



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
**Historical Resources Board**

DATE ISSUED: June 13, 2013 REPORT NO. HRB-13-029

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board  
Agenda of June 27, 2013

SUBJECT: **ITEM #15 – H.R. Emerling Residential Building (HRB #971)**

APPLICANT: City of San Diego

LOCATION: 1451-1453 F Street, Downtown Community, Council District 3

DESCRIPTION: Consider the rescission of the designation of the H.R. Emerling Residential Building located at 1451-1453 F Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Rescind the designation of the property at 1451-1453 F Street, designated as HRB Site #971, due to a loss of integrity. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

Since the property's designation, there has been a change in circumstances surrounding the original designation; specifically extensive damage to the structure caused by fire, resulting in a substantial loss of integrity to the point that the house no longer conveys its historical significance, and a 2011 Notice of Abatement for a Vacant and Unsecured Structure requiring the building's removal.

BACKGROUND

The subject property was designated as HRB Site #971 by the Historical Resources Board on October 28, 2010 under HRB Criterion C with a period of significance of ca. 1909. As designated, the structure was determined to exhibit Edwardian period stylistic influences by being less ornate than earlier Victorian architecture and having understated Classical features. It was a two level duplex, with a rectangular floor plan and asymmetrical façade. The ground level contained a five room apartment and lower level housed three additional units. The building was characterized by a false front façade with bracketed cornice and Greek key detailing; wood shiplap siding; a bracketed shed roof over the entry door; and fenestration consisting of wood double hung windows with simple surrounds. The south (rear) portion of the structure had been

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significantly altered with the replacement of many windows and doors as well as the non-permitted construction of an extensive shed-like addition which more than doubled the size of the original building.

On the night of January 30, 2011, the building, its lower level and its rear additions were substantially destroyed by a fire that started at the rear of the residence. This fire ultimately spread to the adjoining property at 1455 F Street but conveyed limited damage before being extinguished. What remains standing are the street façade and the front portions of the side façades of the ground level five room apartment. The front room of the five room apartment incurred the least amount of damage, while the remaining four rooms, the lower level apartments and the non-permitted construction were destroyed.

In April of 2011, Neighborhood Code Compliance Division staff inspected the site at 1451-1453 F Street and issued a Notice of Abatement for a Vacant and Unsecured Structure in May of 2011. After assessing the extent of the damage to the structure, they recommended that the designated structure be demolished due to its loss of structural integrity as a result of fire. It was also recommended that all other damaged structures on the property be demolished as they were deemed a serious threat to public health and safety and constituted a public nuisance. In the spring of 2012, the 1500 square feet of non-permitted construction was removed after obtaining special permits to do so since the area contained hazardous materials. The remains of the fire damaged designated structure are required to stay on the site until the property's designation has been rescinded pursuant to San Diego Municipal Code.

In June of 2013, Jeff Katz, AIA of Orié Engineering prepared an Architectural Observation Report on the subject property (Attachment 3), and Donald Orié, S.E. of Orié Engineering prepared a Structural Observation Report (Attachment 4). Following a site visit, Mr. Katz observed extensive fire, smoke, water, dry rot and termite damage in addition to evidence of significant structural issues. Much of the building was found to be not salvageable. It was concluded that too much of the building is beyond repair and that for life safety reasons the present structure and compromised foundation must be completely removed in order to bring the building back to habitable conditions. Mr. Orié made similar observations and concluded that extensive fire, water, termite and dry rot damage combined with excessive settlement of the building make it not structurally salvageable.

## ANALYSIS

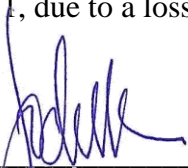
San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC) Section 123.0205 states that the "Historical Resources Board may amend or rescind any designation on a historical resource in the same manner and procedure as was followed in the original designation. This action may be taken only if there is new information, the discovery of earlier misinformation, or a change in circumstances surrounding the original designation."

Since the designation of the property at 1451-1453 F Street, there has been a change in circumstances surrounding the designation. The change in circumstances includes the fire damage and the 2011 Notice of Abatement requiring the building's removal. Chiefly as a result

of fire damage, the resource is presently in very poor condition and much of the original material is destroyed beyond repair or otherwise not salvageable. Thus the building's integrity and ability to convey historic significance has been lost. Furthermore, the conditions of the site constitute a public nuisance and a threat to public health and safety. Therefore, staff recommends that the Board rescind the designation of the property at 1451-1453 F Street.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Board rescind the designation of the property located at 1451-1453 F Street, designated as HRB Site #971, due to a loss of integrity.



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Jodie Brown, AICP  
Senior Planner



for

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Cathy Winterrowd  
Assistant Deputy Director/HRB Liaison

jb/cw

Attachments:

1. Draft Resolution
2. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover
3. Architectural Observation Report prepared by Orié Engineering under separate cover
4. Structural Observation Report prepared by Orié Engineering under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A  
ADOPTED ON 6/27/2013

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 10/28/2010, and designated the property at 1451-1453 F Street, San Diego, CA 92102, APN: 535-171-01-00, further described as BLK 15 POS OF LOTS J THRU L DB13PG522 & W 21 FT OF LOT 5 in the City of San Diego, County of San Diego, State of California; and

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 6/27/2013, to consider rescinding the historical designation of **Historical Resources Board Site #971** (owned by City of San Diego) located at **1451-1453 F Street, San Diego, CA 92102**, APN: **535-171-01-00**, further described as BLK 15 POS OF LOTS J THRU L DB13PG522 & W 21 FT OF LOT 5 in the City of San Diego, County of San Diego, State of California due to a change in circumstances surrounding the original designation; and

WHEREAS, in arriving at their decision, the Historical Resources Board considered 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 removed from the Register of Designated Historical Resources.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Historical Resources Board based its rescission of the designation of the property at 1451-1453 F Street on the following finding:

(1) Since the property's designation, there has been a change in circumstances surrounding the original designation; specifically extensive damage to the structure caused by fire, resulting in a substantial loss of integrity to the point that the house no longer conveys its historical significance, and a 2011 Notice of Abatement for a Vacant and Unsecured Structure requiring the building's removal.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in light of the foregoing, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego hereby rescinds the historical designation of the above named property.

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: \_\_\_\_\_  
CORRINE NEUFFER  
Deputy City Attorney