



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: September 16, 2014 REPORT NO. HRB-14-056

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of September 25, 2014

SUBJECT: **ITEM #7 – Cornelia Fairbrother House and John Meed Ray Cottage**

APPLICANT: Eric Sweeney represented by Scott A. Moomjian

LOCATION: 7224 Fay Avenue and 7224 ½ Fay Avenue, La Jolla Community, Council District 1

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Cornelia Fairbrother House located at 7224 Fay Avenue and the John Meed Ray Cottage located at 7224½ Fay Avenue as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Cornelia Fairbrother House located at 7224 Fay Avenue as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1929 under HRB Criterion C; and the John Meed Ray Cottage located at 7224½ Fay Avenue as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1918 under HRB Criterion A. The designation excludes the detached garage structure. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource at 7224½ Fay Avenue reflects a special element of the La Jolla's historical, social, economic, aesthetic and architectural development and retains integrity to the 1918 date of construction and period of significance. Specifically, the house embodies the character defining features of Beach Cottage architecture, is one of a finite and limited number of beach cottages remaining which reflect the early development history of La Jolla, and retains integrity for that association.
2. The resource at 7224 Fay Avenue embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Spanish Eclectic architecture and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1929 period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits a predominantly flat roof with parapet; a combination gable and hipped clay tile roof with a rounded stucco cornice at the front of the house; hand-troweled stucco; a recessed central porch under a wood header with carved wood corbels enclosed by a low stucco wall; and fenestration consisting a large single pane fixed arched window flanked by 8-lite wood frame and sash casements below; a multi-lite entry door and French door with sidelights at the porch; 5-over-1 and 1-over-1 double hung wood frame and sash windows; and single lite wood frame and sash casement windows.

Planning 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 property is located on a residential street in the J.T. Corcoran's Subdivision of La Jolla. Both buildings are located on APN 351-172-19-00, with the one story building located at 7224 Fay Avenue sited at the front of the lot, and the one story building at 7224½ Fay Avenue constructed at the rear of the lot, off of the alley (Bishop's Lane). The property at 7224 Fay Avenue was identified in the 2004 Draft La Jolla Survey and given a Status Code of 7R, "Identified in Reconnaissance Level Survey: Not Evaluated." Individual resources identified in the reconnaissance survey that were not identified as a potential contributor to a potential historic district were given a Status Code of "7R" since those resources were not evaluated for integrity under the reconnaissance level survey.

The historic name of the resources at 7224 Fay Avenue and 7224½ Fay Avenue have been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Cornelia Fairbrother and John Meed Ray, respectively, who constructed the homes as their personal residences.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Scott A. Moomjian, which concludes that the resource located at 7224 Fay Avenue is significant under HRB Criterion C, and resource located at 7224½ Fay Avenue is significant under HRB Criterion A. Staff concurs with the conclusion of the report. 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.

The village of La Jolla began in the 1880s during the "boom" period of San Diego's history as a small coastal community. One of the first land tracts in the area was La Jolla Park, which was developed in 1887 by Frank Botsford and was the first subdivision to have identified lots and streets. The first permanent residence in La Jolla was constructed that same year. Historian Patricia Schaechlin described La Jolla's early history as follows: "In 1888, the land collapse left a scraggly collection of cottages, few residents, no improvements and little hope.... La Jolla experienced a steady growth in the first two decades of the twentieth century, a time when the community became a village. It grew from a 350 population, some one hundred houses, to a village and a popular resort with a commercial base of tourism large enough to support its permanent residents."

Beach Cottages were the dominant housing type in La Jolla during this early period through the 1930's. The Beach Cottage style was ideal for use as a summer or winter retreat or, even though lacking in many modern conveniences, they could be and were used as permanent residences. Early beach cottages were characterized (in part) as smaller dwellings, typically one story, with a low pitched roof and exposed rafters; wood siding; a small front porch and garden area; and an orientation toward any available beach or coastal view. Originally known by name, the cottages were not given proper addresses until 1913. By the 1920s, the population had increased to over 2,500 people and the

tourism industry was firmly established. Hotels were constructed in increasing numbers, and as the famous and wealthy began to vacation there, the cottages were no longer seen as suitable accommodations. Increased population, tourism and wealth, coupled with shifting architectural preferences, caused Beach Cottages to fall out of favor through the late 1920s and 1930s. In the following decades, many of these early cottages were relocated to less desirable inland lots.

In the 1970s through the 1980s and 1990s, the cottages were demolished, rather than relocated. The shrinking number of cottages dating to La Jolla's early development can be tracked through prior histories and surveys. A 1955 history of La Jolla by Howard Randolph identified approximately 466 beach cottages on 25 streets that dated from the 1890's to the 1920's. In 1977, a survey of historic resources in La Jolla was conducted by Pat Schaechlin. The survey identified approximately 1,976 structures from the early history of La Jolla, only 1,119 of which still remained at the time of the survey. A 1987 survey of the beach cottages identified in the Schaechlin survey found 36 individual cottages remaining, a number reduced by one with the demolition of the Green Dragon Colony in 1992. The subject property, which was not identified in the 1955, 1977 or 1987 listing of cottages, would not be counted among the 35.

The subject building at 7224½ Fay Avenue exhibits a majority of the character defining features that relate to the exterior appearance of early La Jolla Beach Cottages, which include:

- Small to medium sized residences
- One to one and one-half stories, occasionally two stories
- Low, sloping roof, hipped or gabled, sometimes with dormers
- Exposed roof structure, with beams and rafters visible
- Exterior proportions balanced rather than symmetrical in arrangement
- Modest front porch
- Front stoop
- Focus on a garden, even if small
- Partial width front porch
- Wood shingles, horizontal siding or stucco exteriors
- Windows were typically double hung with multiple lights in the upper window and a single pane in the lower, often seen in continuous banks, simple wide casings.

The features that the building does not exhibit are limited, and include use of brick or stone exterior chimneys and asymmetrical "L" shaped porches. Although the windows of the subject house are not found in continuous banks and do not contain divided-lite upper sashes, they are double hung wood frame and sash.

Modifications are limited, and include a modest 56 square foot addition at the side, and the replacement of one side window with an aluminum sliding window. With a construction date of 1918, this cottage was built within the 1880s-1930s period of significance for early La Jolla Beach Cottage development. With the exception of the minor modifications noted, the cottage retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship and feeling to this early period of development in La Jolla.

Significance Statement: Given the scarcity of early Beach Cottages in La Jolla as documented in the report and previous surveys, staff finds that the subject building at 7224½ Fay Avenue, which

embodies the character defining features of Beach Cottage architecture and retains integrity to its 1918 date of construction, reflects a special element of La Jolla's historical, cultural, social, economic, aesthetic and architectural development. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion A. Staff recommends the designation exclude the detached garage which may have been constructed at or about the same time as the property at 7224½ Fay Avenue, but is not a character defining feature of Beach Cottage architecture.

The building at 7224 Fay Avenue structure at the front of the property was built in 1929 at the end of the beach cottage era, but does not reflect the character defining features of early La Jolla Beach cottages; and therefore staff does not recommend designation of this building 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 buildings at 7224 and 7224½ Fay Avenue 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 building located at 7224 Fay Avenue was constructed in 1929 in the Spanish Eclectic style and features a predominantly flat roof with parapet; a combination gable and hipped tile roof with a rounded stucco cornice at the front of the house; hand-troweled stucco over wood frame construction; and a concrete foundation. The front of the house features a front-gable at the east end of the façade with three clay-pipe vents in the gable end and a large single pane fixed arched window flanked by 8-lite wood frame and sash casements below. To the right is the entry porch with wood header and carved corbel brackets, enclosed by a low stucco wall and accessed from the side. A multi-lite entry door and French door with sidelights are present at the recessed porch. To the right is a 5-over-1 double hung wood frame and sash window. Remaining fenestration consists of 1-over-1 double hung and single lite casement wood frame and sash windows. Modifications are extremely limited, and include the addition of an aluminum sliding window on the north side of the house.

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.

Significance Statement: The house at 7224 Fay Avenue, which retains integrity to its 1929 date of construction and period of significance, continues to convey the historic significance of the Spanish Eclectic style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including a predominantly flat roof with parapet; a combination gable and hipped clay tile roof with a rounded stucco cornice at the front of the house; hand-troweled stucco; a recessed central porch under a wood header with carved wood corbels enclosed by a low stucco wall; and fenestration consisting a large single pane fixed arched window flanked by 8-lite wood frame and sash casements below; a multi-lite entry door and French door with sidelights at the porch; 5-over-1 and 1-over-1 double hung wood frame and sash windows; and single lite wood frame and sash casement windows. Therefore, staff recommends designation of the building at 7224 Fay Avenue under HRB Criterion C.

The building at 7224½ Fay Avenue structure at the rear of the property, while significant under Criterion A, does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction, and therefore staff does not recommend designation of this building 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 buildings located at 7224 and 7224½ Fay Avenue do not appear to be architect designed. The builder of the property at 7224½ Fay Avenue is not known, and the builder of the property at 7224 Fay Avenue, O.W. Hamberg, is not established as a Master Builder nor is there sufficient information available to establish him as such at this time. Therefore, the property is not eligible for 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 buildings located at 7224 and 7224½ Fay Avenue have not been listed on or determined eligible for listing on the State or National Registers. 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 buildings located at 7224 and 7224½ Fay Avenue are not located within a designated historic district. Therefore, the property is not eligible for designation under HRB Criterion F.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

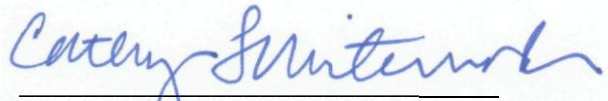
If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Cornelia Fairbrother House located at 7224 Fay Avenue be designated as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1929 under HRB Criterion C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of Spanish Eclectic architecture; and that the John Meed Ray Cottage located at 7224½ Fay Avenue be designated as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1918 under HRB Criterion A as a resource that reflects a special element of La Jolla's historical, social, economic, aesthetic and architectural development related to Beach Cottage architecture. The designation excludes the detached garage, as it is not a character defining element of Beach Cottage architecture. 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.



Kelley Stanco
Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Deputy Director/HRB Liaison

KS/cw

Attachments:

1. Draft Resolution
2. Sanborn Map (corrected through 1966)
3. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 9/25/2014

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 9/25/2014, to consider the historical designation of the **Cornelia Fairbrother House** and the **John Meed Ray Cottage** (owned by Eric Sweeney, 7224 Fay Avenue, San Diego, CA 92037) located at **7224 Fay Avenue and 7224 ½ Fay Avenue** (respectively), **San Diego, CA 92037**, APN: **351-172-19-00**, further described as BLK 1 LOT 18 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 Cornelia Fairbrother House located at 7224 Fay Avenue and the John Meed Ray Cottage located at 7224½ Fay Avenue on the following findings:

(1) The building at 7224½ Fay Avenue is historically significant under CRITERION A as a resource that reflects a special element of the La Jolla's historical, social, economic, aesthetic and architectural development and retains integrity to the 1918 date of construction and period of significance. Specifically, the house embodies the character defining features of Beach Cottage architecture, is one of a finite and limited number of beach cottages remaining which reflect the early development history of La Jolla, and retains integrity for that association. 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 building at 7224 Fay Avenue is historically significant under CRITERION C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Spanish Eclectic architecture and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1929 period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits a predominantly flat roof with parapet; a combination gable and hipped clay tile roof with a rounded stucco cornice at the front of the house; hand-troweled stucco; a recessed central porch under a wood header with carved wood corbels enclosed by a low stucco wall; and fenestration consisting a large single pane fixed arched window flanked by 8-lite wood frame and sash casements below; a multi-lite entry door and French door with sidelights at the porch; 5-over-1 and 1-over-1 double hung wood frame and sash windows; and single lite wood frame and sash casement windows. 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 detached garage structure.

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

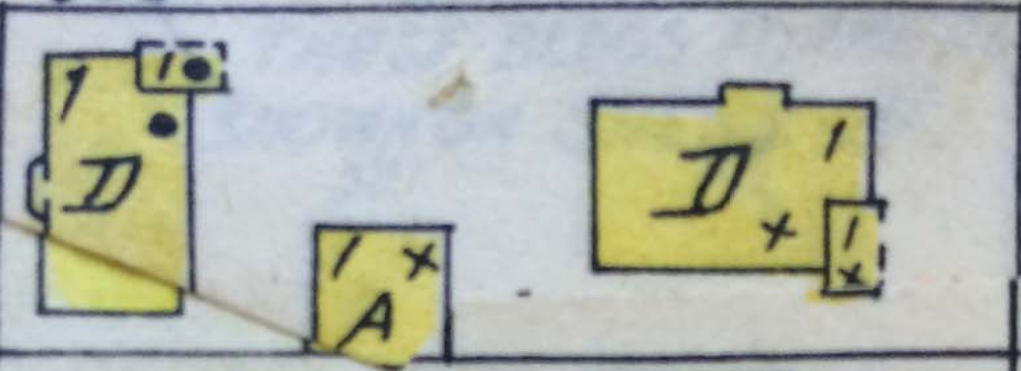
BY: _____
CORRINE NEUFFER,
Deputy City Attorney

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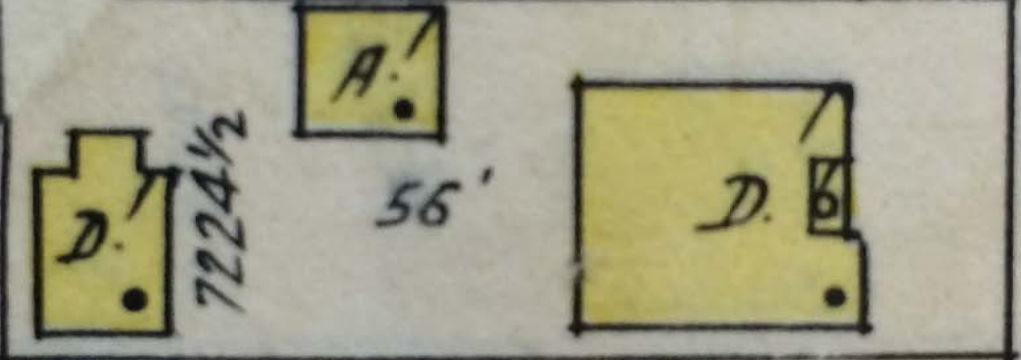
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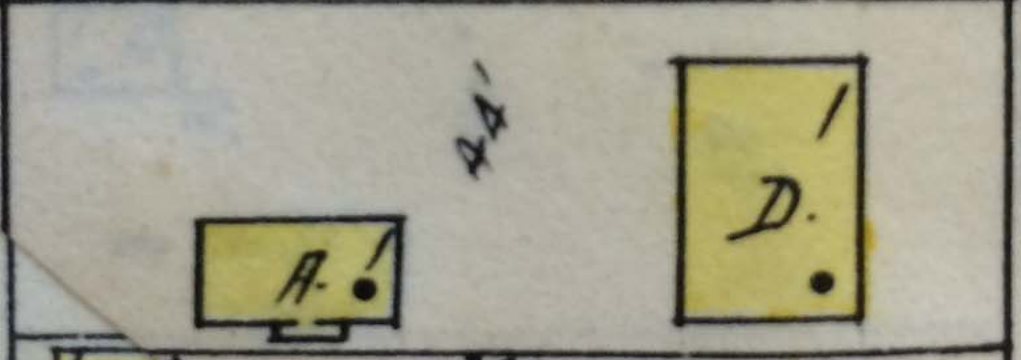
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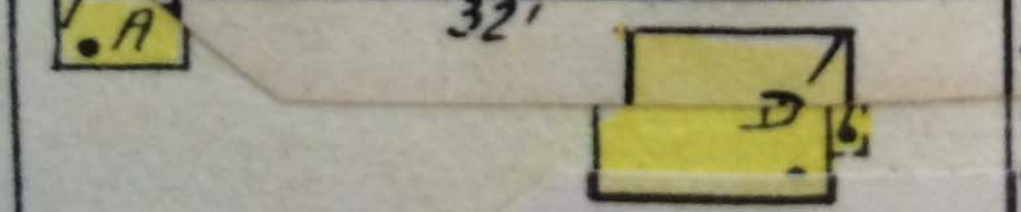
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7224



7218 FAY



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7219

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