



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: June 16, 2016 REPORT NO. HRB-16-036

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board  
Agenda of June 23, 2016

SUBJECT: **ITEM #10 – 3430 Elliott Street**

APPLICANT: Peter Lucca Jr. represented by Scott A. Moomjian

LOCATION: 3430 Elliott Street, Peninsula Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property located at 3430 Elliott Street as a historical resource.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the property located at 3430 Elliott Street under any adopted HRB Criteria due to a lack of integrity.

### 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 single family home located on APN 450-134-21-00 in the residential subdivision of Chatsworth Terrace. The property was evaluated as part of the Quieter Home Program (QHP) and was identified as a potential contributing resource to the potential Loma Portal National Register Historic District.

### ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Scott A. Moomjian which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria C and D. Staff disagrees, and finds that the building is not eligible 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 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.*

Research into the history of the property at 3430 Elliott Street did not reveal any information to indicate that the property exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's or Peninsula's

historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation 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 3430 Elliott Street 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 at 3430 Elliott Street was constructed in 1929 in the Spanish Eclectic style and features a predominantly flat roof and parapet; small front gabled roof with clay tile and slightly overhanging eaves; stucco walls over wood frame construction; clay pipe vents; and a raised concrete foundation with floor joists. The entry door is set perpendicularly to the street on the forward-set gabled bay, and is accessed by a curved path through a low courtyard wall leading to the tile-clad entry steps. Windows, which feature decorative wood lintels, consist primarily of 3-lite casement and 1-over-1 double hung wood frame and sash windows.

The applicant's report indicates that the courtyard site walls were constructed in 1945 (source unknown). The property was evaluated and documented by the QHP in 2003. At that time, the house exhibited a decorative, troweled stucco finish and very few alterations. The property was determined to be a potential contributing resource to the potential Loma Portal National Register historic district, and therefore qualified for in-kind wood window replacements, which occurred in 2004-2005. In 2010, the owner undertook a remodel that resulted in a number of alterations that included in-kind replacement of the wood lintels above the windows and doors; removal and replacement of clay pipe vents; removal and replacement of wrought iron railing at the entry steps; the addition of non-historic decorative clay tiles at two windows along the driveway side elevation; addition of a column at the courtyard wall; and most significantly, restuccoing of the house. The stucco work resulted in the loss of the decoratively troweled stucco appearance. A very slight undulation is still barely detectable, but significantly muted by the new sand finish.

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.

While the building did originally retain the significant features of Spanish Eclectic architecture, the modifications undertaken in 2010, including the addition of non-historic decorative clay tiles at two

windows along the driveway side elevation and most importantly, the loss of the original decorative troweled stucco finish, have significantly impaired the building's integrity of design, materials, workmanship and feeling to the point that the building is no longer eligible 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 at 3430 Elliott Street was constructed by the Dennstedt Company in 1929. 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 Monterrey 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 detailed in the discussion of Criterion C above, the building has been significantly altered since its original design and construction in 1929. Specifically, the addition of non-historic decorative clay tiles at two windows along the driveway side elevation and most importantly, the loss of the original decorative troweled stucco finish, have significantly impaired the building's integrity of design, materials, workmanship and feeling. Therefore, the building no longer reflects the notable work of Master Architect the Dennstedt Company, and staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion D.

*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 3430 Elliott Street has not been listed on or determined eligible for listing on the State or National Registers as an individual resource. It was found eligible as a potential contributing resource to a potential National Register-eligible district; but has not been formally determined eligible for individual listing. 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 3430 Elliott Street 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 property located at 3430 Elliott 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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Kelley Stanco  
Senior Planner/HRB Liaison

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Attachment:

1. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover