



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: June 18, 2010 REPORT NO. HRB-10-029

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of June 24, 2010

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – 8001 Calle de la Plata**

APPLICANT: Jacobus and Jill Nooren represented by Scott A. Moomjian

LOCATION: 8001 Calle de la Plata, La Jolla Community, Council District 1

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property located at 8001 Calle de la Plata as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the property located at 8001 Calle de la Plata under any adopted HRB Criteria.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a preliminary review application to determine whether or not the building is historically significant as part of a constraints analysis for future development. The building is a one story single family residence located in a low-density multi-family residential zone in the La Jolla Shores Subdivision. The subject property is surrounded by residential uses.



City Planning & Community Investment
202 C Street, MS 5A • San Diego, CA 92101-3865
Tel (619) 235-5200 Fax (619) 533-5951

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Scott A. Moomjian, which concludes that the resource is not significant under any HRB Criteria. Staff concurs that the site is not a significant historical resource under any HRB Criteria. 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 property located at 8001 Calle de la Plata was constructed in 1927 by Charles Larkins for owner Clara Chapman. The house was constructed in the La Jolla Shores subdivision, which was marketed by the Evans-Lee Corporation of Los Angeles. The original vision of the developer was that of an exclusively Spanish style subdivision, with all building plans to be approved by an architectural committee. Lot sales within La Jolla Shores began in 1926. The following year real estate development slowed, and the stock market crash and ensuing Depression in 1929 brought development to a halt altogether. By the time construction in the Shores continued, the original vision for the subdivision had been lost. It is unclear exactly how many homes were built in La Jolla Shores prior to the crash. Historic photographs reveal a handful of structures, including the subject property. City directory research provided in the consultant's report indicates that at least three houses had been constructed prior to the crash and as many as nine by 1932. Water and sewer record research by staff, which is hindered by incomplete and missing water records, indicates that at least six water or sewer permits had been pulled by 1930 and several others during the Depression prior to World War II.

The research provided in the consultant's report illustrates that the subject property was not a speculative house built by the Evans-Lee Corporation to promote development within the subdivision. That distinction may fall to the property now located at 7936 Calle de la Plata and originally addressed at 2158 Calle de la Plata. The water permit for that property was pulled by Tract Manager Alarik Soderberg, and he is listed at 2158 Calle de la Plata in the City Directory. While the subject property at 8001 Calle de la Plata was one of the earlier homes in the La Jolla Shores subdivision, research indicates that it was not built to promote the subdivision. Clara Chapman either intended the house as her own speculative development (as she never lived there) or economic conditions at the time forced her to sell the property she built.

In reviewing this property and its eligibility for designation, staff recalled the designation of HRB Site #759, located at 8265 Paseo del Ocaso. HRB Site #759 was designated not only under HRB Criterion C as a resource which embodies the character defining features of Spanish Eclectic architecture, but also under HRB Criterion A as a special element of development in La Jolla. The nomination for Site #759 stated that the property was one of the 5 remaining "Seven Sisters", which the nomination identified as being the first seven homes built in La Jolla Shores as envisioned by the developers prior to the stock market crash and Great Depression. Staff reviewed the nomination report for Site #759 again, and could not find any primary or secondary documentation identified which supports that the "Seven Sisters" refers to seven homes built in

La Jolla Shores prior to the Depression. Additional, albeit limited research by staff also failed to uncover any information which supports that the “Seven Sisters”, a persistent phrase in La Jolla development and history, refers to seven houses built prior to the Depression. Information related to cave formations at La Jolla Cove and seven houses literally built for seven sisters were found, but nothing related to the concept of seven houses built prior to the Depression and the subsequent halt in development until World War II. In addition, as stated previously, it is unclear as to how many houses were actually built prior to the Depression and whether construction halted altogether or sputtered throughout the 1930’s. Water and sewer records can be found throughout the early and late 1930’s, although those connections may or may not have meant that homes were actually constructed. Without documentation beyond the information provided in the nomination for HRB Site #759 to support the assertion that the “Seven Sisters” refers to seven houses built in La Jolla Shores prior to the crash and Great Depression, it is not appropriate to pursue that context or association at this time.

Given that the home was not built by the developer to promote development within La Jolla Shores; and that the concept of the “Seven Sisters” as the seven homes built prior to the Depression cannot be confirmed; we are left with the house simply being one of the early houses constructed within the La Jolla Shores development, along with at least several others. In addition, the house has suffered a number of modifications which adversely impact its integrity from the 1927 period. These modifications are listed in detail in the discussion of Criterion C. Therefore, given a lack of information to support that the house reflects a special element of development beyond its contemporaries, and the alterations that have adversely impacted the building’s integrity to the 1927 period, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion A.

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

The property located at 8001 Calle de la Plata was owned by a number of individuals, banks and mortgage companies after it was sold in 1928 by Clara Chapman, the owner at the time of construction. When ownership settled in 1937, it passed through the ownership of Charles and Helen Hibert (1937-1943), Joseph and Nannette Kelley (1943-1953), Margaret Thomas (1953-1959), Marguerita Honnolo (1959-1963), Maxine MacNeill (1963-1965), Lucille Lennard (1965-1970) and others thereafter. There is no information that indicates that any of these individuals are significant in local, state or national history. Therefore, 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 located at 8001 Calle de la Plata is a one story single family home constructed in 1927 in the Spanish Eclectic style. The house features an “L” shape configuration with cross gable roofs clad in interlocking clay pan-tiles. The construction is moderately textured stucco over wood frame on a concrete foundation, with clay tile vents in three and six-pipe configurations. The site location on a corner lot presents two facades to the public right-of-way. From Calle de la Plata, a forward projecting front-gable bay features a rectangular single-lite fixed wood frame

window flanked by slightly narrower single-lite casement wood frame windows. A stucco coated chimney is present on the south façade of the forward projecting bay. The entry porch intersects with the bay, forming the “L” shape configuration. The entry porch is recessed under the tile-clad gable roof, which is supported by a large square stucco column at the corner. Wood headers, which are suffering significant deterioration, run along the top of the porch opening and through the corner column. The entry door faces Paseo Dorado, while a pair of multi-light wood frame and sash casement windows centered on the porch wall faces Calle de la Plata. A small wood frame window with decorative wrought iron grille sits to the left of the porch. Along the Paseo Dorado elevation, a multi-lite wood frame and sash window is centered under the gable to the right of the entry porch. Continuing east down the property line, a once detached garage has been attached to the house and converted to habitable space.

Modifications to the exterior include replacement of the original roofing tile with new pan-tile; modification to the stucco, although the texture is generally consistent with the style; conversion of the garage to habitable space in 1953, resulting in the loss of the garage door and opening; construction of an addition which in-filled the space between the house and the once-detached garage in 1954; construction of a large adobe site wall and gate along the front of the property in 1975; removal of the original concrete walkway and construction of a new brick walkway in a different configuration at an unknown date; application of non-historic tile at the entry courtyard and porch at an unknown date; and the replacement of original windows and doors with louvered, metal and vinyl frame windows along secondary facades, also at an unknown date. Cumulatively, these modifications have adversely impacted the building’s integrity related to design, materials and feeling and have altered the original character defining features to such an extent that the house no longer conveys its original Spanish Eclectic design from 1927. Therefore, 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 property located at 8001 Calle de la Plata was constructed by Charles Larkins in 1927. The architect or designer is unknown. Charles Larkins is not currently established by the Board as a Master Builder. Three resources currently listed on the local register – HRB Sites #226, #503 and #830, all in La Jolla – were built by Larkins; however, Larkins was not identified or established as a Master Builder with these listings. At this time there is insufficient evidence and analysis to support Larkins establishment as a Master Builder. In addition, the alterations the building has suffered over the years, as detailed in the discussion under HRB Criterion C, have adversely impacted integrity related to the design, workmanship, materials and association with Larkins. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion D.

CRITERION E - Is listed or has been determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or is listed or has been determined eligible by the State Historical Preservation Office for listing on the State Register of Historical Resources.

The property located at 8001 Calle de la Plata has not been listed on or determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and has not been

listed on or determined eligible for listing by the State Historic Preservation Office for listing on the State Register or Historic Resource and is therefore not eligible for designation under HRB Criterion E.

CRITERION F - Is a finite group of resources related to one another in a clearly distinguishable way or is a geographically definable area or neighborhood containing improvements which have a special character, historical interest or aesthetic value or which represent one or more architectural periods or styles in the history and development of the City.

The property located at 8001 Calle de la Plata is not located within a designated historic district, and is therefore not eligible for designation under HRB Criterion F.

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 property located at 8001 Calle de la Plata not be designated under any adopted HRB Criteria. 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.



Kelley Saunders
Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Principal Planner/HRB Liaison

KS/cw

Attachment(s): Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover