



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: January 12, 2012 REPORT NO. HRB-12-004

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of January 26, 2012

SUBJECT: **ITEM #10 – Alexander Schreiber Speculation House #5**

APPLICANT: Kristina DeVico; represented by Allan Hazard & Janet O'Dea

LOCATION: 4167 Palmetto Way, Uptown Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Alexander Schreiber Speculation House #5 located at 4167 Palmetto Way as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Alexander Schreiber Speculation House #5 located at 4167 Palmetto Way as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1918 under HRB Criteria C and D as an example of Craftsman architecture and a notable work of Alexander Schreiber, a Master Builder. The designation excludes the detached garage constructed in 1982 and detached hobby shop (constructed in 1983 and converted to an apartment in 2001). This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of California Craftsman architecture and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1918 period of significance. Specifically, the resource has an asymmetrical two-story stucco exterior over hollow clay tile and wood frame, triple gable hipped roof with overhanging eaves and rafter tails, two massive porch piers with decorative brackets and vertical attic vent, and front porch massed to one side and is balanced by the chimney on the other side.
2. The resource is representative of a notable work of Master Builder, Alexander Schreiber and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. The resource was one of the few properties that Master Builder Alexander Schreiber built and modeled after his personal residence at 4135 Randolph Street.

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 subject property was built on the East side of Palmetto Way. The property is set on a suburban street with a large grass yard. There are two other houses on either side of the subject property that were built by Alexander Schreiber; one is a Craftsman style and the other a Prairie style.

The historic name of the resource, the Alexander Schreiber Speculation House #5, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Alexander Schreiber, who constructed the house as a Speculation house and a Master Builder.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Allen Hazard & Janet O'Dea, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria C and D. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criteria C and D. 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.

Constructed in 1918, the subject property located at 4167 Palmetto Way provides 2,404 square feet of living space and is an excellent example of a two-story California Craftsman style home. The house has many character defining features of the California Craftsman style. The design is asymmetrical. The chimney is tapered and rises on the north side balanced with the porch and central front door. The front porch is a portico style flanked by two sets of massive porch posts that support the gabled roof overhead. There is a triple gable roof with a double gable above the front of the house and a third gable above the second story. There are wide overhanging eaves and rafter tails and a low pitched roof. The wide quarter sawn oak paneled front door is original. All of the windows are original and there are a variety of window styles used. The arrangement of the windows facing the street with the muntins used in the bands of windows on the upper floors accentuates distinctive characteristic of the California Craftsman. The driveway on the north side of property was established at its original location at the south side of the property when the new garage was added.

Modifications to the site are minimal and include the construction of a new garage in 1982 located on the north side of the property and a new detached hobby shop shell located on the south side of the property constructed in 1983, later converted to an apartment. In 2001 the main residence kitchen and bathroom were remodeled. The modifications do not significantly detract from the resource or impair its ability to convey significance as a California Craftsman with a period of significance of 1918.

The structure at 4167 Palmetto Way California Craftsman Style retains good integrity under Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, and Feeling, with the Association element

unmet. The house has retained architecturally defining features consistent with Craftsman design which include but are not limited to a triple-gabled roof, Chicago style windows without muntins, front gabled porch supported by massive piers, and the original Craftsman front door. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion C as an excellent example of California Craftsman architecture. The garage (1982) and the hobby shop (1983) later converted to an apartment (2001) are not included in the designation.

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

In 1911, Alexander Schreiber moved to San Diego, he listed his profession as carpenter in the city directory. In 1916, he listed his profession as a building contractor and owner of A. Schreiber Co. Alexander Schreiber was a prolific builder, designing and building houses and commercial buildings throughout San Diego, including South Park, North Park, Loma Portal, Encanto, University Heights and Mission Hills where he lived, building the most houses during his career. Most of Mission Hills was built during the 1910s through 1930s. Schreiber joined an impressive list of distinguished architects and builders who both lived and designed houses in Mission Hills during this time. Schreiber built over 45 houses in Mission Hills. Alexander Schreiber first moved to Mission Hills in 1918 (4135 Randolph) and lived in 12 different houses in Mission Hills until 1947. Schreiber generally lived in houses that he had designed and built. The two-story Craftsman at 4135 Randolph appears to be the model for 4167 Palmetto Way.

In 1910, Schreiber was setting style trends in San Diego by the early adoption of building Arts & Crafts Bungalows and well-crafted Craftsman style house. As styles evolved, he designed Japoneseque “eyebrow” bungalows and San Diego versions of Midwestern Prairie School Houses. Then toward the end of this career he built Spanish Revival houses that eventually dominated the San Diego landscape.

Most of Schreiber’s house designs were in the Craftsman and Spanish Eclectic vernacular popular in the 1920s and 30s, though he did design at least two houses in Mission Hills in the Prairie style: 1866 Fort Stockton Drive (HRB #730) and the slightly higher-style house at 4205 Arden Way (HRB #618). In addition to being a skilled builder, he was an early experimenter in the use of electricity in houses. His obituary credits him with building the first home in San Diego completely wired for electrical appliances.

Alexander Schreiber died at age 60 in June of 1947. There are presently six designated historic resources listed on the City’s register which were built by Schreiber and designated for that association.

Currently, there are eight known Alexander Schreiber designed houses in Mission Hills. The subject property exhibits Alexander Schreiber’s characteristic style. The house retains a high degree of integrity to its 1918 date of construction, retaining all aspects of integrity. Therefore, staff recommends designation of the subject property under HRB Criterion D, as a notable work of established Master Builder Alexander Schreiber.

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 Alexander Schreiber Speculation House #5 located at 4167 Palmetto Way be designated with a period of significance of 1918 under HRB Criterion C as a resource that exhibits the distinctive characteristics of California Craftsman architecture and HRB Criterion D as a resource that is representative of a notable work of Master Builder Alexander Schreiber. The designation excludes the garage and apartment located at lot. 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.



For

Antoinette Gibbs
Acting Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Principal Planner/HRB Liaison

AG/cw

Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution
2. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover