

This is a revised report for
Item# 9 – 2311 Via Siena
(Staff Report HRB-19-047)
which replaces the previously
distributed and posted report.



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: November 7, 2019 REPORT NO. HRB-19-047

HEARING DATE: November 21, 2019

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – 2311 Via Siena**

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

APPLICANT: Monzon Living Trust; represented by IS Architecture

LOCATION: 2311 Via Siena, La Jolla Community, Council District 1
APN 352-165-01-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Lloyd and Raymona Swortwood House located at 2311 Via Siena as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Lloyd and Raymona Swortwood House located at 2311 Via Siena as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1961 under HRB Criterion C. The designation includes a mature Brazilian Pepper tree located in the rear courtyard. The designation excludes a single-story addition, basketball court, and rear retaining wall which were all added after the period of significance. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Contemporary style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1961 period of significance. Specifically, the resource retains a strong, low-pitched hipped roof form with overhanging eaves; asymmetrical and angular massing; floor to ceiling doors and windows; concrete screen block featuring see-through designs used as privacy fencing to form courtyard areas; an attached carport; and a recessed entryway.

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 single-story single-family residence located on a corner lot in La Jolla. 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 Lloyd and Raymona Swortwood House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of commissioning owners Lloyd and Raymona Swortwood who had the home constructed as their personal residence.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by IS Architecture, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria B and C. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion C, but not HRB Criterion B. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows.

CRITERION B - Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.

The applicant asserts that the subject resource is eligible for designation under Criterion B with a period of significance of 1963-1987 due to its association with psychologist Carl Rogers; however, staff disagrees.

Carl Rogers was a founder of humanistic psychology who purchased 2166 Via Siena in 1963 after accepting a position at the Western Behavioral Sciences Institute in La Jolla. A personal office for Rogers was built as an addition in 1963; however, the office is no longer extant as later owners replaced it with a larger art studio in 1992. Although the Historical Resource Research Report notes that business meetings were occasionally held at 2166 Via Sienna, the Center for Studies of the Person -- established by Rogers in 1968 at 1125 Torrey Pines Road in La Jolla -- would be more closely associated with the professional accomplishments of Carl Rogers.

Although Carl Rogers remains a significant figure in the field of psychology, no significant events related to his career 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.

The subject resource is a single-story single-family home with a center courtyard and double carport constructed in 1961 in the Contemporary style. It has a shallow-pitched hipped roof with asphalt composite shingles over two original wings, which feature enclosed eaves and aluminum gutters. The house has a heavy sand textured stucco over its wood frame construction, as well as vertical board siding on the central wall of the rear wing's east elevation. Fenestration throughout is primarily full-height, single-light, fixed windows and full-height, single-light, aluminum-framed sliding glass doors.

The front façade facing Via Siena features an original poured concrete driveway and front walkway, a double-car carport, an entrance courtyard, and an elevated post-and-beam projection. The double carport under the main roofline is supported by square wooden posts and features an entry with a full-height, wooden slab door flanked by two full-height, fixed, single-light windows. The entrance courtyard is defined by a decorative concrete wall comprised of square, painted, and pierced concrete masonry units (CMUs). The entry courtyard features red clay tile and the same full-height, wooden slab door and two full-height, fixed, single-light windows as found in the carport.

The decorative CMU wall continues to the eastern corner of the front façade, underneath the post-and-beam projection. The post-and-beam projection features three support posts that reach to the ground, forming three full bays and one partial bay. The three full bays feature a large, single-light, full-height picture window and a narrow, full-height jalousie window. The partial bay features a large, single-light, full-height picture window that forms a floating corner.

The CMU wall continues around to the east elevation but does not have any decorative piercings on that elevation. The east elevation of the rear wing consists of two glass wall sections flanking a center wall of vertical board siding, a building technique common in the Contemporary style. The west elevation features a projecting bay which contains two groupings of full-height, single-light, fixed windows with three windows per grouping as an operable, aluminum-framed, central window.

A defining feature of the home is its rear courtyard. It features one large, mature Brazilian Pepper tree which dates back to the period of significance and is included in the nomination. The prominence of this tree within the courtyard illustrates the indoor-outdoor integration which embodies the Contemporary style. The rear courtyard is enclosed on the west, north, and south sides by the house and on the east side by three separate walls. The first segment of the wall, a square CMU wall attached to the house, is a contributing feature included in this nomination. The second and third segments are freestanding walls made of standard dimension CMUs. These walls were constructed outside the period of significance and are excluded from this nomination.

Modifications to the property include the removal of an existing addition to build an extended single-story addition circa 1992; the enclosure of an atrium to form maid's quarters circa 1986; the construction of two additional courtyard walls circa 1992; and the construction of a basketball court and surrounding concrete site wall located at the southeast corner of the property at an unknown date. All of these features are outside the period of significance and are excluded from the designation.

Unlike earlier styles which are generally defined by exterior decorative details, the Contemporary style focused on interior spaces and their relation to the outdoors. Emphasis was placed on integrating the indoors with the outdoors by utilizing windows and exterior living areas such as balconies and courtyards. The style was popular in San Diego in the 1950's and 1960's largely because it could be easily adapted to hillside lots. Character defining features include strong roof forms with deep overhangs and exposed beams; large, aluminum-framed windows; non-traditional exterior finishes including vertical wood siding, concrete block, stucco and flagstone; sun shades, screen or shadow block accents; broad masonry chimneys; and distinctive triangular, parabolic or arched forms. Contemporary houses often incorporate angular massing; attached carports or garages; courtyards or balconies; obscured or recessed entries; and split-level designs.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including a strong, low-pitched hipped roof form with overhanging eaves; floor to ceiling windows/doors; concrete screen block in see-through designs; privacy fencing designed to form courtyard areas; aluminum-framed windows; angular massing; an attached carport; and a recessed entryway. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion C.

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 Lloyd and Raymona Swortwood House located at 2311 Via Siena be designated with a period of significance of 1961 under HRB Criterion C as a resource that exhibits the distinctive characteristics of the Contemporary style. The designation includes a mature Brazilian Pepper tree located in the rear courtyard. The designation excludes two non-original standard CMU courtyard walls, a single-story artist studio, and a basketball court and site-wall, all of which were all added after the period of significance.



Anna McPherson
Program Manager

AM/lk/ss



Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner
Development Services Department

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 **Lloyd and Raymona Swortwood House** (owned by Monzon Living Trust 02-28-07, 2311 Via Siena, La Jolla, CA 92037) located at **2311 Via Siena, La Jolla, CA 92037**, APN: **352-165-01-00**, further described as LOT 20 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 Lloyd and Raymona Swortwood 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 Contemporary style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1961 period of significance. Specifically, the resource retains a strong, low-pitched hipped roof form with overhanging eaves; asymmetrical and angular massing; floor to ceiling doors and windows; concrete screen block featuring see-through designs used as privacy fencing to form courtyard areas; an attached carport; and a recessed entryway. 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 a mature Brazilian Pepper tree located in the rear courtyard which dates to the period of significance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the designation shall exclude two non-original standard CMU courtyard walls, a single-story artist studio, and a basketball court and site-wall, all of which were all added after the period of significance.

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