



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: April 21, 2016 REPORT NO. HRB-16-025

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of April 28, 2016

SUBJECT: **ITEM #10 – Frank and Johanna Linder/Louise Severin Spec House #1**

APPLICANT: Art Family Trust represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 4220 Norfolk Terrace, Kensington-Talmadge Community, Council District 9

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Frank and Johanna Linder/Louise Severin Spec House #1 located at 4220 Norfolk Terrace as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Frank and Johanna Linder/Louise Severin Spec House #1 located at 4220 Norfolk Terrace as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1929 under HRB Criteria A, C and D. The designation includes the remnants of the Prohibition-era cobble walls at the rear of the property that connect to the historically designated walls and dance floor on the adjacent, designated property to the west. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource is a special element of Kensington's historical and social development and retains integrity. Specifically, the resource contains remnants of historic cobblestone walls that connected to a larger complex of walls leading to a dance floor in Fairmont Canyon, which was used by property owners for Prohibition-era parties and socialization.
2. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Spanish Eclectic architecture and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits a predominantly flat roof with parapet; decoratively troweled stucco over wood frame construction; two shallow projecting bays with front gable tile roofs flanking the entry, which is recessed under a shed tile roof; and single and multi-lite wood frame and sash windows.
3. The resource is representative of a notable work of proposed Master Builder Louise Severin and retains integrity as it relates to the original construction. Specifically, subject property exhibits Severin's characteristic style and rustic features, including the distinct skip-trowel stucco treatment, tile trimmed parapets, French doors and wide-multi-paned windows, and tapered stucco chimney with inset panel.

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 located in a residential setting on APN 465-070-12-00 in the Kensington Point subdivision.

The historic name of the resource, the Frank and Johanna Linder/Louise Severin Spec House #1, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of the owners and Master Builder who constructed the house for immediate sale. While the applicant's report states that the house was built by Severin before it was sold to the Linders, there is no Notice of Completion, Severin owned the house for a short three months, and the Linders pulled the Water permit. Staff finds that the record does not clearly illustrate that the house was complete prior to the sale to the Linders, and has therefore recommended to include the Linders in the naming of the house.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Legacy 106, Inc. which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria A, C and D, and staff concurs. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows.

CRITERION A - Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's, a community's or a neighborhood's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development.

Significance Statement: In September 2003 the Board designated HRB Site #610 located at 4210 Norfolk Terrace, immediately west of the subject property, under HRB Criteria A and C. The designation included Prohibition-era cobble walls, steps and a concrete dance floor which was used for private parties by several of the properties on Norfolk Terrace. The subject property at 4220 Norfolk Terrace includes remnants of a larger complex of cobble walls and steps that led to this area. The applicant's report concludes that the subject property is significant under HRB Criterion A as part of this larger resource. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion A as a special element of Kensington's historical and social development.

The applicant also recommends designation under HRB Criterion A because the property is associated with a woman, Louise Severin; however, this is not sufficient to establish significance under HRB Criterion A.

CRITERION B - Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.

Research into the owners and tenants of the property at 4220 Norfolk Terrace did not reveal any individuals who could be considered historically significant in local, state or national history. Furthermore, no events of local, state or national significance are known to have occurred at the subject property. Therefore, the property is not eligible for 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 subject property located at 4220 Norfolk Terrace is a one story Spanish Eclectic style single family home constructed in 1929, and features a predominantly flat roof with parapet; decoratively troweled stucco over wood frame construction and a concrete foundation. Two shallow projecting bays with front gable roofs flank the entry, which is recessed under a shed tile roof. A 16-lite fixed wood frame and sash window sits at the larger bay to the right, and an 8:8 wood double hung window is present on the smaller bay to the left. Additional 8:8 windows flank the chimney at the side of the house. Remaining fenestration consists primarily of 1:1 double hung wood frame and sash windows. The 2-car garage with wood door sits forward of the house in this canyon lot.

Modifications include construction of a rear raised patio, balcony and French door in 1998; extension of the chimney at an unknown date; reconstruction of the porch wall and flatwork in 2015 and window restoration work, also in 2015. The 16-lite window at the front replaced a non-historic window within the original opening, and was based on other Severin homes as opposed to historic photographs, which were not available.

Following the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition, the romantic ideal of Spanish and Latin American architecture was revived. What resulted was the Spanish Eclectic style, which was the predominant style in Southern California between 1915 and 1940, significantly altering the architectural landscape until the Modernist movement took hold during and after WWII. The style uses decorative details borrowed from the entire history of Spanish architecture. These may be of Moorish, Byzantine, Gothic, or Renaissance inspirations, an unusually rich and varied series of decorative precedents. The style employed a variety of floor plans, as well as gabled, cross-gabled, gabled and hipped, hipped and flat roof forms with parapets. Other character defining features include Mission and Spanish clay tile; focal windows; arched windows and other openings; and accented entries.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Spanish Eclectic style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including a predominantly flat roof with parapet; decoratively troweled stucco over wood frame construction; two shallow projecting bays with front gable tile roofs flanking the entry, which is recessed under a shed tile roof; and single and multi-lite wood frame and sash windows. 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.

Louise Severin was born in Missouri in 1892 and moved to San Diego in the 1910s. She apprenticed in the construction trade and learned the necessary skills required to become a general contractor. Severin worked throughout the City of San Diego; however it appears that her most mature period was spent in the Kensington and Talmadge areas. During the 1930s, Severin exploited imagery of the region's Spanish and Mexican past combining rustic and vernacular elements with the most up to date materials and methods. While not as sophisticated, the result was something akin to Cliff May's early Hacienda style houses also found in the area. Key elements in many Severin houses was

the single-story “U” or “L” shaped form was well as details such as rustic stucco, tapered chimneys and large interior rooms that opened onto small courtyards surrounded by stucco-coated walls.

Currently, there are only four known Severin-designed houses that are designated Historical Resources within the City of San Diego, HRB Site #623 located at 4185 Rochester Road, HRB Site #743 located at 4179 Norfolk Terrace, HRB Site #1029 located at 4970 Marlborough Drive, and HRB Site #1116 located at 4170 Rochester Road. All four were designated under HRB Criterion D as a notable work of Severin.

Significance Statement: The subject property exhibits Severin’s characteristic style and rustic features, including the distinct skip-trowel stucco treatment, tile trimmed parapets, French doors and wide-multi-paned windows, and tapered stucco chimney with inset panel. Therefore, staff recommends that the subject property located at 4220 Norfolk Terrace be designated under HRB Criterion D as an example of Severin’s notable work.

CRITERION E - Is listed or has been determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or is listed or has been determined eligible by the State Historical Preservation Office for listing on the State Register of Historical Resources.

The property at 4220 Norfolk Terrace has not been listed on or determined eligible for listing on the State or National Registers. Therefore, the property is not eligible for designation under HRB Criterion E.

CRITERION F - Is a finite group of resources related to one another in a clearly distinguishable way or is a geographically definable area or neighborhood containing improvements which have a special character, historical interest or aesthetic value or which represent one or more architectural periods or styles in the history and development of the City.

The property at 4220 Norfolk Terrace is not located within a designated historic district. Therefore, the property is not eligible for designation under HRB Criterion F.

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 Frank and Johanna Linder/Louise Severin Spec House #1 located at 4220 Norfolk Terrace be designated as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1929 under HRB Criterion A for its association with local Prohibition-era history, Criterion C for its Spanish Eclectic design and Criterion D as the work of Master Builder Louise Severin. 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.



Kelley Stanco
Senior Planner/HRB Liaison

KS

Attachments:

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 4/28/2016

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 4/28/2016, to consider the historical designation of the **Frank and Johanna Linder/Louise Severin Spec House #1** (owned by Art Family Trust 06-27-94, 4220 Norfolk Terrace, San Diego, CA 92116) located at **4220 Norfolk Terrace, San Diego, CA 92116**, APN: **465-070-12-00**, further described as LOT E 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 Frank and Johanna Linder/Louise Severin Spec House #1 on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION A as a special element of Kensington's historical and social development and retains integrity to its 1929 period of significance. Specifically, the resource contains remnants of historic cobblestone walls that connected to a larger complex of walls leading to a dance floor in Fairmont Canyon, which was used by property owners for Prohibition-era parties and socialization. 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 as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of Spanish Eclectic architecture and retains integrity to its 1929 date of construction. Specifically, the resource exhibits a predominantly flat roof with parapet; decoratively troweled stucco over wood frame construction; two shallow projecting bays with front gable tile roofs flanking the entry, which is recessed under a shed tile roof; and single and multi-lite wood frame and sash windows. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

(3) The property is historically significant under CRITERION D as a notable work of Master Builder Louise Severin and retains integrity to the original design. Specifically, subject property exhibits Severin's characteristic style and rustic features, including the distinct skip-trowel stucco treatment, tile trimmed parapets, French doors and wide-multi-paned windows, and tapered stucco chimney with inset panel. 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 designation shall include the remnants of the Prohibition-era cobble walls at the rear of the property that connect to the historically designated walls and dance floor on the adjacent, designated property to the west.

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