



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: June 14, 2007 REPORT NO. HRB-07-033

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of June 28, 2007

SUBJECT: **ITEM #10 – The Tourist Hotel**

APPLICANT: Marie Lia, on behalf of Bahia View Condominiums LLC, owners

LOCATION: 1425-1431 Market Street, Centre City Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Tourist Hotel, located at 1425-1431 Market Street, as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Tourist Hotel, located at 1425-1431 Market Street, as a historical resource under HRB Criterion A as a special element of downtown San Diego's architectural development, reflecting late nineteenth century Italianate commercial development; and HRB Criterion C as a good example of Italianate architecture.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a planned development of a property within the Centre City community. The Tourist Hotel was constructed c. 1888 in the Victorian era Italianate style for D.W. Hewitt, a San Diego real estate entrepreneur. An oral history interview with Grace Frew Kirtley, daughter of the man who apparently built the hotel, recalled two commercial storefronts at the ground floor, two apartments on the second floor and single rooms available for rent. The building was known as the Tourist hotel until 1925 through several ownerships which included Hewitt, Edward and Sarah Requa (parents of Richard Requa), Fenton L. Martin, C.J. Novotny, and Matthew and Geneva Ryan.



ANALYSIS

The Tourist Hotel was included in surveys prepared for the Centre City Development Corporation in 1989 and 2001, and was most recently identified as site #37 in the *East Village Combined Historical Surveys 2005*, where it was evaluated as eligible for local listing. A site specific historical resource research report has been prepared by Kathleen Crawford of the office of Marie Burke Lia for the owner, Bahia View Condominiums, LLC. The report concludes that the Tourist Hotel is significant under HRB Criteria A, C and D. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion A as a special element of downtown San Diego's architectural development, reflecting late nineteenth century Italianate commercial development; and HRB Criterion C as a good example of Italianate architecture; but not HRB Criterion D (Master Architect), 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.

During the 1860's and 1870's, the Bayside area, then known as "South San Diego", relied heavily upon the wharf established at the foot of Fifth Avenue. These early businesses transported stored grain, honey and other products. They also received incoming shipments of lumber, iron, ore and other necessities from other parts of the nation. During the 1880's, New Town San Diego business spread north to H Street, which was at the time considered the main crossroad. Ultimately, development expanded to D Street and beyond as merchants moved northward. With the extension of the railroad in 1885, an influx of newcomers to San Diego area sparked a four-year building boom. In the Bayside and Centre City East area, simple Victorian single-family cottages were erected on 16th and 17th Streets to accommodate laborers, porters, clerks and other blue collar workers.

The Tourist Hotel represents late nineteenth century Victorian-era construction, and is one of only a handful of Italianate commercial properties extant in downtown. Therefore, staff recommends that the Tourist Hotel be designated under HRB Criterion A as a special element of downtown San Diego's architectural development, reflecting late nineteenth century Italianate commercial development.

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 Tourist Hotel was built c. 1888 in the Italianate style as commercial storefronts with apartments and hotel space on the second floor. The building features a two-story rectilinear form with a flat roof, small parapet, horizontal wood clapboard siding, and a concrete foundation. The parapet line includes single decorative brackets. The original façade is symmetrical, and originally featured three 1-over-1 single hung wood frame and sash windows on the second floor, and a central staircase flanked by commercial storefronts on the ground floor. Decorative pilasters accent the ground floor. A second floor faux balcony spans the width of the façade.

The report notes a two-story addition at the east side of the building constructed sometime after 1921 which was designed to blend with the original structure, carrying the parapet line, decorative brackets, balcony and clapboard siding across the new construction. Interestingly, the building is not structurally integrated into the original structure. The doorway between the central and easternmost commercial spaces leads to a walkway between the two structures covered by corrugated roofing. The addition consisted of additional hotel space and commercial space. Based upon review of the Sanborn Maps (Attachment 1) this addition occurred sometime between 1921 and 1950. Review of the City Directory listings included in the applicant's report indicates that three commercial tenants appear in 1926. Given that only two commercial spaces were provided in the original design and that a third was added with the construction of the addition, it is likely that this addition occurred C. 1925-1926.

Other modifications to the property include minor modifications to the storefronts, consistent with a commercial use; replacement of portions of the original wood frame windows on the upper main façade and replacement of other windows on secondary facades; and construction of additions and balconies at the rear of the property. Despite these modifications, the building retains a remarkable degree of integrity on the original, main façade and conveys a distinct architectural style and a sense of time, place and feeling. The building remains an excellent example of late nineteenth century Italianate commercial architecture in San Diego, and staff recommends that the Tourist Hotel be designated 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.

The report concludes that the Tourist Hotel is significant under HRB Criterion D as the work of established Master Architects John B. Stannard and Gustavus Clements. The report acknowledges that there is no definite primary or secondary evidence available to substantiate Stannard and Clements' involvement in the design of the structure, but cites a 1988 survey prepared by R. Brandes, K. Flannigan, K. Webster and A.P. Cooper which identifies Stannard and Clements as the architects responsible. During the preparation of the November 2006 report (updated in May 2007), the applicant researched the references cited on the 1988 survey form and could not find any documentation to verify that Stannard and Clements designed the building. In addition, supplemental research was conducted by historian Anne P. Cooper, which included review of an oral history of Grace Frew Kirtley, daughter of the man who built the hotel; review of San Diego Union articles focusing on the work of John B. Stannard; and City Directory searches. The supplemental research was also unable to verify that Stannard and Clements designed the building. Without any evidence to substantiate or contradict the information in the 1988 survey, the report concludes that Stannard and Clements were the likely architects. However, the lack of evidence to support the determination that Stannard and Clements designed the Tourist Hotel and the mere likelihood that they were involved is insufficient to support designation under HRB Criterion D at this time. If additional information and evidence can be found in the future, designation under Criterion D could be considered at that time.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Tourist Hotel, located at 1425-1431 Market Street, be designated as a historical resource under HRB Criterion A as a special element of downtown San Diego's architectural development, reflecting late nineteenth century Italianate commercial development; and HRB Criterion C as a good example of Italianate architecture. 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.



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KS/cw

- Attachment(s):
1. Sanborn Map Analysis
 2. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover