



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: October 11, 2012 REPORT NO. HRB-12-059

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of October 25, 2012

SUBJECT: **Item #8 – Bessie Olds House**

APPLICANT: Charles and Christine Miller represented by Vonn Marie May

LOCATION: 2306 Pine Street, Uptown Community,
Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Bessie Olds House located at 2306 Pine Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Bessie Olds House located at 2306 Pine Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1938 under HRB Criterion C. The detached single-car garage located at the western side of the property was constructed in the 1970's and is excluded from this designation. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Italian Renaissance Revival architecture and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1938 date of construction and period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits a low-pitched hipped Mission tile roof with two side gables split in the center on a diagonal; overhanging eaves; a bi-lateral symmetrical facade with a smooth exterior stucco wall finish; a raised belt course that splits the two floors; smaller upper story windows above the belt course; a recessed entryway with a low-pitched shed Mission tile roof, molded cornice, and quoins accenting the edges of this decorative architectural entry; and fenestration consisting of sliding, fixed, casements, and double hung windows with wood sashes and frames.
2. The resource is representative of a notable work of Master Builder William Wahrenberger and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource is a good example of Wahrenberger's work in the Italian Renaissance Revival architectural style and is an example of his formal architectural design at a time when Wahrenberger was moving up in his career as a prominent designer and builder.

Development Services Department

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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 house is a two-story building with a detached single-car garage at the southwest corner of the property, and is located on the northwestern corner of Pine Street and Trias Street within the Mission Hills Neighborhood of the Uptown Community.

The historic name of the resource, the Bessie Olds House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of the original owner Bessie H. Olds, who contracted William F. Wahrenberger to design and construct the house as her personal residence.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Vonn Marie May, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria C and D. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criteria C and D. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows.

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 building is a two-story Italian Renaissance Revival house constructed in 1938 and features a low-pitched hipped Mission tile roof ; wide overhanging eaves; a bi-lateral symmetrical main façade; a smooth exterior stucco wall finish; and a concrete foundation. A raised belt course splits the two floors and spans around each elevation of the structure. Quoins are located at every corner of the structure. The chimney is centered on the west elevation. The front façade features a recessed entryway with a low-pitched shed Mission tile roof, molded cornice, and quoins accenting the edges of this decorative architectural entry. Fenestration consists of sliding, fixed, casements, and double hung windows with wood sashes and frames, with smaller windows set above the belt course.

William Wahrenberger's construction plans depict a much more Colonial style residence, with a gabled portico and brick vaneer at the base of the house. However, it is the belief of both the Consultant and staff that the change to the current configuration was likely made in the field during construction, resulting in a more Italian Renaissance Revival appearance. This is supported by photos from the 1950's, which demonstrate that the current appearance is likely original. Wahrenberger's construction plans also indicate shutters on the front and side windows. Faint scarring was discovered adjacent to the front and side windows indicating that shutters were once located there per the original plans. Another modification which may have been added during the actual construction of the structure or at a later point in time is the upper level balcony on the rear elevation of the structure. Additional modifications on the structure include some of the original wood doors and windows, mostly on the ground level and in the rear of the structure, being replaced over time. William F. Wahrenberger's original construction plans proposed a detached garage that would front Trias Street which was never constructed. A detached single-car

garage was constructed on the west side of the property in the 1970's and fronts Pine Street. Although the detached garage does not adversely impact the architectural integrity of the house, it was constructed in the 1970's outside the period of significance and is excluded from this designation.

The Italian Renaissance Revival style is found in early 20th-century houses throughout the country but is considerably less common than the more popular Craftsman, Tudor, or Colonial Revival styles. Primarily a style for architect-designed landmarks in major metropolitan areas prior to World War I, the Italian Renaissance Revival style spread throughout the country with the perfection of masonry veneering techniques; most of these date from the 1920s. Many of the 20th-century Italian Renaissance Revival structures borrowed many design details from the Italian originals from the 19th-century. Among the most notable details are recessed entry porches; hipped low-pitched roofs covered in Mission tile; and wide overhanging eaves with exposed rafters and decorative brackets. Common decorative details include quoins; molded cornices and belt courses; and smaller upper-story windows. The exterior façade is usually covered in stucco, masonry, or masonry-veneered walls.

The subject structure located at 2306 Pine Street conveys the historic significance of Italian Renaissance Revival architecture by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style, including a bi-lateral symmetrical facade with a smooth exterior stucco wall finish; a raised belt course that splits the two floors; smaller upper story windows above the belt course; a recessed entryway with a low-pitched shed Mission tile roof, molded cornice, and quoins accenting the edges of this decorative architectural entry. Therefore, staff recommends designation of the subject building under HRB Criterion C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of Italian Renaissance Revival architecture and retains integrity to the 1938 date of construction. The detached single-car garage located at the western side of the property was constructed in the 1970's and is excluded from this designation.

CRITERION D - Is representative of a notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.

William Fredrick Wahrenberger was born in Colorado in 1892 to John J. and Emilie Wahrenberger. The family relocated to San Diego in 1910. His father became Secretary of the Bay City Construction Company in 1911. William was a draftsman and followed his father into the construction business, working with him until his father's death in 1918. William designed all the homes he built and completed some of the interior finish work himself. The houses that he designed and built are found throughout San Diego, including Mission Hills, Inspiration Heights, Fletridge, La Jolla, Loma Portal and Point Loma. Since he constructed houses for more than a half-century, his work evolved, employing several styles including Craftsman, Italian Renaissance Revival, Spanish Revival, and Modern.

Wahrenberger's original construction plans were provided in the report as evidence that he designed and built the subject structure. Although the entryway shown on the plans is not the same as the existing porch, it does appear in historic photos as described in the discussion of Criterion C. This was likely a change to the original design made during construction of the structure. As a professional designer and builder, William Wahrenberger was responsible for redesigning many of his projects if desired by himself or his clients and would have been responsible for the plan change of the recessed entryway to the subject structure. The structure at 2306 Pine Street is a good example of Wahrenberger's work in the Italian Renaissance Revival architectural style and is an example of his formal architectural design at a time when Wahrenberger was moving up in his career as a prominent designer and builder. Therefore, staff recommends designation under Criterion D.

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 Bessie Olds House located at 2306 Pine Street be designated with a period of significance of 1938 under HRB Criterion C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of Italian Renaissance Revival architecture and Criterion D for its association with Master Builder William Wahrenberger. The detached single-car garage located at the western side of the property was constructed in the 1970's and is excluded from this designation. 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 a 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.



Jeffrey E. Oakley
Associate Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Assistant Deputy Director/HRB Liason

JO/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 **Bessie Olds House** located at **2306 Pine Street, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **443-051-19-00**, further described as BLK 526 LOT 4 SWLY 75 FT OF SELY 100 FT 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 Bessie Olds House on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Italian Renaissance Revival architecture and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1938 date of construction and period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits a low-pitched hipped Mission tile roof with two side gables split in the center on a diagonal; overhanging eaves; a bi-lateral symmetrical facade with a smooth exterior stucco wall finish; a raised belt course that splits the two floors; smaller upper story windows above the belt course; a recessed entryway with a low-pitched shed Mission tile roof, molded cornice, and quoins accenting the edges of this decorative architectural entry; and fenestration consisting of sliding, fixed, casements, and double hung windows with wood sashes and frames. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

(2) The property is historically significant under CRITERION D as a notable work of Master Builder William Wahrenberger. Specifically, the resource is a good example of Wahrenberger's work in the Italian Renaissance Revival architectural style and is an example of his formal architectural design at a time when Wahrenberger was moving up in his career as a prominent designer and builder. 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**. The detached single-car garage located at the western side of the property was constructed in the 1970's and is excluded from this designation.

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