

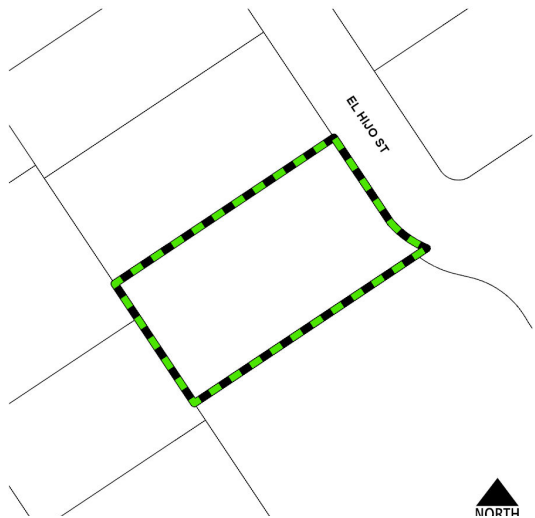


Community & Economic Development Department
3900 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92522 | Phone: (951) 826-5371 | RiversideCA.gov

Planning Division

CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 16, 2022
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 4

PROPOSED PROJECT

Case Numbers	DP-2022-00914 (Historic Designation)	
Request	To consider a Historic Designation request to designate the Powell-Wheeler Residence as a City Landmark	
Applicant	Robert Vega and Michelle Arasim	
Project Location	3860 El Hijo Street, on the west side of El Hijo Street between Arlington and Magnolia Avenues	
APN	227-283-031	
Ward	3	
Neighborhood	Magnolia Center	
Historic District	Not Applicable	
Historic Designation	Not Applicable	
Staff Planner	Scott Watson, Historic Preservation Officer 951-826-5507 swatson@riversideca.gov	

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Cultural Heritage Board recommend that the City Council:

1. **DETERMINE** that Planning Case DP-2022-00914 (Historic Designation) for the designation of the Powell-Wheeler Residence as a City Landmark, is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Sections 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense Rule) and 15308 (Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment), as the proposal will have no significant effect on the environment, identifies the structure as a cultural resource, and preserves the historic character of a cultural resource; and
2. **APPROVE** Planning Case DP-2022-00914 (Historic Designation), based on the facts of findings, and designate the Powell-Wheeler Residence as a City Landmark.

BACKGROUND

Powell-Wheeler Residence

The Powell-Wheeler Residence is located at 3860 El Hijo Street (Exhibit 1). The Monterey Revival-style residence was designed by local designer Henry L.A. Jekel and constructed in 1930. Although building permit records do not indicate the designer of the residence, the Powell-Wheeler residence was included in the book Henry LA Jekel Architect of Eastern Skyscrapers and the California Style 1895-1950 by H. Vincent Moses and Catherine Whitmore. The residence was constructed for Percy and Margaret Powell. Percy Powell, a local businessman and avid gardener, participated in or chaired several Chamber of Commerce beautification projects across the City, including the parkways along Magnolia Avenue. Records indicate that the Powell family moved from the property between 1939 and 1941.

By 1946, Doctor Omer Wheeler, a local physician and president of the California Medical Board in the 1950s, had purchased the residence. In 1946, he constructed a 525-square-foot rear addition to add a bedroom and a bathroom. The original detached garage was altered in 1947 with a 144 square foot addition to the rear for storage. The pool was constructed in 1953. The additions to the garage and residence are generally in keeping with the style of the residence and have limited visibility from the public right-of-way.

After many years of neglect, much of the original design and architectural features have been restored by the present owner.

Monterey Revival Style

The Monterey Revival style, named for Monterey, CA, is a sub-style of Spanish Colonial Revival style and is one of California's few indigenous architectural styles. The style first emerged in the early 18th century as Californians blended the Spanish and New England colonial styles. The style regained popularity in the first half of the 20th Century during the Eclectic Revival Period.

Character-defining features of the Monterey Revival Style include:

- Two-story rectilinear massing
- Stucco cladding
- Low pitched gable roofs covered with shingles or tiles
- Cantilevered second floor balconies with wood railings and covered by the primary roof of the residence
- Double-hung or double casement windows with divided lights
- Covered entry
- Louvered shutters

Henry L.A. Jekel

Henry L.A. Jekel was born in 1876 in Buffalo, New York and trained to be a civil engineer in New York City. In 1902, Jekel worked on the architectural design team for the Pennsylvania Building, the first structural steel building in Philadelphia. He is credited with the design of the Westory building in Washington D.C., when he worked in the Government Architectural Department.

Jekel first came to Riverside in 1911 and worked with architect Myron Hunt, solving some structural challenges on the First Congregational Church bell tower, which was under construction at that time. In 1915, Jekel assisted architect Bertram Goodhue on some engineering challenges related to buildings being constructed for the Panama California Exposition in San Diego. Several of the buildings constructed for this exposition make up Balboa Park today. Jekel returned to Buffalo for a short time and later returned to Riverside, building his own residence at 5063 Magnolia Avenue in 1921.

The applicant is requesting approval of a Historic Designation to designate the Powell-Wheeler Residence as a City Landmark.

ANALYSIS

The applicant has provided an architectural description, statement of significance, photographs documenting the architecture and building setting, and copies of primary and secondary sources as summarized below (Exhibit 2).

Architectural Description

The Powell-Wheeler Residence is situated on southwest side of El Hijo Street within the Magnolia Center neighborhood of the City. The residence is set back from the street with a landscaped front yard. The two-story residence features an L-shaped ground plan with a slightly raised foundation and an asymmetrical facade. The residence is capped with a red concrete tile-topped, moderately pitched gable roof with exposed rafter-tails and no eaves on the gable ends. The residence is clad in smooth stucco. A rectangular stucco-clad chimney rises along northwest elevation of the original portion of the residence. A projecting patio covered by the main roof runs the length of the single-story portion of the façade and serves as the main entry. A cantilevered balcony with outlookers runs the length of the two-story portion of the façade. The balcony is covered by the main roof and features a simple wood balustrade. The primary windows throughout the residence are recessed, wood-framed single and double casement windows with divided lights and sills. Secondary windows include wood-framed fixed and double-hung windows with sills and wood trims. The exterior doors throughout the residence are fully glazed with divided lights. Louvered shutters accent the doors on the façade of the residence. A two-car garage is located at the rear of the property.

Statement of Significance

The Powell-Wheeler Residence is historically significant because it is an excellent and rare example of Monterey Revival style residential architecture in the City. The residence is also significant as it represents the work of a notable local designer, Henry L.A. Jekel.

The Powell-Wheeler Residence retains a high degree of integrity required for Landmark designation.

TITLE 20 EVALUATION

Under Title 20 (Cultural Resources), "Landmark" means: "Any improvement or natural feature that is an exceptional example of a historical, archaeological, cultural, architectural, community, aesthetic or artistic heritage of the City, that retains a high degree of integrity". Pursuant to the applicable Landmark criteria in Chapter 20.50, the Powell-Wheeler Residence is eligible for designation under Criterion 3 and 4 based on the following facts:

FINDING: Criterion 3: 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.

FACTS: The Monterey Revival Style of architecture is fairly uncommon in Riverside, with only approximately fifteen examples throughout the City. The Powell-Wheeler Residence embodies the character-defining features of the style, including: simple, two-story rectangular massing; smooth stucco cladding; a moderately pitched gable roofs topped with red tiles; a cantilevered second floor balcony enclosed with wood railings and covered by the main roof of the residence; double-hung and double-casement windows, some with divided lights; a covered entry within a projecting porch; and louvered shutters accenting the glass doors on the façade.

- FINDING: Criterion 4: Represents the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect, or important creative individual.
- FACTS: The Powell-Wheeler Residence was designed by prominent local designer Henry L.A. Jekel, who is recognized for his work in the Spanish Colonial Revival style of architecture. This residence is a rare example of Jekel's work in the Monterey Revival Style. Jekel is credited with the design of over 40 homes and 15 businesses during the 41 years he worked as a designer and engineer. He is recognized as being one of three designers who were largely responsible for the prominent residences built in Riverside in the 1920s. The other two designers were architects G. Stanley Wilson and Robert Spurgeon Jr.

STRATEGIC PLAN

This item contributes to the Envision Riverside 2025 City Council Strategic Priority 2 – Community Well Being (Goal 2.3 – Strengthen neighborhood identities and improve community health and the physical environment through amenities and programs that foster an increased sense of community and enhanced feelings of pride and belonging citywide).

This item aligns with the following Cross-Cutting Threads:

1. Community Trust: This Landmark Designation request is being reviewed during a Public Hearing before the Cultural Heritage Board and the public is able to provide comments.
2. Equity: Landmark plaques are required to be placed so that they are visible from the public right-of-way, providing information about the historic property to all residents.
3. Fiscal Responsibility: No City General Funds are being allocated as part of this Landmark Designation.
4. Innovation: This Landmark Designation request includes a historic property from the recent past, which relates to new clarifications of historic properties.
5. Sustainability and Resiliency: This Landmark Designation will help to preserve the City's collective history for future generations.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS

A public hearing notice was mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the site. As of the writing of this report, no responses have been received by Staff regarding this proposal.

APPEAL INFORMATION

Actions by the Cultural Heritage Board, including any environmental finding, may be appealed to the Land Use, Sustainability and Resilience Committee within ten calendar days after the decision. Appeal filing and processing information may be obtained from the Planning Division by calling 951-826-5371.

EXHIBITS LIST

1. Aerial/Location Map
2. Historic Designation Application
3. Current Photos

Prepared by: Scott Watson, Historic Preservation Officer
Reviewed by: Matthew Taylor, Principal Planner