



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: July 8, 2021 REPORT NO. HRB-21-042

HEARING DATE: July 22, 2021

SUBJECT: **ITEM #3 – John H. Lovett Spec House # 1**

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

APPLICANT: Michael Meza represented by Johnson & Johnson Architecture

LOCATION: 4351 Bancroft Street, Normal Heights, Community, Council District 3  
APN 447-554-08-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the John H. Lovett Spec House # 1 located at 4351 Bancroft Street as a historical resource.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the John H. Lovett Spec House# 1 located at 4351 Bancroft Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1927 under HRB Criterion C. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Craftsman style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1927 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a low pitched, double gable roof; exposed rafter tails; wood vertical lattice roof vents; narrow clapboard siding; half-width front porch with tapered wood columns and brick support piers; brick chimney; and wood double hung and casement 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 resource is a one-story single-family home with a detached garage constructed in the craftsman style in 1927. It is located on east side of Bancroft Street in the Normal Heights neighborhood.

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

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

## ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Johnson & Johnson Architecture , which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria A and C. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion C, but not HRB Criterion A. 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.*

The resource located at 4351 Bancroft Street was constructed in 1927 with the intention to be sold as a single-family house.

The building was one of over five thousand single-family homes that were purchased in the State of California using a loan from The Veterans' Welfare Board as part of the economic incentives passed by the State of California as a way to support veterans, young and old, reintegrating back into society following World War I. The Veterans Welfare Act and The Veterans Home and Farm Act were passed in 1921 and were administered by the Veterans Welfare Board. The incentives provided by this legislation included preferential hiring in civil service jobs and funding for education, job training, healthcare, and housing.

The resource's first resident, George McCulloch, was a WWI veteran who used these incentives to purchase it six years after both of the state legislative acts had been passed. The resource's real estate developer, John Lovett, was a veteran as well, however, no information has been provided that he used any of these legislative incentives to build this resource with the express purpose to sell to a veteran using a loan from the Veteran's Welfare Board.

The information provided at this time does not justify the identification of the resource as a special element of economic development within the City of San Diego as an example of the state legislation put in place following World War I to provide for veterans as they became a growing part of California's population. Therefore, staff is not recommending 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 resource is a one-story, single family residence constructed in 1927. The house consists of an rectangular massing that is topped by a low pitched, double gable roof with exposed rafter tails on the side elevations, and is surrounded by clapboard wood siding and wooden, single lite windows. The front façade features a half-width covered porch. The gable end contains a wood vertical lattice roof vent and the roof is held up by tapered wood columns and brick support piers. The brick piers start on the ground and rise above the raised porch. A lip of the height of two bricks

tops the prier. On the wall covered by the porch is the front entry and a tri part window that consist of fixed center window with single lite casement windows on either side. The fixed window has a lite pattern of four over one. To the right of the porch is a set of dual casement windows. The south façade features two double hung windows and its center and a hopper window at each corner. The east elevation features a gable end containing a wood vertical lattice roof vent and an off-center rear entry with a small uncovered wood porch. The center of the left side contains one large double hung window, to the direct right of the door is a medium sized double hung window. The center of the north elevation features a raised two door side entry with a double hung window on either side that is topped by a separate roof that starts just below the main roof's rafter tails. The side shed roof extends with a cantilever bar out to cover the cement stairs and features exposed rafter tails that are set farther apart then the ones on the main roof. To the north of the side entry are two wide double hung windows. To the south is brick chimney with a hopper window on either side. The brick of the chimney matches in size and color the brick of front porches' support piers.

To the northeast is the detached garage which matches the house with its low-pitched gable roof with exposed rafter tails on the side elevations, and is surrounded by clapboard wood siding and wooden, single lite windows. The width is of a two-car garage, but on the west façade's left side is single car double swinging door entry. This south facade features a centered double hung window at its center, and the east façade features a casement window and a crawlspace vent with vertical. The north elevation is solid wall of clapboard siding.

The property has undergone a few alterations to the exterior of the house since it was first constructed in 1927. The side entry shed roof was added between 1956 and 1966. A raised concrete planter the to the northwest corner of the front porch was added between March 2018 and August 2020. These alterations do not significantly impair the resource's integrity.

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.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Craftsman style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including a low pitched, double gable roof; exposed rafter tails; wood vertical lattice roof vents; narrow clapboard siding; half-width front porch with tapered wood columns and brick support piers; brick chimney; and wood double hung and casement windows. Therefore, staff recommends 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.*

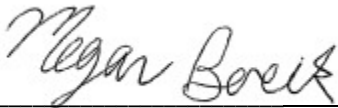
The subject property at 4351 Bancroft Street was built by Pack & Peterman and John H Lovett. Neither Pack & Peterman nor John H. Lovett have been established by the Historical Resources Board as a Master Architect, Designer or Builder, and there is insufficient information to designate either of that as such at this time. The report argues that both Pack & Peterman and John H. Lovett are potentially Master Builders, but no argument was made that this resource was an exemplary example of either of their works. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion D.

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

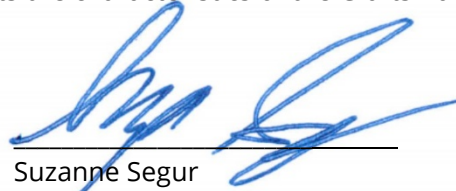
Designation brings with it the responsibility of maintaining the building in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The benefits of designation include the availability of the Mills Act Program for reduced property tax; the use of the more flexible Historical Building Code; flexibility 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 John H. Lovett Spec House # 1 located at 4351 Bancroft Street be designated with a period of significance of 1927 under HRB Criterion C as a resource that exhibits the characteristics of the Craftsman style.



Megan Bacik  
Junior Planner



Suzanne Segur  
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison  
Development Services Department

MB/SS

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER  
ADOPTED ON 7/22/2021

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 7/22/2021, to consider the historical designation of the Fred Heilbron House (owned by Thorp Marcus J W Trust 03-11-10, 4681 Harvey Road, San Diego, CA 92116) located at **2530-2532 A Street, San Diego, CA 92102**, APN: **534-151-04-00**, further described as BLK 30 LOTS 33 & 34 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.** , 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 Fred Heilbron House 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 influences and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1906 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a full width, covered front porch; wooden siding; exposed rounded rafter tails; and fenestration consisting of divided lite and single lite double hung wooden windows. Neoclassical elements are visible through the pedimented gable with fishscale shingles; decorative paneled entranceway; Doric porch columns; and simple cornice band located under the hipped roofline. 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.** .

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the designation shall exclude the north elevation additions as well as the garage and apartment building addressed as 2526-2528 A Street which were built outside the 1906 period of significance.

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