



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

# Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: April 9, 2009 REPORT NO. HRB-09-026

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board  
Agenda of April 23, 2009

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #1**

APPLICANT: Penelope & William D’Allaird Trust represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 2315 Fort Stockton Drive, 92103, Uptown Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #1 located at 2315 Fort Stockton Drive as a historical resource.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #1 located at 2315 Fort Stockton Drive as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1925 under HRB Criteria C and D. The 2006 addition at the rear of the house shall be excluded from the designation. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Storybook style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1925 period of significance.
2. The resource is representative of a notable work of Master Architect Ralph E. Hurlburt and Master Builder Charles Tifal and retains integrity as it relates to the original design.



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## 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 house is a one story single family residence built in 1925 and is located in the one-block residential subdivision bounded by Fort Stockton Drive, Trias Street, Hickory Street and Ampudia Street. The house is an eclectic mix of styles, and can perhaps best be identified as a Storybook house which expresses French and Tudor influences.

The historic name of the resource, the John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #1 has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and includes the name of John Snyder, who constructed the house as a speculation house and the names of Ralph E. Hurlburt, Master Architect and Charles H. Tifal, Master Builder. This is the first spec house built by Snyder to be considered for designation.

## ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Legacy 106, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria A, B, C and D. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criteria C and D, but not HRB Criteria A and B, 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.*

The applicant's report states that the house reflects a special element of the historical, architectural and economic development of Mission Hills. The discussion of Criterion A centers around the construction of the building as a model home for the small subdivision, and notes the rarity of the Tudor Revival style which was built in a small concentration in this one-block subdivision due to the developer's preference in designing his three model homes. There is insufficient evidence to support that this particular one-block subdivision is significant to the development of Mission Hills; or that the design of this house and the other two model homes on the block as Tudor Revival homes reflects a significant element of architectural development in San Diego. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion A.

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

The applicant's report states that the house is significant for its association with developer John Snyder. Snyder built the house as a speculation house along with two others in his efforts to promote his subdivision and never lived at the subject property. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under 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 is a one story Storybook style house with French and Tudor influences built in 1925. Although not overtly fanciful in its expression of the Storybook style popular during the 1920's,

the house exhibits the eclectic mix of Tudor Revival, French Eclectic and cottage elements that help to characterize the Storybook style. The house features a very high, steeply pitched asphalt shingle-clad hipped roof (French Eclectic influence) with a forward-projecting steeply pitched front gable and clipped eaves (Tudor Revival influence). Exterior walls are slightly textured stucco and comprise roughly the lower third of the building, with the roof comprising the upper two-thirds, with the exception of the front gable. A large multi-light leaded glass bay window under a small shed roof sits over a brick base on the gable end beneath a tall, narrow attic vent. Windows elsewhere consist of multi-light leaded casement windows and 1-over-1 double hung wood frame and sash windows. The entry door is set perpendicularly to the sidewalk on the east wall of the front-gable. The tall clinker brick chimney is indicative of the Storybook style. The original detached two car garage sits at the rear of the property.

Modifications include a 2006 addition to the rear of the house totaling less than 400 square feet, and the modification and realignment of the walkway leading to the entry. The addition at the rear is not visible from any public right-of-way and minimally impacts the structure. The original walkway consisted of a concrete path leading straight from the entry door to the sidewalk. The concrete walkway has been removed and replaced with a winding bark path which leads to the entry. The modification impacts the setting and feeling of the house, but not to such an extent that it impairs the home's significance under Criterion C. Therefore, staff recommends designation of the John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #1 under HRB Criterion C as a good example of Storybook architecture with a period of significance of 1925. The 2006 addition at the rear of the house shall be excluded from the designation.

*CRITERION D - Is representative of a notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.*

Ralph E. Hurlburt was born in 1888 in Utica, Nebraska. He was trained by his grandfather George in the construction trade. In 1916, he married Nettie Goodbrod and relocated to San Diego. Originally involved with real estate financing and law, Hurlburt shifted to architectural design. Early in his building career, Hurlburt partnered with builder Charles H. Tifal, a partnership that lasted until shortly before Hurlburt's death in 1942.

HRB Sites designated under Criterion D (Master Architect/Designer) Ralph E. Hurlburt:

- HRB #464 – The Wonder House of Stone (4386 Adams Avenue)
- HRB #523 – James C. & Lillie Byers/Ralph E. Hurlburt House (4230 Arguello Street)
- HRB #613 – Alfred LaMotte/Hurlburt and Tifal House (3557 Third Avenue)
- HRB #697 – Edwin and Rose Emerson/Hurlburt and Tifal House (2645 28<sup>th</sup> Street)
- HRB #824 - Sam & Mary McPherson/Ralph E. Hurlburt & Charles H. Tifal House, (3133 28<sup>th</sup> St)

Charles Tifal was born in 1882 in Wisconsin and relocated to San Diego in approximately 1920. Beginning in the early 1920s, Hurlburt and Tifal designed and constructed structures, primarily high-end custom residences, in a myriad of styles including French Eclectic, Spanish Eclectic, Arts and Crafts, Tudor, Italian Renaissance and variants with North African and American Pueblo territorial design elements. In 1942 Tifal was no longer working with Hurlburt but was

partnered with Scott King. The firm of Tifal & King installed the Alvarado Road Pump House, cottage and garage. Charles died at age 86 in February of 1968.

HRB Sites designated under Criterion D (Master Builder) Charles H. Tifal:

- HRB #613 – Alfred LaMotte/Hurlburt and Tifal House (3557 Third Avenue)
- HRB #697 – Edwin and Rose Emerson/Hurlburt and Tifal House (2645 28<sup>th</sup> Street)
- HRB #824 - Sam & Mary McPherson/Ralph E. Hurlburt & Charles H. Tifal House, (3133 28<sup>th</sup> St)

HRB Sites designated under other Criterion, also built by Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal:

- HRB #534 – The Frank H. & Margaret Burton/Milton P. Sessions House (1271 Brookes Ter)

Together, Hurlburt and Tifal designed only a handful of known eclectic homes with Storybook, Tudor and French influences. The subject property, 2315 Fort Stockton Drive, is the one of the more unique and notable examples of these designs. Therefore, staff recommends designation of the John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #1, as a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion D (Master Architect/Designer/Builder).

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

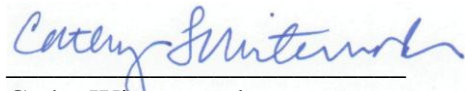
If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #1 located at 2315 Fort Stockton Drive be designated under HRB Criteria C as a very good example of 1925 Storybook architecture; and Criterion D as a notable work of Master Architect Ralph E. Hurlburt and Master Builder Charles H. Tifal. The 2006 addition at the rear of the house shall be excluded from the designation. 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.



Kelley Saunders  
Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd  
Senior Planner/Program Coordinator

KS/cw

Attachments:           Draft Resolution  
                                  Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A  
ADOPTED ON 4/23/2009

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 4/23/2009, to consider the historical designation of the **John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #1** (owned by Penelope and William D'Allaird Trust, 2315 Fort Stockton Drive, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **2315 Fort Stockton Drive, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **443-061-48-00**, further described as Resubdivision of Block 524, Old San Diego, portion of Lots 1 and 2 and all of Lot 14, Map 1824 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.**, 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 **John Snyder/Ralph E. Hurlburt and Charles H. Tifal Spec House #1** on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Storybook style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1925 period of significance.

(2) The property is historically significant under CRITERION D for its representation of a notable work of Master Architect Ralph E. Hurlburt and Master Builder Charles Tifal and retains integrity as it relates to the original design.

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.** .

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: \_\_\_\_\_  
NINA FAIN  
Deputy City Attorney