

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sausalito Planning Commission
FROM: Sausalito Historic Landmarks Board
RE: 605 Coloma Street APN: 064-061-16
DATE: October 22, 2014

DRAFT

Methodology

Pursuant to City Council direction, it is the responsibility of the Sausalito Historic Landmarks Board to examine any remodel or demolition application in the City if the application involves a structure of fifty or more years of age. The Board assigns two members to review each project and to consider the gathered information and produce this report. Our report is not intended to replace or augment any technical reports pertaining to this project: any comments regarding structural integrity, engineering, etc., are purely observational.

Architectural Research

At the request of the Planning Department, the Historic Landmarks Board conducted research into the history of the property at 605 Coloma Street to determine its historic significance.

Property Description

605 Coloma Street is located in a residential neighborhood at the north end of Sausalito. The house is located on the south side of Coloma Street, directly across from MLK Park. The lot, which is approximately 50 feet wide and 120 feet deep, contains a one-story, single-family residence with a car port conversion to bedroom/study with closet. An addition of a new carport to the front of the structure.

The house appears to be a wood frame structure with a flat roof at its east and west ends and a slightly canted roof and deep overhang at its main entrance. The fenestration, organization and materials of the main façade are similar to the neighboring house at 607 Coloma Street - - with a large bisected living room window , a flat panel front door, and irregular siding that appears to be either a composite material or wood. The canted roof overhang is supported by angled columns at its corners.

Both 605 Coloma and its immediate neighbors were designed with a mid-century Modern character, including simple volumetric forms, flat and canted roof planes, large window openings, restrained detailing and deep overhanging eaves.

Due to the absence of historic photographs, original drawings and permit records, we cannot determine whether the building has been significantly modified from its original form. However, neighboring buildings on Coloma, Butte and Olima streets that appear on the 1955 Sanborn Fire Insurance map, have similar visual characteristics. The house just to the west – 607 Coloma Street – appears to be a mirrored twin of the subject property.

Property History

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When the residence at 605 Coloma Street was built in 1950, the property was located in an unincorporated part of Marin County. In January 1979, the City of Sausalito annexed this area into the city limits, and it officially became part of Sausalito.

The 1955 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows five houses in a row on Coloma Street with identical footprints and siting, suggesting that these five houses were built as a group. Today, these same five houses continue to share similar architectural characteristics including massing and roof form. The houses continue to reflect a mid-century Modern character. Similar houses exist on Olima and Butte streets.

City records indicate that on January 1, 1985, the address for C Coloma Street was changed to 605 Coloma Street.

Conrad and Frederick Kett

The Marin County Assessor and Recorder's office records indicate that the house was built by architect Conrad Kett (1901-52) and his brother Frederick who were builders and developers.

The 1940 US Census lists Conrad Kett (37) and his brother Frederick Kett (35) as residing at 508 Throckmorton Avenue in Mill Valley.

Conrad Kett is listed as a California architect in the AIA Historical Directory of American Architects. The only other published design of Mr. Kett's that appeared in our research was the Ocean Park Motel in San Francisco, an Art Deco motel that opening in 1937.

A search of the Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals and the Online Archive of California did not turn up any results for Conrad Kett.

Architectural and Historical Research

In order to determine the history of the site, the construction date of the property, and the ownership history of the property, the following resources were consulted:

- Sanborn Fire Insurance maps – updated through 1955
- Marin County Tax Assessor's records
- Sausalito City Permit records

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: Sausalito Sanborn Maps that were updated between 1909 and 1945 do not include the properties along Coloma Street. The Sausalito Sanborn Map that was updated in 1955 shows the subject property, Coloma Street, as a one-story dwelling with an enclosed car port and a one-story ancillary structure in the back yard. The Sanborn Map indicates that the house at the time was roughly square in plan, and it shows five identical houses side by side on Coloma Street.

Sausalito Plat and Block Books: The Sausalito Plat and Block Books date from the 1920s and the 1940s. 605 Coloma Street was part of unincorporated Marin County when it was constructed in 1950, and therefore does not appear on the Sausalito Plat and Block Books.

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City Permit Records: Since the house at 605 Coloma Street would have originally been permitted through the County of Marin, the City of Sausalito does not have original permit records for the property.

Sausalito Permit Records:

- B1140: Change out water heater. Issued 12/23/1985 (exp: 2/6/1987)
- A2710: Bedroom expansion, construction of a new bathroom, new utility room, upgrade to existing bathroom and kitchen, paint interior and exterior. Issued: 6/26/1990
- AEP3990: Carport conversion to bedroom/living with closet. Issued 6/8/1993
- A11014: Remove existing roof layers; install Class (A) app modified asphalt roof membrane. Issued 8/30/2004 (expired 4/14/2006)
- A11758: Build new carport. Issued 12/13/2005/Pier Modification: 1/5/2006

City records indicate that on January 1, 1985, the address for C Coloma Street was changed to 605 Coloma Street.

No other alterations are documented in the city's permit records.

Property File: There are no property files for C Coloma or 605 Coloma Street in the Historical Society's archives.

Marin County Assessor's and Recorder's office records: The Marin County Assessor's Office indicates that the house at 605 Coloma Street was constructed in 1950.

A timeline of construction and ownership follows:

- 1950: The structure was built by architect Conrad Kett (1901-52) and his brother Frederick who were builders and developers.
- January 4, 1951: Conrad and Frederick Kett sold the property to Robert Alex Wishart and his wife Helen C. Wishart.
- December 3, 1954: The Wisharts sold the property to Pierre E. and Alice S. Valena.
- 1957: Pierre E. and Alice S. Valena sold the property to Johnny L. Yee.

Additional Resources: 605 Coloma Street does not appear on the Sausalito List of Notable Structures, is not listed in the California Historic Resource Information Systems database (CHRIS), and has not previously been identified as a historic resource.

No architectural drawings for the building were found, although these may be on file at the County of Marin.

Findings

1. Is the structure associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history, culture, or heritage of Sausalito, California, or the United States? Such structures may include but are not limited to civic structures, properties featured in publications, and sites where significant events occurred.

The board finds _____ under this criterion.

2. Is this structure associated with the life or lives of one or more people important in our past? Such structures may include but are not limited to homes of prominent persons and places referenced by prominent persons.

The board finds _____ under this criterion.

3. Does the structure embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represent the work of an important creative individual, or possess high artistic values? Such structures may include but are not limited to exceptional examples of architecture or an architect's work; more ordinary examples of such work are emblematic of a particular style or era; and any works by prominent creative individuals.

The board finds _____ under this criterion.

4. Has the structure yielded, or may it be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history? Such structures may include but are not limited to archeological sites.

The board finds _____ under this criterion.

5. Does the property maintain historic integrity?

The board finds _____ under this criterion.

Recommendations:

John McCoy, Bernard Feeney

Sources: Sausalito Planning Department address files, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

The Sausalito Historic Landmarks Board, at their publicly noticed meeting of October 22, 2014, acknowledged this memorandum:

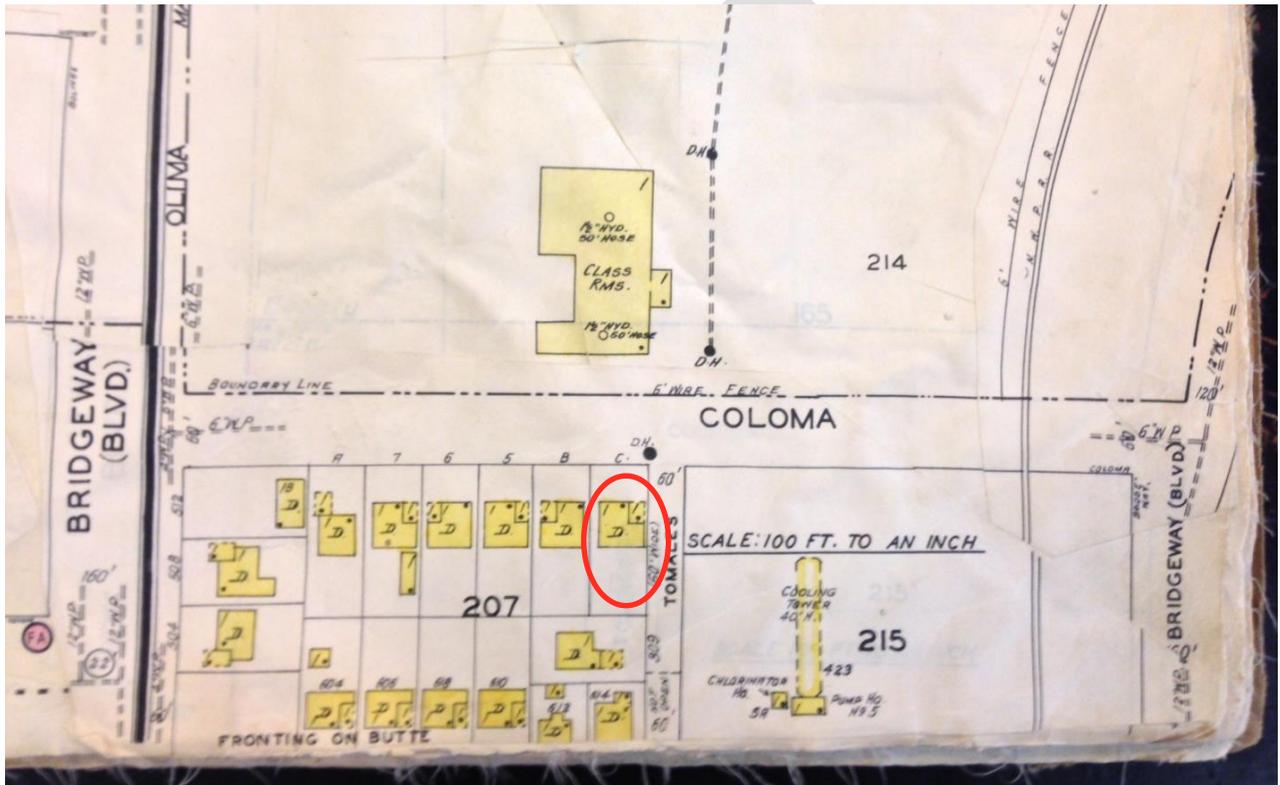
AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

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Sanborn Maps updated 1955

"C" Coloma Street

Now 605 Coloma

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Image 1



Image 2



Image 3

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