



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: November 9, 2010 REPORT NO. HRB-10-055

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of November 19, 2010

SUBJECT: **ITEM #6 – Clinton and Hannah Lester House and Rental Property**

APPLICANT: Steven Brant represented by Scott A. Moomjian

LOCATION: 1643-1645 9th Avenue, Centre City Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Clinton and Hannah Lester House and Rental Property located at 1643-1645 9th Avenue as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Clinton and Hannah Lester House and Rental Property located at 1643-1645 9th Avenue as a historical resource with a period of significance of c.1909 under HRB Criterion C. The designation includes both the front house at 1645 9th Avenue and the rear house at 1643 9th Avenue. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Craftsman style architecture and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its period of significance. Specifically, the resource at 1645 9th Avenue features a hipped roof; exposed rafter tails; wood shingle and thick stucco siding; a brick chimney; wood frame and sash windows; and an entry porch. The resource at 1643 9th Avenue exhibits a gabled roof; exposed rafter tails; attic vents in the gable end; corner brackets; wood lap siding; wood frame and sash windows and a small entry porch.



BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a preliminary review application to determine whether or not the buildings are historically significant as part of a constraints analysis for future development. The site consists of a large and small residence built c.1909 in the Bay View Homestead. The site is surrounded by high density residential development.

The historic name of the resource, the Clinton and Hannah Lester House and Rental Property, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Clinton and Hannah Lester, who constructed the main house as their personal residence and the second house as a rental property. It should be noted that although the applicant's chain of title lists only Hannah Lester as the owner, the deed from the date of construction states that the property was conveyed to both Hannah and Clinton Lester in 1907.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Scott A. Moomjian, which concludes that the resource is not significant under any HRB Criteria. Staff disagrees, and concludes 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 properties at 1643 and 1645 9th Avenue were built as single family residences in the Craftsman style c.1909. The house addressed at 1645 9th Avenue sits at the front of the lot and features a hipped roof with asphalt shingles; exposed rafter tails; wood shingle siding at the second story and thick stucco at the first story, all over wood frame construction; and a concrete foundation. An exposed red brick chimney is located on the front façade and the main entry and entry porch is located on the south-facing side façade. The porch exhibits a flat roof with exposed rafter tails and wide cornice supported by plain, round Ionic columns on a short stucco wall. The porch is accessed by one concrete step leading to a scored concrete pad. At the southwest corner on the front façade is a wrap-around projecting element at the ground floor that is finished with a shed roof and rafter tails. Large single pane fixed wood frame windows with 18-lite leaded glass in the upper portion of the frame are present here. A similar, but smaller wrap-around projecting element is located on the ground floor of the southeast corner. Other than the leaded glass windows, most windows are 1-over-1 double hung wood frame and sash.

Modifications to the structure consist primarily of the enclosure of the porch and balcony at the rear of the house. It is unclear when this modification occurred. The 1921 and 1950 Sanborn maps show the original configuration. The 1956 Sanborn map is illegible. No permits exist for this work, and the Residential Building record does not provide any information regarding the date of this enclosure. A variety of materials were used to build the enclosure. The shingles at the upper enclosure appear to be original to the building; however, the siding materials at the lower

enclosure do not. Windows are a variety of materials, sizes and operations and may have been salvaged. Regardless of the date of these enclosures, they occurred at the rear of the building within the foot print of the original porch and balcony and do not significantly detract from the resource or impair its overall integrity.

The applicant's report states that the stucco at the ground floor is not original, "as it is thick, inconsistent in application, and rather rough." Staff noted that the stucco may have originally been a "heavy dash" texture, characterized by a grainy, somewhat pebbly finish that is thrown or "dashed" onto the wall surface. Staff requested the applicant provide additional analysis of the stucco by a preservation architect to determine whether or not it is original; if not, what the original stucco texture might have been; and whether the present stucco was generally consistent with the original texture. Architect Mark Lyon visited the site and provided an analysis of the stucco dated October 13th (Attachment 3). The analysis found that:

The original texture consists of the spatter or spatter dash technique application consistent with the reported age of the building... The original finish is evident on the North elevation (side), East elevation (rear), and also on some areas of the South elevation (entry). It was not evident on the West elevation (street).

The analysis notes that the west elevation and portions of the south elevation had been restuccoed in a rudimentary manner, possibly hand-applied over the original and partially smoothed-out. Staff finds that the modifications to the stucco do not significantly impact the overall integrity of the building. The original stucco texture was a heavy dash texture and is present and visible in several elevations. The new stucco applied at the front elevation and portions of the south side elevation, while not entirely consistent with the original appearance, still conveys a thick, textured appearance in keeping with the original feeling of the material.

At the end of the stucco analysis, Lyon noted that "it appeared that many; perhaps one-half of the total and two-thirds of the South and West facing double-hung windows had been replaced with fixed windows. The original frames had been modified or removed to accommodate the new window frames thereby substantially compromising the integrity of these windows." No further information or documentation was provided. In addition, staff had not noted these modifications in the field and they had not been previously identified in the historic report. Staff requested additional analysis of the windows to better document these assertions. The applicant provided additional analysis of the windows, prepared by Lyon and dated November 3rd (Attachment 4). The analysis found that:

The majority of the windows in the structure are or were double hung painted wood windows. North Elevation (side yard): There are eight (8) windows, four (4) appear to have been replaced. East Elevation (rear): There are nine (9) windows, eight (8) appear to have been replaced. South Elevation (entry): There are nine (9) windows, three (3) appear to have been replaced. West Elevation (street): There are five (5) windows, two (2) appear to have been replaced.

Other than the rear façade, which has a porch and balcony enclosure that altered the rear fenestration, the window modifications noted in the analysis are not clear. The photos provided in the packet are not labeled and the illustrative purpose of each photo is uncertain. All windows on the front and entry side facades, as well as the majority of the windows on the north facade are of wood construction, within the original frame, with the historically appropriate operation (double-hung and fixed), and all appear substantially weathered. The fixed pane windows with leaded uppers are period and style appropriate and also show weathering and age. Staff believes that the majority of the windows on the front and side facades are original. Any replacement that may have occurred appears to have been done in-kind, within the original openings, and long ago. Staff has not identified any significant issue related to the windows that impairs the overall integrity of the house.

The house addressed at 1643 9th Avenue sits at the rear of the lot and features a gabled roof with asphalt shingles; exposed rafter tails; attic vents in the gable end; corner brackets; wood lap siding over wood frame construction; and a concrete foundation. The off-set entry porch faces out toward 9th Avenue and features a front gable supported on square posts and brackets. The porch is accessed by a wood stoop. The entry door is centered under the porch gable. To the left of the porch is a large single pane window with an 8-lite divided upper pane. Remaining fenestration consists of 1-over-1 double hung wood frame and sash windows and a fixed wood frame window with a 6-lite divided upper pane. No significant modifications to this house were noted. Based on available documentation, the house appears to have been constructed c.1909 by the Lesters as a rental property, concurrently with the main house which they used as their residence.

The houses located at 1643 and 1645 9th Avenue exhibit the character defining features of Craftsman style architecture and retain integrity to their c.1909 date of construction. Therefore, staff recommends designation of both houses 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 Clinton and Hannah Lester House and Rental Property located at 1643-1645 9th Avenue be designated with a period of significance of c.1909 under HRB Criterion C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of Craftsman style architecture and retains integrity. The designation includes both the front house at 1645 9th Avenue and the rear house at 1643 9th Avenue. 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 Stanco
Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Principal Planner/HRB Liaison

KS/cw

Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution
2. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover
3. Applicant's stucco analysis under separate cover
4. Applicant's window analysis under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 11/19/2010

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 11/19/2010, to consider the historical designation of the **Clinton and Hannah Lester House and Rental Property** (owned by Steven Brant, 9415 Gold Coast Drive # B4, San Diego, CA 92126) located at **1643-1645 9th Avenue, San Diego, CA 92101**, APN: **534-022-03-00**, further described as BLK 17 LOT 4 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 Clinton and Hannah Lester House and Rental Property on the following finding:

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 Craftsman style architecture and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its c.1909 period of significance. Specifically, the resource at 1645 9th Avenue features a hipped roof; exposed rafter tails; wood shingle and thick stucco siding; a brick chimney; wood frame and sash windows; and an entry porch. The resource at 1643 9th Avenue exhibits a gabled roof; exposed rafter tails; attic vents in the gable end; corner brackets; wood lap siding; wood frame and sash windows and a small entry porch. 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 each 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