



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: September 15, 2010 REPORT NO. HRB-10-047

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of September 23, 2010

SUBJECT: **ITEM #10 – Mattie Bearns House**

APPLICANT: Kenneth P. Bourke represented by Marie Burke Lia

LOCATION: 1455 F Street, East Village Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Mattie Bearns House located at 1455 F Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Mattie Bearns House located at 1455 F Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of circa 1909 under HRB Criterion C. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Folk Victorian Vernacular style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its period of significance c. 1909. Specifically, the character defining features reflected in the building include a medium pitched, front gable roof with slight eave overhang; wood framed, double hung windows; simplified detailing, plain



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frieze; wood horizontal shiplap siding, and a full width front porch, a rectangular floor plan and a symmetrical façade with a wood frame and foundation.

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 three story residence constructed in the Folk Victorian Vernacular style in c. 1909. The actual date of construction has not been determined due to lack of documentation and inconsistencies in the information available for the property. It is located in East Village, a mixed use area of Downtown San Diego.

The historic name of the resource, the Mattie Bearns House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and includes the name of the first owner. This conclusion is based on the Lot and Block Book page date of construction in 1909 under the ownership of Mattie Bearns.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by K.A. Crawford/Marie Burke Lia, which concludes that the resource is not significant under any HRB Criteria. Staff's position is that the resource is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion C. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows:

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 structure was designed in the Folk Victorian Vernacular architectural style and built in c.1909. Closely tied to the National Folk style popular after the nationwide expansion of the railroad in 1850's, Folk Victorian style houses were generally built in the late 19th and early 20th century, declining in popularity by 1910 with the trend turning toward Craftsman Bungalow style houses. The c. 1909 date is believed to be rather late for this style of construction. As mentioned in the 2005 East Village Combined Historical Surveys, the Single Family Vernacular style was part of the property boom prior to 1887. The historical context specifically mentions the Judson Property (Mattie Bearns House) as being built in c. 1900. The information available does not provide a consistent date of construction for the property, and the Notice of Completion and Water and Sewer Records have not been located. The Assessor's Building Record dates the structure to 1891 and the Sanborn Maps from 1888, 1906 and 1921 all show different structures; which provides contradictory information for the date of construction.

This three-story residence has a symmetrical façade, rectangular floor plan; and a wood frame and foundation. A medium pitched, front gable roof with a slight eave overhang comprises the third floor. The exterior has horizontal wood shiplap siding with corner board; plain frieze; and

simplified detailing. A full width, open front porch with minimal stick work and a shed style roof supported by wooden posts spans the front facade. The property sits on a unusual lot due to the way it slopes sharply away from the street leaving only the first two stories of the structure visible from the sidewalk.

The fenestration throughout the majority of the structure is wood frame two-over-two double hung sash windows, covered with metal security grilles. On the first floor, visible from the street, there is one large wood framed fixed pane window covered with a metal security grille. The entrances to second and third floor units are accessed by two doors located on the front façade.

Modifications to the structure include door and window replacements. The wood floor on the front porch was replaced. On the rear of the property a two story addition was added for ancillary functions; the addition is clearly demarcated from the original structure. Although modifications have taken place this building retains the character defining features of the Folk Victorian Vernacular style.

As explained in the 2005 East Village Historical Context, the simple Residential Vernacular style is rare and therefore expected to be in poor condition, almost nothing remains from that period making this property an extremely valuable piece of San Diego's history. This type of construction represents the architectural style of the late 19th century housing boom and is a property that still remains despite the aggressive removal, recycling and deterioration of almost all of the structures built during this time period. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Folk Victorian Vernacular style and retains a good level of architectural integrity in the design, setting, materials, and workmanship of the original structure. Therefore, staff recommends designation of this resource 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.

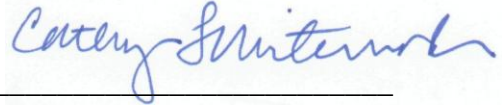
CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Mattie Bearn House located at 1455 F Street be designated with a period of significance of c. 1909 under HRB Criterion C due to the retention of character defining features of a Folk Victorian Vernacular home from a period in San Diego's history that has very few examples present today.

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.



Terra King
Planning Intern



Cathy Winterrowd
Principal Planner/HRB Liaison

TK/cw

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 9/23/2010

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 9/23/2010, to consider the historical designation of the **Mattie Bearns House** (owned by Kenneth P. Bourke, 1455 F Street, San Diego, CA 92101) located at **1455 F Street, San Diego, CA 92101**, APN: **535-171-09-00**, further described as PAR 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 Mattie Bearns House on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics of the Folk Victorian Vernacular style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its period of significance of c. 1909. Specifically, the character defining features reflected in the building include a medium pitched, front gable roof with a slight eave overhang; wood framed, double hung windows; simplified detailing, plain frieze; wood horizontal shiplap siding, and a full width front porch, a rectangular floor plan and a symmetrical façade with a wood frame and foundation. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

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 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