



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: August 18, 2016 REPORT NO. HRB-16-053

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of August 25, 2016

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – 4343 Ridgeway Drive**

APPLICANT: Thomas Welch Living Trust and Donald LaMar represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 4343 Ridgeway Drive, 92116, Kensington-Talmadge Community, Council District 9

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property located at 4343 Ridgeway Drive as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the property located at 4343 Ridgeway Drive 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 property is located in Kensington in a predominantly single family neighborhood.

The building is located on APN 440-031-20-00. The property has not been identified in any historic surveys, as the subject area has not been previously surveyed.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Legacy 106, Inc. which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criterion C. Staff does not concur and believes that the site is not significant under any HRB Criteria. 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.*

Constructed in 1948 in the Custom Ranch style, the house presents as one story from the street and is two story at the rear. The low pitched hipped roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles and features a slight overhang. The exterior of the house is sheathed with stucco with flagstone under the front façade windows. The fenestration on the building is a mixture of divided light steel casement, wood 1/1 double hung and wood single light casement.

The front façade of the building is stepped with a protruding hipped roof portion at the forefront of the house. The section features a bay window with steel windows and flagstone under the window. Stepped back from this section, and centrally located, is the small front porch and main entrance. The raised porch is covered by a flat roof that is supported by a decorative wrought iron post. Setback slightly from the front entrance is the main focal window. The large steel window fills up the space between the front entrance and the garage. Slightly forward of the focal window is the two car garage.

The north façade of the building angles out slightly to accommodate the canyon site. The windows are spaced unevenly on the plane and feature double hung and wood casement windows. The rear of the house has a lower level with access to a deck and an upper level off of the first floor that provides access to a covered balcony. The balcony features several large single glass windows that provide views over the canyon and is accessed several doors. The south façade of the building is similar to the north façade with unevenly spaced double hung and wood casement windows. Midway on the façade is a wood and glass door to access the side yard.

Based on the floor plan and the newspaper articles it appears that there have been a few modifications to the building. There are a number of new single light wood casement windows on the house with appear to be replacement windows. Original double hung windows are still present in a few locations and the news article shows double hung windows on the rear of the house. Based on the evidence provided it appears that the wood casement windows were not present on the house until their more recent installation. Based on the floor plan provided with the newspaper article, it appears that there were originally two doors on the south side with one providing access from the utility room and one providing access from the front bedroom. The door for the front door is no longer present. The garage door was also replaced with a metal sectional roll up door.

The Custom Ranch style of architecture was popular between 1950 and 1975 and is differentiated from Tract Ranch homes because they were typically custom-designed with a specific client in mind. The Ranch style became the era's most prevalent type of residential construction in San Diego. Custom Ranch Homes are generally more lavish than their tract counterparts, but like Tract Ranch housing, materials and detailing are generally traditional. Primary character defining features include horizontal massing, wide to the street; usually single-story; custom details such as wood shutters, large wood windows, or large prominent brick or stone chimneys; and prominent low-sloped gabled or hipped roofs with deep overhangs. Secondary character defining features include a sprawling floor plan frequently "L" or "U" shaped around a central courtyard; large attached carports or garages; and expensive building materials such as wood shingle roofing, wood siding, brick, stone, and adobe which are usually much more generous in materials and craftsmanship than tract homes.

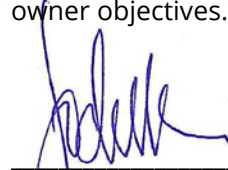
While the subject property has some of the character defining features of a Custom Ranch style, the house fails to reasonably convey as a good example of the style. Rather than present as a lavish example of the style, the subject appears to be more of a tract home. While the house has an "L" shape and a low slope roof, the house is not horizontal to the street, it does not feature a prominent chimney, expensive materials or custom details. The house was designed by a contractor who built his own house and was showcasing the house as a sales pitch for potential customers. The house was not designed by a Master Architect, Designer or Builder. The house is better suited as a contributor to a district rather than as an individually designated house. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under any HRB Criteria.

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 not recommended that the property located at 4343 Ridgeway Drive be designated under any HRB Criteria. 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.



Jodie Brown, AICP
Senior Planner



Kelley Stanco
Senior Planner/HRB Liaison

JB/ks

Attachment(s):

1. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover