



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: September 15, 2011 REPORT NO. HRB-11-064

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of September 22, 2011

SUBJECT: **ITEM# 19 – John R. and Florence Porterfield Beardsley House**

APPLICANT: Bruce and Alana Coons

LOCATION: 3130 Shadowlawn Street, Peninsula Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Review the National Register Nomination of the John R. and Florence Porterfield Beardsley House

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Recommend to the Office of Historic Preservation the listing of the John R. and Florence Porterfield Beardsley House, a single-family residence, designed and built by Cliff May and the O.U. Miracle Company in 1933 located in the Bayside Country Club Estates tract of the Loma Portal neighborhood of San Diego.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board pursuant to the Office of Historic Preservation requirement that the local jurisdiction be provided 60 days to review and comment on a National Register nomination. The John R. and Florence Porterfield Beardsley House is being nominated to the National Register under Criterion C as a significant historical resource at the local level for its architecture, designer and period of construction. The building is not listed on the San Diego Register and has not been previously reviewed by the HRB.

ANALYSIS

A National Register of Historic Places Nomination Report was prepared by Ronald V. May and Dale Ballou May of Legacy 106, Inc., which concludes that the resource is significant under

Criterion C. Staff concurs that the structure is a significant historical resource under National Historic Register Criterion C, as follows.

CRITERION C – Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

The John R. and Florence Porterfield Beardsley House is a one-story, U-shaped, stucco on balloon frame, Spanish Colonial / California “Hacienda” style ranch house built on a concrete slab foundation by Cliff May and the O.U. Miracle Company in 1933. It is the first commissioned work of this master builder and architect and outstanding example of Cliff May’s early work. This U-shaped house sits on a Southwest to Northeast axis with a garage wing connecting the Southwest/Northwest corner and a bedroom wing connecting the Northeast/Northwest corners. The interior central courtyard faces the Northwest elevation, which is bounded by a six-foot tall stucco wall that connects and encloses the corners. The exterior veranda functioned as a substitute for an interior hallway, with access from individual rooms to the veranda and courtyard.

The house is characterized by slightly undulating and rounded white stucco walls that rise from the ground upward to the exposed ornamental rafter tails of the eaves. The stucco walls are fenestrated by wooden casement windows flanked by decorative wood shutters. Some of the windows exhibit projecting, rusticated wooden grills of horizontal and vertical elements that connect to two small square openings within the grill that hold colorful Bauer flowerpots. There are original double sliding wood doors for the two-car garage with heavy recessed panels. The wooden front door is set three feet back from the face of the front wall and is actually a gate entrance into the courtyard that connects the rooms surrounding the courtyard. The recessed doorway also exhibits a round polychrome floral ceramic tile doorbell to the right of the door as is a deeply recessed peep door that allows someone inside to view through the front door. The exposed eaves reveal rounded rafter tail ends that project slightly under the multiple layer Mission half round tile roof above.

The interior courtyard white stucco walls exhibit the same slightly undulating and rounded surface fenestrated by wood casement windows flanked by decorative wooden shutters. The French doors exhibit the original hardware.

The Southwest elevation is the primary elevation of the public view, facing Shadowlawn Street and includes the original doublewide artistic wooden garage door on the Northwest half (left), which is distinguished by handcrafted square narrow boards set in horizontal rows that create a crosshatched pattern of seventy recessed rectangles. This garage door is surrounded by wood jams set into the hand-applied stucco wall finish that extends from the ground to the roof eaves. The white stucco walls with rounded corners wrap into the recessed door entry and window openings. At the top of the walls are slightly overhanging brown-painted wood eaves distinguished by massive square roof beams that have been rounded on the ends. The cross-gabled Mission half-barrel roof is terra cotta tile, stacked several layers with cement mortar. There are two white stucco faux chimneys on the roof. These are capped with two terra cotta tiles that tip from the bottom to intersect at the top into a triangle. One chimney is located above the garage and the other above the room in the Northeast quarter of the house. The third chimney,

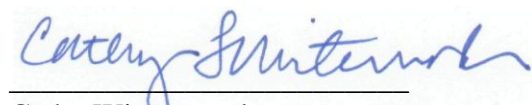
which is the functioning chimney for the artistic fireplace located on the Southeast elevation, looks similar to the others at the roof, but protrudes the length of the wall on the exterior of that elevation.

There have been only minor changes to the building. A small twenty-four square foot laundry room was added to the back of the garage in the 1970s and was then modified in 2001. An owner in the 1970s replaced the original kitchen door facing the interior courtyard and another previous owner converted the garage interior to a family room. In 2001, an owner replaced the veranda tile floor with brick-edged concrete. Former owners replaced the bath tiles in the 1970s and the kitchen tiles in 2001. The decorative painted floral on mustard shutters, window grills, and doors have been painted over numerous times covering the original colors. Changes to the grounds include the front lawn and stepped walkway that has changed from the original brick on four different occasions. A 1940 brick ramp was replaced by offset concrete steps in the 1960s. Concrete and brick steps adjacent to the driveway were added in 2001. A retaining wall to create a flat lawn and trees with wide steps was added at some time. An owner added the retaining wall of concrete block in the 1970s and another owner capped the wall with stuccoed brick in 2001.

The John R. and Florence Porterfield Beardsley House is eligible under National Register of Historic Properties Criterion C at the local level, for its architecture, its designer, and its period of construction. Cliff May, who has received international acclaim, designed and supervised construction of the house. The 1933 Notice of Completion specified a house in the Hacienda style, which has high artistic value and embodies the distinctive characteristics reminiscent of the Mexican era 19th century adobe dwellings that were true to Old California. This early Hacienda style house represents an important stage in May's development of style that led up to the later Rancheria and then Western Ranch style, for which he became so famous across the nation in the next decades and met the needs of modest and low cost housing for millions of families. The ranch house style is a direct outgrowth of the hacienda style. May himself stated that he only built one style of home. As the earliest known and documented of his custom commissions, its significance lies in understanding how May drew from surviving 19th century adobe ranch buildings to create popular residential architecture during the depths of the Great Depression in Southern California.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted, it is recommended that the Historic Resources Board forward a positive recommendation for listing on the National Register of Historical Places the John R. and Florence Porterfield Beardsley House, with a 1933 period of significance. If listed on the National Register, this resource would be eligible for listing on the San Diego Register under Criterion E.



Cathy Winterrowd
Principal Planner/HRB Liaison

Attachment: Applicant's National Register of Historical Resources Nomination Report under separate cover