

CITY OF SAN DIEGO
M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: November 6, 2009
TO: Historical Resources Board
FROM: Kelley Saunders, Senior Planner, Historical Resources
SUBJECT: ITEM 7 – 2950 and 2950A 6th Avenue

Background

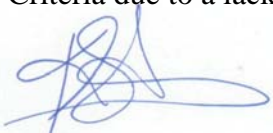
This item was continued at the July 26, 2007 HRB hearing at the request of the property owner and again at the April 24, 2008 HRB hearing at the request of the Hill/ Park West Community Association and the property owner for an indefinite period of time. The property owner has requested that the item be docketed at this time for consideration by the Board.

At the July 26, 2007 hearing staff recommended in staff report HRB-07-039 (Attachment 2) that the property be designated under HRB Criterion C as a good example of Spanish Revival architecture. Staff also recommended that the rear 1936 duplex unit which was expanded and converted to medical offices in 1954 (currently addressed at 2950 Sixth Avenue) be excluded from the designation. This recommendation was based on the information provided in the historical resource research report prepared by Heritage Architecture and Planning.

Following the continuance, a second research report prepared by the Office of Marie Burke Lia was submitted by the property owner. Staff reviewed the report, conducted a second site visit and determined that the building was not eligible for designation under any criteria due to significant, previously unknown modifications. These modifications included the alteration of the original shaped parapet which had been changed to a simple flat parapet, and the replacement of the original divided-lite casement windows on the main street façade with single pane casement windows. These modifications, as well as the staff recommendation to not designate the property, are discussed in greater detail in staff report HRB-08-030 (Attachment 1).

Recommendation

At this time, the staff recommendation from staff report HRB-08-030 remains unchanged, and staff recommends that the Board not designate the property at 2950 and 2950A 6th Avenue under any HRB Criteria due to a lack of integrity.



Kelley Saunders
Senior Planner

Attachments: 1. HRB-08-030
2. HRB-07-039
3. Historical resource research report prepared the Office of Marie Burke Lia
4. Historical resource research report prepared by Heritage Architecture & Planning



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: April 10, 2008 REPORT NO. HRB-08-030

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of April 24, 2008

SUBJECT: **ITEM #9 – 2950 and 2950A Sixth Avenue**

APPLICANT: Marie Burke Lia, on behalf of the owner Palm Properties LP

LOCATION: 2950 and 2950A Sixth Avenue, Uptown Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the property located at 2950 and 2950A Sixth Avenue as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the property at 2950 and 2950A Sixth Avenue under any HRB Criteria due to modifications which have resulted in a loss of architectural integrity.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with the owner's constraints assessment for a potential project at this location involving one or more buildings of 45 years more under SDMC Section 143.0212. The item was originally scheduled for the July 26, 2007 Historical Resources Board meeting but was continued at the request of the property owner.



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The building originally consisted of a one-story, single family home designed by Louis Gill and built in 1923 by G. Edward Chase for owners William and Nell Cronan, who lived at the house from its date of construction until 1929 when Mr. Cronan passed away.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was originally prepared by Eileen Magno of Heritage Architecture and evaluated by HRB staff for the July 26, 2007 Historical Resources Board meeting. The report prepared by Heritage Architecture concluded that the property is ineligible for listing on the San Diego Historical Resources Board Register. The staff analysis provided in report HRB 07-039 disagreed with the conclusion of the Heritage report and recommended designation under HRB Criterion C as a good example of Spanish Revival architecture (exclusive of the rear 1936 duplex unit which was expanded and converted to medical offices in 1954).

At the request of the property owner, the item was continued to further investigate the historicity of the resource. A second consultant's report by Kathleen Crawford in conjunction with Marie Burke Lia was submitted and concluded that the property was not historically significant under any Criteria. The Crawford report provided additional information, including the identity of the architect and previously unknown modifications to the original house. After reviewing the submitted historical report and conducting a site visit, staff concludes that the site is not a significant historical resource under any HRB Criteria 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.

There is no evidence to suggest that the property at 2950 and 2950A Sixth Avenue 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. 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.

Although there is some evidence to suggest that the first owner and resident of the property at 2950A Sixth Avenue, William Cronan, may be considered a historically significant individual upon additional research and analysis, his association with the subject property was brief (1922-1929). In addition, the house has been significantly altered since his association with the property, as described in the discussion of Criterion C, and does not retain sufficient integrity for that association. 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 at 2950A Sixth Avenue (historically addressed as 2950 Sixth Avenue) is a one story Spanish Revival house designed by Louis Gill and built in 1923 by G. Edward Chase. It features a flat roof and light sand-textured stucco walls over wood frame construction on a concrete foundation. The house has simple yet distinctive detailing which includes clay block roof drains; notched corners at the parapet; a wide, short chimney which tapers slightly at the top; and a slightly recessed entry under an arched opening. The entry is located off the interior side along the south elevation. To the right of the entry door is a fixed single pane window flanked by single pane casements, and to the left is an aluminum window which replaced the original wood window. The east elevation fronting onto Sixth Avenue features two fixed single pane windows with a pair of casement windows on each side.

Sanborn Maps from 1950 reveal two dwelling units at this location, 2948 Sixth Avenue and 2950 Sixth Avenue (currently 2950A Sixth Avenue). City directory searches reveal that the 2948 Sixth Avenue address did not appear until 1937, indicating to staff that a second unit was added to the rear of the single family home in 1936. Building permits provided in the applicant's reports show that the second unit at the rear was remodeled and expanded in 1954 and both units were converted to medical offices, as evidenced by the 1956 Sanborn Maps. Both units remained medical offices until the 1990's when 2950A, the original house, was returned to a residential unit.

An advertisement for the Benson Lumber Company appearing in the June 18, 1922 edition of the *San Diego Union* was provided in the recent Crawford report. The ad identifies Louis Gill as the architect of the home (it had been previously suspected that the design could have been the work of Irving Gill) and provides a photograph of the home at the time of construction. The ad provided in the Crawford report appears to show a shaped parapet on the main façade, an element now missing from the home. Staff obtained an enlarged and clearer copy of the advertisement (Attachment 2) which revealed that not only has the parapet been altered to a simple flat parapet, but that the original divided-lite casement windows on the main street façade have been replaced with single pane casement windows. These modifications, previously unknown to staff or the applicant, have significantly altered the character of this modestly designed home. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation 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 Benson Lumber Company advertisement in the June 18, 1922 edition of the *San Diego Union* provided in the recent Crawford report identifies Louis Gill as the architect of the home at 2950A Sixth Avenue. Louis Gill, the nephew of Master Architect Irving Gill, is considered a Master Architect in his own right. However, the home at 2950A Sixth Avenue has been significantly altered from its original design, as evidenced by the photograph in the June 1922 advertisement and described in the discussion of Criterion C. As the house no longer reflects the original design of Louis Gill, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion D.

CRITERION E - *Is listed or has been determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or is listed or has been determined eligible by the State Historical Preservation Office for listing on the State Register of Historical Resources.*

The property at 2950 and 2950A Sixth Avenue is not listed or determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or the California State Register of Historical Resources. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion E.

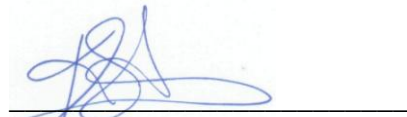
CRITERION F - *Is a finite group of resources related to one another in a clearly distinguishable way or is a geographically definable area or neighborhood containing improvements which have a special character, historical interest or aesthetic value or which represent one or more architectural periods or styles in the history and development of the City.*

The property at 2950 and 2950A Sixth Avenue is not located within a designated historic district and is therefore not eligible for designation under HRB Criterion F.

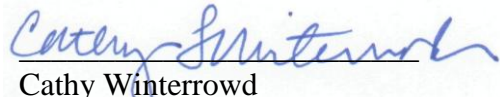
CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the property at 2950 and 2950A Sixth Avenue not be designated under any HRB Criteria due to a lack of integrity.

Should the property be designated, 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

Attachment(s):

1. HRB Staff Report 07-039
2. Benson Lumber Company advertisement from the *San Diego Union*, dated June 18, 1922.
3. Applicant's report, prepared by Heritage Architecture and Planning, under separate cover
4. Applicant's Historical Report, prepared by Kathleen Crawford of the Offices of Marie Burke Lia, under separate cover



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: July 12, 2007 REPORT NO. HRB-07-039

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of July 26, 2007

SUBJECT: **ITEM #8 – William and Nell Cronan House**

APPLICANT: CHEL Holdings, Ltd, owner (referral from Development Services)

LOCATION: 2950 and 2950A Sixth Avenue, Uptown Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the William and Nell Cronan House located at 2950A Sixth Avenue as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the William and Nell Cronan House, located at 2950A Sixth Avenue as a historical resource under HRB Criterion C as a good example of Spanish Revival architecture. Staff is also recommending that the rear 1936 duplex unit which was expanded and converted to medical offices in 1954 (currently addressed at 2950 Sixth Avenue) be excluded from the designation.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with the owner's constraints assessment for a potential project at this location involving one or more buildings of 45 years more under SDMC Section 143.0212. The building originally consisted of a one-story, single family home built in 1923 by G. Edward Chase for owners William and Nell Cronan, who lived at the house from its date of construction until 1929 when Mr. Cronan passed away.



Sanborn Maps from 1950 (Attachment 1) reveal two dwelling units at this location, 2948 Sixth Avenue and 2950 Sixth Avenue (currently 2950A Sixth Avenue). City directory searches reveal that the 2948 Sixth Avenue address did not appear until 1937, indicating to staff that a second unit was added to the rear of the single family home in 1936. Building permits provided in the applicant's report show that the second unit at the rear was remodeled and expanded in 1954 and both units were converted to medical offices, as evidenced by the 1956 Sanborn Maps (Attachment 2). Both units remained medical offices until the 1990's when 2950A, the original house, was returned to a residential unit. The remodeled and expanded duplex unit which was converted to medical offices (previously addressed at 2948 Sixth Avenue and presently addressed as 2950 Sixth Avenue) is not historically significant and staff is recommending that this portion of the structure be excluded from the designation. The original house (addressed historically as 2950 Sixth Avenue and presently as 2950A Sixth Avenue) is being brought before the Board with a staff recommendation to designate the resource under HRB Criterion C.

ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Eileen Magno of Heritage Architecture, which concludes the resource is not historically significant. Staff disagrees, and recommends that the site be designated as a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion C 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.

The house at 2950A Sixth Avenue (historically addressed as 2950 Sixth Avenue) is a one story Spanish Revival house built in 1923 by G. Edward Chase and features a flat roof and light sand-textured stucco walls over wood frame construction on a concrete foundation. Reminiscent of work by Irving Gill, the house is understated, with simple yet distinctive detailing which includes clay block roof drains; notched corners at the parapet; a wide, short chimney which tapers slightly at the top; and a slightly recessed entry under an arched opening. The entry is located off the interior side along the south elevation. To the right of the entry door is a fixed single pane window flanked by single pane casements, and to the left is an aluminum window which replaced the original wood window. The east elevation fronting onto Sixth Avenue features two fixed single pane windows with a pair of casement windows on each side. Other than the additions to the rear of the structure, the original 1923 home appears to be intact with the exception of the aluminum window and new entry door. The house is a good example of the simplified Spanish Revival style, and staff recommends designation of the William and Nell Cronan House, located at 2950A Sixth Avenue, under HRB Criterion C. The later additions resulting in the structure currently addressed at 2950 Sixth Avenue are not significant and should be excluded from the designation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the William and Nell Cronan House, located at 2950A Sixth Avenue be designated as a historical resource under HRB Criterion C as a good example of Spanish Revival architecture. Staff is also recommending that the rear 1936 duplex unit which was expanded and converted to medical

offices in 1954 (currently addressed at 2950 Sixth Avenue) 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.



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Attachment(s):

1. 1950 Sanborn Map
2. 1956 Sanborn Map
3. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover