



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: September 10, 2015 REPORT NO. HRB-15-036

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of September 24, 2015

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – 575 Albion Street**

APPLICANT: Maureen E Feary Revocable Trust represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 575 Albion Street, Peninsula Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property located at 575 Albion Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the property located at 575 Albion Street under any adopted HRB Criteria.

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 a one-story Custom Ranch style single-family residence built in 1950 on the southeast corner of Albion Street and Dupont Street in the Fairlawn Subdivision of the Peninsula Community.

The building is located on APN 532-190-05-00. The property has not been identified in any historic surveys, as the subject area has not been previously surveyed.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Legacy 106, Inc., which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criterion C. Staff finds that the site is not a significant historical resource under any HRB Criteria due to a lack of integrity. 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 575 Albion Street did not reveal any information to indicate that the property exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's or Peninsula'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 575 Albion Street 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 is a one-story Custom Ranch style single-family residence built in 1950 of standard and above standard wood frame construction on a concrete foundation. The building is sited on a corner lot and responds accordingly with an irregular, "L"-shaped plan form to provide a generous front yard setback and a private rear yard. The low-pitched, gabled roof is sheathed in wood shake and exhibits moderate eave overhang with exposed rafters. Cladding consists of a mixture of board and batten, wide horizontal clapboard, and rustic brick veneer. A brick walkway at the primary elevation leads to a modest entry porch covered by the principal roof with a wooden Dutch front door. Fenestration consists primarily of wood divided light double hung windows of varying sizes with louvered decorative wood shutters for the two presentation façades along Albion Street and Dupont Street. In the rear, at the southeast corner of the property, is a detached pool house structure that is believed to be not original to the property.

The Custom Ranch style of architecture was popular between 1950 and 1975 and is differentiated from Tract Ranch homes because they were typically custom-designed with a specific client in mind. The Ranch style became the era's most prevalent type of residential construction in San Diego. Custom Ranch Homes are generally more lavish than their tract counterparts, but like Tract Ranch housing, materials and detailing are generally traditional. Primary character defining features include horizontal massing, wide to the street; usually single-story; custom details such as wood shutters, large wood windows, or large prominent brick or stone chimneys; and prominent low-sloped gabled or hipped roofs with deep overhangs. Secondary character defining features include a sprawling floor plan frequently "L" or "U" shaped around a central courtyard; large attached carports or garages; and expensive building materials such as wood shingle roofing, wood siding, brick, stone, and adobe which are usually much more generous in materials and craftsmanship than tract homes.

Modifications to the property are relatively few in number, yet have a sizeable impact on the building's integrity as it relates to the 1950 date of construction and period of significance. Of greatest concern are additions affecting both the primary and secondary elevations of this corner lot property. At an unknown date, the attached garage at the south end of the building was expanded toward the front, and an original service entry porch area was enclosed and also expanded toward the front. Not only does this addition impact integrity with its unsuitable placement at the front of the building, it alters the original wall plane's articulation and certain features critical to the original design, namely, the attached garage and recessed service entry porch. Furthermore, the exterior materials of the addition, such as the brick, siding, and roof shingles, all closely match original materials elsewhere on the building. The only suggestion of a modification in this area is a break in the roof line and eave – the wall plane below this break, however, does not provide distinction between the addition and the original construction.

A 1968 side bedroom addition enlarges the building's footprint to the east, along the Dupont Street elevation. This addition is also highly visible from the public right-of-way, sits forward of the original portion of the building it connects to, and matches the original in terms of design and materials. Other modifications include a 1967 family room addition behind the garage, a pool, and pool house in the rear.

Additions affecting the primary and secondary elevations of the subject property have greatly impaired the building's character defining features and integrity. These additions are readily visible and closely mimic the architectural detailing and materials of the original building. Overall, the alterations create a false sense of history and are not consistent with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards. For these reasons, staff cannot recommend 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.

The subject property at 575 Albion Street was built by John C. Washington. Washington has not been established by the Historical Resources Board as a Master Architect, Designer or Builder, and there is insufficient information to designate him as such at this time. Therefore, staff does not recommend 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 575 Albion Street 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 575 Albion Street 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 575 Albion Street 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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Kelley Stanco
Senior Planner/HRB Liaison

CP/ks

Attachment:

1. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover