



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: March 13, 2009 REPORT NO. HRB-09-018

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of March 26, 2009

SUBJECT: **ITEM #8 –3131 Elliott Street**

APPLICANT: Sean and Judith Parker, property owners
Represented by Kathleen Crawford, consultant

LOCATION: 3131 Elliott Street, Peninsula Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of 3131 Elliott Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the house at 3131 Elliott Street as a historical resource under any HRB Criterion due to a lack of association with a person significant to San Diego's history and a loss of integrity.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board at the owner's request to have the house and site designated as a historical resource. The house at 3131 Elliott Street is a single family home that was originally constructed in 1936 for Edward and Mae Levy. The house was constructed by Lawrence E. Boerner in the Monterey style.



ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Kathleen Crawford, the consultant on behalf of the property owners, Sean and Judith Parker, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria B and C. Staff disagrees with the determination that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria B and C, as follows:

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

The consultant report states that the property is significant for its association with David Girton Fleet, who is the son of Reuban Hollis Fleet and Elizabeth Girton Fleet. David Fleet was born in Washington State in 1910 and went on to attend Culver Military Academy and Cornell University before joining his father in the aircraft and aerospace industry in 1930. His father, Reuban Fleet, started Consolidated Aircraft in Rhode Island in 1923. The firm moved from Rhode Island to Buffalo and later to San Diego in 1935. Prior to the move to San Diego, David Fleet married his wife, Loula. Once in San Diego, the newly married couple moved into the property at 3131 Elliott Street. David Fleet and his wife lived in this property from 1936 to 1940. While with Consolidated, David Fleet served as the elder's right hand assistant and later as an executive vice president. During his tenure at Consolidated, the company became a leader in innovative new technology for the growing aircraft industry. The company changed its name to Consolidated Vultee and was sold to Convair, a division of General Dynamics, in 1941. David Fleet remained with Convair as the assistant to the president until 1949. After his retirement, Fleet started Fleetridge Realty, which was instrumental in developing the Point Loma area. Fleet also developed a Multiple Listing Service for the Point Loma-Ocean Beach area, which allowed realtors a centralized access point for properties for sale in the area. Fleet was involved in the art scene and opened an art gallery in Point Loma, the Artists Showroom, and served on several boards and commissions during his lifetime. David Fleet died at the age of 80 in 1991.

While David Fleet was involved in Consolidated Aircraft as his father's right hand man and executive vice president, it was Reuban Fleet who was the major force behind the company. It was Reuban who started the company; won an Army competition to build a primary trainer plane; and moved the company to San Diego based on an earlier stay during his Army Air Corp stint. After his retirement from Convair, David did not develop Fleetridge Realty until 1949 which was well after he lived (1936-1940) in 3131 Elliott Street. For this reason, staff does not recommend designation of the 3131 Elliott Street based on HRB 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 house was originally constructed in 1936 in the Monterey style by contractor Lawrence E. Boerner. The house is two story frame and stucco structure with a low pitched gable roof and exposed rafter tails (currently covered by a gutter). The gable ends are sheathed with wood lap siding. The majority of the windows on the front and street visible sides of the house are 6/6

wood double hung windows, while the windows to the rear of the house are 1/1 double hung wood windows.

The east façade features a two story recessed entrance area. The first floor has a raised porch area with a centrally located front door and a window to the west. The second floor features a covered balcony with simple wood pickets and support posts. Access to the balcony is provided by one of two wood and glass doors. The wall of the second floor balcony area is sheathed with vertical tongue and groove wood. The balcony area also features a small stucco grille over a window. The front door, 1st floor porch window and the east façade second floor balcony door all feature tall shutters. To the right of the front porch area are two windows with shutters evenly spaced on the wall plane of the first and second floors.

The west façade features a painted brick chimney with decorative bands at the cap. There are windows on either side of the chimney. The windows on the first floor are 6/6 double hung and the windows on the second floor are 1/1 double hung. The west side of the house also features a concrete driveway that accesses a two car detached garage. The garage is a frame and stucco structure with a flat roof and a non historic metal section garage door.

The north façade has four double hung windows of various sizes evenly spaced on the wall plane. The current property owners constructed a rear addition with an intersecting gable roof that is flush with the historic portion of the house that is visible on the north side of the house.

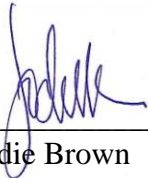
There have been several modifications to the house. According to the January 1936 Union Tribune advertisement, the front door was originally located at the right hand corner of the front porch—closer to the existing mail drop. In the location of the current door a window originally existed. The remaining evidence of the front door location is some hairline cracking in the stucco. The lack of disturbance in the stucco leads Staff to believe that the entire house has been restuccoed with the exceptionally smooth finish. The decorative wood element below the remaining front porch window was also non-existent historically. The front door did not have shutters and the shutters on the windows were only the height of the windows. Staff is also concerned about the rear addition which is visible from the street. The addition is flush with the north wall of the historic house. The only distinction between the historic and the new addition is the header height of the windows. Additionally, as part of the Quieter Home Program all of the windows on doors have been replaced on the house. While the alterations appear minor, with the exception of the rear addition, cumulatively they have had a negative impact on the historic character of the house. Based on these alterations, Staff does not recommend designation under Criterion C.

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 to not designate the house at 3131 Elliott street as a historical resource under any HRB Criterion. 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.



Jodie Brown
Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Senior Planner/Program Coordinator

jb/cw

Attachment: Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover