



Save Our Heritage Organisation

Saving San Diego's Past for the Future

Thursday, September 20, 2018

Suzanne Segur, Associate Planner
Historical Resources, Development Services Department
City of San Diego
1222 First Avenue, MS 401
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: 4101 Lomaland Drive, #1-4

Ms. Segur,

After a second site visit to 4101 Lomaland Drive #1-4, as well as discussions with the current residents of buildings #1 and #3, which have led to new information, Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO) emphatically disagrees with the conclusion of the report regarding buildings #1-4. Instead, SOHO very strongly asserts that all four of these resources have historical significance, retain integrity and should be formally evaluated by the Historical Resources Board for designation. Further, this site is also significant for archaeology, which was determined during the second site visit, due to at least two brick foundations visible near the south end and many pottery sherds found on the ground, which appear recently disturbed by the city's trenching work in preparation for the habitat restoration project at this site.

The Corbin House, building #1, is historically significant under Criteria A and C, and retains very strong material integrity. After reviewing the Sanborn maps, google earth, and a second site visit, the amount of existing historical fabric, both on the exterior as well as the interior, demonstrating strong and intact material integrity as well as association to the early history of this site, the Theosophical Institute of Madame Tingley. A more in-depth investigation of this resource illustrates that these were likely two (and possibly material components of a third) independent cottages joined together at a later date (post 1950). New evidence of early material includes the redwood fireplace mantle with a hammered copper trimmed hearth, multiple mortise and tenon doors, 20th century interior ceiling molding and ceiling paneling in all rooms, blown glass windows, 19th century bead board siding and hardware, and more. Since the Master Plan references that, "No action on the Corbin house shall be taken until the Historical Resources Board (HRB) considers the structure for historical designation (p. 58)," SOHO strongly contends this be considered by the HRB for designation. Further, the recently disturbed archaeological deposit is both highly visible and abundant on the ground, which includes spongeware and other early pottery sherds. In addition, two masonry foundations (one has the entire footprint visible) very possibly predate the Theosophical Institute as an early homestead, due to the masonry foundation not being consistent with the other cottages and no indication of a building at these locations are found on the Sanborn maps; these foundations must be researched and evaluated. Please refer to photos.

After a second site visit that identified buildings #3 and #4 (in addition to #2) are also designed by Richard John Lareau, SOHO asserts all three buildings illustrate the Modern Post and Beam style; retain a high degree of material, design, and setting integrity; and are significant under Criteria A, C, and D. SOHO understands from the current resident of building #3, as well as <http://www.modernsandiego.com/Lareau.html> (which attributes buildings #3 and #4 to Lareau), that

this was designed by Lareau in 1972. Further, this was confirmed to the current resident by the architect himself in May 2018.

Consistent with the Post and Beam style, as outlined in the Modernism Context, primary features identified at 4515 Ladera Street and shared by all these resources are: 1) direct expression of the structure, 2) horizontal massing, and 3) flat or shallow pitch roof. Secondary characteristics shared by these three resources are: 1) the repetitive façade geometry, 2) minimal use of solid load-bearing walls, 3) absence of applied decoration, 4) strong interior/exterior connection, 5) open floor plan, and 6) wood and glass exterior finish materials. Consistent with almost all of the primary and secondary features for the Post and Beam style within the Modernism Context, 4101 Lomaland #2, #3 and #4 are historically significant under Criterion C, for architecture, as well as Criterion D, establishing Lareau as a Master Architect. Further, page 20 of the 4515 Ladera Street report states, “A careful review of Lareau’s designs, awards, commendations, and achievements, indicates that he should now be considered a figure of generally recognized greatness in the field of San Diego architecture.” Please refer to photos.

Also significant under Criterion A, as a special remaining historical and aesthetic element of the community, this small enclave of Modern housing, all built for Rose Vollmer and including a unique studio unit, illustrates a special aspect of building on this oceanfront landscape, prior to the Sunset Cliffs Park and various state laws being enacted. Lareau used a very specific design aesthetic for all three buildings and, along with a cognizance for fitting into the larger clifftop landscape, the location, design and connection between the interior and exterior all indicate historical significance under Criterion A. Last, there is also significant as a special archaeological element of the community due to the abundant pottery sherds and multiple masonry foundations found on site.

SOHO strongly asserts that all buildings located 4101 Lomaland Drive #1-4 are historically significant under multiple designation criteria and MUST be considered by the Historical Resources Board for designation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,



Bruce Coons
Executive Director
Save Our Heritage Organisation