



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: October 14, 2023 REPORT NO. HRB-23-034

HEARING DATE: October 26, 2023

SUBJECT: **ITEM #3 – Morris and Ida Irvin Spec House #3**

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

APPLICANT: Dustin V B Quint and Caitlin Thomas

LOCATION: 4210 Palmetto Way, Uptown Community, Council District 3
APN: 443-300-17-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Morris and Ida Irvin Spec House #3 located at 4210 Palmetto Way as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Morris and Ida Irvin Spec House #3 located at 4210 Palmetto Way as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1920 under HRB Criteria C and D. The designation includes the original detached garage. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

1. The resource embodies distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Craftsman style and retains integrity from its 1920 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a low-pitched roof with wide overhanging eaves, exposed rafter tails, gull wing roof line, porch with large round stucco columns on square piers, a generally symmetrical façade, fine grain stucco cladding, and fenestration consisting of wood frame windows of various lite patterns and groupings.
2. The resource is representative of a notable work of Master Builder Morris B. Irvin and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource reflects Morris Irvin's work in the Craftsman style specifically the "seagull style bungalow" with his use of elephantine columns and gull wing roof line.

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 subject resource is a one-story,

single-family residence with a detached garage located in Mission Hills on the Northeast corner of Palmetto Way and Arbor Drive in the Uptown Community. 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 historic name of the resource, the Morris and Ida Irvin Spec House #3, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Morris and Ida Irvin who constructed the property as a speculation house.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Dustin Quint, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria C and D 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 subject resource is a one-story, single-family residence with a detached garage constructed in 1920 in the Craftsman architectural style. The house features a low-pitched roof with wide overhanging eaves, exposed rafter tails, eyebrow gull wing shaped roof line, porch with large round stucco columns on square piers, a generally symmetrical façade, fine grain stucco cladding, and fenestration consisting of wood frame windows of various lite patterns and groupings.

The primary elevation faces Palmetto Way, with a cement walkway and steps leading to a partial width front porch supported by three large elephantine round columns on square piers. The porch roof line features a large swooping gull wing with decorative exposed rafter tails. Within the porch the front door sits to the right side, and a pair of double hung windows to the left. To the right of the front porch is a single picture window with 6-lite transom. To the left of the porch is a smaller double hung wood window. The South elevation faces Arbor Drive and features a distinctive gull wing roof with decorative corbels over a bowed bay, with a string of five windows. A second pair of double hung wood windows are to the right of the bay. The garage is connected to the house with a stucco site wall and features a distinctive eyebrow shaped roofline mirroring the main house. The east elevation at the rear has a back porch, several small windows, and a sliding patio door. On the north elevation there is a side porch with small gullwing roofline and several small double hung windows.

There have been several modifications to the structure since its 1920 date of construction. At an unknown date the stucco finish was changed, a sliding glass door was added on the rear, and stone tile was added to the front porch and steps. In addition, several windows on the north and west elevations were replaced with vinyl windows in the 2000's. In 2023 the vinyl window on the West elevation was restored to a wood double hung window, and the exterior was restuccoed using a historically appropriate texture. These modifications do not significantly impair integrity of design, materials, workmanship or feeling as it relates to HRB Criterion C.

With origins in the British Arts and Crafts movement, which was born in response to the overly ornate Victorian aesthetic and the highly mechanized Industrial Revolution, Craftsman style

architecture was popular in the United States largely between 1905 and 1930. Early examples by Greene and Greene were highly publicized in magazines, thus familiarizing the rest of the nation with the style. Character defining features of Craftsman architecture include a low-pitched, gabled roof with wide, unenclosed eave overhang; exposed roof rafters; decorative beams or braces; full or partial-width porches supported by tapered square columns or pedestals; wood or stucco cladding; and wood frame and sash windows in fixed, double hung and casement varieties.

Significance Statement: The house continues to convey the historic significance of the Craftsman style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style including low-pitched roof with wide overhanging eaves, exposed rafter tails, gull wing roofline, porch with large round stucco columns on square piers, a generally symmetrical façade, fine grain stucco cladding, and fenestration consisting of wood frame windows of various lite patterns and groupings. 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.

Morris B. Irvin was born in Illinois in 1868 and moved to Nebraska as a child. He arrived in San Diego around 1912 and became a real estate developer. He may have been the first person to engage in large-scale speculative homebuilding in San Diego. During his early years in San Diego, he built houses in the Craftsman style. He is most well-known for building stucco California Craftsman bungalows that are sometimes called “seagull” bungalows, and one-story Mission Revival and Spanish Eclectic houses.

In 1915, Irvin established the Irvin Security Company, a contracting firm dedicated to buying, selling, and leasing real estate and constructing buildings. Irvin built over 100 houses in Mission Hills during his career in San Diego.

At least 16 of Irvin’s works have been designated as historical resources by the City of San Diego Historical Resources Board. They include 11 houses that contribute to the Fort Stockton Line Historic District (HRB #822), which established Irvin as a Master Builder by the HRB in 2007, the M.B and Ida Irvin Spec House #1 (HRB #794), and the Irvin Security Company Spec House #1/Morris B. Irvin House (HRB #860).

Partial List of Notable Works:

- HRB #414/822-40– Dr. Frank P. & Elizabeth K. Lenahan Residence (2154 Fort Stockton Drive), 1916
- HRB #611/822-48– William E. Kier House (2252 Fort Stockton Drive), 1914
- HRB #794– M.B and Ida Irvin Spec House #1 (3960 Alameda Place), 1923
- HRB #815/821-36– Nathan Rigdon and Morris Irvin Spec House #3 (1885 Sheridan Ave), 1923
- HRB #817/822-77– Nathan Rigdon and Morris Irvin Spec House #2 (1760 West Lewis Street), 1913
- HRB #860– Irvin Security Company Spec House #1/Morris B. Irvin House (4167–4169 Jackdaw Street), 1927
- HRB #1044/821-112– Morris B. Irvin Spec. House #2 (4239 Saint James Place), 1922
- HRB #1112– Morris and Ida Irvin Spec House #2 (1530 Fort Stockton Drive), 1921

The subject resource is representative of a notable work of Master Builder Morris B. Irvin. The house was designed and built by Irvin as a speculation house in the Craftsman style and retains integrity as it relates to the original design, including his use of the distinctive gull wing roofline. Three of the four elevations and the detached garage use this roofline, creating a strong connection to Irvin's work as a master builder. The front porch features three large elephantine columns with round pillars and square bases. The house continues to exemplify Irvin's work in Craftsman style utilizing his signature elephantine columns and swooping eyebrow rooflines.

Significance Statement: The subject resource retains integrity and continues to reflect Master Builder Morris B. Irvin's original design, craftsmanship, and aesthetic. It is representative of his notable work in the Craftsman style, specifically the "seagull style bungalow" with the use of the characteristic elephantine columns and gull wing roof line. Therefore, staff recommends designation of the subject property 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 the Morris and Ida Irvin Spec House #3 located at 4210 Palmetto Way be designated with a period of significance of 1920 under HRB Criterion C as a good example of Craftsman style of architecture and HRB Criterion D as a notable work of Master Builder Morris B. Irvin. The designation includes the original detached garage.



Megan Walker
Associate Planner
City Planning Department



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 10/26/2023

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 10/26/2023, to consider the historical designation of the **Morris and Ida Irvin Spec House #3** (owned by Dustin V B Quint & Caitline E. Thomas, 4201 Palmetto Way, San Diego, CA 92103) located at **4201 Palmetto Way, San Diego, CA 92103**, APN: **443-300-17-00**, further described as BLK 1 LOT 7 W 75 FT 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 Morris and Ida Irvin Spec House #3 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 Craftsman style and retains integrity from its 1920 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a low-pitched roof with wide overhanging eaves, exposed rafter tails, gull wing roof line, porch with large round stucco columns on square piers, a generally symmetrical façade, fine grain stucco cladding, and fenestration consisting of wood frame windows of various lite patterns and groupings. 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 Builder Morris B. Irvin and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource reflects Morris Irvin's work in the Craftsman style specifically the "seagull style bungalow" with his use of elephantine columns and gull wing roof line. 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 include the original detached garage

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

DRAFT

RECORDING REQUESTED BY
CITY OF SAN DIEGO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

WHEN RECORDED MAIL TO

HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD
ATTN: HRB SECRETARY
1222 FIRST AVENUE, MS 501
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101

SPACE ABOVE THIS LINE FOR RECORDER'S USE

RESOLUTION NUMBER **N/A**

HISTORICAL DESIGNATION OF PROPERTY ON

4201 Palmetto Way, San Diego, CA 92103

ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER **443-300-17-00**

HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD NUMBER **0**