



This 1936 home designed by architect Cliff May received a historic designation from the City of San Diego on Jan. 23, despite opposition from the property owner.

La Jolla homes receive historic designations

BY PAT SHERMAN

Two La Jolla properties received historic designations during the San Diego Historical Resources Board's (HRB) Jan. 23 meeting.

First, the HRB granted designation to the William and Ruby Snell Cottage in WindanSea — a feather in the cap of the La Jolla Historical Society (LJHS) and architectural preservationists who fought to save the early 20th Century Tudor-style cottage and its rear companion at 337 and 341 Playa Del Sur. The property owners had planned to demolish both cottages to build a duplex.

Through a compromise with the owners, the LJHS and San Diego's Save Our Heritage Organisation were able to save the street-facing — and most historically significant — of the cottages and have it designated. The property owners, Jack and Karen Visin, will demolish the rear cottage and build a three-story modern structure in its place.

A planned two-story addition to the rear of the front cottage that will replace a 1979 addition must first be approved by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior to assure it maintains architectural continuity with the existing cottage.

The designation was granted based on the 1928 cottage's period of significance, reflecting the early historical and architectural development of WindanSea.

Leslie Davis, chair of the LJHS's Preservation Committee, said the cottage might not have been saved without the assistance of the late Charles Snell, who lived



This 1928 WindanSea cottage, with its notable cobblestone chimney and wall, has been designated historic and will be incorporated into new design plans for the property.

PHOTOS BY PAT SHERMAN

in the cottage with his parents, William and Ruby Snell, in his youth.

Snell, who died in October 2013, just shy of his 85th birthday, provided a photo that proved the LJHS's assertion that the cottages' details were original. "This designation is truly due to him being a steward of his family's history," Davis said.

The HRB also granted a historic designation to the George and Marion Cottrell/Cliff May Home at 7727 Lookout Drive in La Jolla (parcels one and four).

The designation was granted based on its type of construction and the significance of its architect, Cliff May (1909-1989) — considered the father of the California Ranch-style home.

The designation is a bittersweet victory for preservationists, who lament the loss of an arguably significant palm tree grove there that was not properly assessed for historic value before being felled by the property owner last summer. Several neighbors attended the HRB meeting to support designation, which the property owner opposed. Preservationists feared the

home would be either demolished or closed off by new development.

Speaking with the *Light* last year, the property owner, David Mandelbaum, said that if the property received a designation, he would "restore it to its

former glory." He said he is not certain whether he will sell the subdivided property as "one estate or four houses."

"There will be nothing that I will do to hurt the (Cliff May) house in any way," he assured. ♦



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