

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

November 15, 2017

HDRC CASE NO: 2017-534
ADDRESS: 433 NATALEN AVE
437 NATALEN AVE
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 6781 BLK 3 LOT 78, 79, 80, W 12.5 FT OF 77 & E 12.5 FT OF 81
ZONING: MF-33,NCD-6
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 2
APPLICANT: Joan Brooks/Mahncke Park Neighborhood Association Board of Directors
OWNER: Robert Garza/Adryca Investments & Consulting LLC
TYPE OF WORK: A request for review by the HDRC regarding eligibility of the property located at 433 and 437 Natalen Ave for landmark designation.

REQUEST:

A request for review by the HDRC regarding eligibility of the property located at 433 and 437 Natalen Ave for landmark designation.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Unified Development Code Sec. 35-606. - Designation Process for Historic Landmarks.

(a) **Authority.** Requests for landmark designation may only be made by or with the concurrence of the property owner. In instances where a property owner does not consent to the landmark designation, the historic preservation officer shall request a resolution from city council to proceed with the designation process prior to any zoning commission hearing. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a request for landmark designation may be made and approved by the city council. To the extent that this subsection conflicts with any other provisions of this chapter, this paragraph shall control except for buildings, objects, sites, structures, or clusters heretofore designated as local landmarks or districts, National Register landmarks or districts, state historic landmarks or sites, or state archaeological landmarks or sites. Additionally, requests for designation shall be made on a form obtained from the city historic preservation officer through the office of historic preservation. Completed request forms shall be returned to the office of historic preservation for processing. All buildings, objects, sites, structures, or clusters heretofore designated by the city council as historic landmarks under any pre-existing ordinance of the City of San Antonio shall be accorded the protection of properties designated historic landmarks under this chapter and shall continue to bear the words "historic, exceptional" (HE) or "historic, significant" (HS) in their zoning designation.

(b) **Designation of Historic Landmarks.**

(1) **Initiation.** Any person, the historic and design review commission, zoning commission, the historic preservation officer, or the city council may initiate a historic landmark designation by filing an application with the historic preservation officer. Requests for designation shall be made on a form obtained from the city historic preservation officer. Completed request forms shall be returned to the office of historic preservation for processing. Owner consent for historic landmark designation shall be required unless a city council resolution to proceed with the designation has been approved. Additionally, owners may submit with the application a written description and photographs or other visual material of any buildings or structures that they wish to be considered for designation as non-contributing to the historic landmark.

(3) **Decision.** The historic preservation officer shall refer a completed application for historic landmark designation to the historic and design review commission. Property owners of proposed historic landmarks shall be notified of the historic and design review commission hearing by the historic preservation officer by mail prior to a historic and design review commission hearing for historic landmark designation. Notice to property owners shall state the place, date, time and purpose of the historic and design review commission hearing. The historic preservation officer shall also send notice of the meeting to any registered neighborhood associations located within the proposed district boundary. The historic and design review commission shall make and forward its recommendation to the zoning commission within forty-five (45) days from the date of submittal of the designation request by the historic preservation officer. Upon submittal of the historic and design review commission's recommendation, the proposed historic district or landmark designation shall be submitted to the zoning commission for its review

recommendations along with its finding of historic significance. The zoning commission and the city council shall process the application as prescribed in [section 35-421](#) of this chapter and this section. The zoning commission shall schedule a hearing on the historic and design review commission recommendation to be held within sixty (60) days of receipt of such recommendation and shall forward its recommendation to city council which shall schedule a hearing to be held within sixty (60) days of council's receipt of such recommendation. Upon passage of any ordinance designating a historic landmark, or removing or upgrading the designation of historic, the city clerk shall send notice of the fact by mail to the owner or owners of affected property.

Unified Development Code Sec. 35-607. – Designation Criteria for Historic Districts and Landmarks.

(a) **Process for Considering Designation of Historic Districts and Landmarks.** Historic districts and landmarks shall be evaluated for designation using the criteria listed in subsection (b) and the criteria applied to evaluate properties for inclusion in the National Register. In order to be eligible for historic landmark designation, properties shall meet at least three (3) of the criteria listed. Historic districts shall consist of at least two (2) or more structures within a legally defined boundary that meet at least three (3) of the criteria. Additionally, all designated landmarks and districts shall demonstrate clear delineation of the legal boundaries of such designated resources.

(b) **Criteria For Evaluation.**

(4) Its identification as the work of a master builder, designer, architect, or landscape architect whose individual work has influenced the development of the community, county, state, or nation;

(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.

(8) Its historical, architectural, or cultural integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship;

FINDINGS:

- a. A demolition application was submitted on September 8, 2017 to the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) by the property owner for the structure at 433 and 437 Natalen which is located in the Mahncke Park Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD-6). OHP Staff conducted research, met with the owner and contacted the neighborhood association during the 30 day review period provided by UDC 35-455.
- b. A Request for Review of Historic Significance for 433 and 437 Natalen was submitted to OHP by the Mahncke Park Neighborhood Association on October 12, 2017.
- c. If the HDRC agrees with the request, OHP will seek concurrence from the owner. If the owner is in favor of designation, the request may proceed in the designation process. In the case where an owner is not in favor, OHP shall forward the recommendation of the HDRC to City Council for consideration of a resolution to initiate the landmark designation process as outlined in UDC 35-606. If the HDRC does not agree with the request, a resolution from City Council to initiate the landmark designation will not be sought.
- d. **ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT** – This two-story apartment building was built circa 1959 and contains eight units. The structure is typical of apartments constructed during this time, featuring front stone façade, faux wooden lattice, aluminum windows, a flat roof, asbestos siding on side and rear. An asphalt driveway leads to the rear with carports on basement level and two-story metal exterior balcony for access to units. The structure is setback significantly from the street, consistent with the development pattern on this block. It is located in Mahncke Park near Fort Sam Houston and is an example of the proliferation of multi-family housing stock after WWII.
- e. **SITE CONTEXT** – The structure is located in a residential neighborhood among other Post-WWII single and multi-family dwellings. Platted as Natalen Terrace, the neighborhood was surveyed as part of the Mahncke Park 2005 survey and was evaluated eligible to be a historic district. Demolition of post-war multi-family housing has occurred on Natalen and the adjacent street of Claremont, changing the context of the block and streetscape of the neighborhood.
- f. **EVALUATION** – The applicant proposed a list of three (3) criteria for eligibility. These include: (b)(10) Its character as an established and geographically definable neighborhood, united by culture, architectural style or physical plan and development; (b)(11) It is distinctive in character, interest or value; strongly exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, ethnic or historical heritage of San Antonio, Texas or the United States; (b)(12) It is an important example of a particular architectural type or specimen. Staff evaluated the structure against all 16 criteria and determined that it was consistent with UDC sec. 35-607(b)(5) It's embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of

construction, or use of indigenous materials -- the property reflects the proliferation of post-World War II multi-family housing in San Antonio. The structure at 433 and 437 Natalen is a typical example of post WWII multi-family residential housing. While 433 - 437 Natalen is of the appropriate historic age and displays some characteristics and features of mid-century modern architecture, such as horizontal massing and composition, low-pitched roof, large windows on the principle façade, and parallel placement to street, it is not an exceptional example of the style and does not meet additional criteria required for landmark status.

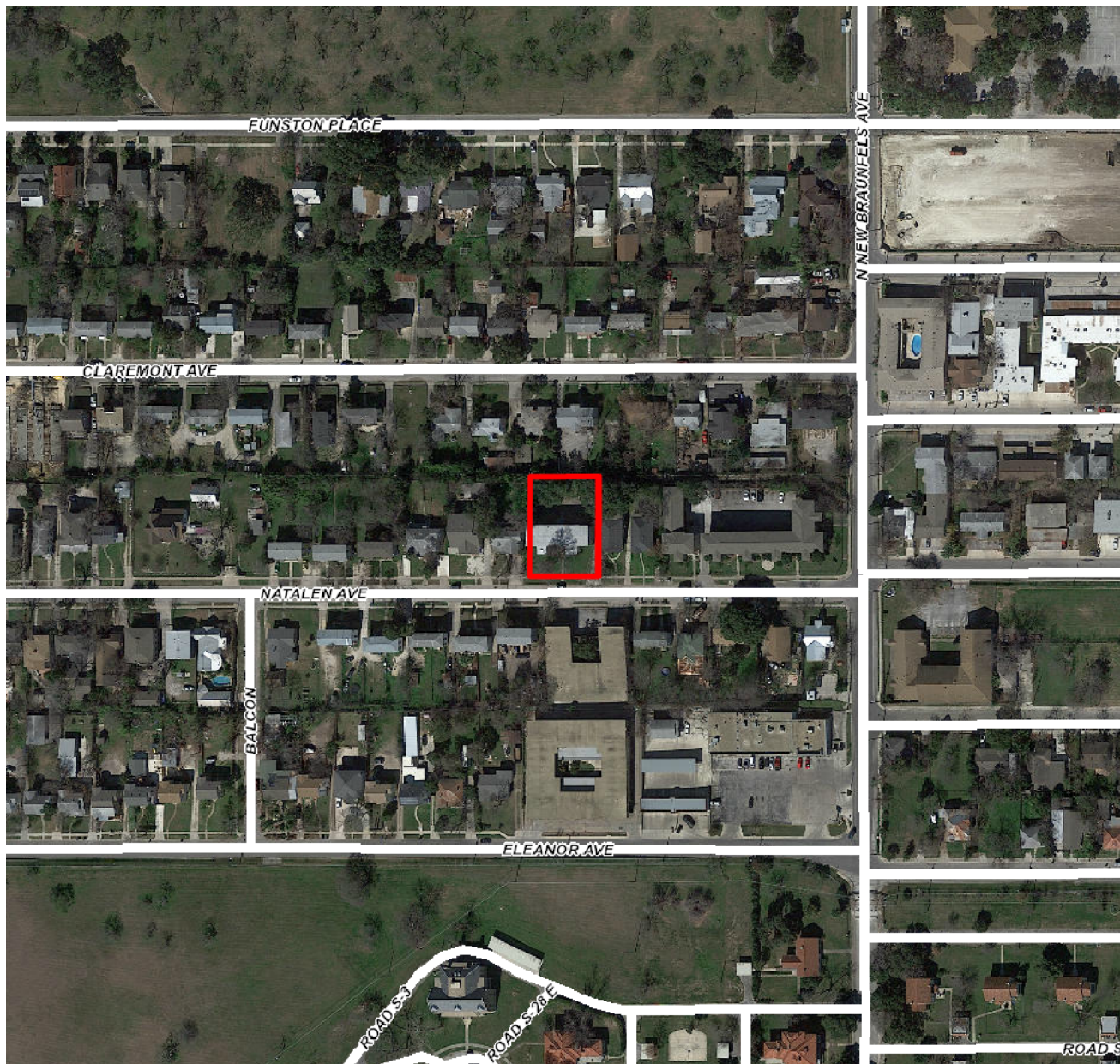
- g. While the structure may not be eligible for landmark designation, it would certainly be a contributing structure to a local historic district. The property is located in a neighborhood conservation district currently. The district is eligible to become a local historic district.
- h. Per UDC Sec. 35-453, once the commission makes a recommendation for designation, property owners must receive a written approval (a Certificate of Appropriateness) for any exterior work until the City Council makes their final decision.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff does not recommend approval of the request. Staff finds that the property at 433 and 437 Natalen does not meet at least 3 of the 16 criteria for evaluation and is not eligible for landmark designation based on findings f through h. If the Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC) approves the request, the HDRC will become the applicant and will request a resolution from the City Council to initiate the designation process.

CASE MANAGER:

Lauren Sage

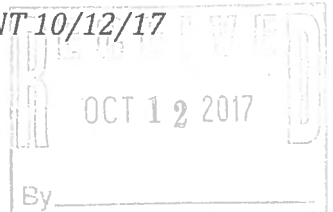


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Printed: Oct 25, 2017

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433/437 Natalen Ave.

The Board of Directors for the Mahncke Park Neighborhood Association request initiation of the historic designation process for **433/437 Natalen Ave.** This 8-plex along with the entire street of Natalen contributes to the historic significance of the neighborhood and supports the guiding principle of the SA Comprehensive Plan to maintain the character and integrity of existing San Antonio neighborhoods.

Statement of significance as defined in Sec. 35-607. - Designation Criteria for Historic Districts and Landmarks.

10. Its character as an established and geographically definable neighborhood, united by culture, architectural style or physical plan and development;
11. It is distinctive in character, interest or value; strongly exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, ethnic or historical heritage of San Antonio, Texas or the United States;
12. It is an important example of a particular architectural type or specimen;

Deed Number: 20170164183

This home is located in Mahncke Park, a suburb established in the 20th century by Ludwig Mahncke, and is part of Natalen Terrace, which was platted by the B.G. Irish Co. in 1927 (San Antonio Light, 3/3/1927). B. G. Irish was one of San Antonio's most prominent subdivision developers in the early twentieth century. Some of his 34 major subdivisions included: Brackenridge Place, Beacon Hill Terrace, The Highlands, Myrtle Lawn, Natalen Terrace, Northview, and Collins Gardens. An article about his funeral in 1930 credited his activities as "instrumental in extending the corporate limits" of San Antonio ("Developers of San Antonio, A-I").



Natalen Terrace's proximity to Broadway was touted both in a 1927 ad for home sites (San Antonio Light, 3/3/1927) and in an advertisement for a two-story duplex apartment on Natalen Avenue in 1954 (San Antonio Express & News, 2/14/1954). This eight-plex at 433/437 Natalen was built in 1958. An ad in the San Antonio Light described "a few spanking 'NEW' 1[?] bedroom apts. Available in building just completed" (10/29/1958). When it opened, the apartment building was "smartly furnished" and featured central heat and air conditioning. It is a classic mid-century modern exterior design with a flat roof with an extra wide overhang over the front facade, front windows sans framing, and modernist standing lamps in the front, which has been adapted to central Texas with stone wall cladding. Also, there are mature trees on the site.

Per our Neighborhood Plan on page 29 and 32, we recognize and promote existing character of neighborhood housing through home ownership, **home improvement and maintenance, rehabilitation, historic preservation, and discourage incompatible development.** This eight-unit apartment on Natalen represents a significant stage in the neighborhood's evolution during the mid-20th century. During the 1950s, the Natalen Terrace subdivision was advertised as an "excellent rental area," with attractive apartments conveniently located near Broadway, Fort Sam, and the San Antonio Country Club. **Choosing rehabilitation over demolition** would provide an excellent opportunity to promote affordable housing, while preserving the character of this street, which has kept much of its historic housing stock intact.

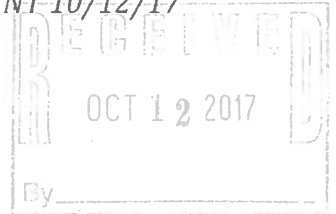
Reference:

1) Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan:

<https://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/Planning/NPUD/MahnckeParkNPwithAppendices.pdf>

2) Photos (attached to email)

- 433_437 Natalen 1
- 433_437 Natalen 2
- 433_437 Natalen 3
- 433_437 Natalen 4
- 433_437 Natalen 5



- 433_437 Natalen 6

3) Sources:

- "Developers of San Antonio, A-I," San Antonio Conservation Society Library.
- San Antonio City Directories.
- San Antonio Express, May 29, 1930.
- San Antonio Express & News, Feb. 14, 1954.
- San Antonio Light, March 3, 1927; Oct. 29, 1958.













433-437 Natalen



Front



Rear

433-437 Natalen



Left



Right