



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: January 9, 2020 REPORT NO. HRB-20-006

HEARING DATE: January 23, 2020

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – John O’Laughlin House**

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

APPLICANT: Swim Hut LLC; represented by IS Architecture

LOCATION: 5972 Avenida Chamnez, La Jolla Community, Council District 1  
APN 357-272-14-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the John O’Laughlin House located at 5972 Avenida Chamnez as a historical resource.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the John O’Laughlin House located at 5972 Avenida Chamnez as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1962 under HRB Criterion C. 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 1962 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features an irregular floor plan with horizontal massing, a low-pitched gravel roof, deep overhanging eaves, vertical siding, and large floor-to-ceiling glass windows and doors.

### BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a preliminary review application to determine whether or not the building is historically significant as part of a constraint’s analysis for future development.

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 John O’Laughlin House, has been identified consistent with the Board’s adopted naming policy and reflects the name of John O’Laughlin, who constructed the house as their personal residence.

## ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by IS Architecture, 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 resource contains a one story, single family house constructed in 1962 in the Contemporary style. The house features an irregular floor plan with horizontal massing that is wide to the street with limited ornamental detailing along the east elevation. The attached two car garage is set flush with the structure and the vertical siding on the pop-up door matches the rest of the siding throughout. The north and south elevations feature the same siding and no windows or exterior details. The west elevation features four unique sections which include an open porch sheltered by a sunshade, an exterior entrance, a large projecting extension feature large glass window and doors with angular transom windows and a recessed entry.

Limited exterior modifications have occurred to the property and were completed in circa 2015. These modifications include the trimming of the extended rafter ends surrounding the front entrance, the removal of both the extended eave structure with fascia board over the north side of the east elevation and the vertical sun screen along the front façade. These modifications did not require a permit and therefore were not reviewed or approved by staff. While these modifications have impacted the integrity of the resource, the property still continues to convey the character defining features of the Contemporary style.

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 Contemporary style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including an irregular floor plan with horizontal massing, a low-pitched gravel roof, deep overhanging eaves, vertical siding, and large floor-to-ceiling glass windows and doors. 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.*

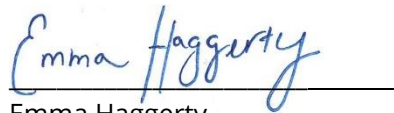
The subject property at 5972 Avenida Chamnez was designed by notable architect, Loch Crane. Loch Crane has not yet been established by the Historical Resources Board as a Master Architect, Designer or Builder, and there is insufficient information to designate him as such at this time. Therefore, staff does not recommend the property for 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 John O'Laughlin House located at 5972 Avenida Chamnez be designated with a 1962 period of significance of 1962 under HRB Criterion C.



Emma Haggerty  
Associate 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  
ADOPTED ON 1/23/2020

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 1/23/2020, to consider the historical designation of the John O'Laughlin House (owned by Swim Hut LLC, 728 Colima Street, La Jolla, CA 92037) located at **5972 Avenida Chamnez, La Jolla, CA 92037**, APN: **357-272-14-00**, further described as LOT 212 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 John O'Laughlin 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 1962 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features an irregular floor plan with horizontal massing, a low-pitched gravel roof, deep overhanging eaves, vertical siding, and large floor-to-ceiling glass windows and doors. 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:

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

APPROVED: MARA W. ELLIOTT,  
CITY ATTORNEY

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