



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: June 11, 2010 REPORT NO. HRB-10-026

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of June 24, 2010

SUBJECT: **ITEM #7 – Albert Eugene and Helen Riley House**

APPLICANT: Michael Koonce and Andrew Nelson, owner; represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 5141 Marlborough Drive, Kensington-Talmadge Community, Council District 3

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Albert Eugene and Helen Riley House as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Albert Eugene and Helen Riley House at 5141 Marlborough Drive as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1926 under HRB Criterion A. The garage constructed in 1952 is excluded from the designation. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource was constructed as a model home and represents a special element of the Kensington Heights Subdivision in the Kensington-Talmadge Community.



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BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with the owner's desire to have their property designated as a historical resource. The two-story, Spanish-Eclectic house at 5141 Marlborough Drive was built in 1926 by William F. Riley, (the father of the original owners – Albert Riley and his wife, Helen Riley). William Riley had an active business constructing homes in San Diego for 15 years prior to the construction of 5141 Marlborough Drive.

The historic name of the resource, the Albert Eugene and Helen Riley House has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and includes the names of the original owners listed on the Grant Deed of Trust when the house was constructed in 1926 by Albert Riley's father.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Legacy 106, Inc., which concludes that the Albert Eugene and Helen Riley House is significant under HRB Criteria A, B and C. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion A, but does not concur that the site is a significant resource under HRB Criterion B and C. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation 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 Albert Eugene and Helen Riley House is one of the first homes built in the Kensington-Heights Subdivision and was a catalyst for later development both within and adjacent to the subdivision. The early development of the Kensington Heights Subdivision dates to 1922 when George Thomas Forbes purchased a large tract of land in San Diego. Forbes partnered with one of Southern California's premier developers, the Davis-Baker Company of Pasadena and architect Richard Requa, to develop the new community as an exclusive, residential tract. With its close proximity to the new State College and Herbert Hoover High School as well as the views of the Mission Valley rim and distant mountains, Forbes found his location ideal for an "investment-quality" tract that buyers would find rivaled other exclusive communities such as Beverly Hills in Los Angeles and the Oak Knoll section of Pasadena. By 1926, construction had begun on the Kensington Heights Subdivision, Unit 1.

The most well-known of the initial Kensington Heights, Unit 1 homes is the single-story Richard Requa-designed model, located across the street from 5141 Marlborough Drive, on the northeast corner of Middlesex and Marlborough Drive at 5159 Marlborough (HRB Site #394). This home, designed by Richard Requa, received enormous publicity in 1926, due in part to an advertising campaign that solicited plans for its design through a competition conducted by the San Diego Union.

After Riley completed the Requa Model Home at 5159 Marlborough Drive, he began construction on the Albert Eugene and Helen Riley House. This home received noted attention from the Davis-Baker Company as well as media attention. An article in the “Sunday Morning” San Diego Union of March 6, 1927 as well as other articles noted that the house located at 5141 Marlborough Drive as well as 5159 Marlborough were considered models for future construction and prime examples of the subdivision. Both residences were open to the public for tours and promoted by the Davis-Baker Company.

The Albert Eugene and Helen Riley House at 5141 Marlborough Drive demonstrates special elements of the Kensington Heights Subdivision as it served as one of the model homes for the community. Along with the other model home at 5159 Marlborough Drive, the Davis-Baker Company marketed the subdivision in newspaper advertisements. These ads emphasized the newly paved streets, fashionable “Electrolier” street lights and large lots with highly visible corner presentation. As one of the first model homes, the Albert Eugene and Helen Riley House reflects a special element of the development of the Kensington Heights Subdivision in the Kensington-Talmadge Community and therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion A.

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

William F Riley worked close with George Forbes and the Davis-Baker Company and was the preferred builder for their Kensington Heights Subdivision. However, there is not sufficient evidence presented in the consultant report to establish eligibility under Criterion B with respect to Riley being a significant person in local history with respect to the development of the Kensington Heights Subdivision. According to the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, an individual needs to be significant in history and have a lengthy and substantial association with the resource. In addition, the resource is to be the best one to associate with the individual and his accomplishments. As Riley did not live in the home and his association with it was brief, staff does not recommend designation under Criterion B at this time.

CRITERION C - Embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction or is

The home at 5141 Marlborough Drive was designed in the Spanish Eclectic architecture style. The building retains some character defining features of the style. This includes the Spanish-fired red clay tile cross-gable roof; wood half timber lintels and shutters; tile-covered wooden Monterey-style second story balcony with ornate, heavy wooden corbels; wood French doors leading to the balconies and sunroom; wrought iron entry tower window grill; medieval-style front entry door and window peep and ornate faux hinges; cast cement walkway scored to resemble fitted stone and front porch; and an arched patio portal with a wooden gate.

While the Albert Eugene and Helen Riley House retains some character defining features of the Spanish Eclectic architectural style, the following is a list of modifications to the structure that occurred since it was built in 1926. The second floor addition to the eastern elevation of the

structure, the replacement of the original wood windows, and the re-stuccoing of the exterior walls are the most significant alterations and have lowered the overall integrity of the building. Alterations affecting the building's historic integrity include:

- A second-floor addition to the eastern elevation of the existing structure (1935).
- An enclosed porch on the south elevation of the existing structure (1935).
- A 380 square foot, detached garage added to the property. Staff recommends excluding the garage from the designation (1952).
- Window modifications – The original wood casement and double-hung windows were removed and replaced in 2008. Changes in the number and pattern of divided lights were made to the windows and new wood, French-style doors were installed (2008).
- Stucco wall cladding replacement - The original stucco wall cladding was replaced with a very smooth stucco texture. From photos in the report dating between 1970 and 1980 and a photo from 2007, the original stucco had more texture to it than the replaced, smoother stucco texture (2008).

Though the 1935 addition was completed early, it altered the original gable roof line, a character-defining feature of the original home. In addition, when the windows were replaced in 2008, the number of lights in each casement window was modified from 3 to 4. It also appears that two windows on the first floor were replaced with wood casement, French-style doors.

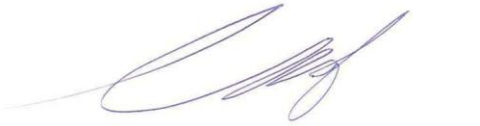
Due to the alterations described above, there has been a cumulative impact to the home that lowers its material integrity. The second-floor addition to the eastern side of the structure, the new windows and doors, and the new stucco have lowered the design and material integrity of the building. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion C.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

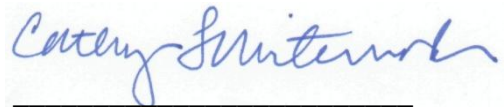
If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Albert Eugene and Helen Riley House be designated under HRB Criterion A as an historical resource that contributed to the development of the Kensington Heights Subdivision in the Kensington-Talmadge Community. 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.



Jeffrey E. Oakley
Associate Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Principal Planner/HRB Liaison

JO/jh/cw

Attachment(s): Draft Resolution

Applicant's Historical Report by Legacy 106, Inc. under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 6/24/2010

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 6/24/2010, to consider the historical designation of the **Albert Eugene and Helen Riley House** (owned by Andrew Nelson Trust 09-20-04 and Michael Koonce Trust 09-20-04, 5141 Marlborough Drive, San Diego, CA 92116) located at **5141 Marlborough Drive, San Diego, CA 92116**, APN: **440-180-10-00**, further described as BLK 7 LOT 1 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 Albert Eugene and Helen Riley House on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION A as an historical resource that was constructed as a model home and represents a special element of the Kensington Heights Subdivision in the Kensington-Talmadge Community.

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, but excludes the garage that was constructed in 1952, as Designated Historical Resource **Site No. 0**.

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: _____
NINA FAIN
Deputy City Attorney