THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: August 10, 2017 REPORT NO. HRB-17-047

HEARING DATE: August 24, 2017

SUBJECT: **ITEM #5 – William and Carrie Old Bungalow Court**

RESOURCE INFO: California Historical Resources Inventory Database (CHRID) link

APPLICANT: Atlas at 30th Street LLC represented by Scott A. Moomjian

LOCATION: 2002-2010 30th Street, Golden Hill Community, Council District 3
APN 539-155-13-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the William and Carrie Old Bungalow Court located at 2002-2010 30th Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the William and Carrie Old Bungalow Court located at 2002-2010 30th Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1948 under HRB Criteria A and C. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource is a special element of Golden Hill and San Diego's historical and architectural development and retains integrity to its 1948 date of construction and period of significance. Specifically, the resource embodies the character defining features of a recognized variety of bungalow court, is one of a finite and limited number of bungalow courts remaining which reflect the early- to mid-20th century development of multi-family housing in Golden Hill and San Diego, and retains integrity for that association.
2. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of a Minimal Traditional style bungalow court and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1948 date of construction and period of significance. Specifically, the resource retains an original attached full court layout; gabled roof forms with boxed eave and minimal overhang; wood shingle cladding accented with brick; multi-light wood double hung and fixed windows; and modest, compact size with simple plan forms.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a preliminary review application to determine whether or not the property is historically significant as part of a constraints analysis for future development. The property consists of a single parcel containing two attached units, one single-family unit and a detached garage structure arranged around a common central courtyard. The property is located at the northwest corner of 30th Street and Grape Street in the Seaman & Choate's Subdivision of the Golden Hill Community.

The property was identified in the 2016 Golden Hill Historic Resources Survey and included in a potential Residential Court Multiple Property Listing as a good example of residential court development.

The historic name of the resource, the William and Carrie Old Bungalow Court has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of William and Carrie Old, who constructed the bungalow court as their personal residence and investment property.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Technical Report was prepared by Scott A. Moomjian, which concludes that the resource is not significant under any HRB Criteria. Staff disagrees and finds that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion A and C. 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 development of the Golden Hill community began in the late 19th century and grew to contain diverse neighborhoods of both single-family and multi-family residential structures, as well as some commercial use areas along main thoroughfares. Much of the area's development was influenced by the establishment and growth of streetcar lines and the Panama California Exposition. Through the 1920s, Golden Hill was marked by robust residential construction until the years following the Great Depression during which there was a significant period of decline. In response to housing shortages during World War II, much of the area was rezoned to accommodate high-density residential development and there began a rise in multi-family residential construction and the conversion of some of the area's larger homes into multi-unit buildings.

One type of multi-family housing that emerged in Golden Hill and elsewhere in San Diego, and was attractive to both developer and resident alike, was the bungalow court. The history of bungalow courts and their characteristics are well outlined in an article in the Spring 1988 issue of the *Journal of San Diego History* entitled, "Bungalow Courts in San Diego: Monitoring a Sense of Place" (Attachment 1), and also in the Bungalow Court Context Statement prepared for the City of Pasadena, where the bungalow court is generally acknowledged to have originated in 1909. Bungalow courts are understood to be "well-designed, small houses carefully arranged around a planned open space." The article identifies four classifications of bungalow courts based on spatial arrangement: "(1) detached full court - the "classic" court consisting of individual cottages arranged around a spacious central garden (2) detached, narrow court - individual cottages arranged around a

long, narrow, garden-like walkway (3) attached, full court – when two or more of the bungalows share a common wall, and (4) attached, narrow court. Since the term "court" implies an enclosed, designed space, in all cases the building arrangement included an end structure and a proper garden."

The bungalow court was a unique type of housing solution during times of immense social change, and when housing was in short supply – it provided an attractive balance between the demands for both density and private living. The spatial arrangements of bungalow courts allowed a sense of community while still providing space for greenery and sometimes even private gardens. Living in a bungalow court was generally more affordable and less demanding than life in a single-family home, but not as sterile and impersonal than apartment living. Bungalow courts took advantage of the agreeable climate of Southern California and offered unique settings which fostered both community involvement and a good sense of security.

According to the 1988 article, few regions outside California saw meaningful quantities of bungalow courts develop. In San Diego, bungalow courts were built primarily in the communities surrounding Balboa Park and generally along or near the streetcar lines. In 1988, the article's authors reviewed the 1940 Sanborn map to take account of all bungalow courts within the central area of the City. At that time 217 of the 278 full bungalow courts (nearly 80%) shown on the 1940 Sanborn were extant, with only a handful in disrepair. The authors branded this rate of "staying power" of the bungalow court as a testament to its value as a housing type.

As noted in the Golden Hill Historic Resources Survey, bungalow courts are a relatively uncommon residential property type within Golden Hill and were constructed primarily between World War I and World War II. The bungalow courts were built in a variety of styles and provided unique living opportunities for those who could not afford a single family home. Despite their apparent popularity, fewer bungalow courts were built after World War II, as developers began to return their focus to single family homes and large apartments.

Residential Court Multiple Property Listings (RCMPLs) in Uptown, North Park and Golden Hill

The significance of the bungalow court as a limited resource in San Diego is also supported by the Residential Court Multiple Property Listings (RCMPLs) identified in the Uptown, North Park and Golden Hill Communities. These potential multiple property listings represent discontiguous groupings of resources which are thematically related and found individually eligible under one or more HRB Criteria. Each RCMPL identified a limited number of residential courts and a period of significance.

The RCMPL in the Uptown Survey identified approximately 150 residential courts and was given a period of significance of 1900-1960. The RCMPL of the North Park Survey identified approximately ninety (90) residential courts with a period of significance of 1920-1959. The RCMPL of the Golden Hill Survey identified a total of sixteen (16) residential courts, including the subject property, with a period of significance of 1920-1959. For these three RCMPLs, the periods of significance accommodated all the residential courts identified, to include not just bungalow courts but also the later and closely related linear courts or apartment courts. These survey results, while not entirely exhaustive, indicate the presence of approximately 256 total residential courts within the Uptown, North Park and Golden Hill communities, which together are comprised of roughly 20,533 land

parcels. These figures reveal that residential courts comprise approximately 1.25% of the building stock in the three communities where residential courts are most likely to be found City-wide; and when one considers that not all of the 256 residential courts identified will ultimately be found eligible, the limited and finite nature of residential courts become clear.

Within the Golden Hill community alone, the sixteen (16) residential courts identified in the RCMPL represent 0.56% of a total of roughly 2,857 land parcels. For Golden Hill, and more broadly for the communities of San Diego surrounding Balboa Park, bungalow courts are a finite resource representing a limited period of multi-family residential development that is very rarely if no longer seen in today's new construction. What bungalow courts offered during their time in Golden Hill and other centrally located suburbs was a unique and affordable housing option for the City's growing middle class in the early to middle part of the 20th century. The bungalow court provided safe and social living spaces considered ideal for singles, especially women entering the labor force, and young men returning from service in the military. The distinctive qualities of this type of multi-family housing contribute to an overall character and identity for San Diego suburban life.

The 1988 article is nearing thirty years old and the latest context and survey information from the Uptown, North Park, and Golden Hill surveys add to our understanding of the bungalow court and its significance to San Diego's residential development. It appears that some bungalow courts were built post-war, and most were built between the World Wars. However, a comprehensive historic context statement and survey focusing exclusively on bungalow courts in San Diego has not been performed in recent years, and without such information it is not clear precisely when the development of bungalow courts fully ceased. Nevertheless, bungalow courts can be adequately identified by their overall designs and spatial arrangements.

The subject property was included in the potential Residential Court Multiple Property Listing of the Golden Hill Survey and its date of construction is within the RCMPL's period of significance of 1920-1959. This bungalow court was built in 1948 in the Minimal Traditional style, with five residential units arranged around a central landscaped courtyard. Four attached units surround the courtyard on either side, and the fifth, single unit encloses the space at the rear. The central courtyard was formerly simple lawn, but remains landscaped and retains its courtyard feeling. The southwest corner of the property contains a five-bay garage structure to serve the five dwelling units, but ultimately does not contribute to nor detract from the proper bungalow court arrangement and feeling. The subject property's building arrangement, constitutes an attached, full (wide) court, with two or more of the bungalows sharing a common wall, a wide, landscaped court in the center, and a structure at the rear to properly enclose the courtyard.

Significance Statement: The resource reflects a special element of Golden Hill and San Diego's historical and architectural development and retains integrity to its 1948 date of construction and period of significance. Specifically, the resource embodies the character defining features of a recognized variety of bungalow court, is one of a finite and limited number of bungalow courts remaining which reflect the early- to mid-20th century development of multi-family housing in Golden Hill and San Diego, and retains integrity for that association. Therefore, staff recommends 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 2002-2010 30th 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 property is a multi-family residential court consisting of two duplexes, one single-family dwelling and a detached garage structure built in 1948 as a Minimal Traditional style bungalow court. At the property's main elevation, a central landscaped courtyard area is flanked by a pair of duplex structures on either side. The rear of the courtyard is enclosed by a single dwelling unit of matching style. The buildings have moderate-pitched gabled roof forms sheathed in composition shingle with boxed eaves and minimal overhang. A wide band of decorative trim is applied beneath the eave overhangs, in line with the window headers. Exterior walls are clad primarily in wood shingle and fenestration consists of wood divided-light windows of double hung and fixed varieties.

The two buildings to the north and south sides of the central courtyard match one another exactly in detailing and layout. Each unit has a main entry at the front or courtyard side and a secondary entry toward the Grape Street side or adjacent property. Each entry is marked by a small roof projection and entry stoop. Of particular note, the two covered entries at the east end of the duplex buildings each are integrated with a bay window projection marked by decorative brick cladding and wood divided-light fixed windows. The single dwelling unit at the rear of the courtyard matches the duplex buildings stylistically. Wood shingle cladding and divided light wood windows are accented by small areas of brick at the wide front porch area and at the south side exterior chimney. Main entries on all three buildings exhibit modest decorative door surrounds. At the southwest corner of the property, out of sight from the central courtyard area, a detached five-bay garage structure exhibits matching gable roof form and cladding, and provides valuable parking for the five residential units on site. All the buildings on site retain very good integrity and have not been subject to any major alterations.

As discussed previously, the property is set deliberately in a bungalow court arrangement, and more specifically, exhibits an attached full (wide) bungalow court configuration. Two pairs of the attached dwelling units surround a central landscaped courtyard space which is enclosed at one end by the single dwelling unit at the rear. The central courtyard has been recently landscaped with new plantings, but has not lost its open courtyard configuration or feeling.

The San Diego Modernism Historic Context Statement identifies Minimal Traditional style buildings as those which reflect traditional architectural forms and eclectic styles, but generally with simpler and less extensive decorative detailing to keep costs lower, particularly during the Depression and War years. The style is characterized primarily by its compact size, usually single story; low-pitched gabled or hipped roofs with shallow overhangs; simplified details of limited extent, reflecting traditional or modern themes; and traditional building materials emphasizing the street façade. Secondarily the style is characterized by a simple floor plan with minimal corners; small front

porches; modestly sized wood framed windows, occasionally one large picture window; and detached or attached front-facing garages, frequently set back from the house.

While the Modernism Historic Context Statement states that it is not anticipated that many examples of Minimal Traditional architecture will be eligible for individual listing, it may be possible for some unique or distinguished examples of the style to be found significant as individual resources. The subject property retains most of the character defining features of the Minimal Traditional style with its single story, compact size; gabled roof forms with shallow overhang; simplified details reflecting traditional themes; traditional building materials; simple floor plans; small front porch; modestly sized wood framed windows; and detached garage. By themselves, each of the individual structures on the property may not be individually eligible for listing. Collectively, however, these Minimal Traditional style structures are distinguished by their bungalow court format and strong, detailed expression of Minimal Traditional style features.

Significance Statement: The property continues to convey the historic significance of the Minimal Traditional style expressed in a bungalow court building type by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style and type; including single story, compact size with simple plan forms; gabled roof forms with shallow, boxed eaves; wood shingle cladding with minimal brick detailing; bay window projections at the primary elevation; fenestration of multi-light wood double hung and fixed windows; and an attached, full (wide) bungalow court configuration. 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 2002-2010 30th Street was likely built by the original owner William G. Old, and no other individuals were identified in association with the property's original design or construction. Old 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.

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 2002-2010 30th 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 2002-2010 30th 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 William and Carrie Old Bungalow Court located at 2002-2010 30th Street be designated with a period of significance of 1948 under HRB Criterion A as a resource that reflects a special element of Golden Hill's historical and architectural development; and Criterion C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Minimal Traditional style expressed in a bungalow court building type.

Camille Pekarek
Associate Planner

Elyse W. Lowe
Deputy Director
Development Services Department

CP/ks/el

Attachments:

1. "Bungalow Courts in San Diego: Monitoring a Sense of Place," from the *Journal of San Diego History*
2. Draft Resolution
3. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

The Journal of San Diego History
Spring 1988, Volume 34, Number 2
Contents of This Issue

Bungalow Courts in San Diego: Monitoring a Sense of Place

by James R. Curtis and Larry Ford
Both professors of Geography at San Diego State University

In the years immediately following World War I, revolutionary social changes were occurring in American cities. Many of these changes would soon affect the housing market as new types of people located so as to do new types of things. For example, large numbers of young, single women entered the labor force as office workers in the new downtown skyscrapers. Large numbers of young men returned from service in the military and, having been uprooted from family and tradition, sought new opportunities in the cities. Mass transit lines sprang up everywhere enabling people to move en masse to the edges of the metropolis. The old housing stock, consisting largely of single family homes and subdivided (tenement-ized) buildings was ill-suited to this new demand. Boarding houses were out and the apartment was in.

In Southern California, a utopian new type of housing evolved to provide dwellings for those who dreamed of a house and garden but who could either not afford one or were too busy to be bothered with the upkeep -- a new type of housing for those who longed for an independent lifestyle but one with a strong sense of community and security. This type of housing was the bungalow court. Although the bungalow court ceased to be built after World War II, we argue that it is a housing form ideally suited to the social and environmental concerns of the present day and should be revived. We attempt to develop this argument by first monitoring the "staying power" of bungalow courts over time in San Diego, demonstrating a long and continuous record of providing highly attractive housing for several segments of the population. And, second, demonstrating through a survey of residents that bungalow courts conform to ideal housing environments described by experts on architecture and community.

Many of the concerns of the eighties, from providing attractive and affordable housing for non-traditional families (singles, mingles, women-headed households, retirees, students, gays, etc.) to densifying older residential neighborhoods without destroying their character, as well as developing new types of suburbs with greater housing variety and afford-ability, call out for a closer examination of such things as the bungalow court. The more things change, the more they remain the same.

Defining the Bungalow Court: Aesthetics and Ideology

In order to monitor the staying power of the bungalow court, we must first define our terms. The key words, of course, are bungalow and court. While there were many examples of multi-house lots in Southern California in the early years of the twentieth century, sometimes referred to as "cholo courts," these were usually not bungalow courts. They were sometimes little more than instant slums as shanties were strewn almost randomly around city lots in order to create cheap horizontal tenements. Bungalow courts, on the other hand, featured well-designed, small houses carefully arranged around a planned open space. Although the shape of this space varied, as we will discuss later, the sense of focus and enclosure were always present.

The literature on the origin and evolution of both the bungalow and the bungalow court is good if not extensive and so suffice it to say that both the word and the form derived from Bengal. There the British attempted to design the ideal tropical dwelling which they felt should be a casual, garden-oriented, one-story house designed for a suburban setting, as opposed to the earlier (Georgian and Victorian) formal, vertical, and rather larger urban houses. The bungalow was introduced by the British into the American South, most typically as a pyramidal-roofed cottage with a large verandah. In the North, the word bungalow was most often applied to small houses in resort settings until well into the twentieth century. By the early 1900s, however, the bungalow was becoming increasingly popular throughout the United States as the Craftsman/Progressive Movements argued for simpler houses as a reaction to the excesses of the Victorian Era. Formal, stuffy Victorians were seen as hard to clean and divorced from nature.

It was in Southern California in the early 1900s that these two ideologies came together to produce the California Bungalow, i.e. the simple, garden-oriented house ideal for the resort-like setting of lotus land. The California Bungalow retained its essential character but quickly came to be "Cecil B. deMilled" into an eclectic Japo-Swiss-Tudor or Egypto-Polynesian suitable for life in an exotic land. (Things cannot stay simple for long it seems.) A bungalow in the garden became the image of the suburban ideal and quickly diffused throughout the country. Yet not everyone could afford this ideal.

It was in 1909 that the first bungalow court appeared, reportedly an innovation of architect Sylvanus Marston who built eleven full-sized bungalows in a court arrangement in Pasadena. Derived in all likelihood from Eastern resort communities, the typical bungalow court came to feature a group of six to ten small, individual houses placed around a communal garden. Usually two standard lots were enough.

Bungalow courts were seen as a compromise between expensive and demanding single-family homes on the one hand, and the "indecent propinquities" of apartment life on the other. They could offer settings with sufficient density for a sense of community and shared responsibility while still allowing the space for greenery and even private gardens. Much of the early literature on courts suggested that in them, a great deal of daily living could be communal with people taking turns cooking, washing, gardening, etc. with social life centered in a sort of dining hall/social center. Although these Utopian ideals did not work out, in part because self-contained household appliances came on the market at the same time such as small stoves, refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, electric irons, and radios, courts continued to be seen as an ideal setting for community involvement. In fact, some were referred to as "community courts." Thus, bungalow courts featured the aesthetics of the bungalow in the garden coupled with the ideology of semi-communal living in a friendly place.

Bungalow Courts in the 1920s: Segmenting the Housing Market

Life in a down-sized, individual house located within the womb-like protection of the court was seen as ideal for certain growing segments of the urban population, especially single women. As office employment and other professional opportunities attracted increasing numbers of young, single women to the city (independent women who would no longer accept the dorm-like housing solutions of the industrial revolution), bungalow courts were advertised as an ideal place

for women who were unable or unwilling to invest in a single-family home but who might not like a large, impersonal apartment building either. In 1913, an article in *Ladies Home Journal* concluded that "Very few persons, particularly women, can be happy outside of a pleasant home. An apartment in a great boxlike building is frequently the solution, as a house to one's self is apt to be not only lonely, but expensive as well. In California, the court apartment has solved the problem in a practical and economical way." Six years later, the same journal ran another piece that identified some of the advantages bungalow courts had to offer working women, noting that they are:" . . . located on the edge of town where air and sunlight are abundant and land is cheap; where the distance to and from business or to and from transportation is within the limits of a short walk; where, amidst the congenial surroundings of delightful country life and inspired by interesting companions in one's own walk of life, business women may have homes for themselves." In addition to providing greater privacy and seclusion than apartments, it was frequently noted in female-oriented articles that courts were "uncommonly safe" places to live.

The bungalows themselves were promoted as being full, albeit small, houses built like the inside of a yacht to maximize convenience in a minimum of space and furnished with the latest and most serviceable array of built-in features, including, according to *Sunset Magazine* in 1917, "buffet, cooler, cabinet kitchen, linen closet, laundry tray on the screen porch, first-class plumbing, electric lights, gas for cooking or heating and most with disappearing beds, open fireplaces, hardwood floors in the living rooms and ample closet space." All these features, coupled with "the glorious outdoors, the mild winters, and the riot of gay colored flowers," led the *Sunset* author to ask: "Who wants a big house in California anyway?" So convenient and free from labor were these cozy houselets thought to be that in 1919 *Ladies Home Journal* opined that "even women employed eight hours a day in business life have time and strength to do their own housework," which, it was suggested, might "help to solve the servant problem." It was also often insinuated (probably by men) that women could learn a sense of domesticity in these bungalows which they could not get in an apartment.

Perhaps because it was associated with outdoor living in a resort-like setting, the bungalow court was slow to diffuse beyond the California hearth. Using Sanborn fire insurance maps to locate courts, we found that, outside the state, the only significant concentrations were in south Florida and southern Arizona. While hundreds (perhaps thousands) of bungalow courts were built in California during the 1920s and 1930s, other parts of the nation made do with garden apartments, row houses, and doubles (semidetached). In Southern California, the bungalow court became an important element in the region's sense of place. Most courts were built in some variation of the Mediterraean/Mission style and covered with bougainvillea. The emphasis on small, efficient houses with outdoor communal space conformed to the popular image of life in California. Although both the ideology and the aesthetics of the early courts represent ideals which were rarely fullfilled completely, bungalow courts have exhibited exceptional "staying power" both architecturally and socially. While perhaps not Utopian in all respects, they have, at least in San Diego, provided remarkably good places to live over the past seventy years.

Bungalow Courts in San Diego

Even a cursory drive through the older residential areas of San Diego, where more bungalow courts were built than in any city except Los Angeles, confirms that the bungalow court has

survived and that it is continuing to play an important role in the social geography of the city. Yet to actually monitor the staying power of the bungalow court is a somewhat more complicated task as we needed to know how many have not survived as well as the condition (socially and architecturally) of the survivors.

Using Sanborn fire insurance maps for the interwar years, we were able to locate all of the courts built in San Diego on a street by street basis. Before mapping the courts, we classified them into four categories based on variations in spatial arrangement. They are: (1) detached, full court - the "classic" court consisting of individual cottages arranged around a spacious central garden (2) detached, narrow court - individual cottages arranged around a long, narrow, garden-like walkway (3) attached, full court - when two or more of the bungalows share a common wall, and (4) attached, narrow court. Since the term "court" implies an enclosed, designed space, in all cases the building arrangement included an end structure and a proper garden. All other multi-house lot arrangements were eliminated.

In central San Diego (that is all of San Diego in 1940 with the exception of the then remote beach communities), we found a total of 278 proper bungalow courts had been constructed prior to World War II (In addition, there were 158 half courts - designed to accept a second half if and when the neighboring lot became available.) Of these, 155 (or 56%) were classic, detached, full courts with the remaining 44% split roughly evenly among the other three types. Most of the courts were located along or very near the streetcar lines north of Balboa Park - suburban settings with excellent access to downtown. Very few of the courts were located more than three blocks from a streetcar line, a fact that has made for continuing good access even with today's bus service.

During the summer of 1986, we conducted a field check to determine precisely how many of the 278 full courts had survived and to assess, in a general way, how the remaining courts were being maintained. Considering the magnitude of growth and change in San Diego over the past fifty years, and nowhere more so than in the older neighborhoods where land values and condominium construction have soared together, the survival rate was impressive. Nearly 80% (217) of the courts were still intact and the vast majority of these appeared to be in excellent condition with only a handful in disrepair. Most of the losses were attributable to locations along major commercial (streetcar) streets with nearly one-third being redeveloped for retail centers. Nearly half of the 61 redeveloped sites now had large apartment/condominium projects with the remaining losses due to freeway construction and downtown expansion. If indeed the staying power of a particular kind of housing is one measure of the success of that housing, then these results would seem to confirm that bungalow courts work; their persistence alone is a testament to their success.

Who Lives in Bungalow Courts?

Having satisfied ourselves that the vast majority of bungalow courts built in San Diego have not only survived but are in immaculate condition, we endeavored to find out why this is so. In order to identify the social, economic, and aesthetic dimensions underlying court survival and to gain some perspective on who lives there and why, we decided to solicit the views of the residents themselves. First we conducted a series of drop-in discussions with court residents - open-ended interviews aimed at identifying key issues. We then constructed a questionnaire which we hand-

delivered to 120 residents in 20 randomly-selected courts in a variety of San Diego neighborhoods. Sixty of the questionnaires were completed and returned in the self-addressed, stamped envelops we provided for a response rate of exactly fifty percent.

We were somewhat surprised to find that bungalow courts appear to attract a much higher socio-economic level clientele than would be expected on the basis of census tract characteristics. Indeed, the average court resident could almost be called a "yuppie." Most of the respondents were between 20 and 39 years of age (70%), were Anglo (93%), single or divorced (92%), and well-educated (42% were college graduates and another 43% had "some college"). A surprising number worked in a profession or skilled trade. Most of the residents (78%) lived alone and just over half (55%) were women. Over one-fourth (27%) had lived in a court before and were committed court seekers.

The yuppie profile, however, masks significant diversity. Indeed, when individual court populations were examined, we discovered a greater depth of diversity, especially with respect to age, gender, and ethnicity. While the majority of courts were fairly evenly divided between men and women, it is not unusual to find courts occupied overwhelmingly or even exclusively by people of the same gender. Courts made up of elderly women, many of whom have lived there for decades, and gay courts are examples of important micro-communities focusing on court life. Of the fourteen respondents who were over sixty years of age, ten were women and six had lived in the court for more than ten years (three for more than 25 years). In addition, while most court residents are Anglo, there appear to be a few which are predominantly Asian or Hispanic -- again, garden-centered micro communities. Once we knew the kinds of court populations that gave the places identity, we could expand our data by using City Directories for various years. We found that, over time, some courts remained stable, female-dominated settings while others were more diverse and transient. In nearly all cases and over sixty years, the typical bungalow housed one Anglo person, most often female.

It would seem on the basis of the resident profiles that bungalow courts are attractive places to live especially for females, since they appeal to people of above-average socio-economic status and education despite the small size of the residences and relatively low rents. In order to determine why the courts are attractive, we asked people to rate the importance of various court features (such as the central garden) and to describe the ways in which they used them. We also asked them to rate the courts as places to live and to describe the things they especially liked or disliked.

Bungalow Courts as Seen by the Residents

People like living in bungalow courts. Fully 60% of the respondents indicated that they enjoy living in their court "very much" while an additional 35% find it "satisfactory" with only 5% "dissatisfied." Both aesthetic and social factors play roles in this positive response.
Since one distinguishing feature of the bungalow court is the court space, we asked residents to rate how important the space is to them and to describe the ways in which they use it. Clearly, the perceptual value of the court space is high with 83% of the residents indicating that it is "very important" (52%) or "important" (31%) to them. Such a positive response is significant given that wide variations occur from court to court. While many are attractively landscaped and may even include fountains or gazebos and permanent lawn furniture, an equal number have little

more than a walkway through a small, grassy area. Still, people emphasize the sense of separation that even a small lawn provides -- a few feet of lawn between houses seems to play an important role in the American psyche.

In describing the aesthetics of the court space, residents wrote: "It is personally important to me to look out on it and see an intimate space that looks attractive"; "I enjoy the quietness and beauty of the courtyard and the relaxing sound of the water fountain"; and "I take my friends through a garden setting to my front door, rather than down a long hallway" (as one would in an apartment building).

Court space seems to be very important for fostering a sense of community and interaction among the residents. Many residents said that the garden was used for barbeques and potlucks and various kinds of planned and unplanned "court parties." Less intensive interaction also results from people using the space to "read," "sunbathe," "relax," and "wash the dog." In addition, the court space, especially the space around the front door and porch, was often intensively personalized with people using it for "growing strawberries," "making sun tea," "gardening," and putting up various kinds of decorations including hanging plants and wind chimes. Over 40% of the residents claimed to do some gardening or landscaping while 60% personalized their porch and entryway. In field checking the courts, we were impressed by the degree of "lived-inness" as the individual bungalows reflected the tender loving care of their residents in ways rarely seen in apartment complexes. This combination of turf personalization around the houses and communal concern for the common area would appear to be essential factors in the appeal of the courts.

In any multi-family housing arrangement, there is a social dynamic at work with the perception of fellow residents being a key factor in how well the housing works. We asked the residents to rate and describe their neighbors compared to other places they had lived. A substantial majority said that court residents were "more friendly" (72%), "helpful" (70%), "considerate" (68%), and "sociable" (62%). It is difficult to say whether the courts attract people who are simply nicer than average or whether living in a court requires a certain attentiveness to the needs of other people. The latter explanation seems more likely. The space encourages people to interact and socialize.

Apart from the court space, there were ten features that stood out as major factors in the appeal of bungalow courts. We list them in order of decreasing importance. First there is the bungalow itself. This was particularly true for people living in detached courts where each unit was a separate house. In addition to the psychological feeling of having your own place, people mentioned that such units were exceptionally quiet with no one "above and below me or knocking on the walls next door." People also appreciated four-sided light as most bungalows had windows on all sides. One resident summed up the consensus feeling by saying "My little house is not a sterile, modern city apartment." Second, the feeling of security which goes along with the bungalow community was commonly noted. One wrote, "I like the security that my neighbors are usually here when I'm not." Another added, "There is a companionship, safety and privacy in a self-contained, neighborhood atmosphere."

The third most important factor seemed to be an appreciation of the fact that similar types of people, or at least soul-mates, tended to congregate in any one court. People tend to like people

who are more or less like them. One resident wrote that "You can conserve your independence and-yet find close to you people more or less in your own circumstance." Another said, "We are all very close and friendly, like one big family." Location was the fourth most important factor, especially location with regard to public transit and local stores. A large minority of the residents do not own cars, particularly the elderly women. "It's near Safeway and the bus line" said one. Fifth in importance was the fact that most of the complexes are quite small having from six to ten units and are located in single-family neighborhoods and so "there is not a horde of people around me."

The sixth and seventh factors could be grouped into one called "lots of greenery and landscaping with no chores." "I have a small house without the worry of upkeep and yard work" said more than one resident. The eighth factor was an ability to keep small pets, especially cats, and a yard for them to romp and lurk in safely.

The final two factors were a perception of low rent (the rents do tend to be a bit lower than the average nice apartment since all of the courts are over fifty years old and many have not changed hands recently), and an appreciation of architecture. Noted one man, "I've always wanted to live in a Spanish-style house" (but I couldn't afford to).

While most of the positive features put forth by the residents were directly related to bungalow court design, most of the complaints elicited were more general in nature. Complaints about street noise, lack of parking, crime, and antiquated plumbing tend to be common in older, central city areas. Some of the complaints were more focused upon the character of the bungalow courts themselves such as the small size of the (usually one bedroom) units, the lack of storage space, and even "too much interaction." The complaints, however, were few and far-between compared to the positive comments. Although we cannot tell from the anonymous responses, there is reason to believe that many of the complaints came from one or two problem courts. All in all, bungalow courts in San Diego are remarkably good places to live for those seeking a neighborhood-centered lifestyle.

If They Are so Good, Why Did They Stop Building Them?

The construction of bungalow courts ceased by about 1940. During the war years, very little was built apart from military bases and associated housing. When housing recovered in the late 1940s, builders concentrated on constructing single-family homes in newly-developing suburbs, especially in San Diego. Central city neighborhoods were ignored for more than a decade as few multi-unit projects of any kind were built. When central city apartment construction resumed in about 1960, the "economics" had changed. Due to the development and unfathomable popularity of the two-story "dingbat" apartment complex, eight units could now be crammed onto one city lot complete with off-street parking. Bungalow courts could not compete as new investments. It is probably also true that apartment seekers in the 1960s (like everyone else) wanted modern dwellings with gleaming kitchens and green shag carpeting. The escalating land values and condo boom of the 1970s brought even larger, often highrise, projects to the older neighborhoods and many existing courts were destroyed for "higher and better uses."

In spite of the unfeasibility of bungalow court construction in most of the neighborhoods where they now exist, these courts might still provide important insights for future housing types. Bungalow courts were usually not built in central city locations even during the teens and twenties but rather were built out on the new streetcar lines in what was essentially suburbia. During the 1950s through the early 1970s, many suburbs were "single-family only" but that is increasingly not the case today. Some variation on the bungalow court would seem to be the ideal compromise for neighborhoods on the border between apartment complexes and single-family homes. In central San Diego, bungalow courts, houses, and apartments have coexisted together serenely for seventy years. The new bungalow court would probably have to contain larger units (and so perhaps fewer units) and off-street parking but there are existing models which could be transferred to suburbia and satellite cities.

In addition to simply building new bungalow courts in suburbia, bungalow courts should be studied intensively so as to allow developers of a variety of new projects to include a few of their quintessential attributes. Many of the new types of apartment complex spaces simply do not work very well. In a pluralistic society, why not housing diversity?

In today's segmented society, hobbies and products abound which aim to please only one type of person or one special interest group yet the housing stock remains remarkably undifferentiated. In a society where an increasing number of households have rejected, at least temporarily, the traditional model of family life in a single-family house, why not attempt to provide attractive alternatives? The bungalow courts of San Diego, in light of their almost non-existent vacancies, appear to do just that. We often give lip-service to the need for a greater sense of community and belonging yet we rarely build environments that encourage such things as well as those of the past. Just as in the 1920s, the need for a house and a garden with a minimum of capital and labor investment and a strong sense of group identity and involvement cannot be a bad thing. Bungalow courts could provide microchip neighborhoods for the sprawling cities of the future.

FURTHER READING

Laura Chase. "Eden in the Orange Groves: Bungalows and Courtyard Houses of Los Angeles." *Landscape*, 25 (1981), 29-36.

Dolores Hayden. *Redesigning the American Dream: The Future of Housing, Work, and Family Life*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1984.

Anthony King. Bungalows. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984. Clay Lancaster. *The American Bungalow, 1880s-1920s*. New York: Abbeville Press, 1985.

Henry Saylor. *Bungalows: Their Design, Construction, and Furnishing*. New York: Robert M. McBride, 1917.

Robert Winter. *The California Bungalow*. Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, 1980.

Gwendolyn Wright. *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America*. New York: Pantheon, 1981.

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 8/24/2017

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 8/24/2017, to consider the historical designation of the **William and Carrie Old Bungalow Court** (owned by Atlas at 30th Street LLC, 2014 30th St.#203, San Diego, CA 92104) located at **2002-2010 30th Street**, **San Diego, CA 92104**, APN: **539-155-13-00,** further described as BLK 53 LOTS 13 THRU 16 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 Carrie Old Bungalow Court on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION A as a special element of Golden Hill and San Diego's historical and architectural development and retains integrity to its 1948 date of construction and period of significance. Specifically, the resource embodies the character defining features of a recognized variety of bungalow court, is one of a finite and limited number of bungalow courts remaining which reflect the early- to mid-20th century development of multi-family housing in Golden Hill and San Diego, and retains integrity for that association. 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 C for its distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of a Minimal Traditional style bungalow court and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1948 date of construction and period of significance. Specifically, the resource retains an original attached full court layout; gabled roof forms with boxed eave and minimal overhang; wood shingle cladding accented with brick; multi-light wood double hung and fixed windows; and modest, compact size with simple plan forms. 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 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