



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: June 11, 2020 REPORT NO. HRB-20-017

HEARING DATE: June 25, 2020

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – Frank and Ada Melcher Spec House #1**

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

APPLICANT: Luis, Maria and Arturo Valderrama represented by Vonn Marie May

LOCATION: 1736 West Montecito Way, 92103, Uptown Community, Council District 3
APN 443-450-17-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Frank and Ada Melcher Spec House #1 located at 1736 West Montecito Way as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Frank and Ada Melcher Spec House #1 located at 1736 West Montecito Way as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1926 under HRB Criterion C. This recommendation is based on the following finding: The designation excludes the rear and basement additions constructed outside of 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 Tudor Revival style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1926 period of significance. Specifically, a steeply pitched gable roof, dominate front facing gable with stucco chimney, rounded arch entry and garage doors, multi-pane wood windows in groups, wood siding and decorative arched attic vents.

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 building is a one-story Tudor Revival style home with basement that backs into a canyon.

The historic name of the resource, the Frank and Ada Melcher Spec House #1, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Frank Melcher, who constructed the house as a speculation house.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research was prepared by Vonn Marie May, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria C as an example of French Eclectic. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criteria C, but as Tudor and not French Eclectic. 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 house is a one-story Tudor Revival style home with basement constructed in 1926. The resource is located on a canyon lot which allows for the addition of a basement at the rear. The house features a steeply pitched single roof and is clad with wood siding. The primary elevation features a stucco chimney incorporated into front facing gable. To the left is a group of three double hung, nine-over-one wood windows and the front entrance, which is a round-arched wood door with windows that is accented by a small brow roofline. To the right is a group of two double hung wood nine-over-one windows and the segmented arched garage entrance. Both groups of windows on the south elevation have flowerboxes below them. On the west elevation is a group of two double hung wood windows under a very steep gable that goes into the side of the gable on the north façade. On the north façade is a deck that is above the basement patio. To the left of the deck is the basement entrance and a set of wood stairs that lead up to the first floor. There are two short gables on this side, one above the stairs and one above the deck. The east elevation is the non-descript side of the garage with a very steep gable.

Several modifications have been made to the subject resource since its 1926 date of construction. Modifications include a 1974 addition to the north façade. This addition includes the creation of the basement level. The roof material was wood shingles, but the pattern was maintained when replaced with composite shingles. In a photo of the building from circa 1928 there are different flower boxes under the windows from the ones seen today, and there was previously a flower boxes under the windows on the west elevation. The window on the back end of the west elevation has also been filled in. Additionally, garage doors have been replaced and a screen door was added to the main entrance. These modifications do not significantly impair the integrity of the design, materials, workmanship or feeling as it relates to Criterion C.

Popular in the 1920s and 1930s, Tudor Revival architecture is loosely based on a variety of late Medieval English styles and influences, but unlike some English prototypes, Tudor Revival style houses exhibit steeply pitched gable roofs that dominate the facades. Other character defining features include decorative half-timbering; tall, narrow windows, usually appearing in multiple groups and with multi-pane glazing; massive chimneys, sometimes with decorative chimney pots; entry porches with round or Tudor arches; and gable dormers. Relatively uncommon before World War I, widespread adoption of masonry veneering techniques in the 1920s accompanied a dramatic rise in the style's popularity as even the most modest examples began to closely mimic the brick and

stone veneers of their English prototypes. Tudor Revival style houses usually include the use of stucco as well as wood cladding and brick or stone veneer, depending upon the subtype.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Tudor Revival style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including a steeply pitched gable roof, dominate front facing gable with stucco chimney, rounded arch entry and garage doors, multi-pane wood windows in groups, wood siding and decorative arched attic vents.

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 Frank and Ada Melcher Spec House #1 House located at 1736 West Montecito Way be designated with a period of significance of 1926 under HRB Criteria C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Tudor Revival style and retains integrity to the date of construction. The designation excludes the rear and basement additions constructed outside of the period of significance.



Megan Bacik
Junior Planner
Development Services Department
MB/ss



Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner
Development Services Department

Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution
2. Assessor's Parcel Map
3. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 6/25/2020

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 6/25/2020, to consider the historical designation of the **Frank Melcher and Ada Melcher Spec House #1** (owned by Luis & Maria Valderrama, Arturo Valderrama, 4308 Sierra Vista, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **1736 W. Montecito Way, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **443-450-17-00**, further described as VL 51 S 90 FT OF E 47 FT IN 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. 1286**, 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 Frank Melcher and Ada Melcher Spec House #1 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 Tudor style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1926 date of construction and period of significance. Specifically, resource exhibits a steeply pitched gable roof, dominate front facing gable with stucco chimney, rounded arch entry and garage doors, multi-pane wood windows in groups, wood siding and decorative arched attic vents. 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. 1286**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the designation shall exclude the rear and basement additions

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

C.5 County Assessor Parcel Map – APN: 443-450-17-00

