



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: January 14, 2021 REPORT NO. HRB-21-008

HEARING DATE: January 28, 2021

SUBJECT: **ITEM #11 – 3752 Park Boulevard**

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

APPLICANT: JMAN at the Mr Rob LP represented by Heritage Architecture and Planning

LOCATION: 3752 Park Boulevard, Uptown Community, Council District 3  
APNs 452-200-56-00 & 452-200-57-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property located at 3752 Park Boulevard as a historical resource.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the property located at 3752 Park Boulevard 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 is located on the northwest corner of Park Boulevard and Robinson Avenue, in the Pueblo Lands subdivision.

The property is located within the boundary of the *Uptown Community Plan Area Historic Resources Survey* (2016) but the current building on the property did not exist when the survey fieldwork was conducted (2004-2006 and 2014). Instead, the building that previously existed on the parcel was surveyed.

### ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Heritage Architecture & Planning, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria C and D. Staff disagrees 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.*

Given the building's location and construction year, it is part of the "Neighborhood Revitalization and the LGBTQ Community: 1970-Present" historic context outlined in the Uptown Community Plan Area Historic Resources Survey Report (2016). However, due to the property's recent construction date, occurring at the end of the chronological period of this historic context, not enough information is currently available to determine whether the property exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's or Uptown's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion A.

CRITERION B - *Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.*

Research into the owners and tenants of the property at 3752 Park Boulevard did not reveal any individuals who could be considered historically significant in local, state or national history. Furthermore, no events of local, state or national significance are known to have occurred at the subject property. Therefore, the property is not eligible for designation under HRB Criterion B.

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 building was constructed in 2015 in the Unifying Material substyle of 21<sup>st</sup>-century Modernism. It is a seven-story, mixed-use apartment building featuring floor-to-ceiling metal-framed windows and board-formed concrete. The first floor contains a restaurant, and the top floor is a penthouse. A concrete pier at the southeast corner and horizontal bands of concrete at the top of the building create the outer edges of a block shape, within which there are voids to allow for more natural light to enter the center of the building. Within those edges, along the south elevation, there is a series of three projecting ellipses plus the concrete corner pier alternating with three voids. The three projecting ellipses end in cantilevered concrete balconies at floors 2-6. The north elevation features three ellipses and two voids. The east elevation features floating wall clad in black metal panels.

There are no known alterations to the building since its 2015 date of construction.

The Unifying Material style is identified as a substyle of 21<sup>st</sup>-century Modernism in *A Field Guide to American Houses* (2015) by Virginia McAlester. The book provides a brief survey of 21<sup>st</sup>-century Modernism grouped into 4 substyles based on the observations of the author. McAlester notes that these substyles emerged from the widespread use of CAD software and that they generally "relax the International in some manner." The Unifying Material style often take advantage of newly available cladding materials and technologies. While the subject property uses board-formed concrete rather than a newly invited cladding material, it nonetheless fits into this substyle due to its use of a unifying cladding material applied to a building that has the angular forms and negative space characteristic of many 21<sup>st</sup>-century Modernist buildings.

While a building does not have to be 45 years old or older to be designated, it is more difficult to adequately evaluate the historical significance of recently constructed structures due to the lack of

perspective on their historic context. For this reason, most properties from the recent past that are historically designated are of exceptional importance within their historic context. Due to the subject property's recent construction date, insufficient time has passed to objectively evaluate whether it is significant within its historic context as a resource that embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, in comparison to other examples of the style. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion C.

*CRITERION D - Is representative of a notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.*

The subject property at 3752 Park Boulevard was designed and constructed by Jonathan Segal, FAIA. Segal was born in South Carolina and raised in Manhattan Beach, California. He received his architectural degree at the University of Idaho. After graduating, he moved to San Diego and began working for Homer Delawie, a recognized modernist architect. He later worked for Antoine Predock, who was then designing an auditorium at UCSD. Around 1988, Segal began his first design-build project. Due to the success of this project, he quit his job working for Predock and began his own firm. In his future projects, he continued to purchase his project sites and act as both the architect and developer of his projects. He has built residential, mixed-use and live/work buildings. In the 1990s and 2000s, he constructed smaller multi-unit buildings (maximum of 3 stories and 20 units) that emphasized exterior space using outdoor walkways and stairways and street-level parking plazas. Beginning in 2010, he began to construct taller, mixed-use buildings made of concrete and glass. Although these buildings did not include the exterior circulation of his earlier buildings, they still emphasized an indoor-outdoor connection by using balconies, floor-to-ceiling windows, and creating voids between building sections that allow for natural light to enter the center portions of the building's overall mass. The subject property is an example of these more recent concrete buildings.

Segal's projects have been recognized as exceptional at the local, state, and national levels. In 2003, he became the youngest architect in the history of San Diego to be inducted into the AIA College of Fellows. His projects have received more National AIA Residential architect awards than any architect in San Diego history, and more than 70 local, state, or national distinctions. According to the Historical Resource Research Report, the subject building has won the most awards of any of his projects. Segal also lectures on the "Architect as Developer" mode in which he has worked.

Segal has not been established by the Historical Resources Board as a Master Architect, Designer or Builder. While he is clearly a significant architect, insufficient time has passed to objectively evaluate his career within its historic context. Additionally, because Segal's career is still active, it cannot be determined how the subject property will relate to his overall body of work at the end of his career. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion D.

*CRITERION E - Is listed or has been determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or is listed or has been determined eligible by the State Historical Preservation Office for listing on the State Register of Historical Resources.*

The property at 3752 Park Boulevard has not been listed on or determined eligible for listing on the State or National Registers. Therefore, the property is not eligible for designation under HRB Criterion E.

CRITERION F - *Is a finite group of resources related to one another in a clearly distinguishable way or is a geographically definable area or neighborhood containing improvements which have a special character, historical interest or aesthetic value or which represent one or more architectural periods or styles in the history and development of the City.*

The property at 3752 Park Boulevard is not located within a designated historic district. Therefore, the property is not eligible for designation under HRB Criterion F.

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 3752 Park Boulevard not be designated under any HRB Criteria.



Gemma Tierney  
Associate Planner



Suzanne Segur  
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison  
Development Services Department

GT/ss

Attachment(s):

1. Assessor's Parcel Map
2. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover