



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

COMMISSION ACTION

This is not a Certificate of Appropriateness and cannot be used to acquire permits

August 16, 2023

HDRC CASE NO: 2023-288
ADDRESS: 1739 W SUMMIT AVE
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 1939 BLK 27 LOT 10 AND W 2.2 FT OF 9
APPLICANT: Dana Kent/KENT DANA W - 378 378 Park Ave
OWNER: Dana Kent/KENT DANA W - 378 Park Ave

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting Historic Landmark Designation for the property at 1739 W. Summit Ave.

FINDINGS:

a. The request for landmark designation was initiated by the property owner.

b. **HISTORIC CONTEXT:** The structure at 1739 West Summit Avenue is a one-story Craftsman style residence with a low-pitched double-gabled roof, one-over-one wood windows, and a porch with square columns built circa 1923 for William R. and Lelia Wells. It is located in the Jefferson/Woodlawn neighborhood of City Council District 7. Dana W. Kent currently owns the property. In the 1924 City directory, 1739 West Summit Avenue is listed as the residence of Wm.R. & Lelia Wells. William ("Ralph") Wells worked for the Southwestern Telephone Company, and in January 1923 he signed a Deed of Trust to the Melliff-McAllister Lumber Company for the construction of the house on this property. In December 1920, Albert Steves, Sr, head of the Ed Steves Lumber Company, was elected as one of five new members of the fifteen-member Board of Directors for the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce; two of the ten members whose terms were held over for the year were Gerald E. Melliff and Walter W. McAllister. McAllister worked in the insurance industry, and Melliff was formerly general manager of the Hillyer, Deutsch, Jarratt Lumber Company, but resigned his position after twelve years of service to become one of the active managers of the building and loan association. In July 1921, the San Antonio Building and Loan Association was chartered by "prominent business and professional men of the city" to provide \$5,000,000 in funds for the building and purchase of homes. The directors contracted Melliff and McAllister "to actively direct the operations of the association." The new association offered two services, available to every member of the community: a monthly deposit savings plan and a loan department, providing funds for the building or purchase of homes. In October 1922, the Melliff-McAllister Lumber Company ran full-page ads in the San Antonio Light announcing its purchase of the Ed Steves & Sons' lumber yard located at Buena Vista and Medina streets, and promising services to help newspaper readers "plan a new home, to supply quality materials for its construction, and to assist in financing it." W.R. and Lelia Wells bought the property at 1739 Summit Avenue for \$2,170 and began paying monthly installments of \$30 in February 1923.

c. **SITE CONTEXT:** The subject property is located in the Woodlawn Lake area, just southeast of the boundary for the Monticello Park Historic District. It is situated mid-block on West Summit, between Zarzamora and Elmedorf Streets, about one-and-a-half blocks west of the Fredericksburg Road commercial corridor, in the Jefferson Neighborhood. The Jefferson Neighborhood is located west of Fredericksburg Road and east of St. Cloud between Donaldson and W. Woodlawn Avenues. The neighborhood features an eclectic mix of architectural styles, ranging from Art Moderne to Spanish Eclectic and Tudor Revival, including fanciful façades and a variety of styles, materials, and textures.

d. **ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:** The subject property is a single-story Craftsman cottage built circa 1923, with a low-pitched, cross-gabled roof with two front-facing gables, a side gable covering the partial-width front entry porch, and wide unenclosed eaves with exposed rafters. The front porch features floor-to-ceiling square columns, and in the rear is a raised wooden deck with latticed skirting, covered by a pergola with gabled rafters. (Historical photos show the porch was originally supported by three high, battered piers topped with short, sloping columns, which were removed and replaced by the classical style columns at a later date.) The front façade features a group of three single-sash wooden windows centered under the overhanging eave of the leftmost front-facing gable. The left façade includes a group of three centered single-sash wooden windows, and three separate, smaller

high windows. A rear wing was added with a cross-gable on the right side to extend the home for an additional room, including corner entry door, a grouped pair of single-sash windows on the right façade, and one single-sash window on the rear façade. Triangular braces join the front and rear façades to the roof, and the side-facing gables at the porch columns and right façade of the rear extension. The walls of each façade include distinctive wooden clapboard siding. The rear deck can be accessed by a single-pane glass door on the right side of the extension, or via a rear door with 15 glass panels with two sidelights of 5 glass panels. The Southwestern style landscaping includes a concrete and brick paver driveway and walkways, rock and gravel beds, and drought-tolerant shrubs. There is a rear accessory dwelling unit near the back property line. This single-story casita has a high-pitched, side-gabled roof, topped with corrugated metal panels.

e. **EVALUATION:** In order to be eligible for historic landmark designation, properties shall meet at least three (3) of the 16 criteria listed. The applicant submitted that the property meets the following criteria, consistent with UDC sec. 35-607(b):

5. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials; for its association with prolific home builders Gerald Melliff and W.W. McAllister.

8. Its historical, architectural, or cultural integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship; as an example of an early Craftsman cottage in the Woodlawn Lake District, with low-pitched roof with overhanging eaves, exposed beams, rafters, and triangular braces, clapboard wood siding.

13. It bears an important and significant relationship to other distinctive structures, sites, or areas, either as an important collection of properties or architectural style or craftsmanship with few intrusions, or by contributing to the overall character of the area according to the plan based on architectural, historic, or cultural motif; it is one of the first six addresses on the block, and one of the first two on north side of the street (and the only extant structure), built at the very beginning of the period of significance for the Woodlawn Place Addition.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of a Historic Landmark Designation of 1739 West Summit Avenue based on findings a through e.

COMMISSION ACTION:

Approved as submitted.



Shanon Shea Miller
Historic Preservation Officer