



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

DATE ISSUED: August 13, 2015 REPORT NO. HRB-15-034

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board  
Agenda of August 27, 2015

SUBJECT: **ITEM #7 – 3953 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

APPLICANT: Kirk Moushegian, HongJun and Mark Moushegian represented by Scott Moomjian

LOCATION: 3953, 3955 & 3957 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Uptown Community, Council District 3

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property located at 3953 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the property located at 3953 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue under any adopted HRB Criteria.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a proposed building modification or demolition of a structure of 45 years or more, consistent with San Diego Municipal Code Section 143.0212. The building under review is a Craftsman style one-story single-family residence built in 1910, and located on the east side of 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, just south of Washington Street in the Estudillo and Capron's Addition of the Uptown Community.

The property consists of three detached, single family residences identified as 3953, 3955 and 3957 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and is located on APN 444-690-26-00. The 3953 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue building was identified in the 2007 Draft Uptown Survey and given a Status Code of 5S3, "Appears to be individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation."

The buildings identified as 3955 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 3957 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue were evaluated by staff and cleared through the Potential Historic Resource Review process. These buildings date to 1951 and 1937 respectively, and were constructed in the Minimal Traditional style.

## ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Scott A. Moomjian, which concludes that the resource is not significant under any HRB Criteria and staff concurs. 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.*

Research into the history of the property at 3953 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue did not reveal any information to indicate that the property exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's or Uptown's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation 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 property at 3953 9<sup>th</sup> 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 property identified as 3953 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue consists of a one-story Craftsman style single-family residence built in 1910 of standard wood frame construction on a concrete foundation. The building's plan form is rectangular and features an inset front porch with two square porch columns. The moderate pitch hipped roof is of composition shingle and exhibits moderate eave overhang with exposed rafters. The building is clad in horizontal wood clapboard siding. Fenestration consists primarily of single 1-over-1 wood double hung windows. Two windows present mismatching wood shutters of unknown origin. Embellishment is somewhat scarce – rafter tails, fenestration, and porch elements are all straightforward and modestly executed. At the rear of the property are the buildings identified as 3955 and 3957 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, previously cleared by Historic staff. No accessory structures or garages are present.

With origins in the British Arts and Crafts movement, which was 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. 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 frames and sash windows in fixed, double hung and casement varieties.

The subject building has undergone relatively few alterations over the years and retains a good level of integrity in terms of its design, materials, workmanship and feeling. Sometime after 1956, a rear porch was enclosed at the southeast corner of the building and is evident by its wider wood clapboard siding.

The property generally retains a good level of integrity; however, it fails to present an adequate level of significance to be determined individually eligible for designation. Little stylistic expression is conveyed through the building's few distinguishing features. The building's inset front porch has only basic square columns; rafter tails are straight-cut; fenestration is austere with single-light windows and plain exterior trim; and a chimney is conspicuously absent. Accordingly, the property does not embody the distinctive characteristics of the Craftsman style sufficient to convey the historic significance of that style. The building is not a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials nor does it exemplify high craftsmanship and design. The building does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a rare or unique building type or method of construction. Finally, the building's age and physical features do not exemplify or reflect the era when its style, type or method of construction became popular. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation 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.*

Research into the construction of the property at 3953 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue failed to conclusively identify a builder, designer or architect. 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 property at 3953 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue has 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 property at 3953 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue is 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 not recommended that the property located at 3953 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue 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.



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Attachments:

1. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover