



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: November 5, 2020 REPORT NO. HRB-20-061

HEARING DATE: November 19, 2020

SUBJECT: **ITEM #11 – 4386 North Talmadge Drive**

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

APPLICANT: Michael S Talbott Trust and Alina R Talbott Trust represented by Landmark Historic Preservation

LOCATION: 4386 North Talmadge Drive, Kensington-Talmadge Community, Council District 9, APN 465-332-09-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property located at 4386 North Talmadge Drive as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the property located at 4386 North Talmadge Drive under any adopted HRB Criteria.

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 contains a single-family residence with an attached garage. The house is located at the upper edge of a steep canyon slope in the Talmadge Park subdivision.

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

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report (HRRR) was prepared by Legacy 106, Inc., and an addendum was submitted to address integrity issues raised by staff. The HRRR finds that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria A and C, and the addendum provides more information in support of Criterion C. Staff disagrees with both the HRRR and the addendum and finds that the property is not

significant under any HRB Criteria. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows.

CRITERION A - Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's, a community's or a neighborhood's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development.

While the applicant and current consultant are not pursuing designation under Criterion A, it is recommended in the HRRR. Research into the history of the property at 4386 North Talmadge Drive did not reveal any information to indicate that the property exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's or Kensington-Talmadge's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development. The HRRR asserts that the property is significant under Criterion A "for its role in the Talmadge Park community and architectural history" because it was used in advertisements for Talmadge Park when the subdivision was being developed. However, the analysis in the HRRR does not offer any evidence that the subject property reflected the development of the community in any special way compared to other properties that were used in advertisements for Talmadge Park at that time. Furthermore, the HRRR does not provide information to allow for a comparison of the incidence of images of the subject property versus images of other properties in those advertisements. Research did not reveal that this property reflects a special element of the development of the City or community's development with respect to promoting the Talmadge Park subdivision, or of any other aspect of development. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion A.

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 subject property contains a single-family residence with an attached garage constructed in 1927 in the Spanish Eclectic style. Due to the building's location towards the top of a canyon slope, it is split-level with one story in the front and three stories in the rear. The attached garage opens onto the street, while the rest of the house is set farther back, sunken about six feet below street level, and fronted by a terraced yard. The building is clad in a light sand stucco and features roofs clad in red clay Mission tiles, flat roofs, and some rear roof sections clad in composition shingles. The main entrance is set in a round tower at the corner formed by the southeast (side) wall of the garage and the southwest (front) wall of the house. The tower features a conical roof clad in red clay Mission tiles, topped by a dovecote that also has a tiled conical roof. The main entry features an arched wood plank door. A small arched niche above the doorway is fronted by a decorative iron grille. To the southeast of the corner tower, there is a chimney topped with arched flues openings and Mission tiles. Aside from the modern windows described below, the house features wood, multi-lite windows, including a window with a stained glass design.

Several modifications have been made to the property since its 1927 date of construction. The garage was extended forward by 44 inches, filling in the area beneath the garage's tiled shed roof. This resulted in the enclosure of two pony walls topped by a series of wood rods. The wood rods were recently partially re-exposed. The garage originally featured two garage doors separated by a post, while it currently features one modern roll-up door. A fountain has been added just inside the front perimeter wall. The walkway leading from the front gate to the main entrance has been clad in hexagonal clay tiles, and the front patio and an area along the side of the house have been clad in

Saltillo tiles, both at unknown dates. The rear of the house features several roof sections clad in composition shingles, and a non-original glass block window. The house also has three vinyl windows that are outside of the public view, which the Historical Resource Research Report says were installed in 1997. At the east corner of the house, there is a patio with a deck on top that is not shown on the Assessor's Building Record. The Building Record does indicate an "uncovered patio" in an area that is currently enclosed, so the deck may have simply been drawn in the incorrect location on the Building Record. Cumulatively, these modifications significantly impair integrity of design, materials and feeling as it relates to Criterion C.

In addition to the modifications mentioned above, the addendum to the report provides details on work done to the property that was approved by former staff members as consistent with the Standards. Three changes were approved by staff: the removal of modern tiles from around the front doorway, the restoration of a set of French doors to a four-lite pattern, and the addition of a low wall along the perimeter of the front of the parcel. This wall was approved by staff as consistent with the Standards via email in 2017.

The Spanish Eclectic style arose out of the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition, which popularized a romantic ideal of Spanish and Latin American architecture. The Spanish Eclectic style was the predominant style in Southern California between 1915 and 1940, significantly altering its 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, such as Moorish, Byzantine, Gothic, and Renaissance precedents. Character-defining features include Mission and Spanish clay tile; focal windows; arched windows and other openings; and accented entries.

Although the house retains many of the character defining features of the Spanish Eclectic style, such as red clay Mission tile roofs, smooth stucco exterior, and arched main entrance with a plank door, the modifications have resulted in a loss of integrity to the 1927 period of significance. The extension of the garage, loss of original arrangement of garage doors and pony walls, and the front tile walkway and patio detract from the original design of the house. Cumulatively, these modifications to the resource significantly impair its integrity of design, materials and feeling to the extent that the building no longer retains integrity as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of its original Spanish Eclectic design, and therefore staff does not recommend designation under 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 property located at 4386 North Talmadge Drive not be designated under any HRB Criteria.



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Development Services Department

GT/ss

Attachment(s):

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