



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: March 8, 2018 REPORT NO. HRB-18-014

HEARING DATE: March 22, 2018

SUBJECT: **ITEM #7 – Dr. Charles and Nancy Rees/ William Wahrenberger House**

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

APPLICANT: Claire E Deeks 1995 Trust represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 4496 Trias Street, Uptown Community, Council District 3
APN 443-051-22-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Dr. Charles and Nancy Rees/ William Wahrenberger House located at 4496 Trias Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Dr. Charles and Nancy Rees/ William Wahrenberger House located at 4496 Trias Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1940 under HRB Criteria C and D. The designation excludes the 2017 rear additions to the house and garage. Included in the designation is the olive tree in the front yard planted around the time of construction. 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 and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1940 period of significance. Specifically, the resource displays a side gable roof, two-story massing with one-story side wing, elaborated door surround, paneled front door and entryway, bay window, multi-lite wooden windows in pairs and triple, and louvered wooden shutters.
2. The resource is representative of a notable work of Master Builder, William Wahrenberger and retains integrity as it relates to the original 1940 design. Specifically, the house is notable as an example of Wahrenberger's work in the Colonial Revival style.

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 property is a two-story single family residence located in Mission Hills.

The property was identified in 2016 Uptown Community Plan Update and given a Status Code of 5D3, "appears to be a contributor to a district that appears eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation."

The historic name of the resource, the Dr. Charles and Nancy Rees/ William Wahrenberger House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Dr. Charles and Nancy Rees who constructed the house as their personal residence and the name of William Wahrenberger, a Master Builder.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Legacy 106, Inc. 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 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 single family residence constructed in 1940 in the Colonial Revival style. The front yard features a large olive tree that was likely planted near the date of the house's construction or before. Staff is recommending that the olive tree be included in the designation. A garage is located on the north side of the property and is separated from the house by a breezeway. The property is two-stories with a moderately pitched side gable roof with shallow eave overhang. The house has a varied exterior cladding with stucco covering the first floor and horizontal wood siding above. The front façade is asymmetrical and features a one-story side wing with bay window. The most prominent feature is the recessed entrance which is accentuated by a simple cornice and pilasters. The front door is constructed of wood panels and more paneling lines the sides of the entry recess. Fenestration is varied and mostly consists of wooden multi-lite over single lite double hung windows. A triple window is present in the center of the first floor and two small casement windows are located in the center of the second floor. Pairs of double hung windows appear on the sides and rear of the house. Windows on the front façade are ornamented with louvered wooden shutters. A two-story stucco clad addition is present on the rear of the structure.

Several modifications have been made to the home since its construction in 1940. Sometime before 1950 a rear addition was added to the house. In 2017 this addition was removed and a new two-story addition was constructed. This project was determined to be consistent with the Standards by Historic Resources staff and included a rear addition to the garage and the construction of a new front walkway. These modifications do not significantly impair integrity of design, materials or feeling.

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 Adam 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 are common. Windows are typically double-hung sash with multi-lite glazing in one or both sashes and are commonly found in pairs, triples or bay windows.

The Regency Revival style is indigenous to Los Angeles and was popular from the mid 1930's until about 1970. The origins of this style are based loosely on British precedents from the Regency of the Prince of Wales (1811 to 1820) rather than American Colonial examples. The Regency Revival includes elements of Neoclassical and French Empire design with influences of modern styles and the exaggerated qualities of Hollywood film sets. Character defining features of this style include a symmetrical façade, blank wall surfaces veneered in smooth plaster, vertically exaggerated fenestration, entrances and windows with arched tops and exaggerated applied ornamentation. Roofs are generally steeply pitched and can be mansard, hipped or gable. The HRRR asserts that the subject resource exhibits influences of the Regency Revival style however the property features only one character defining feature; smooth blank wall surfaces. The sleekness of the house in comparison to other Colonial Revival style homes is more likely influenced by Wahrenberger's evolution toward more modern designs. Therefore, staff is not recommending the property as having Regency Revival influences.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Colonial Revival style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including a side gable roof, two-story massing with one-story side wing, elaborated door surround, paneled front door and entryway, bay window, multi-lite wooden windows in pairs and triple, and louvered wooden shutters. 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.

William Fredrick Wahrenberger was born in Colorado in 1892 to John J. and Emilie Wahrenberger. The family relocated to San Diego in 1910. His father became Secretary of the Bay City Construction Company in 1911. William was a draftsman and followed his father into the construction business, working with him until his father's death in 1918. Although William Wahrenberger designed many houses, his occupation is listed as contractor and he never obtained an architect's license.

William designed all the homes he built and completed some of the interior finish work himself. The houses that he designed and built are found throughout San Diego, including Mission Hills, Inspiration Heights, Fleet Ridge, La Jolla, Loma Portal and Point Loma. Since he constructed houses for more than a half-century, his work evolved, employing several styles including Craftsman, Spanish Revival and Modern. Hallmarks of William Wahrenberger's work were high-quality design and solid functional construction that utilized appropriate detailing and built-ins, and openings that introduced natural light into the interior of each house. The large, comfortable rooms flowed together, a feature that makes the houses very livable and functional even under today's standards. Wahrenberger's status as a Master Builder was established in 2004 with the designation of HRB #680, 4277 Trias Street. There are currently six of Wahrenberger's works designated on the San Diego Register.

Dr. Charles and Nancy Rees hired Wahrenberger in 1939 to construct their house on Trias Street. The property is a rare example of Wahrenberger's work in the Colonial Revival style and helps to illustrate the progression of his work over the fifty year span of his career.

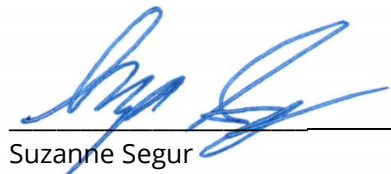
Significance Statement: The subject resource retains excellent integrity and continues to reflect Wahrenberger's original design, intent and aesthetic. The house is notable as an example of Wahrenberger's work in the Colonial Revival style. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion D as a notable work of Master Builder William F. Wahrenberger.

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 Dr. Charles and Nancy Rees/ William Wahrenberger House located at 4496 Trias Street be designated with a period of significance of 1940 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 William F. Wahrenberger. The designation excludes the 2017 rear additions to the house and garage. Included in the designation is the olive tree in the front yard planted around the time of construction.



Suzanne Segur
Associate Planner



Sonnier Francisco
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison

SS/sf

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 3/22/2018

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 3/22/2018, to consider the historical designation of the **Dr. Charles and Nancy Rees/ William Wahrenberger House** (owned by Claire E Deeks 1995 Trust 08-10-95, 4496 Trias Street, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **4496 Trias Street, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **443-051-22-00**, further described as BLK 526 LOT 3 ST CLSD ADJ & NELY 60 FT 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 Dr. Charles and Nancy Rees/ William Wahrenberger 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 Colonial Revival style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1940 period of significance. Specifically, the resource displays a side gable roof, two-story massing with one-story side wing, elaborated door surround, paneled front door and entryway, bay window, multi-lite wooden windows in pairs and triple, and louvered wooden shutters. 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 William F. Wahrenberger and retains integrity as it relates to the original 1940 design. The house is notable as an example of Wahrenberger's work in the Colonial Revival style. 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 the olive tree in the front yard planted around the time of construction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the designation shall exclude the 2017 rear additions to the house and garage.

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