

State of California X The Resources Agency  
 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary #  
 HRI #  
 Trinomial  
**NRHP Status Code**

Review Code      Other Listings      Reviewer      Date

Page \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_ \*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) \_\_\_\_\_

P1. Other Identifier: \_\_\_\_\_

\*P2. Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted

\*a. County Fresno (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Fresno North Date 2021 T 13S; R 20E;  of  of Sec 28 ; Mount Diablo B.M.

c. Address 420 E. Terrace Ave City Fresno Zip 93728

d. UTM: Zone \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_ mE/ \_\_\_\_ mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, decimal degrees, etc., as appropriate)

Assessor's Parcel Number: 443-313-07

\*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

The property at 420 E. Terrace Ave (Assessor Parcel Number: 443-313-07), is in the tower district of the city of Fresno. Set on the west side of North Wilson Avenue and south of East Terrace Ave, the property consists of a 0.18-acre rectangular parcel with a single-family residence and a garage set back in the parcel.

The residence exhibits several defining characteristics of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style, including stucco exteriors, low-pitched roof with terracotta roof tiles, arched entryways, double hung windows, decorative shutters, deep-set entrance, etc.

Aside from mechanical and electrical permits, no other alteration permits were found. A site visit and interview with the current property owner indicate that the building retains a high degree of integrity.



\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP2 (Single Family Residence) HP4 (Detached garage/apartment)

\*P4. Resources Present:  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5b. Description of Photo: 8/28/2024, Main entrance, Camera pointing to Southwest

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:

Historic  Prehistoric  Both

\*P7. Owner and Address:

Kirk A. Serumgard & Ciara M. Serumgard  
420 E. Terrace Ave, Fresno, CA 93704

\*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address)  
Lisha Chen, Historic Preservation Specialist, City of Fresno

\*P9. Date Recorded: 9/10/2024

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe) Intensive

\*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources or enter "none.")

The Fresno Bee. Sanford Nax. "Taylor Wheeler Builders accomplishments recalled," April 01, 1989.

The Fresno Bee. Robert Rodriguez. "Venerable homes pass test of time," Dec 29, 2002.

City of Fresno Building Permit Record

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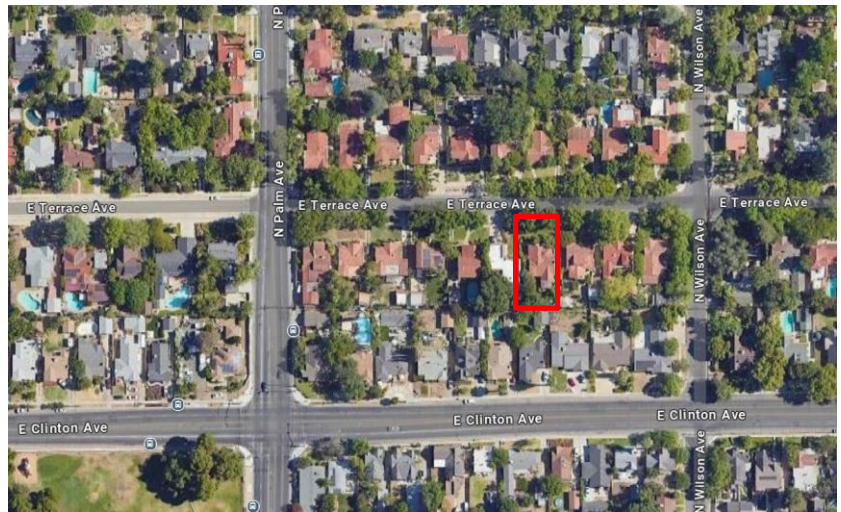
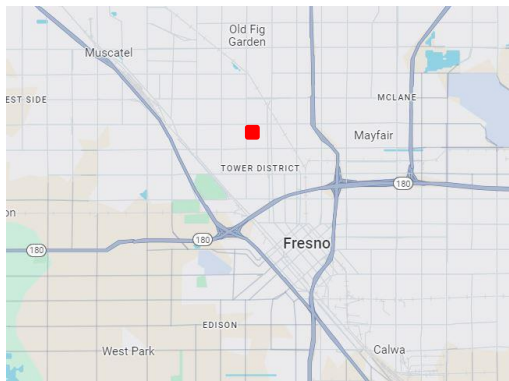
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Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.  
United States Federal Census, 1940.  
City of Fresno Building Record  
City of Fresno Tower District Specific Plan, 1991.

\*Attachments:  NONE     Location Map     Continuation Sheet     Building, Structure, and Object Record  
 Archaeological Record     District Record     Linear Feature Record     Milling Station Record     Rock Art Record  
 Artifact Record     Photograph Record     Other (List): \_\_\_\_\_



Location Map of the Property located at 420 E. Terrace Ave

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Main house, front façade, 1961, photo taken by county accessor's office, camera facing southwest

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Main house, front façade, 2024, camera facing southwest

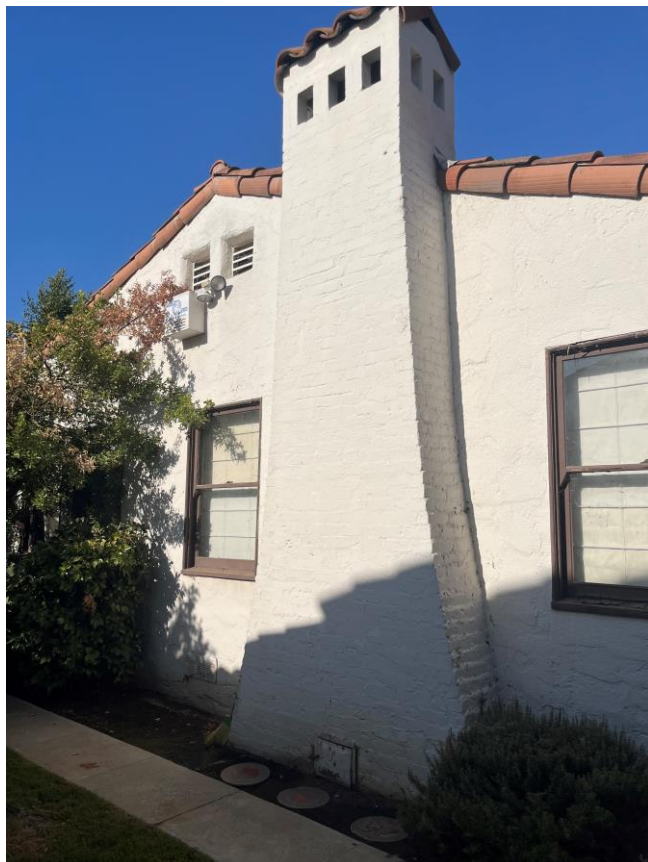
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Main house, 2024, camera facing east



Main house, 2024, camera facing northeast

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Main house, 2024, camera facing north

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B1. Historic Name: Wheeler Home B2. Common Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 B3. Original Use: Single family residence B4. Present Use: Single family residence  
 \*B5. Architectural Style: Spanish Revival  
 \*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

City of Fresno building permit records indicate that a permit for the house was issued on October 27, 1933. Aside from mechanical and electrical permits, no other alteration permits were found. A site visit and interview with the current property owner indicate that the building retains a high degree of integrity.

\*B7. Moved?  No  Yes  Unknown Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Original Location: \_\_\_\_\_ \*B8.  
 Related Features: Garage

B9a. Architect: Taylor-Wheeler Builders b. Builder: Taylor-Wheeler Builders

\*B10. Significance: Theme Urban Development and Architectural Expression in Early 20<sup>th</sup>; Taylor-Wheeler Constructions Area Fresno  
 Period of Significance 1930-1967 Property Type Single family residence  
 Applicable Criteria (ii), (iii) (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

**Background and Neighborhood**

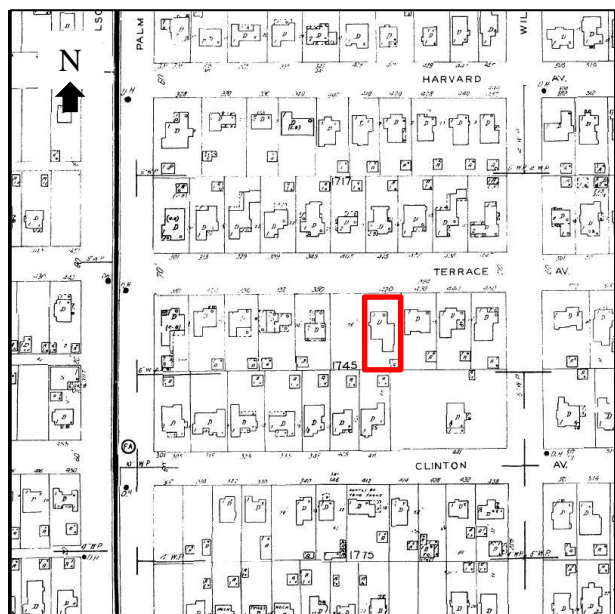
Tower District

In the 1880s, what is now known as the Tower District was a significant distance from downtown Fresno, approximately a 45-minute journey by horse and buggy, or about an hour on foot. By the late 1890s and early 1900s, Fresno's population and economy were experiencing rapid growth. According to the U.S. Census, the city's population doubled from 12,470 in 1900 to 24,892 by 1910. The Tower District began developing in the early 20th century as one of Fresno's first suburbs. With the extension of streetcar lines operated by the Fresno Traction Company, the area evolved into a unique blend of apartment houses, small bungalows, and larger homes. As property values increased, the neighborhood became denser and more diverse, contributing to its distinct character.

Terrace Gardens Historic District

The tower district specific plan adopted in 1991 proposed the terrace gardens historic district which encompasses not only the Terrace Gardens Tract but also portions of the Normal Heights Tract to the north and the St. Francis Wood Tract to the east. This area exemplifies the suburban expansion that followed the denser, more varied development found in the properties south of Belmont Avenue. Among the most noteworthy of this district's many well-crafted

(This space reserved for official comments.)



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homes are a number that employ Mediterranean-style motifs: particularly 315 and 346 East Brown Avenue, and the more modest - but collectively quite effective - array of homes that line both sides of the 300-400 block of East Terrace Avenue.

**Ownership and Occupancy**

Dennis B. Wheeler, the first owner of the property at 420 E. Terrace Avenue, was a significant figure in the construction industry in the Vally, having been involved in major housing developments. Dennis B. Wheeler and Orville R. Taylor founded Taylor-Wheeler Builders in 1927. Taylor-Wheeler Builders quickly became one of Fresno's most renowned building firms, known for their distinctive homes that were unlike anything else in the area at the time. Their architectural contributions have significantly enriched Fresno's built environment. The Terrace Gardens Tract was established in October 1930 when Taylor and Wheeler purchased five acres on Terrace Avenue, between Wilson and Palm Avenues, from A.W. Peters. The house at 420 E. Terrace Avenue is part of this historic tract. Dennis B. Wheeler lived in this house until 1967.

**Spanish Revival**

The Spanish Revival architectural style has deep roots in California, closely tied to the state's colonial history and the revival movements of the early 20th century. Distinct from the earlier Mission Revival style, Spanish Revival gained immense popularity in the 1920s. Characterized by stucco walls, red-tiled roofs, and arched windows and doors, this style was well-suited to South California's Mediterranean climate, effortlessly blending indoor and outdoor spaces. As California's population grew, particularly following World War I, Spanish Revival homes became a hallmark of suburban developments. Builders adapted the style to smaller, more affordable homes, contributing to its widespread presence in suburban neighborhoods across the state.

Character-defining features of the house include:

- Stucco Walls with textured finish
- Red-tiled roof with overhanging eaves
- Arched openings in the outdoor patio area
- Exposed wood beams
- Deep-set entrance
- Double-hung windows
- Wooden shutters
- Chimney with openings near the top
- Decorative ironwork
- Patio and courtyard

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)

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**Integrity and Eligibility**

The house at 420 E. Terrace Avenue was built as part of the Terrace Gardens Tract, which was established in 1930. This means the property is over 50 years old. Additionally, the house retains its original Spanish Revival architectural features, including the stucco walls, red-tiled roof, and arched windows and doors, which demonstrate integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. These aspects suggest that the property meets the age and integrity requirement.

Criteria (i) Association with Significant Events

The Tower District, where the property is located, played a significant role in the suburban development of Fresno during the early 20th century. The area reflects the city's population growth and the expansion of public transportation systems, such as the Fresno Traction Company's streetcars. However, the specific property at 420 E. Terrace Avenue may not be directly linked to any historic event that made a broad contribution to the city's development. While the Tower District's development is significant, this individual property does not appear to be directly associated with a major event in Fresno's history. This criterion may not apply.

Criteria (ii) Association with Significant Persons

Dennis B. Wheeler, the first owner of the property, co-founded Taylor-Wheeler Builders, which became one of Fresno's most notable building firms. Their work significantly shaped the architectural landscape of the city. As the home of Dennis B. Wheeler, who is a notable figure in Fresno's architectural history, the property could meet this criterion. Wheeler's contributions through his company are significant in the context of local architecture.

Criteria (iii) Distinctive Characteristics of a Type, Period, or Method of Construction

The house is an example of Spanish Revival architecture, a style that became widespread in South California during the 1920s. It retains its defining features such as stucco walls, a red-tiled roof, and arched windows, which embody the characteristics of this architectural style. The property clearly embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Revival architectural style.

Additionally, Dennis B. Wheeler, associated with the design and construction, may be considered a master builder, enhancing the property's eligibility under this criterion.

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)

Criteria (iv) Potential to Yield Important Historical Information

This criterion is typically applied to archeological sites or properties with potential for significant historical research. The property

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is unlikely to meet this criterion as it does not appear to be an archeological site or possess untapped potential for important historical discoveries.

**Conclusion**

The property at 420 E. Terrace Avenue appears to meet the criteria for designation as a historic resource based on its integrity and its association with the life of a significant person (Dennis B. Wheeler) and its embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Revival architectural style. Therefore, it is eligible for historic resource designation under criteria (ii) and (iii) of Fresno Municipal Code Sec. 12-1607.

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) \_\_\_\_\_

**\*B12. References:**

*The Fresno Bee*. Sanford Nax. "Taylor Wheeler Builders accomplishments recalled," April 01, 1989.  
*The Fresno Bee*. Robert Rodriguez. "Venerable homes pass test of time," Dec 29, 2002.  
City of Fresno Building Permit Record  
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.  
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B13. Remarks:

\*B14. Evaluator: Lisha Chen, Historic Preservation Specialist, City of Fresno  
\*Date of Evaluation: 9/9/2024

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(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)