



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: November 2, 2022 REPORT NO. HRB-22-048

HEARING DATE: November 17, 2022

SUBJECT: **ITEM #04 – MacPherson and Theodora Hole Rental House**

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

APPLICANT: Kerian Bunch; represented by Scott A. Moomjian

LOCATION: 7109 Monte Vista Avenue, La Jolla Community, Council District 1  
APN 351-141-0600

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the MacPherson and Theodora Hole Rental House located at 7109 Monte Vista Avenue as a historical resource.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the MacPherson and Theodora Hole Rental House located at 7109 Monte Vista Avenue with a period of significance of 1930 under HRB Criterion C. The designation includes the original detached garage. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of the Monterey style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1930 period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits a two-story form, second story balcony with wood railing, stucco and vertical board and batten exterior, wood windows and French doors, and decorative false shutters.

### BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a preliminary review application to determine whether or not the building is historically significant as part of a constraints analysis for future development. The resource is a two-story, single family residence and detached garage constructed in the Monterey style within the La Jolla Community.

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

### ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Scott Moomjian, which concludes that the resource is significant under any HRB Criteria. Staff disagrees and concludes that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion C. 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.*

Research into the history of the property at 7109 Monte Vista Avenue did not reveal any information to indicate that the property exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's or La Jolla's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion A.

*CRITERION B - Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.*

The subject resource was owned by the Schiller family from 1971 to 2021. Herbert Schiller, a writer and educator in the communications field, resided at the property from 1971 until his death in 2000. His wife, Anita Schiller, a librarian and social activist, lived in the subject resource from 1971 until her passing in 2021. Both Herbert and Anita Schiller are historically significant individuals; however, the subject resource is not the property best associated with their achievements.

Herbert Schiller was born in New York City in 1919 and grew up in the Washington Heights section of northern Manhattan. He attended DeWitt Clinton High School, earned his bachelor's degree at the City College of New York in 1940, and obtained a master's degree from Columbia University in 1941. During the Second World War Schiller served in the United States Army with the Bureau of Research and Statistics, the War Production Board and later as a military economist in Berlin. During the 1950s, Schiller lectured at New York City College and economics at the Pratt Institute of Art. In 1960 he obtained his doctorate from New York University and took a job with the University of Illinois, Urbana as a research and economics professor. In 1969 Schiller moved to San Diego where he obtained a position with the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) where he became a founding member of UCSD's Communications Program. The UCSD Communications Program became a regular department of the University in 1982 and established a Ph.D. program in 1984. Schiller retired from teaching at the university in 1990.

Early in his career, Schiller was a frequent contributor to leading scholarly journals and published multiple books regarding political influence over the media. His first book, *Mass Communications and American Empire*, was published in 1969, followed by a rapid succession of work. Schiller's work had an impact beyond the scholarly community and inspired many media critics and activists both in the United States and abroad. In the 1980s and 1990s his work shifted to focus on the rise of the "information society" and how new information technologies allowed corporate power to penetrate new parts of the world and new areas of life. Schiller continued writing until the end of his life, completing his last work in 2000, the year of his death.

Herbert Schiller is historically significant for his contributions to the Communications field as a writer and educator. His most significant achievements were accomplished between 1969 and 2000 when he was living and working in La Jolla. Although Schiller resided at the Monte Vista Avenue residence from 1971 to 2000, there is no evidence that he conducted his most significant work at the property. The UCSD Media Center and Communication Building located on the UCSD campus and constructed in 1971, is the property best associated with Schiller's significant achievements. The building housed the UCSD Communications Program/ Department where Schiller taught from 1971 until his retirement in 1990. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion B for an association with historically significant individual Herbert Schiller at this time.

Anita Schiller was born in New York City in 1926. Anita and Herbert married overseas in 1946 and returned to New York where she worked as a reference librarian. During the 1950s she earned a master's degree in library science. Schiller began to research inequities in the library science field when the couple moved to the Urbana, Illinois where she worked in the Library Research Center of the University of Illinois. Her work exposed the inequalities in pay among the different genders in the library science field. In 1970, Schiller moved to San Diego where she worked as a reference librarian, social sciences bibliographer, and data services librarian until her retirement in 1991. In 1985 Schiller was awarded the ALA Equality Award for outstanding contributions towards promoting equality between men and women in the library profession.

Anita Schiller is historically significant as a pioneering librarian and social science bibliographer. Her most significant achievements were accomplished when she worked at UCSD's Geisel Library from 1971 until her retirement in 1991. Although Schiller resided at the Monte Vista Avenue residence from 1971 to 2021, there is no evidence that she conducted her most significant work at the property. The Geisel Library located on the UCSD campus is the property best associated with Schiller's achievements. Therefore, staff does not recommend designation under HRB Criterion B for an association with historically significant individual Anita Schiller at this time.

*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 two-story, single family residence and detached garage constructed in the Monterey style in 1930. The house exhibits a low pitched, side gable roof with little eave overhang and exposed rafters. The primary façade features the style's signature cantilevered second story balcony with wood railing that runs the length of most of the elevation. The balcony is covered by an extension of the roof which covers the main massing of the house. A one-story, side gable massing extends from the southern portion of the main elevation. The resource is clad in stucco except for the balcony portion of the second floor which displays vertical board and batten siding. A brick pathway leads from the street to the recessed wood paneled front door which is flanked with false shutters. An interior masonry chimney is located on the northern portion of the building. Fenestration includes wood double hung and casement windows as well as multi-lite wooden French doors. Decorative false shutters flank windows on the primary and side facades. The detached garage is located on the northern side of the property.

There is only one known modification to the property since its 1930 date of construction; a brick chimney was removed on the southern elevation sometime between 1980 and 1981, This

modification does not impair integrity of design, materials, workmanship or feeling as it relates to HRB Criterion c.

The Monterey style is one of California's few indigenous architectural styles and was popular during the first half of the twentieth century. The style blended old Spanish building characteristics with the Anglo-influenced architectural language that was brought to California from New England. However, the characteristic full width, cantilevered balcony was derived from house forms built in the southeastern United States, the Caribbean, and the Bahamas. Character defining features of this style include low-pitched gabled or hipped roofs, and cantilevered second floor balconies with wood railings covered by the principal roof. It is not uncommon to have wood railings replaced with decorative iron railings in the Creole French variant. Roofs are usually covered in wood shingle or tile, and walls are typically clad in stucco, brick or wood. Door and window surrounds sometimes mimic the Territorial examples of the Spanish Colonial prototypes; paired windows and false shutters are common architectural details.

Significance Statement: The property continues to convey the historic significance of the Monterey style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including a two-story form, second story balcony with wood railing, stucco and vertical board and batten exterior, wood windows and French doors, and decorative false shutters. 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.*

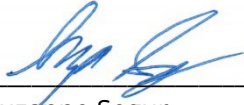
Research into the construction of the property at 7109 Monte Vista Avenue failed to conclusively identify a builder, designer or architect. Therefore, the property is not eligible for designation under HRB Criterion D.

#### 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 MacPherson and Theodora Hole Rental House located at 7109 Monte Vista Avenue be designated with a period of significance of 1930 under HRB Criterion C as a good example of the Monterey Revival style. The designation shall include the original detached garage.



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Suzanne Segur  
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison  
Development Services Department

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Attachment(s):

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A  
ADOPTED ON 11/17/2022

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 11/17/2022, to consider the historical designation of the MacPherson and Theodora Hole Rental House (owned by Kerian Bunch, 1715 Flagstone Drive, Normal, IL, 61761) located at **7109 Monte Vista Avenue, San Diego, CA 92037**, APN: **351-141-06-00**, further described as BLK 9 LOTS 1 & 3 & 5 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 MacPherson and Theodora Hole Rental 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 Monterey style and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1930 period of significance. Specifically, the resource exhibits a two-story form, second story balcony with wood railing, stucco and vertical board and batten exterior, wood windows and French doors, and decorative false shutters. 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

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

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SPACE ABOVE THIS LINE FOR RECORDER'S USE

RESOLUTION NUMBER **N/A**

HISTORICAL DESIGNATION OF PROPERTY ON

**7109 Monte Vista Avenue, San Diego, CA 92037**

ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER **351-141-06-00**

HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD NUMBER **0**