



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: August 9, 2024 REPORT NO. HRB-24-026

HEARING DATE: August 22, 2024

SUBJECT: **ITEM 2 – GEORGE AND MAUD EASTON/ IRVING GILL HOUSE**

RESOURCE INFO: [California Historical Resources Inventory Database \(CHRID\) link](#)

APPLICANT: Hayden Family Trust 10-02-18
Historical Resource Research Report prepared by Johnson and Johnson
Architecture

LOCATION: 3353 2nd Avenue, 92103, Uptown Community, Council District 3
APN 452-554-15-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the George and Maud Easton/ Irving Gill House
located at 3353 2nd Avenue as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the George and Maud Easton/ Irving Gill House located at 3353 2nd Avenue as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1908 under HRB Criteria C and D. The designation excludes the garage and the 1962 and 2019 rear additions constructed outside of the period of significance. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Prairie style architecture with Mission Revival influences and retains integrity from its 1908 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a flat roof with large overhanging eaves, stucco cladding, asymmetrical primary façade, a covered front entry featuring arches, a stucco chimney, and fenestration consisting of wooden casement windows with and without transoms, and wooden windows of various operations and lite patterns.
2. The resource is representative of the notable work of Master Architect Irving Gill, a prominent and accomplished architect responsible for the construction of many quality houses in the city, some of which have been historically designated. Specifically, the resource is an example of his work in the Prairie style with Mission Revival influences, which is shown through its combined roof forms, repeating arch motif, and lack of ornamentation. The combination of stylistic elements creates a distinctive architectural style which Gill has become known for. The resource expresses a quality of design seen in his other known

works with its key elements of his style and retains integrity as it relates to the original 1908 design.

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 property was identified in the [2016 Uptown Community Plan Update Historic Resource Survey](#) and given a Status Code of 5D3, "Appears to be a contributor to a district that appears to be eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation."

The historic name of the resource, the George and Maud Easton/ Irving Gill House has been identified as consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of George and Maud Easton, who constructed the house as their personal residence, and the name Irving Gill, a Master Architect.

In order to be eligible for designation and listing on the City's Register, a resource must meet one or more of the City's designation criteria as specified in the Historical Resources Guidelines of the Land Development Manual and retain integrity as it relates to the significance of the resource. Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance, which requires an understanding of the physical features and characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance. The National, California, and City of San Diego Registers recognize location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association as the seven aspects of historical integrity.

Although not all seven aspects of integrity need to be present for a property to be eligible for designation, the record must demonstrate that the property retains enough physical and design characteristics to reflect and convey the significance of the property. Each resource depends on certain aspects of integrity, more than others, to express its historic significance. Determining which of the aspects are most important to a particular property requires an understanding of the property's significance and its essential physical features. The [Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria](#) provide information regarding the City's designation criteria, as well as guidance on their application and how to evaluate the integrity of a resource.

ANALYSIS

The property located at 3353 2nd Avenue is a two-story, Prairie style with Mission Revival influences single-family residential building constructed in 1908 in the Uptown Community Planning Area. Other buildings and structures present on site include a rear detached garage. The property is located on the east side of 2nd Avenue between Upas and Thorn Streets. The property is in its original location.

Since its construction in 1908, the property has been modified as follows: a portion of the second-floor balcony on the east rear was enclosed to create a bathroom in 1936. In 1962, a permit for renovations to the east rear of the first floor, which included an addition that was stuccoed with a lace finish; a second-floor wrought iron catwalk and staircase was added connecting the house to the guestroom. Several windows were infilled or removed, and an archway was enclosed with two pairs of wood French doors and sidelights. In this same 1962 renovation to the rear, the garage at

the northeast of the property was demolished and rebuilt on the southeast corner to expand the main house and create a guest quarter. In 1995 the front door glass was changed within the original wooden door from bottle bottom to frosted glass. In 2019 staff worked with the homeowners on a permit to renovate the guest quarters added to the rear in 1962. This included removing the staircase and catwalk and restoring the stucco texture back to a smooth sand finish, which had been changed to a lace finish. On the rear first floor, the portion that had been enclosed in 1962 was extended and converted to a covered patio with three arched openings, and four new windows were added to the house. In addition, as a part of the 2019 permit, a guest unit was added to the rear elevation. On the first floor of the north side, two double casement windows were added, and two wood windows were infilled. This permit was reviewed by Heritage Preservation staff and determined to be consistent with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Between 2019 and 2022, the homeowners completed additional work that did not require a permit, including the replacement of the brick front and side walkways with variegated brick, the in-kind replacement of the front gate and the in-kind replacement of several windows and doors within their original openings,

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Johnson and Johnson Architecture with an addendum by Anita Hayden, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria A, C and D. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criteria C and D but not HRB Criterion A. This determination is consistent with the [Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation 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.

The applicant's report states that the subject property is eligible under Criterion A for being one of a concentration of houses designed by Irving Gill as he worked on his ideas of modernism in architecture. The subject property is one of 68 houses in the Bankers Hill and Hillcrest area designed by Gill from 1894-1915.

At this time, there is not sufficient evidence to indicate that the 3353 2nd Street property can be classified as a "special element" of development which possesses a significance that is distinct among other Gill residences or that it surpasses the usual in significance, whether at a subdivision level, at the neighborhood level, or at the city level, as required under HRB Criterion A. Research into the history of the property at 3353 2nd Ave did not reveal any information to indicate that the property exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's or Uptown's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping, or architectural development. Furthermore, the designation of the subject property as part of a collection of Gill houses in Bankers Hill and Hillcrest would be more appropriately addressed through a historic district or multiple property listing. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion A.

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 resource is a two-story, single-family residence constructed in 1908 in the Prairie style with Mission Revival influences. The Mission Revival influence is expressed primarily through the stucco

cladding and the use of arches. The house features a flat roof with overhanging eaves, front stucco chimney, and stucco cladding. The resource sits at street level with a brick path leading to a projecting front entry with a parapet roof and a pair of arches on the left side of the primary façade. One arch leads to the wooden front entry door and the other to a rear brick pathway. The second story features three wood casement windows, two single-lite casements and one with a four-lite transom on the far right of the west facing primary façade. On the first floor of the primary façade a wood casement window with 4 light transoms sits to the right of the stucco chimney. A gated stucco arch projects over the driveway to the far right of the primary, façade. Fenestration consists of wooden casement windows with and without transoms, and wooden windows of various operations and lite patterns.

The Prairie style was popular between 1900 and 1920 and was primarily used for domestic architecture. The style originated in Chicago and is closely associated with Frank Lloyd Wright. It spread nationwide due to being featured in magazines and pattern books. Its primary character-defining features are a low-pitched roof, deep eaves, two-story construction with one-story wings or porches, and detailing that emphasizes horizontal lines. Examples of features used to create a horizontal emphasis include the deep eaves at both the main roof and lower roofs, contrasting trim between stories, contrasting colors on cornices and eaves, horizontal siding, and horizontal rows of windows. Roofs are typically hipped. Massive porch piers are also common, especially on high-style examples. High-style examples also typically have a one-story wing, porch or carport on one side of the house. Windows typically have multi-paned upper sections and are either casements or double-hung.

California was the birthplace of the Mission and Mission Revival style and many of its landmark examples are concentrated there. The earliest examples of the style were built in 1890s and by 1900 the style was spreading eastward under the influence of fashionable architects and national builders' magazines. Although never common outside of the southwestern states, scattered examples were built in early 20th-century suburbs throughout the country. Most date from the years between 1905 and 1920. Commonly found features of the Mission Revival style include: Mission-shaped dormer or roof parapet; widely overhanging eaves, usually open; porch roofs clad in tile supported by large square piers, commonly arched above; and wall surfaces usually clad in smooth stucco.

Of the seven aspects of integrity, design, materials, and workmanship are the most critical to the property's ability to convey significance under HRB Criterion C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Prairie style with Mission Revival influences. The property, which has been modified as detailed in the beginning of the analysis section of this report, retains overall integrity of design, materials, and workmanship despite the modifications. The modifications are designed in a manner that is consistent with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The rear addition done in 2019 does not impact the resource's character-defining features. The addition in 2019 of a rear second-story guest unit, first-story arched porch cover, and simplified wood windows on the rear elevations did not impact significant character defining features and are located on a secondary facades. The 2019 project removed the non-original French doors, wrought iron catwalk and stairs, and stucco texture, helping to restore integrity to the rear east facade. Therefore, the property retains its integrity to its 1908 period of significance under HRB Criterion C.

Significance Statement: The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Prairie style architecture with Mission Revival influences and retains integrity from its 1908 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a flat roof with large overhanging eaves, stucco cladding, asymmetrical primary façade, a covered front entry featuring arches, a stucco chimney, and fenestration consisting of wooden casement windows with and without transoms, and wooden windows of various operations and lite patterns. Therefore, staff recommends 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.*

Irving John Gill was born in Upstate New York in 1870. His father was a carpenter and building contractor. After Gill completed high school, he started his first architectural job in 1889, working with Ellis G. Hall in Syracuse. Shortly thereafter, he moved to Chicago to join the Adler & Sullivan firm, where he was mentored by Frank Lloyd Wright.

In 1893, Gill moved to San Diego for health reasons and to further his architectural career. He partnered with Joseph Falkenhan to form the firm Falkenhan & Gill. His earliest projects in San Diego were Queen Anne-style houses.

In 1896, Gill partnered with famed architect William S. Hebbard. In 1900, he and Hebbard were commissioned to stabilize the Mission San Diego de Alcalá. The Mission's architecture had a vast influence on Gill's future projects. He began to incorporate stripped-down Mission-style elements into his Craftsman designs. In 1907, he introduced his own Mission-influenced Cubist style that had no ornamental embellishments. Gill's awareness of political and social reform swayed him to design for all classes of society, which also encouraged his development of a stripped-down Mission style. Gill built in several San Diego neighborhoods such as Uptown, La Jolla, Sherman Heights, Golden Hill, South Park, and Downtown. In addition to Queen Anne, Craftsman, and Mission Revival, Gill built in the Tudor, Prairie, and International.

Many San Diego architects have been influenced by Irving Gill's Modernist style of structural simplicity and the use of natural materials and colors.

At least 22 of Gill's works have been designated as historical resources by the City of San Diego Historical Resources Board. They include the Gill House (HRB #18), the George Marston House (HRB #40), and the Wheeler Bailer/Irving Gill House (HRB #782) A partial list of Gill's notable works that have been designated by the HRB includes:

- HRB #18– Gill House, (2212 Pine Street), 1905
- HRB #40– George Marston House (3525 7th Avenue), 1909 (Hebbard and Gill)
- HRB #51– Horton Plaza and Fountain (300 Block of Broadway), 1909
- HRB #62– Lee House #2 (3353 Albatross Street), 1905 (Hebbard and Gill)
- HRB #79– La Jolla Women's Club (715 Silverado Street), 1914
- HRB #86– La Jolla Recreational Center (615 Prospect Street), 1915
- HRB #97– Mary Cassitt House #4 (3526 7th Avenue), 1906
- HRB #98– Teats House #1 (3560 7th Avenue), 1905
- HRB #153– Major Myles Molan House (2214–2224 2nd Avenue), 1894 (with Falkenhan)
- HRB #357-003– Gilman Hall (7607 La Jolla Boulevard), 1916 (with Louis Gill)

- HRB #367– Joseph Jessop and Sons Jewelers Building (1041–1049 5th Avenue), 1927 (Hebbard and Gill)
- HRB #782– Wheeler Bailer/Irving Gill House (7964 Princess Street), 1907
- HRB #1021 Alice Lee/ Irving J. Gill/ Hazel Wood Waterman House (3574 7th Ave), 1905

The subject resource was built by Master Architect Irving Gill in 1908, for owners George and Maud Easton. The subject residence is an example of Gill's work in the Prairie style with Mission Revival influences, a distinct combination of styles which he became known for. The use of combined parapet and flat overhanging roof forms, repeating arches, and a lack of ornamentation demonstrated on this building are part of what made Gill's style distinctive and conveys his skill as an architect through its high-quality design and craftsmanship.

Of the seven aspects of integrity, design, materials, and workmanship are the most critical to the property's ability to convey significance under HRB Criterion D as a resource that represents the notable work of Master Architect Irving Gill. The property, which has been modified as detailed at the beginning of the analysis section of this report, retains its overall integrity of design, materials, and workmanship despite the modifications. The rear addition done in 2019 does not impact the resource's character-defining features. The addition in 2019 of a rear second-story guest unit, first-story arched porch cover, and simplified wood windows on the rear elevations did not impact significant character-defining features and are located on secondary facades. The 2019 project removed the unoriginal enclosure, French doors, wrought iron catwalk and stairs, and stucco texture, helping to restore integrity to the rear, east elevation. Therefore, the property retains its integrity to its 1908 period of significance as an example of the notable work of Master Architect Irving Gill under HRB Criterion D.

Significance Statement: The subject resource is representative of a notable work of Master Architect Irving Gill, a prominent and accomplished architect responsible for the design of many quality houses in the City, some of which have been historically designated. Specifically, the resource is an example of his work in the Prairie style with Mission Revival influences, which is shown through its combined roof forms, repeating arch motif, and lack of ornamentation. The combination of stylistic elements creates a distinctive architectural style which Gill has become known for. The resource expresses a quality of design seen in his other known works with its key elements of his style and retains integrity as it relates to the original 1908 design. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion D.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

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. 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 George and Maud Easton/ Irving Gill House located at 3353 2nd Avenue be designated with a period of significance of 1908 under HRB Criterion C as an example of Prairie style architecture with Mission Revival influences and HRB Criterion D as representative of a notable work of Master Architect Irving Gill. The designation excludes the garage and the 1962 and 2019 rear additions constructed outside of the period of significance.



Megan Walker
Associate Planner



Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison
City Planning Department

MW/SS

Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution
2. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 8/22/2024

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 7/25/2024, to consider the historical designation of the **George and Maud Easton/ Irving Gill House** (owned by Hayden Family Trust 10-02-18 c/o Chicago Trust Co, 3353 2nd Avenue, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **3353 2nd Avenue, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **452-554-15-00**, further described as BLK 390 LOT B 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. 0**, 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 George and Maud Easton/ Irving Gill House 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 Prairie style architecture with Mission Revival influences and retains integrity from its 1908 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a flat roof with large overhanging eaves, stucco cladding, asymmetrical primary façade, a covered front entry featuring arches, a stucco chimney, and fenestration consisting of wooden casement windows with and without transoms, and wooden windows of various operations and lite patterns. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

(2) The property is historically significant under CRITERION D as a notable work of Master Architect Irving Gill, a prominent and accomplished architect responsible for the construction of many quality houses in the city, some of which have been historically designated. Specifically, the resource is an example of his work in the Prairie style with Mission Revival influences, which is shown through its combined roof forms, repeating arch motif, and lack of ornamentation. The combination of stylistic elements creates a distinctive architectural style which Gill has become known for. The resource expresses a quality of design seen in his other known works with its key elements of his style and retains integrity as it relates to the original 1908 design. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

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. 0**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the designation shall exclude the garage and rear additions from 1962 and 2019, constructed outside of the period of significance.

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:

BY: _____
TIM HUTTER, Chair
Historical Resources Board

APPROVED: MARA W. ELLIOTT,
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: _____
LINDSEY SEBASTIAN,
Deputy City Attorney