



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: April 21, 2016 REPORT NO. HRB-16-024

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of April 28, 2016

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – 3235 Freeman Street**

APPLICANT: Sean and Lisa Keith represented by Johnson & Johnson

LOCATION: 3235 Freeman Street, Peninsula Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property located at 3235 Freeman Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the property located at 3235 Freeman Street under any adopted HRB Criteria.

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 subject resource is a one-and-a-half story single family residence built in 1927 in the Tudor Revival style on the south side of Freeman Street, just east of Willow Street in the Chatsworth Terrace Subdivision in the Peninsula Community.

The building is located on APN 450-133-02-00. The property was identified as a contributor to a potential district in the Quieter Home Program (QHP) in and provided in-kind windows and doors in 2002 as part of the sound attenuation program.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Johnson & Johnson, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria C and D. Staff finds that the site is not a significant historical resource under any HRB Criteria due to a lack of integrity. 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 is a one-and-a-half story single family residence built in 1927 in the Tudor Revival style of standard wood frame construction on a concrete foundation. The building is sited on a flat rectangular lot facing northeast, and features an irregular plan form with asymmetrical façades. The house is clad in a medium sand finish stucco, and exhibits a prominent, high-pitched gabled roof of composition shingle with clipped eaves, characteristic of the Tudor Revival style. Also present are decorative half-timbering, an arched entry door, conspicuous exterior stucco chimney, and diamond-paned leaded glass. Fenestration consists primarily of wood fixed and casement windows, but also includes wood double hung and metal fixed and casement windows. At the rear is a detached garage structure with matching roof form and decorative half-timbering.

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 the use of stucco as well as wood cladding and brick or stone veneer, depending upon the subtype. Decorative half-timbering is present on about half of examples. Fenestration is typically characterized by tall, narrow windows, usually appearing in multiple groups and with multi-pane glazing. 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.

Documented modifications have considerable impact on the building's integrity as it relates to the 1927 date of construction and period of significance. Between 1956 and 1966 a single-story rear addition was placed at the southwest corner of the structure and in 1966 a second rear single-story addition was placed at the southeast corner. Also in 1966, and of greatest concern to staff, the attic space over the original structure was converted to living space and expanded to include the addition of a large shed dormer appearing over the entry at the primary elevation. This alteration was not completed in a manner consistent with the US Secretary of the Interior's Standards as it significantly impacts the building's character defining features and historic integrity. Not only is its placement at the primary elevation inappropriate – influencing the massing and composition of the façade – the dormer is rather large and significantly impacts the building's high-pitch gabled roof form which is an essential character defining feature critical to the original Tudor Revival design. Furthermore, the dormer is not readily distinguished from the original construction as it presents matching stucco cladding and diamond paned leaded glass windows that appear identical to other windows present on the original portions of the building. The seamless nature of the addition's design creates a false sense of history of the building's original design.

Additional modifications are noted in the report and include a variety of window and door modifications or replacements that may be resulting from the 1966 remodel and addition. Also, and more recently, the original front stoop at the primary entry and the original concrete driveway were removed and replaced with a historically inappropriate design of modern pavers. These alterations further degrade the building's character defining features and overall integrity. Some window and door replacements occurred in-kind in existing openings as part of the Quieter Homes Program and are not considered a negative impact to the building's integrity.

Overall, the alterations, in particular the shed roof dormer addition at the primary elevation, drastically impact character defining features critical to the building's conveyance of its Tudor Revival style as it was originally designed, and creates a false sense of history with the introduction of non-

historic features that seamlessly match the original. The building's integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling have been significantly undermined. For these reasons, staff cannot support designation of the subject property 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 was designed by Master Architect Eugene Hoffman and built by Master Builder A.L. Dennstedt of the Dennstedt Company. The subject structure, as originally constructed, likely retained sufficient integrity of design, materials, workmanship and feeling to be representative as a notable work of these two Masters prior to its significant alteration in 1966.

Eugene Hoffman came to San Diego in 1910 after beginning a career in architecture in New York and New Jersey. Hoffman is known primarily for his industrial and commercial works, many commissioned by the prominent Spreckels enterprise. Some of his more well-known works in San Diego that have been historically designated include the SDG&E Station B building at 903 Kettner Boulevard (HRB Site #354), the Barcelona Apartment Hotel at 326 East Juniper Street (HRB Site #440), and the Wonder Bread Building at 171 14th Street (HRB Site #458).

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 soon began their careers as builders. 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 in custom home construction. The Dennstedt Company produced houses in the Spanish Eclectic, Mexican Hacienda, Tudor, English Monterey 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.

As a result of the aforementioned alterations, including the large, non-historic shed roof dormer over the entry at the primary façade, the subject building lacks original integrity to honestly convey the original design and intent of the Master Architect and Master Builder associated with the building. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion D.

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 staff's field check, it is recommended that the property located at 3235 Freeman Street not be designated under any HRB Criteria due to a lack of integrity. 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.



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CP/ks

Attachment:

1. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover