



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: November 14, 2008 REPORT NO. HRB-08-071

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of November 21, 2008

SUBJECT: **ITEM #7 – MUT KULA XUY/MUT LAH HOY YA SITE #6**

APPLICANT: Scott Moomjian on behalf of the property owner, Patrick Daniels and Virginia De Robertis

LOCATION: 7907 Princess Street, La Jolla Community, Council District 1

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the traditional cultural property and building located at 7907 Princess Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Mut kula xuy/Mut lah hoy ya Site #6 as a historical resource under HRB Criterion A and do not designate the building located at 7907 Princess Street under any HRB Criteria. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource exemplifies special elements of the City's archaeological and cultural development associated with the Mut kula xuy/Mut lah hoy ya site known to be of cultural significance to the Kumeyaay tribes of San Diego.
2. There is no evidence to suggest that the building at 7907 Princess Street played a direct or significant role in La Jolla's development, or that it reflects an association with an event or person significant in history, and the building does not retain integrity of materials, design, workmanship, and feeling nor was it designed or built by an established master.



BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a proposed building modification of a structure of 45 years or more, located at 7907 Princess Street, under San Diego Municipal Code Section 143.0212. The Spanish Eclectic home was constructed in 1926 by Martha Stockton Russell and was designed by her cousin, Russell Walcott, a Chicago architect.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Scott Moomjian, which concludes that the building is not significant under HRB Criteria A, B, C, D, E, and F (Attachment 1). Staff concurs that the building is not a significant historical resource. In addition, a cultural resources study was prepared by Brian F. Smith & Associates which concludes the property lies within an area of La Jolla with known significant cultural sensitivity associated with the Mut kula xuy/Mut lah hoy ya site. Staff believes the property represents a significant traditional cultural property and is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion A, 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.

Documentation submitted (Attachment 2) has indicated that the building at 7907 Princess Street may be significant for its reflection of special elements of the historical, architectural, cultural, and aesthetic development of La Jolla. However, there is no evidence to suggest that 7907 Princess Street played a direct or significant role in La Jolla's development. The property was not the first one on its street and did not influence the development of the surrounding neighborhood. At the time it was built, 7907 Princess Street was designed in a style popular and common for Southern California in the 1920s. Therefore, the building at 7907 Princess Street is not eligible under Criterion A.

This property is located within 250 feet of the mapped boundaries of a regionally significant archaeological site known as the Spindrift Site, (CA-SDI-39/17,372, SDMM-W-1). This site encompasses a large habitation area known to its Kumeyaay inhabitants as *Mut kula xuy/Mut lah hoy ya* (place of many caves). The area is composed of several large midden areas, temporary camps, pottery and lithic scatters, various shell scatters, and burials found throughout multiple, consecutive layers representative of different cultural phases found in the San Diego region. The 20-acre knoll, historically known as the Richards Tract and the La Jolla Vista Tract, was originally investigated and recorded by Malcolm Rogers during the late 1920s, and by James Moriarty in the 1960s, and has been associated with occupations by groups from the La Jolla Complex and the Late Prehistoric Kumeyaay.

The HRB's first designation of a portion of the Mut kula xuy/Mut lah hoy ya site was in 1999 (HRB #390). Other portions of the site (HRB #638, #813, #818, and 885) were designated between 2003 and 2008. Previously, the HRB considered whether to develop a policy of pre-designating the entire Spindrift site so that property owners would be informed before they

embark on projects with the potential to adversely impact the significant site. Administrative issues associated with this approach resulted in a continuation of parcels being considered on a case-by-case basis as projects are processed through the Development Services Department. In 2007, the Archaeology Subcommittee began reviewing the potential for creating an archaeological geographic historic district encompassing all the properties within the known and mapped boundaries of this significant archaeological and Native American site.

The archaeological fieldwork conducted at this property identified the presence of minimal marine shell within disturbed soil. No artifacts were recovered in the limited testing program. Much of the archaeological deposits in this site have been disturbed by the development of the neighborhood in the 1920s and by grading for more recent development, including the development of the present lot. The archaeological survey was conducted by inspecting areas of bare soil within the landscape possessing adequate ground visibility. The majority of the property is covered with a residential structure and hardscape. A marine shell fragment was encountered along the east edge of the residence. It could not be determined if the shell was from a prehistoric or modern context. Four shovel test pits were excavated to identify the nature and extend of any subsurface deposits at the property. They were all excavated to a depth of 50 cm and produced a total of 9.6 gm of marine shell. Modern debris including fragmentary glass, ceramic and plastic trash was found in three of the test pits. None of the trash was temporally or functionally diagnostic and could not be definitively ascribed to the historic period (at least 45 years old).

Subsurface excavations resulted in the recovery of marine shell. No evidence of any prehistoric features was observed during the excavations. Although the portion of the site within the subject parcel is disturbed and does not retain integrity, due to the significant nature of the larger site throughout this La Jolla neighborhood and a documented history of archaeological investigations that acknowledge the frequent discovery of sensitive cultural material within both intact and disturbed contexts, any impacts to this resource are noteworthy and will require a monitoring program during construction. A summary of the archaeological site investigation was submitted to the San Diego Historical Resources Board to officially document the 7907 Princess Street portion of SDI-39 (Attachment 3). In addition, correspondence from the Native American Monitor that worked on the project is provided in Attachment 4. This correspondence notes Native American human remains were found in close proximity to this property and the possibility of fragmented human remains existing on the site is high.

HRB staff believes this site is associated with the larger significant traditional cultural property found in the neighborhood and recommends the Board designate the site under Criterion A as the resource exemplifies special elements of the City's archaeological and cultural development associated with the Mut kula xuy/Mut lah hoy ya site known to be of cultural significance to today's Kumeyaay tribes of San Diego.

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

The residence at 7907 Princess Street was built by Martha Stockton Russell. Russell studied music theory at Northwestern and graduated in 1910. She lived at 7907 Princess Street from 1927 to 1933 and established a music studio for children in her home. Russell's teaching included classes in rhythmic movement and she established the principles of Creative Motion. While Russell's contribution to music education may be considered influential, the building at 7907 Princess Street does not retain sufficient material integrity to convey her work or its significance. Though the building can be associated with Russell, the building's integrity of design, materials, and workmanship have been significantly altered. Modifications include the construction of the garage, addition of the entry turrets at the northwest and southwest corners, replacement of the wood shake roof with red tile, the conversion of five arched windows to doors, removal of two fireplaces, and construction of a breakfast room. Therefore, 7907 Princess Street does not retain sufficient integrity to reflect its association with Martha Stockton Russell and is not eligible under Criterion B.

Artist Niki de Saint Phalle owned 7907 Princess Street from 1994 until her death in 2002. Niki de Saint Phalle was a world renowned artist, known for her "shooting paintings" and "Nana" sculptures. Her work has been displayed in numerous countries including Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, Holland, Sweden, and the United States. Niki de Saint Phalle spent the last 8 years of her life in San Diego and continued to work on her art while living at 7907 Princess Street. Though she lived in 7907 Princess Street while she was producing works of art, there has not been sufficient historical perspective since the period from 1994 to 2002 to determine whether her association with the property would be significant. In addition, many of her pieces of art that were created during her time in San Diego were created for or located in other countries. Therefore, the association between Niki de Saint Phalle, her residence at 7907 Princess Street, and her artwork does not rise to a level of significance and the property is not eligible under Criterion B.

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 one-story Spanish Eclectic home at 7907 Princess Street has an irregular "U" shaped plan. The building features a side-gabled roof with exposed rafter tails and little eave overhang. Shed and front-gabled roof sections extend along the southwestern elevation. The roof is clad with red tile. The building is clad with stucco. A variety of windows including casement, double hung, and fixed are present. The west elevation features five arched doorways (originally windows). Two turrets at the northwestern corner and southwestern corner frame the west elevation. These turrets are virtually identical and feature dovecotes with weathervanes and fixed windows. The main entrance of the home is centered in the northwestern turret and features a paneled front door. A large outdoor patio/pool area is located on the east side of the property within a courtyard.

The building at 7907 Princess Street has been extensively altered through the construction of additions and modifications. A garage has been added to the property; this was likely after 1965. In 1982, the courtyard was altered by the construction of the pool and spa. Other modifications

include a remodeled kitchen, bathroom, and fireplaces. In 1985 the two turrets were constructed. In 1994 the five arched windows along the west elevation were converted to doors and tiled landings with iron railings were installed. Other modifications included the removal of two fireplaces and the addition of skylights. In addition, in 1994-1995, the wood shake roof was removed and replaced with red tile. The stucco finish also appears to have been altered. Based on these modifications, the building does not retain integrity of materials, design, workmanship, and feeling. Therefore, the building is not eligible 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.

Architect Russell Walcott designed 7907 Princess Street for his cousin Martha Stockton Russell. Walcott, a Chicago native, studied architecture at Princeton and worked out of Chicago during the 1920s. Walcott went into partnership with Robert Work in the late 1920s and the two men worked together until 1936 when Walcott retired and moved to North Carolina.

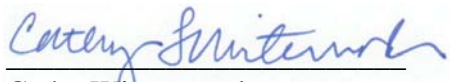
While working in Chicago, Walcott designed several homes in the northern suburbs. While Walcott may have an extensive body of work in Chicago, the extent of his work in San Diego is unknown. Therefore, there is not sufficient documentation to establish Walcott as a master architect. In addition, even if Walcott could be established as a master, 7907 Princess Street lacks integrity of design, materials, and workmanship due to modifications and would not reflect Walcott's design. Therefore, 7907 Princess Street is not eligible under Criterion D.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the HRB designate the site under Criterion A as the resource exemplifies special elements of the City's archaeological and cultural development associated with the Mut kula xuy/Mut lah hoy ya site known to be of cultural significance to today's Kumeyaay tribes of San Diego and do not designate the building at 7907 Princess Street under any HRB Criteria.



Jennifer Hirsch
Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Senior Planner/Program Coordinator

jh/cw

Attachments:

1. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover
2. Letter from Roger P. Craig
3. DPR 523L Continuation Sheet (Confidential – not for public distribution)
4. Letter from Red Tail Monitoring & Research, Inc.