



# Save Our Heritage Organisation

Protecting San Diego's architectural and cultural heritage since 1969

Monday, July 15, 2019

La Mesa Planning Commission  
City of La Mesa  
8130 Allison Avenue  
La Mesa, CA 91942

Re: 8371 La Mesa Boulevard

Planning Commissioners,

Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO) asserts the project at 8371 La Mesa Boulevard, illustrating the 1951 design aesthetic by Master Architect Lloyd Ruocco, should be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards and is NOT exempt under CEQA. The addition of an outdoor dining area and sidewalk café are generally project components that can easily meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards. Last, the City of La Mesa needs to devise a process that would require review by the Historic Preservation Commission for any potentially eligible historical resource, regardless of being listed on a historical survey.

SOHO remains disappointed that the original consultant report failed to note that this building was altered by Lloyd Ruocco in 1951, which notes a lack of due diligence. Only after receiving multiple letters and emails did staff request it be re-evaluated, by the same consultant. While the revised evaluation gives proper credit to Ruocco, despite various experts' opposite opinions, the revised report still concludes the resource does not maintain integrity; however, there is serious concern regarding the discretionary decision made by staff during this historical review process, which is NOT exempt under CEQA.

SOHO appreciates and applauds the City of La Mesa for moving forward in updating their historical resources survey after a variety of resources have been determined not significant due to this survey not being updated in several decades, including the Drew Ford Roundhouse. Additionally, the sense of place for La Mesa is partially encompassed by buildings such as 8371 La Mesa Boulevard, and an unfair or partial evaluation does a disservice to the La Mesa Village character.

SOHO asserts the project at 8371 La Mesa Blvd. is NOT exempt from CEQA, but should easily be able to become consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards regarding the proposed outdoor dining and café area.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,

Bruce Coons  
Executive Director  
Save Our Heritage Organisation