



Save Our Heritage Organisation
Protecting San Diego's architectural and cultural heritage since 1969

Monday, July 19, 2021

City of San Diego
Chair McCullough, Historical Resources Board & staff
202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: July 22, 2021 agenda –Items 1, 4, and 7

Chair McCullough, Board members & staff,

Item 1: 807 La Jolla Rancho Road – Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO) concurs with the staff report and finds this resource significant under Criterion B for an association with William S. Ivans, a prominent San Diego sailplane pilot who lived in the home, flew in San Diego from 1962 through 1999, and won many awards and recognitions for his records and contributions to the field. SOHO also concurs under Criterion C; this is an exceptional example of Contemporary style design with post-and-beam influences and a rare method of construction.

Highly significant under Criterion B for an association with William S. Ivans, this is one of America's greatest sailplane pilots, living in San Diego from 1962 through his passing in 1999, where he continued to set records and popularize the unique sport of glider flying. Elected to the Soaring Hall of Fame in 1962, the same year he began to reside along La Jolla Rancho Road, Ivans was President of the Soaring Society of America (SSA) from 1963-64. In 1967, Ivans set a national speed record in El Mirage, California by flying a Sisu 1A; he skimmed across the desert at 84 mph over 62-miles. Ivans was a successful leader at Cohu, an electronics and semiconductor company, from 1957 through 1983, and played an important role in the local business community while popularizing the unique sport of glider flying. Serving as an US representative to the international soaring community for 14 years, Ivans received a second Exceptional Service Award from the SSA in 1970. Other records include flying a Schmepp-Hirth Nimbus II over a 500km triangle on July 26, 1984 going 86.7mph and just two days later flying a 300km triangle at 92.5 mph, not to mention earning a 1000K Diploma for a motorless flight of more than 1000km or that his Nimbus II sailplane currently resides at the National Air and Space Museum.

SOHO also finds this exceptional c. 1961 Contemporary style home with post-and-beam influences to be intact and significant under Criterion C with a rare method of construction. Designed and constructed by Robert Liebner, a former General Motors aerospace engineer, this unique home is thought to be San Diego's first use of cantilevered tapered steel beams for residential construction, illustrating an uncommon element of Criterion C, method of construction. An excellent and unusual example of the style, the use of these cantilevered beams enables best use of the lot and its expansive views. Other character-defining features include the site-specific design and orientation, redwood siding, clerestory and floor to ceiling windows, sliding glass doors, and the low pitch gable roof with deep eaves over a split-level design. Additionally, the 1970 carport extension, to accommodate Ivans hang glider, should be called out in the resolution and retained.

Item 4: Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics (IGPP) Munk Laboratory – SOHO supports National Register listing for the Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics (IGPP) Munk Laboratory,

Scripps Institution of Oceanography, located at 8800 Biological Grade. SOHO finds this Modern Post-and-Beam style resource highly intact and significant under Criteria A, B, C, and Criteria Consideration G in the areas of Education and Science, and Architecture with a 1963 through 1982 period of significance. This is a truly special and unique resource for the breadth of groundbreaking oceanographic and geophysical science achieved here, its distinctive association with Dr. Walter Munk and his development of the physical oceanography field, and as the iconic and masterful work of Lloyd Ruocco, an essential influence on the Modern movement in San Diego.

Item 7: 5175 Del Mar Mesa Rd – SOHO concurs with the staff report and finds the rare and early William and Bertha Niemann Homestead significant under Criteria A and B with an 1892 through 1950 period of significance. Additionally, we find it significant under C as a rare and intact remaining building type, from an early agricultural period in San Diego County history, and as a valuable example of craftsmanship.

Associated with one of the pioneering families of Carmel Valley and one of the first homesteads for the region, this is a highly significant and special historical element under Criterion A, for all of San Diego. The evolution of this farmhouse, beginning with its construction in 1892, and various additions, illustrate the early history, building typology and architecture of the region. With a strong level of remaining integrity, this is quite a rare existent building. Also significant under Criterion B, for William and Bertha Niemann, this early Carmel Valley homestead is where they raised their family and cultivated land, which contributes to the cultural landscape, sense of place and character of the larger region.

SOHO also finds this resource significant under Criterion C as an excellent and rare example of a late 19th century farmhouse, whose method of construction demonstrates the rare craftsmanship of single-wall construction. Beginning in 1892, the evolution of this resource is an important demonstration for how people lived during this period, expanding their house and farmstead as time, resources and people allowed. The changes in material and construction, as this homestead evolved, also speaks to the changes in technology and architecture, which heightens the level of significance for this resource under Criterion C, because it serves as a visible and rare surviving architectural timeline.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,



Bruce Coons
Executive Director
Save Our Heritage Organisation