



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

DATE ISSUED: October 8, 2015 REPORT NO. HRB-15-046

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board  
Agenda of October 22, 2015

SUBJECT: **ITEM #13 – The Robert and Laura Ford House**

APPLICANT: Shapiro/Calahorro Family Revocable Trust represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 1237 Cypress Court, 92103, Uptown Community, Council District 3

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Robert and Laura Ford House located at 1237 Cypress Court as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Robert and Laura Ford House located at 1237 Cypress Court as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1929 under HRB C. The designation excludes the rear second story balcony enclosure. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Spanish Eclectic style architecture and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its period of significance. Specifically, the resource retains its barrel clay tile roof with exposed rafter tails, stucco exterior, wood divided light windows, decorative wrought iron, wood shutters, decorative corbels and integrated garage.

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 is located within the Marston Hills neighborhood on a cul-de-sac in a predominantly single family area.

The building is located on APN 452-331-04-00. The property was identified in the Draft 2007 Uptown Survey and given a Status Code of 5D3, "Appears to be a contributor to a district that appears eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation."

The historic name of the resource, the Robert and Laura Ford House, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of owners who constructed the house as their personal residence.

## ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Legacy 106, Inc. 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 Criterion C, but not HRB Criterion 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 1929 in the Spanish Eclectic style, the subject property presents as a two story residence from the street and a three story at the rear. The exterior of the house features a sand finish stucco on an undulating surface, a barrel clay tile hipped roof and wood divided light windows. The main entrance is located at the northwest corner of the house. The entrance is located on a one story portion of the house, is slightly recessed and features a heavy wood header. The entrance is covered with a hipped roof that extends to the left to cover the double hung window with decorative wrought iron. The double garage doors are located at the northeast corner of the house. The garage door is a single door that was designed similar to the wood sliding doors shown on the original rendering. The door is recessed slightly behind the decorative corbels at the garage door opening. The garage opening is underneath the cantilevered second floor which features decorative wood corbels. The second floor of the front façade features evenly spaced windows with decorative shutters. The window at the northwest corner of the house is a window with a decorative grille. The windows above the garage also feature decorative wrought iron pot holders.

The west façade of the house is predominantly one story. To the right of the front entrance, under the hipped roof, is a pair of double hung windows. Just beyond the hipped roof portion, the house transitions to a flat roof with a parapet. The portion of house features a low stuccoed chimney for the living room place at an angle. The second floor of this façade is recessed off of the living room portion. The windows on the second floor are evenly spaced on the wall plane.

The first floor of the east façade features a small protrusion with a shed roof at the southeast corner. This portion features evenly spaced windows on each side and a single door on the north side. Directly above the shed roof at the second floor is an addition to the house. This area was originally an open porch and was enclosed at an unknown date. The porch is delineated by the remaining porch rail cap. The cap wraps around the corner to the rear of the house. At the rear, the addition stopped short of enclosing the entire second floor and left a small portion open to create a recessed balcony. There have been several modifications at the rear of the house. There are a couple of locations where the window openings have been modified on the lower level and at the 1<sup>st</sup> floor at the southeast corner. A newer deck and patio coverings have also been added to this façade.

Modifications to the house are primarily limited to the rear of the house. The second floor balcony enclosure, which is visible from the public right of way, is delineated with the railing cap and the modifications to the rear windows do not detract from the character-defining features of the house. Another modification from the original plans is the change to the windows. The rendering and the plans depict the windows as multi-light casement windows, however the existing windows on the house are 4/4 double hung windows. The building record indicates that the windows are double hung and it appears that there have been no modifications to the opening. Based on the evidence present, it appears that the modification to the windows was done during the initial construction. The modifications have not significantly impacted integrity of design, materials, workmanship or feeling to the extent that the building no longer retains integrity to its original Spanish Eclectic design and 1929 period of significance.

Following the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition, the romantic ideal of Spanish and Latin American architecture was revived. What resulted was the Spanish Eclectic style, which was the predominant style in Southern California between 1915 and 1940, significantly altering the architectural landscape until the Modernist movement took hold during and after WWII. The style uses decorative details borrowed from the entire history of Spanish architecture. These may be of Moorish, Byzantine, Gothic, or Renaissance inspirations, an unusually rich and varied series of decorative precedents. The style employed a variety of floor plans, as well as gabled, cross-gabled, gabled and hipped, hipped and flat roof forms with parapets. Other character defining features include Mission and Spanish clay tile; focal windows; arched windows and other openings; and accented entries.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Spanish Eclectic style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including its barrel clay tile roof with exposed rafter tails, stucco exterior, wood divided light windows, decorative wrought iron, wood shutters, decorative corbels and integrated garage. Therefore, staff recommends designation of the subject property 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 applicant provided an analysis of the plans, renderings, known associations and common architectural features and believes that the property was designed by Richard Requa; however there is no clear evidence to support this association. Additional evidence providing definitive information on the architect of the house could be brought back to the HRB at a later date, if found. Without conclusive evidence as to the architect of the proposed property, staff cannot recommend designation under HRB Criterion D.

#### 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 Robert and Laura Ford House located at 1237 Cypress Court be designated with a period of significance of 1929 under HRB Criterion C as a good example of a Spanish Eclectic style residence. The designation excludes the rear second story balcony enclosure. 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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Jodie Brown, AICP  
Senior Planner



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Kelley Stanco  
Senior Planner/HRB Liaison

JB/ks

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A  
ADOPTED ON 10/22/2015

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 10/22/2015, to consider the historical designation of the **Robert and Laura Ford House** (owned by Shapiro/Calahorro Family Revocable Trust 12-19-08, 1237 Cypress Court, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **1237 Cypress Court, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **452-331-04-00**, further described as LOT C/EXC CITY OF S D/ 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 Rober and Laura Ford House on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Eclectic style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1929 period of significance. Specifically, the resource retains its barrel clay tile roof with exposed rafter tails, stucco exterior, wood divided light windows, decorative wrought iron, wood shutters, decorative corbels and integrated garage. 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 designation shall exclude the rear second story balcony enclosure.

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: JAN I. GOLDSMITH,  
CITY ATTORNEY

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