



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: January 13, 2022 REPORT NO. HRB-22-006

HEARING DATE: January 27, 2022

SUBJECT: **ITEM #04 – William and Frances Sutherland House**

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

APPLICANT: Michael A Mikus & Wen Liao; represented by IS Architecture

LOCATION: 1647 Los Altos Road, Pacific Beach Community, Council District 2
APN 416-090-46-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the William and Frances Sutherland House located at 1647 Los Altos Road as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the William and Frances Sutherland House located at 1647 Los Altos Road as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1955 under HRB Criterion C. The designation includes the original detached workshop, post-and-beam breezeway, and porte-cochère. The designation excludes the non-original 1960s pool, pool fence, gazebo, and changing rooms. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Contemporary style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1955 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a cross-gabled roof with deep overhangs, large rectangular and clerestory window groupings, vertical board-and-batten wood siding, post-and-beam breezeway with a flat roof; and the overhang-formed porte-cochère.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a preliminary review application to determine whether or not the building is historically significant as part of a constraints analysis for future development. The resource is a single-family residence with a detached workshop and porte-cochère.

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 William and Frances Sutherland House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of William M. Sutherland and Frances E. Sutherland, who constructed the house as their personal residence.

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 constructed in 1955 in the Contemporary style and includes a one-story cross-gabled residence, a one-story side-gabled detached workshop, and a porte-cochère with an original roughly oblong-shaped driveway. The resource's footprint is primarily rectangular, with a connected square towards the rear, thus forming an approximate "T" shape. It also features an extruded bay along the primary elevation. The front door opens to a post-and-beam breezeway, which leads toward the detached workshop. Both buildings are clad entirely with vertical board-and-batten wood siding, adorned with clerestory windows below the eaves, and topped with low-pitched asphalt shingle roofs. A pool was constructed behind the residence, and a board-and-batten changing room is affixed to the walls along the west elevation.

The south (primary) elevation of the house presents a post-and-beam wooden breezeway that extends from the front door. The front door is grouped next to two reeded floor-to-ceiling glass. The front bay, located west of the front door, features two sets of reeded/fixed and casement windows; the reeded window glazing is original. A three-part window grouping of two casements with a fixed center window is located towards the east of the front door. The east (secondary) elevation is defined by a prominent eave overhang supported by exposed purlins, creating a covered patio. An additional cover was installed in the southeast corner of the house, thus increasing the covered area. This elevation features clerestory windows along the gable end and a pair of single-lite French doors. The southern part of the east elevation includes a second set of French doors and a large rectangular fixed glazing. The west (secondary) elevation fenestration is simple—featuring a pair of casement windows and a small clerestory window along the side gable; it also features a two-room changing booth sided with board-and-batten. The southern part of the west elevation includes a glass-inset French door and an unelaborated rectangular brick chimney. The western half of the south (rear) elevation displays a series of four casement and fixed window sets. Towards the eastern half of the rear elevation, the gabled façade features large rectangular and clerestory windows and exposed purlins/ridge beams. On the easternmost part of this elevation, a fixed window grouping has been modified to accommodate an air conditioner.

A swimming pool is situated south of the residence. The pool area is enclosed by a glass and board-and-batten fence. A non-original gazebo is located on the southernmost part of the parcel. Both the front and rear yards contain brick retaining walls. The detached workshop building is located north

of the residence and features a wide overhanging eave extending southward, creating a porte-cochère. The porte-cochère does not connect to the post-and-beam breezeway cover, although an original board-and-batten fence forms a continuous segue from the aforementioned breezeway to the porte-cochère. The workshop features a pair of south-facing doors; the north-facing fenestration consists of clerestory, casement, and fixed windows. This building also exhibits exposed purlins along the north elevation.

Modifications to the property include construction of the pool in 1962, and the changing rooms and pool fence were presumably added during this time. Additionally, at unknown dates, the roof was re-shingled; a rear elevation window was modified to accommodate an air conditioner; the workshop's south façade door was reconfigured; and a photovoltaic panel was installed on the south elevation roof. Overall, this modification does not significantly impair the integrity of design, materials, workmanship, or feeling as it relates to HRB Criterion C.

Unlike earlier styles which are generally defined by exterior decorative details, the Contemporary style focused on interior spaces and their relation to the outdoors. Emphasis was placed on integrating the indoors with the outdoors by utilizing windows and exterior living areas such as balconies and courtyards. The style was popular in San Diego in the 1950's and 1960's largely because it could be easily adapted to hillside lots. Character defining features include strong roof forms with deep overhangs and exposed beams; large, aluminum framed windows; non-traditional exterior finishes including vertical wood siding, concrete block, stucco and flagstone; sun shades, screen or shadow block accents; broad masonry chimneys; and distinctive triangular, parabolic or arched forms. Contemporary houses often incorporate angular massing; attached carports or garages; courtyards or balconies; obscured or recessed entries; and split-level designs.

Significance Statement: The resource continues to convey the historic significance of the Contemporary style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style, including the cross-gabled roof form with deep overhangs, large clerestory window groupings, vertical wood board-and-batten siding, post-and-beam breezeway with a flat roof; and the overhang-formed porte-cochère. 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 1647 Los Altos Road was designed by Fred Earl Norris. Fred Earl Norris has not been established by the Historical Resources Board as a Master Architect, Designer or Builder, and there is insufficient information to designate him as such at this time. 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 William and Frances Sutherland House located at 1647 Los Altos Road be designated with a period of significance of 1955 under HRB Criterion C. The designation includes the original detached workshop, post-and-beam breezeway, and porte-cochère. The designation excludes the non-original 1960s pool, pool fence, gazebo, and changing rooms.



Alvin Lin
Junior Planner



Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison
Development Services Department

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Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 1/27/2022

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 1/27/2022, to consider the historical designation of the **William and Frances Sutherland House** (owned by Michael A Mikus & Wen Liao, 1647 Los Altos Road, San Diego, CA 92109) located at **1647 Los Altos Road, San Diego, CA 92109**, APN: **416-090-46-00**, further described as PAR 1 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 **William and Frances Sutherland 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 Contemporary style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1955 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a cross-gabled roof with deep overhangs, large rectangular and clerestory window groupings, vertical board-and-batten wood siding, post-and-beam breezeway with a flat roof; and the overhang-formed porte-cochère. 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 original detached workshop, post-and-beam breezeway, and porte-cochère.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the designation shall exclude the non-original 1960s pool, pool fence, gazebo, and changing rooms.

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

RECORDING REQUESTED BY
CITY OF SAN DIEGO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

WHEN RECORDED MAIL TO

HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD
ATTN: HRB SECRETARY
1222 FIRST AVENUE, MS 501
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101

SPACE ABOVE THIS LINE FOR RECORDER'S USE

RESOLUTION NUMBER **N/A**

HISTORICAL DESIGNATION OF PROPERTY ON

1647 Los Altos Road, San Diego, CA 92109

ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER **416-090-46-00**

HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD NUMBER **0**