

**HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
STRUCTURE OF MERIT DESIGNATION
STAFF REPORT**

**2948 SERENA
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA
APN 051-202-022**



Vicinity Map of 2948 Serena Road



Significance

The City of Santa Barbara establishes historic significance as provided by the Municipal Code, Section 22.22.040. Any historic building that meets one or more of the eleven criteria established for a City Landmark or a City Structure of Merit can be considered significant. The house at 2948 Serena Road meets the following criteria.

Criterion A. Its character, interest or value as a significant part of the heritage of the City, the State or the Nation

Designed in September 1925, just after the large earthquake of June 29, 1925, this Spanish Colonial Revival house is important to the heritage of Santa Barbara. The City of Santa Barbara realized the cultural and economic value of preserving its historic resources much earlier than most American cities. In the early 1920s, the City established the Community Arts Association: the Plans and Planting Committee that, under the leadership of Pearl Chase, was dedicated to planning, architecture, landscaping, parks, and conservation in order to protect and preserve historic resources. Because of this early intervention, Mexican-era adobe structures and original Spanish Colonial Revival historic resources still exist, providing a window to the City's past. In the 1920s, but even more so during reconstruction after the earthquake, the City deliberately transformed its architecture and look from an ordinary western style town into a romantic Spanish Colonial Revival/Mediterranean style city. This transformation was the result of the planning vision of a number of Santa Barbara citizens in the early 1920s with the founding of the Santa Barbara Community Arts Association, which urged that the town identify its individual character and then use planning principles to develop it. In Santa Barbara, examples of Spanish Colonial Revival can be found throughout the City as one of its most defining styles of architecture. Known for its Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, Santa Barbara owes much of its charm to the many thick plaster walls and clay tile roofs of this style. The various subtle details such as rounded arch windows and doorways add to the quality of the architecture and character of the city. Spanish Colonial Revival architecture will always be key to Santa Barbara's identity. In Santa Barbara, the Andalusian vernacular (southern-Spanish farmhouse) was the key inspiration for the simplicity in detail found in much of the region's architecture. This building is an excellent example of a residential interpretation of the Spanish Colonial Revival style, which became an important part of Santa Barbara's heritage in the 1920s. The building illustrates social and aesthetic movements that conveys the sense of place and time of 1925 and is important to the heritage of the City. As an authentic example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style, the house is significant to the heritage of the City.

Criterion D. Its exemplification of a particular architectural style or way of life important to



the City, the State, or the Nation

The house embodies the following Spanish Colonial Revival style's character-defining features:

- whitewashed stucco walls punctuated by a careful use of openings that are asymmetrically arranged;
- terra-cotta roof tiles on the front facing gable that create a decorative edge from the roof to the wall;
- the mission shaped parapet;
- the round front window and triple set of windows that recess at the wall plane set with a stucco return;
- the arched entry over the front stoop;
- the wood entry door that expresses solidity with an arched decorative plaster surround that sets it apart from the other façade openings;
- emphasis the interplay of cubic volumes that are typical of the Spanish Colonial Revival style.



Criterion G. Its embodiment of elements demonstrating outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials and craftsmanship

The house embodies the following elements that demonstrate an outstanding attention to design, detail, materials, and craftsmanship: the design of the low-pitched roof with terra-cotta roof tiles that create a decorative edge from the roof to the wall; the largely unadorned, whitewashed, stucco walls; deeply recessed, wood, horizontally divided casement windows; arched openings over the front stoop and arched doorway. Because the house demonstrates these outstanding elements, it qualifies as a Structure of Merit under Criterion G.

Historic Integrity

The house is in good condition, with almost all of the original materials still present. The house retains enough of its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, allowing it to convey its original appearance.