

SAN BUENAVENTURA RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

MEMORANDUM

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To: Nichole Doner, Ventura County Planning
From: Mitch Stone, San Buenaventura Research Associates
Date: 11 October 2013
Re: 534-42 S. F Street Determination of Eligibility for Designation as a City of Oxnard Historic Landmark

The attached State of California DPR 523 forms were prepared for the purpose of assisting the County of Ventura Cultural Heritage Board, acting as the City of Oxnard Cultural Heritage Board, in determining the eligibility of the property at 534-42 S. F Street as a City of Oxnard Landmark. The owners of the property, Armando J. and Catherine Berriz, are interested in applying for a Mills Act Contract. The property consists of a 12-unit, two-story courtyard apartment building with detached garage buildings.

These forms assess the historical and architectural significance of the property in accordance with the City of Oxnard landmark criteria. The forms were prepared by San Buenaventura Research Associates of Santa Paula, California, Judy Triem, Historian; and Mitch Stone, Preservation Planner, for the property owners. The evaluation is based on a field investigation and research conducted in September and October 2013.

City of Oxnard Landmarks Criteria

In April 1991, the City of Oxnard adopted the Ventura County Cultural Heritage ordinance (§§1360-1374, as amended) by resolution (City of Oxnard Resolution No. 10135), including eligibility criteria and procedures, substituting references in the ordinance to the County of Ventura with the City of Oxnard. Since that time, the Ventura County Cultural Heritage Board has acted as the city's cultural heritage board. The criteria for designating properties for listing are: (a landmark needs to only meet one of the following criteria)

1. It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the County's social, aesthetic, engineering, architectural or natural history;
2. It is identified with persons or events which are significant in national, state or local history;
3. It shows evidence of habitation, activity or the culture of prehistoric man;
4. It embodies elements of architectural design, details, materials or craftsmanship which represents a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation;
5. It is representative of the work of a master builder, designer, architect or artist;
6. It is imbued with traditional or legendary lore;
7. It has a unique location or singular physical characteristics or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar feature associated with a neighborhood, community or the County of Ventura;
8. It is one of the few remaining examples in the County possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type or specimen.

County of Ventura
November 13, 2023
Cultural Heritage Board Meeting
Item 6a
Exhibit 2 – DPR Form 523, October 11,
2013

534-42 S. F Street

Determination of Eligibility for Designation as a City of Oxnard Historic Landmark

In our opinion, the property at 534-42 S. F Street appears to be individually eligible as a Oxnard City Landmark under Criteria 1, 4 and 8. It is also appears to be eligible as part of a discontiguous district comprised of the remaining seven U-plan courtyard apartment complexes in Oxnard built between 1920 and 1950.

PRIMARY RECORD

Primary
HRI
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code

Other Listing

Review Code _____

Reviewer _____

Date _____

Page 1 of 7

Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 534-42 S. F Street

P1. Other Identifier: McColm Manor Apartments

P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted
and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

a. County Ventura

b. USGS 7.5' Quad _____ Date _____ ; R _____ 1/4 of _____ 1/4 of Sec _____ B.M. _____

c. Address: 534-42 S. F Street City Oxnard Zip 93030

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/linear resources) _____ ; _____ mE/ _____ mN

e. Other Locational Data (Enter Parcel #, legal description, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)

APN 202-0-121-080

P3. Description (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

The property consists of two, two-story stucco clad residential buildings and a single-story garage building. The two mirror-image residential buildings are L-plan, organized symmetrically, with the bases of Ls forming the rear (eastern side) of the courtyard between the buildings. The buildings feature low-hipped roofs with shallow boxed eaves. Windows are mainly pairs of four-by-one light steel casements and tripartite four-by-one light casements with transoms over, with shallow sills and no framing. The window openings at the street-facing are filled with six-by-five glass block. All of the street-facing windows feature single wood louvered faux shutters on one side of the window opening. Ground floor entries are located above low concrete stoops. Second floor entires are accessed via common balconies covered by open wood frame pergolas supported by pipe columns. The stairways feature stucco balustrades topped with steel pipe handrails. A low brick wall topped with a single-course cornice connects the top of the Ls and completes the enclosure of the courtyard. [continued]

P3b. Resource Attributes (List attributes and codes) HP3-Multiple Family Property

P4. Resources Present Building Structure Object Site District Other (isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photograph or Drawing (Photograph required for buildings, structures, and objects)

P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)
Western elevation, 9/16/2013



P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:
 Prehistoric Historic Both
1950-F

P7. Owner and Address
Armando J. and Catherine Berriz
1781 Brooksfall Court
Westlake Village, CA 91361

P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation and address)
Mitch Stone,
San Buenaventura Research Associates
1328 Woodland Drive
Santa Paula, CA 93060

P9. Date Recorded: 10/2/2013

P10. Survey Type: (Describe)
Landmark application

P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none")

Attachments NONE Continuation Sheet District Record Rock Art Record Other (List)
 Location Map Building, Structure and Object Record Linear Feature Record Artifact Record
 Sketch Map Archaeological Record Milling Station Record Photograph Record

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

HRI #

Primary #

Page 2 of 7

NRHP Status Code

Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 534-42 S. F Street

B1. Historic Name: McColm Manor Apartments

B2. Common Name: 534-42 S. F Street

B3. Original Use: courtyard apartments

B4. Present Use: same

B5. Architectural Style: Modern / Minimal Traditional

B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Constructed 1950, screen between buildings and pergola over entry removed after 1981.

B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown **Date:**

Original Location:

B8. Related Features:

Two, three-bay garage at rear of property

B9a. Architect: none or unknown

b. Builder: Bergseid Construction Company

B10. Significance: Theme Residential development

Area: Oxnard

Period of Significance: 1950

Property Type: Courtyard housing

Applicable Criteria:

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period and geographical scope. Also address integrity.)

The Eastwood-Lathrop Subdivision was opened in 1925 on the former lands of the John G. and Aranetta Hill property just south and west of the boundaries of the Town of Oxnard. The boundaries of the subdivision are Fifth Street on the north, Seventh Street on the south, G Street on the west and E Street on the east.

Located west of the subject property is the Hill Residence, built in the 1870s originally on a 630 acre ranch owned by John G. and Aranetta Hill. The Hills arrived in Ventura County in 1868, purchasing land from Thomas Scott, owner of Rancho El Rio de Santa Clara. John G. Hill died in 1904. His wife Aranetta lived into the 1920s. The exact date of her death could not be determined, but apparently occurred in 1925, the year the Eastwood-Lathrop Subdivision was recorded.

The Town of Oxnard, laid out in 1898 on the lands of John and Aranetta Hill, was primarily a neighborhood of single family homes during the early years. With the 1920s housing boom, multifamily housing units began to make an appearance, primarily in the form of courtyard housing. Between 1920 and 1950 approximately fifteen such properties were developed throughout the city. Today, only about seven remain. [continued]

B11. Additional Resource Attributes (List attributes and codes)

B12. References:

California Death Index.

Ventura County Directories.

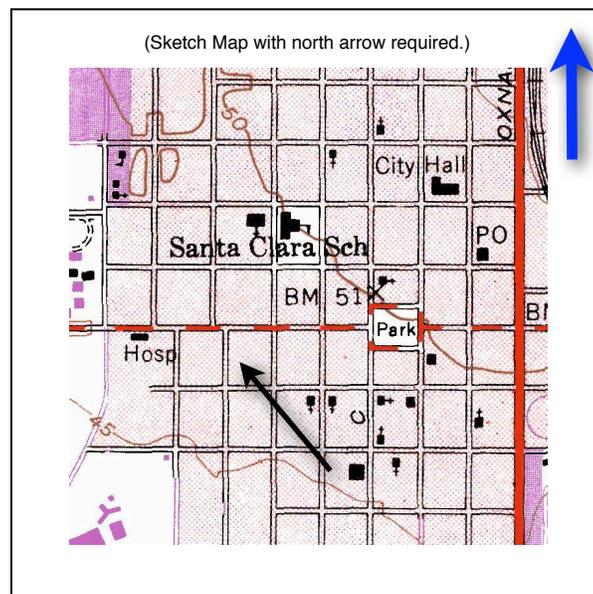
Oxnard Courier, 12/9/1904. "Pioneer of County Gone. John G. Hill Passes Away at his Home in this City." [Continued]

B13. Remarks:

B14. Evaluator: San Buenaventura Research Associates

Date of Evaluation: 10/2/2013

(This space reserved for official comments.)



Page 3 **of** 7 **Resource Name or #:** (Assigned by recorder) 534-42 S. F Street

Recorded by: San Buenaventura Research Associates

Date 10/2/2013

Continuation **Update**

P3. Description

The wall is broken for a centered entry and concrete sidewalk originally framed by low brick planters, now replaced with brick pilasters. Two, single-story 3-bay garages are oriented towards the alley to the rear (east side) of the property. The garages are hip-roofed and accessed via vertical wood paneled awning doors. Landscape materials are confined mainly to low foundation plantings and shrubs both within and outside of the courtyard, and several mature palm trees located between the divider wall and the street.

The property's key character defining features include:

- exterior finish
- roof shape and eave treatment
- steel sash and glass block windows
- tile in kitchen and bathrooms
- stairways and pipe rail balusters
- open pergolas over entries
- faux shutters

Known alterations to the property include:

- replacement of one steel sash window on the second story of the southern building with aluminum sliders.
- covering of two small brick planters at the street entry with brick pilasters
- removal of a freestanding pergola over the street entry
- removal of a frame screen connecting the buildings at the rear of the building Ls.



Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)

Southern building, northern and western elevations. (9/16/2013)

CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #

HRI #

Trinomial

Page 4 of 7 Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 534-42 S. F Street

Recorded by: San Buenaventura Research Associates

Date 10/2/2013

Continuation Update

B10. Significance

Site-Specific Context

The 12-unit courtyard housing complex at 534-42 S. F Street known as McColm Manor was completed in 1950 for Ralph C. and Sofia McColm. Ralph Carter McColm was born in Kansas in 1893 and by the late 1920s was living in Longview, Washington where he practiced as a chiropractor. The couple moved to Southern California during the late 1940s, and shortly thereafter begin investing heavily in real estate and real estate development around Ventura County. Their development company was listed in directories as County Construction Company and Venco Construction Company (the latter incorporated in 1965). In late 1949 they purchased two adjacent parcels in the Eastwood and Lathrop Subdivision from Edgar and Martha Johnson. It appears the McColms lived in Ojai for a number of years, later moving to Santa Barbara, where Ralph McColm died in 1975. The date and location of death for Sophia McColm could not be readily determined. The property remained in the McColm family ownership until at least the 1970s.

The designer of these buildings is undocumented. They were constructed by the Bergseid Construction Company, a large and prolific Ventura-based contracting firm. Given the size of the Bergseid Construction firm, they quite possibly designed smaller projects, such as this one, in-house. This firm had its beginning in 1927, three years after Theodore Bergseid arrived in Ventura to join his older brother Thomas. It appears they formed a construction company partnership, although it is unclear if it continued until the death of Thomas in 1960, as this 1950 project is credited in press reports to Theodore Bergseid. After serving in the Naval Construction Battalion during World War II, Theodore Bergseid was responsible for a wide variety of commercial, residential and institutional construction projects county-wide. The company was especially noted for its work in developing north Oxnard. Theodore Bergseid continued contracting until his retirement in 1971.

The apartments of McColm Manor provided housing to a variety of working-class Oxnard residents. The one-bedroom units were apparently mostly rented to single people, with a particular emphasis on the professions populating Ventura County during the immediate postwar period. Residents during the 1950s included members of the military, teachers, and nurses.

Local Significance and Eligibility

McColm Manor reflects special elements of the county's architectural history under **Criterion 1** as a scarce example of a housing type that was built primarily during the 1920s through the 1950s to address the demand for multifamily housing. The postwar boom and the lack of construction during the Great Depression and wartime created an urgent need for housing throughout Southern California, of both single family and multifamily types. Literally thousands of these housing types were built throughout Southern California and Oxnard was no exception.

The property is an example of the "u-parti" form of courtyard apartment complex, as defined in the typology created by Polyzoides, et. al., 1992. One of the most common and characteristic of the courtyard types built in Southern California, the u-parti is defined by building masses enclosing a courtyard on three sides with an opening facing the street. The courtyard in this type was typically "completed with a thin wall screen connecting the two front bars of the U," a detail seen in this property. A cursory view of Sanborn Maps for this period suggests that roughly fifteen of these u-parti apartment courtyards complexes were built in Oxnard by 1950, with perhaps half of them remaining today. (Polyzoides, et. al, 1992: 42)

The seven remaining courtyard apartment complexes in Oxnard include the subject property (1950), Olive Court at 401 W. Fourth Street (1923), Palm Court at 330 W. Palm Drive (ca. 1930), 380 W. Palm Drive (ca. 1950), 127 N. D Street (ca. 1945), 529 First Street (ca. 1950), and 531 S. F Street (1926). The last of these courtyard complexes was listed as an Oxnard City Landmark in 2010, on the basis of its significance as a type of residential construction (courtyard housing).

Under **Criterion 2**, the property at 534-42 S. F Street is not associated with the lives of persons or events who have made a significant contribution to the city of Oxnard. The builders and original owners Ralph and Sophia McColm apparently never lived in Oxnard, and made no, known significant contributions to the city's development.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial

Page 5 of 7 Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 534-42 S. F Street

Recorded by: San Buenaventura Research Associates

Date 10/2/2013

Continuation Update

Criterion 3 relates to archaeological resources and is not relevant to this evaluation.

Under **Criterion 4**, McColm Manor at 534-42 S. F Street embodies the architectural design, details and materials characteristic of the courtyard housing, a type of housing popular from the 1920s through the 1950s, and is one of the later examples of this courtyard type. It is designed in the Modern style, incorporating elements of the Minimal Traditional style also popular during the immediate postwar period. The Minimal Traditional style is a popularized form of the Modern style that incorporates familiar design elements derived from historical architectural styles (e.g., Colonial, Cape Cod) into otherwise Modern buildings. The low-pitched hipped roof, boxed eaves and faux shutters seen on this property are representative of this approach.

The property is an example of the “u-parti” form of courtyard apartment complex, as defined in the typology created by Polyzoides, et. al., 1992. One of the most common and characteristic of the courtyard types built in Southern California, the u-parti is defined by building masses enclosing a courtyard on three sides with an opening facing the street. The courtyard in this type is often “completed with a thin wall screen connecting the two front bars of the U,” a detail seen in this property. (Polyzoides, et. al, 1992: 42).

As the courtyard apartment form evolved into the 1950s, elements of the basic form began to change. The central landscaped courtyard was often replaced with a swimming pool, and individual unit entries tended to be replaced with common exterior balconies above the ground floor. This property is a transitional example, as the three upstairs units in each building are accessed by a common stairway and balcony and the landscape courtyard remains the central focus.

Under **Criterion 5**, the property does not represent the work of a master builder or designer. It was built by a contractor with no architect known to have been involved.

Under **Criterion 6**, the property does not meet the criteria for traditional or legendary lore.

Under **Criterion 7**, it does not have a unique location or single physical characteristic, or view representing an established feature associated with the city of Oxnard.

Under **Criterion 8**, McColm Manor is one of the four remaining examples of postwar courtyard housing in Oxnard.

The property has retained substantial integrity. The property is still in its original location. Its design in the Modern style has remained essentially intact. An aluminum slider inserted within one original opening is the only apparent alteration to the fabric of the buildings. An open wood framed two-story screen joining the apartment buildings at the rear of the courtyard has been removed, along with a freestanding pergola originally located at the entry sidewalk. The property's integrity of materials and workmanship are also largely intact. The property is in good condition. In addition, the property retains a number of key interior architectural features, including original cabinets, and counter tiling in the kitchens and bathrooms.

The property at 534-42 S. F Street appears to be individually eligible as a Oxnard City Landmark under Criteria 1, 4 and 8. It is also appears to be eligible as part of a discontinuous district comprised of the remaining seven U-plan courtyard apartment complexes in Oxnard built between 1920 and 1950. Further research and documentation would be required to establish the eligibility of this potential district.

B12. References

Oxnard Daily Courier; 5-24-1950, 3-31-1985.

Polyzoides, Stefanos, Roger Sherwood, and James Tice. *Courtyard Housing in Los Angeles*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992 (second edition).

Sanborn Maps, 1929 updated to 1950.

U.S. Census.

Page 6 **of** 7 **Resource Name or #:** (Assigned by recorder) 534-42 S. F Street

Recorded by: San Buenaventura Research Associates
Ventura County Grant Deeds

Date 10/2/2013

Continuation **Update**

Map of Eastwood and Lathrop's Subdivision, August 1925.



Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)

Detail of entries, balcony and stairway.
(9/16/2013)



Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)

Garages, eastern elevation. (9/13/2013)

Page 7 **of** 7 **Resource Name or #:** (Assigned by recorder) 534-42 S. F Street

Recorded by: San Buenaventura Research Associates

Date 10/2/2013

Continuation **Update**



Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)

Kitchen interior, typical. (9/13/2013)



Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)

Western elevation, showing original wall configuration, pergola and screen. (1981)