



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: March 17, 2016 REPORT NO. HRB-16-019

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of March 24, 2016

SUBJECT: **ITEM #15 – Thomas Faulconer House**

APPLICANT: Jane Ligon Trust; represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 4152 Ibis Street, 92103, Uptown Community, Council District 3

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Thomas Faulconer House located at 4152 Ibis Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Thomas Faulconer House located at 4152 Ibis Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1910 and 1923-1926 under HRB Criteria B and C. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource is identified with Thomas Faulconer, a historically significant person, and retains integrity for that association, as he owned and lived within the 4152 Ibis Street residence from 1923 to 1926 during the height of his career as San Diego Zoo's executive director. Specifically, during this time he was singlehandedly responsible for bringing the first koalas from Australia into the United States, which contributed towards the San Diego Zoo's reputation as a world class cultural attraction.
2. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Craftsman style architecture and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1910 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a medium pitched side gable roof with exposed rafter tails and eave overhang; wood frame construction with coursed shingle all around; upper level dormer balcony over full width front porch supported by stucco covered battered square columns; decorative extending ridge beams and purlins; and true divided light casement 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. This property is located in Mission Hills of the Uptown Community Plan Area.

The building is located on APN 444-391-08-00. The property was identified in the 2012 Uptown Survey and given a status code of 5D3, "Appears to be a contributor to a district that appears eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation."

The historic name of the resource, the Thomas Faulconer House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Thomas Faulconer, a historically significant individual who resided within the home at the height of his career.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Legacy 106, 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 Criteria B and C. 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 home is significant for its association with Thomas Nichols Faulconer, who in 1925 was singlehandedly responsible for bringing the first koalas into America, specifically to the San Diego Zoo. Thomas was born in Danville, Kentucky on January 21, 1887. After graduating from college in 1906, he moved to San Diego the following year. Thomas became executive secretary to the San Diego Park Board in 1913. Thomas and his wife Margaret owned 4152 Ibis Street from 1923-1926, during which time he worked as one of the earliest directors of the Zoological Society of San Diego, an organization now with the largest zoological membership association in the world. While living in the subject residence, Thomas was appointed as the San Diego Zoo's executive director in 1923. Thomas was personally financed by John D. Spreckles to travel abroad and bring back animals from around the world.

In 1924, Thomas traveled to Australia to obtain animals to display at the San Diego Zoo, and returned in January 1925 with over 200 specimens of animal life. Of these animals, the most interest was generated around the two koalas, which were the first of their kind to be brought into the United States. The addition of exotic animals had a pivotal impact on the San Diego Zoo's reputation and popularity, therefore fueling the San Diego economy. According to the San Diego Evening Tribune in 1925, during Faulconer's tenure as executive director the zoo "added hundreds of new families to its personnel" and grew in "size and importance to a position of distinction in the United States." While Thomas resided at the 4152 Ibis Street home, his work and leadership developed San Diego economically through tourism, creating an internationally acclaimed attraction in San Diego.

Significance Statement: The resource is identified with Thomas Faulconer, a historically significant person, and retains integrity for that association, as he owned and lived within the 4152 Ibis Street residence from 1923 to 1926 during the height of his career as San Diego Zoo's executive director. Specifically, he was singlehandedly responsible for bringing the first koalas from Australia into the United States, which contributed towards the San Diego Zoo's reputation as a world class cultural attraction. Therefore, staff recommends 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 property sits on a corner lot with its front façade facing East towards Ibis Street, and its secondary façade facing south towards Montecito Way. The one and a half-story, single family home was constructed in 1910 in the early Craftsman architectural style. Made of wood frame construction and stucco, the subject resource features a medium pitched side gable roof, full width porch, and upper level dormer and balcony. It also utilizes decorative angle cut overlapping porch roof support beams, extending purlins, ridge beams, and exposed eave overhang and roof rafters. Split cedar shingles are utilized on all sides of the home, along with skirting just above its foundation.

On the front façade, the home utilizes unique Craftsman design in its overlapping gable above the main side gable, creating a larger upper dormer. At its apex, a decorative ridge beam extends beyond the roof. Below this, two decorative matching purlin beams support the open eaves. The balcony features original double French doors and true divided light 4 over 1 windows. The balcony has simple square wooden balusters and sits above the almost flat roof front porch. The porch features a balustrade with smooth stucco surfacing, battered square porch supports, and central stairs connecting the walkway to the raised concrete foundation. These stairs were once repaired and replaced in kind. On the porch, its centered entry doorway has 6 rectangular upper lights and is flanked by large tripartite window groupings that have a central fixed 10 light and rectangular window flanked by 4 over 1 wooden divided light casement windows. These windows are contained by white planks and square wooden casings.

On the South side elevation facing Montecito Way, the front façade upper balcony and front porch is visible towards the right of the home. Double groupings of two wood 4 over 1 casement windows, small four light windows, and a large rectangular wood casement window are on the upper level. On the first level, a shed roof extension covers a secondary service entrance and appears to have been an enclosed side porch or an early addition made in the 1920s or 1930s. An original three-sided bay window is seen to the right with a grouping of 6 over 1 divided light rectangular wood windows. The North elevation faces the driveway and neighboring property. Its wall matches other elevations with split cedar shingles, and its roof also continues a composition gable roof with exposed eave rafters and extending purlins. On the West (rear) elevation, a small rear balcony addition, was constructed in 1992 out of sight from public view.

According to the consultant's report, the detached rear single car garage is believed to have been constructed after the main residence sometime between 1910 and 1920. Its details match that of the subject resource in Craftsman design, with a similar pitched roof. All windows and doors on the homes' front elevation are original with the exception of the dormer extension window, which was replaced in kind. Other modifications such as repairing roof shingles, re-pouring the porch concrete, and window replacement have been minimal and done in kind with the residence's original style.

With origins in the British Arts and Crafts movement, which was born in response to the overly ornate Victorian aesthetic and the highly mechanized Industrial Revolution, Craftsman style architecture was popular in the United States largely between 1905 and 1930. Early examples by Greene and Greene were highly publicized in magazines, thus familiarizing the rest of the nation with the style. Character defining features of Craftsman architecture include a low-pitched, gabled or hipped roof with wide, unenclosed eave overhang; exposed roof rafters; decorative beams or braces; full or partial-width porches supported by tapered square columns or pedestals; wood or stucco cladding; and wood frame and sash windows in fixed, double hung and casement varieties.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Craftsman style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style including a medium pitched side gable roof with exposed rafter tails and eave overhang; wood frame construction with coursed shingle all around; upper level dormer balcony over full width front porch supported by stucco covered battered square columns; decorative extending ridge beams and purlins; and true divided light casement windows. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion C.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

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 staffs field check, it is recommended that the Thomas Faulconer House located at 4152 Ibis Street be designated with a period of significance of 1910 and 1923-1926 under HRB Criterion B for association with Thomas Faulconer, a historically significant individual; and HRB Criterion C as a resource that exhibits the distinctive characteristics of the Craftsman style. 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.



Jane Kang
Planning Intern



Kelley Stanco
Senior Planner/HRB Liaison

JK/ks

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A

ADOPTED ON 3/24/2016

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 3/24/2016, to consider the historical designation of the **Thomas Faulconer House** (owned by Jane S. Ligon Trust 09-08-00, 4152 Ibis Street, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **4152 Ibis Street, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **444-391-08-00**, further described as BLK 24 POR 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 Thomas Faulconer House on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION B for its association with Thomas Faulconer, a historically significant person, and retains integrity for that association, as he lived within the 4152 Ibis Street residence from 1923-1926 during the height of his career as San Diego Zoo's executive director. Specifically, he was singlehandedly responsible for bringing the first koalas from Australia into the United States, which contributed towards the San Diego Zoo's reputation as a world class cultural attraction. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

(2) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics in the Craftsman Style, and retains integrity from its 1910 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a medium pitched side gable roof with exposed rafter tails and eave overhang; wood frame construction with coursed shingle all around; upper level dormer balcony over full width front porch supported by stucco covered battered square columns; decorative extending ridge beams and purlins; and true divided light casement 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 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: _____
JOHN LEMMO, Chair
Historical Resources Board

APPROVED: JAN I. GOLDSMITH,
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: _____
CORRINE NEUFFER,
Deputy City Attorney