

Dedicated to Preserving San Jose's Architectural Heritage

PRESERVATION
ACTION COUNCIL



CONTINUITY

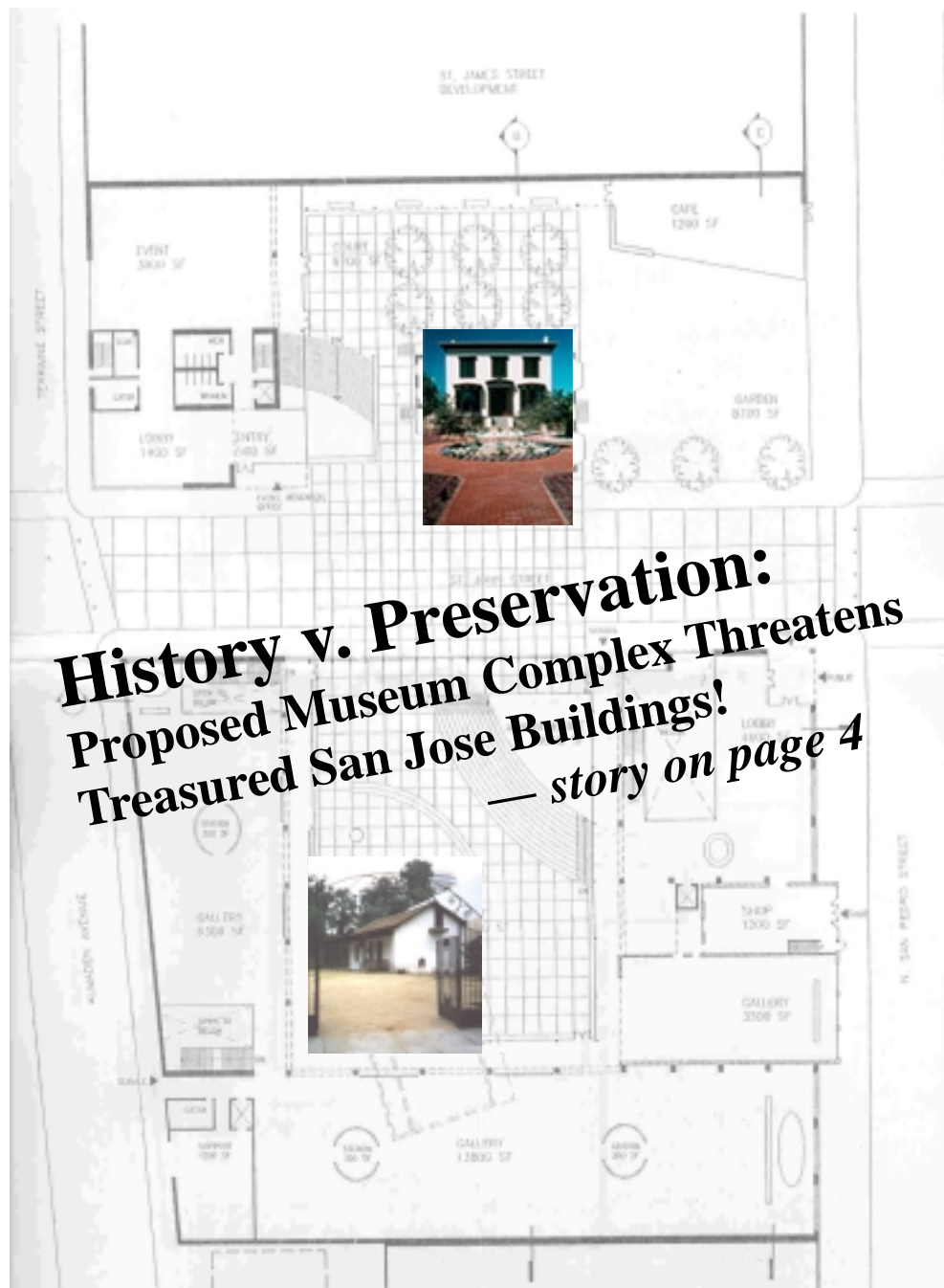
PRESERVATION ACTION COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE NEWSLETTER

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History v. Preservation:
Proposed Museum Complex Threatens
Treasured San Jose Buildings!
— story on page 4



From the President

On August 20, the San Jose city council certified the Cinnabar Commons environmental impact report (EIR) and approved a high density housing project which would result in the demolition of the historic Muirson Label factory. (See *Continuity*, Summer 2002, at p.4). Passionate pleas to save the landmark by me and former Historic Landmarks commission chair **Marti Wachtel** did not dissuade the council. At this writing, PAC**SJ* is considering legal action for violation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) by failing to fully consider feasible alternatives.

* * * * *

Bill Jung, local architect and son of one of the former owners of Crescent Jewelers at First & San Fernando Sts. in downtown San Jose (see *Continuity*, Spring 2001, at p.6), opened the building up to PAC**SJ*'s board recently. The second floor, sealed off in the 1950s, remains in pristine condition and is San Jose's oldest hotel. Many 1870s features remain. The Redevelopment Agency (RDA) recently purchased the building from Jung's mother and the other owners. A high level RDA official told me that a request for qualifications (RFQ) will soon be posted seeking rehabilitation of this remarkable contributing structure to the downtown historic commercial district. I'm pleased the concept of adaptive reuse and compatible scale are being integrated into this important downtown block.

* * * * *

The Bocca house, PAC**SJ*'s house on blocks in the River St. district, could be facing the axe. The city council approved money in the 2002-03 budget to buy land for this house, temporarily sited in the Guadalupe River flood control project area. Talks with city staff charged with resolving the final site for the building have bogged down. Let's hope we can establish a new home for this structure soon and get underway to restore it as an interpretive center for the old Italian neighborhood now gone.

* * * * *

Please save Friday, November 15 for PAC**SJ*'s 3rd annual preservation celebration. (See p. 18 for more information or call PAC**SJ* at 998-8105).

* * * * *

PAC**SJ* received the Downtown Beautiful Award at councilmember **Cindy Chavez**'s 4th annual neighborhood summit on May 11. Chavez commended PAC**SJ* for its "dedication to preserving the historical nature of San Jose and to promoting new development that is sensitive to that history." She called PAC**SJ* "a tremendous asset to us all." Thanks, Cindy!



PAC**SJ* president Pat Curia

* * * * *

*'At this writing, PAC**SJ* is considering legal action for violation of CEQA' to save the Muirson Label factory.*

PAC**SJ* continues to build community partners with a focus on historic buildings and events. **Mike Borbely**, chair of the September 8 Palm Haven home tour, says he deeply appreciated all of the docents PAC**SJ* provided for the event — **Maria Brand**, dressed as her German grandmother, as well as **Walt & Patti Phillips**, **Nan Vaughn**, **Curtis Jones**, **Gabriel Ibarra**, **Judy Borcharding**, **Ken Podgorsek**, **Bonnie Montgomery**, **Helen Magnus** and **Barbara Klein**. Local historians **Jack Douglas**, **Franklin Maggi**, **April Halberstadt** and **George Espinola** were also on hand. Mike — please invite us back when Palm Haven turns on the lights of its restored electroliers/columns that welcome residents and guests to your wonderful conservation area.

* * * * *

Finally, happy anniversary to the **San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin's members** for preserving the faith and the building, which celebrates 100 years, and kudos to San Jose historic preservation officer **Courtney Damkroger**, for helping develop residential design guidelines for the Hensley Historic Dist., which, extrapolated city-wide, will be invaluable for our historic neighborhoods.

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Watchdog Report

I'm trotting over to the suburbs of Saratoga this week to give the pack some lessons in growling, snapping and biting. Saratoga residents have lost in recent months at least three of their heritage structures to developers with pockets full of liver bits. There are only a few structures designed by Julia Morgan in Santa Clara County and Saratoga used to have five. But two of these wonderful houses have been relocated, gutted and so modified that they no longer qualify for the historic inventory. The beloved Saso herb garden and farm house, a local favorite for decades, is also gone. Will the historic Mitchell ranch house on Quito Rd. be next? Saratoga is looking more like Sunnyvale every day.

* * * * *

Naglee Park puppies are read to bite the hand that has been trying to feed them. San Jose's Redevelopment Agency included upscale Naglee Park as one of the neighborhoods in the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI), a program to bring redevelopment money into "blighted" neighborhoods. There was lots of howlin' when they found out many of their expensive homes could be taken by eminent domain. At least two prospective buyers backed out of Naglee Park real estate deals recently when it was found that the area was included in SNI. The pack will meet for a neighborhood howl and vote on October 16th.



Above: a Craftsman home in upscale Naglee Park. Is this blight?

'Naglee Park puppies are ready to bite the hand that has been trying to feed them. . . . The pack will meet for a neighborhood howl and vote on October 16th.'

— The Dog



Redwood interior molding

*Photo courtesy
Pat Curia.*

Historic Redwood Molding Available for Adaptive Re-Use!

PAC*SJ has obtained from advisory board member **Michael Garavaglia** 5 pallets of old growth redwood interior molding stripped of paint and nails he received from an Atherton client who no longer needed it. Rather than send it to a landfill, PAC*SJ is making it available to members for \$1 per sq. foot (price may vary on some pieces), with proceeds benefitting PAC*SJ. Contact PAC*SJ board member **Norm Finnance** at (408) 286-0596 to make an appointment to preview or purchase. *(Thanks to John Olson, Brian Leeland, Jo Dreschler, Rich Eilbert & John Mitchell for helping transport the lumber to San Jose and Bonnie Montgomery & Tom Simon for storing it.)*



The Peralta Adobe, San Jose's oldest building.

History vs. Preservation: Proposed Museum Complex Threatens Treasured Structures

*by Don Gagliardi
and Jim Zetterquist*

Propagating San Jose's history does not necessarily mean preserving it.

That's the lesson to be drawn from History San Jose's proposed master plan for erecting a massive history museum complex on the Peralta Adobe and Fallon House historic site in downtown San Jose.

"The proposed Master Plan advocates the demolition, removal, encapsulation and over-crowding of some of San Jose's most important historic resources," according to an August 5 letter from PAC* SJ president Pat Curia to History San Jose (HSJ) president David Crosson.

'Propagating San Jose's history does not necessarily mean preserving it. That's the lesson to be drawn from History San Jose's proposed master plan for erecting a massive history museum complex on the Peralta Adobe and Fallon House historic site.'

HSJ is planning a regional "History Center" in downtown San Jose to supplement or replace the city's historical museum in Kelly Park. Last July, Crosson presented HSJ's draft master plan to PAC* SJ's board of directors and in August to a study session of the city's Historic Landmarks Commn for comment.

The proposed \$30 million museum project refocuses the city's earlier efforts at the existing 27-acre Kelly Park history park site, instead seeking to join with other museums in the downtown.

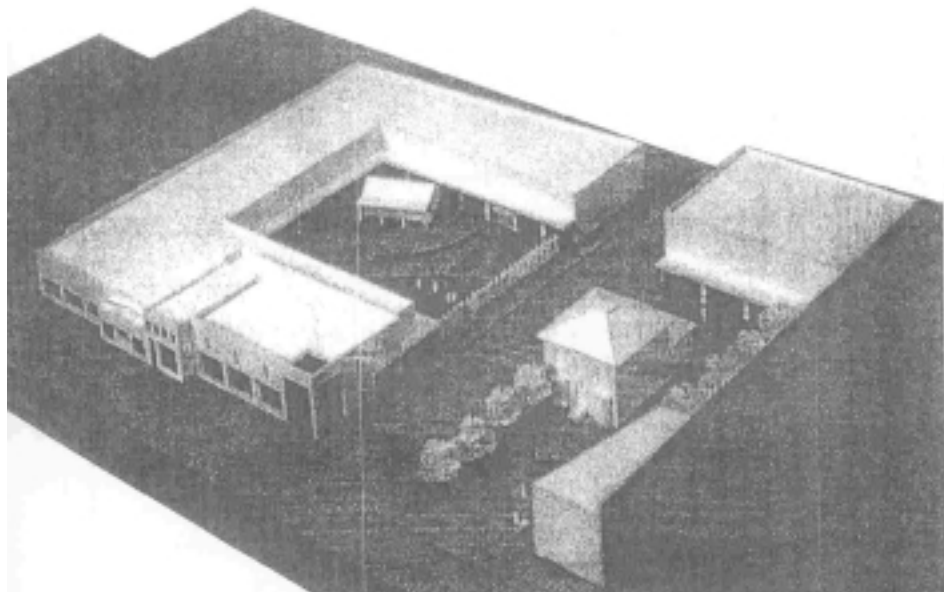
Although funding for this effort has not been identified, HSJ intends to relocate the museum and related event activities, research center and offices to a new complex enveloping and dwarfing



“The new museum buildings [would be] too close to the Peralta Adobe, and massing of buildings on site and their scale relative to the adobe and Fallon House will result in significant impact to their setting.”

— Pat Curia

Above and below: massing diagrams of the proposed History San Jose downtown “History Center” complex at the Peralta Adobe and Fallon House historic site. On the cover page, a schematic diagram of the proposal. On the cover and above, photos of the existing adobe and Fallon House are superimposed to give an idea of the context of the proposal.



San Jose's oldest building, the eighteenth century Luis Marie Peralta Adobe, and the mid-1800s Fallon House across the street at the northern end of San Pedro Square.

The draft master plan proposes integrating only portions of the historic El Dorado Bakery Building (Laundry Works) into the museum complex, while demolishing the historic Crosetti Wagon and Carriage Works (Storm Building). Both buildings front N. San Pedro St.

"We have deep concerns with the physical aspects of the museum proposal as currently presented," PAC* SJ's Curia told Crosson in her August 5 letter. "Any new development on or in the vicinity of this historically significant place must consider preservation of existing resources as a baseline for any program development."

"The master plan fails in four key areas," Curia wrote.

First, "one of the most significant archeological sites associated with Hispanic California will be destroyed by the project," according to Curia.

Adjacent to the Peralta Adobe, remains of a second adobe may also exist, as well as the subsurface remnants of the historic, rock-lined *acequia*, the aqueduct system that provided the early pueblo with water. HSJ's proposal includes a below grade amphitheatre and underground tunnel that would effectively destroy the integrity of this archaeological resource.

Second, "the new museum buildings [would be] too close to the Peralta Adobe, and massing of buildings on site and their scale relative to the adobe and Fallon House will result in significant impacts to their setting," said Curia.

The project as proposed, would in effect encapsulate the Peralta Adobe, surrounding it on three sides by new structures. Curia observed that it has always been the goal of preservationists "to make the two historic residences more prominent and provide a more historically accurate visual



'The El Dorado's preservation "is essential to the integrity of the district of buildings along San Pedro St. associated with our ethnic Italian history. Removal of significant portions of this historic building is not appropriate.'"

perspective. . . . The museum proposal runs counter to this goal, building over 30% of the existing open space and inserting a café in front of the Fallon House. . . . The setting will not be enhanced by the new design, but will relegate the two historic buildings to being small artifacts within a larger museum complex."

Third, HSJ's master plans call for demolition of the historic century-old Crosetti Wagon and Carriage Works (Slavich) building, "the sole example of this genre remaining in the greater San Jose area," according to Curia.

This currently vacant, one-story vernacular brick building at 73-75 N. San Pedro St., according to the *Storm and Laundry Works Buildings Structural and Historic Analysis for the History San Jose Downtown Museum* (the *Analysis*) by Mark Cavegnere Associates, dated October

2001, “was constructed about 1902 by owner Lorenzo V. Slavich, best known for his restaurant, Slavich’s Restaurant and Grill” on W. San Fernando St.

“The first occupant of the building was John (Giovanni) Crosetti, who was a wagon and carriage manufacturer.” In the 1920s, a blacksmith moved into one of the two buildings, and it remained a blacksmith shop until the late 1940s. “The use of the building from 1902 to the late 1940s, first for the manufacture of carriages and wagons, and continuing as a blacksmith shop . . . is part of a larger pattern of immigration and related ethnic Italian settlement in the area,” says the *Analysis*. “[W]ith the adjacent buildings along North San Pedro Street, this building would appear to be eligible for the National Register . . .”

Fourth, under HSJ’s master plan the circa 1904 El Dorado Bakery Building, at 87-97 N. San Pedro St., would receive a “facadectomy” (a term coined by the *New York Times* for butchering an historic building and removing its guts, leaving only its façade to suggest what once was).

“This one- and two-story brick Spanish Eclectic commercial building was originally built to house a bakery,” according to the *Analysis*. “It has been adapted for commercial uses, including contemporary restaurant uses.”

The El Dorado’s one-story sections would be removed along with the heart of the structure save its façade. Like the wagon works, the El Dorado’s preservation “is essential to the integrity of the district of buildings along San Pedro St. associated with our ethnic Italian history,” wrote Curia. “Removal of significant portions of this historic building is not appropriate.”

Landmarks commissioners agreed with PAC*SJ’s concerns and expressed their own reservations about the project, its impact to historic structures, and potential impacts to archaeological resources associated with the Peralta adobe site.

In response to PAC*SJ’s concerns, HSJ announced, in a letter from Crosson to Curia dated August 30, that HSJ “will re-

*‘In response to PAC*SJ’s concerns, HSJ announced . . . that HSJ “will re-examine whether the programmatic and physical needs of a successful regional history museum . . . can be accomplished while preserving and enhancing the historic resources at the proposed San Pedro Square site.”’*

examine whether the programmatic and physical needs of a successful regional history museum . . . can be accomplished while preserving and enhancing the historic resources at the proposed San Pedro Square site.”

Crosson also said that “HSJ will seek to identify other sites that could meet those needs over the long term in downtown San Jose” and invited PAC*SJ’s “active participation in identifying alternative sites.”

PAC*SJ looks forward to working with HSJ to create a plan that is more sensitive to preservation of such important historic and cultural resources, not only at the Peralta Fallon site, but also throughout San Jose.

Hopefully History San Jose has learned its lesson and won’t be doomed to revisit its ill-conceived scheme to showcase San Jose’s history by demolishing it.



The historical plaque for the Peralta Adobe, San Jose’s oldest building (“the last vestige of El Pueblo de San Jose de Guadalupe”), dating to the late 1700s.

*The former Star Motel on N. 13th St., demolished earlier this year.
Photo courtesy San Jose Planning Dept.*

Shooting Star: Remembering the Former Funky Star Motel along N. 13th St.

Reprinted with permission from the Fall 2002 Northside newsletter.

by Don Gagliardi

For more than half a century its rows of detached bungalows stood modestly but elegantly in the shadow of N. 13th St., and then overnight last spring — without warning — it was gone forever.

The Star Motel, at 875 N. 13th St. in San Jose, was an early exemplar of a quintessentially California creation — the roadside motor hotel, or “motel.” In 1999, the city’s planning commission approved the Star Motel’s demolition in the name of “progress,” to make way for a cookie-cutter Comfort Inn that three years later is rising grotesquely out of all proportion to its surroundings.

The “motel” was invented in California. Kevin Starr, the state’s librarian, writes in his acclaimed multi-volume history of California, “On December 12, 1925, a new

‘The Star Motel had a very distinctive Craftsman bungalow style and was among, if not the, very last of its type in San Jose, and our community is the poorer for its demise.’

American institution, the motel, made its debut with the opening of the Milestone Motel outside San Luis Obispo.” Although designed in Mission Revival style with red-tile roofs, it “however, was a no-nonsense bungalow court, with a garage in back of each cabin. It took another twenty-five years for the word *motel* to be accepted into Webster’s dictionary, but by the time this California-invented institution had long since further wedded America to highway culture.” (K. Starr, *The Dream Endures: California Enters the 1940s* (Oxford, 1997), at p. 5).

By the mid-1930s, motels “were competing effectively against hotels in the city” for tourists, according to Starr. Whereas, hotels tended to be placed in the heart of downtown, motels and motor courts were “conveniently located near highways for late arrival or early getaway.” The motel was part of the transformation of American society in the middle of the last century, with California (including San Jose) at the vanguard. “By 1940 an

automobile culture was in place in California that anticipated how Americans would live in the post-war era,” Starr asserts. “Fast food, drive-ins, the motel, the automobile as home and habitat; the road culture of America was not exclusively invented in California, yet California did intensify the paradigms.”

According to an historical and architectural evaluation by Dr. Robert Cartier of Archaeological Resource Management, commissioned by the property’s former owner and dated September 1998 (*Report*), the Star Motel “is [was] not of a particular architectural style and is a reasonably common resource type.” The Report gave the motel only 21.58 points on the city’s historic evaluation criteria, which require a score of at least 67 points for landmark status. In fact, the Star Motel had a very distinctive Craftsman bungalow style and was among, if not *the*, very last of its type in San Jose, and our community is the poorer for its demise.

“I was appalled when I learned after-the-fact that the Star Motel had been leveled,” says PAC**SJ* board member Brian Chapman, who lives in the nearby historic Hensley District. “It doesn’t say much for community-based oversight of development in our city.”

“At the time that the Star Auto Camp [as it was originally known] was built in the late 1940s, this land would have still been on the edge of San Jose, probably surrounded by orchards, and therefore a suitable site for a campground,” per the *Report*.

The Star Motel featured an office building facing N. 13th St. and eighteen small separate cottages following the fenceline defining the border of the property, each cottage with its own carport, front entry overhang, and small front landscaping.

The Star Motel’s cottages were all in “fair condition” according to the *Report* and, with appropriate restoration, they might have made a distinctive, charming and highly sought-after form of accommodation for visitors to San Jose, much as broken down Victorians have been spruced up and converted to beds-and-breakfasts. The Star Motel could have been an anchor for a revitalized 13th St. business strip. At least that was the community’s concept; but before the SNI process the city planning dept. lacked the vision or the impetus to fulfill such a program — and then it was too late.

There are Comfort Inns everywhere, but there had been only one Star Motel.



This page: vintage postcards of other early-day San Jose detached bungalow-style motels that no longer exist. The Glorietta Motor Court on N. 1st St. (top) is from 1935, the Hi-Way Auto Court (middle) from 1941, and the 101 Motel on S. 1st St. (bottom) circa 1950s.



Honey, Let's Re-Arrange the Furniture: RDA Decides SoFa District Needs Redeveloping

by Tom Simon

First St. south of San Carlos St. in downtown San Jose, popularly known as SoFA or South First Area, mimicking more famous, trendy areas like SoHo in New York City, has developed as a bohemian hang out and popular nightclub spot. SoFa was one of the first parts of downtown to show signs of life in the late 1970s. It offered the Camera Cinemas and a number of coffee shops, clubs and restaurants and, until recently, the annual SoFa street festival. Now on weekends crowds go there looking for entertainment. SoFa now has many popular establishments, including the Agenda Lounge, Polly Esthers, South First Street Billiards, and the Wine Bar.

Part of the area's attraction is a mix of historic buildings with a critical mass of businesses and a pedestrian friendly scale to make strolling attractive. SoFa, although near large redevelopment projects like Fairmont Plaza and the convention center, had until recently been free of any major redevelopment projects, making it an organic and self propelled revitalization. But, perhaps inevitably, SoFa caught the attention of San Jose's Redevelopment Agency (RDA).

In October 2001, RDA awarded Field Paoli Architects, Inc. a \$308,000 contract to draft a SoFa strategic development plan (the *Plan*) in order to boost retail and housing in the area. The *Plan* was released August 21. "It's a strategic plan, not a specific plan that says on this block you will build X," Leslie Little, RDA's director of downtown management, told *Silicon Valley Business Ink*.

The *Plan* is cause for concern because it could possibly lead to the elimination of the eclectic and charming atmosphere that SoFa has today. The *Plan* calls for developing the area over time with buildings ranging from five to over 10 stories. This will not happen immediately because only vacant parcels are targeted



for development initially. Moreover, no overall budget has been established and the "massive developments" proposed "won't happen in a bad economy," *Business Ink* attributes to Richard Berg, a Santa Clara U. law professor and one of the co-chairs of the SoFa redevelopment committee.

However, even though the plan is not specific and will materialize only over time, with greatly increased building heights permitted, owners may eventually begin to demolish their historic buildings – using the Plan as a justification.

The *Plan* specifically acknowledges the significance of the historic buildings in SoFa. "The historic resources of the SoFa district must be preserved to provide a sense of continuity," the *Plan* says (p.34). Historic buildings for a distinct part of a community's collective memory, act as landmarks and help identify a district. In SoFa, the small scale buildings along First Street, with old and renovated facades display a distinct 'storefront' character that gives a place a certain uniqueness and intransience [sic]."

The *Plan* also admits (at p.64): SoFa enjoys a high concentration of historic resources. These resources are an invaluable element of SoFa's identity – SoFa's feel is due in large part to the

architectural diversity in the area . . . Every effort should be made to preserve these historic resources in their original locations. Preservation may be appropriate if distinctive materials, features, and spaces are essentially intact and convey the building's historical significance."

Nonetheless, PAC*SJ's experience shows that older, and even landmark, buildings usually lose out when developers want to build housing or large retail. The city council's unanimous approval of demolition of the landmark eligible Muirson Label factory to make way for affordable housing is the most recent case in point. Advisory wording alone will not protect the character of SoFA when large-scale development is encouraged by RDA. Based on RDA's track record, the language in the *Plan* is mere lip service, and you can bet RDA officials will give the narrowest possible construction to the term "historic buildings" – ignoring older structures with character as not sufficiently important, or declaring the undeniably historic ones too far gone to be saved (except perhaps for their facades, in some instances).

For many, SoFA symbolizes what the revitalization of downtown should be about. But, the city stands poised to destroy the pedestrian friendly scale and alternative atmosphere that made the area successful to begin with. Instead of an off-beat area that attracts creative business owners looking for affordable digs, we will have the same cookie-cutter retail development seen at so many local malls. SoFA is at risk of becoming a victim of its own success.

A community feedback meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 30 after which the Plan will need to be approved by the city council sitting as RDA's board.

Restore San Jose: Elegant Queen Anne on Sunol St. in Burbank Del Monte area

by Beth Wyman

I wasn't looking for historical homes the day I passed by this little Queen Anne gem, but I stopped because I had to know more. It looked original and appeared to be undergoing a thoughtful restoration. A painter on the premises gave me a contact number for his uncle, the owner. A few days later I met Tony and Kim Perez. This is their story.

They bought the property at 250 Sunol St. in San Jose four years ago. It had been lived in for a long time by the previous owner, Suzanne Vick, whose mother had also owned it. The house sits on a street with other nicely remodeled and restored homes and is adjacent to a continuation high school owned and operated by Santa Clara County.

The 1915 Sanborn map shows both the house and the original 1859 Sunol School at that location. The couple had been given an old map and they were puzzled that it showed a race track nearby. They were pleased to learn about Race St. and the Santa Clara County Agricultural Park that was located near the bend of The Alameda for forty years in the late 1800s.

The featured attraction there was the race track where world records were set by legendary steeds such as Electioneer. The county fairgrounds was eventually moved to its present location and the Race St. area was subdivided to become Hanchett Park. Sunol St. is zoned industrial and is located within the newly adopted Burbank-Del Monte Strong Neighborhoods Initiative area.

The Perez house is at the front of a deep 187 foot lot with mature trees along the driveway. Tony made life safety changes such as new wiring and plumbing. He also replaced the lathe and plaster with wallboard and covered



Left: the Perez family on the porch of their Sunol St. Queen Anne home.

Below: old bottles uncovered during the restoration process.

Photos courtesy Beth Wyman.



In the past he had worked with his father replacing double-hung windows, so he did this with all of the windows, reusing lumber that had been pulled out of the house for new frames. The original Bay window had some stained glass trim that was inadvertently lost, so they plan to install new, but matching, stained glass panels.

the clapboard exterior with v-rustic siding. Other changes included replacing the shed-style roof over the Bay window with a flat roof.

The Perezes saved all the original rosettes, moldings and soffits and either replaced them or created replicas. The new doors, including those in the interior, are of the same panel style as the old ones. A well executed 500 sq. ft. of space was added to the original 1300 sq. ft. by placing a second story atop what was previously the back porch. It fits nicely with the original floor space.

Tony's "research" was accomplished by driving around and looking at other houses of the same style to see how they were built.

Of course, the Perez's found some interesting artifacts such as square nails, wavy glass bottles, and, inside, a photo of two World War II era sailors with their girlfriends. With help from the County planning department, they were able to keep the original low front porch railing (not up to current code) by implementing the state historic building code. Tony expressed the desire to learn more about historic preservation and to eventually study architecture.

It was such a treat to find an intact house that was valued for its own integrity. I can't wait to see the finished product. Congratulations to Tony and Kim Perez.



This page (c. 1920) and opposite page (1997): the Gates house at 62 S. 13th St. in Naglee Park, the only extant Maybeck structure in San Jose.

Photos courtesy Jack Douglas.

They Left Their Mark: Architect Series

Bernard Maybeck: Eclectic Genius

by Jack Douglas

Bernard Maybeck (1862-1957) has become legendary in the annals of California architecture. To some he seems to be an almost idealized personification of the medieval artist-craftsman that so fascinated esthetes and cultural critics such as John Ruskin and William Morris. Maybeck's buildings would blend elements of earlier eras with modern materials, and do it with remarkable results.

Maybeck was born in New York City. His father was an immigrant German wood carver who earned his living designing and carving elements for fine furniture. Bernard attended local schools and the City College of New York but left prior to graduating. Realizing that his son had a talent for design, the elder Maybeck sent his son to Paris to study and work in the studio of a noted Parisian craftsman. The studio was not far from the *Ecole des*

'Unfortunately, Maybeck designed only a few buildings in our area.' In San Jose, 'the Newhall Bros. store [is] long gone.' But another 'excellent example' remains in the Howard B. Gates home at 62 S. 13th St. in Naglee Park.

Beaux-Arts, the most prestigious school in Europe and the first to offer courses in architecture. Young Bernard entreated his father to let him take the examination for entrance. Of the 250 applicants, the young American ranked twenty-fifth. And so one of America's most unorthodox architects received his diploma from the seat of classical traditionalism. His protégé, Julia Morgan, would follow him to the *Ecole*, but only after gaining her engineering degree, with honors, from UC Berkeley.

Maybeck worked briefly in New York, but soon gravitated to California where new concepts were more welcome. He worked in the office of A. Page Brown with other newcomers Willis Polk and A. C. Schweinfurth. Bernard and his wife Annie moved to the then rural area of Berkeley, an ideal place for a young architect, with its intellectual university climate, arts and crafts ideals and recognition of the unique natural wonders of California.



Steeped in the philosophies of naturalist John Burroughs and the writings of John Muir, the Berkeleyites were attracted to the naturalistic architectural designs that Maybeck created for his neighbors in the Berkeley Hills. He became the guru of Berkeley intellectuals who formed the Hillside Club.

Maybeck also drew the attention of Phoebe Hearst who, with her deceased husband's fortune, set about building the small Berkeley campus into an architectural show place. He helped her organize the design competition that laid the foundation for plans which continue today. The commission was won by John Galen Howard, but Maybeck would design several unique structures there, including the large arch-beamed Hearst Hall and the Men's Faculty Club. Both buildings were constructed of native redwood. He would also design the Hearst's fanciful stone lodge, Wyntoon, on the McCloud River in the Siskiyou. It was described as "a castle on the Rhine with Japanese overtones."

The Gates home 'is reminiscent of a Swiss chalet, with its plaster walls and wide overhanging eaves. . . . The Gates home has seen many owners over the years, including the wine maker Paul Masson. . . . Its current owner has restored the home to its original condition.'

Maybeck could revert to classical revivalism when the need arose. His massive columned automobile showroom on San Francisco's Van Ness Ave., and the Palace of Fine Arts in that city's Marina District are the best remaining examples. Berkeley's Christian Science Church is one of his greatest achievements. In this building, as in many of his hillside homes, he experimented with the use of modern materials – concrete, corrugated steel and industrial windows – to create an original design. The carved wooden beams of the church rival those of a cathedral.

Maybeck in Santa Clara County

Unfortunately Maybeck designed only a few buildings in our area. The Newhall Brothers store in San Jose and a Christian Science church in Palo Alto are long gone. Two excellent examples of domestic architecture remain, however, the Emma Kellogg house at

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1061 Bryant Street in Palo Alto, and the Howard B. Gates home at 62 S. 13th St. in San Jose.

The Kellogg home, built in 1899, is known as the “Sunbonnet House” because of the extended gambrel roof overhang which shades the front of the house. Clad in redwood shingles, the Palo Alto “Professorville” home has much in common with Maybeck’s Berkeley homes of that period.

Not so similar is the 1903 home he designed for Dr. Howard B. Gates of San Jose. This house is more reminiscent of a Swiss chalet, with its plaster walls and wide overhanging eaves. There are classical elements in the front balcony. The rounded arch design is repeated on the back dining room opening onto a recessed rear garden. What appears to be a two-story structure is actually three. Above the kitchen dining area, with its delicate leaded glass windows, is the living room with a large fireplace and balcony. Under the third floor roof-line are the bedrooms with windows facing the rear. A skylight and clerestory windows add light to the graceful stairway that joins the three floors. The interior surfaces are unfinished redwood.

The Gates home has seen many owners over the years, including the wine maker Paul Masson. After it was used as a fraternity house and a Hari Krishna ashram it was in need of refurbishment. Attorney Guy Shoup, its current owner, has restored the home to its original condition, even reproducing the original front door and the outside lighting fixtures.

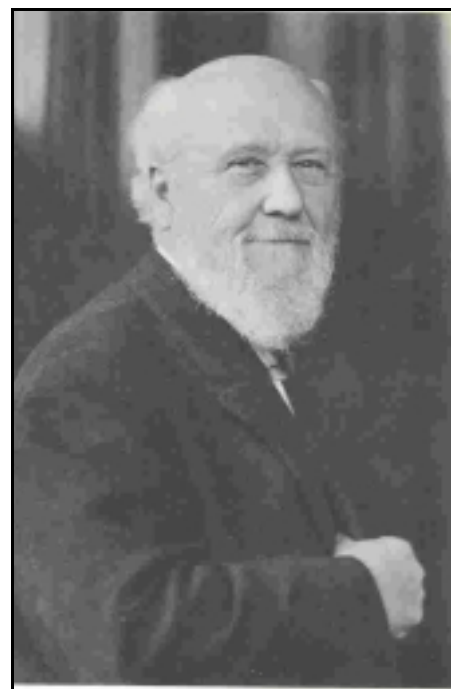
Bernard Maybeck was a firm believer in putting his homes into the natural landscape. This came more easily for the hillside homes of Berkeley, with their views of the Golden Gate. For our local Gates landmark he relied on extensive landscaping to add character. (This can be seen in the early photograph. In its current state it lacks the romantic verisimilitude it had originally.)

Shunned during the 1920s and 1930s by the modernists who eschewed his medievalisms, Maybeck lived until



Above: the Kellogg house at 1061 Bryant St. in Palo Alto.

‘Bernard Maybeck has become legendary in the annals of California architecture. . . . Shunned during the 1920s and 1930s by the modernists who eschewed his medievalisms, Maybeck lived until 1957, long enough to be rediscovered and lauded with many honors.’



Bernard Maybeck

1957, long enough to be rediscovered and lauded with many honors. One might say that he was one of the grandfathers of today’s ecological movement.

Downtown: Its Rise and Fall, 1880-1950

by Robert M. Fogelson

New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001. 492 pp. \$27.95

Reviewed by Don Gagliardi

San Jose's apparently rudderless drive to redevelop its downtown is not only endlessly unsettling to preservationists, as one historic building after another is demolished or suffers a facadectomy; the whole enterprise may, in fact, be foredoomed by phenomena larger than Silicon Valley boosterism. I base this conclusion on Robert Fogelson's *Downtown: Its Rise and Fall, 1880-1950*, a worthy read which places our civic soap operas (vacant storefronts, BART, parking, highrises, and redevelopment itself) in stark historical context.

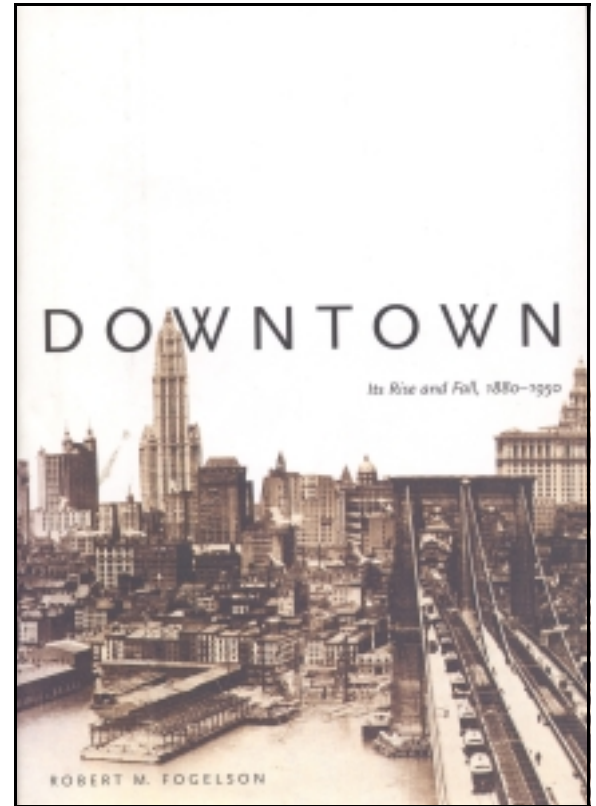
Perhaps unsurprisingly, San Jose merits no mention in this history. Yet all the usual suspects are there: retail merchants, greedy developers, business associations, suburban shoppers, and bumbling bureaucrats. Their colliding interests and debates, immediately comprehensible to us (because we unknowingly rehash them), are given remarkably detailed description (better, for example, than current downtown San Jose issues are covered in the *Mercury News*).

Downtown, says Fogelman, was a distinctly American innovation, as was its signal architecture, the skyscraper. In the beginning, which is to say shortly after the Civil War, "downtown was *the* business district, a highly compact, extremely concentrated, largely depopulated business district, and not the *central* business district, which it became in the 1920s, and not *just another* business district, which it became after World War II."

Downtown originally "thrived everywhere in urban America, even in Los Angeles, now regarded as the archetype of the decentralized metropolis." This was because, says Fogelman, most Americans regarded a prosperous downtown as vital to the well-being of the city as a whole, a concept Fogelman calls "spatial harmony." Eventually, Americans came to appreciate by example that cities could support multiple business districts, branch banks and chain stores, thus dispersing the concentration and disrupting this harmony. Central to the ideology was the technological subtext. Steel girders preceded the internal combustion engine in the late 19th century, suddenly allowing for vastly taller buildings (for 4,000 years until the late 1800s the tallest man-made structures were the Egyptian pyramids), thereby promoting highly compacted commerce in extremely crowded quarters. Later, with the widespread advent of the automobile, commercial decentralization unfolded, leading to downtown's decline all across America. (I am being somewhat reductionist for space reasons — all the more reason to read the book.)

Despite reports that downtown is rebounding, "the results have fallen far short of expectations in most cities," Fogelman says. "The almighty downtown of the past is gone — and gone for good. And it has been gone much longer than most Americans realize." He concludes, echoing downtown San Jose neighborhood activists: "If there is reason today for optimism about the future of downtown, it can be found not in the many cities that have built downtown malls and convention centers, but in the few cities where many Americans have rejected the traditional [suburban] concept of the good community and instead opted to live in apartments in or near the central business district."

Don Gagliardi, besides editing *Continuity*, is on the boards of the San Jose Downtown Assn. and Downtown Neighborhood Leadership Forum.



Excerpt

‘ For a gifted architect, the skyscraper offered unparalleled opportunity. . . . Many [skyscrapers] were beautiful . . . They were also “a distinctively American product,” their supporters noted, “the first absolutely genuine expression of an original American architecture.” ’



‘The former IBM building on Notre Dame is significant because the magnetic disk storage drive, an invention that transformed the way the world does business, was developed there.’

*Above: the former IBM building at 99 Notre Dame St. in downtown San Jose.
Photo courtesy Franklin Maggi.*

Cheers for Old Notre Dame: Computer Hard Disk Drive Invention Site Saved — For Now

by April Halberstadt

Hard Driving in San Jose. No, it's not the chorus of a new hit country tune. It's the current theme of an influential group of innovation pioneers who have formed the Magnetic Disk Heritage Center.

On Friday evening, September 13, the heritage center group met to survey their first major accomplishments – adding the IBM laboratory at 99 Notre Dame St. to San Jose's list of landmarks, the installation of a permanent display in the lobby recording the creation of the magnetic disk drive at the site, and the announcement of their intention to create a permanent museum at the site in the future.

The former IBM building on Notre Dame is significant because the magnetic disk storage drive, an invention that transformed the way the world does business, was developed there.

Starting in 1952, a former schoolteacher named Rey Johnson led a design team that developed the machine now known

throughout the world as RAMAC.

Johnson eventually held more than 90 patents. The device he helped build was designated an international historical mechanical engineering landmark in 1984 by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) befitting the fact that it is one of the most significant engineering accomplishments of the 20th century. The disk drives has allowed immediate storage and retrieval of millions of "bits" of information.

These systems made it possible to put a man on the moon, to analyze DNA for the Human Genome Project, to make on-line banking and automatic tellers a reality. Its impact on our society and culture as well as the rest of the world has been tremendous. Hard drives have become smaller, cheaper and faster. Today's little devices hold an estimated 10 million times more data than the first hard drives and are smaller than a credit card.

Two years ago, this unassuming, single-story, yet tremendously historic, former IBM facility on Notre Dame was vacant and in danger of demolition. Owner Barry

Swenson wanted to sell the site to the city's redevelopment agency for a parking garage. The structure received a temporary reprieve from Santa Clara County, which is currently leasing the space for a court building. The County had spent \$2 million to renovate the interior and add the security facilities necessary for a modern courtroom. The current lease is for five years.

In a strange twist of fate, the San Jose city council approved the site as a city landmark on the same day it, acting as the board of its redevelopment agency, approved the same site for a multi-story garage. Today, the building may have an entirely different future. Many of the pioneering IBM engineers who helped develop the RAMAC gathered to recall the impact their contribution has made. City councilmembers Cindy Chavez and Forest Williams, the latter a former IBM program manager himself, pledged to explore the eventual possibility of a museum on the site.



Naglee Park Centennial Walking Tour May 11

In honor of the neighborhood's centennial (see *Continuity*, Fall 2001, at p. 10), PAC*SJ and the Campus Community Assn. sponsored a walking tour of Naglee Park homes on May 11.

Additional copies of the guidebook are available for \$5 each from PAC*SJ. Call 998-8105 to order yours.



*Immediately above: PAC*SJ president Pat Curia with downtown city councilwoman Cindy Chavez.*



Preservation Action Council of San Jose



*Artist's rendering of
PAC*SJ's Bocca
House in River St.
Dist. as it might look
when eventually
restored.*

House

Helen Mangus

San Jose Historic Landmark HL-xx-XX

Friday, November 15, 2002, 6 pm

Bankers' Club, Bank of Italy Bldg., First & Santa Clara Sts.

Catered Food! Cash Bar! Silent Auction! Preservation Awards!

Annual Preservation Celebration

Advance reservations required by November 8. \$35 per person. Submit checks payable to PAC SJ, PO Box 2287, San Jose, CA 95109.*



HAPPY HOLIDAYS! — FROM PAC*SJ

Above: Christmas postcard depicting St. Joseph's Church, c. 1910.

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Please complete this form, enclose it with your check made payable to 'Preservation Action Council of San Jose' and mail to:

PAC*SJ
PO Box 2287
San Jose, CA 95109-2287

CALENDAR

November

- 15 Preservation Celebration
6 p.m. Bank of Italy Bldg.
First & Santa Clara Sts.
- 18 PAC SJ Board Meeting
7 pm Le Petit Trianon
72 N. 5th St.
Annual Meeting

December

- 16 PAC SJ Board Meeting
7 pm Le Petit Trianon
72 N. 5th St.

January

- 20 PAC SJ Board Meeting
7 pm Le Petit Trianon
72 N. 5th St.



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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*PAC*SJ board members Tom Simon (l) and John Olson (r) move a vintage stove at the PAC*SJ salvage sale in late August which raised over \$5,000.*

Join or Renew Today: Membership Form Inside on Page 19!