

**Mills Act Application, Muller-Noggle House and Garage, 211 Chorro Street**



**Master Listing and Historic Background** The Muller-Noggle House and Garage at 211 Chorro Street were added to the city's Master List of Historic Properties in January 2022. They were designed in 1936 by the architect Edla Muir, during her partnership with Santa Monica architect John Byers. Of some four hundred properties on the Master List, 211 Chorro is only the second by a woman architect, after Julia Morgan's Monday Club. The house and garage were built by the F. C. Stolte Company, the contractor for Hearst Castle, and they comprise one of only two residential projects by the Stolte Company documented in San Luis. The Muller-Noggle House and Garage are significant for being the work of a master architect and of high artistic quality and embodying the Late Georgian Revival in a Minimal Traditional context.

Like Morgan a generation before, Muir became regionally known in one genre and nationally known in another. Morgan moved from First Bay Tradition to post-World War I revival styles, and Muir moved from revival styles to post-World War II Modernism. At the time Muir designed the Muller-Noggle House in 1936, she had received exposure in the Federal Housing Administration's Modeltown in San Diego and the California House and Garden Exposition in Los Angeles, and it is possible she had come to the attention of attorney A. V. Muller through his contemporary work for San Luis Obispo under the National Housing Act.

**Overall condition** The property was purchased by John and Neva Noggle in 1953; John occupied it till his death in 2000 and Neva till her death in 2020. As with many houses long occupied by a single family, the Muller-Noggle House is in reasonable cosmetic condition but needs major foundation work and updating such as HVAC. The garage also requires a new foundation, a new roof, and—like many historic structures seeking utility to survive—adaptive reuse, in this case to an ADU.

**California's Mills Act** Passed by the legislature at the instigation of State Senator Jim Mills of San Diego, struck down by the State Supreme Court, and re-passed by the people of California as a referendum in 1972, the Mills Act recognizes the high costs of maintaining the historic nature of a historic resource, which includes adherence to the Secretary of the Interior's standards for minimal intervention with maximal care. A Mills Act contract runs for a renewable ten-year period. The county calculates benefits to a formula based largely on 20 percent of the annual rental value of the house with a few additional factors.

## APPENDIX B

**List of improvements**      The city mandates that Mills Act applications contain specific “repairs, improvements, or maintenance” in order to have an enforcement mechanism. Expressed within the conceptual framework of the Secretary of the Interior’s standards, these would be preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

Anticipated work on the Muller-Noggle House includes

- Rehabilitation of HVAC (over the next year)
- Extensive foundation restoration for the structural integrity of the creekside house (over the next two years)
- Reroofing and the rehabilitation of foundation for the garage and addition of minimally invasive insulation, including preservation of the exposed roof structure (over the next two years)
- Preservation and restoration of exterior siding, brickwork, and other exterior fabric in the period of significance (over the next ten years)
- Preservation and restoration of period-appropriate fencing, including brick, wood, and wrought iron (over the next ten years)
- Rehabilitation of electrical and plumbing systems and restoration of any structural work in addition to the foundation for the safety and maintenance of the house and its fabric (over the next ten years)

*Submitted on behalf of Jim and Mai Haselman by  
James Papp, PhD • Historicities LLC • 24 March 2022*