characteristics of the Art Deco architectural style.



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BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with the owner's desire to have the historical designation removed from the property. The Remington Rand Company Building was designated on April 22, 2004 under Criterion C based on the finding that the "...building embodies distinctive characteristics of the Art Deco architectural style with minor reversible alterations...". The owner appealed the designation to the City Council on April 27, 2004. The appeal has not gone before the City Council as the owner has been out of the country for the past 5 years. The owner has returned and would like to proceed with the appeal. Prior to taking the item to City Council, staff is returning the item to the HRB. When the item was originally before the HRB in 2004, staff asked for the item to be returned for further analysis prior to designation.

San Diego Municipal Code Section 123.0205 states that the "...HRB may amend or rescind any designation of a historical resource in the same manner and procedure as was followed in the original designation. This may be taken only if there is new information, the discovery of earlier misinformation, or a change in circumstances surrounding the original designation." Staff will provide new information including an analysis of material integrity that was not previously considered. In addition, in reviewing the transcript from the April 2004 HRB hearing, there was misinformation that was applied to the designation.

ANALYSIS

In support of the Centre City Community Plan, the Centre City Development Corporation brought the Historic Resources Inventory Update of the Core Area to the HRB in November 2003 and April 2004. Materials presented to the HRB included the Department of Park and Recreation 523A and 523 B forms (Attachment 1), staff reports from April 2004 (Attachment 2) and November 2003 (Attachments 3 and 4), as well as material submitted by the owner (Attachment 5). At the November 2003 meeting, staff recommended the HRB designate 926-928 C Street along with 27 other properties under various HRB Criteria. The owner of 926-928 C Street requested a continuance at the 2003 HRB meeting. The item returned to the HRB in April 2004 and staff requested additional time to review 926-928 C Street in the context of other similar properties within the survey area. Rather than return the item to staff, the HRB designated the property under HRB Criterion C (Attachment 6).

The owner submitted materials in support of the appeal in April 2004 (Attachment 7) and November 2008 (Attachment 8). In April and May 2009, staff reviewed all previously submitted materials and completed a site visit to 926-928 C Street. Staff recommends the HRB rescind the designation of 926-928 C Street based on new information and the discovery of earlier misinformation.

The building at 926-928 C Street was constructed in 1930 in an Art Deco architectural style. The one-story building has a flat roof with a decorative parapet along its south façade. The parapet and the three molded pilasters on the south façade are the remaining Art Deco elements of the building. Horizontal rows of chevrons along the parapet are broken into six sections and divided

by stacked and layered chevrons. The ornamentation along the parapet and the use of vertical pilasters is reflective of angular and geometric patterns often found in Art Deco architecture

The building at 926-928 C Street has been extensively altered. As seen in a historic photograph (Attachment 9) the building originally likely featured two glass storefronts, one on either side of the central pilaster. A recessed entry was centered within each storefront. A transom window was centered above the doorway and three wood framed windows spanned the width of the entire storefront. The base of the building featured square tile with additional geometric ornamentation at the center. All of these features have been removed with the exception of the window openings (filled in with stucco) that spanned the storefront. Each storefront has been stuccoed and small square windows have been installed. The entries have been reconfigured as there is only one entrance into the building along the south façade whereas there originally were two recessed entrances. Smaller transom windows have also been installed into the original storefront area. The original proportion, feeling, and style of the building have been altered by these modifications. Five aspects of integrity have been reduced by these alterations including design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Along with changes on the south façade, the building has been altered along its east façade. Sanborn Maps from 1950 and 1956 indicate a building (a four flat apartment building) was located to the east of 926-928 C Street prior to 1950 (Attachment 10). By 1956, the building had been removed. Sometime after that building was demolished additional windows and doorways were added to the east side of 926-928 C Street. The current owner indicated in his testimony at the April 2004 hearing that several alterations were completed prior to 1989. A photograph from the 1970s indicates alterations had already occurred on the east side.

The building at 926-928 C Street was designated under HRB Criterion C. The building does not retain sufficient integrity to convey its architectural style. To be eligible under Criterion C, a building must retain most of the physical features that constitute its style. The building has lost character defining features including its storefronts, entrances, windows, and decorative tile. In addition, the east side of the building has been modified through the addition of windows and entrances. The additions to the east side and modifications to the south façade are not consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. While the building does retain its parapet and some of the geometric ornamentation common to Art Deco architecture, retention of these elements is not sufficient to meet Criterion C as the loss of the storefronts, entrances, windows, and decorative tile are considered major alterations. The loss of these character defining features reduces the material integrity of the building to the point that it no longer embodies Art Deco architecture.

The assessment of integrity or a property's ability to convey its significance is subjective as there is no way to quantitatively measure alterations or modifications. Attempts were made by Ray Brandes and the owner to characterize the percentage of original fabric remaining on 926-928 C Street. The estimate in April 2004 was that 6% of the original fabric remained intact. However, in addition to the number of modifications, consideration must be given to the types of alterations and aspects of integrity including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A property needs to possess several and usually most aspects of integrity to convey significance. To be significant under Criterion C, a property must retain most

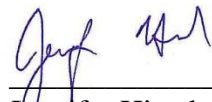
of the physical features that constitute a particular style, type, period, or method of construction. The building at 926-928 C Street has lost the majority of its features that characterize Art Deco architecture; therefore, its material integrity has been greatly impaired. Based on the new information of an integrity analysis, staff recommends the HRB rescind the designation of 926-928 C Street.

Staff also recommends the rescission of the designation of 926-928 C Street on the basis of earlier misinformation. In reviewing the transcript of the HRB hearing from April 2004, the HRB focused their discussion on the south façade of the building, an indication that the HRB believed they were designating a façade rather than an entire building. Several boardmembers made comments that alluded to the designation of the façade (see pages 56, 59-61 of Attachment 6) rather than the building. Historical designation applies to an entire building, therefore, to only consider the front façade as the basis for the designation was misinformation. Staff recommends the HRB rescind the designation of 926-928 based on the misinformation that the south façade was the only element on which to base the designation.

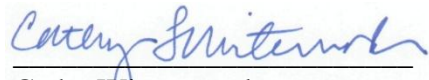
CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, staff recommends that the HRB rescind the designation of the Remington Rand Company Building at 926-928 C Street.

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 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.



Jennifer Hirsch
Senior Planner



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- Attachments:
- 1) Department of Park and Recreation 523A and 523B forms
 - 2) Staff report dated April 9, 2004 (without attachments)
 - 3) Staff report dated November 3, 2003 (without attachments)
 - 4) Table 2003 Historic Property Update Core Area
 - 5) Letter from the Law Office of Craig A. Candelore dated March 15, 2004 (with attachments)
 - 6) Relevant Pages from transcript of HRB April 22, 2004 hearing
 - 7) Appeal filed by Craig A. Candelore on April 27, 2004
 - 8) Additional Appeal material dated November 20, 2008
 - 9) Photographs of 926 – 928 C Street
 - 10) 1950 and 1956 Sanborn Maps