

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

DATE: November 5, 2010

TO: Historical Resources Board and Interested Parties

FROM: Kelley Stanco, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: **ITEM 8 — 1010 Leroy Street**

This item was docketed previously for consideration by the Board at the June 24, 2010 hearing at which time the staff recommendation was to not designate the property under any HRB Criteria. At the hearing, the applicant requested a continuance to allow time to provide additional documentation and analysis in support of designation. The item was continued to the October or November hearing, as docket space allowed. The item was continued at the beginning of the meeting and was not heard or discussed.

The applicant has provided additional analysis and documentation in a letter dated October 18, 2010, which is included as Attachment 2 to this memo. The letter and supplemental material focus on two main arguments; first, that the house is eligible for listing as a Tract Ranch based on the evaluation criteria and significance thresholds in the *San Diego Modernism Context Statement*, and second that the design of the house is inspired by the work of Cliff May. In regard to the first argument, staff maintains that the house does embody the primary and secondary characteristics of Tract Ranch, but that it does not meet the significance thresholds identified in the *Modernism Context*, as detailed in the prior staff report:

“The *Modernism Context* also states due to the mass production of Tract Ranch homes following World War II, examples of the style are abundant and will gain their significance through a district context. In addition, the *Modernism Context* states candidates for individual listing may be associated with a master architect or builder. The *Modernism Context* states, “Although it is not anticipated that many examples of Tract Ranch architecture will be eligible for individual listing, it may be possible for some unique or distinguished examples of the style to be found significant as individual resources.” The home at 1010 Leroy Street is not a unique or distinguished example of the Tract Ranch style and does not meet the evaluation criteria described in the *Modernism Context*. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion C.”

The applicant contends that the house is unique and distinguished and does have an indirect association with a Master because the design of the house is influenced by the work of Cliff May. While the subject house may have similarities to May-designed homes, resemblance to the true work of a Master does not constitute a unique or distinguished example of the style or the work of a Master Architect. Any number of homes designed in the Tract Ranch style could be

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said to resemble May's work or the work of another Master. Therefore, the staff recommendation to not designate the property under HRB Criterion C or any other HRB Criteria remains unchanged.


Kelley Stanco
Senior Planner

Attachments:

1. Staff Report HRB-10-025, dated June 11, 2010
2. Applicant's letter and supplemental materials dated October 18, 2010 under separate cover



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: June 11, 2010 REPORT NO. HRB-10-025

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of June 24, 2010

SUBJECT: **ITEM #6 – 1010 Leroy Street**

APPLICANT: Gregg and Heidi Morton, property owners
Represented by Scott Moomjian, consultant

LOCATION: 1010 Leroy Street, Peninsula Community, Council District 2

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of 1010 Leroy Street as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Do not designate the house at 1010 Leroy Street as a historical resource under any HRB Criteria.

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 home at 1010 Leroy Street was built in 1949 by contractor Henry L. Wheeler for Doris Helen Tovrea. The house was constructed in the Tract Ranch style.



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ANALYSIS

A historical resource research report was prepared by Scott Moomjian, the consultant on behalf of the property owners, Gregg and Heidi Morton, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criterion C. Staff disagrees with the determination that the resource is significant under HRB Criterion C. 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.

The one-story Tract Ranch home was built in 1949. The home features a side gable roof with wide eave overhangs and exposed roof rafters. The wall cladding includes a variety of stucco and board and batten siding. An attached garage is located along the street facing façade (east elevation) and the garage door is adorned with wood molding in a diamond pattern. Other elements along the east elevation include a double multi-paned casement window with wood shutters and another double casement window flanked by two louvered windows. A wood window grille covers these windows. The main entrance to the home is also located along the east elevation and features a wood slated door in a zig-zag pattern.

Through the main entrance there is a central courtyard described in the historical report as a *corredor* – an open-air hallway. The original flooring (likely concrete) in the courtyard has been replaced with large tiles. The applicant's report compares this feature to designs by Cliff May in his article titled "Western Ranch Houses." The applicant also describes the home as a Modern Western Ranch rather than a Tract Ranch home. While the home does feature some elements described in May's article, no association can be made to May or another master architect or builder.

The *San Diego Modernism Historic Context Statement (Modernism Context)* identifies character-defining features and provides evaluation criteria for Tract Ranch homes in San Diego. Primary character defining features include horizontal massing, low sloped gable roofs with deep overhangs, and homes are typically one-story. Secondary character-defining features include attached carports or garages, the use of traditional details emphasizing the street façade such as wood shutters, and the use of traditional building materials (wood shingle roofing, wood siding, brick, stucco, and stone). The *Modernism Context* also states due to the mass production of Tract Ranch homes following World War II, examples of the style are abundant and will gain their significance through a district context. In addition, the *Modernism Context* states candidates for individual listing may be associated with a master architect or builder. The *Modernism Context* states, "Although it is not anticipated that many examples of Tract Ranch architecture will be eligible for individual listing, it may be possible for some unique or distinguished examples of the style to be found significant as individual resources." The home at 1010 Leroy Street is not a unique or distinguished example of the Tract Ranch style and does not meet the evaluation criteria described in the *Modernism Context*. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB 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 1010 Leroy 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.



Jennifer Hirsch
Senior Planner



Cathy Winterrowd
Principal Planner/HRB Liaison

jh/cw

Attachment: Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover