



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: February 13, 2020 REPORT NO. HRB-20-011

HEARING DATE: February 27, 2020

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – Fred and Anne Payne/ Dennstedt Company House**

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

APPLICANT: Shannon M. Togni; represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 4875 East Alder Drive, Kensington-Talmadge Community, Council District 9
APN 465-251-01-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Fred and Anne Payne/Dennstedt Company House located at 4875 East Alder Drive as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Fred and Anne Payne/Dennstedt Company House located at 4875 East Alder Drive as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1936 under HRB Criterion D. The designation excludes the one-story shed roof addition on the south side of the garage, the two-story addition on the north side of the building, and the deck addition on the rear of the building, which were constructed outside of the period of significance. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

The resource is representative of a notable work of Master Builder, the Dennstedt Company and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource exhibits the high level of craftsmanship characteristic of the company's work and is an example of their work in the Hacienda substyle of the Spanish Eclectic style at a point in the company's history when they had become adept in working with these styles.

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 split-level, U-shaped building with an interior courtyard located at 4875 East Alder Drive built on a sloped site at the top of Talmadge Canyon in the Talmadge Park Unit Two Subdivision.

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 Fred and Anne Payne/Dennstedt Company House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Fred and Anne Payne, who constructed the house as their personal residence and the name of the Dennstedt Company, a Master Builder.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Legacy 106, Inc., which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria C and D. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion D but not HRB Criterion C. 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 contains a split-level, single-family residence constructed in 1936 in the Spanish Eclectic style with a Hacienda-style interior courtyard. The U-shaped building is clad in stucco with low-pitched gable roofs. The roof features exposed rafter tails and is covered in randomly-laid red clay half barrel tiles. The gable ends feature round, red clay attic vents. The interior courtyard is surrounded on three sides by a covered walkway and on its fourth side by a stuccoed wall topped with red clay half barrel tiles. The house features wrought iron details on a grille and front gate visible on the façade, and on the front door to the courtyard.

Several modifications have been made to the property since its 1936 date of construction. The original wood garage doors have been replaced with wood garage doors that feature small openings fronted by spindles. Although this spindle form is found on Spanish Eclectic buildings, it was not originally featured on this building. On the south side of the garage, there is a short, shed roof addition that was added sometime between 1962 and 2007. Inside the courtyard, the roof over the rearmost covered walkway was extended farther into the courtyard. An original Dutch door was moved from the courtyard to the north side of the garage and that courtyard door opening was converted to a window. On the rear of the building, a wooden deck was added around the original stairs leading from the upper-story to the backyard below, and the main roof was extended to cover the new deck. The Historical Resources Research Report notes that the current surface of the stairs is likely not original. Additionally, a modern, flat metal door has been added at the foot of the stairs. On the north elevation, a two-story addition was added after 1939. The addition consists of an enclosed addition at the basement level and a semi-enclosed deck at the upper level. These modifications significantly impair integrity of design, materials and feeling as it relates to Criterion C.

The Spanish Eclectic style uses decorative details borrowed from the entire history of Spanish architecture. Its vocabulary is influenced by Moorish, Byzantine, Gothic or Renaissance precedents. The style became popular after the Panama-California Exposition of 1915 and reached its height in the 1920's and early 1930's before rapidly declining in the 1940's. Identifying features include a low-pitched roof with little or no eave overhang, red tile roof covering, stucco exterior wall finishes, an asymmetrical façade and arches above doors and principle windows. Common decorative details

are patterned tiles, carved stonework, large focal windows, wooden or iron window grilles, decorative vents and balconies. The Hacienda style, which often functions as a subset of the Spanish Eclectic style, emphasizes a connection between indoor and outdoor living spaces, particularly through designs that include courtyards, covered walkways and other semi-enclosed spaces.

Although the house retains many of the character defining features of the Spanish Eclectic style, such as red clay half barrel tile roofing, clay tile attic vents, and a stuccoed exterior, the modifications have resulted in a loss of integrity to the 1936 period of significance. The replacement of the garage doors is a historically inappropriate modification in a highly visible location. Additionally, the location of the garage addition detracts from the original design of the house. Modifications in the courtyard, such as the expansion of the roof and alterations to door openings, damage the historic spatial relationships of this important feature. Cumulatively, these modifications to the resource significantly impair its integrity of design, materials and feeling to the extent that the building no longer retains integrity as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of its original Spanish Eclectic design, and therefore staff does not recommend designation under 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 resource at 4875 East Alder Drive is a known work of Master Builder, the Dennstedt Company. The Dennstedt Company was established as a Master Builder in 2007 with the designation of HRB Site #818, the Hazel Weir/Dennstedt Company House/Mut kula xuy/Mut lah hoy ya Site #4. The Dennstedt brothers came to San Diego from Minnesota in 1924 and began their careers as builders soon after. The Dennstedt Company became well known as a design-build company producing high-quality custom homes with financing options. By the mid-1930s, the Dennstedt Company split and the resulting companies continued to construct custom homes. The Dennstedt Company produced houses in the Spanish Eclectic, Mexican Hacienda, Tudor, English Monterrey and Ranch styles in San Diego communities including North Park, Talmadge, Kensington, La Jolla and Point Loma, as well as in Escondido and La Mesa. With several iterations of the firm name, the firm continued until 1988.

The Paynes hired the Dennstedt Company to construct the subject resource in 1936, at a point by which the company had become adept in the construction of Spanish Eclectic style residences.

As discussed above, staff does not believe that the subject resource rises to the level of significance to be individually designated under Criterion C as an example of the Spanish Eclectic Style with a period of significance of 1936. However, it does retain integrity as an example of this specific company's notable work in the Hacienda substyle of the Spanish Eclectic style in 1936, at a point in when the company had gained significant experience working in the Spanish Eclectic style. Additionally, the alterations to character-defining features of the Spanish Eclectic Style that diminish the building's integrity under Criterion C do not diminish the ability of the resource to exhibit the high level of craftsmanship that the Dennstedt Company brought to its custom homes, regardless of their style.

Significance Statement: The subject resource retains integrity and continues to reflect the Dennstedt Company's original design, intent and aesthetic. The house is significant as an example of

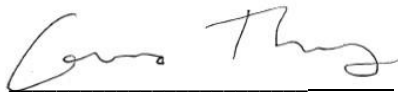
the Dennstedt Company's work because it exhibits the high level of craftsmanship characteristic of the company's work and because it is an example of their work in the Hacienda substyle of the Spanish Eclectic style at a point in the company's history when they had become adept in working with these styles. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion D as a notable work of Master Builder, the Dennstedt Company.

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 Fred and Anne Payne/Dennstedt Company House located at 4875 East Alder Drive be designated with a period of significance of 1936 under HRB Criterion D as a notable work of Master Builder, the Dennstedt Company. The designation excludes the one-story shed roof addition on the south side of the garage, the two-story addition on the north side of the building, and the deck addition on the rear of the building, which were constructed outside of the period of significance.



Gemma Tierney
Associate Planner



Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner

GT/ss

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 2/27/2020

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 2/27/2020, to consider the historical designation of the **Fred and Anne Payne/Dennstedt Company House** (owned by Martin and Shannon Togni, 4875 East Alder Drive, San Diego, CA 92116) located at **4875 East Alder Drive, San Diego, CA 92116**, APN: **465-251-01-00**, further described as LOT 304 in the Talmadge Park Unit Two Subdivision 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 Fred and Anne Payne/Dennstedt Company House on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION D as a notable work of Master Builder, the Dennstedt Company and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource exhibits the high level of craftsmanship characteristic of the company's work and is an example of their work in the Hacienda substyle of the Spanish Eclectic style at a point in the company's history when they had become adept in working with these styles.

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: N/A

BY: _____
DAVID MCCULLOUGH, Chair
Historical Resources Board

APPROVED: MARA W. ELLIOTT,
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: _____
LINDSEY SEBASTIAN,
Deputy City Attorney