



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: July 12, 2018 REPORT NO. HRB 18-033

HEARING DATE: July 26, 2018

SUBJECT: **ITEM #7 – Aizo and Komume Sogo Farm**

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

APPLICANT: Almeria Investments LP represented by Scott A. Moomjian

LOCATION: 1398 Lieta Street, 92110, Clairemont Mesa Community, Council District 2  
APN 430-680-09

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Aizo and Komume Sogo Farm located at 1398 Lieta Street as a historical resource.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Aizo and Komume Sogo Farm located at 1398 Lieta Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1938-1983 under HRB Criterion A. The designation excludes the structures located on the parcel. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource is a special element of the Issei/Japanese-American agricultural practices within the Mission Bay area during the 1930s through the 1950s and the restrictive property rights/ownership measures taken against minorities, specifically Japanese nationals, during the 1930s through the 1950s.

### BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a proposed building modification or demolition of a structure of 45 years or more, consistent with San Diego Municipal Code Section 143.0212. The property is located in the Clairemont community along Moreno Drive in a mixed-use area.

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 Aizo and Komume Sogo Farm has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Sogo family who lived and worked on the farm.

## ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Technical Report was prepared by Scott Moomjian which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criterion A and Staff concurs. This determination is consistent with the [Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria](#), as follows.

*CRITERION A - Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's, a community's or a neighborhood's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development.*

Aizo Sogo was born in 1873 in Kagawa Prefecture, Japan and came to the United States in 1905. After moving around California, Aizo settled in San Diego in 1910-11. Aizo purchased 10 acres in Spring Valley and some land in Pacific Beach. In 1916, Azio returned to Japan where he married Komume Kaseyana. Around 1917, the Sogos built a house in Spring Valley and started a poultry farm. By the 1920s, they had sold the Spring Valley poultry farm and moved to Pacific Beach/Mission Bay area to farm the land. The Sogo family occupied and farmed the land at 1398 Lieta Street by 1938. They also constructed a Minimal Traditional style house at the northwest corner of the property. Produce from the farm was trucked to and sold at the hakuji market. In 1942, at the beginning World War II, the family was sent to the Colorado River Relocation Center (Poston War Relocation Center). They remained at this internment camp until 1945, after which time, they returned to Lieta Street.

In July 1953, Azio and Komume Sogo were among the first of five Japanese-born individuals to become naturalized citizens of the United States in San Diego. Previously, natives of Japan, except for World War II veterans, were one of the nationalities barred from citizenship until the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 (aka the McCarran Walter Act). In February 1954, as citizens, the Sogos obtained ownership of the Lieta Street property. In 1962, the Sogos sold three acres of the land which had been zoned residential and commercial. Aizo died in 1974 and Komume, who remained at the property after his death, died in 1983.

Significance Statement: The resource reflects a special element of the Issei/Japanese-American agricultural practices within the Mission Bay area during the 1930s through the 1950s and the restrictive property rights/ownership measures taken against minorities, specifically Japanese nationals, during the 1930s through the 1950s. 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 1398 Lieta 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.*

Constructed in 1938, the house is a one story single family dwelling designed in the Minimal Traditional style. The house features a gable roof and is sheathed with asbestos siding. The fenestration is predominantly wood casement windows with the exception of the small gable roof front entrance which has aluminum sliding windows.

There have been a number of changes to the property. The exterior was originally sheathed with wood shingles, but was resided with asbestos shingles in 1956. In the same year a rear addition was constructed. More significantly, the house was originally located at the northwestern property boundary and relocated in 1956 to the southwestern property boundary.

Minimal Traditional style buildings reflect traditional architectural forms and eclectic styles, but generally display simpler and less extensive decorative architectural detailing of the previous Revival styles. Minimal Traditional house are usually modest in scale with one level, although there are some two-story examples. Common decorative features include smaller, simple front porches, chimneys, and low pitch shallow eave roofs. Pre-War examples reference Moderne and older styles, and usually have a detached garaged. Post-War examples often integrate the garage and reflect the emerging Contemporary trends. Though sometimes employing brick or stone materials, this was the first style to typically delete the expensive treatment from the side and rear facades, reflecting the frugal times. The style is most prevalent in residential construction, but is also common in small scale commercial, retail and office uses. Minimal Traditional style houses are usually clustered together, especially in the 1940s residential neighborhoods, although they can also be found separately as later infill in previously developed neighborhoods of Craftsman, Bungalow and earlier styles.

While the house displays the simple design of the Minimal Traditional style, there have been significant modifications to the house. Therefore, staff does not recommend 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.*

Research into the construction of the property at 1398 Lieta Street failed to conclusively identify a builder, designer or architect. Therefore, the property is not eligible for 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 1398 Lieta 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 1398 Lieta 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 Aizo and Komume Sogo Farm located at 1398 Lieta Street be designated with a period of significance of 1937-1983 under HRB Criterion A. The designation excludes the structures located on the parcel.



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Jodie Brown, AICP  
Senior Planner



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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 7/26/2018

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 7/26/2018, to consider the historical designation of the **Aizo and Komume Sogo Farm** (owned by Almeria Investments LP, PO Box 232628, Encinitas, CA 92023) located at **1398 Lieta Street, San Diego, CA 92110**, APN: **430-680-09-00**, further described as LOT 255 LOT 5 0.62 AC M/L IN 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 Aizo and Komume Sogo Farm on the following findings:

- (1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION A with a period of significance of 1938-1983 as a special element of the Issei/Japanese-American agricultural practices within the Mission Bay area during the 1930s through the 1950s and the restrictive property rights/ownership measures taken against minorities, specifically Japanese nationals, during the 1930s through the 1950s. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in light of the foregoing, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego hereby approves the historical designation of the above-named property. The designation includes the parcel and exterior of the building as Designated Historical Resource **Site No. 0**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the designation shall exclude the structures located on the parcel.

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