



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: September 9, 2026 REPORT NO. HRB-26-034

HEARING DATE: September 24, 2026

SUBJECT: **ITEM #6 – Katie and Oliver Stewart Spec House #1**

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

APPLICANT: Scott C. Constance and Vinutha S. Gowda Co-Trustees of the Constance Gowda Family Trust; represented by Allen Hazard and Janet O'Dea

LOCATION: 4126 Stephens Street, Uptown Community, Council District 3
APN 443-461-13-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of Katie and Oliver Stewart Spec House located at 4126 Stephens Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Katie and Oliver Stewart Spec House #1 located at 4126 Stephens Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1922 under HRB Criterion C. The designation excludes the 1935 southwest corner addition and the 2023 rear accessory dwelling unit. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Craftsman style with Neoclassical Revival features and retains integrity from its 1922 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a compact bungalow form, horizontal wood siding, and a low-pitched roof characteristic of the Craftsman style. Neoclassical Revival influences can be seen in the symmetrical façade, the front porch's central arch, boxed eaves, soffit dentils, arched attic vents and arched divided-lite, wood, double-hung windows.

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 subject resource includes a single-family residence, in the Mission Hills neighborhood of the Uptown Community.

The property was identified in the 2016 Uptown Community Plan Area Historic Resources Survey Report and given a Status Code of 5D3, "appears eligible for local listing or designation as a contributor to an eligible local historic district."

The historic name of the resource, the Katie and Oliver Stewart Spec House #1 has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Katie and Oliver Stewart, who constructed the house as a speculation house.

ANALYSIS

The property located at 4126 Stephens Street is a one-story, Craftsman style with Neoclassical Revival influences, single-family residential building constructed in 1922 in the Uptown Community Planning Area. Other structures present on the site include a rear accessory dwelling unit constructed in 2023. The property is situated on an interior residential lot in the Mission Hills neighborhood, with the primary elevation oriented towards Stephens Street. The surrounding area is developed primarily with single-family residences of varying architectural styles and construction dates. The property remains in its original location.

Since its construction in 1922, the property has been modified as follows: In 1935, an addition was constructed at the southwest corner of the residence. In 2022, the detached garage at the rear of the property was demolished. In 2023, a new accessory dwelling unit (ADU) was constructed at the rear of the property. The ADU project was reviewed by staff and determined to be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Allen Hazard and Janet O'Dea, 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 1922 in the Craftsman style with Neoclassical Revival influences. The building has a compact, symmetrical bungalow form, horizontal wood siding, and a low-pitched hipped roof with cross gables and boxed eaves. The primary façade features a centrally located arched porch roof supported at each end by matching subtly battered Tuscan columns. The oversized soffit dentils add a Neoclassical decorative element to the otherwise Craftsman form. The residence also features symmetrically arranged arched attic vents and arched, divided-light, wood double-hung windows. Together, these elements illustrate the blending of the Craftsman and Neoclassical Revival styles.

With origins in the British Arts and Crafts movement, born in response to the overly ornate Victorian aesthetic and the highly mechanized Industrial Revolution, Craftsman style architecture was popular in the United States largely between 1905 and 1930. Early examples by Greene and Greene were highly publicized in magazines, thus familiarizing the rest of the nation with the style. As a result, a flood of pattern books appeared, offering plans for Craftsman bungalows. One story vernacular examples are often called simply bungalows. Character defining features of Craftsman architecture

include a low-pitched, gabled roof with wide, unenclosed eave overhang; exposed roof rafters; decorative beams or braces; full or partial-width porches supported by tapered square columns or pedestals; decorative attic vents; wood or stucco cladding; and wood frame and sash windows in fixed, double hung and casement varieties.

The Neoclassical style was an architectural trend from the late 1800s to the mid-1900s. It incorporated previously established elements of the late 18th -century Classical Revival and Adam (Federal) styles as well as the early 19th -century Greek Revival style, sometimes combining them in the same building. The style had two primary phases of design. The first period, from 1900 to 1920, emphasized hipped roofs and elaborate columns. The later period, from roughly 1925 through the 1950s, emphasized side-gabled roofs and simple, slender columns. In general, both phases of the Neoclassical style are best identified by symmetrical façades, typically dominated by a full-height porch with the roof supported by classical columns. Neoclassical houses usually have a boxed eave with a moderate overhang, frequently with dentils or modillions beneath; a wide frieze band is occasionally found beneath the cornice. Doorways commonly have elaborated, decorative surrounds with based on Greek Revival, Federal, or even Georgian precedents. Windows are rectangular with double-hung multi-pane sashes.

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 Craftsman Bungalow and Neoclassical Revival styles. The property has been modified as detailed at the beginning of the analysis section of this report. However, these modifications are located primarily at the southwest corner and rear of the property and do not substantially impair the building's character-defining features. The resource retains its compact, symmetrical bungalow form; low-pitched roof; central arched porch roof; elephantine, subtly battered Tuscan columns; porch dentils; symmetrical arched attic vents; and arched, divided-light, wood double-hung windows. Therefore, the property retains integrity to its 1922 period of significance under HRB Criterion C.

Significance Statement: The resource continues to convey the historic significance of the Craftsman style with Neoclassical influences. Specifically, the resource features a compact bungalow form, horizontal wood siding, and a low-pitched roof characteristic of the Craftsman style. Neoclassical Revival influences can be seen in the symmetrical façade, the front porch's central arch, boxed eaves, soffit dentils, arched attic vents and arched divided-lite, wood, double-hung windows. 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 Katie and Oliver Stewart Spec House #1 located at 4126 Stephen Street to be designated with a period of significance of 1922 under HRB Criterion C as a resource that exhibits the distinctive characteristics of the Craftsman style with Neoclassical Revival influences. The designation excludes the 1935 southwest corner addition and the 2023 rear accessory dwelling unit.



Rafael Dooijes
Intern
Heritage Preservation



Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner/ HRB
City Planning Department

RD/SS

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on , to consider the historical designation of the **KATIE AND OLIVER STEWART SPEC HOUSE #1** (owned by Constance Gowda Family Trust A 05-29-14, 4126 Stephens Street, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **4126 Stephens Street, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **443-461-1300**, further described as BLK 13 LOTS 9 & 10 S 46 FT 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 KATIE AND OLIVER STEWART SPEC HOUSE #1 on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Craftsman style with Neoclassical Revival features and retains integrity from its 1922 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a compact bungalow form, horizontal wood siding, and a low-pitched roof characteristic of the Craftsman style. Neoclassical Revival influences can be seen in the symmetrical façade, the front porch's central arch, boxed eaves, soffit dentils, arched attic vents and arched divided-lite, wood, double-hung windows. 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 1935 southwest corner addition and the 2023 rear accessory dwelling unit.

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