



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: January 10, 2013 REPORT NO. HRB-13-001

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of January 24, 2013

SUBJECT: **ITEM #6 – B. Franklin and Helen Mahoney/Richard Requa House**

APPLICANT: James and Dori Cage Family Trust represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 4105 Alameda Drive, Uptown Community, Council District 3

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the B. Franklin and Helen Mahoney/Richard Requa House located at 4105 Alameda Drive as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the B. Franklin and Helen Mahoney/Richard Requa House located at 4105 Alameda Drive as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1921 under HRB Criteria C and D. The designation excludes the service yard enclosure addition at the southeast corner of the structure behind the garage, totaling about 312 square feet. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Spanish Eclectic style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1921 period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits a combination of a moderate-pitched cross gable roof sheathed in Mission clay tile with minimal eave overhang and a flat roof with parapets; smooth stucco exterior walls that flare out at the eaves; accented entry with a Moorish keyhole doorway and decorative tile work; and fenestration consisting of wood casement and fixed windows.
2. The resource is representative of a notable work of Master Architect Richard Requa and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource exhibits Requa's characteristic Spanish Eclectic style and refined features; utilizes his patented hollow clay tile construction method; and demonstrates an enduring influence of his early mentor Irving Gill.

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 resource is a one story Spanish Eclectic style single family residence built in 1921 at the northeast corner of Alameda Drive and Sheridan Avenue. The property is located in the Inspiration Heights subdivision of the Uptown Community.

The historic name of the resource, the B. Franklin and Helen Mahoney/Richard Requa House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of B. Franklin and Helen Mahoney, who constructed the house as their personal residence and the name of Richard Requa, a Master Architect who designed it.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Legacy 106, Inc., which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria B, C, and D. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criteria C and D, but not HRB Criterion B. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows.

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

B. Franklin Mahoney owned the subject property beginning in 1921 until his death in 1951. He lived in the house from the time of its construction in 1921 until 1925. Mahoney is most known for his association with Charles Lindbergh and his role in the construction of the *Spirit of St. Louis*. This association began in 1927, shortly after Mahoney had taken full ownership of Ryan Airlines in 1926. Lindbergh planned to compete for the \$25,000 Orteig Prize by flying non-stop from New York to Paris and quickly needed a competent plane to accomplish the record-breaking feat. He contacted Ryan Airlines and Mahoney boldly stated he would build him the plane in just 60 days. The *Spirit of St. Louis* was completed on schedule and Lindbergh became widely recognized for the historic flight.

Lindbergh's courage and ambition as an aviator are what made him a household name. And without Mahoney's bold vision and entrepreneurial spirit, contributions to that legendary transatlantic flight may have been left for some other city to don as a crowning achievement. It was that record-breaking flight and the men behind it that put San Diego on the map as a city that leads the charge in aeronautical innovation.

The importance of B. Franklin Mahoney's historical contributions to the aviation industry is unquestionable. However, Mahoney's more landmark contributions to the aviation industry – i.e. his affiliation with the *Spirit of St. Louis* and Charles Lindbergh – and his productive life in general occurred when he was no longer living at the subject property. Mahoney's marriage with his first wife Helen Post was very rocky and the couple divorced and vacated the house in 1925. It was not until 1927 that Mahoney met Lindbergh and began construction on his plane.

After leaving the subject property in 1925, Mahoney lived at the Palomar Apartments at 536 Maple Street (HRB site #336 also designed by Requa) until 1927. He then lived at 1173 Leroy Street with his second wife for a short time, followed by a stay in Manhattan and then several places around Beverly Hills until his death in 1951. Staff feels that the brevity of Mahoney's association with the subject property and the fact that he was not living there during his most productive period of life renders that association too weak to warrant designation under HRB Criterion B. Therefore staff does not recommend 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 is a one-story Spanish Eclectic style single family residence built in 1921 of hollow clay tile construction on a concrete foundation. The building exhibits an asymmetrical façade and a "U" shaped form surrounding a rear courtyard. The north wing of the building features a flat roof with parapet while the balance of the structure has a moderate-pitched cross gabled roof form sheathed in Mission clay tiles. Exterior walls are clad in smooth finish stucco and flare out at the eaves. The primary façade is characterized by a pair of small decorative porches with wrought iron railings and an accented entry featuring a Moorish keyhole doorway with decorative tile work on the inside of the arch. This distinct keyhole shape is repeated in the gable end attic vent. Fenestration consists of wood casement and fixed windows. Primarily on the west and south elevations, casement windows appear with transom awning windows above.

Historic photographs and original design plans reveal some modifications that have occurred. First, the window muntins pictured on the west and south elevations in the historic photographs have been removed. This appears to be the only change to the windows as they are wood and remain original in their configuration and operation. Second, the walled-in area laid out in the plans for the clothes dryer and service yard has been made into additional living space. It is believed that this addition was originally built in the 1950s or 1960s, and in 2002 this space was remodeled. This addition follows the location of the original site walls drawn in the plans and is located at the rear of the structure, on the southeast corner of the garage, out of public view. Additionally, the original sliding garage doors seen in the historic photographs have been replaced with a wooden tilt up door and the small pool in the rear courtyard has been converted into a raised planter. These modifications are reversible and do not alter the structure's character defining features or significantly impair its integrity as it relates to the 1921 period of significance.

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.

The house continues to convey the historic significance of Spanish Eclectic architecture by embodying the character defining features of the style including the asymmetrical façade; Mission clay tile roof and flat roof with parapet; smooth stucco exterior walls that flare out at the eaves; accented entry with a Moorish keyhole doorway and decorative tile work; and wood casement and fixed windows. The limited modifications to the subject building do not alter its character defining features or significantly impair the integrity as it relates to the 1921 date of construction. Therefore, staff recommends 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.

Richard Requa was born in Rock Island, Illinois in 1881. He grew up in Nebraska and was trained as an engineer. In 1900, he and his family relocated to San Diego and though he did not attend architecture school he trained under Master Architect Irving Gill, one of the early Modernists in San Diego. Gill was known for simplifying his designs, reducing ornamentation, and focusing on the mass and shape of a building. In 1912, he partnered with another Gill-trained architect Frank Mead. Together they continued a refinement of Gill's interpretation of indigenous architectural design based on Mediterranean and Southwest styles that – owing to similar materials, climate and terrain – were appropriate for San Diego. Requa and Mead were heavily influenced by the Panama-California Exposition designs and began an intense study of 15th through 18th century Spanish and Mexican architectural styles, Native American southwestern pueblos, and 11th through 14th century Moorish architecture. During this time Requa developed an architectural style that emphasized outdoor living and capturing sunlight with the incorporation of French doors and expansive windows placed on south and west-facing elevations of buildings.

In 1920, Requa became a licensed architect, left his partnership with Mead. Subsequently, structural engineer Herbert Jackson joined Requa. The firm of Requa & Jackson became the architects of choice during the booming 1920's and their style, which Requa named Southern California architecture, dominated the San Diego scene. The subject property's character-defining features embody an interesting time in Requa's career. Combined with the residence's Spanish Eclectic detailing, the structure's relatively simple massing, broad surfaces, and expansive window openings reveal a lingering influence from his time with Gill. Additionally, when B. Franklin Mahoney commissioned him to design the home in 1921, Requa chose to construct it with his newly patented hollow clay tile building method and was documented as having considered the house an excellent example of Southern California architecture. As such, the house remains as a notable example of the work of Requa as a Master Architect. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion D.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

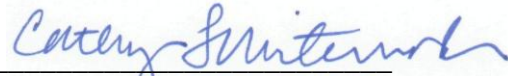
If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the B. Franklin and Helen Mahoney/Richard Requa House located at 4105 Alameda Drive be designated with a period of significance of 1921 under HRB Criterion C as a good example of the Spanish Eclectic style and Criterion D as a notable work of Master Architect Richard Requa. The designation excludes the service yard enclosure addition at the southeast corner of the structure behind the garage, totaling about 312 square feet. 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.



Camille Pekarek
Planning Intern



Cathy Winterrowd
Assistant Deputy Director/HRB Liaison

CP/jb/cw

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A

ADOPTED ON 1/24/2013

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 1/24/2013, to consider the historical designation of the **B. Franklin and Helen Mahoney/Richard Requa House** (owned by James W. and Dori J.N. Cage Family Trust 10-28-96, 4105 Alameda Drive, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **4105 Alameda Drive, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **443-602-04-00**, further described as BLK 1 LOT 5 W 28 FT LOT 4 & ALL 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 B. Franklin and Helen Mahoney/Richard Requa House on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Spanish Eclectic style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1921 period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits a combination of a moderate-pitched cross gable roof sheathed in Mission clay tile with minimal eave overhang and a flat roof with parapets; smooth stucco exterior walls that flare out at the eaves; accented entry with a Moorish keyhole doorway and decorative tile work; and fenestration consisting of wood casement and fixed windows.

(2) The property is historically significant under CRITERION D as a notable work of Master Architect Richard Requa and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource exhibits Requa's characteristic Spanish Eclectic style and refined features; utilizes his patented hollow clay tile construction method; and demonstrates an enduring influence of his early mentor Irving Gill.

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 exclude the service yard enclosure addition at the southeast corner of the structure behind the garage, totaling about 312 square feet.

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 AS TO FORM AND
LEGALITY: JAN I. GOLDSMITH,
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: _____
CORRINE NEUFFER,
Deputy City Attorney