



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: November 7, 2025 REPORT NO. HRB-25-054

HEARING DATE: November 20, 2025

SUBJECT: **ITEM 5 – ELMO AND ANGELINE CRABTREE SPEC HOUSE #3**

RESOURCE INFO: [California Historical Resources Inventory Database \(CHRID\) link](#)

APPLICANT: Riley Family 2009 Trust 02-18-09; represented by Heritage Architecture & Planning

LOCATION: 4192 Rochester Road, 92116, Kensington-Talmadge Community, Council District 9, APN 465-070-0400

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Elmo and Angeline Crabtree Spec House #3 located at 4192 Rochester Road, as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Elmo and Angeline Crabtree Spec House #3, located at 4192 Rochester Road, as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1927 under HRB Criterion C. The designation excludes the detached ADU due to substantial alterations to the garage structure. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Spanish Eclectic style architecture and retains integrity from its 1927 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features asymmetrical façade, stucco cladding, varied roof forms with tile roofing and little eave overhang, an arched focal window, a central tower, stucco chimney, arched wooden entry door, and fenestration consisting mainly of wood windows in various lite patterns and operations.

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 property has not been identified in any recent historic surveys, as the subject area has not been recently surveyed.

The historic name of the resource, the Elmo and Angeline Crabtree Spec House #3, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the names of Elmo and Angeline Crabtree, who constructed the property as a speculation house.

In order to be eligible for designation and listing on the City's Register, a resource must meet one or more of the City's designation criteria as specified in the Historical Resources Guidelines of the Land Development Manual and retain integrity as it relates to the significance of the resource. Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance, which requires an understanding of the physical features and characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance. The National, California, and City of San Diego Registers recognize location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association as the seven aspects of historical integrity.

Although not all seven aspects of integrity need to be present for a property to be eligible for designation, the record must demonstrate that the property retains enough physical and design characteristics to reflect and convey the significance of the property. Each resource depends on certain aspects of integrity, more than others, to express its historic significance. Determining which of the aspects are most important to a particular property requires an understanding of the property's significance and its essential physical features. The [*Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*](#) provide information regarding the City's designation criteria, as well as guidance on their application and how to evaluate the integrity of a resource.

ANALYSIS

The property at 4192 Rochester Road is a one-story, single-family residential building constructed in 1927 in the Kensington-Talmadge Community Planning Area in the Spanish Eclectic style. Other buildings and structures present on site include a detached ADU constructed as a garage in 1927 and converted to ADU in 2013. The property is located on the east side of Rochester Road and fronts a canyon in the Kensington Hillsides Open Space. It is in its original location.

Since its construction in 1927, the property has had several modifications: Permits show that a 16' x 10' free-standing patio was constructed in the rear 1969. In 1999 an addition and kitchen remodel included the infill of an original window toward the rear east end of the side (north) façade, along with one door at the center of the side (north) façade. Staff notes that based on aerial imagery, two skylights were likely added at this time. A replacement wood window was added as part of the remodel project in a modified opening. An addition was added at the rear (east) façade with a connecting outer deck and is not visible from the street. An accessibility ramp was constructed on the front façade at this time, which included removing the front sidewalk and removal of approximately 2 feet of porch wing wall.

At an unknown date, the residence was restuccoed in a historically inappropriate texture. In 2002 a wood trellis structure supported with wood brackets was added on the primary façade along with a renovation of the rear deck. In 2013, the garage was converted to an ADU which included replacing the garage door with a tripartite wood window, French doors at the north (side) façade, and windows on the east (front) façade. The ADU project was reviewed by Heritage Preservation staff and determined to be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards in terms of overall impact to the resource, which is the house. In 2023, solar panels were installed. In 2023, the non-original trellis on the front façade was removed. Between 2023 and 2025 the ADA ramp was

modified to be less visually intrusive by the shortening of the concrete and stucco wall and addition of metal railings in its place. In 2025, the stucco was re-finished with a period compatible light sand texture, approved by Heritage Preservation Staff.

A Historical Resources Research Report was prepared by Heritage Architecture & Planning which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criterion C and staff concurs. 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 resource is a one-story, single-family residence constructed in 1927 in the Spanish Eclectic Style. The house has an asymmetrical massing with varied roof forms on the primary façade with red tiles, a little eave overhang, and a flat roof with a simple parapet covering the remainder of the building. The house is clad in medium sand-finish stucco. The house exhibits an irregular footprint with varied roof heights, unified through consistent materials and detailing. Fenestration consists primarily of multi-lite and single-lite wood and vinyl windows of various materials, sizes, and operations.

The front elevation is asymmetrical in composition and anchored by a central, slightly projecting entry tower. The pyramidal hipped roof tower features a round-arched entryway containing a heavy wooden plank door with decorative wrought-iron hardware and a small inset speakeasy. Above the entry, the tower rises to a low-pitched, hipped clay tile roof with shallow overhanging eaves. There is a recessed covered porch found at the central portion of the primary façade. Along the porch are wood framed double hung windows and a secondary French door entry with wood framed screen door. A tiled conical roof bay window accentuates the northern end of the primary façade which includes a fixed wood framed center window with four divided lite uppers flanked by four-over-one double hung wood windows. On the right of the primary entrance is a projecting gable with a large inset scalloped tripartite wood window with a set of 10 divided lites flanking a central fixed window.

The north side façade features a wood double hung window, water heater closet door, and clay tube drains. The rear elevation features a series of French doors and grouped vinyl windows. The same stucco wall finish, clay tile roof, and restrained decorative details continue on this elevation. The façade also features a raised deck, a stucco wall, and metal rails. The south (side) façade consists of a pair of tripartite windows with a central fixed window with four-lite uppers flanked by a pair of one-over-one double hung windows. A pair of arched windows also flank the stucco clad chimney at the west end. A south facing arched stucco entry with wood paneled door is found at the east end providing access to the rear.

A curved, low-height, stucco wall surrounds a concrete accessibility ramp that leads from the driveway and curves to the front porch. It has tile pavers and a decorative wrought-iron gate that surrounds the main entry and porch.

The Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) features a large wood tripartite window located within the infilled garage door, which is recessed in the stucco. Double-hung windows and double French doors are

located on the north façade. The east façade of the ADU has double-hug windows and an AC unit. A stucco arched gate connects the ADU to the main house.

Following the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition, the romantic ideal of Spanish and Latin American architecture was revived. What resulted was the Spanish Eclectic style which was the predominant style in Southern California between 1915 and 1940, significantly altering the architectural landscape until the Modernist movement took hold during and after WWII. The style uses decorative details borrowed from the entire history of Spanish architecture. These may be of Moorish, Byzantine, Gothic, or Renaissance inspirations, and unusually rich and varied series of decorative precedents. The style employed a variety of floor plans, as well as gabled, cross-gabled, gabled and hipped, hipped, and flat roof forms with parapets. Other character defining features include Mission and Spanish clay tile; focal windows; arched windows and other openings, and accented entries.

Of the seven aspects of integrity, design, materials, and workmanship are the most critical to the property's ability to convey significance under HRB Criterion C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Eclectic style. The property, which has been modified as detailed in the beginning of the analysis section of this report, retains overall integrity of design, materials, and workmanship despite the modifications.

Changes that have been made to the main house do not significantly impair integrity as it relates to HRB Criterion C. The infill of three windows, replacement door with a water heater closet door, and replacement wood double-hung window in a modified opening on the north, side, facade do not impact any primary character defining features and are minor in scale. The addition and deck on the rear do not significantly impact the Spanish Eclectic design as they were added on a façade with minimal character defining features. These additions are also smaller in scale to the main massing of the resource and do not change the setting or feeling of the resource. Changes to the primary façade include modification to the original porch wall and installation of a cast-in-place concrete accessibility ramp and steps with a stone tile finish providing access to the centrally located concrete porch.

The ramp and modifications to the front porch wall minorly impact the integrity of design and materials of the house. While integrity of design and materials are more important to Criterion C than setting, feeling, location, or association, the impact to design and materials do not impact the resource's ability to convey its significance through Criterion C. Specifically, the resource is still able to showcase all character-defining features and the elements of design that were changed, including the walkway and few feet of porch wall are minor in the overall design impact of the house. The generally at-grade orientation of the porch results in a minimal visual impact of the ramp, which lessens the integrity loss of design. Material integrity-wise, the porch only interacts with the ramp at a singular porch wall. The work done to minimize the ramp, including the reduction in height, also reduced impacts to integrity. The stucco work done in 2025 improved the overall integrity of the resource through the restoration of an appropriate stucco texture. Overall, the property retains integrity to its 1927 period of significance under HRB Criterion C.

Significance Statement: The resource continues to convey the historic significance of the Spanish Eclectic style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including horizontal orientation and asymmetrical composition. The residence feature varied tiled roof forms including

flat with parapet, gable, pyramidal hip, and bay; exterior sand stucco finish; arched focal window at the primary façade as well as a bay window and double hung and arched windows; stucco clad chimney; and a hipped entry tower feature with a recessed wood framed arched door. Fenestration consists mainly of wood windows in various lite patterns and operations.

Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion C.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

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. 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 Elmo and Angeline Crabtree Spec House #3 located at 4192 Rochester Drive be designated with a period of significance of 1927 under HRB Criterion C as an example of Spanish Eclectic style architecture. The designation excludes the detached ADU due to substantial alterations.



Kelsey Kaline
Associate Planner



Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison
City Planning Department

KK/SS

Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution
2. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 11/20/2025

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 11/20/2025, to consider the historical designation of the **ELMO AND ANGELINE CRABTREE SPEC HOUSE #3** (owned by Riley Family 2009 Trust 02-18-09, 4192 Rochester Road, San Diego, CA 92116) located at **4192 Rochester Road, San Diego, CA 92116**, APN: **465-070-0400**, further described as LOT A POR OF LOT 21 BLK 8 MAP 1848 & POR OF\ 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 Elmo and Angeline Crabtree Spec House #3 on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Eclectic style of architecture. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Spanish Eclectic style architecture and retains integrity from its 1927 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features asymmetrical façade, stucco cladding, varied roof forms with tile roofing and little eave overhang, an arched focal window, a central tower, stucco chimney, arched wooden entry door, and fenestration consisting mainly of wood windows in various lite patterns and operations. 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 designation shall exclude the detached ADU due to substantial alterations to the garage structure.

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:

BY: _____
KRISTI BYERS, Chair
Historical Resources Board

APPROVED: HEATHER FERBERT,
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: _____
LINDSEY SEBASTIAN,
Deputy City Attorney