



# Administrative Report

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J.1., File # PREZ21-2414

Meeting Date: 5/5/2021

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**To:** PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
**From:** STACEY KINSELLA, ASSOCIATE PLANNER

## **TITLE**

PUBLIC HEARING FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE DESIGNATION OF THE BUILDING AS A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 4, TITLE 10 OF THE REDONDO BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 224 AVENUE C (CASE NO. LM-2021-02)

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Open the public hearing, administer oath, take testimony, and deliberate;
2. Close the public hearing; and
3. Adopt a resolution by title only approving a Historic Landmark Designation pursuant to Chapter 4, Title 10 of the Redondo Beach Municipal Code for the property located at 224 Avenue C

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Local Landmark Designation and Criteria**

In order to be eligible for designation, a structure must be at least fifty years of age and meet one or more of the following criteria, as stated in Section 10-4.201 of the Preservation Ordinance:

- A. It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering or architectural history.
- B. It is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.
- C. It embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.
- D. It is representative of the notable work of a builder, designer or architect.
- E. Its unique location or singular physical characteristic(s) represents an established or familiar visual feature or landmark of a neighborhood, community or the City.

The information provided in the sections below will illustrate that the nominated building is eligible for designation.

### Description of Nominated Property

The nominated property consists of a one-story residence, a detached accessory unit behind the main residence, and a garage located along the rear alley. The 1986 Historic Resources Survey identifies the property as a C-rated Spanish Colonial site.

The property is located on the southern side of Avenue C, west of Pacific Coast Highway. The rectangular-shaped parcel is approximately 42 feet wide and 143 feet deep. Per Assessor's records, the house is approximately 932 square feet and the rear detached accessory unit is approximately 288 square feet. The property is zoned R-1, Single Family Residential.

The existing residence features a parapet roof with tile coping, a trowel-finish stucco exterior, and wood, recessed windows. The home exhibits an arched covered entry porch that leads to an east-facing front door.

### LANDMARK ANALYSIS

#### Historic Resources Survey Rating

The property was identified in the 1986 Historic Resources Survey as an example of the Spanish Colonial architectural style, and was given a "C" rating. These buildings are somewhat less distinctive in terms of age or architecture. In general, however, these are well-designed buildings in which research may prove to have a relationship to important events or persons in history. Many of these buildings are likely to have local significance and some of these buildings may also be contributing members to a potential historic district.

#### Construction History

Building records show that the residence and garage were built in 1931. The Assessor's records note that the rear accessory unit was constructed in 1946. An inspection in 1980 identified two residences with two meters. The roof has been updated, but it is unclear when that work was completed.

#### Design and Architecture

Spanish Colonial homes often feature a parapet roof with tile coping, scuppers for drainage, recessed wood windows, and trowel-finish exterior stucco. This style of architecture was popular in the United States from 1915 to 1940. This home is typical of smaller Spanish influenced examples of buildings that were built throughout California suburbs during the 1920's and 1930's. It is also one of the more prevalent historic architectural styles in Redondo Beach.

Staff performed a socially-distanced site walk November 20, 2020. The main residence is in excellent condition and most of the windows are original. The exterior stucco may also be original to the site. There is one window along the west elevation that has been replaced and the stucco around this window reflects an unusual pattern. This window exists within a small sideyard and is not visible to the street. The majority of the windows are single- or double-hung wood windows. The two main street-facing windows are large fixed glass wood windows. The picture window on the right-hand side

is arched and includes divided lights along the edges. The arch of this window mirrors the design of the arched entry porch which creates a pleasing symmetry on the front elevation. The window within the entry porch exhibits a fixed picture window with single- or double-hung windows on either side. While the majority of the house is covered by a flat parapet roof, the entry porch exhibits a shed roof which provides a nice street-facing display of red tiles.

The detached garage adjacent to the southern alley exhibits very similar features as the house with a parapet roof and tile coping as well as the trowel-finish stucco. All of the openings on the garage including the garage door, however, are not original. The one-story detached unit between the main house and the garage does not exhibit Spanish Colonial features and has much newer openings and materials.

The main residence exhibits the Spanish Colonial style of architecture found in other earlier developments throughout the City. Based upon the design elements described above, the site appears to be architecturally significant. This site is also located within the Clifton-by-the-sea district which was envisioned to be a high-end residential neighborhood.

The Preservation Commission may consider requesting that the newer openings on the house and the garage be replaced with historically accurate fenestration. Because the accessory structure behind the house was built later and in a very different style, restoring that structures is less critical. Should the Preservation Commission wish to explore the replacement of the window on the west elevation of the house, the window at the garage, and the garage door staff suggests the following condition of approval:

- The owners shall replace the newer window on the west elevation of the house, the newer window at the garage, and the sectional garage door with historically accurate openings. The stucco around the west elevation window on the house shall also be repaired. The owners shall work with staff regarding the final design of the openings and obtain the appropriate permits.

### Historical Background

Per the Building records, the residence and detached garage were owned by Mrs. Swan in 1931. She is also noted as the owner in the 1936 City directory. By 1947, Edward (electrician) and Seline Albachton lived at the site. In 1948, the City Electrical Inspector is listed as Edward Albachtin with a slight variation in the spelling of the last name. Staff suspects this is a typo and it is indeed the same person. Eva Starkey and her husband, Steve, lived in the rear cottage in 1951. Records indicate that they had recently moved from Canada to California. The Starkey family later moved to Avenue B, but eventually bought the subject site around 1962. Sometime before her retirement after working at Torrance Memorial Medical Center for 37 years, Eva moved back to 224 Avenue C. Steve had passed away in a plane crash several years prior to her return to the site. They shared four children.

There are several other mentions of the Starkey name in the City records. In 1925, the Redondo Reflex notes a Captain F.L. Starkey overseeing prisoners working on the roads as a way to pay fines. The Redondo Reflex later references the Starkey furniture store at 335 Camino Real in 1927. The store sold new and second hand pieces. Lula (wife), Elias (owner, probably husband),

and Ethel Starkey (bookkeeper, possible sister or daughter) are listed in the newspaper. Lastly, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur L. Starkey are noted in the Reflex in 1947. Arthur is noted as WWI army veteran and their son, Arthur L., Jr. is noted as being in the Navy. They also shared a daughter named Sharon Ann. It is unclear if the Starkey families mentioned in the newspaper are any relation to Eva and Steve. That said, it is very common for families to migrate to the States after previous family members became established.

The current owners of the site, Marilyn and William Crawford, purchased the property from the Starkey Family Trust in 2012. Thus, the Starkey family lived at the site in 1951 and later owned the site for approximately 50 years.

## **MILLS ACT CONTRACT**

If the Preservation Commission decides to approve the requested designation, a Mills Act Agreement will be prepared and later considered by the City Council. The Mills Act contract offers a property tax break to homeowners that maintain and carefully restore local historic landmarks.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

This report has documented that the residence at 224 Avenue C is an example of Spanish Colonial architecture. This style of architecture was common in California from around 1915 to the 1940s. This property also reflects special elements of the City's cultural, social and economic history. The structure serves to make the property a valuable historical resource to the community, thus, the property merits designation as a landmark.

If approved, this landmark will be referred to as the "Starkey House" for the long legacy of the Starkey family's ownership of the site.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Draft Resolution  
Exemption Declaration  
Application Materials  
Photos