

CITY OF SAN DIEGO
M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: January 9, 2014

TO: Historical Resources Board and Interested Parties

FROM: Jodie Brown, AICP, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: **ITEM 8 — Review the National Register Nomination of the Robert O. Peterson/Russell Forester Residence**

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board pursuant to the Office of Historic Preservation requirement that the local jurisdiction be provided 60 days to review and comment on a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nomination. Robert O. Peterson/Russell Forester Residence at 567 Gage Lane is being nominated to the National Register under Criterion C and Criteria Consideration G as a significant historical resource at the local level for its association with Russell Forester and as a property that is less than 50 years old. The property was placed on the California Register in January 2010 under Criterion 3 and listed on the local register in May 2010 as Historic Site #959 (Attachment 1 and 2).

NRHP Criterion C requires that a resource, “*Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.*” A National Register Nomination Report was prepared by Jaye MacAskill stating that the property at 567 Gage Lane is significant at the local level for its association with Russell Forrester. The property demonstrates high artistic value as the work of a known Master Architect. The Modern “California Style” of the primarily post-and-beam house responds to the landscape, climate and lifestyle of Southern California, combining key aspects of the International style with Traditional Pacific Asian-inspired Organic Geometric architecture.

The property is also being nominated under Criteria Consideration G which relates to properties “...*less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.*” Construction of the subject property began 50 years prior to the time the National Register nomination was submitted, but the completion of the building overlaps the fifty year period by approximately one year. Russell Forrester was considered to have been an important pioneer in San Diego’s mid-twentieth century Modernist Period. The Robert O. Peterson/Russell Forester Residence is widely regarded to have been the best and most ambitious residential commission of his career. The property meets the requirements of Criteria Consideration G as an exceptional example of the architect’s work, whose period of construction only overlaps the 50 year minimum by one year. HRB staff concurs that the property is significant under Criterion C and Criteria Consideration G.

Based on the information submitted, it is recommended that the Historical Resources Board forward a positive recommendation to the Office of Historic Preservation for listing of the Robert O. Peterson/Russell Forester Residence on the National Register of Historic Places.



Jodie Brown, AICP
Senior Planner

Attachments:

1. Staff Report HRB-09-060 dated September 10, 2009
2. Staff Report HRB-10-024 dated May 13, 2010
3. Applicant's National Register of Historic Resources Nomination Report under separate cover



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: May 13, 2010 REPORT NO. HRB-10-024

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of May 27, 2010

SUBJECT: **ITEM 10 – ROBERT O. PETERSON/RUSSELL FORESTER
RESIDENCE**

APPLICANT: Jeffrey R Krinsk Separate Property Trust, et al represented by Jaye Furlonger

LOCATION: 567 Gage Drive, 92106, Peninsula Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property located at 567 Gage Drive as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Robert O. Peterson/Russell Forester Residence, a 1965 building designed in the Organic Geometric architecture sub-style with Post and Beam construction and listed on the California Register of Historical Resources as a significant example of the residential design work of local master architect, Russell Forester, as a historical resource under HRB Criterion E.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with the owner's desire to have the property listed as a historical resource by the City of San Diego. In September 2009, the HRB recommended listing of the subject property on the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 3 for representing the work of a noted master architect and for possessing high artistic value (see Attachment 1).



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The residence was constructed in 1965 by Russell Forester for Robert Peterson, the founder of the fast-food restaurant chain Jack in the Box. Located on a 1.69 acre lot, the approximately 12,000 sq. ft. of living space hosts a compound of buildings. The architecture, which used natural materials, responds to the site and the surrounding environment to create a harmonious union. The irregular footprint and the placement of the separate buildings also respond to the site by being sensitive to the site's natural features and plants. The wide expanse of glass used throughout the building blur the line between indoor and outdoor living. The buildings have a low-pitch hipped roof with enclosed overhanging eaves with the exception of the dining room and entry foyer which have a mansard roof. The house rests on a raised foundation and is surrounded by a wrap-around catwalk. The front entrance is access via a raised gable roof walkway. Typical fenestration on the main public areas, master suite and corridors consists of massive floor to ceiling panels of tempered glass. Full height glazed wood doors open to exterior wrap-around redwood decks and catwalks. The primary walls of the bedroom wing and the detached bedroom/ laundry building and the new pool house are constructed of banks of fixed vertical glass panels set into heavy wooden frames. Glazed single and double wood doors are designed in a manner consistent with the fixed panels to blend in seamlessly with dominant fenestration pattern. Beneath the eaves and above the glazed walls and doors is a ribbon of transom windows.

Other buildings within the compound include the previously mentioned detached bedroom/laundry room building, a multi-car garage, guard house, floating tea house and a gardening shed. Both the garage and the guard house were constructed on concrete brick. In the 1980s a pool house, a lap pool and a tennis court were added to the property. The landscaping surrounding the house and auxiliary buildings features a collection of exotic trees and plants as well as several Forester-designed reflecting ponds beneath the elevated front entrance. A large koi pond at the northeast corner of the property features approximately 200 fish. In 1967, a Japanese style island tea house was constructed at the center of the pond. In the 1980s, Robert Peterson replaced the original swimming pool at the front of the house with several naturalistic ponds and a cascading stream.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Jaye E. Furlonger and submitted to the State Office of Historic Preservation which concludes that the resource is significant under Criterion 3. Given that the Robert O. Peterson/Russell Forester Residence has been found to be of State-wide significance with its listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, staff recommends local designation under HRB Criterion E. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows:

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 Robert O. Peterson/Russell Forester Residence was listed on the California Register of Historical Resources by the State Historical Resources Commission on January 29, 2010 at its

regular quarterly meeting in Sacramento, California (Attachment 2). The Commission determined the property meets State listing Criterion 3 as a significant example of the residential design work of local master architect, Russell Forester. The Commission further noted that “viewed within the context of San Diego Modernism, the property is an impressive representation of the type of groundbreaking architecture that was being created by Forester and other local visionaries during this relatively recent but notable period of cultural development of San Diego and Southern California.”

In listing the resource, the State Commission noted it is of wood post-and-beam construction, with broad and low pitched hipped roofs and enclosed overhanging eaves. Fenestration consists of massive floor-to-ceiling panels of tempered glass. Full-height glazed wood doors open to exterior wrap-around decks and catwalks. The resource includes a small compound of auxiliary buildings including a detached bedroom and laundry building, a multi-car garage, guard house and “floating” tea house, plus a gardening shed.

Given that the Robert O. Peterson/Russell Forester Residence has been found to be of State-wide significance with its listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, and given that the Historical Resources Board designation criteria provide for the local designation of resources listed on or determined eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, staff recommends designation of the Robert O. Peterson/Russell Forester Residence under HRB Criterion E.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Robert O. Peterson/Russell Forester Residence be designated under HRB Criterion E due to its listing on the California Register of Historical Resources. 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.



Cathy Winterrowd
Principal Planner/HRB Liaison

- Attachments:
1. Staff Report No HRB-09-060 dated September 10, 2009
 2. State Historical Resources Commission Findings dated 1/29/10
 3. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 05/27/2010

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 5/27/2010, to consider the historical designation of the **ROBERT O. PETERSON/ RUSSELL FORESTER RESIDENCE** (owned by Jeffrey R Krinsk Separate Property Trust 12-02-03 Et Al, 567 Gage Drive, San Diego, CA 92106) located at **567 Gage Drive, San Diego, CA 92106**, APN: **532-180-13-00**, further described as LOT 149 (EX RD) DOCS 197378 REC 63&74697 REC 66, 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, glass, 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 ROBERT O. PETERSON/RUSSELL FORESTER RESIDENCE on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION E as a significant example of the residential design work of local master architect, Russell Forester, and as such is listed on the California Register of Historical Resources. The resource is of wood post-and-beam construction, with broad and low pitched hipped roofs and enclosed overhanging eaves. Fenestration consists of massive floor-to-ceiling panels of tempered glass. Full-height glazed wood doors open to exterior wrap-around decks and catwalks. The resource includes a small compound of auxiliary buildings including a detached bedroom and laundry building, a multi-car garage, guard house and "floating" tea house, plus a gardening shed.

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 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: _____
NINA FAIN
Deputy City Attorney



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: September 10, 2009 REPORT NO. HRB-09-060

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of September 24, 2009

SUBJECT: **ITEM #5 –The Robert O. Peterson/Russell Forester Residence**

APPLICANT: Jeffrey and Marcy Krinsk, property owners
Represented by Jaye Furlonger, consultant

LOCATION: 567 Gage Lane, Peninsula Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Review the California Register Nomination for 567 Gage Lane

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Recommend to the Office of Historic Preservation the listing of The Robert O. Peterson/Russell Forester Residence at 567 Gage Lane to the California Register of Historical Resources.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board pursuant to the Office of Historic Preservation requirement that the local jurisdiction be provided 90 days to review and comment on the nomination. The property is being nominated to the California Register under Criterion 3 for representing the work of a noted master architect and for possessing high artistic value. The site and building are not listed on the San Diego Register and have not been previously reviewed by the HRB.



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ANALYSIS

A California Register of Historical Resources Nomination Report was prepared by Jaye Furlonger, the consultant on behalf of the property owners, Jeffrey and Marcy Krinsk, which concludes that the resource is significant under Criterion 3. Staff concurs with the determination that the resource is significant under Criterion 3, as follows:

CRITERION 3 - Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values

The residence was constructed in 1965 by Russell Forester for Robert Peterson, the founder of the fast-food restaurant chain Jack in the Box. Located on a 1.69 acre lot, the approximately 12,000 sq. ft. of living space hosts a compound of buildings. While Forester was renowned for designing in the International Style, this particular property was designed more in keeping with the Organic Geometric architecture sub-style with Post and Beam construction. The architecture, which used natural materials, responds to the site and the surrounding environment to create a harmonious union. The irregular footprint and the placement of the separate buildings also respond to the site by being sensitive to the site's natural features and plants. The wide expanse of glass used throughout the building blur the line between indoor and outdoor living.

Built of post and beam construction with painted wood elements, the house is generally constructed as several connected glass cubes that conform to the site in a one story plan. There are four asymmetrical wings on the main house connected by a glassed central corridor. The public rooms are located to the north while the private rooms are located to the south. The buildings have a low-pitched hipped roof with enclosed overhanging eaves with the exception of the dining room and entry foyer which have a mansard roof. The roof was originally sheathed with wood shake shingles, which were replaced more recently with copper shingles. The house rests on a raised foundation and is surrounded by a wrap-around catwalk. The front entrance is access via a raised gable roof walkway.

Typical fenestration on the main public areas, master suite and corridors consists of massive floor to ceiling panels of tempered glass. Full height glazed wood doors open to exterior wrap-around redwood decks and catwalks. Vertical wood siding is used on some secondary facades. The primary walls of the bedroom wing and the detached bedroom/ laundry building and the new pool house are constructed of banks of fixed vertical glass panels set into heavy wooden frames. Glazed single and double wood doors are designed in a manner consistent with the fixed panels to blend in seamlessly with dominant fenestration pattern. Beneath the eaves and above the glazed walls and doors is a ribbon of transom windows.

Other buildings within the compound include the previously mentioned detached bedroom/laundry room building, a multi-car garage, guard house, floating tea house and a gardening shed. Both the garage and the guard house were constructed on concrete brick. In the 1980s a pool house, a lap pool and a tennis court were added to the property.

The landscaping surrounding the house and auxiliary buildings features a collection of exotic trees and plants as well as several Forester-designed reflecting ponds beneath the elevated front

entrance. A large koi pond at the northeast corner of the property features approximately 200 fish. In 1967, a Japanese style island tea house was constructed at the center of the pond. In the 1980s, Robert Peterson replaced the original swimming pool at the front of the house with several naturalistic ponds and a cascading stream.

While the majority of the house is intact, there have been several alterations to the house over the years. The wood shingles were replaced with copper shingles, the solid front doors were replaced with single light French doors, the original pool was removed and replaced with several ponds, a pool house was added, and the kitchen was expanded slightly under the existing roof line. Overall, the integrity of the property has been maintained and the modifications do not have a negative impact.

Historic Context:

While not yet 50 years old, the California Register of Historical Resources does not require a specific age determination. In conjunction with the *San Diego Modernism Historic Context Statement*, which was adopted by the Office of Historic Preservation, the property was evaluated for its significance and integrity. Built in 1965, the property is within the general period of significance of 1935 to 1970. The house was constructed in the International Style with Post and Beam construction and Asian/Organic Geometric architectural influences.

In the 1930s, modernist structures were not common in the US. Both Irving Gill and Rudolph Schindler promoted modernism in San Diego prior to this date. The designs were stripped of nearly all ornamentation and vernacular associations. The design was intended to have universal appeal and became known as the International Style. Over the years the style evolved and began to feature large patios, indoor-outdoor living spaces, free flowing open floor plans, an abundance of glass and the use of simple, economical building materials. The context statement regards Post and Beam Modernist buildings as representation of a rare sub-style. In Modernist era post and beam buildings, solid load bearing walls are replaced with structural framing consisting of load-bearing wood or steel columns. This structural support system allows for the characteristic placement of floor to ceiling glass walls along the perimeter. Due to the transparent nature of these structures, contextual relationship and landscape setting are of extreme importance to the overall design. Buildings are typically rectilinear with open, grid-like floor plans based on consistent modules or beam lengths. Other character defining features of Modern era post and beam structures include horizontal massing, repetitive façade geometry, the minimal use of solid load bearing walls, direct expression of the structural system and the absence of applied ornamentation.

The Organic Geometric architecture was a design philosophy that created a visual relationship between the built environment and nature. The design was intended to create a seamless relationship between the indoor and the outdoor spaces. The philosophy revolved around the ideas of Frank Lloyd Wright who originally incorporated organic principals into his designs. The style was used to take advantage of any views and landscape features and was typically integrated into the surroundings.

Russell Forester:

Forester (1920-2002) was at the height of his architectural career when he began designing the Peterson Residence in 1964. He was well regarded as a commercial and residential designer by the 1950s. He is considered to have introduced the International Style to adventurous post-WWII consumers with his innovative designs for Peterson's original Jack in the Box drive-thru hamburger stands, the first of which was located on El Cajon Blvd.

Born in 1920 in Idaho, Forester moved to La Jolla when he was 5 years old. After graduation from La Jolla High School in 1938, Forester served in the Army Corps of Engineers and worked as a draftsman under Lloyd Ruocco. In 1948, he opened his first architectural office. By 1950 he began the formal training to become a licensed architect. He developed an affinity for the new International style while attending the Institute of Design in Chicago and studying under Mies Van Der Rohe. While he was not licensed until 1960, he designed several Modernist structures within San Diego including his own residence on Hillside Drive in La Jolla in 1952. After a 28 year career, during which he received a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects (FAIA) designation, he retired in 1976. After his retirement, Forester devoted his time to artistic endeavors becoming a well-known artist.

His philosophy used designs and materials that were suitable for the San Diego climate. He was one of the first San Diego architects to promote Mies Van Der Rohe's use of glass and steel construction in commercial and residential buildings. The first Jack in the Box restaurant in 1951 introduced a stripped down version to the city.

Since his death many of his designs have been demolished or seriously altered. One extant residence has been designated on the local register, the Dr. Harold C. and Frieda Daum Urey/Russell Forester House at 7890 Torrey Lane in La Jolla, in 2002 during which time he was declared a Master Architect on the San Diego Register.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted, it is recommended that the Historical Resources Board forward a positive recommendation for the Robert O. Peterson/Russell Forester Residence to the Office of Historic Preservation for listing on the California Register of Historical Places. If listed on the California Register, this resource would be eligible for listing on the San Diego Register.



Jodie Brown
Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Principal Planner/HRB Liaison

jb/cw

Attachment: Applicant's California Register of Historical Resources Nomination Report under separate cover