



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: August 13, 2009 REPORT NO. HRB-09-057

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of August 27, 2009

SUBJECT: **ITEM #13 – Raymond and Doris Worrell House**

APPLICANT: Marcella & Frank Plant Family Trust represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 4351 Ampudia Street, Uptown Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Raymond and Doris Worrell House located at 4351 Ampudia Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Raymond and Doris Worrell House located at 4351 Ampudia Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1927 under HRB Criterion C. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Spanish Eclectic style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1927 period of significance.

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. He house is a one story Spanish



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Eclectic style home built in 1927 on a corner lot in the residential re-subdivision of Old San Diego Block 524.

The historic name of the resource, the Raymond and Doris Worrell House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and includes the name of Raymond and Doris Worrell, who constructed the house as their personal residence.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Legacy 106, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria A, B and C. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion C, but not HRB Criteria A or 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 house reflects a special element of the architectural progression of the neighborhood and San Diego community. The discussion of Criterion A centers around the establishment of the underlying subdivision as a one block development created by John Snyder, who constructed three model homes in the Tudor Revival style. The applicant's report states that the subdivision itself is significant because it is small and was marketed to be architecturally controlled to the English style. In addition, the report states that the subject property is significant because it reflects a shift in style preference from Tudor Revival to Spanish Eclectic. There is insufficient evidence to support that this particular one-block subdivision is significant to the development of Mission Hills; or that the design of this house as a Spanish Eclectic house reflects a significant element of architectural development in San Diego to a greater degree than any other Spanish Eclectic style house. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation 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 house is significant under HRB Criterion B for its association with Thomas Hemphill, who owned and lived in the property from 1956 through his death in 1971. Hemphill was a mechanical engineer who came to San Diego in 1935 when Rueben Fleet moved Consolidated Aircraft from New York to San Diego. According to the applicant's report, while working for Consolidated (later Convair) Hemphill supervised the development of the B-24 bomber and other aircraft. He later worked on the experimental XF-92A and the F-102 in the early and mid 1950s. During this time Hemphill resided at another house at 1997 Alameda Terrace. The report states that Hemphill is significant as the first person to accurately track the Sputnik satellites via radio frequency in 1957. Hemphill converted his garage to a radio shack and built custom antennae out of copper irrigation pipes. The report states that Hemphill was consulted by scientists and the media for predictions related to the location of the satellites. The report also states that Hemphill worked with the Naval Electronic Laboratory in his capacity as project engineer with Convair on satellite tracking, but does not provide any

elaboration on that work. While Hemphill's interest in satellites and work from his home is somewhat unique, it does not necessarily elevate him to the level of a historically significant individual. In addition, the assertion that Hemphill was the first to track the Sputnik satellite was not substantiated by the documentation provided in the report; nor was his work with the Naval Electronic Laboratory. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion B for an association with Thomas Hemphill at this time.

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 property at 4351 Ampudia Street is a one story "U" shaped Spanish Eclectic style house built in 1927 and features intersecting gable roofs with single barrel clay tile; slightly overhanging eaves with exposed rafters; smooth stucco walls over a wood frame; and a concrete foundation. The entrance is located at the southwest corner of the house oriented toward the intersection of Ampudia and Hickory Streets. A solid wood door with a small slit of glass and original hardware is set in a stucco opening trimmed with decorative tile. A window with a decorative wood grille is set to the right. Down the Hickory Street elevation are two pairs of multi-lite wood frame and sash casement windows, and at the far end a detached two car garage with a stepped parapet accented with clay tile connected to the house by a stucco arch. Down the Ampudia Street elevation, a multi-lite tri-partite wood frame and sash window is covered by a reconstructed decorative wood grille. To the left, a projecting front-gable bay with three clay tile vents contains a pair of multi-lite wood frame and sash casement windows with decorative wood shutters, as well as a small window covered by decorative wrought iron.

Modifications to the house have been minimal and include the reconstruction of several decorative wood elements. The clay tile on the garage parapet is questionable, but is present on the 1960 historic photograph of Thomas Hemphill. Examination of the 1956 Sanborn Map appears to show the garage set back farther than it currently sits. However, the 1960 photograph shows the garage in its present location. While it is possible that the garage was modified in the intervening years, it is also possible that the location of the garage is simply not accurately depicted on the Sanborn Map. Regardless, the property retains a very high degree of integrity of design, materials, workmanship or feeling and embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Eclectic style with a 1927 period of significance. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion C.

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

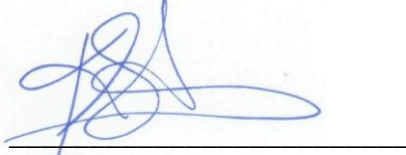
Although the Building Structure and Object record lists the applicable criteria as A, B, C and D, the report's narrative concludes that there remains insufficient evidence to establish builder Reuben Haas as a Master Builder at this time. Staff agrees with this assessment and does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion D at this time.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

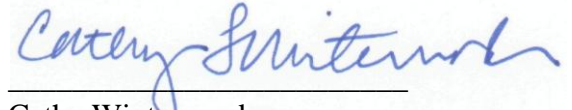
If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Raymond and Doris Worrell House located at 4351 Ampudia Street be designated under HRB Criterion C as a resource which exhibits the character defining features of Spanish Eclectic architecture with a 1927 period of significance. 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 Saunders
Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Principal Planner/HRB Liason

KS/cw

Attachment(s): Draft Resolution
Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 8/27/2009

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 8/27/2009, to consider the historical designation of the **Raymond and Doris Worrell House** (owned by Frank E. III & Marcella A. Plant Family Trust 9-17-08, 4351 Ampudia Street, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **4351 Ampudia Street, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **443-061-42-00**, further described as Lot 8 in the Resubdivision of Block 524 of Old San Diego, Map 1825, filed in the Office of the Recorder March 3, 1925 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 Raymond and Doris Worrell House on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C as it embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Spanish Eclectic style architecture and retains architectural integrity from its period of significance, the construction date of 1927. Specifically, the house retains intersecting gable roofs with single barrel clay tile; slightly overhanging eaves with exposed rafters; smooth stucco walls over a wood frame; and multi-lite wood frame and sash windows, some with decorative wood grilles. 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: _____
NINA FAIN
Deputy City Attorney