



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

# Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: September 19, 2008 REPORT NO. HRB-08-062

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board  
Agenda of September 25, 2008

SUBJECT: **#12 – Florence A. Maddock and Kate M. Dillon/ Henry J. Lang House**

APPLICANT: Vonn Marie May and Tricia Olsen on behalf of the property owners,  
Christopher and Jill Metcalf

LOCATION: 3696 Albatross Street, Uptown Community, Council District 3

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Florence A. Maddock and Kate M. Dillon/  
Henry J. Lang House at 3696 Albatross Street as a historical resource.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Florence A. Maddock and Kate M. Dillon/ Henry J. Lang House at 3696 Albatross Street as a historical resource under HRB Criterion C and D. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource embodies distinctive characteristics through retention of character defining features of the Spanish Eclectic/Revival style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1923 period of significance; and
2. The resource is representative of a notable work of an established Master Architect Henry J. Lang.



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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 house and site designated as a historical resource. The house at 3696 Albatross Street is a single family home that was originally constructed in 1923 for Florence A. Maddock and Kate M. Dillon in the Spanish Eclectic/Revival style.

The historic name of the house is based on the original owners of the resource and the architect of the house who has been declared a Master Architect by the Historic Resources Board.

## ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Vonn Marie May and Tricia Olsen on behalf of the property owners, Christopher and Jill Metcalf, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criterion A, C and D. Staff disagrees with the determination that the resource is significant under Criterion A, but concurs with the determination that the resource is significant under HRB Criterion C as a good example of the Spanish Eclectic/Revival style and under Criterion D as a notable work by Master Architect Henry J. Lang, 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.*

Staff does not believe that the subject structure 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. The property was not the first property to be constructed within the Cleveland Heights district nor are there any unique construction techniques which exemplify this resource. For that reason, staff does not recommend designation of the 3696 Albatross Street based on HRB Criterion A.

*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.*

Constructed in 1923 in the Spanish Eclectic/Revival style, the house is a single story frame and stucco house. The front (east) façade of the house is dominated by a large square tower that is integrated into the body of the house. The tower has a hipped roof with exposed rafter tails and sheathed with clay French tile. The tower is punctuated by three small, arched, louvered vents. The tower houses the entry alcove which is accessed by an arched opening from the uncovered front porch. Natural light is also provided to the alcove via an arched opening with decorative wrought iron railing. On either side of the tower are two sets of windows, which are wood true divided light casement 3/1 windows. The casements also have a unique arched horizontal muntin. Two small cantilevered tiled roofs are located above the arched entry and the window to the right of the tower. The front porch area is enclosed by a low stuccoed and wrought iron fence.

The bulk of the house is under a flat roof with parapets that is stepped at the corners. The north façade of the house features a stuccoed chimney with a recessed niche on the lower portion and a decorative cap at the top. Windows on the north façade of the house are wood, single and paired, single light casement windows with the exception of the windows at the northwest corner which are a pair of 1/1 wood double hung windows. The south façade features several different window types. At the southeast corner is a wood 1/1 double hung window which is next to a tri-part window. The tri-part window has a fixed 4/1 wood window which is flanked on either side by narrow double hung windows. Windows at the rear of the house are combination of casement and double hung.

Overall the integrity of the house is good and the house has been maintained. There have been a few changes to the exterior of the home, but staff believes that the alterations do not detract from the historic character of the house. The single light casement windows and the 1/1 double hung windows located on the sides and rear of the house are for the most part replacement sashes. It is Staff's understanding that the current property owner replaced historically inappropriate sashes with simplified wood sashes based on evidence remaining on the original window frames. The current property owner also altered the scored cement porch floor to alleviate a drain problem. Regardless of the modifications, staff recommends that the house is designated under Criterion C as a good example embodying distinctive characteristics of Spanish Eclectic/Revival style architecture.

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

The house was designed by Henry J. Lang and construction was completed in 1923. Born in Germany in 1859, Lang appears to have worked independently as a carpenter, builder and building contractor throughout his career. His work appears to have been largely construction of speculation homes or commissions for individual home owners. Three other houses that have been designed by Lang and designated were HRB Site #776—1787 Fort Stockton Drive and HRB Site #620—1530 29<sup>th</sup> Street and HRB Site #732—3703 Albatross Street . In the process of designating HRB Site #508, Rice was established as a master architect. Staff feels that the design of the house is a notable example of a Master Architect's work and recommends designation under HRB Criterion D.

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

As part of a future Mills Act Agreement, staff recommends that a historic photo of the house is obtained to investigate the design of the windows. If it is determined that the windows have been modified then staff recommends that they are returned to their original configuration. Detailed Mills Act conditions will be determined during the application process.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that 3696 Albatross is designated as a historical resource under HRB Criterion C as a good example embodying distinctive characteristics of Spanish Eclectic/Revival style architecture and Criterion

D as a notable work of architecture by Master Architect Henry J. Lang. 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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Jodie Brown  
Senior Planner



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Cathy Winterrowd  
Senior Planner/Program Coordinator

jb/cw

Attachment(s):

Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover