



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: June 8, 2017 REPORT NO. HRB-17-037

HEARING DATE: June 22, 2017

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #7**

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

APPLICANT: Brian Sanders and Montinee J. Pongsiri; represented by Allen Hazard & Janet O'Dea

LOCATION: 3851 Hawk Street, Uptown Community, Council District 3
APN 451-071-15-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #7 located at 3851 Hawk Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #7 located at 3851 Hawk Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1920 under HRB Criteria C and D. The designation excludes the garage and guest house constructed outside of the period of significance. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Colonial Revival style with Craftsman influences and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1920 period of significance. Specifically, the resource displays a symmetrical front façade, multi-pane wood windows in adjacent pairs, side facing gambrel roof, accentuated front entry with Tuscan columns, flared siding and decorative attic vents.
2. The resource is representative of a notable work of Master Builder Martin V. Melhorn and retains integrity as it relates to the original 1920 design. Specifically, the house is notable as an example of Melhorn's work in the Colonial Revival style during a period when he began to move away from the familiar Craftsman house and experiment stylistically.

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 a one-story single-family residence constructed in 1920 in the Colonial Revival style with Craftsman influences.

The property was identified in the 2016 Uptown survey and given a Status Code of 5D3, "(appears to be a contributor to a district that appears eligible for local listing)."

The historic name of the resource, the Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #7, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Alberta Security Company, who constructed the house as a speculation house and the name of Martin V. Melhorn, a Master Builder.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Allen Hazard and Janet O'Dea, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria C and D and staff concurs. 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.

Research into the history of the property at 3851 Hawk Street did not reveal any information to indicate that 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 3851 Hawk Street 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 resource is a one-story single family residence constructed in 1920 in the Colonial Revival style with Craftsman influences. Behind the main house is a garage/guest house structure which was constructed at a later date and is excluded from this designation. The house features a L-shaped plan, narrow clapboard siding which flares slightly above the foundation and a side facing gambrel roof. The front façade is symmetrical, with a centrally located front entrance flanked by two sets of French doors. The Colonial Revival front door is accentuated by a vented eyebrow overhang

supported by Tuscan Columns. A matching smaller eyebrow vent dormer appears at the center of the roof's front façade. The original concrete front porch runs the length of the front façade. The house features several styles and sizes of wood windows including multi-pane double hung windows in adjacent pairs. The north elevation features a wide red brick chimney.

Several modifications have been made to the property since its construction in 1920. In 1993 the brick chimney was rebuilt to match the original. When conducting a field visit, historic resources staff took note that the solid massing of the chimney and newer bricks appeared to be out of character for a house of this style and time period but transitional photographs and physical evidence show that this was likely the original design. However, before the chimney was rebuilt it was covered with stucco and it was reconstructed with non-original oversized red bricks. On the rear of the building, three jalousie windows were added within the original openings at an unknown time. The garage was constructed at some time after the dwelling and the guest house was added to the garage in 1997. Additionally, the walkway from the sidewalk to the front entry is newer concrete but scored similarly to the original pattern. The modifications do not have significant impacts to integrity of design, workmanship or feeling, and the building retains integrity as it relates to architectural significance.

Following the Centennial Exposition of 1876 America experienced a rebirth of interest in its colonial past. Primarily popular from 1880 to 1955, Colonial Revival buildings reference the early English and Dutch homes of the Atlantic seaboard, particularly the Georgian and Federal styles. As with their prototypes, Colonial Revival structures generally have a symmetrical front façade with the principal areas of elaboration being entrances, windows and cornices. Roofs can be hipped, gable or gambrel and some variations feature a center gable projecting slightly from the primary façade. One-story side wings with flat roofs are common. Windows are typically double-hung sash with multi-pane glazing in one or both sashes and are commonly found in pairs, triples or bay windows. Front-facing gambrel roofs were most common in earlier revival houses while side gambrels became popular in the 1920s and '30s.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Colonial Revival style with Craftsman influences by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including a symmetrical front façade, multi-pane wood windows in adjacent pairs, side facing gambrel roof, accentuated front entry with Tuscan columns, flared siding and decorative attic vents. 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.

Martin V. Melhorn was born in Indiana in 1866. He lived and worked in Falls City, Nebraska and Denver, Colorado before moving to San Diego in 1911 with his wife, Alberta, and their son William. Melhorn established the Alberta Security Company in 1913 which focused primarily on the financial aspects of building construction. The Alberta Security Company and Melhorn purchased and built the subject property in 1919. Melhorn and his affiliates were prolific builders in the City of San Diego – particularly in the areas of Mission Hills, Hillcrest, University Heights, North Park and South Park – and numerous Melhorn-built homes have been listed on the San Diego Register. Melhorn's status as a Master Builder was established in 2003 with the designation of the Neil Brown/Martin V. Melhorn House at 4195 Palmetto Way (HRB Site #583).

The subject property was constructed in 1920 during a period of transition for Melhorn in which he began to move away from the building of Craftsman styled homes in favor of the Prairie, Colonial Revival, and Spanish Eclectic styles. 3851 Hawk Street exhibits both Colonial Revival and Craftsman influences illustrating this transitional phase and his skill for elegant design and quality constructions.

Significance Statement: The subject resource retains excellent integrity and continues to reflect Melhorn's original design, intent and aesthetic. The house is notable as an example of Melhorn's work in the Colonial Revival style during a period when he began to move away from the familiar Craftsman house and experiment stylistically. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion D as a notable work of Master Builder Martin V. Melhorn.

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 3851 Hawk Street 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 3851 Hawk Street 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.

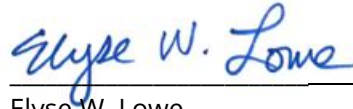
CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #7 located at 3851 Hawk Street be designated with a period of significance of 1920 under HRB Criterion C as a resource that exhibits the distinctive characteristics of the Colonial Revival style; and HRB Criterion D as a resource that is representative

of a notable work of Master Builder Martin V. Melhorn. The designation excludes the garage and guest house constructed outside of the period of significance.



Suzanne Segur
Assistant Planner



Elyse W. Lowe
Deputy Director
Development Services Department

SS/el

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 6/22/2017

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 6/22/2017, to consider the historical designation of the **Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #7** (owned by Brian Sanders and Montinee J. Pongsiri, Hawk Street, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **3851 Hawk Street, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **451-071-15-00**, further described as BLK 482 LOT 15 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 Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #7 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 Colonial Revival style with Craftsman influences and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1920 period of significance. Specifically, the resource displays a symmetrical front façade, multi-pane wood windows in adjacent pairs, side facing gambrel roof, accentuated front entry with Tuscan columns, flared siding and decorative attic vents. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

(2) The property is historically significant under CRITERION D as a notable work of Master Builder Martin V. Melhorn and retains integrity as it relates to the original 1920 design. Specifically, the house is notable as an example of Melhorn's work in the Colonial Revival style during a period when he began to move away from the familiar Craftsman house and experiment stylistically. 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 exclude the garage and guest house constructed outside of the 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: N/A

BY: _____
DAVID MCCULLOUGH, Chair
Historical Resources Board

APPROVED: MARA W. ELLIOTT,
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: _____
CORRINE NEUFFER,
Deputy City Attorney