



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: February 8, 2018 REPORT NO. HRB-18-009

HEARING DATE: February 22, 2018

SUBJECT: **ITEM #6 – The Howard and Helen Taylor House**

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

APPLICANT: Hans and Elizabeth Strom represented by Heritage Architecture & Planning

LOCATION: 605 San Fernando Street, 92106, Peninsula Community, Council District 2
APN 532-272-14-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Howard and Helen Taylor House located at 605 San Fernando Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Howard and Helen Taylor House located at 605 San Fernando Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1956 under HRB Criterion C. The designation excludes additions completed after the 1956 date of construction. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Custom Ranch style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its period of significance. Specifically, the resource retains strong horizontal massing and a low-medium pitched roof, vertical board and batten exterior siding with stone features along the west façade; divided light fixed and casement windows along the west façade, a large angled bay window to the left of the front entrance, and a covered front entrance supported by circular posts with slate flooring.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board (HRB) in conjunction with the owner's desire to have the site designated as a historical resource. The property is located in the La Playa area of Point Loma in a single family neighborhood. The property was previously heard at the April 27, 2017 HRB hearing. At that time, staff was not recommending designation due to several modifications to the house. The most notable modifications were the replacement of the divided light steel casement windows with single light vinyl windows and the replacement of the solid, flush

entrance doors with a paneled wood door with leaded lights. Prior to the voting on the motion, the applicant withdrew the item in order to address the integrity issues. The applicant stated that they had quotes on new steel windows and would have the work completed prior to returning the nomination to the HRB.

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

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Heritage Architecture and Planning, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria C and D. Staff does not concur and believes that the site is significant under HRB Criterion C and not under HRB Criterion D. 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.

Constructed in 1956 in the Custom Ranch style, the subject house is a one story building located at the end of a dead end street. The house features a low-medium pitched roof sheathed with concrete tile and boxed eaves. The exterior walls are sheathed with board and batten siding and features stone along the primary west façade and chimney. The main entrance is located to the right of an angled bay window. The entrance is accessed via a double door with a shallow porch overhang. The overhang is supported by a pair of slender columns. To the left of the angled bay is another covered porch area that was originally a breezeway connecting the house to the two car garage. The south façade showcases four casement windows and a narrow pathway that leads to the rear of the property. The east façade faces the canyon and features a covered terrace and large bay window. The covered terrace features circular posts and slate flooring. The terrace is accessed via a sliding glass door. A second sliding glass door provides access from the breakfast nook has been replaced with casement windows. In 1967 a wood deck and bedroom addition were added to the east extending into the canyon.

The Custom Ranch style of architecture was popular between 1950 and 1975 and is differentiated from Tract Ranch homes because they were typically custom-designed with a specific client in mind. The Ranch style became the era's most prevalent type of residential construction in San Diego. Custom Ranch Homes are generally more lavish than their tract counterparts, but like Tract Ranch housing, materials and detailing are generally traditional. Primary character defining features include horizontal massing, wide to the street; usually single-story; custom details such as wood shutters, large wood windows, or large prominent brick or stone chimneys; and prominent low-sloped gabled or hipped roofs with deep overhangs. Secondary character defining features include a sprawling floor plan frequently "L" or "U" shaped around a central courtyard; large attached carports or garages; and expensive building materials such as wood shingle roofing, wood siding, brick, stone, and adobe which are usually much more generous in materials and craftsmanship than tract homes.

Based upon review of the property against the original plan set elevations, there had been a number of modifications to the house which have impacted the historic character. The most prominent modification had been the replacement of all of the steel casement divided light windows with vinyl or metal single light windows. As noted previously, the applicant withdrew the nomination at the April 2017 hearing to address integrity issues. The applicant stated that they had plans to install steel casement windows on the front façade to replicate the original windows. Once the work had been completed, staff was notified via a resubmittal of an addendum to the report. Based on a recent site visit to the property, it was determined that the applicant did not install steel casement windows as previously proposed rather they installed metal clad wood windows. The rails and stiles of the new windows are slightly thicker than the original steel casement windows. Additionally, the large window to the right of the main entrance was installed with the incorrect light pattern. While not steel casement windows the general feel of the windows is present with the added divided light pattern. As part of the restoration work, the owner also removed the non-historic front entrance and installed solid, flush wood doors to match the plans. Other modifications that still exist on the house include the original wood shingle roofing material that was replaced with concrete tile. The breezeway between the garage and the main house that was enclosed to accommodate additions at the rear, and modifications on the rear of the house, that include a number changes to the window openings and the operation of the window and doors.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Custom Ranch style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including strong horizontal massing and a low-medium pitched roof, vertical board and batten exterior siding with stone features along the west façade; divided light fixed and casement windows along the west façade, a large angled bay window to the left of the front entrance, and a covered front entrance supported by circular posts with slate flooring. 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 house was designed by Master Architect Ralph L. Frank for original owners Howard and Helen Taylor. Frank was established as a Master Architect by the HRB in 2002. Through the 1920s and 1930s, Frank designed high-end homes independently as well as through his associations with the firms Hurlburt and Tifal, and Hurlburt Frank and Slaughter. He is known to have worked in a variety of architectural styles, and in many neighborhoods including Uptown, Mission Hills, Point Loma, La Playa and La Jolla. During the Depression, Frank transitioned from the more Spanish styles of architecture to the simpler, more cost effective Colonial Revival design. Most of his locally listed works are in the Colonial and Monterey Revival styles.

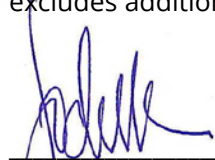
As a result of the aforementioned previous window replacement and the partial restoration of a similar light pattern, but not the original material and additions to the original structure, the subject building lacks enough original integrity to honestly convey the original design and intent of the Master Architect. 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 Howard and Helen Taylor House located at 605 San Fernando Street be designated with a period of significance of 1956 under HRB Criterion C as a good example of a Custom Ranch style house. The designation excludes additions completed after the 1956 date of construction.



Jodie Brown, AICP
Senior Planner



Sonnier Francisco
Senior Planner/HRB Liaison

JB/sf

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 2/22/2018

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 2/22/2018, to consider the historical designation of the **Howard and Helen Taylor House** (owned by Hans P and Elizabeth K Strom, 605 San Fernando Street, San Diego, CA 92106) located at **605 San Fernando Street, San Diego, CA 92106**, APN: **532-272-14-00**, further described as BLK 161 LOT 1 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 Howard and Helen Taylor 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 Custom Ranch style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1956 period of significance. Specifically, the resource retains strong horizontal massing and a low-medium pitched roof, vertical board and batten exterior siding with stone features along the west façade; divided light fixed and casement windows along the west façade, a large angled bay window to the left of the front entrance, and a covered front entrance supported by circular posts with slate flooring. 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 additions completed after the 1956 date of construction.

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: _____
JEREMY JUNG,
Deputy City Attorney