

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

HISTORIC SIGNIFIGANCE REPORT

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1325 Morrison Avenue

Santa Barbara, CA



Figure 1 1325 Morrison Avenue from: Herics, Sebastian, May 2021. The rest of the photos in this report are by the same author taken on the same day unless otherwise noted.

Designation Status: Contributing Property to a Historic District

Assessor Parcel Number: 029-091-023

Constructed: Circa 1918

Historic Name: None

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Unknown

Architectural Style: Craftsman

Property Type: Single Family Residence

Original Use: Residential



Figure 2 The full-length porch entrance. Note the transomed single-pane windows and trussed front gable.

What makes this place historic?

The property is within the Bungalow Haven Historic District, exemplifying the time at the beginning of the twentieth century when bungalows took America by storm. The typical bungalow was a single-story structure suited to a warm climate, with verandas for outdoor entertainment, overhanging eaves and multiple windows to provide shade and cross-ventilation in the days before air conditioning. These small

houses helped fulfill many Americans' wish to own their own home. With climate and economic opportunity drawing more people westward, homey bungalows sprang up rapidly in California. The Ready-Cut Bungalow Company estimates it shipped over 40,000 bungalow kits to Southern California from 1910 through the 1920s. For about \$650 everything you needed to construct a bungalow would be delivered to your lot. Simple and affordable, the bungalow itself became a visual motif, and along with citrus groves and palm trees, was a part of the California setting.

The District comprises a collection of over 80% historic bungalows and is a unique area in Santa Barbara within the Lower Riviera neighborhood, developed between circa 1900 and 1940. Bungalows characterize the district, a majority designed in the Craftsman and Spanish Colonial Revival styles. Outside of the district, post-World War II development demolished single-family houses for apartment and condominium complex construction, but this special district still maintains historical integrity, representing Santa Barbara's modest middle- and working-class residential neighborhoods within the first half of the twentieth century.



Figure 3 Characteristic wide eaves and board-and-batten gable. Characteristic windows may be glimpsed, as can a few exposed rafter tails.

The house in this report retains sufficient integrity to qualify for designation as a **Contributing Property** to the Bungalow Haven Historic District under Criteria 3. The house retains the majority of its character-defining elements, including its clapboard siding and open porch, therefore contributing to the visual and physical integrity of the Bungalow Haven Historic District.

Property Description:

This is a one-story clapboard sided Craftsman style house with a low-pitched side gabled roof, covered in composition shingles. A small porch is sheltered by a narrow front gable roof with exposed rafter tails. Trellis-like supports are located under the gable at the base. The entrance door is wood paneled with a fixed pane of glass in the upper register. Fenestration is comprised of a combination of fixed single pane windows and single hung sash windows.

City Directory:

1918: Mrs. Gertrude Cook 1920: R.H. Wilson

1925: F. B. Hall

1930: A.M. Hamilton

1940: B.V. Herrera

1945: S.P. Calef, owner

1951: C.R. Houtz, owner

1960: Mrs. Ruth Houtz, owner 1970: Frank F. Murray, owner 1975-81: Maurice La Zarus

1985: Bob Rodgers



Figure 4 Latticed porch post, not original to the home but nonetheless fitting.

Historic Integrity:

“Integrity” is how well a historic place or resource represents the period or theme for which it is being recognized for. To prove “Integrity,” researchers use the National Register of Historic Place’s definition of “Integrity.” For the National Register, Integrity is determined by the historic resource’s Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association (Integrity, 44). Despite the addition of latticed posts to the front porch, 1325 Morrison Avenue maintains its integrity because it successfully conveys its 1910s appearance, contributing to the integrity of the Bungalow Haven Historic District.

Historical Significance:

“Historical Significance” is a term used by the city to call a place historical. A place earns “Historical Significance” if it meets one or all of the criteria listed below in the City of Santa Barbara. The Landmarks Commission and City Council decides whether or not, based on these criteria, if a historical place is a Historic Landmark or a Structure of Merit (Chapter 30.157). A place may also be historical as a Contributing property to a Landmark District, or a Historic District (Chapter 30.57). This building qualifies for designation as a **Contributing Property**, because it:

Meets Criteria 1: *It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution in our past;*

~~Meets Criteria 2: It is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;~~

Meets Criteria 3: *It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, architectural style or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic or historic value, or represents a significant and distinguishable collection whose individual components may lack distinction;*

The property's Craftsman character, evident in its architectural details, represents the Bungalow Haven Historic District, which preserves a middle- and working-class neighborhood developed between the 1900s and 1940s.

Craftsman homes are characterized by low-sloped roofs with large eave overhangs, generally simple in form. Other notable character defining features of Craftsmen style exhibited at this property are:

- Horizontal wood siding
- Trussed porch gable with latticed porch posts
- Exposed beams and rafter tails
- Single-pane transomed windows as well as single-hung wood sash windows used throughout
- Unique low-pitched cross-gabled roof

Craftsman homes are important because they are uniquely American—and Californian—creations, appearing first around 1905. Where else but in the Golden State, with access to the Pacific by ship and East Coast by rail, could Japanese styling and the English Arts and Crafts movement be fused together? The Gamble House—the quintessential international example of a Craftsman home in its fully realized ideals of carpentry, wood work, design, and architecture—was built just down in Pasadena by the Greene brothers. The building would shape home building of all scales for over a third of the twentieth century through pattern books and newspapers. So impactful was the Gamble House, that by the 1920s one could mail order an entire Craftsman house for assembly. The cozy feeling of the interior created by intricate wood work, buffered against the outside world by a porch, is the exact feeling that has made Craftsman homes unique. The welcoming low-lying mass attests to the style's homey California character, as does the humble wood siding, brackets, and porch posts atop piers. A kind of welcoming found along the streets of Santa Barbara's Bungalow Haven Historic District.

Extensive development did not occur within the District until after 1901, when the Southern Pacific Railroad Company linked Los Angeles to Northern California with a coastal railroad. With the northern segment of the rail line completed, an economic boom shortly followed in Santa Barbara, largely tied to the City's expanding resort industry. With the additional construction of an expanded rail yard, the building or expansion of hotels, and the opening of the State Normal School in 1913, thousands of workers were drawn to the city. Santa Barbara's population nearly quintupled between 1900 to 1940, from 7,000 residents to 34,000. Within walking distance of downtown, the Bungalow Haven neighborhood expanded accordingly (Community Development).

The neighborhood reflects changing trends in architecture, transportation and town planning. It was characterized by modest, one-story, bungalow, frame houses, most often designed in the Craftsman and Spanish Colonial Revival styles with intact early twentieth century streets, curbs, and sidewalks. Over half the houses in the District are in the Craftsman style, which was a typical trend in modest neighborhoods developing throughout

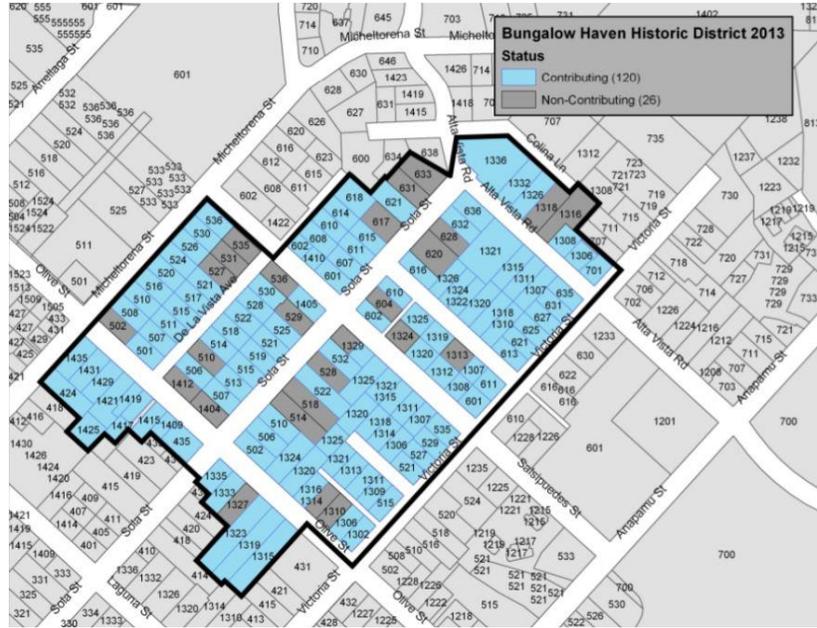


Figure 5 The Bungalow Haven Historic District from: Community Development, City of Santa Barbara. *Proposed Bungalow Haven Historic District.* <https://www.santabarbaraca.gov/civicax/filebank/blobload.aspx?BlobID=35953>.

the state during the early twentieth century. Retaining its essential integrity of setting, design, and association, the District conveys the essential qualities of its period of significance (1900-1940). Therefore, the District exemplifies the characteristics that typified Santa Barbara’s modestly scaled residential neighborhoods of the early twentieth century, peopled with working and middle-class Santa Barbarans (Community Development).

~~Meets Criteria 4:~~ *It yields, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history; or*

~~Meets Criteria 5:~~ *Its unique location or singular physical characteristic represents an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood.*

Works Cited

Community Development, City of Santa Barbara. *Proposed Bungalow Haven Historic District*.

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“How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property” in *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for*

Evaluation, National Register Bulletin NRB 15,

https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf.