



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: March 12, 2009 REPORT NO. HRB-09-016

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of March 26, 2009

SUBJECT: **ITEM #7 – La Jolla Adult Recreation Center Club**

APPLICANT: La Jolla Cove Bridge Club, Inc, tenant; represented by IS Architecture
(City of San Diego, property owner)

LOCATION: 1160 Coast Boulevard, La Jolla Community, Council District 1

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the La Jolla Adult Recreation Center Club located at 1160 Coast Boulevard as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the La Jolla Adult Recreation Center Club located at 1160 Coast Boulevard as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1939 under HRB Criterion A. This recommendation is based on the following findings (Attachment 1):

The resource is a special element of the La Jolla's historical, cultural and social development by providing recreational, leisure and social activities to the residents and visitors since its construction in 1939.



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BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with the applicant's desire to have the site designated as a historical resource. The building is a one story Ranch style structure built by the City of San Diego and the Works Projects Administration (WPA) in 1939 to serve as an Adult Recreation Center. The original structure was designed by Richard Requa, but was substantially remodeled in the 1950's and 1960's to accommodate expansion of the La Jolla Cove Shuffleboard and Bridge Club. The extent of the modifications are detailed below and visually illustrated in Attachment 2.

The historic name of the resource, the La Jolla Adult Recreation Center Club, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy which states that the site may be named for the specific name placed on the building upon construction.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by IS Architecture, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria A and B. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion A, but not HRB Criterion B, 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.

The applicant's report states that the subject building, which has become a local community landmark, is significant under HRB Criterion A as a special element of the neighborhood's development. The La Jolla Adult Recreation Center was constructed in 1939 on City park land set aside by La Jolla Park developer Frank T. Botsford in 1886 and deeded to the City in 1903. The park was occupied by a variety of buildings and uses, including bathhouses, dance pavilions, and a marine biology laboratory and museum throughout the first quarter of the twentieth century, until the last of the buildings was demolished in 1925. Residents desired a building and a use which would better serve the needs of the community. In 1932 plans began for an adult recreation center on Girard Avenue, but the project never proceeded and the location was changed to Scripps Park. Finally, a local fund-raiser and support from the La Jolla Chamber of Commerce provided the needed funding for the project. Design services were provided by Richard Requa, and the labor was provided by the WPA. The construction of the La Jolla Adult Recreation Center and shuffleboard courts in 1939 was eagerly anticipated by the community. A 1945 article in the *La Jolla Journal* noted:

For years we have had the playgrounds for the children and the tennis courts for the young people but for the adults there was nothing and the Shuffleboard Club filled that need... In the early days the clubhouse was used but little, then some folks began playing bridge and soon cards rivaled the courts in interest. Every day there are many people who play bridge and cribbage and to less extent checkers and sill less chess, but the possibilities are there for all these games and probably many others. However, one does not need to play anything to enjoy the benefits. It is a grand place to reset and for conversation and to meet one's friends and to form new acquaintances, and in these days the

acquaintances are from all parts of the world as the service people are coming in increasing numbers.

The shuffleboard courts were very popular in the Center's early years, and were considered somewhat of a novelty. Later, members of the La Jolla Shuffleboard Club would participate in tournament play against other local clubs, including the Balboa Park Shuffleboard Club. As bridge and other card games gained favor, use of the clubhouse intensified, which necessitated enlargement of the original 36' x 16' (576 square foot) building. Enlargement occurred over three phases in 1958, 1967 and 1969, as outlined in detail above. These modifications allowed the Center to continue to serve the needs of the community by hosting aerobics and yoga classes, Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, local community organization and planning meetings, and private events including weddings and other parties. The building's highly prominent and iconic location in Scripps Park on the bluff overlooking La Jolla Cove has contributed to the Center's continued use and has made the building a highly recognizable, important community asset.

In regard to the building's integrity, staff has identified a number of significant modifications since the building's construction in 1939 which have significantly impaired its architectural and associative integrity (as it relates to the WPA). However, the modifications which have occurred were in response to the community's continuing and growing need for the services and facilities provided at the Center. The Center has served the community for the last seventy years since its construction in 1939 and continues to do so today. Therefore, staff's position is that the modifications which have occurred have not impaired the building's integrity as it relates to its significance as an important community landmark reflecting the historical, cultural and social development of La Jolla. Finally, in regard to the period of significance, the applicant's report identifies the period of significance as 1939-present. Staff's concern with extending the period of significance through the "present" is two-fold. First, if "present" refers to 2009, then it appears to be an arbitrary date based upon when the building was designated, given that the building continues to function as an important community resource. Second, if "present" refers to the any point in the future, then it would be inappropriate to extend the period of time into the indefinite future without knowing whether or not the building will continue to serve the function for which it is significant. In considering a more appropriate period of significance, staff considered a date range, but found that most "end dates" were arbitrary and again did not take into account the building's ongoing significance to the community. Therefore, staff has identified the period of significance as 1939 when the building was originally constructed to serve the residents of La Jolla as the Adult Recreation Center. Elements of the building constructed after that date are not excluded from the designation, as they are relevant to the significance of the resource.

As a significant community landmark reflecting the historical, cultural and social development of La Jolla by providing recreational, leisure and social activities to the residents and visitors alike, staff recommends designation of the Adult Recreation Center Club located at 1160 Coast Boulevard under HRB Criterion A.

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

The applicant's report states that the subject building is significant under HRB Criterion B for its association with the Works Projects Administration and the La Jolla Bridge Club. The WPA was created in 1935 by Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidential order and was originally known as

the Works Progress Administration. The WPA was the largest New Deal agency, employing millions of people and affecting almost every locality in the United States, especially rural and western mountain populations. The WPA provided almost 8 million jobs and desperately needed income to the unemployed during the Great Depression between 1935 and 1943. In San Diego County, the first of over 1,000 WPA projects began in October of 1935 with the construction of a road up Palomar Mountain to facilitate the building of the observatory. The County Administration Center is one of San Diego's most prominent examples of WPA architecture. The subject building was constructed by the WPA in 1939. If the building retained integrity to this period, the building would be eligible for designation for its association with the WPA (although more likely under Criterion A). However, the building, which has been substantially remodeled since 1939 as discussed in detail in the background section, no longer reflects the work of the WPA and does not retain integrity for that association.

The La Jolla Shuffleboard Club incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1954 and held its first board of directors meeting in 1955. The Club has operated the La Jolla Adult Recreation Center since that time under a number of different names, including The La Jolla Shuffleboard Club, Inc., the La Jolla Shuffleboard and Bridge Club, Inc., and the La Jolla Bridge Club, Inc. The Club has provided for the maintenance of the building, and was the impetus behind the modifications to the building in the 1950's and 1960's. In addition, the Club has provided social and recreational opportunities to local senior citizens and others. Although the Club has provided a valuable service to the community through their stewardship of the Center and their outreach to members of the community, there is insufficient evidence to suggest that the La Jolla Bridge Club is a historically significant entity.

Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion B for any association.

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.

As originally designed in 1939, the structure exhibited a simple rectangular floor plan under a long gable roof, with square storage rooms at the northeast and southeast corners. The west wall featured a ribbon of windows which looked out on the ocean. The east elevation featured three sets of multi-lite accordion-style doors with five panels each which could be pushed open to create an open transition between the clubhouse and the shuffleboard courts on the east lawn. The first significant modifications occurred in 1958, when the west wall was removed and the clubhouse extended toward the ocean. According to the plans, the windows were salvaged and re-used on the new wall. Two of the three sets of multi-lite accordion doors were also fixed in place at this time. According to the plans, a lattice structure was present at the north and south ends of the structure. This lattice structure may have been original, and is no longer present. The second significant modification occurred in 1967. The project scope consisted of additions to the north and south of the building, including an extension of the building to the south measuring approximately 12 feet in length; relocation and remodeling of the southern storage area and remodeling and possible relocation of the northern storage areas; the "reconstruction" of the roof; and a canopy over the porch. No construction plans for this project could be found.

A third project in 1969 added the Riford Lounge annex and connecting structure to the north end of the building. The annex was a contemporary design at the time and featured a generally square floor plan with angular alcoves projecting out to the north, northwest and west to capture views of the ocean. Other modifications include the removal of the original wood frame and sash windows on the 1958 addition to the west, which were replaced with metal frame and sash; as well as the removal of the shuffleboard courts c.2000.

Due to the extensive modifications to the original 1939 structure, many of which occurred within the last fifty years, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion C, due to a lack of integrity.

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

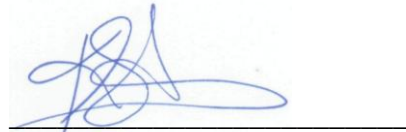
The original 1939 structure was designed by Master Architect Richard Requa. However, the structure was heavily altered during the 1950's and 1960's and no longer reflects Requa's design. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion D, due to a lack of integrity.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The building is owned by the City of San Diego and is not eligible for a Mills Act agreement.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the La Jolla Adult Recreation Center Club located at 1160 Coast Boulevard be designated under HRB Criterion A as a special element of La Jolla's historical, cultural and social development by providing recreational, leisure and social activities to the residents and visitors alike since its construction in 1939. 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 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 Saunders
Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Senior Planner/Program Coordinator

KS/cw

- Attachments:
1. Draft Resolution
 2. Aerial photo showing the date and location of existing modifications.
 3. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 3/26/2009

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 3/26/2009, to consider the historical designation of the **La Jolla Adult Recreation Center Club** (owned by the City of San Diego, Real Estate Assets, 1200 Third Avenue, Suite 1700, San Diego, CA 92101) located at **1160 Coast Blvd., San Diego, CA 92037**, APN: **350-010-01-00**, further described as Lot 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.**, 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 La Jolla Adult Recreation Center Club on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION A as a special element of La Jolla's historical, cultural and social development by providing recreational, leisure and social activities to the residents and visitors since its construction in 1939.

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.** .

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: _____
NINA FAIN
Deputy City Attorney

MODIFICATIONS TO THE LA JOLLA ADULT RECREATION CENTER



Original building footprint



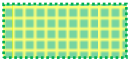
1958 Addition



1967 Additions (roof also reconstructed)



1969 Addition



May be original or reconstructed in slightly different location in 1967