



CONTINUITY

PRESERVATION ACTION COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE NEWSLETTER VOL. 11, No. 2, SPRING 2000

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TROUBLE IN PARADISE? CITY HALL PROJECT RAISES COMMUNITY CONCERNS

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A series of public hearings have been held over the last several weeks by San Jose City officials to present the latest design for the proposed City Hall. Architect Richard Meier's revised design is imaginative and very impressive. Most speakers at the hearings complemented the architect and expressed their approval. However, at the same time there seems to be a growing disenchantment with the proposed location.

Traffic, parking, project cost and the loss of a large number of historic homes in the surrounding area were the major concerns voiced by the public at the hearings. In addition, although all the councilmembers spoke in favor of the new City Hall design, several councilmembers expressed their reservations concerning the proposed location. As an organization, PACSJ has remained neutral on this project. This stance was taken primarily because the new City Government gave every indication that it was determined to save historic resources wherever possible and to be open to the community regarding city projects. PACSJ wished to cooperate and honor those major changes in policy. As the project plans have unfolded, our concerns have grown and we now believe the location is wrong for the reasons stated below.

Parking and Traffic: Staff reassurances of mitigation to offset obvious traffic and parking problems in the area were never determined by the community to be adequate. As the realization sinks in that this already congested area will be further impacted by the joint city/university library, adding City Hall into the mix could be a recipe for traffic gridlock. The cumulative impact on the surrounding historic community cannot be miti-

gated. Portions of Fifth and East San Fernando Streets would be closed. If the proposal to construct Light Rail and/or BART on East Santa Clara Street is approved, keeping in mind that the street cannot be widened, does this mean another heavily traveled main street with narrowed and confusing auto traffic lanes? East-West traffic would be forced to use streets north of Santa Clara Street and North-South traffic would use 10th, 11th or 13th Streets. Most of these streets are located within older historic residential areas, adding significant traffic, noise and pollution to these neighborhoods. The traffic problems inherent in placing a major destination point in an area with already overtaxed streets and approaches is obvious.

The proposed design provides limited parking at the Civic Center, approximately 450 spaces. Most people visiting or working at the center would have to park off-site. The answer to parking seems to be more and taller parking structures, to which no amount of architectural genius can render eye-appeal. The lack of adequate parking will add to the traffic and environmental problems within an area that is already impacted by the University and the future joint library.

The proposed project does not provide parking at the same rate that is required by city ordinance for other public and private projects. That ordinance contains city minimum off-street parking requirements as follows: Professional Offices: One space for each 250 sq.ft. of useable floor area. Auditoriums: One parking space for each 4 fixed

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LAST CHANCE, check your label, if not '00, get your membership fees in NOW.



Watchdog Report

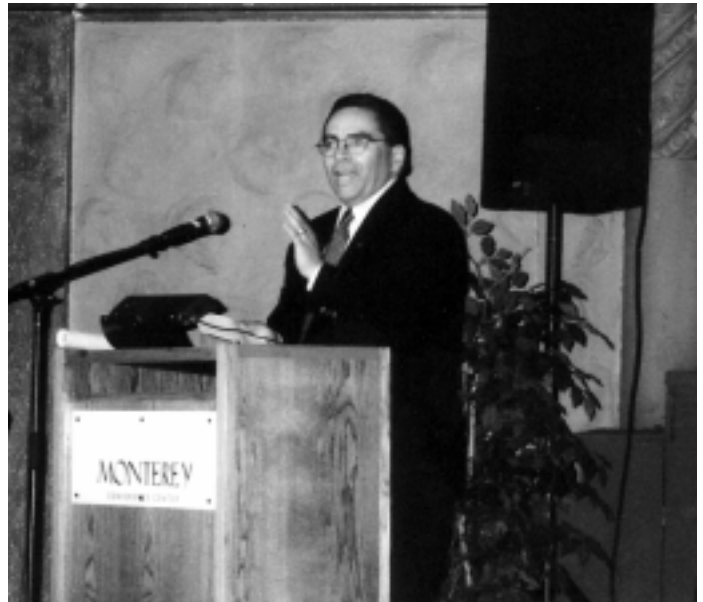
Sometimes I pant, sometimes I growl, at times I howl...now I'm so despondent all I can do is sigh. That great sentinel tree on N. 21st Street is gone forever, and it was one of my favorite watering spots. Died of old age, or maybe it was the water. Whatever, it leaves a bare spot on my path of random stops.

All my paths seem to be changing, this ol' dog is goin' to have to learn a few new tricks. Won't be able to cut through that empty lot next to the California Fox Theatre much longer. The plans are out and woof-ee-ee! Are they somethin'! Glass fronted courtyard on the old lot, new additions put the old Fox all the way through from First to Market Streets, with new box offices on both streets; new dressing rooms; an enlarged stage and so-o much more. My favorite original lobby is gonna be restored, my stagehounds tell me. Lots of moolah there, good thing Packard's good guys are throwin' a few mil kibbles in the kitty. Gonna hold 1100 humans at conventions, opera and movies. Plenty of opportunities for me an' my buddies to beg, howl and salivate.

You might recall a few months back I meandered south to see what's shakin' down where the coyotes used to howl. On the way I passed by the very spot where some idiotic human (there's a few of those around and about) is tryin' to put in a power plant. Now I'm not just runnin' around in circles here, there's a point to this trek down memory lane. Remember that highly intelligent councilmember lady human that led the pack to recycle and sweeten up our environment? Well, us dogs really appreciated not having to dig through all those newspapers, cans and bottles to get to the meat of the matter, you know, the really GOOD stuff! Now my sources tell me that same environmental and preservation-minded lady and her cohorts are sayin' PLUNK DOWN THAT POWER PLANT RIGHT SMACK DAB IN THE MIDDLE OF THAT PRISTINE GREEN OPEN SPACE! Right near a bunch of humanhouses (and a few doghouses), not to mention the plans for all those two-legged animals that'll be spendin' 8/10/12/14 hours a day grindin' out Cisco's (and others in the future) latest and greatest gizmo. Another go figure! Too bad it can't just stay one big park.

Enough growlin'...a few good barks for the Guadalupe River Park & Gardens gang! They've gone and adopted a portion of the river, and are plannin' some river clean up days. First day is Saturday, May 29, so give 'em a call at 408-298-7657 and volunteer for a few hours of fun-filled romp along the banks of the ol' Guadalupe! I'll be there, and if you're lucky you may catch a glimpse of me!

The Dog



SAN JOSE'S MAYOR GONZALES HONORED AT CPF CONFERENCE

Mayor Ron Gonzales was the recipient of California Preservation Foundation's prestigious Senator Milton Mark's Award at the recent CPF conference in Monterey. This annual award is presented to an elected official from California for their significant contribution to Historic Preservation. Mayor Gonzales was nominated for this award on the basis of his courage in reversing earlier decisions to demolish San Jose's Jose Theatre and Montgomery Hotel and his continuing support of historic preservation in San Jose. In his acceptance speech Mayor Gonzales graciously recognized PACSJ for its Herculean efforts to preserve these two historically important structures. PACSJ looks forward to working with the mayor and his staff on current and future preservation projects.

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Opinions expressed in CONTINUITY are not necessarily those of the Preservation Action Council of San Jose.

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Please submit your comments and suggestions to Preservation Action Council of San Jose, CA 95109

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ANNUAL GARAGE/SALVAGE SALE

PACSJ will hold its annual garage and salvage sale on Saturday, August 26th, 8am-4pm, at the home of Patt Curia, 260 S.13th Street. Although this notice may seem early, we would appreciate your collecting and saving items for this sale. The proceeds will allow us to retain our partnership in the River Street project, which is at a critical stage, as well as meet other expenses. Please, no clothing except vintage. This is your opportunity to donate some of your most loved, high quality items for a good cause...those items you care about but have no room for. Good household items and decorative pieces are also needed. Sale items should be delivered to the location during the week before the sale.

To make this sale a success, volunteers will be needed to sort and price items the week previous to the sale, and to staff the event on that day. If you have questions, or are willing to volunteer, please leave your name and number on PACSJ's answering machine (408) 947-8025.☞

PAC MEMBER OFFERS FINANCIAL ADVICE

by Beth Wyman, PACSJ Treasurer

As newly elected PACSJ treasurer, I was advised by the Board of Directors to meet with Dean Helms, a former Lockheed executive, to solicit his advice on the status of the organization's budget, taxes and future planning. Some of you may recall that Dean helped us through the rigors of maintaining financial records for the California Preservation Foundation's statewide conference which we hosted in San Jose in 1996. Dean and his wife, Joan, agreed to meet to review our various financial needs as follows: a review/audit for 1998 and 1999 (no small task); a thorough review and reconciliation of the bank account; and advice about future expenditures, fundraising and investments.

Dean and Joan graciously took it all on and produced a remarkable report within two weeks. In addition they organized our records (stacks of paper!) to enable current and future treasurers to easily find items such as IRS returns, insurance policies, 501(c)(3) information, etc. I am personally very grateful as this makes the job much more fun! THANK YOU, DEAN AND JOAN, FOR A JOB WELL DONE!☞

CITY HALL, continued from page 1

seats or one parking space for each 30 sq.ft. of useable floor space. Public Eating Facilities: One parking space for each 2.5 seats or 40 sq.ft. of useable floor space. Useable Floor Space Formula: Gross Floor Area X 0.85 = useable floor space. The city should be required to follow its own ordinance, which would mean the Civic Center should have approximately 3500 parking spaces instead of 450.

Environmental Impact Report: A revised EIR must be prepared when major changes are made in a project that could be controversial and that could have significant impacts. The impacts must be eliminated or mitigation measures must be implemented. Alternative project locations must be fully evaluated. Public scoping meetings must be held to review all revisions. The present EIR does not fully comply with CEQA and could be legally challenged.

In view of our concerns, PACSJ will join many other community groups and individuals in closely examining this project. This includes urging our city officials to reconsider the proposed location of the Civic Center, and look seriously at the viability of building the new Civic Center on North First Street at the current City Hall location. We believe the general public would join us in supporting this change for the following reasons:

1. There is ample room in this area to build the Civic Center, with almost no impact on historic structures or neighborhoods. Since much of the property is city owned, project costs would be greatly reduced.
2. The Civic Center could be located on both sides of Mission Street, reaching south between First and San Pedro Streets.
3. The latest architectural rendering of City Hall would work well in this location.
4. With the Guadalupe Expressway, Highway 880, and the convenience of adjacent light rail, the approaches to the area are already in place. The area streets are better designed to address traffic problems. There is adequate space to build parking structures at this location.

We believe that it is feasible for the Civic Center to remain on North First Street, and will support that projection. It would certainly reduce the costs of the project, and pose less parking and traffic problems. In addition it would mean preservation of a large area of distinctive homes, historic structures and whole neighborhoods.

Mayor Gonzales showed a great deal of courage in reversing plans to demolish the historic Jose Theatre and Montgomery Hotel. Perhaps he could repeat that action by changing the location of the proposed Civic Center to North First Street.☞

THEODORE AND JACOB LENZEN, MASTER BUILDERS

by Jack Douglas

With Barry Swenson's restoration of the beautiful Letitia Building we are reminded of the Lenzen family of architects and builders who created most of the more impressive structures built in San Jose and Santa Clara County from 1860 to 1900. Sanitariums, breweries, colleges, homes, churches, hotels, hot spring facilities, public buildings...no project was too large for the Lenzen brothers.



*Odd Fellows Building Third and Santa Clara Streets
Photo courtesy of Jack Douglas*

Theodore, the eldest, was born in 1833 near the German city of Trier. As a young man he apprenticed in the mechanical trades and took lessons in architectural drawing. He embarked for the United States in 1854 on a ship named "The Vulture" and arrived in New York after a sixty day voyage. His first job was with the Illinois Central Railroad in their Chicago office, but four years later he decided to strike out on his own and by 1859 had established himself in San Francisco where one of his first jobs was to assist with the plans for St. Ignatius College. His reputation with the Catholic hierarchy would stand him in good stead, for it was not long after that he was commissioned to draw up plans for Santa Clara College.

In the meantime Theodore's brothers, Jacob and Michael, had arrived in the United States and settled in San Jose. Jacob became the foreman on the construction of the Auzurais Hotel in 1863. (Until the end of the century this was San Jose's finest hotel. It was remodeled by the Lenzens into an office building in 1901.) Theodore moved to San Jose where he and Jacob began working together. They designed and built the 1869 St. Joseph's

Church only to see it burn down in 1875. In 1869 Theodore also designed the first State Normal School on Washington Square. In 1880 the State Normal School fell victim to fire as well.

In the mid-1880s Theodore was commissioned to design a new City Hall. This impressive brick and stone monument, located in the middle of the old plaza and facing our famous Electric Light Tower on Santa Clara and Market Streets, would be the focal point of the City's civic activities for seventy years. Also in the mid-80s the Lenzens guaranteed the construction of the giant Vendome Hotel by demonstrating cost saving strategies. Their old O'Connor Hospital on San Carlos Street was a long time landmark (later demolished to make way for Sears).

Time has taken its toll of major Lenzen buildings. The Fredericksburg Brewery (later Falstaff) was razed in the 1960s, as was St. Joseph's Rectory in 1977 and the old College of Notre Dame on East Santa Clara Street in the late 1920s. Of the many downtown buildings—the Hall of Records, the Dougherty, Alice, Archer, Rucker, Rea, Sweigert and Theater buildings—only the Odd Fellows Building at Third and Santa Clara Streets and the Letitia remain.

The brothers designed and built a number of private residences in the area, including the lavish Flood mansion "Linden Towers" in Menlo Park and the formidable Scheller/Martin house on the San Jose Campus which is soon to be restored and renamed "University House."



*1800s San Jose City Hall
Postcard courtesy of Jack Douglas*

It is fortunate that the Letitia Building is being preserved, for of all the Lenzen structures in the area it was, and still is, one of their most distinctive, inside and out. The front boasts a Romanesque facade with carved sandstone orna-

See LENZEN on page 5

LENZEN continued from page 4

mentation, and inside there is a spacious atrium with a skylight that allows natural light to the interior spaces. Balustraded galleries look down from every floor onto the spacious entry area.

The Lenzens lived well into the 20th century. Theodore died in 1912, but their era was pretty much over by the end of the 1800s. It was time for younger architects such as Binder and Wolfe.☞



Frieze Enrichment ca. 1900

FINIALS AND FRETWORK

by April Halberstadt

Recycling Structures: It might happen that our growing trash piles force cities to preserve houses. Recently passed Assembly Bill AB939 forces communities to recycle 50% of their trash. San Jose is currently at 45% and looking for new ways to meet the target or face penalties. A staggering amount of the material in landfills comes from the demolition of buildings and other structures. To meet the target, a new program is now being developed through the city's Environmental Services Department. This program will reward developers who find ways of saving old houses or who find ways to save the material from old houses. The California Resource Recovery Association, part of the National Recycling Coalition, is the watchdog group here. Since the San Jose Redevelopment Agency plans to demolish more than sixty homes and apartments with the Civic Center project, here is their first opportunity to demonstrate their willingness to comply.

Interesting Salvage: Planning a room addition? Want to cut some costs? Here's a new way to shop. The Whole House Building Supply of San Mateo County lets you bring your WonderBar and your sawzAll into someone's home and help yourself. They are currently advertising a 3500sf Spanish style house in Hillsborough with lots of wrought iron, a fabulous mantel, custom-made doors, oak casings, crown moldings and much more. If you miss the action and want to shop in a more leisurely manner, visit the Whole House warehouse at 1955 Pulgas in East Palo Alto, Monday through Saturday afternoons, 1-6pm. Telephone 650/328-8731. It's the next best thing to preserving the

entire house. (Also see article PACSJ Benefits From Internet Economy on page 6 regarding salvaged high-quality windows, French doors and great miscellaneous items which PACSJ has available for purchase.)

Houses Reprieved: San Jose Hospital was acquired by the giant Columbia Health System and the result has been a mixed blessing for the surrounding Northside Neighborhood. While some local health services have been transferred to Alexian Brothers Hospital, Columbia has also been selling all of their excess property including many houses in the Northside neighborhood. Over the years, San Jose Hospital had been quietly buying the houses as they came up for sale, using them for clinics, then tearing them down for parking lots when needed. The sale to Columbia is putting families back into the neighborhood. Currently on the market and closely watched by many of the neighbors is the unique bungalow at the corner of 15th and St. James Streets known as Ye Olde Rabbit Ruff House, a delightful garden wall and sculptures surrounding the yard. Children and adults alike are intrigued by the antics of the bunnies that play gleefully through the wall. Columbia Hospital neighbors hope this important local landmark is purchased by someone who appreciates its special place in the neighborhood.

Demise of an Old Friend: Preservationists, historians and tree lovers of all ages are greatly saddened by the recent loss of the Sentinel Tree in the Northside neighborhood. Described by some as the oldest living thing in the Valley, the tree was located on private property although it was protected under city ordinance. It developed some dangerous cracks and splits so the homeowners requested removal.

The city tried removing the tree without following a proper public hearing process and the outcry was loud and immediate. Dissatisfied with city efforts to save the tree, local devotees contacted an arborist from Ohio who has a national reputation for saving trees that others would destroy. Somewhat chastened, the City of San Jose paid the expenses for the expert. But the effort was to no avail when his close examination revealed other serious structural problems that were not as immediately obvious. Satisfied that all reasonable steps had been taken, neighbors sadly watched the destruction of the giant. Cutting the tree and hauling it away took nearly a week, a process witnessed by hundreds of neighbors and friends who drove by to sadly observe its passing. The city has an Historic Tree ordinance and inventory to protect its heritage trees. While this list is frequently ignored, we are glad the hearing process to protect important specimens is in place. It was an important tool in this situation.☞

ST. JAMES TOUR HUGE SUCCESS



*Franklin Maggi fascinates audience with tales of
St. James Park
Photo courtesy of Beth Wyman*

Preservation Action Council members were amazed at the amount of historic information provided by tour guides during PAC's "members only" tour around St. James Park and into some of the surrounding historic structures. Tour guides Franklin Maggi and Chuck Morrow shared their knowledge of the St. James Historic District with about 45 members during the 3-1/2 hour tour. Participants were able to view the interior of the First Unitarian Church, where Diana Wix explained the history of this early religious venue. The next stop was the beautiful Scottish Rite Temple (current Capitol Club Athletics) to get a close-up look at the ballroom, lounge and upstairs rooms. Chuck and Franklin gave the history of the park itself and the park monuments, as well as the First Church of Christ Scientist, Letcher's Garage and the St. James Post Office. As the groups strolled through the park and surrounds, Julie Pifer played beautiful music on Trinity Cathedral's unique chimes. Members then toured Trinity, and Julie gave a fascinating talk on the history, windows and other features of the cathedral. Julie has a tremendous store of anecdotes which she shared with the group. The last stop was the 1863 Santa Clara County Courthouse, where Beth Wyman talked about the history of that beautiful structure, followed by a tour of the interior. By that time a weary bunch was happy to sit down, enjoy a catered lunch in one of the jury rooms, and then listen to Harry Farrell give an account of San Jose's most infamous crime, the murder of Brook Hart and the subsequent capture and lynching of the two men who committed this atrocious act. All in all, it was a fascinating day. Those in attendance expressed their appreciation, and we look forward to PACSJ's next member's event, hopefully in the near future. In the meantime, a big Thank You! to all those who planned and implemented this event. ♡

PACSJ BENEFITS FROM INTERNET ECONOMY

by André Luthard

An anonymous donor who is doing a million-dollar remodel of a Saratoga home near Villa Montalvo has donated to PAC a series of double-paned windows and French doors, bathroom fixtures, large ceramic pottery and Asian garden statuary. Only 8-years new, the Pozzi brand arched windows and doors with removable window grids and tinting to protect from ultraviolet rays are estimated to have cost in excess of \$30,000 when installed. The statuary includes carved Indonesian sandstone figures, a Foo dog and several other Asian items.

All of this came about through the fortunate suggestion of PACSJ member Jim Zetterquist, the homeowner's contractor who some of you may know as a former Chair of the Historic Landmarks Commission and current Planning Commissioner. Jim placed a call to President John Olson who rounded up a large crew that descended upon the Saratoga hills on a recent Saturday. Members Hank Lutz and Rich Eilbert provided trucks, while former and current board members John Frolli, Mike Yeomans, John Olson and Andre Luthard rode along. Andre even recruited his father-in-law Joe Dowden who was in town from Southern California!

It was a back breaking morning as all of the items were carefully removed from the donor's property and loaded into the vehicles for transport to a secret location in downtown San Jose for inventory. We concluded our day with a pizza lunch and refreshments courtesy of John Olson. PAC is now consulting with landscape designers and contractors to determine what the items are worth and to find willing buyers for the salvaged items. We hope to sell the items quickly to raise funds to replenish our treasury that is being taxed by our recent financial investment in our River Street project...more about this next issue. Many thanks to Jim Zetterquist and the volunteers who conceived and executed the salvage, and most of all to the generosity of the anonymous donor who has given back to the community.

A brief description of available items: There are 10 high-quality Pozzi brand thermopane woodframed arched windows ranging in size from 38X60 to 120X60. (The 120X60 is the only one that is not arched.) All but the smallest windows have panes which swing open. There are 2 French doors, 60X81 and 117X81, the largest having sidepanes. The garden items include 13 statues of various sizes, 3 large terra cotta urns, and 2 large blue pots.

If you or someone you know are remodeling or constructing check out these bargains. For further information please contact Rich Eilbert at 275-1460 for the building items, and/or Patt Curia at 294-3599 for statuary and pottery. ♡

CPF CONFERENCE DAZZLES

ATTENDEES

Monterey was the site for the California Preservation Foundation's Year 2000 conference, with the opportunity for preservationists, historians and architects from all over the state to absorb the history of the Monterey Peninsula as well as the latest information on preservation of historic structures and districts. Attendees enjoyed events held in some of the most inspiring venues in Monterey and on the peninsula, including the mid-1880s Cooper-Molera adobe, gardens and barns for the opening night reception. The magnificently restored 1924 State Theatre was the site of the plenary session, with Pasadena's renowned organist Dennis James providing a magical selection on the mighty Wurlitzer to accompany early silent films. The audience went into histrionics at the skits, including PACSJ's rendering of "The Full Monty," a story of the struggle to save the Montgomery Hotel and its subsequent history-making move, at the ever-popular three-minute success stories held in Pacific Grove's Chautauqua Hall. There were tours through Monterey's many adobes, Cannery Row, Pacific Grove's Victorians and Carmel's cottages. There was a special tour to the spectacular Carmel Highlands on the ocean cliffs to examine Frank Lloyd Wright's Walker House, Charles Sumner Greene's Studio and the D. L. James House. Additional tours to view Julia Morgan's buildings at Asilomar, Pebble Beach architecture, historic ranches and agricultural landscapes, and a special look at the unique Modernism Style, were available to attendees. Preservationists, architects, citizens, historic



1918 D. L. James House, Carmel Highlands
Photo courtesy of Ellen Garboske

property owners, open-space advocates, nonprofits and commissioners all benefited from the educational sessions, which provided overview and information necessary for preservation of resources at the local, state and national level. PACSJ Board Member Tom Simon was one of the featured speakers at an educational session titled CEQA and Historic Resources. PACSJ member Karita Hummer and Tom Simon were both speakers at the session titled Effective

Presentations Before Local Commissions and City Councils. PACSJ was well represented by the fine presentations by Tom and Karita. The Final Gala was held in the elegant 20s-era ballroom of the historic Hotel Del Monte. Next year's conference is scheduled for San Diego, with the promise of a detailed look at that historic city and its environs.

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CALENDAR

| MAY | |
|---------------|--|
| 15 (MON) | PACJSJ OPEN BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING 7PM MOTHER OLSON'S INN, 72 N. FIFTH STREET |
| 19 (FRI) | DONATION TO CALIFORNIA ROOM IN HONOR OF RICK SHERMAN, MARTIN LUTHER KING LIBRARY, 4:30PM — PLEASE JOIN US. |
| JUNE | |
| 20 (MON) | PACJSJ OPEN BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING 7PM MOTHER OLSON'S INN, 72 N. FIFTH STREET |
| JULY | |
| 17 (MON) | PACJSJ OPEN BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING 7PM MOTHER OLSON'S INN, 72 N. FIFTH STREET |
| UPCOMING | |
| AUG. 26 (SAT) | 8AM TO 4PM, PACJSJ ANNUAL GARAGE & SALVAGE SALE SEE NOTICE ON PAGE 3 OF THIS NEWSLETTER. |



The Preservation Action Council of San Jose is a nonprofit membership organization providing information to property owners and education to the public, and promoting programs and policies for historic preservation and compatible new architectural design.

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