



Historic Landmark Nomination Proposal General Information

OVERVIEW:

Historic zoning is a zoning overlay which is added to the base zoning of a specific tract of land (for example (HR-1). This zoning overlay can apply to local historic preservation zones (HPZs) and historic landmarks (HLs).

Designating an HL is a two part process. First, the proposed HL is subject to a historical designation review process. The **Steps to Establish or Amend a Historic Preservation Zone or Historic Landmark** (Article 5.8.4 UDC) are as follows:

- 1.) **Nomination Proposal Package** prepared by applicant and submitted to City of Tucson Historic Preservation Office. (Requirements regarding Nomination Proposal can be found in SUBMITTAL CHECKLIST p.3)
- 2.) Applicant attends a **Historical Commission Nomination Review** and presents the Nomination Proposal and any other evidence of historical significance and integrity in a public meeting.
- 3.) **The Mayor and Council review** the project and the recommendations and decide whether to initiate the designation process.
- 4.) Rezoning Process

WHERE TO APPLY:

City of Tucson Historic Preservation Office:

Jonathan Mabry, PhD | Historic Preservation Officer
jonathan.mabry@tucsonaz.gov | Phone: (520) 837-6965

Jennifer Levstik, M.A. | Preservation Lead Planner
jennifer.levstik@tucsonaz.gov | Phone: (520) 837-6961

310 N. Commerce Park Loop, Santa Rita Bldg • PO Box 27210 • Tucson, AZ 85726-7210

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:

Refer Submittal Checklist. Complete Application Forms, and supplemental materials.

THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE CONSIDERED WHEN REVIEWING A CITY HISTORIC NOMINATION APPLICATION:

Historic Landmark:

An HL shall include historic sites, buildings, and structures, as defined in Section 11.4.9, and which are individually listed or individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local, state, or national level of significance. Properties that meet the aforementioned criteria may be proposed for designation as an HPZ Contributing Property or Historic Landmark.

Historic Landmark

A historic site or structure of the highest historic, cultural, architectural, or archaeological importance to Tucson that if demolished or significantly altered would constitute an irreplaceable loss to the quality and character of Tucson. A Historic Landmark is an outstanding or unique example of architectural style; is associated with a major historic event, activity, or person; or has unique visual quality and identification. A Historic Landmark may be located within the boundaries of or outside a historic district.

Historic Site or Historic Structure

A building, structure, object, or site, including vegetation or signs located on the premises, that:

- Dates from a particular significant period in Tucson's history, i.e., prehistoric, native indigenous, Pre-Colonial (before 1775), Spanish Frontier (Colonial) (1775-1821), Mexican Frontier (1821-1853), Territorial (1854-1912), Post-Territorial (1912-1920), or Post-World War I Development (1920-1945), or relates to events, personages, or architectural styles that are at least 50 years old; however, outstanding examples less than 50 years old should be evaluated on their own merits; and
- Is associated with the lives of outstanding historic personages; or
- Is associated with significant historic events or occurrences; or
- Exemplifies the architectural period in which it was built and has distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or method of construction or is the notable work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose individual genius influenced his/her age; or
- Contributes information of archaeological, historic, cultural, or social importance relating to the heritage of the community; or
- Relates positively to buildings in its immediate vicinity in terms of scale, size, massing, etc., such that its removal would be an irreparable loss to the setting.

For Zoning and Subdivision review, the Unified Development Code (UDC) applies to this application. If you feel the Land Use Code (LUC) should apply, please consult with Zoning review staff. Applicable timeframes can be provided at your request or found in Administrative Manual Sec. 3-02 or found on our website at <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/pdsd>. For information about applications or applicable policies and ordinance, please contact Frank Dillon at 837-6957.

By state law, we cannot initiate a discussion with you about your rights and options, but we are happy to answer any questions you might have.



Historic Landmark Nomination Proposal Application

Date Submitted: March 13, 2021


PROPERTY LOCATION INFORMATION

Project Name: Beck, John H. House (Number 9 Potter Place)
Property Address: 1830 North Potter Place (Catalina Vista NRHP District)
Architect/Designer: John H. Beck, Architect
Builder:
Plat Name: SE2 E199.4' W222.4' N210' SE4 NW4
EXC RD .42 AC SEC 5-14-14
Pima County Parcel Number/s: 123-01-0260 Parcel Use: Residential

APPLICANT INFORMATION

APPLICANT NAME: Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation
ADDRESS: PO Box 40008, Tucson, Arizona, 85717
PHONE: 520-247-8969
EMAIL: info@preservetucson.org
PROPERTY OWNER NAME: Gregory Beck, gregorybeck@mac.com, (917) 864-4993
PHONE: FAX: () -

SIGNATURE OF OWNER _____ Date _____

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT (if not owner)  Demion Clinco THPF Date March 14, 2021

AREA TO BE REZONED: ACRES: .48

Existing Zoning: R-2

Proposed Zoning: HLR-2

CHECKLIST FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION PROPOSAL

- ☒ **Fee \$330.00 (Base Fee) + Variable Fees**
- ☒ **A completed Historic Nomination Proposal Application (a blank form is attached to this document).**
Completely fill in all fields on the nomination application form. The Assessor's No. and the complete Legal Description can be found by contacting the Pima County Recorder's Office (<http://www.asr.pima.gov/>)
- ☒ **A completed National Register of Historic Places form or nomination or a State of Arizona Historic Property Inventory Form**

Pima County Assessor's Maps showing properties within 500' of the designation request
- ☒ **Pima County Assessor's Record**
- ☒ **Color labeled photographs showing full exterior views, including all elevations, setting, outbuildings, and details of structural and landscape features**
- ☒ **Reproductions (high quality photocopies acceptable) of historical photographs**
- ☒ **A dimensioned, scaled site plan or survey of the site and the location/placement of all buildings/structures on the site.**
- ☒ **A scaled map of the site outlining the geographic boundaries of the proposed area**

*All plans, maps and other figures should be clearly identified. All figures, including drawings, plans and maps, (excluding photographs, see above requirements) should be of a standard size (8.5" by 11", or 11" by 17").

A list of proposed Neighborhood Advisory Board Members (If nominating a Historic Preservation Zone)

WRITTEN REPORT

- ☒ **Property Description**
 - Present and original (if known) physical appearance and characteristics.
 - A complete, detailed architectural description of all elevations of the exterior of the building and a complete description of all the site elements
 - A description of the interior features should also be included.
 - A brief description of the surrounding neighborhood or natural environment and its development, including relevant features such as neighboring buildings, natural features, topography, major roadway, etc.
 - A complete description of the alterations to the exterior of the building must be included as well.
- ☒ **Statement of Significance and Integrity**
 - A chronological list of prior owners
 - Chronology of past uses
 - Information on historically significant events which occurred at the location
 - Information on architect, landscape architect, builder, contractor and any craftsmen who worked on the on the site
 - The project's historic context, and explain how the building fits into the history of the city and the neighborhood.
- ☒ **Complete Bibliography**



Photo A. Beck House, East Elevation, GMVargas for Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation,

Property Description

Setting

The Beck House, designed and built a bi-nuclear International modernist residence with tilt-in-place cast concrete, is located in Tucson at the end of Potter Place across from the Arizona Inn within the boundaries of the Catalina Vista National Register Historic District listed as a contributor on February 1, 2021. The residence was designed by John H, Beck in 1959 as his own home and built-in 1960.

The one-story Beck House is located on the edge of the cul-de-sac at the end of Potter Place sited in the center and towards the front of a triangular lot. The short curving road arches northwest from Elm Street. The east-facing street character of the house is defined by massive concrete exposed aggregate panels. The ten monolithic concrete panels connected horizontally are asymmetrically divided by the double carved doors and a projecting integrated porch. With four panels on each side, the south end of the façade is extended by a two-pane window with orange paneling below and above followed by the final two concrete panel elements. The architecture of the house makes a significant statement. The suburban urban midtown location, unique architectural expression, and the work of an important local architect create a significant post-WWII era example of Mid-Century Modern residential architecture in Tucson. At the time of

construction, the house showcased an example of progressive architecture within a traditional suburban context.



Photo B. Beck House, Entry and east entry and concrete wall.

The gardens, parking area and driveway, setbacks, materials, and expressive design combine to create an outstanding example of the early 1960s post-WWII suburban development occurring in Tucson. The flat roof, exposed concrete aggregate, and entry program combine to create a street-facing facade with a monumental quality. The architectural emphasis is on open interior spaces, the atrium window system, and expansive uninterrupted south-facing window wall. The exterior northside backyard is centered around a rectilinear swimming pool and ramada. The structural system and roof plane overhanging the window walls create shade in direct response to the extreme desert climate of the Sonoran Desert. These design features create a sense of place that was envisioned by Beck for the property and controlled through a comprehensive site design.

East Elevation, (primary public facade)

The east elevation of the Beck House is the principal and street-facing façade. The massing and geometry are broken into five primary rectilinear forms (north to south): four concrete cast-in-place panels, double door entryway, and extended porch, four concrete cast-in-place panels, window with painted panel system, and two concrete cast-in-place panels. The panels,

cast with exposed rough river rock aggregate in natural colors, carved doors, hanging light, house numbers, and touches of red/orange paint are the extent of the material palette.

To the south of the main house is the guest house. The original design was one-story which included the cast concrete panels and a carport facing the street. (See below). The two structures are connected by an open lattice roof system creating a breezeway.

South Elevation. (primary private façades)

The south elevation facing the breezeway and guest house is one of the two primary private elevations of the house. The design vocabulary utilizing the cast-in-place exposed aggregate concrete panels and glass window walls continues on both façades to create a continuity of the project.

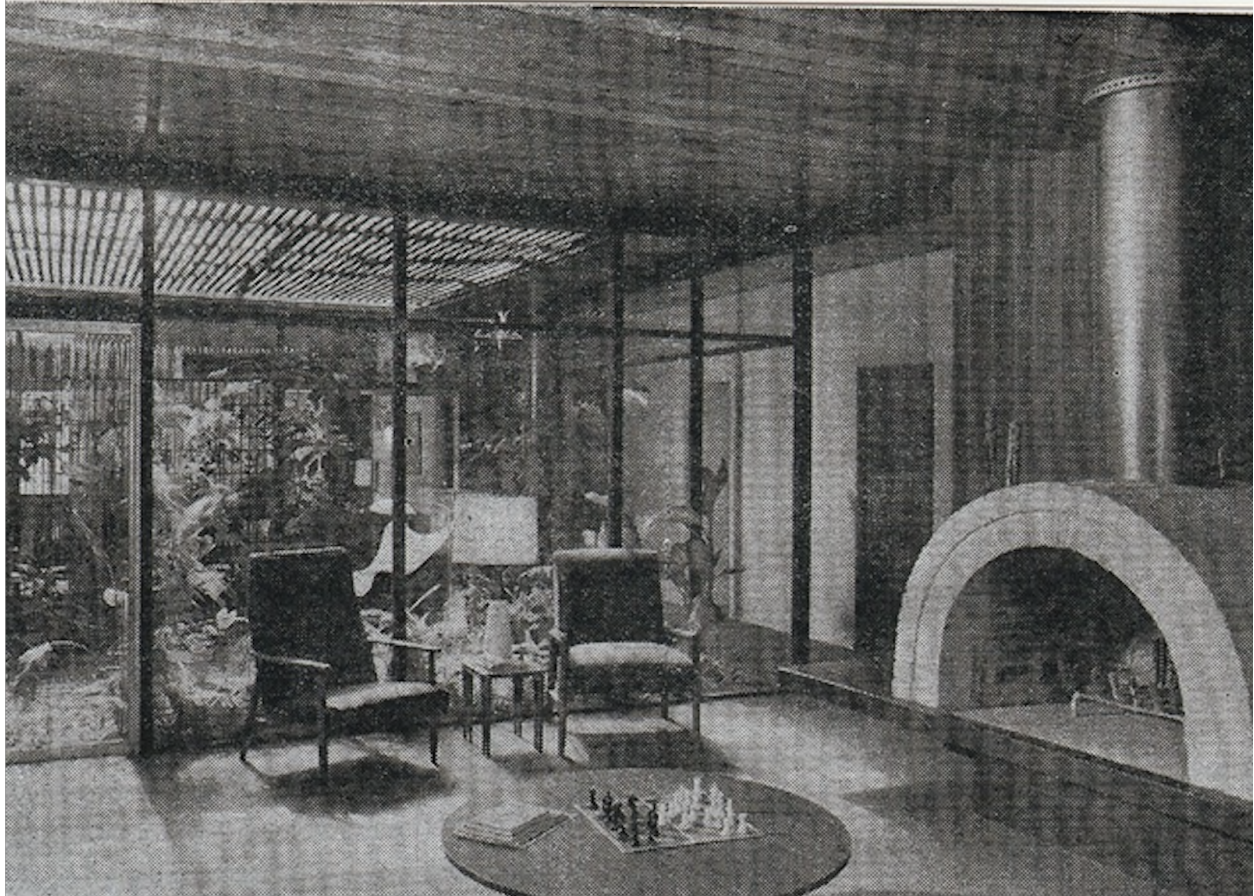
The south elevation inverts the front façade convention replacing the concrete massing with the glass window wall system that looks into the kitchen and sitting room. The western end of the façade continues with concrete panels separated by a window panel system.

North Elevation (primary private façades)

The north elevation looks onto the north side yard which includes a rectangular pool and ramada. The cast concrete structural panels are separated by sliding glass doors that lead from the living room and bedrooms. The roof is flat and extends over the panel system creating shade. Recessed from the prevailing setback of the main house is the western bedroom suite which is slightly taller than the height of the concrete panels and has a shed roof and a window wall system. The pool is sunken on the property two steps from the floor grade.

West Elevation (secondary private facade)

The west elevation is principally characterized by a bedroom suite that extends the primary rectilinear floor plan. The frame construction is rendered in stucco. Trees along the western edge of the property line eliminate the ability to see the elevation in full.



Beck House, living room, fireplace and atrium window wall. 1968.
Photo by Art Grasberger and Dave Action for Tucson Daily Citizen

Interior Features

The City of Tucson Historic Landmark designation does not regulate the interior of privately owned property. The interior character-defining features of the Beck House which are integral to the design should be considered. Beck used contrasting materials to create a visually dynamic space. The cast concrete panels facing the public view are in juxtaposition to the glass walls and sliding door systems facing the private yard and garden. The extensive use of glass in the south-facing window wall creates permeability and blurs in the inside and outside of the house. Walking through the front doors reveals spacious and natural light-filled rooms clustered around a glass atrium open to the elements. The atrium enhances a sense of expansive space within the home. The living room is organized around a raised floating fireplace that is constructed from an arch of brick topped with a vent pipe. The spatial configurations of the house are key design elements. The ceiling throughout is tongue and groove wood.



Photo C. Beck House, Living Room, Atrium.

Garden and Site Walls

The hardscape elements of the front yard, breezeway between the main house and guest house, private side garden, and pool are character-defining features of the property. These include the brick paver entryway, poured concrete breezeway flooring and concrete north stepped terrace. The site hardscape elements including concrete pavement is a secondary character-defining feature of the house and should be considered when making alterations. The side garden also includes a site wall for privacy.

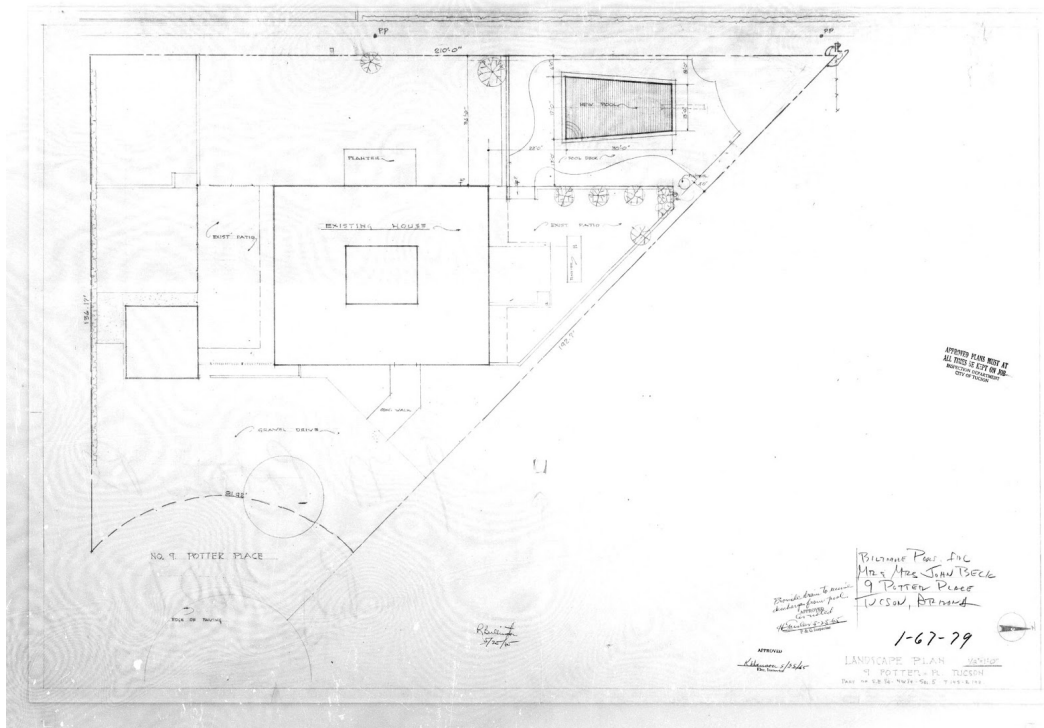


Photo D. Beck House, Breezeway between House and Guest House, Facing East.

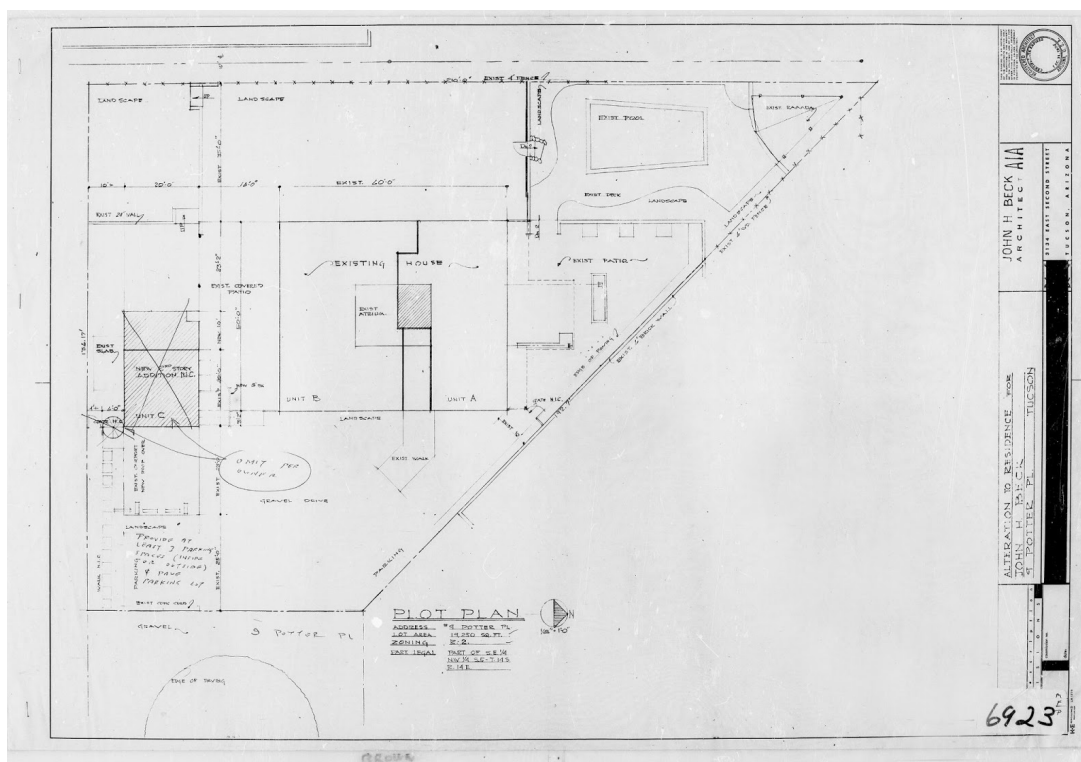
Guest House (1961 /1985) Non-Contributor

The two-story guest house was designed by Beck in two phases. The lower level studio and carport were part of the original design, but were significantly altered in 1985 with the addition of a second-story apartment and covered sun deck. The second story has a gently pitched roof and east-facing glass window wall. The second story has impacted the original design, if reversed the original design appears intact and should be considered during future changes. The concrete block walls supporting the carport roof (and now guest house porch deck) are original. The stone aggregate panels were test walls to see how they would work for the main house. (Gregory Beck).

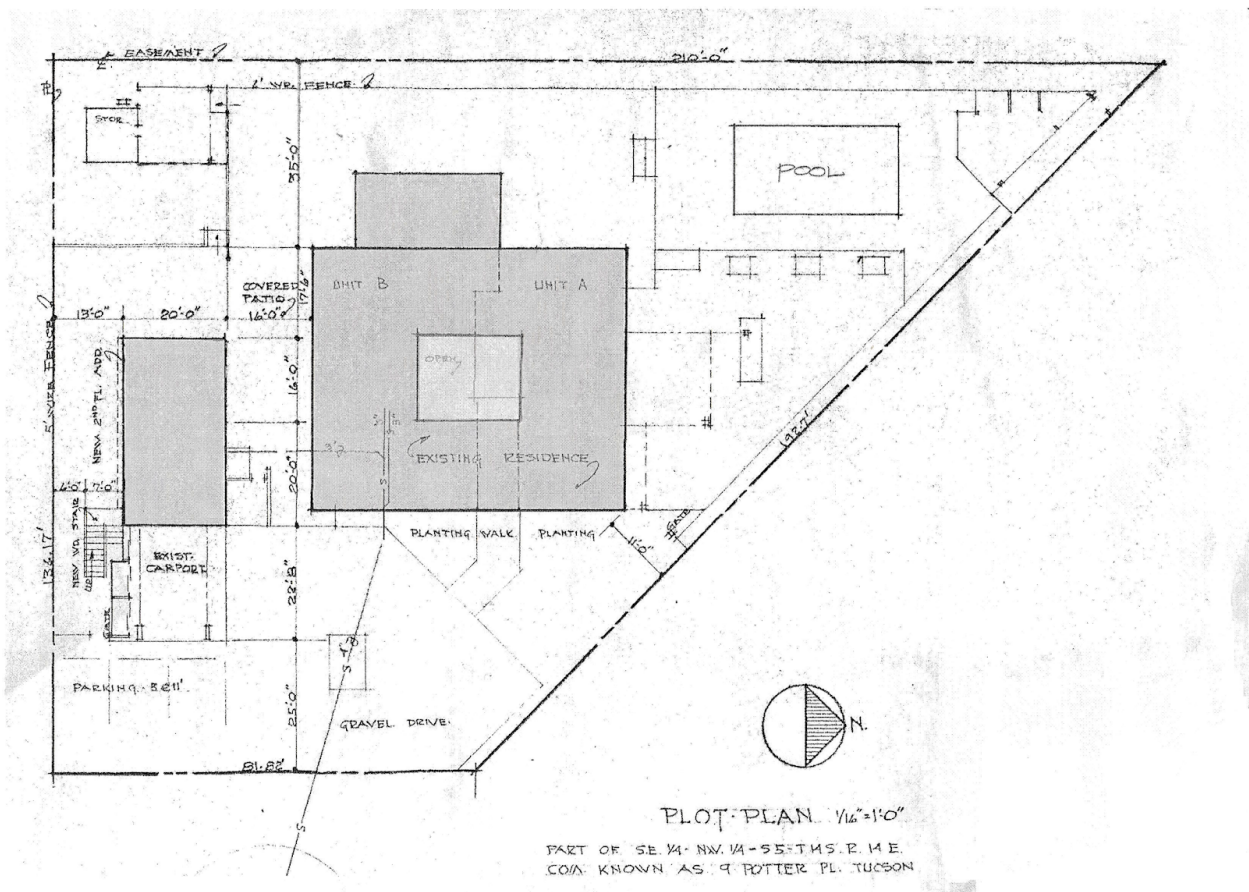
The guest house is connected to the main house by an open grid patio system that creates a semi-sheltered breezeway. The modifications to the guesthouse have impacted the integrity of the original detached structure design and diminished the architectural significance of this site element. Although part of the site the guest house should not be reviewed with the same degree of attention as the main house and should be allowed for future alterations, changes and enclosures.



Beck House Landscape Plan, 1965.



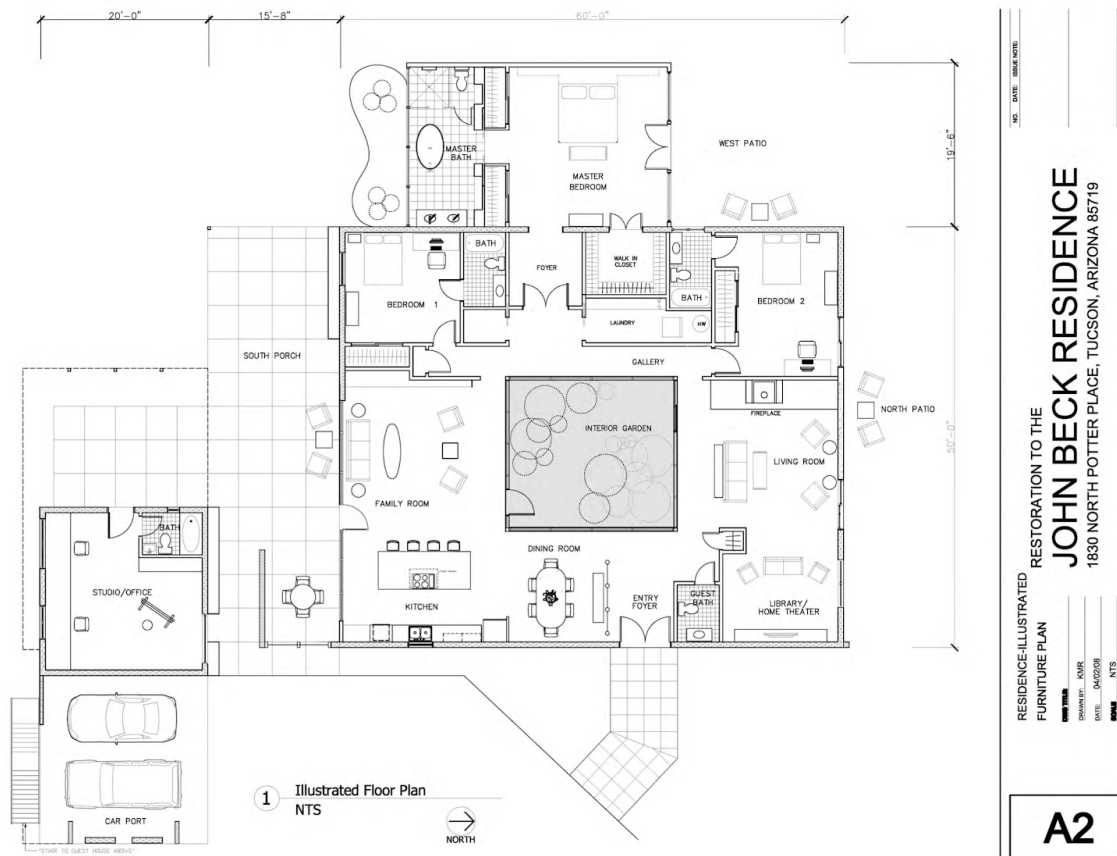
Beck House Site Plan, 1974



Beck House Plot Plan, guest house second story plan and unit conversion for Beck House, 1982.

Alterations

The house retains an exceptionally high degree of integrity. The property was designed in 1959 and built in 1960. A swimming pool was added in 1965, designed by Biltmore Pools. Over the years Beck made addition and changes to the property. The bedroom was added on the back of the house in 1976 extending the western facade. In 1979 the house was converted into a duplex, a change that was later reversed. In 1982, the second-story addition was added to the guest house and the main house. In 2008 the current owner Gregory Beck, the son of John Beck, who is also an architect, fully restored and rehabilitated the property and added the master bedroom suite. The major character-defining features, facades, atrium, living spaces, and volumes were retained and new systems replaced the originals that were failing. The kitchens and bathrooms were updated. During the 2008 rehabilitation the exterior windows were replaced with new frames and glass to match the original design. The kitchen side door and sliding glass doors on the north face also match the original design. The two tall front doors are original to the house. (Gregory Beck).



Restoration Plans for Beck House, Gregory Beck, architect, 2008

Period of Significance: 1961

Statement of Significance and Integrity

The Beck House is eligible as a city of Tucson Historic Landmark. 1. Beck House is from a significant period in Tucson's history: *Post-World War II Development (1945-1975)* and is a distinct architectural style that is at least 50 years old. 2. Beck House is an outstanding example of modern design and is associated with significant historic events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history in particular: *Community Development in Tucson 1945 - 1975*. 3. Beck House exemplifies the architectural period in which it was built and has distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style: *Modern; John H. Beck, Architect*. 4. Beck House contributes historic, cultural, and social importance relating to the heritage of the Tucson community; and 5. Beck House relates positively to buildings in its immediate vicinity in terms of scale, size, massing, etc., such that its removal would be an irreparable loss to the setting and a diminishment to the architectural heritage of Tucson.

The house derives its significance from its architecture and design.

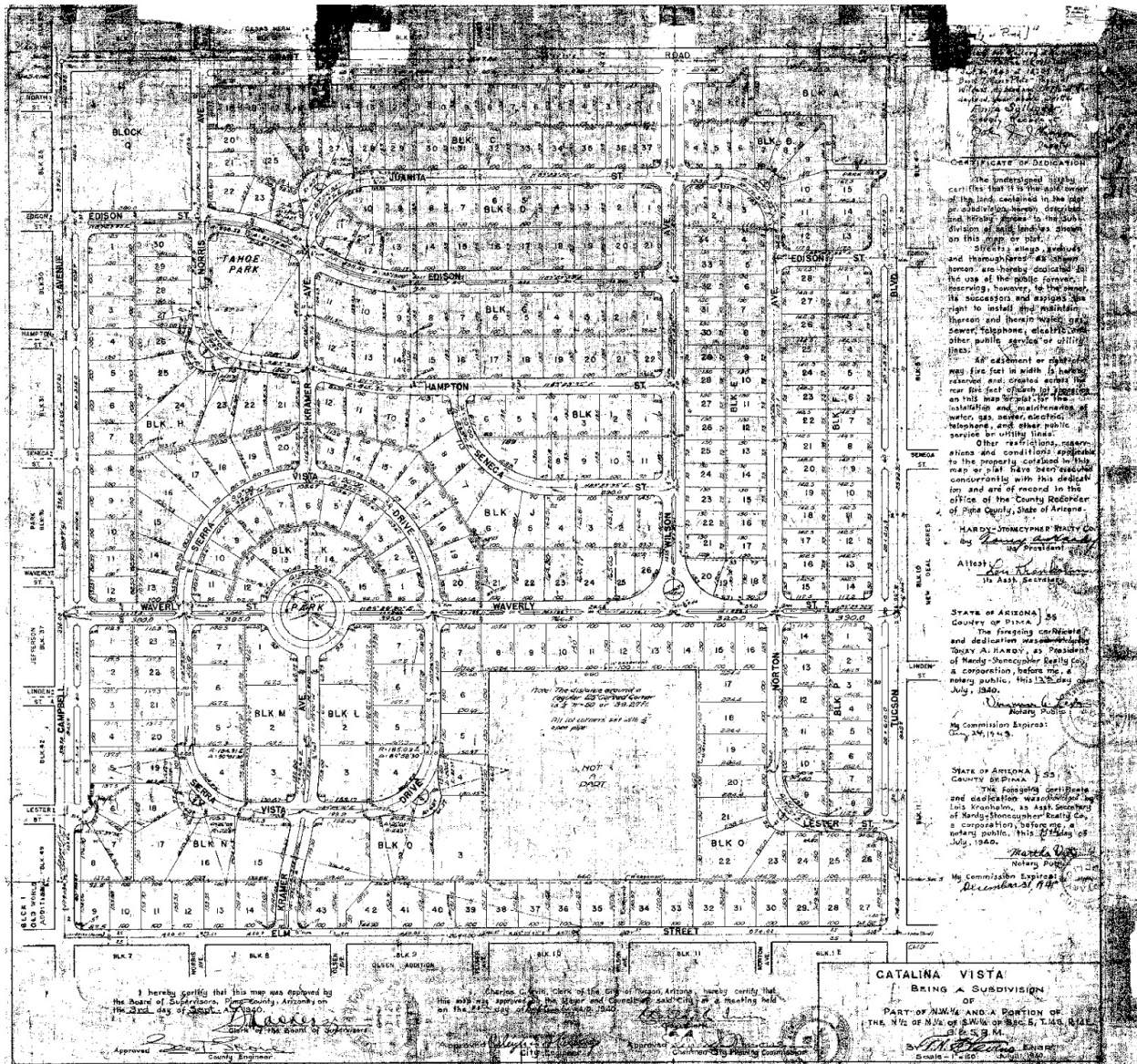
List of previous owners.

1961 - 2006

John H. Beck

2006 - Current

Gregory Beck



Catalina Vista Subdivision, Plat Map, 1940

Catalina Vista & Potter Place

The Beck House is an important example of post-WWII design concentrated at the end of the period of significance of the Catalina Vista National Register Historic District. The Catalina Vista subdivision (1924-1962). Catalina Vista is located in Tucson, Arizona in the Santa Cruz River Valley of Southern Arizona's Sonoran desert uplands. The neighborhood is located in central

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Email: DSD_zoning_administration@tucsonaz.gov

Tucson adjacent to the Arizona Inn. The neighborhood is geographically defined by Grant Road to the North, Elm Street to the South, Tucson Boulevard to the east, and Campbell Avenue property to the west.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the significance of the subdivision and development of Catalina Vista was outlined in the 2003 National Register of Historic Places nomination prepared by Don W. Ryden. AIA. Debora M. Parmiter, RA, Doug Kupe, Ph.D for Ryden Architects, Inc. Key elements and sections of the nomination are included in this document:

In Tucson, the 1940 Catalina Vista subdivision is significant as the first subdivision to integrate fully the rambling ranch house, the family automobile, and aesthetic site planning into a unified, picturesque Ranch Style suburban neighborhood. Until the development of Catalina Vista, there had been no opportunity in Tucson to build a Ranch Style house on a lot of sufficient width to realize the potential of the newly popularized, broad-faced house. This neighborhood layout responded to a new concept of neighborhood relying upon automobiles rather than shoe leather and streetcars for transportation. It also employed City Beautiful suburban amenities such as small neighborhood parks, traffic roundabouts, and landscaped medians as boulevard dividers and screens from arterial street traffic. In Tucson, however, the landscaping was not dense trees, shrubbery, and lawns, but rather palms, cactus, and gravel. It is the picturesque Southwestern setting for the red adobe Ranch Style houses with attached carports that makes Catalina Vista the first of its kind in Tucson's history of development.

[...]

Catalina Vista was created in much the same way suburban residential development in Arizona is most often created - the subdivision of former farm or ranch land on the borders of townsites. The story of Catalina Vista follows this same course. The desert land upon which Catalina Vista was developed lay far to the northeast outside the original townsite of Tucson. This quarter-section of land originally was the 1891 homestead of a Mr. Wilson, who in 1907 sold it to Wheeler as ranch land. Wheeler made initial improvements on the property and sold it to Frederick Leighton Kramer in 1924. Mr. Kramer named his new holdings Rancho Santa Catalina after the nearby mountains. He reportedly replaced Wheeler's small house with the large two-story ranch house which still exists intact on the site. Upon Kramer's death, the property was disposed of through lengthy probate proceedings.

In 1940 Hardy & Stonecypher Real Estate Company subdivided the quarter-section of land along with a small strip of the former Olsen Addition along the north side of Elm Street. As part of their 1940 residential land development project, they excluded from the plat the ten acres which contained Kramer's Rancho Santa Catalina house. They sold it

to Potter's School for Girls for use as a finishing school. Thus, the School for Girls and the Ranch-Style houses of Catalina Vista sprang simultaneously from the same Rancho Santa Catalina origin. The school operated until 1953. Since then the Kramer Rancho has been further subdivided by lot splits for new houses.

Construction in Catalina Vista began immediately upon the platting of the subdivision in 1940. The housing starts were relatively vigorous in spite of the shortages of building materials during World War II. In the five years after the war construction about doubled reaching its highest rate. During the first half of the 1950s building activity resumed at the same level as during the war. By 1955 about two-thirds of the subdivision was developed.

The meandering streets of Catalina Vista create a picturesque passage among rows of Ranch houses set amid a desert landscape and a rugged mountain backdrop. The subdivision was named after Kramer's Rancho Santa Catalina, which in turn had been named for the Santa Catalina Mountains to the north. Catalina Vista's curving Streetscape character distinguishes it from earlier subdivisions which were arranged on the traditional orthogonal street grid. A strong sense of neighborhood identity is created by the subdivision designers who incorporated features of City Beautiful planning such as winding and crescent streets, roundabout intersection circles, landscaped medians in the main boulevards and along the arterial street frontages, and a centerpiece neighborhood park (Tahoe Park). The City Beautiful Movement inspired urban beautification in architecture, landscaping, and city planning in the United States from the 1890s through the 1920s. Influenced by the Beaux-Arts architecture of Europe, American city-shapers designed civic centers, grand boulevards, and parks in a quest for urban beauty. The City Beautiful model was "the White City" built at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, in Chicago, Illinois. This was primarily an aesthetic movement, but its promoters felt that it would uplift the spirit too. The City Beautiful ideology also emphasized tourism, scenic values, and boosterism.

The layout of Catalina Vista dramatically demonstrates the departure from city planning concepts of pedestrian/streetcar neighborhoods of the early twentieth century toward the automobile-oriented custom-home subdivisions of the late twentieth century. The striking difference in character between the adjacent Blenman-Elm and the Catalina Vista neighborhoods is created by street geometry rather than by architectural styles, for both areas contain virtually the same Ranch-Style houses. Catalina Vista's street layout and architecture foreshadow the Ranch house tract subdivisions of the 1950s and 1960s, where some of the best character-defining elements of the custom-designed neighborhoods are utilized in mass-produced tracts.

Although the curvilinear arrangement of streets and parcels in Catalina Vista are visually appealing, that layout is not as efficient in use of land as is the grid plan. The curving

streets create parcels of varying shapes and sizes. While there are still a good many small, rectangular lots, there are also bigger wedge-shaped and irregular lots. These fewer and larger irregular-shaped lots were, by necessity, used more land and were more expensive than the densely packed rectangular lots of the grid subdivisions. Some of this inefficiency and expense of design was offset by the omission of alleys and tree lawns separating sidewalks from the street curbs. The public utility easements for power were retained at the rear lot lines even though the alleys disappeared. Sewer and gas lines joined the water lines in the street.

The broader frontage of each parcel also was a response to the American love affair with the automobile. No longer was the family car to be kept in the backyard detached garage, a reminder of the old stable and carriage house. With the end of depression and world war, people could afford an automobile and would proudly display it for all to see in the open carport attached to the side of the house. The advent of the attached carport or garage played right into the design aesthetic of the "rambling" ranch house. These popular houses were very wide and shallow; quite the opposite of the narrow bungalow with a garage in the rear. In Tucson, Catalina Vista was the first subdivision to integrate fully the rambling ranch house, the family automobile, and aesthetic site planning into a unified, picturesque Ranch style suburban neighborhood.

Until 1940 with the platting of Catalina Vista, Ranch Style houses, first introduced to the American public in 1935, were built only on parcels with narrow frontage originally intended for narrow bungalows with detached garages. As a step in the evolution of the architectural style and community development in Tucson, these Early Ranch houses on bungalow lots straddled the middle of the twentieth century - with one foot in the streetcar era and one foot in the automobile era. The development of Catalina Vista allowed the Ranch Style concept of open space and personal independence to approach its potential in a truly suburban setting. However, this achievement was not reached without paying a price - it also signaled the beginning of the loss of casual social contact with one's neighbors. Houses began to become introverted. Front porches were traded for back patios. Automobiles supplanted pedestrians. Television replaced conversation. The advent of the Ranch house and its suburban neighborhood, coupled with the automobile and television, signaled a major cultural shift in America - and in Tucson.

Most of the streets in Catalina Vista derive their names from the projected alignments of previously named, adjacent streets. An important exception is seen in the naming of the primary entrance street, Kramer Boulevard, and its related circle street, Sierra Vista Drive. Another uniquely named subdivision street is Juanita Street.

On June 2, 1940, the Arizona Daily Star detailed the concept of the new subdivision in an article titled: Sale Highlights Week's Building, Subdivision Planned:

The new owners plan to subdivide under the names of Catalina Vista. The subdivision will be the most modern and up-to-date in this area and is being designed along lines laid down by expert planning engineers. Blocks will be about three times the length of the average in Tucson, and all streets will be paved and slightly curved. Street's are being laid out to make the section a strictly residential one and to eliminate any possibility of through traffic/ Streets will have parkways in the center and 21-foot parkways will be placed along the entire frontage of the property on Campbell, Grant, and Tucson boulevard. No houses on these streets will be directly on the street.

[...]

All lots will have a frontage of at least 100 feet and will be much wider than the original city lots.

The block located at the corner of Grant Road and Campbell Avenue will be designed for businesses and it is understood the purchasers are now negotiating for its sale.

Negotiations are also underway for the sale of the 10-acre tract upon which the large Kramer residence is located to the Potter School of Tucson, now located on East Fifth Street. (Arizona Daily Star, Sale Highlights Week's Building, Subdivision Planned, June 2, 1940)

The NRHP nomination includes historical background and a context examining Tucson Subdivisions in Transition from 1940-1962. The relevant sections of the nomination that apply to the Beck House are excerpted here:

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: Tucson Subdivisions in Transition, 1940-1962

By 1940, the economy had rebounded considerably from the depths of the Great Depression. This had more to do with conditions in Europe than with any economic program created by the Federal government. Adolph Hitler engineered Germany's invasion of Poland in September of 1939, starting World War Two. Although the United States would not enter the war until two years later, after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, conditions in Europe put the United States on a war footing and the economy began to boom.

Within the Catalina Vista neighborhood, the lengthy probate of the estate of Leighton Kramer had tied up the northwest corner of the area, consisting of what had originally been the Wilson property and later the Wheeler Ranch. Although Kramer had died in Tucson in 1930, his extensive property holdings in Arizona and the east, several heirs, and many codicils to his last will and testament had held up the disposition of his estate for some time. The Tucson portion of the puzzle reached completion on May 24, 1940, when the estate of Leighton Kramer in Philadelphia transferred his interest in the northwest quarter of Section 5 to the Hardy-Stonecypher Realty Co. of Tucson.

The Hardy-Stonecypher Realty Co. was a corporation founded by Toney A. Hardy and George A. Stonecypher. Hardy was a lawyer who came to Tucson in 1934 after spending more than twenty-five years in corporate practice in New York. Perhaps a casualty of a corporate shake-out caused by the Great Depression, by 1936 Hardy took over as the business manager and vice-president of Tucson's Desert Sanitarium. George A. Stonecypher was a businessman who came to Tucson in 1912. He purchased a bakery in 1918 and built it into a very successful business in Tucson. For a time, he also served as the president of the Consolidated National Bank in Tucson. Stonecypher was very active in community affairs, including serving several terms as president of the El Rio Country Club. After selling the bakery in 1940, he joined Toney A. Hardy to form the Hardy-Stonecypher Realty Co.

On May 24, 1940, the estate of Leighton Kramer transferred its interest in the old Wilson / Wheeler property to the Hardy-Stonecypher Realty Co. One week later, on May 31, the Realty Co. transferred a portion of this property to Dickinson and Sue B. Potter. This parcel consisted of the Kramer House - Rancho Santa Catalina - and the Wheeler pool and well. Potter and his wife established the Potter School for Girls on the property. This finishing school for girls operated from the ranch house and grounds until 1953. The school was a college preparatory girls school for grades seven through twelve. The Potters added a new entry road, called Potter Place, off Elm Street as an entrance to the property.

The remaining portion of the Wilson / Wheeler / Kramer property formed the basis for the Realty Company's major project: creation of the Catalina Vista subdivision. Planning for Catalina Vista was already well underway by the time the Company had received title from the Kramer estate. The engineering plat of the subdivision was completed on July 11, 1940. The company filed the plat with the Pima County Recorder on September 30, 1940. As part of the process for developing the subdivision, the company reached an agreement with the Potters for the use of the Wheeler well to supply water to the development.

As had become common with subdividers in Tucson and throughout the nation, in July of 1940, the company established a set of restrictive covenants for the Catalina Vista subdivision. Surprisingly, these allowed for the construction of duplexes or two-family homes on certain designated lots in the subdivision. All building plans had to be approved by the company before construction could commence. After seventy-five per cent of the lots had been sold, the task of architectural review would fall on a committee composed of residents. The restrictions specified that all plans "shall be of the architectural design native to Southern Arizona, to-wit: Spanish, Moroccan, Modernistic, Mexican, Indian, or Early Californian architecture." The covenants also established size and price ranges for the buildings in the subdivision, which started at 1,000 square feet

and a cost of \$4,000.00 and increased to 2,000 square feet and a cost of \$8,000.00. The document identified specific locations for the particular sizes of houses. In October of 1940, just prior to the commencement of an advertising campaign for the subdivision, the company modified the size of the houses allowed. It provided for the construction of smaller houses on a number of lots, starting at 750 square feet and a cost of \$3,000.00.

The company soon began to advertise in Tucson newspapers to spur sales for the development. Advertisements appeared during November and December of 1940 that extolled the virtues of the subdivision. The advertisements emphasized the importance of the subdivision's plan as a way of setting it apart. The company stated: "Catalina Vista is a scientifically planned subdivision ... [that] has eliminated monotonous straight lines without creating a confusing maze of roadways." The company also stressed the importance of the relationship between the plan and FHA approval. According to the sales literature, this was the result of "many months of careful planning by experts."

Catalina Vista was indeed different in its plan than other subdivisions in the immediate area. Rather than utilize a strict grid plan, company officials incorporated curvilinear streets, parks, and open spaces into the design. In many respects, the plan for Catalina Vista looked back to an earlier era of development, reminiscent of the City Beautiful Movement. This type of plan had been used successfully in Tucson, but ten years earlier during the creation of the El Encanto Estates and Colonia Solana subdivisions. At Catalina Vista, company planners stated that "restricted areas are divided by parks and parkways in such a way that there is no conflict, and yet, no sharply dividing line."

Company officials may have been a bit too ambitious with their plan. In August of 1941 registered civil engineer Paul U. Sawyer returned to the drawing board to re-work the northeast corner of the subdivision. The new plan allowed for more street and park planting strips to allow for better access to the lots. Company officials filed the revised plan of the northeast corner of the subdivision with the Pima County Recorder on September 24, 1941.

Despite the advertising blitz and the modifications to the initial plan, initial sales in Catalina Vista were slow. This was most likely due to the national emergency associated with the war effort. To spur sales, Hardy and his wife moved into Leighton Kramer's old stable and George Stonecypher had established a sales office at 2049 East Elm. Despite the presence of the subdivision's principals on the property, buyers were more concerned with other events.

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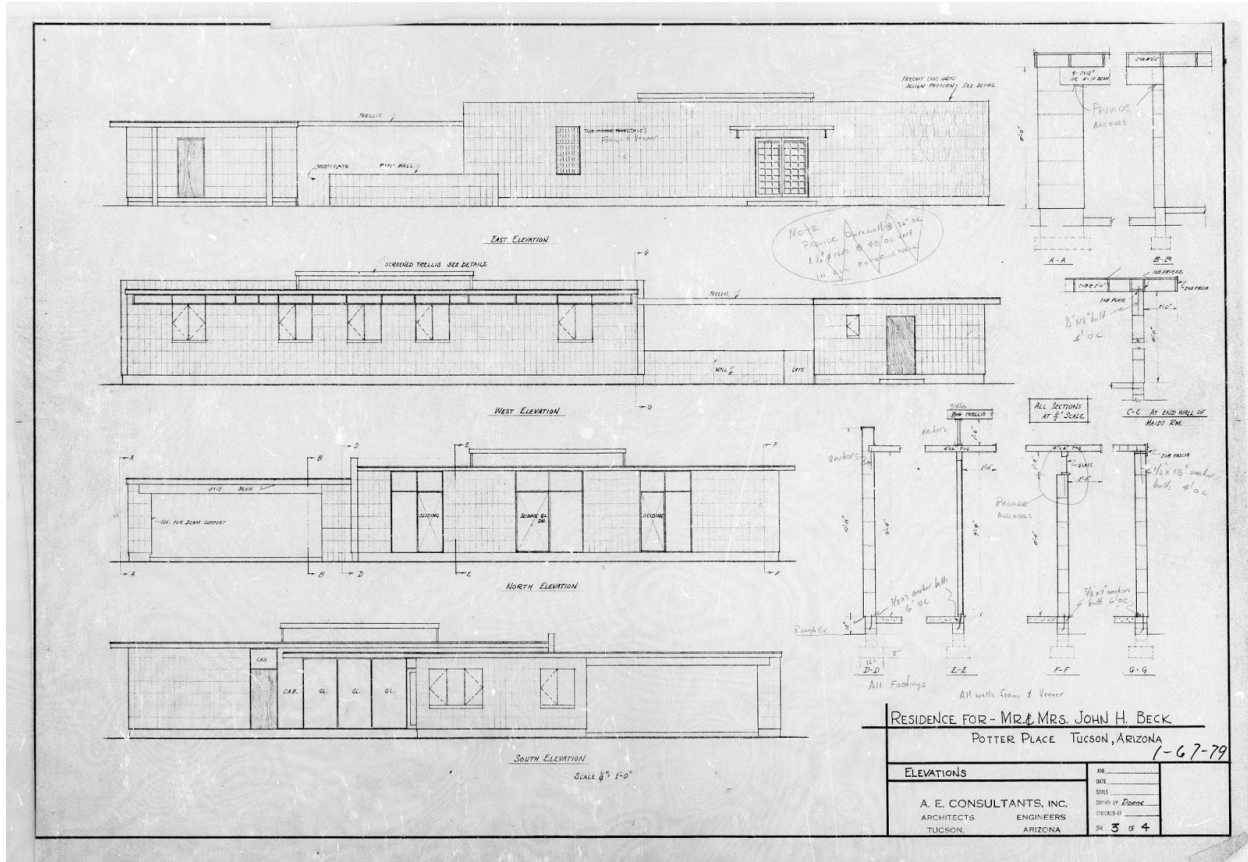
Despite the presence of the subdivision's principals on the property, buyers were more concerned with other events. began to have a bigger and bigger impact on the area. One of the earliest businesses along Speedway in the area was the Ester Henderson Studio, located at 1139 E. Speedway by 1940 (now demolished). Mrs. Henderson was a photographer that specialized in portraits.

By 1962, the end of the period of significance for the Catalina Vista Historic District, most lots in the area had been filled with residential homes. While a few vacant lots remained, the area had been essentially built-out. After 1962, the historical trend in the neighborhood changed from one of residential home construction to one of an erosion of residential characteristics. Residents began to be concerned with protecting the residential character of the area, particularly on the outskirts of the neighborhood along major streets.

Catalina Vista had a "coming of age" crisis in the mid-fifties. As early as 1953, the park lots, planting strips, and roads were showing the effects of time. Residents petitioned the City of Tucson to improve the roads. It responded by installing new pavement, curbs and drainage. This stopped complaints for a time, but landscaping of the park tracts was still contentious. An agreement was reached with residents to install Mexican fan palms. The new landscaping was completed by 1956. The winding streets, medians, parks, and landscaping contribute significantly to the character of the subdivision's setting and environment. They create the picturesque setting for the rambling Ranch House facades.

The Beck house was built on a triangular lot, in an area of the neighborhood that was known by the mid-1950s as Potter Place. John and Marguerite Beck purchased the property from Sue B. Potter on May 11, 1960 (Arizona Recorder Book 1653 Page 282). The Pima County Assessor Residential Property Record Card from 1963 lists the Date of Construction as 1960 with an update to an "effective date" of 1962. The Arizona Daily Star on July 5, 1961 included a newspaper article that mentions Ingrid Beck, age 11 "of 9 Potter Place" winning a local Young Hobby Club Prize. This supports a 1960/1961 construction date.

The large property, located in the south-central part of the subdivision that included the 1924 Frederick Leighton Kramer mansion, was excluded from the original Catalina Vista Subdivision. Kramer died at the age of 46 and the property was purchased by Dickson B. Potter and his family. "Potter Place" was established and by 1954 the Kramer mansion was addressed "No. 5 Potter Place." An iron gate flanked by brick columns at Elm Street was adorned with the new name. By 1956 other homes began to be built on Potter Place including the Potter Cottage at No. 6 and the Enrique C. Lineiro House at No. 1. By 1961 J.K.B Here House was built at No. 3 and Beck was noted in the local paper as the owner of No. 9. No. 8, the 1966 Clyde and Cissie Krebs House located next door to the Beck House was designed by local master architect Arthur T. Brown.



Beck House, Original Elevation Plan, City of Tucson Development Services, 1959

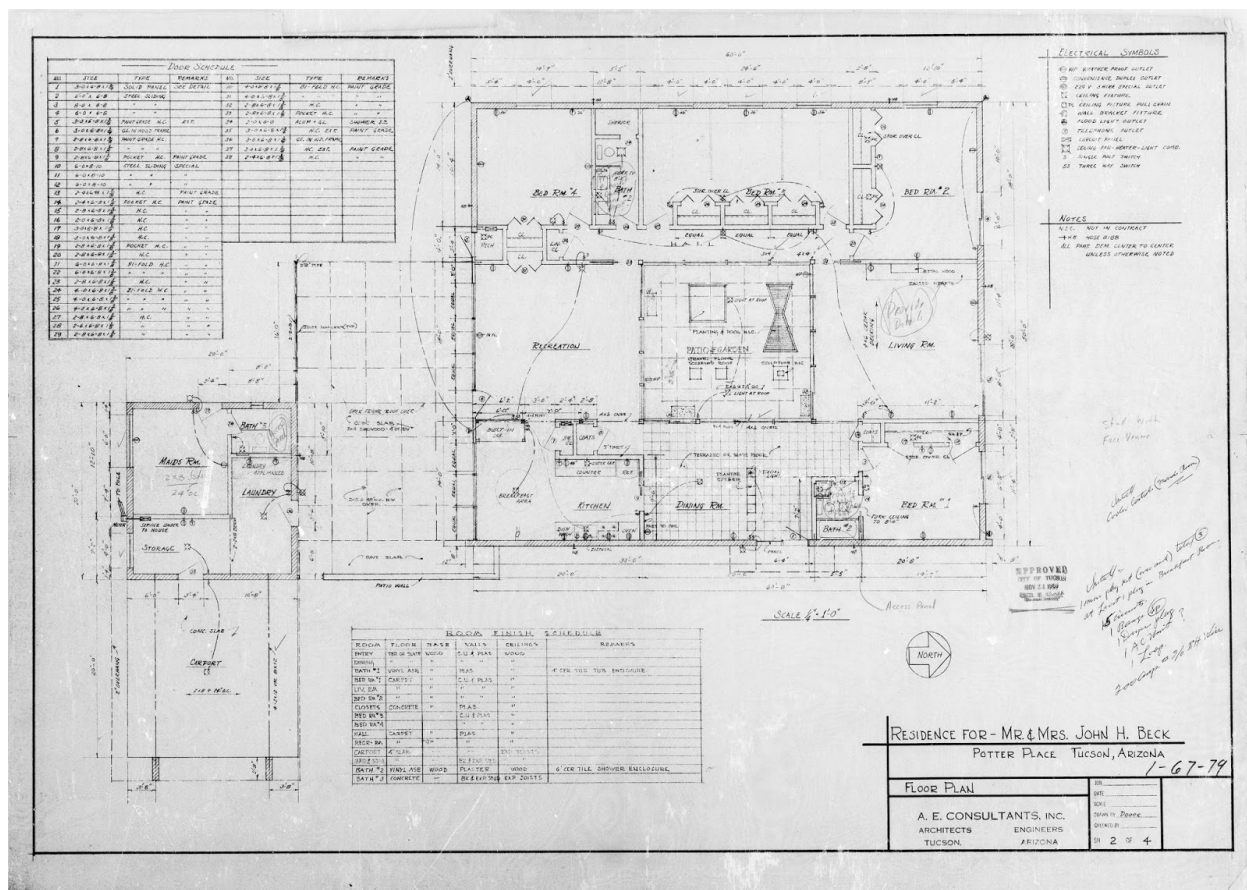
Beck House

Architect John Beck designed the modernist 4000 square ft. home for his family. The plans were designed under Beck's firm A.E. Consultants and approved by the City of Tucson on November 24, 1959.¹ Pima County assessor dates the house to 1960. It was constructed by Tucson builder R. B. Taylor. The initial designed employed precast concrete pattern blocks but was modified before construction. The revised concept was a distinctive design that utilized a precast exposed-aggregate concrete panels system. Each panel was fabricated on-site using river rock and lifted into place giving the principle elevation a monolithic quality. The primary living spaces surround a glass-walled atrium/courtyard which allows diffused natural daylight to illuminate the interior.

The Tucson Citizen, March 9, 1968, noted, "John H. Beck found expression particularly in the atrium or inner court which forms the hub of the house at 9 N. Potter Place with the recreation room to the south and the formal living room to the north. "Having come from Seattle, I wanted plants and an inner garden in contrast to the outside desert," he recalled. "It's been wonderful especially in the spring and fall, on moon-lit nights and even during storms." The court is entirely

¹ City of Tucson Development Records, Beck House Records 1959.

enclosed in glass and the lattice-style roof is screened and open to the sky most of the year except in the coldest periods when it is topped in vinyl sheeting.

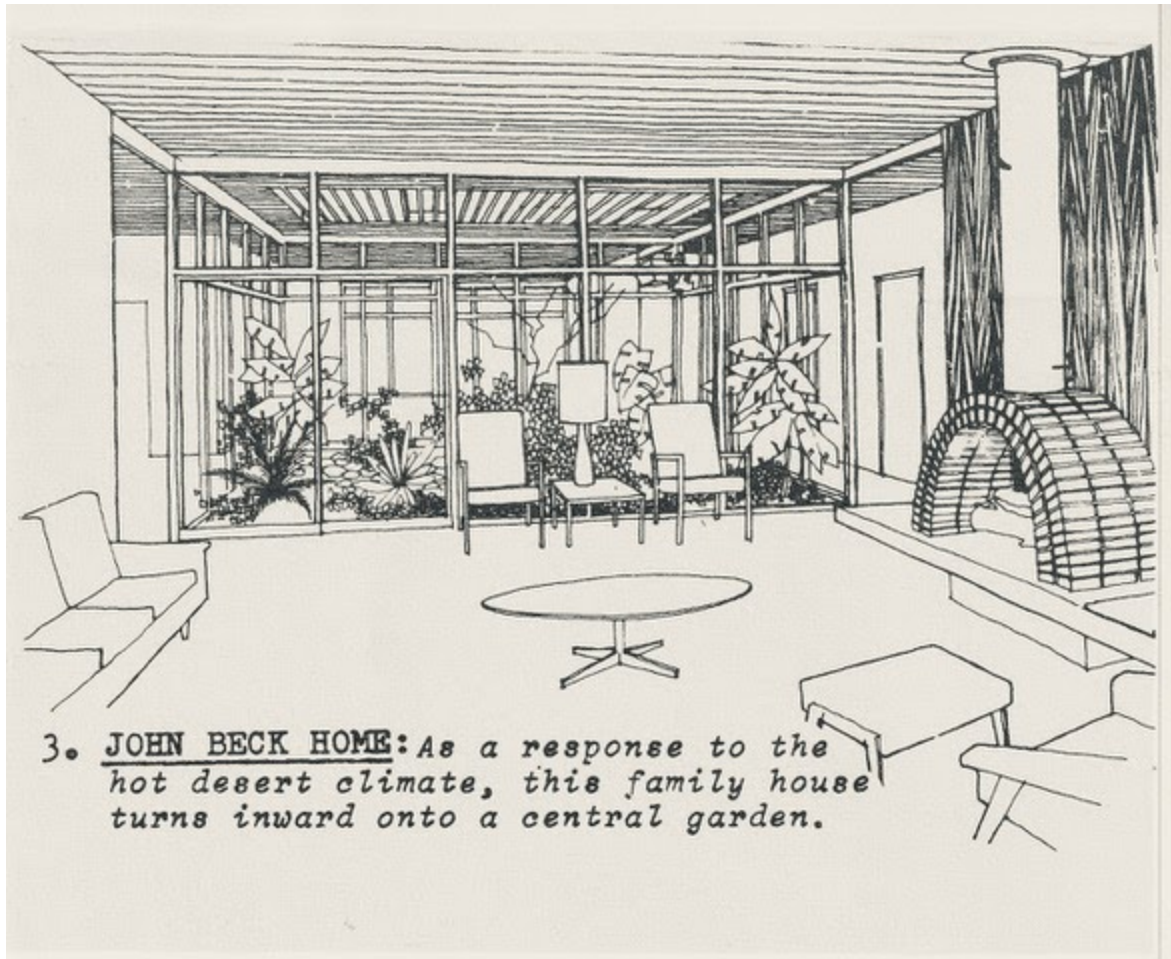


Beck House, Original Plan, City of Tucson Development Services, 1959

The fireplace in the living room, designed after an Indian one he had seen, "broke all the rules," according to Beck. "It's twice as deep as an ordinary fireplace but works like a dream." Hooded in brick, the fireplace has a circular stack finished in copper and a cantilevered hearth of informed concrete.

The property also includes a two-story guest house and carport, designed by Beck, to the south that connects to the main house by a walkway covered by an open latticework.

The house was featured on the South Arizona Chapter, American Institute of Architects 1968 Tour of Tucson Architecture which featured the homes of five Tucson architects. It was included on the Modern Architecture Preservation Project Modern 50 list, designed by the Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation in 2016 as Modern Classic, and has twice been featured on the Tucson Modernism Week Home Tour.



Kirby Lockard Sketch of the Beck House, c. 1968

As noted in the National Register of Historic Places nomination:

The Catalina Vista Historic District consists of a single subdivision, Catalina Vista, platted by the HardyStonecypher Realty Company in 1940. There was development in the area prior to 1940. A strip of land on the north side of Elm Avenue was part of the original Olsen's Addition, platted in 1903. This strip was resubdivided and included within the Catalina Vista subdivision. A second prior-developed parcel, excluded from the Catalina Vista subdivision, is commonly called "Potter Place." It was first developed as a ranch and later as a preparatory school for girls. Although included within the boundaries of the historic district as a contributing property, Potter Place is not a part of the Catalina Vista subdivision. However, Potter Place is considered significant and is included in the National Register nomination.

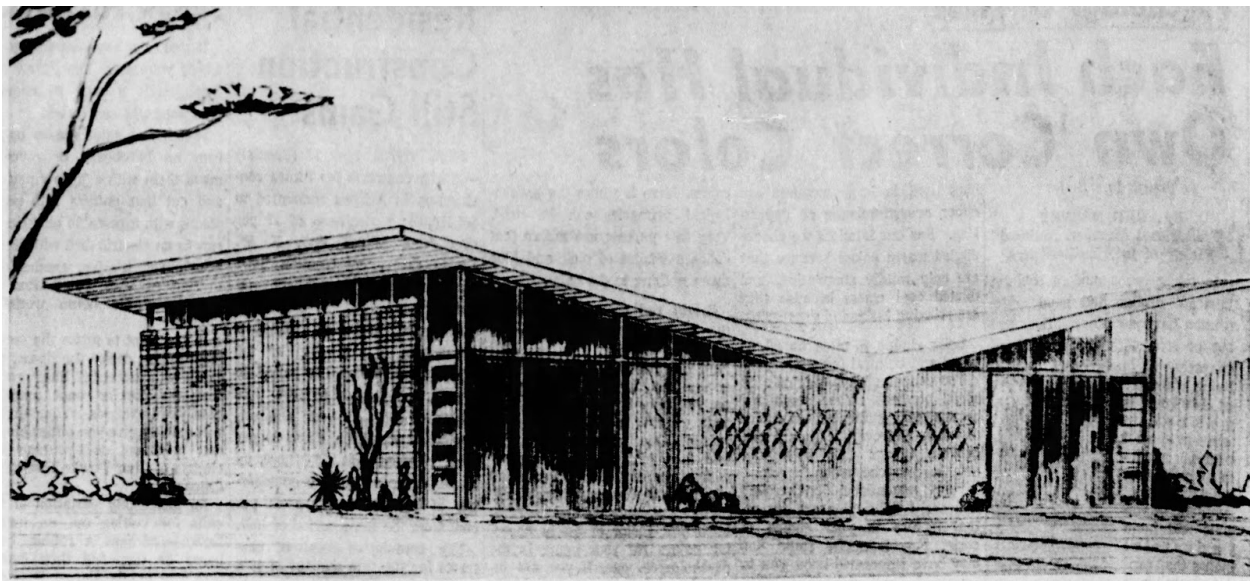
It is worth noting that the John H. Beck House meets the criteria for eligibility as a city of Tucson Historic Landmark. 1. John H. Beck House is from a significant period in Tucson's history: Post-World War II Development (1945-1975) and is a distinct architectural style that is at least 50 years old. 2. The John H. Beck House is an outstanding example of modern design and is

associated with significant historic events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history in particular: Community Development in Tucson 1945 - 1975 3. The John H. Beck House exemplifies the architectural period in which it was built and has distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style: Modern; John H. Beck, Architect. 4. The John H. Beck House contributes historic, cultural, and social importance relating to the heritage of the Tucson community; and 5. The John H. Beck House relates positively to buildings in its immediate vicinity in terms of scale, size, massing, etc., such that its removal would be an irreparable loss to the setting and a diminishment to the architectural heritage of Tucson.

John H. Beck, FAIA (1919 - 2006)

John H. Beck was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1919. He studied architecture at Wentworth Institute and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He married Marguerite, his elementary school love. His first architectural project was a home for his family in Seattle, Washington at 5060 Ivanhoe PI NE, 98105 built in 1953. The Becks moved to Tucson in 1956. There is limited documentation about his career before relocating to Tucson but it is clear that Beck arrived with a sophisticated approach to architectural design. His work pushed the bounds of engineering, employed avant-garde structural systems and forms, and was responsible for noted examples of mid-twentieth-century design.

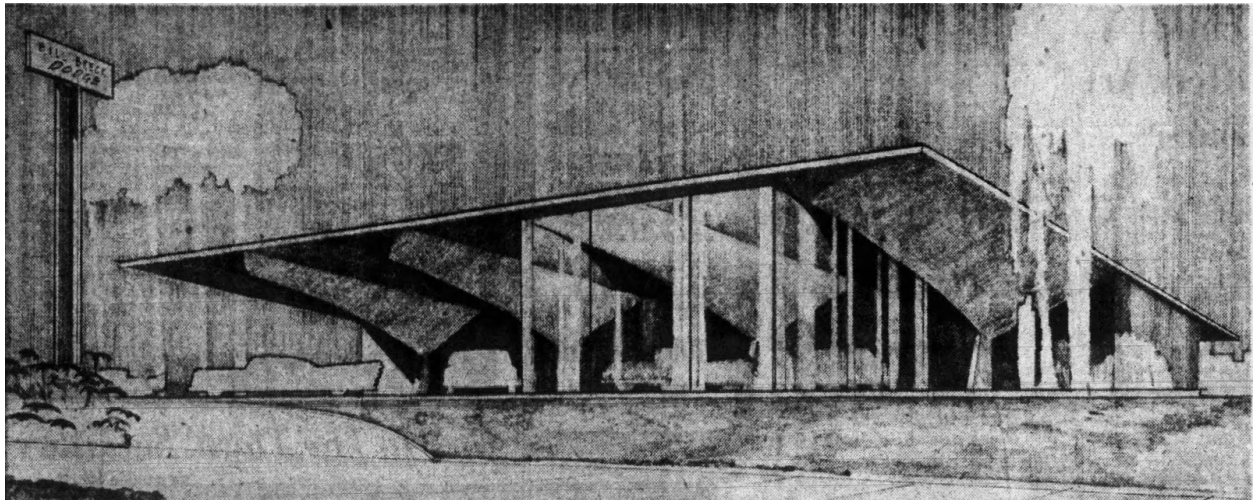
After his arrival in Tucson, by 1958 Beck was designing noted buildings including an “ultra-modern” office to house the Arizona Register, the editorial and business offices of the Catholic newspaper for the Diocese of Tucson at a cost of \$30K. Built at the corner of Oracle and Prince Road the design used significant glass in the second story. (Arizona Daily Star, Arizona Register Plan to Erect New Building, August 3, 1958.)



Sentinel Land and Development Corp. Model House, Architect John H. Beck drawing, 1958.

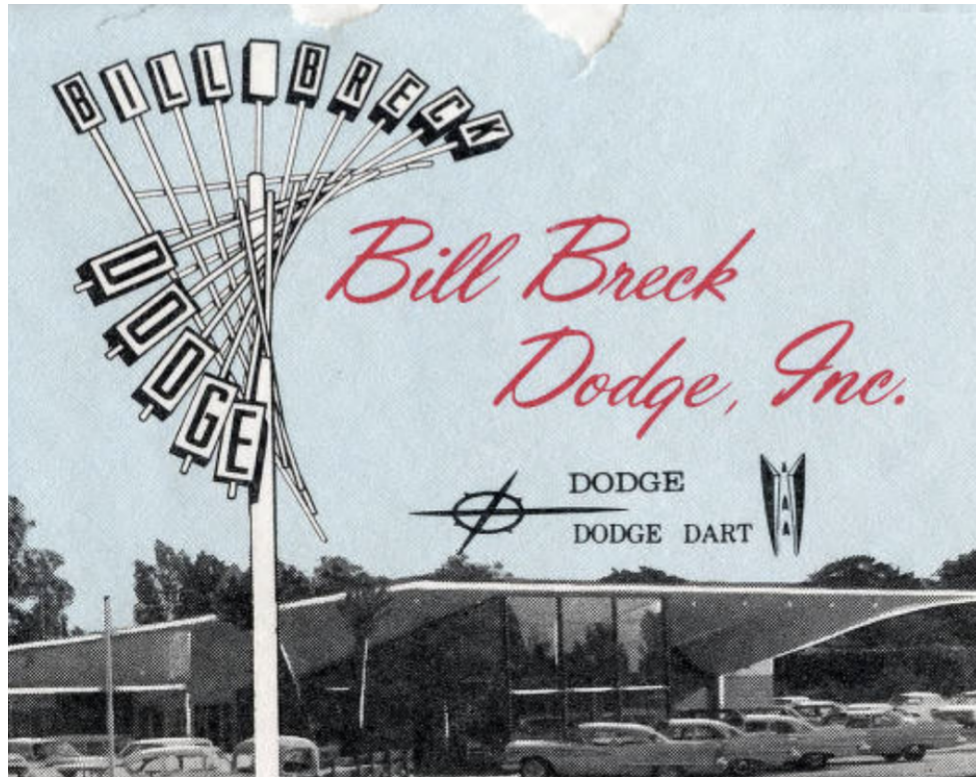
In 1958, the first Arizona building to use a hyperbolic paraboloid concrete structure began construction in Tucson. Richard R. Hughes, president of Sentinel Land and Development Corp. built a demonstration duplex with plans to build 100 more. Although the plan to develop a hundred homes was never realized, the extant model was constructed at 4616-18 East Fairmount Avenue with a 40 x 50-foot thin-shell concrete roof supported by two columns, creating a 2,000 square-foot livable space. (Fig. 12) The project was designed by architect John H. Beck and AE Consultants Inc, architect and engineers. T.W. Kramer civil engineer and W.M. Waggoner mechanical engineer worked on the project and W.L. Johnson Construction Co. was the contractor. (Arizona Daily Star, Hyperbolic Paraboloid Structure Being Built, May 18, 1958.)

In 1959 Beck designed the new steel plant for the Saint Joseph Steel Co. at Rillito between the highway and the Southern Pacific Railroad Co. mainline on two and one-half acres leased from the railroad. The 16,000 square foot plant melted scrap steel and was built by general contractors Kahlhamer & Driemeyer, Inc. with structural engineering by Walter W. Walker. (Tucson Citizen, Tucson's Newest Industry To be Steel-Making Plant, Apr. 16, 1959, 8.)



Bill Breck Dodge Showroom, Architect John H. Beck drawing, 1960.

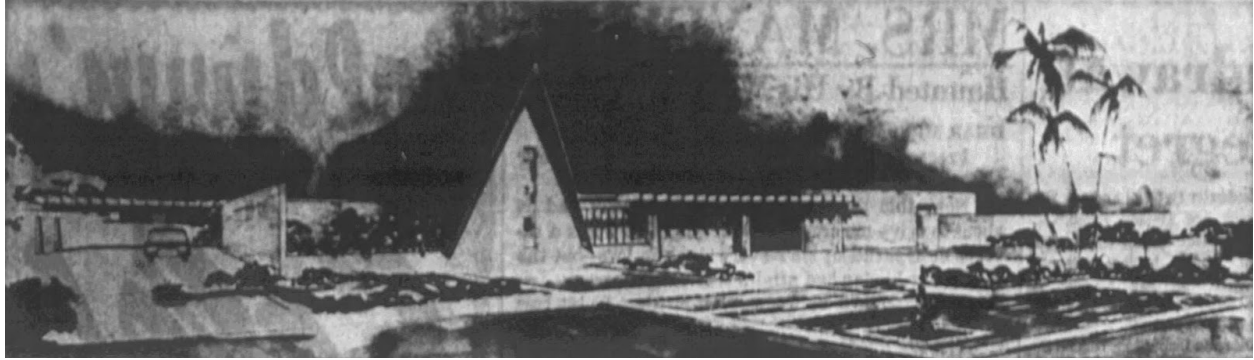
Beck with Edson and Goldblatt (BEG) created AE Consultants and Construction, the same year, Beck was hired to design a series of 33 "California-style" apartments by Geroge Woodruff, president of the Lanai Apartments Inc. The units were adjacent to Tucson Country Day School at 3727 East 5th Street. The one and two-bedroom units were two-story and face a center garden with a swimming pool. Each apartment included its own sun deck or private patio area. The complex was built by Wendell T. Decker, the general contractor. (Arizona Daily Star, Apartment Construction Announced, Jun 21, 1959, 12.)



Bill Breck Dodge Showroom, Architect John H. Beck, 1960

In 1959, Beck again utilized the hyperbolic paraboloid form, for the new automobile sales agency Bill Breck Dodge, Inc. located at the southeast corner of East Speedway Boulevard and Bentley Avenue (demolished). The Arizona Daily Star at the time noted the main structure “will employ the modernistic hyperbolic paraboloid roof style, will house a 15,000 square foot showroom and administration office.” (Arizona Daily Star, “Bill Breck to Open New Dodge Agency in City”, August 18, 1959.)

In 1960, Beck presented plans for the Randolph Park Communications Center (Arizona Daily Star, Council OKs, Mar. 8 1960, 4), which is located at 1000 Randolph Way within Reid Park. Later that year he designed the Palms Mortuary and Chapel at 5225 East Speedway under his firm John H. Beck and Associates. The chapel with seating for 125 and included two glass-enclosed gardens. The complex features a large A-frame chapel building and landscaping that has since been removed as Speedway Boulevard has been widened. (Tucson Citizen, Tucson’s Newest Funeral Home, Jul 27, 1960, 15)



Palms Mortuary and Chapel, Architect John H. Beck, 1960

In August of 1960, Beck was commissioned by the University of Arizona to design a new Beta Theta Pi Greek House. The project was part of an initiative to build 11 Greek houses. Other architects who created designs as part of the initiative included Arthur T. Brown, D. Burr Du Bois, Gordon Luepke, Scholer & Fuller, William Wilde, Place & Place, Carl LaMar John, and Edward Herreras. (Tucson Citizen, UA Getting Drawings for 11 New Greek Houses, Aug 1, 1960, 2). In February of 1962, Southern Arizona Bank produced an exhibition of major architectural projects in Tucson and Beck was included. (Arizona Daily Star, Bank Will Exhibit Architects' Plans, Feb 18, 1962, 28.)

In 1962, Beck was hired to design a retirement community called Christopher City. The non-profit project was an effort of the Knights of Columbus and occupied 70 acres at Fort Lowell Road and Columbus Boulevard. The project was designed to be 400 units and envisioned to house 700 seniors as well as community and commercial buildings.

Other major buildings included the Park Student Union at the University of Arizona, 1965; 1969 Alvernon Village Shopping Center and Woolco anchor store at the southeast corner of 22nd Street and Alvernon Way; 1972 Marry E. Dill Elementary School at Three Points. Beck also designed a co-housing project at 3647 East Second Street. Which was an early example of "collaborative housing", with two rows of 6 apartments facing a common courtyard.

Beck and his family traveled extensively through Asia, Africa, and South American. Beck died on April 15, 2006

Integrity

As defined in the National Register Bulletin, How to apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, integrity is defined as: "the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be listed in the National Register of Historic Places, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the National Register criteria, but it also must have integrity. The evaluation of integrity is sometimes a subjective judgment, but it must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance."

The historic building retains all seven aspects of integrity including Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association.

1. Location. Built on Potter Place within the boundaries of Catalina Vista (NRHP listed), the home was constructed on a triangular lot set back from the street. The house remains in its original location.

2. Design. John Beck designed and built the house for himself and his family in a progressive modern design on a city lot within the Catalina Vista. As an outstanding example of the Modern style, the home exemplifies interior and exterior living. The design coupled with exceptional craftsmanship and detailing create a distinctive sense of place that epitomizes mid-twentieth century Tucson. In 1988 the original carport and guest house were modified with a second story to add a guest apartment.

3. Setting. Beck House retains its original suburban residential setting. Subsequent development during the post-WWII era, 20th and 21st Century has created an eclectic residential neighborhood with the Beck House serving as an architectural anchor of the post-WWII era.

4. Materials. The materials remain the same from the period of construction. Limited alterations have remained true to the original material palette.

5. Workmanship. The quality of workmanship is intact; the original craftsmanship with which the residential building was built is still present, details such as exposed material details, tongue and groove ceiling, built-ins, exterior cast concrete details, window framing, and flooring. Throughout the building, there is exceptional workmanship and finish detail. The distinct interior/exterior finish work and treatment are outstanding examples of mid-century design.

6. Feeling. The sense of place persists, including the subdivision streetscape. The high degree of integrity supports the retention of feeling.

7. Association. The historic associations of the property to John Beck have remained intact; very few modifications have been made to the original design. The few details changes have included an overcoating on the floor and enclosure of the carport into a guest suite.

The building retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance.

Contemporary Context

The Beck House was restored by Gregory Beck in 2008 and the public rooms and exterior was rehabilitated using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The wood frame windows and doors are original. As part of the 2008 rehabilitation were carefully restored.

In 2010 the Beck House was included on the Modern Architecture Preservation Project of Tucson: list of Modern 50 Houses. It has been featured in Dwell.com. In 2012 the Beck House was the featured property on the inaugural Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation Tucson Modernism Week Home Tour and again in 2018. Annually, this tour highlights some of the most significant architecture from Tucson's post-WWII, the homes are carefully chosen and curated for their significance and ability to convey the various community historic contexts. The Beck House was included for its significance and interior and exterior integrity. The Beck House was also designated a Modern Architectural Classic by the Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation

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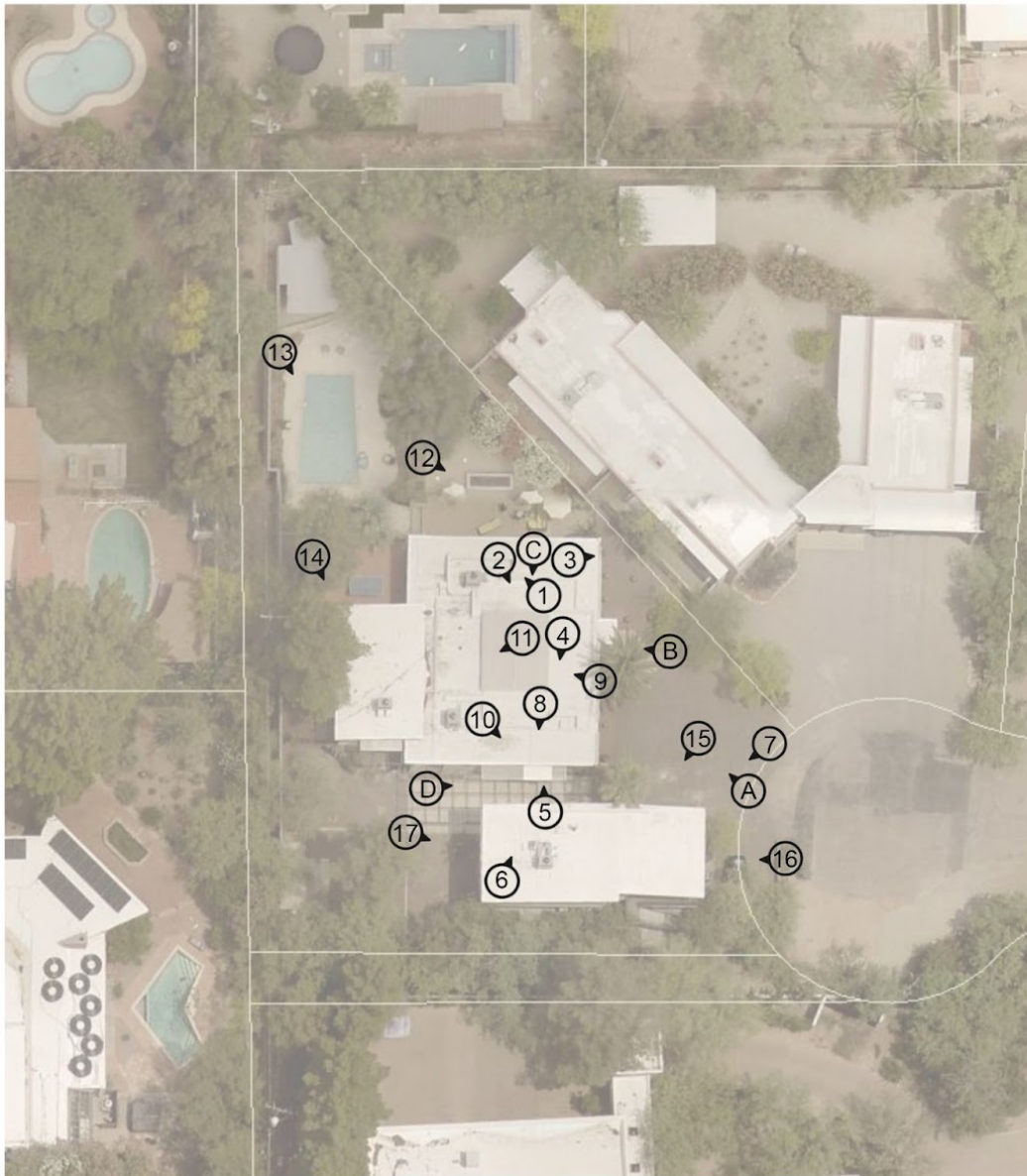
001 Beck House, Living Room, and Fireplace.

- 002 Beck House, Living Room, and Atrium.
- 003 Beck House, Office.
- 004 Beck House, Atrium, Dining Room, and Kitchen, facing south.
- 005 Beck House, Side south elevation, facing north.
- 006 Beck House, Side south elevation from the carport, facing northeast.
- 007 Beck House, Guesthouse, facing east
- 008 Beck House, Kitchen, and sitting room looking south to the breezeway.
- 009 Beck House, Dining room, and atrium.
- 010 Beck House, Sitting room, and kitchen looking southeast.
- 011 Beck House, Atrium.
- 012 Beck House, Rear north elevation looking northeast.
- 013 Beck House, Rear north elevation and pool, looking northeast.
- 014 Beck House, Reach northwest elevation detail.
- 015 Beck House, Guest House, northeast elevation with carport.
- 016 Beck House, Guest House, east elevation.
- 017 Beck House, Guest House, west elevation



John H. Beck House

Photographic Number and Direction 



40 ft.

Photo 001



Photo 002



Photo 003



Photo 004



Photo 005



Photo 006



Photo 007



Photo 008



Photo 009



Photo 010



Photo 011



Photo 012



Photo 013



Photo 014



Photo 015



Photo 016



Photo 017

