



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: November 5, 2020 REPORT NO. HRB-20-059

HEARING DATE: November 19, 2020

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – R.L. and Ruby Starrett Spec House #1**

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

APPLICANT: Jeffrey Michalowski and Inga Lintvedt represented by IS Architecture

LOCATION: 2124 Upas Street, North Park Community, Council District 3  
APN 453-361-06-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the R.L. and Ruby Starrett Spec House #1 located at 2124 Upas Street as a historical resource.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the R.L. and Ruby Starrett Spec House #1 located at 2124 Upas Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1929 under HRB Criterion C. The designation shall include the detached garage. 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 and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1929 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features red clay Mission tile roofs, multiple roof planes including a flat roof with a parapet, shallow eaves, an asymmetrical façade, a hand-troweled stucco finish, multi-lite wood windows, arched openings including an arched focal window, a walled entry courtyard, and a corner tower.

### 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 is in the middle of a block in the Pauly's Addition subdivision. The front of the building faces south, towards the front of the parcel and towards Balboa Park across the street.

The property was located within the boundary of the 2016 *North Park Community Plan Area Historic Resources Survey* but was not identified in the survey because it was not evaluated at that time.

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

## ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by IS Architecture, 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 subject resource was originally constructed in 1929 as a one-story, single-family residence in the Spanish Eclectic style. The house is clad in hand-tooled stucco. It features several different roof forms. From west to east across the front of the building, there is a front-gable section, a shed roof section over a porch, an octagonal hipped roof on top of a corner tower, and a side-gable roof section over a stucco porte-cochere. These roof sections are clad in red clay Mission tiles. Behind the front tiled roofs, there is a flat roof with a parapet. The flat roof covers most of the house. The detached garage also has a parapet. The house features multi-lite wood windows, including a large, arched focal window in the front-gable bay. The porte-cochere off the east side of the house features wide arched openings that span the remaining width of the parcel. The driveway and front entry patio are made of pink concrete.

The house has undergone few alterations since its 1929 date of construction. The current garage wood tilt-up door was installed at an unknown date. The metal channel that guided the original sliding garage door is still present above the existing door. The porte-cochere originally featured stucco posts near the center of the front and back openings. The posts broke those openings into two arched openings, one of which spanned the width of the driveway, and second, smaller one that spanned the area between the driveway and the house. These posts were removed at an unknown date. Finally, a door on the east (side) elevation was replaced with a more modern door at an unknown date. These modifications do not significantly impair integrity of design, materials, workmanship or feeling as it relates to Criterion C.

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.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Spanish Eclectic style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including red clay Mission tile roofs, multiple roof planes including a flat roof with a parapet, shallow eaves, an asymmetrical façade, a hand-troweled stucco finish, multi-lite wood windows, arched openings

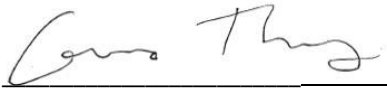
including an arched focal window, a walled entry courtyard, and a corner tower. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion C.

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 the R.L. and Ruby Starrett Spec House #1 located at 2124 Upas Street be designated with a period of significance of 1929 under HRB Criterion C as a good example of the Spanish Eclectic style. The designation shall include the detached garage.



Gemma Tierney  
Associate Planner



Suzanne Segur  
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison  
Development Services Department

GT/ss

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A  
ADOPTED ON 11/19/2020

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 11/19/2020, to consider the historical designation of the R.L. and Ruby Starrett Spec House #1 (owned by Jeffrey Michalowski and Inga Lintvedt, 2124 Upas Street, San Diego, CA 92104) located at **2124 Upas Street, San Diego, CA 92104**, APN: **453-361-06-00**, further described as BLK 20 POR 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 R.L. and Ruby Starrett 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 Spanish Eclectic style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1929 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features red clay Mission tile roofs, multiple roof planes including a flat roof with a parapet, shallow eaves, an asymmetrical façade, a hand-troweled stucco finish, multi-lite wood windows, arched openings including an arched focal window, a walled entry courtyard, and a corner tower. 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 include the detached garage.

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: \_\_\_\_\_  
DAVID MCCULLOUGH, Chair  
Historical Resources Board

APPROVED: MARA W. ELLIOTT,  
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
LINDSEY SEBASTIAN,  
Deputy City Attorney