



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: April 12, 2012 REPORT NO. HRB-12-027

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of April 26, 2012

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – 1257 Virginia Way**

APPLICANT: Owner represented by Vonn Marie May

LOCATION: 1257 Virginia Way, La Jolla Community, Council District 1

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property located at 1257 Virginia Way as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the property located at 1257 Virginia Way under any adopted HRB Criteria, due to a lack of integrity and insufficient passage of time to properly evaluate the historic significance of the individual associated with the house.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with the owner's desire to have the site designated as a historical resource. The building is a one and two story Spanish Eclectic style house located in the residential subdivision of Villa Tract La Jolla Park. The house was originally constructed in 1929 and was substantially remodeled between 1983 and 1985, with additions at the front, side and rear. These alterations are detailed in the applicant's report, along with copies of the building plans.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Vonn Marie May, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criterion B. Staff finds that the site is not eligible for designation under any HRB Criteria, due to a lack of integrity and insufficient passage of time to properly evaluate the historic significance of the individual associated with the house. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows:

Development Services Department

1222 First Avenue, MS 512 • San Diego, CA 92101-4155
Tel (619) 235-5200 Fax (619) 446-5499

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

The applicant's report states that the subject house is eligible for designation under HRB Criterion B for its association with Patricia Schaelchlin, a local La Jolla historian and preservation activist who owned and lived in the home with her husband Juerg from 1972 until her passing in 2006. Schaelchlin moved to San Diego with her husband in 1959, settling in La Jolla at the subject house in 1972 where she became involved with the La Jolla Historical Society, as well as the Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO). She worked with SOHO on the preservation of the Victorian homes in Heritage Park and the San Diego Rowing Club, and would later serve as President of SOHO. She was an avid researcher of La Jolla's history, and became an authority on the subject, authoring several books including, *The Little Clubhouse on Steamship Warf* in the early 1980s, *La Jolla: Story of a Community, 1887-1987* in 1988 and *Newspaper Barons: A Biography of the Scripps Family* in 2003.

Schaelchlin was a strong advocate of historic preservation in the La Jolla community as well, completing a survey of early La Jolla development in 1977; successfully nominating Wisteria Cottage to the San Diego Register in 1982; and creating Heritage Place, a collection of historically designated early beach cottages preserved in the "Heritage Park model", on La Jolla Boulevard. She also served on the Historical Resources Board for twelve years between 1982 and 1994.

Patricia Schaelchlin was a prominent and beloved member of the La Jolla community who has been fondly remembered and regarded in the six years since her passing. La Jollans and preservationists alike have a strong connection to her and her work documenting and preserving La Jolla's history and heritage. This connection is due in no small part to the proximate nature of her achievements. Although there is no requirement that 45 or 50 years pass before a resource is eligible for designation within its context, it must be demonstrated that sufficient time has passed to understand the historical importance of a resource, event or individual within that context. Schaelchlin's work as a historian and preservationist began 40 years ago, and ended only with her passing in 2006.

While time may prove that her work does elevate her to the level of a historically significant individual, insufficient time has passed to fully evaluate and place into perspective her work and contributions within the broader context of local history and preservation. Additionally, if Schaelchlin were found to be a historically significant individual, one might argue that a more appropriate associative designation would be Heritage Place in La Jolla (HRB Site #128), and in particular the Galusha B. Grow Cottage (HRB Site #133), which she temporarily resided at between 1983 and 1986 after relocating the cottage to Heritage Place in 1979. These resources are a more direct reflection of her research, advocacy and activism on behalf of La Jolla's historic resources.

At this time, staff is unable to recommend designation of the subject property located 1257 Virginia Way under HRB Criterion B, due to insufficient passage of time to properly evaluate the historic significance of Patricia Schaelchlin, who is associated with the house.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

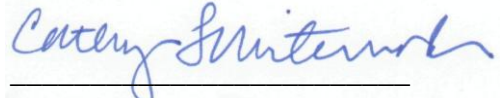
If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the property located at 1257 Virginia Way not be designated under any adopted HRB Criteria, due to a lack of integrity and insufficient passage of time to properly evaluate the historic significance of the individual associated with the house. 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 Stanco
Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Principal Planner/HRB Liaison

KS/cw

Attachment:

1. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover