

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

DATE: June 11, 2015

TO: Historical Resources Board and Interested Parties

FROM: Jodie Brown, AICP, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: **ITEM 5 – 536-538 7th Avenue**

The property was previously docketed for review by the Historical Resources Board on April 24, 2014 at which time staff recommended against designation due to a lack of significance relating to the style or any significant African-American association. At the April 24, 2014 HRB meeting, the board returned the report and requested additional information. Specifically, the board requested further research regarding the relationship to the African American community and research on the type and method of construction.

The addendum reviewed several sources of information and found that during the six year period (1930-1936) that the building was operated as a restaurant, there was little information related to the proprietors or the clientele. Any African American relationship with the restaurant is speculative and limited in duration. The addendum also reviewed the method of construction of the One-Part Commercial Block with hollow clay tile. The use of hollow clay tile in the construction of a simple one story commercial building was rather common building practice during the 1920s. The use of the tile did not constitute a construction innovation or technological advance during the period. The common use of the tile along with the application of the tile and the modifications to the building noted in the previous staff report indicate that the building is not a significant example of One-Part Commercial Block with hollow clay tile.

The staff recommendation to not designate under any HRB Criteria due to a lack of significance remains unchanged.



Jodie Brown, AICP
Senior Planner



Kelley Stanco
Senior Planner/HRB Liaison

JB/ks

Attachments: 1.) Staff Report No. HRB-14-028
2.) Applicant's Addendum dated April 2015 (under separate cover)
3.) Applicant's Consultant Report (under separate cover)



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: April 10, 2014 REPORT NO. HRB-14-028

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of April 24, 2014

SUBJECT: **ITEM #7 – 536/538 7th Avenue**

APPLICANT: 7th and Island LLC represented by Scott A. Moomjian

LOCATION: 536/538 7th Avenue, 92101, Downtown Community, Council District 3

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property at 3745 3rd Avenue as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the property located at 536/538 7th Avenue under any adopted HRB Criteria.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a preliminary review application to determine whether or not the building is historically significant as part of a constraints analysis for future development. The property is located in the Downtown community in an area of mixed use development with commercial and multi-family residential properties.

The building is located on APN 535-111-09-00. The property was identified in the 2005 Warehouse Thematic Historic District Draft survey and given a Status Code of 5D3, “Appears to be a contributor to a district that appears eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation.” In February 2006, the HRB did not establish the historic district, and more specifically, excluded this building, as “not to be considered contributors for purposes of designation within the aforementioned Warehouse Thematic Historic District.”

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Scott 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.

There is no information provided to illustrate that the subject property exemplifies or reflects special elements of the historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development of the City or the downtown area. 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.

Chain of Title and City Directory research revealed past owners and tenants of the subject building, none of which appear to be historically significant individuals. Therefore, staff does not recommend 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 was constructed in 1927 as a restaurant in the One-Part Commercial Block type. Rectangular in form, the building is one story with hollow clay tile walls and brick pilasters. The roof is flat with a parapet wall.

The main elevation features centrally located double entrance doors flanked by large wood picture windows above a low bulk head. Above the storefront is a transom window that extends the width of the building. The transom features eight windows evenly spaced on the plane. Above the transom windows is an essentially unadorned stuccoed wall surface with pilasters at each corner that extend slightly past the parapet.

The south and rear elevations feature exposed hollow clay tile and brick surfaces. Sometime after 1956, an office addition was added at the rear of the building. In addition to the office addition, the other modification to the building has been the replacement of the front entrance doors.

The One-Part Commercial Block type was a popular commercial architectural style across the United States from the 1850s through the 1940s. It is typically one story, free standing, which is treated in much the same variety of ways as the lower zone of the two-part commercial block. It consists of a storefront and an upper wall featuring a false parapet roof often used to display signage. Exterior front façade elements may also include decorative features.

While there have not been significant alterations, the building is not significant as it does not embody the distinct characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction, therefore staff does not recommend this 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 property is not associated with a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under 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 has not been listed on or determined eligible for listing on the State or National Registers, and is therefore 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.

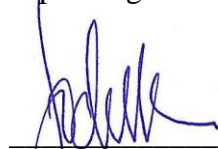
The property is not located within a designated historic district, and is therefore not eligible for designation under HRB Criterion F.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

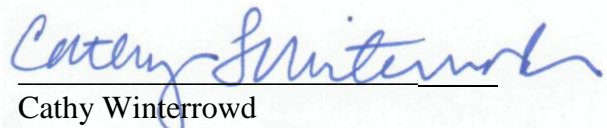
If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is not recommended that the property located at 536/538 7th 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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Cathy Winterrowd
Deputy Director/HRB Liaison

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Attachment(s):

1. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover