



Save Our Heritage Organisation
Protecting San Diego's architectural and cultural heritage since 1969

Wednesday, May 15, 2019

City of San Diego
Chair McCullough, Historical Resources Board & staff
202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: May 23, 2019 agenda, Item 5, 2027-2045 India Street

Chair McCullough, Boardmembers & staff,

Item 5: 2027 – 2045 India Street – SOHO concurs with the staff report that the Asaro Apartments are historically significant under Criterion C, for embodying the rare Colonial Revival influenced Arts and Crafts era architectural style. SOHO also asserts they are significant under Criterion A, as rare multi-family building types within Little Italy that served tenants of the fishing industry.

These intact apartment buildings continue to retain a strong sense of historical integrity for their association with the fishing community (even at their relocation site). Due to the intact nature and rarity of these building types within Little Italy, as well as the continued sense of place these buildings offer together as a collection, these resources are highly significant under Criterion A and their loss would be detrimental to the historical built environment of San Diego.

The 1989 survey highlights a connection with the fishing industry at their present location, stating, “Various Italian fisherman tenants have rented apartments here including Joseph Muscio and others in the late 1960s.” However, the tenancy of these buildings was hardly explored beyond Mr. Dacquist. Further, the Asaro buildings are highly significant under Criterion A, because they specifically exemplify, “After World War II, when development intensified in downtown, many wood frame buildings were relocated to Little Italy to serve as housing for this rapidly growing Italian community based upon the post-war tuna fishing industry.” The Asaro Apartments are an excellent example of Little Italy’s development as some of the last multi-family building types within Little Italy that served tenants of the fishing industry, which was once a standard example. However, now that these Colonial Revival influenced buildings are some of the last of their kind within Little Italy, continuing to represent this important fishing district context, they are highly significant under Criterion A.

Regarding Criterion C, 2027-2045 India Street exhibits features that represent the Colonial Revival influence such as the full pediment of both dormers. As stated in the report, other features include the hip roof with exposed rafters and enclosed eaves, central gable dormers (with Colonial Revival influenced pediment), horizontal shiplap siding on the first floor and wood shingles on the second, a large quantity and variety of windows for interior light such as sash and transom windows, recessed entry area with wood and glass entry doors, and the rectangular shape. Since the Prairie style elements listed within the applicant’s report are either the same as those listed for Craftsman or also characteristic of the Arts and Crafts era (such as the hip roof, wide eaves, enclosed rafters, wood windows in various size and placement, divided lights, recessed entry area, and solid balustrades), the report’s assertion this is of a Prairie or vernacular style is misleading and inaccurate.

The Asaro Apartments at 2027-2033 and 2041-2045 India Street are character-defining elements of Little Italy, once the Italian fishing district of San Diego. Their loss would diminish this sense of history and place, and without these resources, future generations will not understand this important historical context. SOHO asserts that 2027-2033 and 2041-2045 India Street are highly significant under Criteria A and C, and warrant historical designation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Coons", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned to the left of a vertical line that extends downwards from the text above.

Bruce Coons
Executive Director
Save Our Heritage Organisation