

ATTACHMENT B:
PROPERTY DESCRIPTION & HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Property Description:

Property Data:

- Address: 801 South San Rafael Avenue, Pasadena
- Location: West side of South San Rafael Avenue between San Rafael Terrace and Hillside Terrace
- Date of Construction Completion: 1947 (source: original building permit)
- Original Architect: Unidentified (source: original building permit)
- Original Builder and First Owner: Homs P. Tuttle (Source: original building permit)
- Original / Present Use: Single-family residence
- Property size: 0.79 acres (source: County Assessor)
- Building size: 4,337 square-feet (source: City of Pasadena property record)

Architectural Description:

The Site

The site is a 0.79 acre irregularly shaped lot located in the South San Rafael neighborhood. A recently constructed one-story, three-car garage is located closest to the street and is accessed by a circular driveway. Beyond the garage is the two-story primary single-family residence oriented toward South San Rafael Avenue. Behind the house, not significantly visible from the street, is a one-story attached building volume, one-story detached accessory dwelling unit and a large in-ground pool and spa. The site is also heavily landscaped, and several large mature trees are found throughout the property.

Exterior Features of the Building

This two-story Monterey Colonial style residence was completed in 1947. Although the original architect is unknown, the first owner, Holms P. Tuttle, is identified in the permit records as the owner and contractor. Character defining features of this house include a 2-story rectangular massing with a one-story appendage with a wide street frontage, a low-pitched side-facing gable roof, a cantilevered balcony set under the main roof the house that spans the entire primary façade and is enclosed with a wooden railing, flat stucco walls along the ground-floor level and wood siding on the second level walls. The primary street facing elevation is predominantly symmetrical. A main entry door is centered on the façade, surrounded with classical trim detailing, and flanked by a pair of double hung windows on either side. In addition, two French door openings and two double hung windows are symmetrically composed along the second floor level.

Documented Changes to the Property

Multiple changes were made to the property prior to John Van de Kamp purchasing it, including small room additions, construction of an additional chimney, construction of a patio cover, conversion of garage space to habitable space, and other miscellaneous interior remodeling . However, only a few alterations were made during his tenure there, including a roof replacement with an alternative roofing material (wood shingles to fiberglass shingles), and an interior kitchen remodel.

After his passing in 2017, the house and grounds were extensively remodeled. Significant alterations include the addition of a spa to the existing pool (BMN2019-01226), a 466 square foot rear addition, exterior remodeling at the sides and rear of the primary structure, interior remodeling throughout, and the new construction of an accessory structure (three-car garage) directly in front of the residence (BLD2019-01654). Other alterations included window and door replacements (BLDSFR2020-10498), paving to accommodate a circular driveway leading to the new three-car garage (ZON2021-00065), major remodeling of the rear playroom (BLDSFR2021-01175), and the new construction of an accessory dwelling unit in the rear yard (BLDSFR2021-01263).

Current Conditions, Use, and Proposed Plans

The house is currently in good condition and is used as a single family residence. No significant changes to the property, such as demolition, subdivision, or other “major projects” that may affect its potential historical significance are proposed at this time.

Historical Overview:

John Van de Kamp

John Van de Kamp was born on February 7, 1936, and during his early youth resided in Altadena before moving to Pasadena with his family. He attended the private Trailfinders School for Boys in Altadena for his early education and then attended John Muir High School in Pasadena. He then graduated from Dartmouth College and Stanford Law School and spent a short time in the military.

Professionally, he served as the 37th District Attorney for the County of Los Angeles from 1975 to 1981 and as the 28th Attorney General for California from 1983 to 1991. He unsuccessfully campaigned for the Democratic nomination for Governor of California in 1990, losing to Diane Feinstein. He subsequently retired from public office in 1991 and continued to practice law as a private attorney. He served on the Board of Governors of the State Bar of California from 2001 to 2005, and was the President of the Board from 2004 to 2005. Other notable accomplishments from his time as a private attorney include serving as the independent reform monitor for the City of Vernon, the Getty Trust, and various cases related to environmental protection.

Aside from his professional accomplishments, John Van de Kamp was also involved in multiple local activities after his retirement from politics, including involvement with the Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena Education Foundation, St. Andrews Church, and helped fundraise for the Jackie and Mack Robinson memorial located in front of Pasadena's City Hall.

A more detailed list of professional and personal accomplishments was included in the application submittal package, which is included as part of this report (Attachment B).