

## RESOURCE FOR HOMEOWNER'S SEEKING HISTORIC DESIGNATION La Jolla Historical Society Landmark Group



The City of San Diego is the regulatory authority for historic property in La Jolla. Any building, structure, sign, interior element, fixture, feature, site, district or object may be designated as historical by the City of San Diego Historical Resources Board (HRB). The board will use one or more of the following criteria for designation:

- CRITERION A:** Exemplifies or reflects special elements of La Jolla, such as historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping, or architectural development.
- CRITERION B:** Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.
- CRITERION C:** Embodies distinctive characteristics of style, type, period, or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.
- CRITERION D:** Is representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.
- CRITERION E:** Is listed or has been determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or is listed or has been determined eligible, by the State Historical Preservation Office, for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources.

If you are considering designating your home, you may want to make an appointment with the Historic Resource Board (HRB) staff (619) 533-6300, to make a fee-free preliminary evaluation. Bring any photographs or documentation you may have. Before doing this, we recommend confirming that your house is not already designated. The HRB Staff offices are located at 1222 First Ave. 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, San Diego.

If you want to make certain that the house is not already designated, you can go to the California Historical Resource Inventory Database (CHRID) and type in the house address. The database will search the inventory of all historically designated sites in San Diego for your address. [California Historic Resource Inventory](#)

If your home fits into one or more of the above listed criteria, and you wish to pursue historic designation, there are two options:

- You can hire an architectural historian or specialist (provided on page 6 of this resource).

Or, if you choose to complete the designation yourself...

- The following list of tips are suggested by the La Jolla Historical Society Landmark Group and Save Our Heritage Organization of San Diego ([SOHO](#)):

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Before you begin, go to the City of San Diego Historic Resource Board (HRB) website and review the application forms and the description of the Nomination Process for Designation. (Forms are listed on HRB website, far right of page). <https://www.sandiego.gov/development-services/historical>

The "Historical Resource Research Report Guidelines and Requirements" includes a list of required attachments for the application. The following table lists the attachments and where to go to obtain them. The attachments and your narrative describing how your property fulfills one or more of the designation criteria are the bulk of the application. In a sense, the attachments provide the primary source documentation for your narrative. *Jazz Age to Our Age: Architects and Developers of 1920s La Jolla* by Seonaid McArthur, Molly McClain, and Diane, (La Jolla Historical Society, 2017) is a valuable resource and starting point. You can pick it up at Warwick's or at the Society offices.

**REQUESTED ATTACHMENTS \***

**WHERE TO GO**

**Attachments A: Building Development Information**

<p><b>A.1 County Assessor’s Building Record</b>  <b>A. 2 Notice of Completion</b> County Assessor’s Office  <b>(Room 103)</b>- Get copies of the, Pages of Deed from time of construction, and Chain of Title                  County Lot and Block Book page (for the first year the parcel was assessed with an improvement)</p>	<p>San Diego County Assessor/Recorders <b>(Room 109)*</b>-                  1600 Pacific Highway, Room 109/103, SD 92101                  (619) 236-3771                  *NOTE: Building Record is obtained from Room 109 and requires an authorization note from homeowner with name/address); Notice of completion: Use Grantor index; by last name of owner-locate the Book &amp; Page number of recorded document; then to Advanced search book/page.  <b>STAFF WILL HELP! ASK!</b></p>
<p><b>A.3 Water/Sewer Connection Records:</b> Copy of water hook up record. Contact Javier Clark-  <a href="mailto:JECClark@sandiego.gov">JECClark@sandiego.gov</a>; 619-527-7458 for appointment</p>	<p>City of SD, Water Operations, Maps &amp; Records                  2797 Caminito Chollas, SD</p>
<p><b>A.4 Building Permits</b> (electrical, mechanical, &amp; plumbing permits not required) for all work done on structure. (Only permits available are 1955-present)</p>	<p>City of SD, Development Services Dept.                  1222 First Ave; <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Floor</b>, Records Section</p>
<p><b>A.5 Site Plan</b> with the building footprint/identify additions</p>	<p>Google Aerial View or Architect plans</p>
<p><b>A.6 County Lot and Block Book</b></p>	<p>Development Services County Assessor</p>
<p><b>A.7 Previous Historical Survey</b> Forms: and provide copies of pages related to your property.</p>	<p>Consult: The La Jolla Historical Survey by Wayne Donaldson, 2004 (can be emailed to you.)</p>

**Attachments B: Ownership and Occupant Information**

<p><b>B.1 Chain of Title</b> – San Diego County Assessor/Recorders Room 103                  Bring names of homeowners, dates, lot number. Staff will assist with finding/making copies of deeds. A copy of deed from time of construction of residence is needed for the report.</p>	<p>County staff can be paid to conduct a search for you: \$60-hour (2 hour minimum) Contact Supervisor: <a href="mailto:curtis.cornell@sdcounty.ca.gov">curtis.cornell@sdcounty.ca.gov</a>. Or, you may use a private title search company (California Title Search Company (<a href="http://www.lotbook.com">www.lotbook.com</a>) 858-278-8797; Title Reports \$45-\$300</p>
<p><b>B.2 Directory Listing of occupants</b>, (occupations, if identified in the directory) (table format) You will need a table showing changes in ownership by date, from date of construction to present. ( at UCSD,free parking weekends, 5<sup>th</sup> floor rare books.)</p>	<p>La Jolla Library, California Room 858- 454-1068 has Bluebooks for 1928-1938; and/or Central San Diego Public Library, 330 Park Blvd., SD, California Room – <b>9<sup>th</sup> Floor</b> (619) 236-5800 – Note: La Jolla is located at back of directories through 1940s.</p>
<p><b>B.3 Deed from Time of Construction</b></p>	<p>(see above – County offices)</p>

**Attachments C: Maps**

<p>C.1 City of San Diego 800 Scale Engineering Maps (with north arrow and site location)                  C.2 USGS Map (with north arrow/site location identified)                  C.3 Original Subdivision Map with the site location</p>	<p>Most if not all are available at La Jolla Historical Society                  USGS MAPS: website <a href="https://archive.org/details/maps_usgs">https://archive.org/details/maps_usgs</a>                  C.3. -City of SD, Development Services Dept.                  1223 First Ave; <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Floor</b>, Records Section + PLOT PLANS</p>
<p>C.4 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps While the application requests these years -1886/1887,1906,1921,1940,1950, 1956 – the maps available for La Jolla on-line are <b>Jan 1909, October 1921, May 1926, and May 1926-49</b>. If your house does not fall within these maps/time period insert a page with explanation.</p>	<p>Sanborn Maps can be accessed on-line with a San Diego Public Library card: Sign-in to library; go to ecollection; Articles and Database; History and Genealogy; click on Sanborn insurance. Copies are also on file in the La Jolla Historical Society archives; Last Sanborn map was published in 1956.</p>

**Attachments D: Photographs**

- D.1 Historical (including transitional photos, if available).
- D.2 Current 4" x 6" (minimum) Color photographs. Wide shot and details for each of the following:
  - o North Elevation; East Elevation; South Elevation; West Elevation

**Attachments E:** Documents supporting Narrative (relevant obituaries, biographies, newspaper articles, advertisements, subdivision maps, scholarly journal articles, advertisement.

## Tips on Preparing a Historical Resource Report for Your Property

1. A description of the process for preparing the report, including links to all forms are available at the City of San Diego's "Historic Resource Designation Nomination Process" page, located on the web here: [Historic Resource Nomination Process](#).
2. A good starting point for the report is to obtain the Residential Building Record for your home. (see page 2) This document will often provide the name of the architect and/or builder as well as the original date of construction. Additions and changes to the house over time are noted in this record. There is a fee per page and the office requires homeowner to be present (or a note from homeowner giving approval for the document to be copied). The "**Residential Building Record**" is a required part of the application.
3. Changes of ownership of the home, from the date of construction to present, are required to be listed in table format for the report. Hence, each deed from the time of transfer, need to be located and copied. You can hire staff from the County Recorder's Office for a nominal fee to compile and email the title documents to you. The four-column table should include Grantor name; Grantee name, date recorded, and County Instrument number. **The complete title deed from the date the house was constructed must be included as an attachment to the report.** (See a sample report) Microfilm Readers in Room 103 of the San Diego County Recorder's Office (across hall from Room 109), can be used to locate these documents. Staff can also assist you with this. Once you have the title information you will have the legal description of the property, also required for the HRB application.
4. Once the date of constructed is verified on the Residential Building Record, the County Recorder's Office can try locate a **Notice of Completion**. This is a filing by the builder or architect to certify with the County that his/her/work is complete. **If available, a copy should be included in the report** to verify the building's date.
5. To further verify the date of construction /occupancy of your house, the HRB requests **a copy of the San Diego Water Department's date of water/sewer hook up for the building address**. Try phoning the archives at (619) 527-7482 (1-4pm, Monday–Friday) to request a copy. You may need to provide them with the assessor's parcel number, and the subdivision, block and lot. If they find documents relating to your property, they can email them to you. Alternately, you can personally go to the department at 2797 Caminito Chollas, San Diego, 92105. A copy of the **Water/Sewer hook-up document is requested in the application**.
6. The HRB requests a table with a Directory of Occupants from the date of construction. Using the names and dates from the Deeds of Title, look up the years in the City of San Diego Directories which are all on line: at [Directories - City of San Diego](#) (or type into Google "San Diego City Directory – (year you require). In the early directories La Jolla residents are listed in a separate directory at the back of the book. If you don't find a name you are looking for, try the La Jolla Bluebooks (published 1936 to 1994) available at the La Jolla Library California Room (check their hours by phoning 454-1068), and the La Jolla Historical Society. All of the hard copy versions of the directories are available at the San Diego City Library or the San Diego History Center. **A**

**table showing earliest owners/occupants associated with your house and (if possible) their professions should be included in your report.**

7. Once you know the names of owners, occupants, architect, builder, check the La Jolla Library or Historical Society, SDHS biographical files and computerized index for further biographical information. Other sources are the Smythe, Black, McGrew, Heilbron, *Who's Who in San Diego* (1936). The website [www.genealogybank.com](http://www.genealogybank.com) , or ancestry.com has can also be searched for info on your owners.
8. The La Jolla Historical Society has a series of real estate listings on file cards, organized by address, for the 1950s and 1970s. Some of the cards have photos. They also have files on streets of La Jolla which also include information on individual homes.
9. The La Jolla Historical Society has an indexed construction chronology of La Jolla compiled from primarily La Jolla papers, as well as an indexed listing of houses constructed by specific architects. (Compiled by Pat Schaelchlin in 1980s) This can be extremely helpful.
10. The *La Jolla Light* for the year your house was completed (La Jolla Library California Room has papers going back to the 1920s) and/or the *San Diego Union* on microfilm for that time period, SDPL, Newspaper Room, could have informatin on your home. In the 1920s, the Sunday editions of the *San Diego Union* had a "Development" section. If your house was built after 1927 you can search through the *Southwest Builder & Contractor*, which can be obtained in the periodical section on the first floor of the downtown library. **Include all articles you find relating to your house in your report.**
11. Check the historical photograph collection at the La Jolla Historical Society and the San Diego History Center (SDHC) Archives (open Wed-Fri 9:00 -1:00pm and by appointment 619-232-6203). Locate any photo documentation for your house. Check under owners' names, neighborhoods, architectural files, family scrapbooks, or aerial photographs. **All historic photographs should be included in your report with credit given to the appropriate source.**
12. If your house was designed by a prominent local architect, builder or designer check the architectural drawing files at the La Jolla Historical Society, and reference the *Biographies of Established Masters*, compiled by the Historical Resource Board which appears on their website. Established masters can include: architects, designers, builders, craftsman, artists, engineers, interior designers, and landscape architects. **If possible, include biographical information in your report, with credit to your sources.**
13. The HRB requests you provide copies of the Sanborn Fire Maps for your property. The only years Sanborn maps exist for La Jolla are 1909, 1921, 1926, 1949, 1952. You can consult the original maps at the La Jolla Historical Society or the digital versions available on-line through the public library card holders at [Digital Sanborn Maps](#).
14. If possible, conduct oral interviews of previous owners and architect/builder to obtain further information about your house. Track down former residents or their children. Verbal accounts from the family and others associated with the property are also often useful. They may be able to help you date changes or tell you stories about their home. Written histories, journals, letters, photographs, etc., are sometimes available from family members. Neighbors can be helpful if they have lived in the neighborhood for a long time and have any family pictures with photos of your home.

15. Additional information on the house can be found in other public records such as mortgages, wills, tax records. Will and probate records may list one or more of the previous owners.

16. All information and discussion of historicity and significance must be fully contained with Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms. These forms are available on-line by visiting the California State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) website at [STATE PARK FORMS FOR REPORT](#). Historical reports that do not provide DPR forms, or provide them as attachments, will no longer be accepted. (Please refer to the attached DPR examples for clarification of HRB requirements and formatting.)

## 17. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. If the property has been remodeled will it affect designation?

- If you want to apply for designation and are considering a remodel, take your preliminary plans to the Historic Resource Board Staff for an opinion. If you are working with an architect familiar with issues of historic designation they can help guide you through this process.
- Any new work (additions, etc.) need to be respectful of the existing building in massing, scale and materials, but should not be an identical match.
- Previous remodeling efforts need to have followed the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and not be visible from the public street.

### 2. Will my real estate tax basis be affected if I bought my property prior to the passage of Prop 13?

- As the owner of a historically designated home, you do not have to apply for the Mills Act if your savings will be better under Prop 13. Should you sell your home in the future, the new owner can apply for the Mills Act since the house is historically designated.

### 3. What are the benefits of historical designation?

- Property values can increase substantially in neighborhoods where historical homes are purchased, restored and maintained. Research has generally shown that resale values are increased, particularly in La Jolla, where the sale price becomes the tax basis if the home is not historically designated.
- Not only does your home gain additional value, so do those within 300 feet of your property. This is because designation stabilizes neighborhoods and provides certainty about future development.
- The benefits to the community are great. You are preserving a unique, one of a kind property which is important to the history of your community. The completed Application for Historic Designation provides a detailed historic record of your property, an invaluable resource for posterity.

### 4. What requirements do I have as a homeowner of a designated site?

- You must maintain the historical integrity of your home. HRB staff completes inspection of historic resources every 5 years. All alternations, additions or remodeling should be discussed and approved by HRB staff. G to the HRB website for a copy of the Staff Assistance Procedure Handout.

### 5. How does designation affect the future sale of my property?

- In most cases, historical designation can be of benefit to new homeowners, particularly in La Jolla, where the purchase of a new house results in the house purchase price becoming the tax basis.
- Studies in various areas of the country show that historical district designation can increase property values upwards of 30 percent beyond normal appreciation. Appraisers of historical properties believe that as a historical district provides protection to individual homes by maintaining community context, property values are substantially increased.

### 6. What fees are charged to submit the Application for Designation?

- A historic resource nomination fee of \$1,185 is due upon submittal of the historic nomination. This fee covers staff time for reviewing and processing the nomination, which includes a submittal appointment, site visit, completeness check, preparation of a written staff report, and review by the Historical Resources Board. There will be an additional fee when the Mills Act Application is filed.

Additional details on the Nomination Process and more FAQs are provided on the [HRB website](#).

## Select List of Designation Report Consultants

IS Architecture  
Ione Stiegler, AIA  
5649 La Jolla Boulevard La Jolla, CA 92037  
(858) 456-8555  
[ione@isarchitecture.com](mailto:ione@isarchitecture.com)

Johnson & Johnson Architecture  
Sarai and Paul W. Johnson  
5014 Catoctin Drive San Diego, CA 9211  
[JohnsonArchitecture@mac.com](mailto:JohnsonArchitecture@mac.com)  
(619) 297-4659

Legacy 106  
Kiley Wallace  
Cell: 760-704-7373  
Office: 858-459-0326  
[kileywallace@yahoo.com](mailto:kileywallace@yahoo.com)

Vonn Marie May  
Cultural Resource Planning & Research  
1941 Fairlee Drive Encinitas, CA 92024  
(760) 753-3420

[vmmay@mac.com](mailto:vmmay@mac.com)

Scott Moomjian, Attorney at Law  
5173 Waring Road, #145 San Diego, CA 92120  
(619) 230-1770  
smoomjian@earthlink.net  
(619) 261-5587 (Cell)

Brian F. Smith and Associates, Inc.  
14010 Poway Road, Suite A  
Poway, CA 92064  
(858)679-8218  
info@bfsa-ca.com

Urbana Preservation & Planning, LL  
Wendy L. Tinsley  
4594 Mayapan Drive La Mesa, CA 91941  
619-543-0693  
[wendy@urbanapreservation.com](mailto:wendy@urbanapreservation.com)

Ginger Weatherford Historic Visions  
[ginger@gingerweatherford.com](mailto:ginger@gingerweatherford.com)  
619-548-8311

Disclaimer: The individuals listed above have recently written successful designation reports. This is not an endorsement for any one individual/company.

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We are here to help!

This resource was prepared by Seonaid ("Shona") McArthur Chair, and Susan Comden, Julie Hatch, members, of the La Jolla Landmark Group. Please call or email should you have questions. We also thank Realtor Linda Marrone, former HRB Member, and Diane Kane, Chair LJHS Preservation Committee, for their contributions to this resource.

### La Jolla Historical Society Contact Info

Heath Fox, Executive Director  
Dana Hicks, LJHS Collections Manager/Archivist  
Seonaid (Shona) McArthur,  
Chair, La Jolla Landmark Group

(858) 459-5335  
(858) 459-5335 x 9 then 3

(858) 922-5162 [lajollalandmarkgroup@gmail.com](mailto:lajollalandmarkgroup@gmail.com)