



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

DATE ISSUED: November 25, 2012 REPORT NO. HRB-12-069

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board  
Agenda of November 29, 2012

SUBJECT: **ITEM #5 – John and Joan Vondracek House**

APPLICANT: Micah & Elisabeth Parzen, represented by Scott Moomjian

LOCATION: 851 Amiford Drive, Peninsula Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the John and Joan Vondracek House located at 851 Amiford Drive as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the John and Joan Vondracek House located at 851 Amiford Drive as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1959 under HRB Criterion C. The designation excludes the 256 square foot rear bedroom addition constructed in 1965. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the International style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1959 date of construction and period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits a flat composition roof; lack of applied ornament; horizontal bands of flush fixed and jalousie windows with steel and wood frames; an asymmetrical façade; square corners; corner windows; and exterior materials consisting of wood, stucco and concrete block that appears similar to brick.

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 house is a one story single family home with basement on a sloping lot with an ocean view in the residential subdivision of Amantea Mar Vista.

The historic name of the resource, the John and Joan Vondracek House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of John and Joan Vondracek, who took ownership of the property on May 31, 1956 and constructed the house as their personal residence on September 22, 1959, as documented in the Notice of Completion.

## ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Scott A. Moomjian, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criterion C. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion C. 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 property located at 851 Amiford Drive was constructed in 1959 in the International style and features a one story, irregular and asymmetrical plan with basement; a flat composition roof with no eave overhang for much of the house and a wide eave overhang supported by metal posts at the entry; a simple cornice with horizontal banding; a combination of wood, and stucco siding over wood frame and post and beam construction; concrete block accents; and a concrete block foundation. The entry is accessed via an "L" shaped stair leading from a carport area under the main floor up to a landing at the entry door. The stair and landing are covered by a wide cantilevered section of the flat roof. To the left of the carport at the basement level, the garage features two bays with the original tilt-up wood doors. At the main level above, full-height window systems consisting of a large fixed glass pane over jalousie windows are present, rounding the corners of the building. To the right of the main entry, a ribbon of alternating fixed and jalousie clerestory windows run the entire 40-foot length of the south wing.

The building retains a very high degree of integrity, with the only modification being a 256 square foot addition constructed at the rear of the house in 1965. This addition was constructed outside of the period of significance and is excluded from the designation.

The International style was a significant world-wide architectural trend of the 1920s and 1930s that originated in Western Europe and transcended any national or regional identity because the style made no reference to local vernaculars or traditional building forms. The International style quickly migrated to the United States as architects from Europe fled prior to WWII. The emergence of International style architecture in San Diego came later with most examples built after 1935. The San Diego Modernism Context Statement identifies the primary and secondary character defining features of the International style. Primary features include flat roofs; lack of applied ornament; horizontal bands of flush windows; and asymmetrical facades. Secondary features include square corners; steel sash windows (typically casement); corner windows; and exterior materials consisting of wood, stucco and concrete block that appears similar to brick.

The house continues to convey the historic significance of the International style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including a flat composition roof; lack of

applied ornament; horizontal bands of flush fixed and jalousie windows with steel and wood frames; an asymmetrical façade; square corners; corner windows; and exterior materials consisting of concrete block that appears similar to brick, wood and stucco. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion C.

### 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 John and Joan Vondracek House located at 851 Amiford Drive be designated with a period of significance of 1959 under HRB Criterion C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of International style architecture and retains integrity to its period of significance and date of construction. The designation excludes the 256 square foot rear bedroom addition constructed in 1965. 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



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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 11/29/2012

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 11/29/2012, to consider the historical designation of the **John and Joan Vondracek House** (owned by Micah D. and Elisabeth M. Parzen, 851 Amiford Drive, San Diego, CA 92107) located at **851 Amiford Drive, San Diego, CA 92107**, APN: **531-450-11-00**, further described as LOT 11 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 John and Joan Vondracek House on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the International style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1959 date of construction and period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits a flat composition roof; lack of applied ornament; horizontal bands of flush fixed and jalousie windows with steel and wood frames; an asymmetrical façade; square corners; corner windows; and exterior materials consisting of wood, stucco and concrete block that appears similar to brick. 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 designation shall exclude the 256 square foot rear bedroom addition constructed in 1965.

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