



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: November 7, 2019 REPORT NO. HRB-19-045

HEARING DATE: November 21, 2019

SUBJECT: **ITEM #8 – Dr. Asa and Agnes Churchill Spec House**

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

APPLICANT: Brent Julius D & Lilia Family Trust; represented by Ginger Weatherford

LOCATION: 3481 Cooper Street, North Park Community, Council District 3  
APN 453-835-1000

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Dr. Asa and Agnes Churchill Spec House located at 3481 Cooper Street as a historical resource.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Dr. Asa and Agnes Churchill Spec House located at 3481 Cooper Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1931 under HRB Criterion C. The designation excludes the 1956 438 square-foot rear addition and the modified garage. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Spanish Eclectic style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1931 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a stuccoed exterior, red clay roof tiles, decorative drains and faux beams as well as fenestration consisting of fixed, casement, and double hung wood windows.

### 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 features a 2-story single family home and a detached garage.

The property was identified in the 1996 Greater Mid-City Historic Preservation Strategy Survey and given a Status Code of 5S3, "Appears to individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation."

The historic name of the resource, the Dr. Asa and Agnes Churchill Spec House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Dr. Asa and Agnes Churchill who constructed the house as a speculation house.

## ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Ginger Weatherford which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criterion C 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 property is a two-story single-family home with a detached garage located in North Park near McKinley Elementary School. The property was constructed in 1931 in the Spanish Eclectic style and features a stuccoed exterior, red clay roof tiles, decorative drains and faux beams as well as fenestration consisting of fixed, casement, and double hung wood windows. Additional features include a large focal window on the street facing gable end as well as a unique arch shaped pattern along the bottom of the cantilevered second story. The east and west elevations lack ornamental details, but features a smooth stucco texture, shallow tile overhang, faux beams, and wood windows. The rear façade features an uncovered partial width deck as well as a 438-square foot addition that was completed in 1956.

Modifications to the property include the rear 438 addition which was completed in 1956, the addition of solar panels on the roof, and exterior modifications to the garage which were completed at an unknown date. Restoration efforts to the property include the application of a smoother, more historically appropriate stucco texture and the replacement of windows on the rear of the property with period appropriate materials. Overall these modifications do not impair the overall integrity of the property's location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Following the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition, the romantic ideal of Spanish and Latin American architecture was revived. What resulted was the Spanish Eclectic style which was the predominant style in Southern California between 1915 and 1940, significantly altering the architectural landscape until the Modernist movement took hold during and after WWII. The style uses decorative details borrowed from the entire history of Spanish architecture. These may be of Moorish, Byzantine, Gothic, or Renaissance inspirations, and unusually rich and varied series of decorative precedents. The style employed a variety of floor plans, as well as gabled, cross-gabled, gabled and hipped, hipped and flat roof forms with parapets. Other character defining features include Mission and Spanish clay tile; focal windows; arched windows and other openings; and accented entries.

Significance Statement: The property continues to convey the historic significance of the Spanish Eclectic style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including a stuccoed exterior, red clay roof tiles, decorative drains and faux beams as well as fenestration consisting of fixed, casement, and double hung wood windows. 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.*

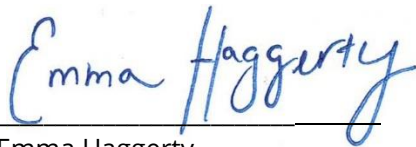
The subject property at 3481 Cooper Street was likely built by R.R. West, as indicated on the building permit and Notice of Completion. R.R West has not been established by the Historical Resources Board as a Master Architect, Designer or Builder, and there is insufficient information to designate him as such at this time. 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 Dr. Asa and Agnes Churchill Spec House located at 3481 Cooper Street be designated with a period of significance of 1931 under HRB Criterion C. The designation excludes the 1956 438 square-foot rear addition and the modified garage.



Emma Haggerty  
Assistant Planner



Suzanne Segur  
Senior Planner  
Development Services Department

EH/ss

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A  
ADOPTED ON 11/21/2019

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 11/21/2019, to consider the historical designation of the Dr. Asa and Agnes Churchill Spec House (owned by Julius and Lilia Brent Family Trust 06-19-17, 199 Tamal Vista Boulevard, #402, Corte Madera, CA 94925) located at **3481 Cooper Street, San Diego, CA 92104**, APN: **453-835-10-00**, further described as BLK F LOT 2 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. Asa and Agnes Churchill Spec 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 Spanish Eclectic style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1931 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a stuccoed exterior, red clay roof tiles, decorative drains and faux beams as well as fenestration consisting of fixed, casement, and double hung wood windows. 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 1956 438 square-foot rear addition and the modified 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:

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
DAVID MCCULLOUGH, Chair  
Historical Resources Board

APPROVED: MARA W. ELLIOTT,  
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
LINDSEY SEBASTIAN,  
Deputy City Attorney