



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: March 13, 2025 REPORT NO. HRB-25-012

HEARING DATE: March 27, 2025

SUBJECT: **ITEM-5 Helen and Spencer Rogers Spec House #1**

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

APPLICANT: Jennifer L Spithill Revocable Trust 09-20-1; represented by IS Architecture

LOCATION: 3252 Harbor View Drive, 92106, Peninsula Community, Council District 2
APN 531-641-1600

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Helen and Spencer Rogers Spec House #1 located at 3252 Harbor View Drive as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Helen and Spencer Rogers Spec House #1 located at 3252 Harbor View Drive as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1979-1981 under HRB Criterion C. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Contemporary style and retains integrity from its 1979-1981 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a flat roof with wide overhanging eaves, picture windows, vertical wood siding, concrete block exterior accents, an attached garage, courtyard, recessed entry, wide split-ribbed concrete block chimney, decorative beams, and vertical posts.

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 historic name of the resource, the Helen and Spencer Rogers Spec House #1, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Helen and Spencer Rogers, 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 3252 Harbor View Drive is one-story with basement, single-family home constructed between 1979 and 1981 in the Contemporary style. It is located in the Peninsula Community Planning Area on a corner lot overlooking the San Diego Bay. The property is in its original location.

Modifications to the property include the expansion of the deck on the south and east elevations at an unknown date between 1983 and 1988, the addition of a retaining wall on the north corner of the east elevation in 1989, the replacement of sliding doors in the courtyard and at the deck in 2007, and the addition of four-foot retaining wall and wood fence on the eastern boundary of the parcel in 2009. At an unknown date between 2009 and 2011, the wood deck railing was replaced with glass panels and the deck supports were replaced. In 2019, a plexiglass skylight over the front entryway was replaced with a canvas awning, the garage door was replaced with a modern door, and a window in the courtyard was replaced with a vinyl window. Work done in 2023 includes the reconstruction of the original deck railing in front of the existing glass panels and replacement of the garage door to match the original wood door. The 2023 modifications did not require a permit but were determined to be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards by Heritage Preservation staff as part of a preliminary review application.

A Historical Resource Research 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 one-story with basement, single-family home constructed between 1979 and 1981 in the Contemporary style. It is located on a sloping corner lot. The resource has an asymmetric front elevation, a tar-and-gravel flat roof, wide eaves, vertical wood siding and an attached garage. A courtyard is located on the property's west elevation. Fenestration consists primarily of fixed wood windows.

The resource faces south on Harbor View Drive. The primary (south) elevation features a central, recessed entryway with a plain wood door, a stained-glass window, and a canvas covered roof opening. One section of the roof extends over the rear, east half of the property. The attached garage with a wood garage door is located west of the entryway. The east side of the front elevation features a two-panel glass box aluminum bay window. A deck with wood railing and a protective glass panel extends to the property's east elevation.

The east elevation is visible along Martinez St. It displays the property's lower level on the side of the sloping lot. It features split-rib concrete siding beneath the deck, a wood balcony with a protective glass panel, a split-rib concrete block chimney, sliding doors and a horizontal wood fence. The central section of the elevation protrudes outwards and is slightly taller than the other sections. It is characterized by posts that span the length of the section, decorative beams, three picture windows, and clerestory windows below the roof line.

The property also features a central courtyard on the west elevation. It contains stained-glass windows, decorative beams, vertical posts, and French and sliding doors.

Unlike earlier styles which are generally defined by exterior decorative details, the Contemporary style focused on interior spaces and their relation to the outdoors. Emphasis was placed on integrating the indoors with the outdoors by utilizing windows and exterior living areas such as balconies and courtyards. The style was popular in San Diego in the 1950's and 1960's largely because it could be easily adapted to hillside lots. Character defining features include strong roof forms with deep overhangs and exposed beams; large, aluminum framed windows; non-traditional exterior finishes including vertical wood siding, concrete block, stucco and flagstone; sun shades, screen or shadow block accents; broad masonry chimneys; and distinctive triangular, parabolic or arched forms. Contemporary houses often incorporate angular massing; attached carports or garages; courtyards or balconies; obscured or recessed entries; and split-level designs

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 Contemporary Modern style with Post-and-Beam influence. The modifications detailed in the beginning of the analysis section of this report, do not significantly impair the resource's integrity and ability to convey historical significance under Criterion C for Contemporary Modern style with Post-and-Beam influence. Modifications including the expansion of the deck on the south and east elevations between 1983 and 1988, the addition of a retaining wall to the east elevation in 1989, the replacement of sliding doors on the courtyard and the deck in 2007 with historically appropriate wood doors, and the replacement of a skylight with a canvas awning on the north elevation in 2019 do not significantly impact character defining features. The reconstruction of the deck railing and replacement of the garage door in 2023 were deemed consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards by Staff. Therefore, the property does retain integrity to its 1979-1981 period of significance under HRB Criterion C.

Significance Statement: The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Contemporary style and retains integrity from its 1979-1981 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a flat roof with wide overhanging eaves, picture windows, vertical wood siding, concrete block exterior accents, an attached garage,

courtyard, recessed entry, wide split-ribbed concrete block chimney, decorative beams, and vertical posts. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion C.

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 Helen and Spencer Rogers Spec House #1 located at 3252 Harbor View Drive be designated with a period of significance of 1979-1981) under HRB Criterion C as an example of the Contemporary style.



Audrey Rains
Assistant Planner



Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison
City Planning Department

AR/SS

Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on , to consider the historical designation of the **Helen and Spencer Rogers Spec House #1** (owned by Jennifer L Spithill Revocable Trust 09-20-11, 3252 Harborview Drive, San Diego, CA 92106) located at **3252 Harbor View Drive, San Diego, CA 92106**, APN: **531-641-1600**, further described as BLK 5 LOT 10 S 100 FT OF LOT 11&(EX W 25 FT)S 100 FT OF 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 Helen and Spencer Rogers Spec House #1 on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics of the Contemporary style. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Contemporary style and retains integrity from its 1979-1981 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a flat roof with wide overhanging eaves, picture windows, vertical wood siding, concrete block exterior accents, an attached garage, courtyard, recessed entry, wide split-ribbed concrete block chimney, decorative beams, and vertical posts. 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 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