



Save Our Heritage Organisation
Protecting San Diego's architectural and cultural heritage since 1969

Thursday, May 18, 2019

City of San Diego
Chair McCullough, Historical Resources Board & staff
202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: July 25, 2019 agenda, Item 5, 2027-2045 India Street

Chair McCullough, Boardmembers & staff,

Item 5: 2027 – 2045 India Street – SOHO continues to concur with the May 2019 staff report that the two apartment buildings located at 2027 – 2033 and 2043-2045 India Street are historically significant under Criterion C, for embodying the rare Colonial Revival influenced Arts and Crafts era architectural style. SOHO also asserts they are significant under Criterion A, for cultural development, as a rare multi-family building type within Little Italy that served primarily tenants of Italian descent from the fishing industry, both fisherman and “the non-fishing population of India Street [who] also made a living from the industry” (Appendix A of June 2019 report, p.4). This began upon their relocation in 1948, where the height of the “modern day fishing industry was between 1950 and 1965 with approximately 135 tuna boats,” (June 2019 report, p.6).

These intact apartment buildings continue to retain a strong sense of historical integrity under Criterion A, related to cultural development, as these two resources reflect development that is associated via strong tenancy with the Italian community of Little Italy, who are linked together by a system of shared values and beliefs. Further, these resources specifically exemplify, as noted in the consultant's report, after WWII, when downtown development intensified, many buildings were relocated to Little Italy to serve as housing for this rapidly growing Italian community based upon the post-war tuna fishing industry.

Cultural development is supported under Criterion A by the set-back location of these buildings on lot, the prominent number of Italian descent tenants, and the lack of other historical designations under Criterion A within this important historic San Diego community. As noted in the consultant's report, while there is a suburban feel to this parcel due to the prominent set-back, this rear location was a conscious decision by the property owner, Frank Dacquisto, who fully intended to develop the front half of the parcel because of the continued growth of the tuna fishing industry. The set back is part of the narrative for this site and, in part, what makes the relocation of these two buildings, and its unfinished site development, unique for Little Italy, especially as this was just before the height of the industry. Second, as demonstrated heavily in the consultant's June 2019 report, the tenants of these two resources are predominantly of Italian descent, who shared the same value system and religious beliefs, which was a key component to the continuing cultural development of Little Italy. Last, the June 2019 report notes that only one building to date is designated under Criterion A within the Little Italy community. However, there are a number of buildings that contribute to the Little Italy historic context under Criterion A, such as 2027-2045 India Street. As a small intact collection of dwindling resources for this area, it would be an especially detrimental loss to the historic built environment if these buildings were to disappear from Little Italy's cultural landscape.

Regarding Criterion C, 2027-2045 India Street exhibits features that represent the Colonial Revival influence such as the full pediment of both dormers. As stated in the report, other features include the hip roof with exposed rafters and enclosed eaves, central gable dormers (with Colonial Revival influenced pediment), horizontal shiplap siding on the first floor and wood shingles on the second, a large quantity and variety of windows for interior light such as sash and transom windows, recessed entry area with wood and glass entry doors, and the rectangular shape. Since the Prairie style elements listed within the applicant's report are either the same as those listed for Craftsman or also characteristic of the Arts and Crafts era (such as the hip roof, wide eaves, enclosed rafters, wood windows in various size and placement, divided lights, recessed entry area, and solid balustrades), the report's assertion this is of a Prairie or vernacular style is misleading and inaccurate.

These apartments are an excellent example of Little Italy's post WWII development as some of the last multi-family building types within Little Italy that served Italian tenants, many of whom supported the fishing industry (both fisherman as well as those who supported the industry from land), and was once a standard example. Now, these Colonial Revival influenced buildings are some of the last of their kind within Little Italy, continuing to represent this important fishing district context, and they are highly significant under Criterion C.

2027-2033 and 2041-2045 India Street are character-defining elements of Little Italy, once the Italian fishing district of San Diego. Their loss would diminish this sense of history and place and, without these resources, future generations will not understand this important historical context. SOHO asserts that 2027-2033 and 2041-2045 India Street are significant under Criteria A and C, and warrant historical designation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,



Bruce Coons
Executive Director
Save Our Heritage Organisation