



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

# Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: June 9, 2011 REPORT NO. HRB-11-035

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board  
Agenda of June 23, 2011

SUBJECT: **ITEM #7 – Mary Maschal House**

APPLICANT: Kama Guluma & Marieka Yoder represented by Hilda van Neck-Yoder

LOCATION: 1436 31<sup>st</sup> Street, Greater Golden Hill Community, Council District 3

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Mary Maschal House located at 1436 31<sup>st</sup> Street as a historical resource.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Mary Maschal House located at 1436 31<sup>st</sup> Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1913 and 1986-1998 under HRB Criteria A, B and C. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource is a special element of the City's cultural development and retains integrity. Specifically, the resource is unique within the community as the birthplace (from 1986-1996) of the San Diego Women's History Reclamation Project (Women's History Museum), whose mission is to educate and inspire present and future generations about the experiences and contributions of women by collecting, preserving and interpreting the evidence of that experience.



**City Planning & Community Investment**  
202 C Street, MS 5A • San Diego, CA 92101-3865  
Tel (619) 235-5200 Fax (619) 533-5951

2. The resource is identified with Mary Maschal, a historically significant person, and retains integrity for that association. Specifically, the resource was owned and occupied by Maschal from 1986-1998 while she developed the Women's History Reclamation Project, which later became the Women's History Museum.
3. 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 1913 date of construction. Specifically, the resource exhibits a wide, medium-pitch side gable roof with front-facing dormers; overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails; decorative wood brackets; wood lattice at the gable end vents; wood shingle siding at the second floor and wood clapboard siding at the ground floor; a large, centered front-facing gable dormer flanked by two smaller shed roof dormers; a front gable porch supported on large exposed brick columns; an exposed brick chimney; and multi-lite double hung and casement wood frame and sash windows.

## 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. The property consists of a two story house constructed in 1913 and a detached garage constructed in 1980 on a residential lot in the South Park Addition.

The historic name of the resource, the Mary Maschal House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Mary Maschal, who is a historically significant individual.

## ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Hilda van Neck-Yoder, 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 Criteria A, B and C. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, 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 report states that the house is significant under HRB Criterion A as a special element of the City's cultural development as the birthplace of the San Diego Women's History Reclamation Project, later renamed the San Diego Women's History Museum and Education Center. The Project was the effort of several local women that included Mary Maschal, an avid collector of suffragist memorabilia and women's history artifacts. In selecting a new home in 1986, Maschal chose the subject property in part because it could house her vast collection which she wanted to share with the women of San Diego. During the early and mid-1990s, Maschal and other members of the Project worked to collect and catalogue a vast array of books, banners, household items, and correspondence between suffragist leaders.

By early May 1995, the house had been transformed into a museum that was opened to the public. The garage was converted into a library, with shelves along the walls filled from top to bottom with thousands of books and with additional bookshelves, back to back, in the middle of the garage, fastened to the rafters. In the addition behind the house, she exhibited women's art work. The downstairs of the house itself became the public exhibition space. The kitchen exhibited her varied collection of kitchen tools, with the walls covered with washboards, eggbeaters, etc. Everything was professionally labeled. They had advertised and distributed flyers, generating great public interest. The opening was well attended and covered by the media, including articles in the *San Diego Union*.

The collections soon outgrew the house, and with the money that the open house had generated, Maschal began to look for a new place. In September 1996 the Women's Reclamation Project moved from 1436 31st Street to the Art Union Building in Golden Hill. There, with more space, the collection of objects related to women's history has continued to grow with contributions by many community members. The Women's History Museum has developed into an important and influential cultural institution, with a paid executive director. Over the years it has offered a wide variety of changing exhibits. It offers a monthly lecture series, poetry readings, film screenings, and outreach educational activities. It collaborates with the Women's Center at UCSD and the Women's Studies Department at SDSU. In addition, it has received numerous grants, and has established a Women's Hall of Fame that inducts six women every year.

The subject property is unique within the community as the birthplace (from 1986-1996) of the San Diego Women's History Reclamation Project (Women's History Museum), whose mission is to educate and inspire present and future generations about the experiences and contributions of women by collecting, preserving and interpreting the evidence of that experience. Therefore, staff recommends designation of the house under HRB Criterion A with a period of significance of 1986-1996 as a special element of the City's cultural development.

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

The report states that the house is significant under HRB Criterion B for an association with Veronica Burke and her daughters Mary, Mildred and Noreen. Veronica and her husband Charles built the house in 1913. According to the information in the report, Veronica was a very independent-minded woman and raised her daughters to be the same. All of her daughters attended Russ High School where they excelled. Following school, Mary formed the Thursday Club with several friends. Her sisters Mildred and Noreen would also become very active with the Club when they became adults. While Veronica, Mary, Mildred and Noreen were most certainly very independent and civically active women, it does not appear that they would be considered historically significant individuals. Further, many of the daughter's achievements and activities with the Thursday Club occurred after they moved out of the subject house. Therefore, staff does not recommend that the house be designated under HRB Criterion B for an association with Veronica Burke and her daughters.

The report also states that the house is significant under HRB Criterion B for an association with Mary Maschal, who purchased the subject property in 1986 and lived there until her death in

1998. Maschal dedicated the later years of her life to preserving suffragist memorabilia, women's history artifacts, and the stories of women's contributions to national and local history, as detailed in the discussion of Criterion A and the applicant's report. Maschal's contributions were recognized during her life time. She received the NOW Susan B. Anthony Award for Contributions to the Feminist Movement in 1997 and was inducted into San Diego County's Women's Hall of Fame. She was for many years a member of the San Diego Commission on the Status of Women. She attended several women's conferences, including the 1980 United Nations Conference for Women in Copenhagen. Maschal's vision went beyond the reclamation of women's history and beyond raising awareness of that history. In her work with the Women's History Reclamation Project, she also searched for a different organizational model, one that would not be hierarchical. Consequently, she insisted on calling herself "coordinator," rather than chair or president. As the guiding force behind the Project, Maschal was remembered by friends and colleagues as a major figure in the history of San Diego. Therefore, staff recommends designation of the house under HRB Criterion B with a period of significance of 1986-1998 for an association with Mary Maschal, founder of the San Diego Women's History Reclamation Project, who owned and resided at the house while developing the Project.

*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 is a two story Craftsman style home built in 1913 that features a wide, medium-pitch side gable roof with front-facing dormers; asphalt shingle roofing; overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails; decorative wood brackets; wood lattice at the gable end vents; wood shingle siding at the second floor and wood clapboard siding at the ground floor, all over wood frame construction; and a concrete foundation. A large, centered front-facing gable dormer is flanked by two smaller shed roof dormers, one of which holds an enclosed sleeping porch. At the ground floor, the entry porch is set to the north end of the main façade and is covered by a front gable supported on large exposed brick columns. A pair of multi-lite French doors sits to the south of the covered porch. An exposed brick chimney is located on the north façade. Fenestration consists of 9-over-1, 6-over-1 and 1-over-1 double hung wood frame and sash windows, as well as wood frame and sash casement windows with 4 lites in the upper part of the sash.

Modifications include addition of a small washroom at the rear in 1957; construction of a patio at the rear in 1962; construction of a family room addition at the rear of the house in 1968; the demolition of the original garage and construction of a new detached garage in 1980; in-kind replacement of deteriorated windows at the dining room and upstairs bedroom; replacement of a non-historic window on the south elevation with a historically appropriate window; replacement of the non-historic entry door with a period and style appropriate Craftsman door; removal of original concrete walkway leading to the house; and installation of slate at the entry steps. The additions at the rear of the property are not readily visible and do not adversely impact the building's integrity and ability to convey the Craftsman style from the 1913 date of construction. Therefore, staff recommends designation of the house 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 Mary Maschal House located at 1436 31<sup>st</sup> Street be designated with a period of significance of 1913 and 1986-1998 under HRB Criterion A as the birthplace of the San Diego Women's History Reclamation Project from 1986-1996; Criterion B for an association with Mary Maschal from 1986-1998; and Criterion C as a resource that reflects the character defining features of the Craftsman style and retains integrity to its 1913 date of construction. 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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A  
ADOPTED ON 6/23/2011

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 6/23/2011, to consider the historical designation of the **MARY MASCHAL HOUSE** (owned by Kama ZeZe Guluma and Marieka Yoder, 1436 31st Street, San Diego, CA 92102) located at **1436 31st Street, San Diego, CA 92102**, APN: **539-423-11-00**, further described as BLK 21 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 Mary Maschal House with a period of significance of 1913 and 1986-1998 on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION A with a period of significance of 1986-1996 as a special element of the City's cultural development. Specifically, the resource is unique within the community as the birthplace (from 1986-1996) of the San Diego Women's History Reclamation Project (Women's History Museum), whose mission is to educate and inspire present and future generations about the experiences and contributions of women by collecting, preserving and interpreting the evidence of that experience. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

(2) The property is historically significant under CRITERION B with a period of significance of 1986-1998 for an association with Mary Maschal, who owned and occupied the house from 1986-1998, during which time she developed the Women's History Reclamation Project, which later became the Women's History Museum. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

(3) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C with a period of significance of 1913 as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of Craftsman style architecture and retains integrity to the date of construction. Specifically, the resource exhibits a wide, medium-pitch side gable roof with front-facing dormers; overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails; decorative wood brackets; wood lattice at the gable end vents; wood shingle siding at the second floor and wood clapboard siding at the ground floor; a large, centered front-facing gable dormer flanked by two smaller shed roof dormers; a front gable porch supported on large exposed brick columns; an exposed brick chimney; and multi-lite double hung and casement wood frame and sash windows. 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: \_\_\_\_\_  
KEITH BAUERLE  
Deputy City Attorney