



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: April 12, 2018 REPORT NO. HRB-18-021

HEARING DATE: April 26, 2018

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – Robert and Alma Lard/Homer Delawie House**

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

APPLICANT: Paul Jr & Shirley Schwab Trust, Scott W Johnston et al represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 2218 Vallecitos, 92037, La Jolla Community, Council District 1  
APN 346-231-11-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Robert and Alma Lard/Homer Delawie House located at 2218 Vallecitos as a historical resource.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Robert and Alma Lard/Homer Delawie House located at 2218 Vallecitos as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1962-1965 under HRB Criteria C and D. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

1. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Contemporary Modern style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its period of significance. Specifically, the resource retains a strong, low-pitched gabled roof form with wide overhanging eaves; vertical wood siding; floor to ceiling windows/doors; privacy fencing designed to form courtyard areas; and an attached similarly designed garage.
2. The resource is representative of a notable work of Master Architect Homer Delawie and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource is a good example of the Modern Contemporary style and possesses many of the signature characteristics that represent Homer Delawie's distinguished body of work.

### 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 located on northwest corner of Vallecitos and Paseo Del Ocaso in a single-family and multi-family neighborhood.

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

The historic name of the resource, the Robert and Alma Lard/Homer Delawie House has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Robert and Alma Lard who constructed the house as their personal residence and the name of Homer Delawie, a Master Architect.

## 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.*

Constructed in 1962, the house is one-story with a gable roof. Located at the northwest corner of Vallecitos and Paseo Del Ocaso, the low pitched gable roof has a ridge running east to west. The roof features evenly spaced exposed rafter ends and deep overhanging eaves. The roof extends out over the southwest corner of the house to cover the front entrance and the kitchen area. The exterior of the house and is sheathed with vertical wood siding throughout. At the southwest corner of the parcel is an attached two-car garage. A site wall, built of vertical wood siding, connects the garage and the main house to create a private courtyard area at the front facade.

The entrance to the house is centrally located and features a pair of solid, flush wood doors with a full height jalousie window to the right of the doors. Directly above the entrance and the jalousie window are large clerestory windows. Within the privately fenced area just to the west of the front entrance, there are a number of large aluminum windows and sliding glass doors to allow for a connection between the interior and the exterior. The two-car garage located to the west of the fenced area features a flat roof and a tilt up garage door located off center on the wall plane. The front entrance area and the privately fenced area feature the original globe light fixtures.

The west façade of the house is a gable end fronting a narrow side yard. This façade features three large sliding glass doors. Directly under the apex of the gable roof is a single wood door with a jalousie window that provides access to a bathroom. Just above this door is a small access door for the attic. The north façade of the house has multiple large windows and sliding glass doors that create an indoor/outdoor feeling. With the exception of a small window with a door for attic access above that matches the west elevation, the east elevation is devoid of fenestration. A vertical wood slat fence encloses a portion of the parcel on this elevation.

There have been few changes to the property that includes the enclosure of the original carport to create a garage space in 1965. The enclosure was designed by Homer Delawie and is seamless to the original construction. Given that it was constructed a mere four years after the house and designed by the original architect, staff is including the garage in the period of significance. The

other modifications are limited to the wrought iron fence that was added at the east façade and wraps around to enclose the front entrance and the possible modification of the attic access door on the west façade. The door currently in place does not match the door shown on the plans. The house also has solar panels at the front façade. While not ideal, they are flat to the slope of the roof and do not detract from the overall character of the house.

As discussed in the *San Diego Modernism Historic Context Statement*, the Modern Contemporary sub-style was a popular design style for tract communities in the 1950s and 1960s. While clusters of Contemporary tracts retaining integrity should be considered for potential designation as districts, custom residential examples like the subject property may be eligible for individual designation. The style is primarily characterized by strong roof forms typically with deep overhangs; large windows, often aluminum framed; and non-traditional exterior finishes.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Modern Contemporary style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including a strong, low-pitched gabled roof form with wide overhanging eaves; vertical wood siding; floor to ceiling windows/doors; privacy fencing designed to form courtyard areas; and an attached similarly designed garage.

*CRITERION D - Is representative of a notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.*

Homer Delawie was born in 1928 and raised in Santa Barbara, California. At the age of 17, Delawie enlisted and served the Navy at the end of World War II. After the war, while working for the U.S. Forest Service as a firefighter, Delawie was guided towards a career in architecture by Veterans Administration tests. Delawie went on to enroll at California Polytechnic College in San Luis Obispo where he was part of the second graduating class in the school of architecture. Delawie was the first graduate of the school to receive his license and go on to practice architecture.

Delawie worked for firms in Fresno and Modesto before being offered a job at Lloyd Ruocco's firm at the Design Center in San Diego. After just a year and a half with Ruocco, Delawie became a partner at the firm. One of his first projects was a studio for Channel 10, the most advanced television station in the country. In 1961, after three years, Delawie went on to open his own firm in Old Town and for 40 years, Delawie designed over sixty residences, many civic landmarks, as well as many public and military projects.

Projects designed by Delawie and his firm have received over 65 design awards. In 1973, Delawie received the Cal Poly School of Architecture Distinguished Alumni Award and the National Urban Land Institute and the California and San Diego chapters of the AIA have awarded Delawie their highest honors. Delawie also received Service Citations in 1972 and 1973 from the AIA, a Presidential Citation in 1997 and a Lifetime Achievement Award in 1997. Twice, the Department of Defense awarded Delawie its highest award.

Delawie served on several local boards including the Museum of Man, the Children's Museum and the UCSD Board of Overseers. He was active in historic preservation through involvement with the San Diego Historical Society and the City of San Diego Historical Resources Board. In 2003, Save Our Heritage Organization presented him with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his work in preserving

the works of local Modern architects. Delawie served on the planning commission for 13 years and served on the Historic Resources Board for 8 years.

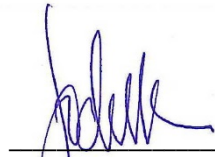
Significance Statement: The subject property, 2218 Vallecitos, is the work of Master Architect Homer Delawie. The subject house is a good example of the Modern Contemporary style and possesses many of the signature characteristics that represent Homer Delawie's distinguished body of work. As such, staff recommends designation of the Robert and Alma Lard/Homer Delawie House, as a significant historical resource, 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 Robert and Alma Lard/Homer Delawie House located at 2218 Vallecitos be designated with a period of significance of 1962 under HRB Criteria C as a good example of a Modern Contemporary and D as a notable work by Master Architect Homer Delawie.



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 4/26/2018

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 4/26/2018, to consider the historical designation of the **Robert and Alma Lard/Homer Delawie House** (owned by Paul E Jr & Shirley B Schwab Trust 01-20-89, Scott W Johnston et al, 7450 Olivitas Ave #385, San Diego, CA 92037) located at **2218 Vallecitos, San Diego, CA 92037**, APN: **346-231-11-00**, further described as BLK 22 LOT 11 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 Robert and Alma Lard/Homer Delawie 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 Contemporary Modern style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1962-1965 period of significance. Specifically, the resource retains a strong, low-pitched gabled roof form with wide overhanging eaves; vertical wood siding; floor to ceiling windows/doors; privacy fencing designed to form courtyard areas; and an attached similar designed garage. 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 Architect Homer Delawie and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource is a good example of the Modern Contemporary style and possesses many of the signature characteristics that represent Homer Delawie's distinguished body of work. 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: \_\_\_\_\_  
JEREMY JUNG,  
Deputy City Attorney