



CONTINUITY

Newsletter of the Preservation Action Council of San José Volume 5, Number 6, November/December 1994

National Trust Director Speaks in San José

Betsy Mathieson

Elizabeth Goldstein, director of the western regional office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, treated the south bay community to a rousing talk on "The Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation" in a November 28 presentation at the Italian American Heritage Foundation.

The event was hosted by the Preservation Action Council of San José and co-sponsored by *City Times* and the San José Downtown Association. Ms. Goldstein's professional experience includes studies of the many ways both historic preservation and parks contribute to the quality of life. San José's River Street historic district, scheduled for demolition to accommodate a small portion of

the Guadalupe River Park, was a major emphasis of Ms. Goldstein's presentation.

One assignment Ms. Goldstein completed before joining the National Trust was the restoration of Union Square. She discovered that people are drawn to historic places and unique urban parks because such features give a city a "sense of place." Americans, unfortunately, have come to believe that what looks alike is better.

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Old Hoover Junior High Threatened

Patti Massey

Herbert Hoover Junior High School (known to many as Old Hoover Junior High) at 1670 Park Avenue is becoming the focus of concern for Rosegarden and Shasta-Hanchett neighbors, as well

as PACSJ. This elegant structure is a beautiful example of the work of noted California architect William Weeks.

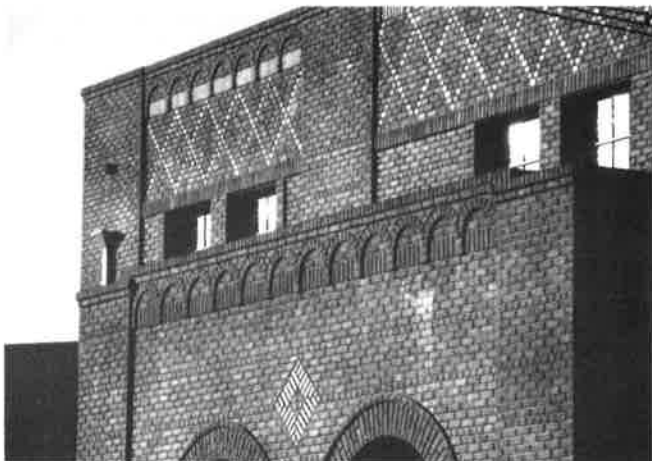
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Preliminary Injunction Granted for the Scheller House

Tom Simon

On October 28 Judge Fogel granted PACSJ a preliminary injunction, halting San José State University's plans to demolish the Scheller House. The University had intended to demolish the building within a few days if the injunction had not been granted. After listening to arguments by our attorney, Susan Brandt-Hawley, and Thomas O'Donnell, representing the University, the judge determined that there was a reasonable likelihood that PACSJ

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Now you see it ... now you don't ... Costa Hall, a contributing structure to San José's Downtown Commercial National Register District, becomes history itself, all for a parking lot.



From the President

Ellen Garboske

The holiday season is in full swing, and we all feel the pressure of a multitude of events to attend, shopping in the midst of a mass of humanity, clogged parking lots, traffic jams, etc. But there is joy in the air, too, and I hope each of you can find the time to reflect on the rewarding aspects of our lives – the beauty, peace and serenity of the season. And while you're at it, spread a little of that joy by donating food, toys, and clothing to your favorite charities.

By the time you read this column, a sad event will have occurred, or be in the works. All efforts to save Costa Hall from demolition were to no avail. Located at 15 S. Third Street, Costa Hall was a contributing structure to San Jose's Downtown Historic Commercial District, a 40-building (make that 39!) district listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Listing on this register is one of the ways San Jose is pointed out to worldwide tourism as a worthwhile place to visit. Keep chipping away at our historic buildings, and it'll be back to "San Jose, who?" Well, at least there'll be a parking lot for use by our non-visitors.

Efforts to save the Scheller House continue. A preliminary injunction was granted, and our attorney and task force members are busy preparing for the January 13th court date. We appreciate the support of our members and others from the community for this important expensive litigation.

PACCSJ did not enter into this litigation lightly; we would have been delighted if other measures to save this historically important house had been successful. We still need monetary support to meet legal expenses, so keep those checks coming, marked for "Scheller House Rescue." And we need your presence in the courtroom on January 13, so mark your calendar (see full article on page 1 for further details).

The final consultant's report on the River Street Project has finally arrived, and the River Street Task Force is really busy. A press conference was held at the Italian Heritage Foundation, followed by a talk on the benefits of historic preservation by Elizabeth Goldstein, director of the Western Regional Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Karita Hummer and members of the task force arranged a fine presentation, and we appreciate your dedication. Maybe *this* is the project you'd like to support by joining in the activities or activating that checkbook again! There's a project for everybody, so check the "WatchDog" column for other activities.

The second annual Penny Rolling Party will be history by the time you read this. We hope you are among the PACCSJ members and friends who joined in the merriment and enjoyed the company, good food, and beverages. Held at the Hochburg von Germania Restaurant both years, this event has been a lot of fun and raised some much needed money. Owner Walter Harding has been very supportive of local preservation efforts, so keep this fine establishment in mind when

you are looking for good food and courteous service.

Just a quick mention of some recent historic events which have enhanced our community. The annual commemoration of the founding of El Pueblo de San Jose de Guadalupe was held November 29th on the grounds of the Peralta Adobe. Entertainment was inspiring, including singers from César Chávez Elementary School and appearances by the De Anza Lancers. PACCSJ's Franklin Maggi and Paul Bernal were among the speakers for this event.

Groundbreaking ceremonies were held November 30 for the United Artists Theatre Complex at the Pavilion. The theatres are scheduled for completion by November of 1995. I'm not sure this is historic, nor a prudent investment, but we wish them success and hope this venture will help to revitalize the area.

The Firefighter's Memorial, which stood for many years at the south end of Plaza de César Chávez, has been moved to St. James Park and was rededicated on December 9.

I'm honored to have been part of the team which developed a new exhibit in the basement of the Fallon House (see article on page 3 in this newsletter). A different approach was taken in this exhibit of the diverse eras of San Jose's history. How you will visit soon. Makes losing "Manny's Cellar" a little more palatable.

That wraps up this column – may your holidays be peaceful and wonderful and 1995 be the best year ever for you and for historic preservation.

New Exhibit Opens in Fallon House

The refurbishing of the Peralta Adobe and Fallon House on St. John Street was completed last year, and visitors have expressed their appreciation of the beauty and history of these representations of two eras in San José, from founding of the pueblo to the America period.

A new exhibit was installed in the basement of the Fallon House and opened for public viewing on November 29. Visitors enter a timeline, beginning with the Native Americans, and through the Mission, Pueblo, Mexican, Gold Rush, and American periods. Lifesize photos and murals give a warm, living feeling to the exhibit. Exhibit designers Nikki Silva and Charles Prentiss, from the History Museum of Santa Cruz County, were responsible for this unique approach to portraying history. Also working on the exhibit were Judy Stabile, Jim Zetterquist, Ellen Garboske, and Dan Bingham.

The Peralta Adobe and Fallon House are open for tours on Wednesdays through Sundays. Call 408/993-8182 for details or reservations.

Goldstein Address

(Continued from page 1)

There is a numbing uniformity in new buildings, airport terminals and hotels. Travellers can forget where they are when they wake up each day. Recently, however, there has been a recognition that a major factor in the decision of businesses to expand or relocate in one city or another is quality of life, including a sense of place. Historic

preservation is part of the mix in establishing a sense of place in a city; new buildings can be found anywhere, but historic buildings are unique and serve to differentiate one place from another.

Formerly, the goals of historic preservationists were to save the homes of the great men of America, creating house museums that are relics of the past. Today, preservation creates living, active places that often serve new purposes. According to Ms. Goldstein, the 250,000-member National Trust is not about preventing change. In fact, the organization supports change as long as it creates a sense of place.

Society now recognizes that our natural resources are finite, and landfill space is limited; we cannot discard everything that is old. Reuse of old buildings is not a luxury. Historic preservation also has a greater positive economic effect than new construction. Preservation creates more jobs (60 to 70 percent of construction costs go to labor, as opposed to 50 percent in new construction), preservation projects rely more heavily on local contractors and suppliers, there is a greater increase in a community's average family income, and preservation projects, being generally more modest in scale, have access to more sources of funding.

Ms. Goldstein encouraged us to think creatively about the design of Guadalupe River Park. Great parks house buildings and architecture that not only support the purpose of the park, but enhance it tremendously. She encouraged park planners to program park activities as a tool to draw in the community, putting the

park to constructive use. Serene, natural parks are beautiful, but in her past work on new and restored urban parks Ms. Goldstein has warned her clients, "don't expect crime and drug use will not occur in your park if they occur in your city." The necessary supervision of urban parks during times of unprogrammed activity is expensive. She encouraged the creation of healthy, safe, well-maintained, lively spaces. Incorporation of the River Street structures into the park would achieve that objective while at the same time creating business opportunities.

In closing, Ms. Goldstein urged San José "to enhance its sense of place so we all know where we are when we wake up."

Matching Funds from Your Employer?

Many firms in the Bay Area provide matching funds to non-profit organizations when employees become a member or make a donation to non-profit organizations such as Preservation Action Council of San José. The funds can range from 50% up to 200% of member fees or donations.

Check with your company Personnel or Community Relations Department to see if we qualify to participate in their program, if one exists. Pick up appropriate forms and submit them to any PACSJ board member, or call PACSJ at 408/947-8025 if you have questions or need additional information. If such a program exists at your company, it would be a big benefit to PACSJ. We appreciate your support in securing much-needed funds.

Grant Writers Sought

There are many ways to help PACSJ in efforts to preserve the architectural and historic heritage of our community. One most needed at present is someone with the ability to write grant applications. If you have a few hours a month to track possible grants and to assist with or complete the applications, it would be very helpful. PACSJ needs to take advantage of grant opportunities as they come up, to build our treasury for future preservation efforts. If you can help, call PACSJ at 408/947-8025, leave your name and number, and your call will be returned as soon as possible. Your help would be deeply appreciated!

Hoover School May Become a Landmark

(Continued from page 1)

Weeks (1864-1936) was a remarkably prolific architect not only for his day, but even to the current time. In Weeks' 36th year working as an architect, he designed not only Old Hoover, but also 24 other projects. He designed and oversaw the building of hotels, schools, houses, and churches from one end of California to the other. In 1894 Weeks lived in Watsonville, but much of his work life was spent travelling from site to site by train.

In 1930, Hoover Junior High School was built at the cost of \$650,000. This Spanish Colonial Revival building features arches, Catalina tile, a red tile roof, turrets, and much more. PACSJ board member Marvin Bamburg, at the October meeting of the Historic Landmarks Commission,

characterized the building as "well designed."

Weeks also designed other San José landmarks, including Woodrow Wilson Junior High (another building that PACSJ WatchDogs will need to keep an eye on), the De Anza Hotel, the Medico-Dental Building, and Berryessa School.

Old Hoover School was closed in 1971 because the building could not meet earthquake safety standards for classrooms as mandated by the state. Since that time, the building has been used by San José Unified School District for offices and teacher training.

The threat to Old Hoover comes about as the result of an asset management plan proposed by the district and the district's effort to consolidate administrative operations at a building acquired on Lenzen Street. Despite efforts by Raymond Cortines, District Superintendent in 1985, to actively consider the use of Old Hoover as a stately and beautiful home for the San José Unified School District headquarters, today Old Hoover is endangered.

Conflicting statements have been made by district personnel regarding the building's future. At various times, the district has expressed interest in selling the property, leasing it, or exchanging it for other land in the city. In any case, on several occasions school district representative Barry Schimmel, in a *San José Mercury News* article and at public meetings has described the building and land as surplus property.

Most recently a citizen committee called the Facilities Management

Task Force was assembled and directed by the Board of Education to look at all assets of the district and to make recommendations regarding a future plan for the district. The task force report described four options for this historic structure. Option #4 is "asset management program without preservation of the structure." Option #1 suggests preservation of the structure and use by an outside party. At public meetings held in November, district representatives explained that two options for use of the structure by the district have been excluded from consideration.

Members of PACSJ and the surrounding neighborhoods have been working actively to bring a request for beginning the procedure for seeking landmark status for this building to the Historic Landmarks Commission. In October the Commission heard the request, and the City Council initiated the procedure. At the December Historic Landmarks Commission meeting, the Commission voted to recommend to the City Council that Old Hoover School become City Landmark #94-99.

The public hearing before the San José City Council is scheduled for January 24, 1995, at 1:30 p.m. Once again it is important for the council to hear from PACSJ members and others in the community who are concerned about the threat of loss of one of the few old and architecturally delightful school structures in this city.

To learn more about how you can help Old Hoover School, contact PACSJ member Patti Massey at 408/297-9478.

River Street Final Report Issued

The US Army Corps of Engineers Final Report on River Street was recently released. Consultant Michael Garavaglia, AIA, issued the report.

It included the following conclusions: "The body of information gathered in pursuit of identifying alternatives to the Army Corps of Engineers prompts the Consultant Team to make conclusions based upon the following assumptions:

"1. All contributing structures in the River Street Historic District are worthy of rehabilitation and relocation.

"2. To preserve the historic status of the District as a whole, the most advantageous relocation scenario is to move the affected structure to land available within the District, outside of the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the following reasons: a. The historic district status could be preserved for those structures unaffected. b. Historic status for those structures moved will be easier to obtain in an in-district scenario. c. The future re-use potential of the District as part of the Guadalupe River Park Plan may be a valuable asset to the City. d. More options for funding are available if the project maintains National Register eligibility, i.e., 20% tax credits.

"3. The prioritization rankings offer future planners at the onset a list in descending order of those structures on which to first concentrate on preserving. The only determinant in how many structures to preserve is dependent

on the effort to pursue and the amount of funds raised. The ranking scores range from a high of 2.75 (out of possible 3.00) to a low of 1.30. Half of the structures rank above 2.20.

"4. All structures have a variety of re-use potential; as continued residences or commercial/retail adaptations."

Although recommendations were not required in the scope of work of this report, it should be noted that, "The Consultants find the foregoing conclusions so important from an historic preservation point of view that a recommendation to pursue this scenario is an obvious choice."

Storage Space Needed

PACCSJ members and friends have indicated they would like to save items for PACCSJ's annual garage sale during the year, but they don't have room to store it, so they pass it on to other groups. If anyone out there has an unused garage, room or whatever, where items could be stored as they are collected, it would help us to have an even bigger and better fundraising garage sale in 1995! We would request that items be boxed for easy stacking if at all possible. No firm date yet, but the sale will be in late September or early October. If you have, or know of, a possible site for storage, call PACCSJ's number, 408/947-8025, leave your name and number, and your call will be returned.

Scheller House Court Date January 13

(Continued from page 1)
could prevail and would be irreparably harmed if the building

were demolished. The ruling did require the posting of a \$500 bond, and PACCSJ was asked to make an effort to find a way to relocate the house. The tense hearing cleared the way for the next hearing on January 13 when the substance of our case will be heard.

The issue at hand is whether the University needs to comply with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA requires an environmental impact report for projects which affect historical resources, such as the Scheller demolition. The University filed an exemption from CEQA in 1990 when they first sought to demolish the house. In response to community input, in March of 1991 they abandoned the demolition and entered into a contact with Matt Hurley to move and preserve the house. It wasn't until last April that the University decided that Hurley would not be able to move the house. Finally in August the University said unequivocally that the house was to be demolished. It is our view that this new demolition project needs an environmental impact report (EIR) under CEQA. An EIR would evaluate the significance of the loss of the structure and would make recommendations to eliminate or reduce the impact of the proposed project.

The University claims that the building is an undistinguished house which is occupying valuable land on campus. The building has a "temporary" classification. The University normally places trailers, barracks, and small residences into this category. Once a building is defined as temporary, there are no funds allocated for its maintenance

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San José Historical Museum Association Publishes Book

Linda Larson Boston

One of the benefits of joining the San José Historical Museum Association is the fine publications that they make available to their members. This year's publication is the 22nd in a series that began in 1973 with a reprinting of San José's first City Directory, originally published in 1870.

The 1995 membership premium is the limited edition *Scenes Along the Line of the San José and Los Gatos Interurban Railroad*. Compiled by Andrew Putnam Hill about 1904, the album is a collection of photographs of the construction of the railroad, scenes along its route, and other images taken around the turn of the century. The album was originally presented to the San José Chamber of Commerce by Hill.

In addition to his photographic talents, Hill was a skilled painter. His studio in downtown San José was destroyed in the April 18, 1906, earthquake, and many of his negatives were lost. Although a few of the images presented in this album also appear in the *San José Mercury's* 1895-1896 souvenir publication *Sunshine, Fruit, and Flowers* (for which Hill was chief photographer), most of photos have never been published.

For this reproduction of the album, detailed captions were written to provide additional information about the subject matter. The softcover book contains all 47 photographs from the original album. These images provide a

rare insight into life in the Valley of Hearts Delight.

In addition to this book, members of the Association also receive a subscription to the *Association News*, free admission to the Peralta Adobe & Fallon House Historic Site and the San José Historical Museum, invitations to special events, a 10 percent discount in both City Store gift shops, and special rates in the Association's costume shop, Vintage Reflections. Memberships begin at \$35 for individuals and senior citizens and \$45 for families. Those who join at higher levels receive additional incentives.

For more information on the San José Historical Museum Association's membership program, call the Association Offices at 408/277-3780 or the Museum at 408/287-2290.

Lenzen Designed Scheller House

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or improvement. Likewise, by definition no temporary building can be historic. There are at least 13 temporary structures on campus today, including the men's gymnasium, the red brick dorms, one wing of the old science building, and the performing arts building.

Much of the debate in the hearings has revolved around the historical value of the house. Interestingly, George Espinola recently came across information which for the first time identified the architect: Theodore Lenzen. Lenzen designed San José's Victorian City Hall building, the Letitia building, the Carnegie Library, and ironically the original San José Normal School building, among others.

PACCSJ would like to see preservation of the building on its original site. The University wants to build a new science building over the footprint of the Scheller house. Certainly it will be many years until the science building is funded at nearly \$50 million. Nevertheless, the science building is just a proposed structure which could be modified to afford the Scheller house the space it needs. Or the house could be moved to a nearby location on-campus, perhaps within the adjacent planned science quad.

For those interested, the court date is January 13 at 9 a.m. in Superior Court, Department 4, on the second floor of the courthouse between Market and First streets. Also, donations are still needed to fund the legal effort to preserve this house. Send your contribution, marked "Scheller House Rescue" to PACCSJ, P.O. Box 2287, San José, CA 95109.



Well, the old Dog almost got the boot from the President after my last column because she says I have a disrespectful attitude. Well Ellen, you can send Snoopy to obedience school if you want, but I'm heading for the bushes to sniff out what's really going on....har har.

Costa Hall is history. I took a look while lunching in the bins next door at the Hong Kong Market and didn't see many bricks in all that steel and concrete. Who was thinking this was a URM building? URM must stand for Urban Renewal Material in planner-speak.
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Watchdog

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Speaking of URM buildings, the City Council has delayed the demolition deadline for one year for those brick buildings that haven't been fixed yet. I was getting worried. As of November, demo permits have been issued for Lou's Donuts, 71 and 89 South First, the Kogura/Kumamoto building at North 6th and Jackson, and 35-37 South 4th. Getting ready were the Lenzen Roundhouse, Del Monte Dry Pack behind Cahill Station, and Nishioka Fish Market on North 6th (one of my favorite hangouts!).

Speaking of brick buildings, while dodging rats in the José Theatre, the Dog noticed some artful stenciling on the plastered brick walls hidden behind the existing furred surfaces. Looks like maybe there is a masterpiece hidden from view in there with painted walls like the Fox. I hear plans are to gunite these walls to protect us from the past.

At least we don't have to worry about the grand ol' Fox Theatre, though. The RA chief wants to take a little more time on this ol' dog to do it right. We're going to get some Big City Slickers from the Big Apple or even LA to come in and do it for us. I'm rooting for

some Toone Town Developer myself. They have more respect for us canines than those New Yorkers.

Got to go. David's got another site he wants me to sniff out for the Scheller House.



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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Fill in the form, enclose with your check, and mail to: Preservation Action Council of San José,
P.O. Box 2287, San José, CA 95109.

Calendar

December

19 (Monday) NO PACSJ Open board of directors meeting. Happy holidays!

January

13 (Friday) Scheller House Hearing, Superior Court, Department 4, 9 a.m.

16 (Monday) PACSJ Open board of directors meeting at Mother Olson's Inn, 72 N. Fifth St., 7 p.m.

24 (Tuesday) City Council public hearings for landmark consideration, Hoover School and Cahill (Diridon) Station, Council Chambers, City Hall, 1:30 p.m.

February

20 (Monday) PACSJ Open board of directors meeting at Mother Olson's Inn, 72 N. Fifth St., 7 p.m.

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