BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Environmental Setting

The subject property, the Zimmers House, is located on the north side of La Mesa Drive, a curving street that is parallel to San Vicente Boulevard. The legal description of the subject property is Tract 7233 Lot 14 and Tract 10163 Lot 14. The residence is oriented to the south facing La Mesa Drive and is situated towards the south end of the lot. The Mexican Colonial Revival hacienda style house is located in a single-family residential neighborhood consisting primarily of large, stately homes set amongst lush landscaping.

Regulatory Setting

The one-story Mexican Colonial Revival style single-family residence was originally identified in 1983 during Phase I of the City’s Historic Resources Inventory. At that time it was found to be one of 35 contributors to a potential “La Mesa Drive District” and was given a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) status code of 5D, defined as a “contributor to a district that is eligible for local listing or designation.” A few years later the findings were reconfirmed in Phase II of the survey.1 In 2002, the “Historic Resources Inventory Update: North of Montana Survey Area,” validated the findings of the previous surveys but recommended that two properties be removed as district contributors due to demolition or alteration (1837 La Mesa Drive and 2515 La Mesa Way) and that a separate group of eight properties not previously documented be added to the Historic Resources Inventory (2009, 2154, 2402, 2510 and 2517 La Mesa Drive; and 2406, 2528 and 2538 La Mesa Way). Therefore, the total number of district contributors in 2002 increased to 41. In addition, the 2002 Inventory Update identified a potential National Register eligible “La Mesa Drive District” comprised of a subset of 32 contributors that were also contributors to a locally eligible district (3D/5D status code) with an additional 9 contributors that appeared locally eligible only (5D status code). Further, the report found that 15 of the 33 La Mesa District contributors appeared individually eligible for National Register listing, including the subject property (3B/5D status code).

Preliminary results from the 2007-2008 “Citywide Historic Resources Inventory Update” confirm that the subject property appears individually eligible for National Register listing and remains a contributor to a National Register and locally eligible “La Mesa Drive District.” In addition, the inventory update finds that the subject property is individually eligible for designation as a local landmark (equating to a combined 3B/5B status code). The 2007-2008 survey also recommends that four properties be removed from the Inventory as district contributors due to demolition or alteration (2021, 2113, 2131, 2402 La Mesa Drive) for a total of 37 contributing properties presently existing in the potential district.

1 Santa Monica Historical Resources Inventory: 1985-1986.
Architectural Description

The subject property is a one-story, single-family residence reminiscent of the rustic adobe dwellings once found on haciendas during the Mexican Colonial period (1821-1846) in what is now the American Southwest. Designed and built by renowned local architect John Byers in 1924, the residence effectively represents the Mexican Colonial Revival architectural style in its massing, materials, and architectural elements. Constructed of hand-made adobe bricks finished with plaster, the house is capped by a low-pitched hipped and side-gabled roof covered with hand-made red clay tiles. Indeed, the hand-made aspect of the adobe bricks and roof tiles was very important to John Byers. In a 1946 article on adobe houses he writes:

This type of house can only be arrived at successfully if one builds them much in the same manner as the old days one hundred years or so ago. The adobes should be made by hand, and laid up preferably by Mexican labor... They can only be done economically if the adobe bricks are made right at the building site with the soil at hand.2

He then carefully explains how to properly fashion hand-made adobe bricks. Regarding roof tiles, he states later in the article, “These tiles, to be in character, should definitely be hand-made.”3

Of the handful of Byers-designed adobe houses highlighted in the article, an entire page is given to the Mrs. E.W. Zimmers adobe, with an exterior photograph of the east end of the primary elevation and a photograph of the rear court, the latter with the caption “Note emphasis of extended eaves” (see Appendix).4 The eaves to which the caption refers appear to have been slender tree branches with rough-cut ends that extended far beyond the porch roof prior to being sheared off at a later date. The Zimmers House initially appeared in the May 1925 edition of Architect and Engineer and depicted the entire primary (south) elevation and a portion of the west elevation (see Appendix).5 Remarkably, the exterior of the house as seen from the street appears much the same today. An interior photograph of the living room also appears in the magazine (see Appendix).6

Typical of Byers’ adobe structures, the dwelling’s exterior elevations, which are finished with plaster, exhibit the rounded corners and uneven “bumpy” appearance of being hand made. A wide, recessed front porch sheltered by the main roof occupies the center bay of the almost symmetrical building’s primary (south) elevation. A trio of stucco-covered wooden posts supports the porch roof. Wrought iron railings between the posts enclose the space. Within the porch area are three deeply recessed full-height openings of which the westernmost serves as the dwelling’s main entrance. Wood-framed casement windows fronted by ornate wrought iron grilles front the porch’s other two openings. Visible fenestration punctuating the building’s east and west wings consists mainly of wood-framed casements set within deeply recessed, irregularly shaped openings. A shallow interior chimney with rounded corners emerges from the ridgeline near the east end of the main roof.

---

Sanborn maps and current photographs depict a traditional hacienda-type, U-shaped plan with east and west wings extending towards the dwelling’s rear and a small courtyard between the wings. As noted, the building’s numerous additions have mostly occurred in both of these wings; however, these modifications do not appear to have been visible from the public right-of-way. In contrast, the results of the recent demolition of the garage/bathroom/laundry room west wing are clearly visible from the street. Despite these alterations, it appears that the main portion of the house that is constructed of adobe bricks has not been noticeably impacted by the demolition when viewed from the public right-of-way. However, current photography suggests that portions of the original adobe walls located on the building’s north elevation at the rear of the dwelling may have been removed in recent months or in prior years during the construction of the noted additions. Nonetheless, because the key character-defining features of a Mexican Colonial Revival style adobe dwelling remain intact when viewed from the street, it can be concluded that the house retains its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship.

The associated landscape of the property consists of a large mature Moreton Bay Fig Tree located in the front yard, tree ferns, and what was until recently a grassy front lawn. A paved driveway borders the building’s west elevation. The property contains no auxiliary buildings. The small original patio (or courtyard) that was situated between the two rear wings of the house was greatly modified when a small swimming pool was installed in 1975. As a result, it appears that only the Moreton Bay Fig Tree would be considered potentially contributing to the property’s significance because it greatly enhances the feeling of a rustic hacienda in a mature natural setting.

The property at 2101 La Mesa Drive is an outstanding example of hand-made adobe construction which exemplifies the vision of “authentic” indigenous southwestern architecture promoted by local architect John Byers for buildings he designed and built during the 1920s and 1930s in Santa Monica. It is also a good representative example of the Mexican Colonial Revival architectural style interpreted by Byers in the form of a hacienda type residence, a rare building type in Santa Monica.

Historical Background

The significance of the subject property at 2101 La Mesa Drive was evaluated against two applicable associated historic contexts. The connection of the residence to the career of Santa Monica architect and builder, John Byers: and Mexican Colonial Revival architecture of adobe construction in the City of Santa Monica.

La Mesa Drive

Portions of this section were adapted from the “Santa Monica Historical Resources Inventory: Final Report,” prepared by Johnson Heumann Research Associates for the City of Santa Monica, 1985-1986.

Opened in 1923 as the Canyon Vista Tract, a development of the Santa Monica Land and Water Company, La Mesa Drive quickly became one of the loveliest and most sought after addresses in Santa Monica. Located at the northeast edge of the city, La Mesa Drive is an intact, six-block long, curving street of large and gracious homes mostly dating from the 1920s and 1930s. The street is parallel to San Vicente Boulevard, with access to it at each end and in the middle.
Morton Bay fig trees, notable for their overhanging canopy of branches and leaves and for their large, intricate root systems, line both sides of the street. Vintage post-top streetlamps, with paired lanterns at the ends of the drive and single ones in the interior, illuminate La Mesa at night.

Several noted architects were commissioned to design the homes that soon lined La Mesa. Most prominent among the designers was Santa Monica native son, John Byers, who is responsible for seven houses, including his own (2021, 2034, 2101 (the subject property), 2126, 2141, 2153, 2210). Byers’ work on La Mesa showed him at his most characteristic, exploring the possibilities of Spanish Colonial Revival, Mexican Colonial Revival, and the Monterey styles.

Two notable Pasadena architectural firms are also represented on La Mesa: Marston, Van Pelt and Maybury (2202) and Palmer Sabin (2233). Paul Williams, a prominent Los Angeles architect who was responsible for creating much of the contemporary upper-middle class elegance of residential districts such as Hancock Park and Beverly Hills, also designed several houses in the La Mesa Drive area (2201, 2209). In many ways, La Mesa Drive was also comparable to the graceful residential neighborhoods of Pasadena which were made architecturally outstanding by the work of these firms, among others. From the 1930s and 1940s on, La Mesa saw the construction of two homes in the International Style by Lloyd Wright and J.R. Davidson, the latter a European expatriate who was a member of the circle associated with Richard Neutra. In 1962, a stunning residence based on plans prepared by the renowned Brazilian architect, Oscar Niemeyer, was erected at 1911 La Mesa Drive.

**Mexican and Spanish Colonial Revival Styles**

Period revival styles grew in popularity just after World War I and were patterned after buildings of earlier periods in American and European architecture. Throughout the Southwest, the most common style was the Spanish Colonial Revival. Inspired by the Panama California Exposition of 1915 hosted by the City of San Diego, many architects found Southern California the ideal setting for this architectural style that idealized and romanticized the Spanish colonial period. Numerous publications argued in favor of this style for the Mediterranean environment of California, including W. Sexton’s *Spanish Influence on American Architecture and Decoration of 1926*, and Rexford Newcomb’s *The Spanish House for America: Its Design, Furnishing, and Garden*, published in 1927. Typical character-defining features of this style include asymmetrical facades, courtyards, verandas, red clay tile roofs, stucco-finished walls, wood framed multi-pane casement windows with prominent lintels and sills, arched doorways, wrought iron window grilles, projecting *vigas*, decorative carvings and glazed tiles, and fountains.

Far less common were buildings erected in the Mexican Colonial Revival style that was derived from variations of Colonial Mexican dwellings that were once associated with the *haciendas* and *ranchos* located in Southern California, the Southwest, and northern Mexico. While the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style for residential buildings became especially popular in Santa Monica in the years between the two World Wars, the Mexican Colonial Revival style, represented by the subject property, was rare.

One of the notable character-defining features of Mexican Colonial Revival-style buildings was the use of adobe bricks, a traditional, indigenous building material rarely used in the construction of twentieth-century residences in the Los Angeles region. However, Santa Monica
architect John Byers embraced indigenous materials, especially adobe, and utilized traditional methods of construction in achieving his objective of architectural “authenticity.” In a highly technical article of 1946 on adobe houses published in *Architect and Engineer*, Byers writes, “The appeal of adobe would be for those people who really want a house in the simple picturesque feeling of the early California adobes, such as are seen in the towns of Monterey and Santa Barbara, and generally scattered about California.”

In describing an appropriately designed adobe house, he concludes in the same article,

> The best result, and particularly in this material, is to go about it directly, no false roofs, no false chimneys, every rafter, every timber doing its work and nothing more; no curlicues, no funny little mouldings, just straight walls surrounding squares or rectangular spaces, good and thick, with shutters inside or out to shut off the light, and wide terrace roofs supported on simple wooden posts or adobe columns.

The MacBennett Residence of 1920 (404 Georgina Avenue), a designated Santa Monica Landmark, is one of Byers’ earliest attempts at realizing these objectives. The Zimmers House of 1924, the subject property, is another excellent example of Byers’ success in applying traditional methods to a then-contemporary dwelling four years later.

Common character-defining elements of the Mexican Colonial Revival style include thick adobe walls finished with smooth whitewashed plaster; low-pitched red-tiled roofs; broad front porches or verandas shaded by deep overhangs; deeply recessed, wood-framed, double-hung or casement windows; arcaded porches or walkways; and rear courtyards. The subject property at 2101 La Mesa Drive displays many of these architectural features in its design and configuration. The particular features incorporated into this residence that are characteristic of the style and period include its general scale and massing; thick adobe walls with smooth plaster sheathing; low-pitched, hipped and side-gabled roof covered with red clay tiles; wide, recessed front porch sheltered by deep eaves; wood-framed casement fenestration within deeply recessed openings; and a rear courtyard.

As noted, local architect John Byers was perhaps the region’s most renowned practitioner of the Mexican Colonial Revival style. Although there are seven Byers-designed and built residences from the 1920s located along La Mesa Drive (listed below) only one, the subject property, was based upon indigenous Mexican Colonial prototypes.

- 2021 La Mesa Drive (1924) Spanish Colonial Revival
- 2034 La Mesa Drive (1924) John Byers (Third) House, Monterey Revival
- 2101 La Mesa Drive (1924) Mrs. E.W. Zimmers House, Mexican Colonial Revival
- 2126 La Mesa Drive (1925) Spanish Colonial Revival
- 2141 La Mesa Drive (1928) Spanish Colonial Revival
- 2153 La Mesa Drive (1925) Spanish Colonial Revival
- 2210 La Mesa Drive (1925) Spanish Colonial Revival

---

8 Ibid. p.25.
John Byers

The property is directly associated with Santa Monica architect John Winford Byers (1875-1966). In the period between World War I and World War II, John Byers made more of an impact on the development of Santa Monica architecture than any other local practitioner.

Byers, a graduate of Harvard University, was a self-trained architect and builder who worked primarily in the City of Santa Monica. He had previously been employed as a schoolteacher of Spanish and French at San Rafael High School and Santa Monica High School. By the mid 1910s, Byers was particularly interested in architectural forms and materials indigenous to California. He completed his first commission, a house at 510 Lincoln Boulevard in Santa Monica, for W.F. Barnum, the principal of the Santa Monica High School in 1916. Byers eventually established an architectural practice at 246 26th Street (now a Santa Monica City Landmark). He explored the possibilities of a number of architectural styles including Spanish Colonial Revival, Mexican Colonial Revival, and the Monterey. He was most notable for his adobe-designed buildings, having written several articles in the 1920s and 1930s on adobe construction and its influence in the journal Architect and Engineer. Byers achieved a wide reputation in southern California for his unique architectural work, acquiring a large following in the entertainment world.

Architectural historians David Gebhard and Robert Winter summarize Byer’s importance, “though Byers was self-trained as an architect, he early developed an interest in and sensitivity to the Hispanic architectural tradition. His adobe, Spanish, English, French Norman, and American Colonial designs set an example which others followed to good effect, making northern Santa Monica an architectural monument of traditional images of the twenties and thirties.”

In the City’s Historic Resources Survey conducted in 1985-1986, six non-contiguous Byer-designed residences were identified as forming a “Byers Thematic Grouping.” The six buildings that make up the grouping are either Spanish Colonial Revival or Norman Revival. Many of his early residential designs were one-story haciendas, such as the subject property, that were reminiscent of those erected for the early Californios.

Byers’ career in Santa Monica spanned more than three decades. Examples of his work include the residences at 1707 San Vicente (Albert Ahern residence) and 1717 San Vicente (Donald Armstrong residence), 217 17th Street (Laidlaw residence), 1602 Georgina (E.J. Carrillo residence), 500 25th Street (J.B. Nethercott residence), and 270 18th Street (Speers residence). Other dwellings designed by Byers were constructed in Coachella, Victorville, Bel Air, and Beverly Hills. Byers also constructed an adobe recreation hall in Santa Monica (the Miles Memorial Playhouse), a clubhouse at Brentwood Park, and a church in San Fernando. In 1931, examples of Byers’ work were displayed in the Architects Building Materials Exhibit held in Los Angeles. In 1936, Byers, along with architect Edla Muir of West Los Angeles, designed a two-story ranch residence for R.A. Sperry in Encino. In 1946, he worked with Rose Connor, an architect from Pasadena, to design an adobe style residence in San Gabriel.

---

10 Byers Thematic Grouping survey forms, 1986.
**Samuel G. McClure**

Subject property owner Samuel Grant McClure (1863-1948) resided at 2101 La Mesa Drive from approximately 1936 until his death in 1948. He is best known as the owner and publisher of the *Santa Monica Evening Outlook* newspaper, the City’s premier and most influential periodical during that time. McClure had been the newspaper’s publisher since 1932. Before that he had owned the *Glendale News* and *Glendale News-Press*.

According to his obituary, Mr. McClure was born in Wayne County, Ohio in 1863, graduating from Ohio’s Wooster College.\(^{11}\) His newspaper career began in 1887 with the *Cleveland Leader*. From 1907 until 1922, McClure was the owner/operator of the *Youngstown Telegram*. In 1922, he moved to California and, in 1926, reentered the newspaper business with the purchase of the *Glendale News*, which he renamed the *Glendale News-Press*. McClure sold the business to the Copley newspaper chain, becoming its president, a position he held until 1932, when he left Copley and became the sole owner of the *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*.

In addition to his newspaper responsibilities, Samuel McClure was active in Santa Monica civic affairs serving as the City’s representative on the Metropolitan Water District Board of Directors. Current research indicates that McClure’s son, Robert E. McClure (1897-1978), who resided at the subject property for a few years in the late 1930s and early 1940s, went on to achieve his own prominence as the publisher of the *Evening Outlook* following his father’s death. However, the younger McClure is perhaps best known for his association with transportation issues, serving on the State Highway Commission and as the “father of the Santa Monica Freeway” for his longtime efforts to construct that portion of the transcontinental highway.\(^{12}\) The McClure Tunnel that connects the freeway with Pacific Coast Highway is named for him.

**2101 La Mesa Drive – E.W. Zimmers House**

In 1924, a building permit was issued to erect a seven-room dwelling of adobe construction at 2101 La Mesa Drive with an estimated cost of $15,000. The permit listed E.W. Zimmers, widow, as the owner with John Byers identified as both architect and builder. Seven years later, in 1931, a building permit for an addition to the rear of the house, also of adobe, costing approximately $2,000 was submitted by builder C.P. Zimmers for owner Effie W. Zimmers. City directory research identifies C.P. Zimmers as Charles P. Zimmers who, in 1927, was a draftsman with John Byers’ architectural firm. It appears logical that Charles Zimmers was Mrs. Effie Zimmers’ son, who, as a draftsman working for Byers, had his employer design and build his mother’s house in 1924. Charles Zimmers then added a room to the residence three years later utilizing his training under Byers for the addition’s adobe design and construction. City directories show that Mrs. Zimmers resided at the subject property until at least 1933.

In 1940, a rear bedroom of wood-frame construction was added for then-owner S.G. McClure by Wilson Brothers contractors. No architect was listed for the $1,000 addition. Samuel G. McClure, the property owner from approximately 1936 until 1948, was president of the Santa Monica Publishing Company, publisher of the *Santa Monica Evening Outlook* newspaper (see


persons of historical importance below).

In 1949, the building was enlarged for a 368 square-foot playroom at the rear of the dwelling costing approximately $2,500 for then-owner Rudolph Liebig. Interestingly, John Byers was hired for the project although this time he utilized wood frame and stucco construction instead of adobe. Also in 1949, Byers was retained by Mr. Liebig to enlarge the dwelling for a 140 square-foot dressing room costing $1,500. It, too, was of standard materials and not adobe.

Nine years later, in 1958, Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph S. Liebig hired the structural engineering firm of Kenneth J. Iwata & Associates to design a 220 square-foot $15,000 alteration and addition to the rear of the house with Mayfair Construction Company listed as contractor. Also in 1958, a permit was issued for $160 in house repairs utilizing contractor J. B. Eyer to remove and replace the original flashwall, replace a beetle-damaged joist with new material, install new mudsills, and cover the repair work with plaster. Rudolph Liebig was a retiree who resided with his wife Caroline in the dwelling from 1949 through at least 1961.

In 1972, then-owner Richard Falden applied for a building permit to add a bathroom and laundry to the dwelling and raise the roof height over the master bedroom and bathroom. The architectural firm of Wolf & Koch and contractor Richard Falder were hired to complete the approximately $7,600 in alterations. A small swimming pool located in the courtyard between the two rear wings of the house was installed in 1975 for then-owner E. Gregson. A wall located on the parcel’s southeast property line was removed in 2001 for then-owner Edith Morgan.

Physical evidence indicates that the current owner recently demolished (in 2008) the northwest portion of the building’s west wing containing the garage, bathroom, and laundry room. In addition, recent photographic evidence indicates that the portion of the building that extended north from the master bedroom on the dwelling’s northeast corner has been removed. It is unclear how much, if any, of the original adobe construction or elements of the rear porch roof area were impacted by the current alterations.

**Statement of Other Significance**

The subject property appears to meet criteria for high aesthetic or artistic value because it fully articulates architect John Byers’ concept of indigenous residential design based upon adobe construction techniques and aesthetic ideals associated with the Mexican Colonial Revival style. In particular, Byers’ successful and highly romanticized evocation of a Mexican ranch house is attained through pleasing horizontal lines, the hand-made texture of the exterior elevations, deeply recessed door and window openings, low-pitched red tile roof, and overall sense of rusticity.

Is the property representative of a style in the City this is no longer prevalent?

This single-family dwelling is a very good example of the uncommon Mexican Colonial Revival style and an excellent example of hand made adobe construction as interpreted by well-known local architect John Byers, the most prominent proponent of the use of adobe as a construction material for buildings in Santa Monica and the Los Angeles region in the 1920s and 1930s. Because of his influential role in promoting the style, most extant examples of Mexican Colonial Revival style adobe structures in the City are those associated with Byers. Of the approximately 25 most significant Byers-designed buildings in Santa Monica dating from this
period, it appears that less than half are of adobe construction and only a small percentage of these
are in the Mexican Colonial Revival style. Therefore, it appears that this residence is representative
of a style that is no longer prevalent in Santa Monica.

**Does the property contribute to a potential historic district?**

Both the 2002 Historic Resources Inventory Update: North of Montana Survey Area and the
preliminary findings of the 2007-2008 Citywide Historic Resources Inventory Update found the
subject property to be a contributor to a potential National Register eligible and locally eligible “La
Mesa Drive District.”

In addition, current and previous research indicates that a potential noncontiguous multiple
property thematic grouping or district consisting of the extant work of distinguished local architect
John Byers may exist in the City of Santa Monica. A preliminary review of existing Byers-designed
properties suggests that, according to City of Santa Monica criteria related to historic districts, a
noncontiguous grouping of thematically related Byers-designed properties which contribute to each
other and are unified aesthetically by physical development and architectural quality can be
identified in the City. Further, the Byers grouping appears to meet many of the same criteria
identified for individual properties discussed for the subject property in this assessment.

An abbreviated list of potential contributors to this Byers grouping includes:

- 326 Adelaide Drive
- 624 Alta Avenue
- 547 7th Street
- 216 17th Street
- 217 17th Street
- 270 18th Street
- 304 18th Street
- 500 25th Street
- 246 26th Street (Santa Monica Landmark)
- 404 Georgina Avenue (Santa Monica Landmark)
- 1602 Georgina Avenue
- 2021 La Mesa Drive
- 2034 La Mesa Drive (Santa Monica Landmark)
- 2101 La Mesa Drive (the subject property)
- 2126 La Mesa Drive
- 2141 La Mesa Drive
- 2153 La Mesa Drive
- 2210 La Mesa Drive
- 2535 La Mesa Drive
- 510 Lincoln Boulevard
- 1130 Lincoln Boulevard - Miles Memorial Playhouse (Santa Monica Landmark)
- 701 – 703 Pacific Beach Road
- 1020 Pacific Beach Road
- 1707 San Vicente Boulevard
- 1717 San Vicente Boulevard
CONCLUSION

In summary, based on current research and the above assessment, the property located at 2101 La Mesa Drive Avenue appears to meet several City of Santa Monica Landmark criteria. The property was evaluated according to statutory criteria as follows:

Landmark Criteria:

9.36.100(a)(1) It exemplifies, symbolizes, or manifests elements of the cultural, social, economic, political or architectural history of the City.

The dwelling is a very good example of the Mexican Colonial Revival architectural style as interpreted by John Byers in domestic architecture and an excellent example of his use of adobe bricks as a construction material. The property located at 2101 La Mesa Drive Avenue retains sufficient contextual and architectural integrity to manifest the varied residential development and architectural history of Santa Monica. Additionally, this property is reflective of revival style architecture as applied to residential buildings during the 1920s and 1930s within the City of Santa Monica. Therefore, the subject property appears to satisfy this criterion.

9.36.100(a)(2) It has aesthetic or artistic interest or value, or other noteworthy interest or value.

The subject property is a very good example of the Mexican Colonial Revival style as designed by local architect John Byers. The design of this house fully articulates Byers’ design principles for adobe hand-made architecture as well as expressing his aesthetic and romantic ideals of a traditional Mexican Colonial adobe dwelling adapted for 1920s residential architecture in Santa Monica. In the dwelling’s pleasing balance of low horizontality, deeply recessed wood-framed openings, uneven hand-plastered exterior surfaces, hand-made clay roof tiles, and overall rusticity, a successful interpretation of a Mexican ranch house is attained. Therefore, the property at 2101 La Mesa Drive Avenue appears to possess high aesthetic or artistic qualities necessary for designation under this criterion.

9.36.100(a)(3) It is identified with historic personages or with important events in local, state or national history.

John Byers was among the most important local architects working in Santa Monica whose efforts at attaining accurate 20th century representations of Mexican Colonial and Spanish Colonial architectural styles and construction methods had a substantial impact on Santa Monica’s built environment. As the architect of the subject property and longtime resident of the City with offices on 26th Street, Byers is a key historic personage in Santa Monica.

In addition, current research indicates that Samuel G. McClure owned and resided at the subject property from approximately 1936 until his death in 1948. As the owner and
publisher of the influential *Santa Monica Evening Outlook* newspaper during the years of his residence at 2101 La Mesa Drive, the property is clearly identified with a historic personage of local importance.

Therefore, the subject property appears to satisfy this criterion.

9.36.100(a)(4) *It embodies distinguishing architectural characteristics valuable to a study of a period, style, method of construction, or the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship, or is a unique or rare example of an architectural design, detail or historical type valuable to such a study.*

The residence located at 2101 La Mesa Drive Avenue is an excellent example of John Byers’ use of hand-made adobe, a traditional, indigenous construction material commonly used during Southern California’s Mexican Colonial period (1821-1846). The use of adobe for building construction in the twentieth century is exceptionally rare, and only a handful of residential examples exist in Santa Monica today. Byers’ design philosophy of the 1920s and 1930s was strongly centered on interpreting Spanish and Mexican Colonial architecture using indigenous materials, especially adobe, and traditional construction methods in achieving these aims.

The subject property embodies a number of character-defining features of the Mexican Colonial Revival style including its general scale and massing; its walls constructed of hand-made adobe bricks covered with plaster; a low-pitched hipped and gabled roof covered with hand-made red clay tiles; deeply recessed openings; wood-framed casement windows; wide front porch sheltered by an extension of the main roof; and rear courtyard. Although the rear of the residence has been modified over the years, the character-defining features and architectural integrity of the subject property have not been compromised in a manner that would diminish the qualities of Byers’ original design intent. The subject property is one of John Byers’ finest achievements in realizing his objective for authenticity in design, use of materials, and construction methods derived from the Mexican Colonial era in California. Therefore, the property appears to satisfy this criterion.

9.36.100(a)(5) *It is a significant or a representative example of the work or product of a notable builder, designer or architect.*

The subject property is directly associated with architect John Winford Byers, a prominent local architect. He was a prolific, influential and stylistically identifiable local self-trained architect in the City of Santa Monica, who helped to define the City’s architectural development, and therefore he is considered a significant individual important in local history. Byers’ design philosophy during the decades between the two World Wars centered around his interpretation of traditional Spanish and Mexican Colonial architectural styles and construction techniques, particularly the use of adobe. The subject property, designed and built by Byers, is an outstanding example of his design philosophy for a modest *hacienda*-type residence in Santa Monica. Hence, it appears that the subject property satisfies this criterion.
9.36.100(a)(6) It has a unique location, a singular physical characteristic, or is an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the City.

The subject property is located on the north side of La Mesa Drive in Santa Monica. Most of the residences in this neighborhood are of generous scale, massing, and proportion. The subject property, in contrast, is an example of a modest one-story dwelling designed in the Mexican Colonial Revival style, which is uncommon in the neighborhood. Due to the dwelling’s small-scale and the hacienda-inspired form of its primary elevation, it has become an established and unique feature of the neighborhood.
### City Directory Research

**2101 La Mesa Drive**

**APN: 4407-018-004**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>No listing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Zimmers, Effie W. Mrs, no occupation listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zimmers, Charles P., draftsman John Byers r2101 La Mesa Dr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Zimmers, Effie W. Mrs., no occupation listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-31</td>
<td>Zimmers, P. Effie (widow E.W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zimmers, Philip r2101 La Mesa Dr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Zimmers, P. Effie (widow E.W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zimmers, C. Philip (Irene) r2101 La Mesa Dr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>McClure, Samuel G. (Louise T.), president Santa Monica Publishing Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>McClure, Samuel G., president Santa Monica Publishing Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McClure, Robert r2101 La Mesa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McClure, Robert E., vice president Evening Outlook r2101 La Mesa Dr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>McClure, Samuel G., president Santa Monica Publishing Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McClure, Robert E., vice president Evening Outlook r2101 La Mesa Dr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947-1948</td>
<td>McClure, Samuel G., president Santa Monica Publishing Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952-53</td>
<td>Liebig, Rudolph S. (Caroline E.), no occupation listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liebig, Anthony A., student r2101 La Mesa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liebig, Charlotte S., student r2101 La Mesa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Liebig, Rudolph S. (Caroline E.), no occupation listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liebig, Charlotte S., student r2101 La Mesa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958-1959</td>
<td>Liebig, Rudolph S. (Caroline), retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1961</td>
<td>Liebig, Rudolph S. (Caroline), retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tatsumi, Tokutaro 2101 La Mesa Dr.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BIBLIOGRAPHY


_____________.  *Santa Monica Bay: Paradise By the Sea*.  Santa Monica: Hennessey + Ingalls, 2001.


_____________.  *Santa Monica Historical Resources Inventory, Phase I: 1983*.  Prepared by Paul Gleye and Leslie Heumann, 1986.


City of Santa Monica Building and Safety Department.  Building Permits.


“Illustrations of John Byers’ design.”  *Architect and Engineer*, April 1931.

Ingersoll, Luther A.  *Ingersoll’s Century History: Santa Monica Bay Cities*.  Los Angeles: Luther A. Ingersoll, 1908.

Los Angeles County Tax Assessor.  Property Information Records.


Polk. *Polk’s Santa Monica City Directory*. Los Angeles, (various years).


Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, City of Santa Monica.

Santa Monica Public Library, Santa Monica Index.

Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives.


__________. *Santa Monica Blue Book*. Santa Monica: Cawston, 1941.

__________. *Santa Monica Community Book*. Santa Monica: Cawston, 1944

ATTACHMENTS

Current Tax Assessor Map

Sanborn Map

Current Photographs

Historic Images from Architect and Engineer
Assessor’s Map
CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHS

*Primary (south) elevation, looking north.*

*Primary (south) and west elevations, looking northeast.*
Primary (south) elevation, looking north.

Context view, La Mesa Drive, subject property on right, looking west.
Context view, La Mesa Drive, subject property on left, looking east.
House for Mrs. E.W. Zimmers

Source: The Architect and Engineer, May 1925.
House for Mrs. E.W. Zimmers

Source: The Architect and Engineer, May 1925.
Mrs. E.W. Zimmers...adobe

Source: Architect and Engineer, October 1946.