



CONTINUITY

Newsletter of the Preservation Action Council of San José

Volume 3, Number 5, September/October 1992

San José's Historic

SAN PEDRO SQUARE

Open House

Saturday, October 17, 1 to 5 p.m.

Take a self-guided tour around the historic San Pedro Square area of downtown San José. Learn about its history and architecture. Enjoy entertainment and refreshments along the way.

Tickets

\$10 in advance (by mail, by October 10)

\$12 at the door

\$8 anytime for Preservation Action Council of San José members

Look for the ticket order form in this newsletter, or call the Preservation Action Council at (408) 947-8025 to receive a ticket order form.

Sponsored by

The Preservation Action Council of San José
San José Downtown Association

Bernal-Joice Ranch to be Parks Department Historic Restoration Project

Paul Bernal

Since June, members of the Bernal-Joice Ranch Community Task Force have met several times with the Department of Parks and Recreation, owner of the Bernal-Joice ranch property. Doug Gaynor, Director of the Parks Department, decided that instead of requiring a tenant before making improvements, that the site be considered a historic restoration project that could later be adapted to a specific tenant.

The task force recommended that the Parks Department implement short- and long-term goals. Short-term goals include providing security for the remaining structures, shoring up the barn, and providing termite control. The long-term goal is to restore the structures and site to make them available for possible use as a living history museum.

Plans also call for an interpretive museum that reflects the influence of the Indian, Spanish, Mexican, early American, and modern cultures on the site. County Supervisor Michael Honda and his aide Cathy Ming-Hyde have been supportive of our efforts to

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Bernal-Joice Ranch
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have been supportive of our efforts to make this a community-sponsored history center.

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Criminal and Civil Lawsuits Filed in Illegal Mosby Ranch Demolition

In July, the County of Santa Clara filed two lawsuits against two companies and four individuals, including San José attorney Jim Matthews, for illegal demolition of the historic Mosby Ranch property in November of last year. A civil suit seeks reconstruction and replacement of the buildings that are listed on the county's Heritage Resource Inventory. A criminal suit seeks fines and jail sentences.

The complaints allege that attorney Jim Matthews and real estate broker Gordon Copus contracted, on behalf of McTavish Corp., to have Ferma Corp. raze all structures, knowing that the structures were protected by the inclusion in the Heritage Resource Inventory.

The demolished historic resources included the ranch house, a water tower and tank house that were to be moved to Emma Prusch Park, the Evergreen Wagon Stop and Trading Post, a redwood barn, a system of corrals and cattle chutes, and three Eucalyptus trees. Also demolished was a "bar" that rodeo cowboys and cowgirls used as a meeting and drinking place.

The suits, filed by Deputy District Attorney Paul Bernal, was the result of several months of investigation and interviews with involved parties. The suit details the series of events that led up to the demolitions which started in July 1991 and ended during a four-day period in November.

While the property owner, McTavish Corporation, and the demolition contractor, Ferma Corporation, claimed that the demolition was accidental, Bernal said in a July 17, 1992 article in the *San Jose Mercury News* that "it is the district attorney's position that the razing was more than an oversight."

The criminal charges (misdemeanors), carry a maximum \$10,000 fine and six months in jail.

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Upcoming Preservation Action Council Outreach Events

As a non-profit organization, being able to participate in events where we can recruit new members and inform the public of our activities is very important to our continued success. Two key upcoming events in September are Tapestry in Talent (TNT) and the South First Association (SoFA) Street Fair.

Without a doubt, TNT is the event where we can reach the greatest number of people who are not familiar with historic preservation or our organization. This year TNT is over Labor Day weekend, September 5-7. At this event, we will have a booth at the corner of Park and Market streets, just across from Plaza Park. We will be offering tours of the Plaza Park area to point out existing and past historic structures. And, we will be introducing a major new exhibit that probably will move to a large display window in the building where we have our office.

The title of this exhibit is "Where are these San José buildings? Gone. Endangered. Saved." As the title implies, the display will contain photographs and brief descriptions of buildings in each category. The "endangered" category will contain

our Preservation Action Council current projects such as the Bernal-Joice Ranch, Scheller House, and First Church of Christ, Scientist.

Our second event is the SoFA Street Fair on Sunday, September 27. We have a booth there courtesy of the San José Downtown Association. At this booth, we will have brochures and other membership materials available, but will concentrate our efforts on selling tickets for our October 17 Open House.

Of course, we'll need help at each event, especially TNT, which is a three-day event. All of us who have participated in this event in the past have had fun meeting and talking to prospective members and giving the tour. It's also an outstanding opportunity to do some consciousness-raising about the fate of our historic buildings.

To volunteer for TNT or the SoFA Street Fair, call Patti Massey at (408) 297-9478.

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Plastic Signs Unsightly

Karita Hummer

The proliferation of plastic signs must stop! While strip malls in the city are actually improving in overall architectural design (with some notable innovations), they are most certainly being spoiled by unsightly and completely uninspiring plastic signs on retail establishments. You can see these ugly, manufactured signs throughout the city, including downtown. Contrast such signs with the signage on retail stores along Lincoln Avenue in Willow Glen. Not a plastic sign in sight! The effect is one of good taste and grace. Let's do something!

If you are interested in this issue, contact Karita Hummer, (408) 971-0940.



From the President

Karita Hummer

We are deeply involved right now in five major projects, and we need your ideas, energies, and resources. (There are stories on all these projects in this issue. I want to underscore their importance here and to enlist your help.)

Open House

Most imminent is our Open House at San Pedro Square in San José on October 17 from 1 to 5 p.m. Nancy Newlin and Sharon Heinrichs have done a marvelous job of organizing this event. Once again, we are making an all-out effort to make this a stellar event.

We chose San Pedro Square, with the Peralta Adobe, Fallon House, and many other important buildings, because it is one of three of our most historic settings in downtown. The other two are St. James Square, which we featured in 1990, and the Historic Commercial District, where we had last year's Open House. The San José Downtown Association will once again cosponsor the event with us.

As in previous years, it is our aim to promote both the historical importance and architecture of the area as well as to promote the businesses in the district. We want to underscore the economic vitality that makes preservation succeed and demonstrate the significance of preservation for attracting people to business districts. We think San Pedro Square is a perfect example of our motto for our open houses, "Preservation is good for business, and business is good for preservation."

Come join us for a very enjoyable afternoon. We'll have our annual preservation awards, a silent auction, and great prizes. There are still many ways that you can help. (See separate article.)

Bernal-Joice Ranch Task Force

Another major project we are involved in is the Bernal-Joice Ranch Task Force. The goal here is to save and restore the old buildings on the ranch and to protect historic trees and archeological features on the site, which is located in the Santa Teresa Park area. (One of the properties around which there is some contention involves a major Indian burial site and one of the original adobe sites of the Bernal family.)

Paul Bernal is heading this committee. Paul has done a yeoman's job of organizing this task force and has brought a great number of people from many areas of concern to work on this project—from the neighborhood near Santa Teresa Park, IBM, county parks, the Muwekma-Ohlone Indian Tribe, Sourisseau Academy, the Santa Teresa Golf Club, and others, as well as the Preservation Action Council.

The whole ranch is a truly beautiful setting that evokes a marvelous sense of many past eras of our valley—Indian, Spanish, Mexican and early American. It is glorious. It is a very important new venture for us into an area of open space, old rural buildings and ranch culture.

Join this effort. Call Paul Bernal, (408) 299-7438, to let him know you are interested and to contribute to the Trust Fund for this project to preserve this very important space. (See article.)

Transportation Act

Another big project for us has been our campaign to stimulate an interest and organize an effort in the community to tap the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Act funds on behalf of Preservation and other Enhancement projects for the City of San José and Santa Clara county. Three meetings in the community have been held on this topic. The meetings have involved public and private groups, and several Santa Clara County cities and the county. Project ideas have generated a great deal of excitement.

This effort has provided us with the opportunity to become acquainted with government processes and procedures on many levels. The details of the Transportation Law require considerable study and monitoring, and we would welcome a detail-oriented person with lots of ideas for efficiently tapping these monies (about a minimum of \$9 million for the county) to help us.

Many thanks for the organizational efforts go to Paul Hummer, Preservation Action Council Advisory Board Member, Natalie Wells of Santa Clara County Supervisor Rod Diridon's office, Michele Olson of City Councilmember Jim Beall's office, and Beth Wyman, County Historic Heritage Commission.

We're calling this project "Destination Cities", and welcome your involvement. (See separate article.)

River Street

But it goes on. We're gearing up for the role we will play as a concurring signatory to the Memorandum of Agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers regarding River Street and

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From the President

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the Guadalupe River Park. We'll be reviewing the scope of work for the market study and plan, suggesting resources, reviewing the final report and all the while educating the public and our leaders about the significance of this project. April Haberstadt, Paul Bernal, Craig Mineweaser, and Ren Renzel have been a great deal of help on this effort. But again, with so many roles, we would welcome your ideas and inputs and suggestions of people who might have an interest in this project. (See separate article.)

Our Office

The office is another very important effort for our group right now. Theo Van Dyne continues to do a great job in organizing the office into a business center for us and eventually a library and resource center for the community. The Fundraising Sub-committee has put out a great effort in fundraising for the office and our operations: participating in the Human Race; holding a great rummage sale (special thanks to John Mitchell for holding it at his home); and developing a drawing for great prizes at our San Pedro Square Open House including stays at the beautifully restored Ste. Claire Hotel (San José), the extraordinary Sherman House (San Francisco), the modern Post Ranch Inn (Big Sur), dinner at Il Fornaio (in the Ste. Claire Hotel), and great preservation favorites Hochburg Von Germania, Abigails, and others. (See separate article.)

Elizabeth Cooney has agreed to chair the library and resource center, which will be available for building owners, professionals, and the public (by appointment). We also want to use our space for exhibits and displays, including two showcase windows.

There is tremendous creative opportunity here in the office, and imaginative concepts are most welcome. The office is an ongoing investment in the vitality and future of our organization. Let Theo know of your interest at (408) 292-0756.

In Summary

There it is—a very full menu for a group of enthusiasts excited about the prospects for preservation and good design in San Jose. Thanks to so many of you for making this happen. And welcome to all who will help keep it going.



How to Reach Us

Bernal/Joice Ranch Task Force: Paul Bernal, (408) 299-7438

CONTINUITY newsletter: Nancy Newlin, (408) 297-4084

First Church of Christ, Scientist Task Force: Sharon Heinrichs, (408) 298-7810

José Theatre Task Force: Gary Parks, (408) 371-9103

River Street Task Force: Karita Hummer, (408) 971-0940 or April Halberstadt, (408) 293-2860

San Pedro Square Open House: Nancy Newlin, (408) 297-4084, or Sharon Heinrichs, (408) 298-7810

Transportation Law Task Force: Karita Hummer, (408) 971-0940

URM/Seismic Retrofit Task Force: Peter Fenerin, (415) 322-7440

Watchdog Committee: April Halberstadt, (408) 293-2860

Our new office: (408) 947-8025

Meetings Held on New Transportation Law and Historic Preservation

Karita Hummer

The Preservation Action Council of San José organized three meetings of representatives of public and private groups from all areas of Santa Clara County to brainstorm and share information about the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Law. The Preservation Action Council hosted the first meeting, Supervisor Rod Diridon hosted one of them, and San José City Councilmember Jim Beall hosted another.

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Law has provisions in its Surface Transportation Section for "enhancements," which include historic preservation and other environmental provisions. One estimate is that over the 6-year life of the act almost \$300 million in funds could come to the State of California, and that perhaps as much as \$10 million to Santa Clara County alone. While guidelines for applying for such funds are still being formulated, the intent of the law is to be flexible, creative, and allow considerable public input.

Local groups applying for funds will need to have plans approved by the Congestion Management Agency-Commuter Network and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, as well as receive direction from the CalTrans Transportation Facilities Enhancement Program.

The meetings have been a great opportunity for representatives of the county, of the cities of San Jose and Santa Clara, and of private heritage and preservation groups to communicate about possible project ideas and to consider ways to work in a coordinated way. Many project ideas have been brought up at the meetings, and

ways to select among them have been considered.

Betty Antrim, San José Historic Landmarks Commissioner and Preservation Action Council member, suggested ways to categorize the most popular ideas. Her categories include railroad-related projects, facade enhancement projects, Guadalupe River projects, Monterey Road and county history trail projects, and Alviso projects. Another possible category is transit mall projects which would include First and Second streets (Historic Commercial District) and St. James Square (Historic District).

(It is important to note that while the funds for this law have been authorized, they have not yet been appropriated. This situation requires close watching.)

In attendance at these meetings have been councilmembers David Pandori and Judy Stabile, staff members of several councilmembers, staff members of Supervisor Rod Diridon's office, commissioners from a number of Historic Commissions, City of San José Public Works staff, a commissioner and staff member of the City of Santa Clara planning department, a commissioner of the County Parks Department and representatives from the Gilroy Historical Museum, the Heritage Council of Santa Clara County, the San José Historical Museum Association, the Victorian Preservation Association, the Railroad Association, and the Preservation Action Council of San José.

To become part of this important and exciting opportunity for historic preservation, call Karita Hummer, (408) 971-0940.

Preservation Action Council Plans Fundraising Raffle and Mixer

Karen West

In conjunction with our annual Open House on October 17, the Preservation Action Council of San José's fundraising committee will be conducting a raffle. We now have a grand prize and two first prizes donated, along with a number of other great prizes in preservation and cultural settings.

The winner of the grand prize will receive a night for two at the beautifully restored St. Claire Hotel and dinner for two at Il Fornaio. The two first prizes include a night for two at the Post Ranch Inn in Big Sur, a spectacular modern new inn and a night for two at the Sherman House in San Francisco, one of the finest restorations in San Francisco. Other prizes include a dinner for two at

Abigail's, Hochburg Von Germania, Gordon Biersch, and the Tied House. Prizes are being solicited from other local cultural organizations.

Tickets should be available by mid-September and the donation will be \$1 per ticket. The fundraising committee is excited about the support it has received from the community and asks for your support as well by buying tickets and encouraging your family and friends to buy tickets. Proceeds from the raffle will be used to sustain the operation of our new office in downtown San José.

Winning tickets will be drawn at a mixer at the Tied House, following the San Pedro Square Open House on October 17, from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. We hope to see you there!

Interested in helping with this raffle? Want to sell or purchase tickets? Contact Robin Biggar at (408) 287-6408.

This issue of *CONTINUITY* is sponsored by:

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Fox California Theatre Plans Move Ahead

Gary Parks

In June, the Fox California Theatre Advisory Board approved a master plan for restoration and expansion of the 1927 movie palace. If the plan is approved by the San José City Council, actual construction could be a year to a year and one half away.

The project would begin by making the existing building usable for performances, with expansion into the adjoining lots planned for the future.

Important features in the master plan include restoring the historic wall surfaces to their 1927 color scheme and keeping the organ chambers that flank the stage intact to allow for installation of a Worlitzer theatre organ. However, suspension of an acoustical reflector from the proscenium arch (recommended by the architects) remains a hot debate topic because it would permanently alter the historic character of the auditorium. The argument has been made that this would be an unnecessary addition because the hall was originally designed for unamplified sound.

For more information about the Fox Theatre plans, contact Gary Parks at (408) 371-9103.

Linda Larson Elected to Preservation Action Council Board of Directors

Linda Larson was unanimously elected to the Board of Directors of the Preservation Action Council of San José at its July meeting. A longtime advocate of historic preservation, she has been very active in the

Preservation Action Council for the past several years.

A graduate of Santa Clara University, Linda developed her interest in historic research through her participation in a number of history projects using the university archives. She has been involved in conducting historic research on a number of local historic buildings/projects including the Bank of America Building, the Medical Dental Building, the Glein-Fenerin Building, and a number of houses. Linda was a member of the San Jose Historical Museum Association Board for four years.

This past March, Linda developed the Preservation Action Council Seismic Retrofit Task Force's informational handbook for its Seismic Retrofit Workshop. She has also assisted with the work of several committees including the José Theatre Task Force for which she did historical research on the theatre. She currently is one of two people collecting historical information on the buildings in the San Pedro Square area for our October open house program.

We greatly appreciate Linda's past and current contributions and look forward to her active participation on our board.

River Street Task Force Update

Karita Hummer

A Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Guadalupe River Flood Control Project has been signed by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and by the Preservation Action Council of San José as a concurring party.

A market study will be conducted and a marketing plan will be developed as a result of this agreement. The study will include a review of similar districts in other [parts of the state], integration of the district with uses for the surrounding area, identification of funding sources, and projected revenues and financial benefits for the City of San José. The Preservation Action Council will be asked to review and comment on the scope of work for the study, provide assistance in identifying uses and community resources for the study, and review and comment on plans, specifications, contracts, and other documents.

In addition, the Preservation Action Council will continue to educate the community about the importance of this district. We will stress the value the buildings would have for attracting tourists and contributing to the economic vitality of the city.

Toward that end, a recent Urban Studies graduate of Stanford University, Laurie Seibert, will prepare several design scenarios for the buildings in the district. (Laurie contacted us through the Haas Center for Public Service at Stanford University.)

Laurie will consider the buildings from four different viewpoints: as a cluster for commercial purposes, for functional uses in the Guadalupe River Park, for housing archaeological finds from the Guadalupe River bed, or for some combination of these three uses.

Having visual representations of these potential uses will help build enthusiasm in the community for saving the best and most historic of the buildings from the district.

Interested in participating in the River Street Task Force? Contact April Halberstadt at (408) 293-2860, or Karita Hummer at (408) 971-0940.



Watchdog Report

April Halberstadt

The Watchdog Committee of the Preservation Action Council of San José keeps an eye on historic buildings that are threatened by insensitive rehabilitation, demolition, or neglect.

Here are some of the historic properties we are watching:

- The Midtown Plan has no specific proposal for the Del Monte building site and a portion of the cannery is now on the unreinforced masonry (URM) demolition list. Also endangered by the plan are residences along Sunol Street and the existing housing adjacent to the cannery.

We have also received several howls from watchdogs about the old Western Pacific freight depot on Santa Clara Street adjacent to the Del Monte canneries and now used as the Archer's Den. The fate of this building in the Midtown Plan is unclear.

- The Scheller House still sits... on the San José State University campus. The university has cut the weeds that might have presented a fire hazard.
- We continue to watch the process of "demolition by encroachment" of the remnants of the Autumn Street neighborhoods adjacent to the new arena.
- Slated for certain demolition as a result of the Guadalupe River Park is the pre-1870 bungalow of inventor A.C. Stowe on St. Augustine Street. Also slated to go are an old barn and several newer (1920) bungalows.

- The proposed realignment of San Fernando Street will increase the traffic pressure on the remains of the Delmas Street area, called Parkside by the Redevelopment Agency.

- The Goosetown area continues to be whittled away by the addition of more parking areas.

We are also watching the Wool Ranch, Bernal-Joice Ranch, First Church of Christ, Scientist, and the proposed redevelopment of the Naglee Park site by the San José Medical Center.

Interested in watchdog activities?
Call April Halberstadt at (408) 293-2860.

Preservation Action Council Work to Promote Architecture Books

Chuch Volwiler

Toward our goal of promoting excellence in all areas of architectural design, Karita Hummer and Chuck

Volwiler met recently with Chris Miller, gift shop manager at the San José Museum of Art to discuss how the Preservation Action Council of San José might work with the museum to promote architecture books.

What we found is that Chris is very receptive to our suggestions for books to add to the gift shop, and that she has a great deal of experience in what people purchase.

In the future, Chuck will prepare some mini reviews of current titles, and alert Preservation Action Council members of upcoming book sales through an article in *Continuity*. We hope that this will encourage our members to purchase books at the museum, and therefore stimulate the expansion of architecture titles.

For more information, or for a list of current titles, contact Chuch Volwiler at (408) 297-5970.

San Pedro Square Open House Saturday, October 17



The Preservation Action Council of San José is a non-profit 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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 Gil Sanchez, F.A.I.A.
 James A. Salata
 James C. Williams

Calendar

September

- 5, 6, 7 Tapestry in Talent, downtown San José. Look for the Preservation Action Council booth at the corner of Market and Park streets.
- 14 (Monday) Executive committee meeting. Karita Hummer's, 96 Fox Ave., 7:00 p.m., (408) 971-0940.
- 20 (Sunday) Grand opening of the Hotel Sainte Claire, benefit for the San José Historical Museum Association.
- 21 (Monday) Open board of directors meeting. Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th St., 7:00 p.m., (408) 971-0940.
- 27 (Sunday) SoFA Street fair on South First St.
- 28 (Monday) Finance and operations committee meeting at our office, 40 N. First St., 8 p.m. Greg Casella, (408) 998-5034.

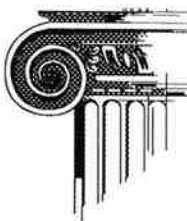
October

- 3 (Saturday) "What's a Cultural Resource?" presented by the California Preservation Foundation. Call (510) 763-0972 for information.
- 12 (Monday) Executive committee meeting. Karita Hummer's, 96 Fox Ave., 7:00 p.m., 971-0940.
- 17 (Saturday) San Pedro Square Open House, 1 - 5 p.m. (See cover.)
- 19 (Monday) Open board of directors meeting. Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th St., 7:00 p.m., (408) 971-0940.
- 26 (Monday) Finance and operations committee meeting at our office, 40 N. First St., 8 p.m. Greg Casella, (408) 998-5034.

November

- 9 (Saturday) New Almaden Quicksilver Mines County Park and Museum tour, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Wear your hiking shoes and bring a sack lunch. For more information contact Kitty Monahan, (408) 268-6541.

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