



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: October 10, 2024 REPORT NO. HRB-24-038

HEARING DATE: October 24, 2024

SUBJECT: **ITEM 4 – JAMES AND MARY CAMBRON HOUSE**

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

APPLICANT: Charles Murin and James Gutierrez; represented by IS Architecture

LOCATION: 4545 Rhode Island Street, 92116, Uptown Community, Council District 3  
APN 444-180-13-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the James and Mary Cambron House located at 4545 Rhode Island Street as a historical resource.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the James and Mary Cambron House located at 4545 Rhode Island Street as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1907 under HRB Criterion C. The designation excludes the rear porch enclosure, rear dormer addition, detached garage, and rear shed structure constructed outside of the period of significance. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of Folk Victorian style architecture and retains integrity from its 1907 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a medium-pitched pyramidal roof with boxed eaves, horizontal wood siding, simple wood frieze, a generally symmetrical primary facade, a partial-width front porch with tapered-square columns, a pyramidal roof, an off-center entry door, and original wood fenestration of double-hung and single-light fixed windows with leaded diamond transoms.

### 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 Area Historic Resources Survey](#) and given a Status Code of 5S3, "Appears to be individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation."

The historical name of the resource, the James and Mary Cambron House has been identified as consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the names of James and Mary Cambron, who constructed the house as their personal residence.

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 4545 Rhode Island Street is a one-story, Folk Victorian style, single-family residential building constructed in 1907 in the Uptown Community Planning Area. Other buildings and structures present on site include a detached garage and rear shed structure. The property is located on the east side of Rhode Island Street, in a residentially zoned neighborhood. The property is in its original location.

Since its construction in 1907, the property has been modified as follows: the original garage was demolished, and a new garage and shed were constructed prior to 1955. In 1963, the rear porch was modified and extended toward the east; this included a partial porch enclosure, toward the south, with two aluminum sliding windows. Between 1970 and 1980, dormers were added to the front, rear, and north sides of the house, and a rear window was replaced with an aluminum slider within the existing opening at an unknown date. In 2024, a permit was approved for the removal of the dormers on the front and north facades. The 2024 work was reviewed by Heritage Preservation staff and determined to be consistent with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by IS Architecture, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criterion C and staff concurs. 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 resource is a one-story, single-family residence constructed in 1907 in the Folk Victorian style. The house features a medium-pitched pyramidal roof with boxed eaves, asphalt shingle roofing, and narrow wood lap siding with a simple wood frieze. The residence is a standard wood frame construction on a rusticated ashlar-faced concrete block foundation, with a generally symmetrical primary façade. The partial-width front porch is accessed via steps leading from the sidewalk and is accented with square-tapered columns, a pyramidal roof, and an off-centered entry door. Two single-light fixed windows with a leaded diamond transom flank the front porch. Fenestration consists primarily of original wood frame double-hung and single-light fixed windows with leaded diamond transoms.

As detailed in McAlester's A Field Guide to American Houses, the Folk Victorian style was common throughout the country, and closely tied to the National Folk style made popular after the nationwide expansion of the railroad in the 1850s. Folk Victorian style houses were generally built in the late 19th and early 20th century, declining in popularity by 1910 with the trend toward Craftsman Bungalow style houses. Essentially straightforward and modest versions of earlier Victorian houses, the Folk Victorian style is characterized by a simple folk house form with a sparing application of Victorian detailing that is most often focused at the front porch and cornice line. The style typically presents moderate to steeply pitched gabled or pyramidal roof forms, simple window surrounds, boxed or open roof to wall junctions, porches with spindlework detailing or flat, jigsaw cut trim, cornice-line brackets, generally symmetrical façades, and a lack of textured and varied wall surfaces.

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 Folk Victorian style. 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 removal and rebuilding of the garage and the extension and enclosure of the rear porch do not impact the resource's character-defining features. The 2024 project removed the non-original dormers, helping to restore integrity to the primary facade. Therefore, the property retains its integrity to its 1907 period of significance under HRB Criterion C.

Significance Statement: The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Folk Victorian style architecture and integrity from its 1907 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a medium-pitched pyramidal roof with boxed eaves, horizontal wood siding, simple wood frieze, a generally symmetrical primary facade, a partial-width front porch with tapered-square columns, a pyramidal roof, an off-center entry door, and original wood fenestration of double-hung and single-light fixed windows with leaded diamond transoms.

#### 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 James and Mary Cambron House located at 4545 Rhode Island Street be designated with a period of significance of 1907 under HRB Criterion C as an example of Folk Victorian style architecture. The designation excludes the rear porch enclosure, rear dormer addition, detached garage, and rear shed structure constructed outside of the period of significance.



Megan Walker  
Associate Planner



Suzanne Segur  
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison  
City Planning Department

MW/sa/SS

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A  
ADOPTED ON 10/24/2024

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 10/24/2024, to consider the historical designation of the **James and Mary Cambron House** (owned by James Gutierrez and Charles Murin, 1260 Cleveland Avenue, #E207, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **4545 Rhode Island, San Diego, CA 92116**, APN: **444-180-13-00**, further described as VL 158 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 James and Mary Cambron 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 the Folk Victorian style architecture and retains integrity from its 1907 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a medium-pitched pyramidal roof with boxed eaves, horizontal wood siding, simple wood frieze, a generally symmetrical primary facade, a partial-width front porch with tapered-square columns, a pyramidal roof, an off-center entry door, and original wood fenestration of double-hung and single-light fixed windows with leaded diamond transoms. 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 rear porch enclosure, rear dormer addition, detached garage, and rear shed structure, all 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