



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: October 11, 2012 REPORT NO. HRB-12-055

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of October 25, 2012

SUBJECT: **ITEM #5 – Dr. Roger Revelle House**

APPLICANT: William Revelle II, Anne Shumway, and Mary Paci represented by
Scott Moomjian

LOCATION: 7348 Vista Del Mar, La Jolla Community, Council District 1

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Dr. Roger Revelle House located at 7348
Vista Del Mar as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Dr. Roger Revelle House located at 7348 Vista Del Mar as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1940-1991 under HRB Criterion B. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource is identified with Dr. Roger Revelle, a historically significant person and retains integrity for that association. Specifically, the resource is the only property associated with Dr. Revelle's entire productive life from 1940-1991, and reflects his significant accomplishments that include his work for the Navy and the Scripps Institute of Oceanography, as well as his role in establishing the University of California San Diego, among many other accomplishments.

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 house is a one and two-story beach front house located at the southwest corner of Vista Del Mar and Marine Street in the residential subdivision of La Jolla Beach.

The historic name of the resource, the Dr. Roger Revelle House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Dr. Revelle, a historically significant individual in the fields of science and oceanography.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report dated January 2004, revised March 2004 was prepared by Kathleen Crawford of the Office of Marie Burke Lia, which concludes that the building is significant under HRB Criterion B. An Addendum dated August 2012 and Addendum Supplement dated October 2012, both prepared by Scott A. Moomjian, conclude that the building is not significant under any HRB Criteria. Upon review of the historic report and addenda, staff finds that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion B. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows.

CRITERION B - Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.

The subject property located at 7348 Vista Del Mar was deeded to Roger and Ellen Revelle in December 1940 from Ellen's mother, Grace Scripps Clark Johanson. The Revelles would own and intermittently occupy the house until their respective deaths in 1991 and 2009. Dr. Revelle's accomplishments are described chronologically in great detail in the historic report and addenda, and are summarized here. Born in Seattle, Washington, Dr. Roger Revelle graduated from Pomona College in 1929 with a B.A. in geology. Two years later he married Ellen and joined the Scripps Institute of Oceanography (SIO). In 1936 he obtained his Ph.D in oceanography from UC Berkley. During World War II, Dr. Revelle served as a commander in the Navy, where he was in charge of all oceanographic measurement during the Bikini Atoll atom bomb tests in the 1940s. Dr. Revelle left the Navy in 1947 and returned to SIO where he served as a professor before being promoted to Director in 1950, a position he would hold until 1962. During this time, Dr. Revelle planned and led a dozen oceanographic expeditions to the Pacific Ocean.

In the late 1950s, Dr. Revelle and Dr. Hans Suess wrote the *Tellus* paper in which they proposed that the ongoing industrial revolution would have profound implications for climate changes, and called on the scientific community to monitor changes in the carbon dioxide content of water and air as well as the rates of production of plants and animals. This paper is now widely regarded as the beginning of the global warming debate. Dr. Revelle also worked extensively to create, sponsor and promote scientific committees and organizations during the late 1950s, traveling extensively to Washington D.C. to do so. Such organizations included the Special Committee of Oceanic Research (now the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research) of the International Council of Scientific Unions, and the United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

From 1954-1961, Dr. Revelle worked hard for the establishment of a University of California campus in San Diego, organizing a team of aggressive recruiters who scoured the county for academic talent to serve as faculty. In 1964, he was appointed as a professor of population policy at Harvard University and the new Center for Population Studies. The Revelles moved to

Massachusetts, which would serve as his primary residence for ten years before returning to San Diego part-time in 1974 and full-time in 1978. From 1978 until his death in 1991, Dr. Revelle remained a professor at UCSD, and had several offices during this time, including two in the UCSD campus and one on the SIO campus.

Based upon his extensive body of work and significant achievements and contributions to science, it is clear that Dr. Revelle would be considered a historically significant individual.

The historic report and addenda also discuss the work and achievements of Ellen Revelle, a leader and generous patron of the arts in San Diego. Mrs. Revelle worked closely with her husband in support of the establishment of UCSD, and traveled with him throughout the world for his work. She was an active alumna and supporter of Scripps College throughout her life, and was active in local arts, culture and civics. She served on the board of countless arts and education groups, and worked with others to found Citizens Coordinate for Century 3. She provided significant and sustaining contributions to the La Jolla Playhouse, SIO and UCSD, including scholarship funds. While unquestionably a dedicated civic and cultural activist and generous patron and philanthropist, such activities are typically not sufficient to determine that an individual is historically significant. Absent more detailed information regarding significant contributions or achievements, staff is unable to determine that Ellen Revelle should be considered a historically significant individual at this time.

In regard to whether the subject property would be considered the property most reflective of the life, work and achievements of Dr. Revelle, the applicant's Report Addendum and Report Addendum Supplement provide a detailed analysis of where the Revelles were living and when; where Dr. Revelle worked; and what property would be considered to have the strongest association with Dr. Revelle's work and accomplishments. The report concludes that the subject property should not be designated for an association with Dr. Revelle for several reasons. First, he spent a significant time away not only from the house, but from San Diego, working in Washington D.C. and Massachusetts, as well as various oceanographic and research excursions. Second, it has been documented through statements from Ellen Revelle and the Revelle children that Dr. Revelle conducted all of his work at his office or in the field, and did not bring his work home. Third, the report states that there are a number of properties and objects that currently recognize Dr. and Mrs. Revelle's work and accomplishments, including Revelle College, the research vessel Roger Revelle and several buildings on the SIO campus, to name a few. Fourth, the report identifies a former office on the SIO campus that Dr. Revelle occupied from the late 1970s through his death in 1991. That office is still intact, complete with his original nameplate outside the office door and his many awards on the walls; and continues to recognize his presence, accomplishments and legacy.

Staff has reviewed this information and determined that the subject house is the appropriate resource to be designated for an association with Dr. Revelle. While he did not work at his home, it is the only property that is associated with Dr. Revelle throughout his entire career and productive life. The only other extant resource in San Diego to have a direct association with his life and work would be his office at SIO. However, that office reflects only the last 10-15 years of his life; and as the property of the Regents of the University of California, is out of the

jurisdiction of the City of San Diego. Additionally, the modifications that have occurred to the subject property, as summarized in the discussion of Criterion C below and described in detail in the historic report, were completed by the Revelles, and therefore do not adversely impair associative integrity. Therefore, staff finds that the subject property is the appropriate resource to associate with Dr. Revelle's highly significant life and accomplishments, and recommends 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 located at 7348 Vista Del Mar was originally constructed in 1922 in the Spanish Eclectic style, and featured a one and two story massing in a largely "L" shape, with a smaller one story wing forming a slight "U" shape; a cross-gabled roof with single barrel clay tile roofing; slightly overhanging eaves; stucco walls over wood frame construction; a raised belt course between the first and second floors; an arched entry accented by decorative quoins; and fenestration consisting primarily of wood frame and sash multi-lite casement windows accented by wood shutters.

The building was extensively altered over the years by the Revelle family, as documented in detail by year in the historic report and addenda. In summary, these modifications include removal of the original clay tile roof which was replaced with wood shingles; modification of the roofline along the main façade, which was partially lifted to provide additional headroom at the second floor; replacement of the decorative stucco chimneys with less decorative exposed brick chimneys; construction of a shed roof addition at the front façade containing a staircase; construction of a one story addition at the front façade to the right of the entry, under a shed roof that extends out over the entry door; expansion of the one story wing, extending it forward toward Vista Del Mar and north toward Marine Street through the introduction of an intersecting gable; addition of board and batten siding on the main façade; alteration of original windows and window openings, including the windows at the second floor of the main façade; and enclosure of the rear patio.

The modifications have significantly impaired integrity of design, materials, workmanship and feeling to the extent that the building is unrecognizable as the 1922 Spanish Eclectic style building it originally was. Due to this substantial loss of integrity, staff is unable to recommend designation under HRB Criterion C, consistent with both the historic report and addenda.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

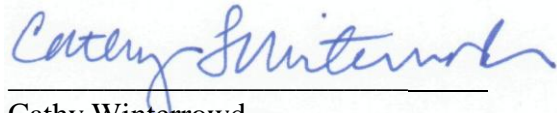
If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Dr. Roger Revelle House located at 7348 Vista Del Mar be designated with a period of significance of 1940-1991 under HRB Criterion B for its association with Dr. Revelle, a historically significant scientist, oceanographer and educator. 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
Assistant Deputy Director/HRB Liaison

KS/cw

Attachments:

1. Draft Resolution
2. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 10/25/2012

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 10/25/2012, to consider the historical designation of the **Dr. Roger Revelle House** located at **7348 Vista Del Mar, San Diego, CA 92037**, APN: **351-017-01-00**, further described as BLK 5 LOTS 1 THRU 4 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 Dr. Roger Revelle House on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION B for its association with Dr. Roger Revelle, a historically significant scientist, oceanographer and educator. Specifically, the resource is the only property associated with Dr. Revelle's entire productive life from 1940-1991, and reflects his significant accomplishments that include his work for the Navy and the Scripps Institute of Oceanography, as well as his role in establishing the University of California San Diego, among many other accomplishments. 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 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: _____
KEITH BAUERLE
Deputy City Attorney