



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: February 19, 2025 REPORT NO. HRB-25-007

HEARING DATE: February 27, 2025

SUBJECT: **ITEM #3 – John and Mary Elizabeth Lambert Spec House #1**

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

APPLICANT: Kevin and Alice Fitzgerald; represented by Vonn Marie May

LOCATION: 7964 Roseland Drive, La Jolla Community, Council District 1
APN 346-461-11-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the resource located at 7964 Roseland Drive as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the property located at 7964 Roseland Drive as a historical resource under Criterion C with a period of significance of 1929. The designation excludes the 2022 additions (kitchen, lanai, and west-elevation addition) and the rear-view deck. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

The subject resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Colonial Revival style through the retention of character defining features and retains integrity from its 1929 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a low-pitched roof, red tile roof covering, a prominent arched arcade, elaborated chimney top, walled entry courtyard, exterior stairs, wood casement windows, and decorative window grilles.

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 has not been identified in any historic surveys, as the subject area has not been previously surveyed.

The historic name of the resource, the John and Mary Elizabeth Lambert Spec House #1 has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of original owners John and Mary Elizabeth Lambert, who constructed the house as a speculation house.

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 7964 Roseland Drive is a single-story with partial basement, Spanish Colonial Revival, single-family residence constructed in 1929 in the La Jolla Community Planning Area. Other buildings and structures present on site include an original site wall and original detached garage. The property is located on the east side of Roseland Drive, approximately one block east of the Pacific Ocean. The property is in its original location.

Since its construction in 1929 the property has been modified as follows: A door located on the east side of the house, along with a front window were changed prior to 2013 with non-historic aluminum replacements. The door and window were replaced with a historically compatible wood material and the surrounding stucco was patched to match the existing stucco through a 2013 permit that was reviewed by City Staff and deemed consistent with the U.S Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Non-original bay windows were added to the north elevation of the living room in approximately 1965, the garage doors were replaced, and a view deck was added between 1965 and 2021. In 2022, a 212 square foot south kitchen addition, a 35 square foot closet addition on the northwest corner of the house, a 318 square foot lanai, and 560 square foot view deck were permitted. The 2022 permit also included the restoration of the bay windows and the redesign and permitting of the view deck with an outdoor chimney. Finally, the 2022 permit included replacing the garage doors and rear garage steps with a historically compatible design, and an in-kind roof replacement. The 2022 modifications were approved by Heritage Preservation staff and determined to be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

A Historical Resource Research was prepared by Vonn Marie May, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria C and D. Staff agrees that the resource is significant under Criterion C but not under Criterion D. 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 property was constructed in 1929 as a single-story with partial basement, Spanish Colonial Revival style house with a central, walled courtyard. The resource was constructed on a concrete foundation with wood framing and stucco exterior and is surrounded by a large stucco covered site wall topped with a simple side gabled tile roof. Egress into the courtyard is provided by an ornate metal gate. A sloping lot toward the north provides a basement level to the rear of the home.

The primary resource has a low-pitched, cross-gabled roof with open overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails on every elevation. The roofing material consists of double-barreled red clay roof tiles with bird stops. Fenestration consists of wood casement windows, metal window grilles, and ornate wood doors.

The subject resource is partially obscured by the large site wall and side-gabled detached garage with wood garage doors. Upon entry into the courtyard, the resource makes an approximate "U-shape". The primary, south, elevation faces inward towards the courtyard and has four large arches that form a patio arcade set on a clay tile patio. An oversized chimney with elaborated chimney top and inset niche is slightly offset of center. The ornate wood front door is asymmetrically set to the west. Fenestration includes two sets of full-length wood windows to the east.

The west elevation also faces inward to the central courtyard. A central stucco staircase entry and original ornate wood door are centered on the elevation. Two sets of wood casement windows with projecting Spanish-style boxed window grilles, along with a single, small casement window with window grille, are located on both sides of the central staircase.

The east elevation features an open loggia with arabesque clay tile flooring, and cove-ogee archway detailing. A modern iron chandelier and built-in outdoor kitchen are located underneath the covered patio. A series of full-length fixed picture windows are located on the north end of the elevation, along with a modern door.

The rear elevation features a view deck with an iron railing, along with a series of full-length wood windows and French doors. A modern, unelaborated chimney is centered on the rear elevation. Other details include a multi-light picture window, and projecting juliette balcony. The basement level elevation is underneath the view deck and mimics the front loggia with cove-ogee arches, clay tile flooring, and heavy wood ceiling beams.

The original detached garage features a side gable roof with clay tile roof, two modern wood garage doors, a stucco exterior, and casement windows. A curved staircase was added to the back of the garage in 2022.

The resource displays Spanish Colonial Revival details on every elevation. Specifically, the resource features a "U" Shaped plan form; fully enclosed central courtyard; low-pitched gable and hipped roof sheathed in double-barreled red clay tile; wide eaves that are open with exposed rafter tails; fixed wood shutters grilles; tile vents; ornate courtyard gate, wood windows; and a stucco exterior.

Following the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition, the romantic ideal of Spanish and Latin American architecture was revived. What resulted was the Spanish Eclectic style which was the predominant style in Southern California between 1915 and 1940, significantly altering the architectural landscape until the Modernist movement took hold during and after WWII. The style uses decorative details borrowed from the entire history of Spanish architecture. These may be of Moorish, Byzantine, Gothic, or Renaissance inspirations, and unusually rich and varied series of decorative precedents. The style employed a variety of floor plans, as well as gabled, cross-gabled, gabled and hipped, hipped and flat roof forms with parapets. Other character defining features include Mission and Spanish clay tile; focal windows; arched windows and other openings; and accented entries.

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 Spanish Colonial Revival style. The property, which has been modified as detailed in the beginning of the analysis section of this report, has not been modified to the extent that it no longer retains its significance as a high style example of a Spanish Colonial Revival style residence.

The construction of the 2022 kitchen addition does not impact any of the character defining features of the property and was designed to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Although the addition is constructed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, it's distinct from the original historic structure through the use of differing window types and profiles. The addition is offset from the original structure providing further differentiation.

The construction of the 2022 lanai does not impact any of the character-defining features of the property and was designed to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The lanai does not change the general shape of the courtyard and the construction of the addition is compatible but distinct from the historic structure. The lanai has open walls with a differentiated reverse ogee structural design and the tile flooring pattern is distinct from the original tile.

The view deck is constructed in an appropriate location and does not have a negative impact on the property's ability to convey its historic significance as a Spanish Colonial Revival style residence. The small 35 square foot closet addition on the west elevation is minor in size and scale and uses a differentiated window. Further, the change to the garage doors is separate and distinct from the original historic structure and was done in a compatible manner. Therefore, the property does retain integrity to its 1929 period of significance under HRB Criterion C.

Significance Statement: the resource continues to convey the historic significance of the Spanish Colonial Revival style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including a low-pitched roof, red tile roof covering, a prominent arched arcade, elaborated chimney top, walled entry courtyard, exterior stairs, wood casement windows, and decorative window grilles.

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

The subject property at 7964 Roseland Drive was designed by John W. Gernandt. Gernandt has not been established by the Historical Resources Board as a Master Architect, Designer or Builder, and there is insufficient information in the report to designate him as such at this time.

City staff notes the following information which was compiled from previous designation reports.

John W. Gernandt, the son of noted Nebraska architect William E. Gernandt, moved to San Diego around 1923. In San Diego, John W. Gernandt worked for the A. M. Southard Company, which started in 1920 as the San Diego branch of the Los Angeles-based Pacific Ready-Cut Homes. Southard's company produced over 1,000 homes in the region between 1920-1925. John joined Southard's firm in 1924 and served as the superintendent of construction until 1928. His expertise contributed to the company's success, supervising up to 75 employees and overseeing the construction of numerous homes. By 1925, the firm began transitioning from pre-cut homes to custom designs, opening a "Design Studio" near Balboa Park. The Gernandt family and the Southards developed a strong personal and professional relationship, with John W. Gernandt also designing homes for his parents using the Southard Company. In 1928, he split from Southard founding Gernandt Construction Company. The following buildings are known to be constructed by the J.W Gernandt Construction Company:

- 3636 Curtis Street
- 3192 Saint James Place (HRB #695)
- 7126 Monte Vista Avenue (HRB #805)
- 4391 Hermosa Way
- 3646 Elliot Street
- 1949 Hypatia Way
- 334 J Avenue (Coronado)
- 7796 Lookout Drive
- 4433 Trias Street

In 1937, Foster Milmurt purchased the Gernandt Construction Company.

Throughout his career, John W. Gernandt's contributions to home design and construction can be seen in original drawings and specifications for various residences, including HRB #805, and numerous newspaper renderings.

The applicant's request for designation for the property did not include enough information to support a determination under HRB Criterion D. The [Criteria Guidelines](#) state that enough information must be supplied to not only establish significance of the proposed master but also substantiate the association with the resource property. The proposed nomination substantiates the association with J.W Gernandt through the notice of completion and newspaper articles, but does not supply enough information about how and why Gernandt's work rises to a level of significance to be established as a Master.

Specifically, documentation is required that identifies and labels architectural features that match stylistic characteristics of the Master's development through time with the subject property, along

with written documentation establishing the proposed Master's professional development and lists of work and either historic or current photographs of the work.

Due to the lack of the documentation supplied, staff has not made a determination regarding eligibility under Criterion D at this time. Eligibility under this criterion can be reevaluated at a future date pending submittal of additional information and analysis. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion D. As the property is not significant under Criterion D, an evaluation of integrity as it relates to Criterion D is not relevant or required.

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 John and Mary Elizabeth Lambert house located at 7964 Roseland Drive be designated with a period of significance of 1929 under HRB Criteria C as an example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The designation excludes the 2022 additions (kitchen addition, lanai, and west-elevation addition) and rear-view deck constructed outside the period of significance.



Kelsey Kaline
Associate Planner
City Planning Department



Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison
City Planning Department

KK/SS

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 2/27/2025

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 2/27/2025, to consider the historical designation of the **John and Mary Elizabeth Lambert Spec House #1** (owned by Kevin and Alice Fitzgerald, 4719 Rock Spring Road, Arlington, VA, CA 22207) located at **7964 Roseland Drive, San Diego, CA 92037**, APN: **346-461-1100**, further described as LOT 1285 POR 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 John and Mary Elizabeth Lambert Spec House #1 on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style. The subject resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Colonial Revival style through the retention of character defining features and retains integrity from its 1929 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a low-pitched roof, red tile roof covering, a prominent arched arcade, elaborated chimney top, walled entry courtyard, exterior stairs, wood casement windows, and decorative window grilles. 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 2022 additions (kitchen, lanai, and west-elevation addition) and the rear-view deck.

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: HEATHER FERBERT,
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: _____
LINDSEY SEBASTIAN,
Deputy City Attorney