

Richard Brandi
Historic Preservation Consultant

April 4, 2022

Mr. Michael Nash, President
Baywood Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 349
San Mateo, CA 94401

Dear Mr. Nash:

You asked whether in my opinion the house at 415 Fairfax Avenue could qualify as a contributor to the Baywood Historic District. In my opinion, 415 Fairfax Avenue does qualify as a contributor to the Baywood Historic District.

I concluded in a report dated March 25, 2022 that the Baywood Neighborhood as defined in the report is eligible for listing as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under criteria A and C. Baywood meets criterion A for its development as a commuter suburb of San Francisco, as a historic streetcar suburb, and as a historic automobile suburb. Baywood meets the National Register test for historic districts for having a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development. Baywood also meets criterion C because it represents a significant and distinguishable entity, the components of which may lack individual distinction. The houses in Baywood reflect the popular revival styles of the 1920s and 1930s, including Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival, Mediterranean Revival, Tudor Revival, Classical Revival, and Italian Renaissance; and embody the distinctive characteristics of the revival types and method of construction.

I reviewed the HRE on 415 Fairfax Avenue completed for the City of San Mateo by architecture + history, llc.¹ That report concluded that the building is not eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources as an individual contributor but it did not address whether it could be a contributor to a historic district. However, the report did find that:

The building at 415 Fairfax Avenue in San Mateo's Baywood Subdivision is a wood frame, single-family residence in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. This particular revival style became hugely popular in California from the 1910s into ...Spanish Colonial Revival houses almost always are of wood frame construction with a stucco finish. The use of the arch was very common, especially above doors, porch entries and main windows. The stucco finish, red roofing tiles, large, multi-paned windows, and wood porch posts give the house at 415 Fairfax Avenue its Spanish

¹ historical resource evaluation report, 415 fairfax avenue, san mateo, ca, architecture + history, llc, san francisco, ca, June 14, 2021

Revival-style character.²

While the house is illustrative of the housing type and pattern of development within the Baywood subdivision, that association is evident in many of the houses in the subdivision and is not individually significant in this case.

While the house embodies the distinctive characteristics of a Spanish Revival-style house, it is not an outstanding example within the context of the style as represented in San Mateo and thus is not individually eligible for the California Register.³

Based on the HRE which states 415 Fairfax Avenue “embodies the distinctive characteristics of a Spanish Revival-style,” in my opinion 415 Fairfax Avenue is a contributor to the eligible Baywood Historic District which includes the Spanish Colonial Revival style. It is located within the boundaries of historic district used my report. The house was built in 1933, placing within the period of significance (1927-1950). The historic building permits listed in the architecture + history, llc report do not reveal that any exterior alterations were made. A historic photo shows the house newly completed:



Source: Gregory N. Zompolis, *Images of America, San Mateo*, Arcadia Publishing, 2004, page 96. Photo undated but circa 1930s given state of the landscaping.

² Page 16 of HRE.

³ Page 19 of HRE.



Photo by R. Brandi 2022.

The historic photo confirms that the house has not been altered on its primary façade and thus it retains its historic integrity. Therefore, in my opinion, 415 Fairfax Avenue is a contributor to the Baywood Historic District.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Richard Brandi

Richard Brandi
Historic Preservation Consultant
125 Dorchester Way
San Francisco, CA 94127
Brandipreservation.com