



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
**Historical Resources Board**

DATE ISSUED: November 27, 2013 REPORT NO. HRB-13-054

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board  
Agenda of December 11, 2013

SUBJECT: **ITEM #7 – Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #3**

APPLICANT: Robert M. McLeod Trust represented by Legacy 106, Inc

LOCATION: 4019 Hawk Street, Uptown Community, Council District 3

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #3 located at 4019 Hawk Street as a historical resource.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Designate the Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #3 located at 4019 Hawk Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1919 under HRB Criteria C and D. The designation excludes the circa 1956 detached accessory structure at the rear of the property. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Craftsman Bungalow style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1919 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features low pitched gable roof forms with wide unenclosed eaves and exposed rafter tails, ridge beams and purlins; a partial width corner porch with battered open post columns and large stucco piers; original Craftsman style wood entry door with beveled glass inlay; and fenestration consisting of wood double hung windows and picture windows with multi lite transoms.
2. The resource is representative of a notable work of Master Builder Martin V. Melhorn and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource reflects an example of Melhorn's work in the Craftsman Bungalow style during a period of stylistic transition in his career.

**Development Services Department**

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## 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 subject house is a one-story Craftsman bungalow constructed in 1919 on the east side of Hawk Street just south of Fort Stockton Drive in the Arnold and Choate's Addition of the Uptown Community.

The historic name of the resource, the Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #3, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Alberta Security Company, who constructed the house as a speculation house and the name of Martin V. Melhorn, a Master Builder.

## ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Legacy 106, Inc., which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria 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 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 house is a one story Craftsman Bungalow built by Martin V. Melhorn in 1919. The house is rectangular in form and features an asymmetrical façade with a front gable roof that intersects with a partial-width side gable roof above the corner porch. The low pitched, gable roofs feature wide unenclosed eaves with decorative exposed rafter tails as well as exposed ridge beams and purlins on the gable ends.

The front porch is accessed by a scored concrete walkway and concrete steps supported by large stucco square piers and battered open post columns. The house is sheathed in a light sand finish stucco that the property owner based off the original stucco on the house. Louvered attic vents with stucco sills are present in the primary gable ends at the front and rear. Overall, fenestration is made up of wood double hung windows and transomed picture windows. The west (primary) façade features a large 8-over-1 transomed picture window flanked by two wood double hung windows. To the right of the windows, the partial width porch features exposed rough hewn wood beams and the original Craftsman style wood door with beveled glass inlay sits on the south facing wall.

A detached accessory structure at the rear of the property was constructed circa 1956, replacing the original detached garage, and is not included in the nomination.

With origins in the British Arts and Crafts movement, born in response to the overly ornate Victorian aesthetic and the highly mechanized Industrial Revolution, Craftsman style architecture was popular in the United States largely between 1905 and 1930. Early examples by Greene and Greene were highly publicized in magazines, thus familiarizing the rest of the nation with the style. As a result, a flood of pattern books appeared, offering plans for Craftsman

bungalows. One story vernacular examples are often called simply bungalows. Character defining features of Craftsman architecture include a low-pitched, gabled roof with wide, unenclosed eave overhang; exposed roof rafters; decorative beams or braces; full or partial-width porches supported by tapered square columns or pedestals; wood or stucco cladding; and wood frame and sash windows in fixed, double hung and casement varieties.

Some modifications have occurred over the years which do not greatly affect the building's character defining features or detract from its integrity. First, the home has been restuccoed in a light sand finish similar to its original. Within the corner porch, a pair of narrow 3-over-1 French doors has been placed in an original opening and surround on the west facing wall. At the south (side) elevation, a small indent and stucco sill indicates a small window that was infilled. A pair of windows on the north (side) elevation were also infilled – one retaining its stucco sill and one covered by an electrical panel. At the service area projection near the rear of the north (side) elevation, a replacement door and small window were placed in original openings.

The limited modifications to the subject building do not alter its character defining features or significantly impair the integrity as it relates to the 1919 date of construction. The house continues to convey the historic significance of Craftsman Bungalow style by embodying the character defining features of the style including the low pitched gable roof forms with wide unenclosed eaves and exposed rafter tails, ridge beams and purlins; partial width corner porch with battered open post columns and large stucco piers; original Craftsman style wood entry door with beveled glass inlay; and fenestration consisting of wood double hung windows and picture windows with multi lite transoms. 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.*

Martin V. Melhorn was born in Indiana in 1866. He lived and worked in Falls City, Nebraska and Denver, Colorado before moving to San Diego in 1911 with his wife, Alberta, and their son William. Melhorn established the Alberta Security Company in 1913 which focused primarily on the financial aspects of building construction. The Alberta Security Company and Melhorn purchased and built the subject property in 1919. Melhorn and his affiliates were prolific builders in the City of San Diego – particularly in the areas of Mission Hills, Hillcrest, University Heights, North Park and South Park – and numerous Melhorn-built homes have been listed on the San Diego Register.

The subject property was constructed in 1919, shortly after the dissolution of Melhorn's Bay City Construction Company in 1916, and during a period of transition for Melhorn in which he began to move away from the building of Craftsman styled homes in favor of the Prairie style, Colonial Revival, and Spanish Eclectic style bungalows. This transition is most noticeable in the subject property with the choice of stucco cladding for this Craftsman Bungalow. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion D as a resource that is representative of a notable work of Master Builder Martin V. Melhorn.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

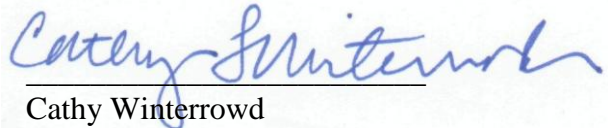
If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #3 located at 4019 Hawk Street be designated with a period of significance of 1919 under HRB Criterion C as a resource that exhibits the distinctive characteristics of Craftsman Bungalow style architecture; and HRB Criterion D as a resource that is representative of a notable work of Master Builder Martin V. Melhorn. The designation excludes the circa 1956 detached accessory structure at the rear of the property. 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  
Junior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd  
Interim Deputy Director/HRB Liaison

CP/cw

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A  
ADOPTED ON 12/11/2013

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 12/11/2013, to consider the historical designation of the **Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #3** (owned by Robert M. McLeod Trust, 4019 Hawk Street, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **4019 Hawk Street, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **444-403-04-00**, further described as BLK 55 LOTS 7 & 8 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 Alberta Security Company/Martin V. Melhorn Spec House #3 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 the Craftsman Bungalow style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1919 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features low pitched gable roof forms with wide unenclosed eaves and exposed rafter tails, ridge beams and purlins; a partial width corner porch with battered open post columns and large stucco piers; original Craftsman style wood entry door with beveled glass inlay; and fenestration consisting of wood double hung windows and picture windows with multi lite transoms. 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 D as a notable work of Master Builder Martin V. Melhorn and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource reflects an example of Melhorn's work in the Craftsman Bungalow style during a period of stylistic transition in his career. 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 exclude the circa 1956 detached accessory structure at the rear of the property.

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