



LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

REFERRAL
JUNE 2, 2022

1820-1828 San Pablo Avenue

Demolition Referral: Use Permit #ZP2021-0186 to demolish a commercial building originally constructed circa 1925.

I. Application Basics

A. Parties Involved:

- Project Applicant: Yang Ming
Gunkel Architecture
1295 59th Street
Emeryville, CA
- Evaluator: Mark Hulbert, Historic Architect
Preservation Architecture
446 17th Street #302
Oakland, CA
- Property Owner: Toni Ogi-Robbins
35936 Niles Boulevard
Fremont, CA

B. Staff Recommendation: Consider the extent to which this property exhibits historical significance and then take no action to initiate further consideration.

II. Background

On October 7, 2021, the applicant submitted a Use Permit application to demolish the building at 1820-1828 San Pablo Avenue, located in Northwest Berkeley. The Use Permit proposes to construct a four-story, 43,277 square-foot mixed-use building with 44 dwelling units, and 5,718 square-feet of commercial space.

The Use Permit application is under review by the Zoning Officer, who will recommend a determination for environmental review compliance pursuant to CEQA. At this time, the proposal is expected to reach the Design Review Committee in the coming months and to complete a hearing before the Zoning Adjustments Board later this year. More information can be found on the City's website, linked below.

<https://permits.cityofberkeley.info/CitizenAccess/Default.aspx>

Pursuant to Berkeley Municipal Code (BMC) 23.326.070(C), any application for a Use Permit to demolish a non-residential building or structure which is 40 or more years old shall be forwarded to the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) for review prior to consideration of the Use Permit for demolition. Given the lack of a current, City-wide comprehensive historic resource survey, the referral requirement is understood to address the potential for the loss of unidentified significant resources.

In considering the proposed demolition of a structure, the Commission will weigh the potential to meet the significance criteria for COB Landmarks and Historic Districts in the City's Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 3), which are relatively specific and appear to align with the California Register. The Commission will also weigh the potential to meet the broader COB Structure of Merit criteria, which can include structures that are neither individually architecturally distinctive nor associated with significant people or events but may qualify as contributors to identified districts, areas, or clusters. The LPC may initiate a designation or take no action based on the significance criteria, and may still forward comments regarding potential project conditions such as relocation, salvage, and/or photographic documentation to the Zoning Adjustments Board for consideration in its action on the application.

III. Historical Resource Status

The subject building does not appear on the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, or the State Historic Resources Inventory.

Nearby City Landmarks and Structures of Merit include: Toverii Tuppa- Finnish Hall at 1819 Tenth Street (1908), and the Church of the Good Shepherd at 1001 Hearst Avenue (1878) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Vicinity Map showing nearby City Landmarks

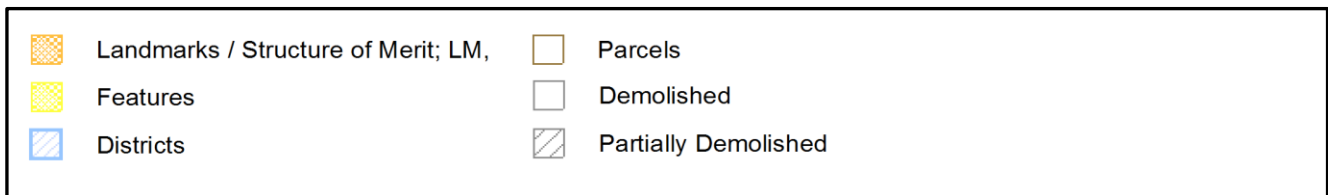
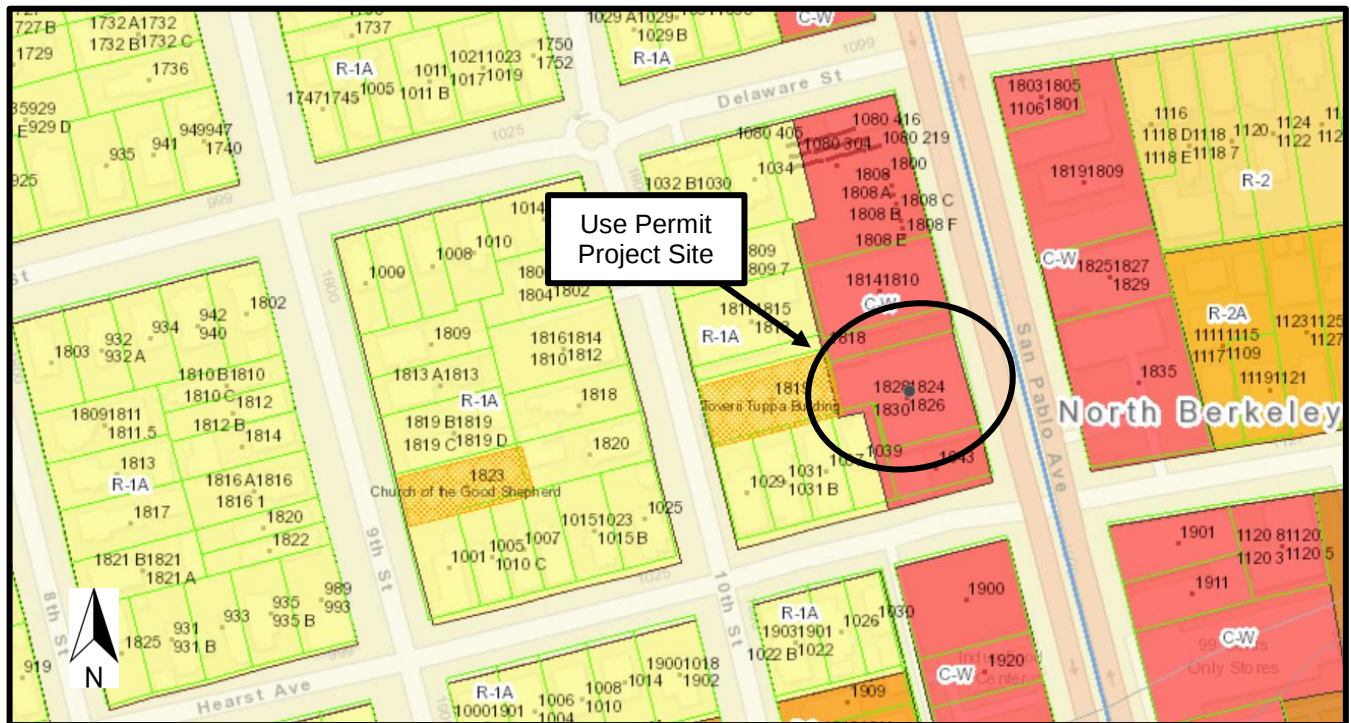


Figure 3: Subject Property – Existing Photo, East Elevation (Google Maps, 2020)



Figure 4: Subject Property – East Elevation, 1964 (Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, Humphrey Slide Collection)



IV. Property Description

The historic resource evaluation (HRE) for the subject property was completed by preservation architect Mark Hulburt in February 2021; please see Attachment 1 of this report. The following description derives from the information contained in the HRE as well as the City's land use archives and building permit records.

Parcel Description: The subject parcel is on the west side of San Pablo Avenue, between Delaware Street (north), and Hearst Avenue (south). The lot is 11,750 square-feet in area. The existing building covers the entire lot, except at the right portion of the rear, where there is a setback of 2.27 feet.

Building Description: The front half of the building, along San Pablo, is two stories, while the rear half is one story. The walls are concrete, with a low slope wood frame roof. Along San Pablo there are eight bays, each about 12.5 feet in width. There are transom windows above the first five bays, starting with the southernmost bay. The northern three bays are filled by a wood front that rises to the window sill on the second floor. Steel sash windows fill most of the second-floor windows. There are projecting concrete sills at the second-floor windows. At the top of the east elevation, a projecting cap steps vertically at the outer bays and the two central bays. The exterior is painted concrete.

The style is an early twentieth century commercial vernacular design, similar to a *brick-front store*, but made of concrete and wood.

Early Site History & Parcel Development: The property was first mapped in 1876. The lot remained vacant until 1925, when the existing building was constructed for the owner, Stephen Furch, to use as an automobile painting shop. The architect was J.R. Carson, and the builder was Coast Construction Company.

Furch Paint Shop occupied the first floor from 1925-1927. Wickman Glove Company occupied the second floor at 1822 San Pablo from 1928 to 1960.

Berkeley Food Store occupied the first floor at 1826 San Pablo from 1943 until the 1980s. Berkeley Food Store was owned by Kenneth and Mary Soe, who acquired the property from their relatives Jack and Rosa Soe in 1950. The Soe family purchased the property in 1942.

In 1964, the front glass windows at 1822 San Pablo were covered with shutters, and other exterior changes were made for a new bar. The Albatross Bar/Pub occupied 1822 San Pablo from 1965-2020. A dance studio occupied the upstairs at 1820 San Pablo beginning in 1972, and in 1977 a modeling agency and photography studio occupied the upstairs at 1820 San Pablo. A record store occupied 1824 San Pablo beginning in 1983; plans for signage show the new record store between the grocery store and pub.

In 1998, a new illuminated metal and glass blade sign, along with lights and letters on

the front facade was added for the Albatross Pub.

The ownership and occupancy history of the subject building are available in detail in the HRE, Attachment 1.

V. Evaluation of Significance Criteria

Historic Context¹: For the purpose of contextualizing and focusing this discussion of potential historical significance, staff concludes that the period of significance for the property would have begun with the construction of the subject building around 1925 and continued until no longer than 40 years prior to this evaluation, or 1982. The minimum 40-year threshold for historical maturity is derived from the demolition referral provisions of BMC Section 23.326.070. Owing to the subject building's design, continued use as a commercial and industrial structure, it is associated with the historical theme of commercial and industrial development.

Significance Criteria: The subject property is evaluated based on the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources (CR), and the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (LPO/BMC 3.24). The existing building is more than 50 years old and, therefore, may be considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources. Because it is more than 40 years old, BMC Section 23C.08.050 requires that it be evaluated for potential local significance prior to issuance of any demolition entitlement.

The evaluation concentrates on possible associations with events (CR-1, BMC Sections 3.24.110(A)(2) and (B)(2)), persons (CR-2, BMC Section 3.24.110(A)(4)), architectural design (CR-3, BMC Sections 3.24.110(A)(1)(a-c) and (B)(2)(a and c)), and information/education (CR-4, BMC Section 3.24.110(A)(3)). The results of the consultant's and staff's evaluations are discussed below.

Events – CR Criterion 1/BMC Criterion *Historical Value*

The property is associated with the historical patterns of commercial/industrial development in Berkeley. A study of its construction history, ownership, and occupancy records revealed no information linking this site to any events or singular episode of primary importance to Berkeley's history or economic development. For this reason, it does not exhibit historical significance under the local or state criteria.

Persons – CR Criterion 2/BMC Criterion *Cultural Value*

With respect to significant persons and potential cultural value, the consultant's research confirmed that the persons and enterprises that owned and occupied this property do not appear to have made a significant or lasting contribution to history, commercial development, or their respective fields. The Albatross Pub was a long-standing neighborhood bar, with many regular patrons. Since the bar was more than a mile from the U.C. Berkeley campus it was one of the places where people could legally drink prior

¹ National Register Bulletin #15, Item V: How to Evaluate a Property within its Historic Context (2002); National Register Bulletin #16A, Section III: How to Complete the National Register Registration – Period of Significance (1997).

to changes in local law, but it was not the first or only bar on San Pablo Avenue. The bar was important to patrons, but it does not exhibit cultural value to the extent that it should be landmarked. Similar to the findings and conclusions for the previous significance criterion, this property is not associated with a historically significance person.

Design – CR Criterion 3/BMC Criteria *Architectural Merit*

The building is a typical two-part commercial building representing the architectural style that was common in the early twentieth century, but does not express particular artistic value. The extant building does not appear to be the work of master designers or builders. The building cannot be considered an outstanding or distinctive design, and therefore the building is not significant for its design.

Information – CR Criterion 4/BMC Criterion *Educational Force*

There have been no recent CA Historical Resource Information System investigations for the subject parcel or its environs, but previous research concluded that it was not likely to yield archeological information or other sub-surface resources related to pre-history or pre-colonial and tribal cultural resources.

LPO/BMC Criteria for *Structure of Merit*

As a potential Structure of Merit (BMC Section 3.24.110.B, Paragraph 2), the extant structure does not appear to be worthy of preservation as part of a neighborhood, a block, or a street frontage, or a group of buildings which include City Landmarks because:

- The subject building is not contemporary of any nearby City Landmark structure, nor is it compatible in size, scale, or design.
- The building is not a good example of architectural design when considered individually or in relation to others.
- The building possesses no historically significant connections to the neighborhood, block, frontage, or a group of resources.

VI. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission consider the extent to which the building meets (or does not meet) the criteria for designation as a City Landmark or Structure of Merit, and then **Take No Action** to initiate this property.

Attachments:

1. Historic Resource Evaluation for 1822-1828 San Pablo Avenue; prepared by Mark Hulbert, dated February 2021

Prepared by: Allison Riemer, Associate Planner, ariemer@cityofberkeley.info, 510-981-7433

PRESERVATION ARCHITECTURE

February 20, 2021

1822-1828 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley City of Berkeley Historical Evaluation

Based on the attached historic resource records (State of CA DPR forms, *1822-1828 San Pablo Avenue*, Feb.20, 2021, 5pp.), the existing building located at 1822-1828 San Pablo Avenue is not eligible for designation as a Berkeley Landmark or Structure of Merit on the basis of any cultural value, as the subject property and building:

- Is not associated with the movement or evolution of religious, cultural, governmental, social or economic developments of the City (LPO Section A.2). Re: the latter – being the only potentially applicable movement relative to this commercial property – the subject property belongs to a general pattern of regional development beginning with original subdivision and promotion in the late-19th century and continuing into a period of development in the first half of the 20th century, which development pattern fits the locale as it does the entire vicinity and relative to which the subject parcel and building are without distinction.
- Are not worth preserving for usefulness as an educational force (LPO Section A.3), as there is no potential educational value associated with the original or subsequent uses and users;
- As the individual property does not embody or express the history of Berkeley/Alameda County/California/United States (LPO Section A.4).

Additionally, on the basis of architectural merit, the subject building is not eligible to be a City of Berkeley Landmarks or Structure of Merits, as:

- The subject building is not a “first, last, only or most significant architectural property of its type in the region,” as there are numerous commercial-industrial properties of identifiably greater significance in the direct vicinity (ex.: the recently landmarked 1923 Borg Building at 2136-2154 San Pablo Ave.) (LPO Section A.1.a).
- The subject building is also not a prototypical or outstanding example of its period or style, as there are numerous, local examples of related period commercial/industrial development (ex.: 2136-2154 San Pablo). Nor is the subject building an important work of its otherwise minimally-known architect or builder, J. R. Carson and Coast Construction Co., respectively. (LPO Section A.1.b).
- The building is not an architectural example worthy of preservation for any “potentially exceptional values relative to its neighborhood fabric.” (LPO Section A.1.c).
- Nor is the building worthy of potential preservation as part of its neighborhood, block or street frontage, nor is it directly a part of a group of buildings that includes landmarks. (LPO Section B.1)

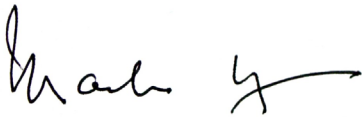
Further, under CoB Structure of Merit criteria:

- As cited above, the existing building is not worthy of preservation as part of its neighborhood, block or street frontage, or as part of a group of buildings that includes landmarks (LPO sec.B.1).
- The age of the subject building is not contemporary with an historic period or event of significance to the City, or to this neighborhood, block, street frontage, or group of buildings (LPO sec.B.2a); neither does the subject building constitute any potential event of importance relative “to the structure's neighborhood, block, street frontage, or group of buildings” (LPO Section B.2.a[2]).

- The subject building is not compatible in size, scale, style, materials or design with a designated landmark structure within the neighborhood, block, street frontage, or group of buildings (LPO sec.B.2b).
- The existing building has no identifiable historical significance to the City and/or to the structure's neighborhood, block, street frontage, or group of buildings. While portions of the building housed several longstanding local businesses, the Berkeley Food Store (1943-c1980) and the Albatross Pub (1965-2020), the importance of such occupants are sentimental and temporal – as both establishments are no longer extant – rather than historical (LPO sec.B.2d).

Consequently, the building at 1822-1828 San Pablo Ave. in Berkeley is not eligible as a City of Berkeley Landmark or Structure of Merit.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Hulbert", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Hulbert
Preservation Architect

State of California ☐ The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION PRIMARY RECORD	Primary # _____ HRI # _____ Trinomial _____ NRHP Status Code _____ Other Listings _____ Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____
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Page 1 of 5 *Resource Name or #: 1822-1828 San Pablo Avenue
 P1. Other Identifier: None

*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted
 *a. County Alameda and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)
 *b. USGS 7.5' Quad Oakland West Date 1993 Township & Range --
 c. Address 1822-1828 San Pablo Ave. City Berkeley Zip 94702
 d. UTM: Zone --, -- mE/ -- mN
 e. Other Locational Data: Assessor's Parcel Number 57-2087-5

***P3a. Description:**

The subject site measures 100 by 100 ft. with an additional 35 ft. deep by 50 ft. wide leg that extends rearward at its northwest corner. The existing building fills the entire lot. Exterior walls are concrete, roofs are low-slope wood frame. The building's front half is 2-stories, its rear half 1-story, so the tops of the building's concrete side walls incrementally step down at the transition. The 35 by 50 foot rearward extension has 1-story walls yet is without a roof. All but the front (east) wall directly adjoin neighboring properties though both side walls are largely open to the adjoining lots.
 (cont.)

P5a. Photograph



Fig.1 – 1822-1828 San Pablo Ave., front (east)

***P3b. Resource Attributes:**

HP6: 1-3 story
commercial building

*P4. Resources Present: ☒ Building ☐
☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐
☐ Element of District ☐ Other

P5b. Description of Photo:
fig.1)MH,2021;fig.2)Google
Earth,2021;fig.3)BAHA,1964

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and
 Source: ☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric
☐ Both

1925, bldg.permit #19195

***P7. Owner and Address:**

Toni Ogi-Robbins
United World LLC
ton@unitedworldllc.com

***P8. Recorded by:**

Mark Hulbert
446 17th St. #302
Oakland, CA 94612

P9. Date Recorded:

February 20, 2021

***P10. Survey Type: (Describe)**

Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:**

None

*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☐ Location Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List): _____

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name or # 1822-1828 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley *NRHP Status Code _____
Page 2 of 5

B1. Historic Name: 1822-1828 San Pablo Avenue
B2. Common Name: --
B3. Original Use: Commercial B4. Present Use: same
B5. Architectural Style: 2-Part Commercial Block

***B6. Construction History:**

The subject property was first mapped in 1876 as lots 10 and 11 of the Berkeley L.T.I. Association's Tract B. Those lots appear to have remained vacant until the existing building was constructed in 1925 based on a Dec. 1924 building permit (#19195) for the property owner Stephan Furch and for his auto painting shop, which business resided in the subject building from 1925-1927. (cont.)

*B7. Moved? ☒ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____
*B8. Related Features: None
B9a. Architect: J.R. Carson b. Builder: Coast Construction Co.
*B10. Significance: Theme -- Area West Berkeley
Period of Significance -- Property Type -- Applicable Criteria --

Per the attached evaluation, the subject, 1925 commercial building has no identifiable historic significance. (cont.)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: none

***B12. References:**

* Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street*, Alta Mira Press, 2000.
Alameda County/Oakland directories – 1920-1975 (@loc.org); Sanborn maps – 1929, 1950 (@sfpl.org).
City of Berkeley permit records, 1924-present.
BAHA archives: Bldg. permits, 1924-1946; 1964 photo (fig.3)

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Mark Hulbert Preservation Architect
*Date of Evaluation: February 20, 2021

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



Fig.2 – 1822-1828 San Pablo Ave.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: 1822-1828 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley

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Description (continued):

At the second floor, the rear (west) wall has windows overlooking the roof of the lower half of the building. The single story, rear wall also has existing openings, including doors from the building into its uncovered extension.

At the front, the concrete façade is 2-stories high and 8 structural bays in length, each bay evidently 12.5 feet wide. A range of existing shop fronts fill the 1st floor openings of each bay, though the northern 3 bays are filled with a single wood front that rises to the second floor window sill. Steel sash window, each 3 units wide and with divided lites, fill each of the 2nd floor openings except one, which has replacement windows. Each second floor opening also has a projecting concrete sill. The top of façade has a projecting cap that steps vertically at both outer bays and at the 2 central bays, which cap and steps along with the basic projecting sills are the building's only original architectural features. The painted concrete exterior finish is plain. No original or early storefronts remain, though 5 existing rows of transom windows above the transom rail appear to be original.

Construction History (continued):

The 1929 Sanborn map identified an auto repair shop along with 3 stores in the first floor, the rear of which was vacant, and a glove factory on the second floor. The 1950 Sanborn recorded a small warehouse in the northern bay of the building and a store that filled the remainder of the first floor, while the second floor was occupied by leather goods and glove factory. Directories confirm the Wickman Glove Co. occupied 1822 San Pablo Ave. from 1928 to 1960; and that the first floor grocery store was the Berkeley Food Store, which was first listed in 1943 at 1826 San Pablo and where it was still listed in 1975 (the last available online historical directory).

The 1924 permit application was for a two-story building to house an auto painting shop owned by Stephan Furch, designed by architect J. R. Carson and built by the Coast Construction Company. Subsequent permit records (1920s-1960s) include:

date	work	owner	architect/engineer/builder
Oct.1925	Int. alts.	Furch Paint Shop	--/--/C.M. Texdahl
Dec.1930	Int. alts.	Calvin Phillips Co.	--/--/owner
Nov.1938	Reroof	Calvin Phillips	--/--/--
Nov.1942	Store alts.	Kenneth Soe	--/Francis B. Plant/V.E. Sigge
Dec.1942	Grocery store	Kenneth Soe	--/--/V.E. Sigge
Feb.1946	Reroof	Kenneth Soe	--/--/--
Apr.1946	Roof alts.	Kenneth Soe	--/--/?
Nov.1964	Tavern	William A. Scanlon	--/--/--

Based on this recorded information, primary occupants included:

1925-1927	Auto paint shop (first floor, second floor unknown)
1928-1960	Glove factory (second floor)
1943-c1980	Grocery store (first floor)
1965-2020	The Albatross Bar/Albatross Pub

One early photograph (fig.3) has been located, dated 1964, and which depicts a grocery store in the southern end and center of the building, a gallery at the northernmost bay, and the two bays between those uses then under construction. Directories confirm that the grocery store was the Berkeley Food Store at 1826 San Pablo Avenue. The date of that photo indicates that the spaces then under construction were the tavern use added under the 1964 permit, the first directory listing for which was in the 1965 directory and under the name The Albatross Bar at the address 1822 San Pablo. (cont.)

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: 1822-1828 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley
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Construction History (continued):



Fig.3 – 1822-1828 San Pablo Ave., 1964 (courtesy BAHA – Humphrey Slide Collection)

Significance (continued):

Per the *California Register of Historical Resources* evaluation criteria:

Criterion 1 – There are no identifiable events of any potential historic importance associated with this property or its building. The subject property belongs to a general pattern of regional development beginning with its original subdivision in the late-19th century and continuing into a period of development in the first half of the 20th century, yet which contextual pattern fits the locale as it does the entire vicinity, which experienced, in its time, relatively extensive commercial and industrial development, relative to which this parcel and its 1925 building is typical. The original and early commercial retail and light industrial uses likewise do not stand out as important in their context.

Criterion 2 – There is no available information from which to identify that any person associated with the origins or early history of the subject building are of any historical importance. The one person directly associated with the development of the 1822-1828 San Pablo building, Stephan Furch, was an auto painter. His business occupied a portion of this building for a brief period. Other general owners and tenants followed. The longest owner-occupant was Kenneth Soe (1906-1996) and Mary Soe (1915-?), whose family acquired the building in 1942, where they relocated their store (the Berkeley Food Store, previously on University Ave.), which reopened at 1826 San Pablo in 1943 and remained in operation until c.1980. Kenneth and Mary Soe acquired the property and building from family members Jack and Rosa Soe in 1950 and which the Soe family has held up to the present. While the Soes were evidently important to their community and family, there is again no evidence that they are historically important persons.

Criterion 3 – Given the subject building's basic design and construction character, it does not embody distinctive design characteristics of its type, period or region, and there are no distinctive methods of construction. Neither are the identified architect and builder, J. R. Carson and Coast Construction Co., respectively, of any identifiable importance, nor does the building embody any artistic values present.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: 1822-1828 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley
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Significance (continued):

Criterion 4 – Relative to potential historic architectural resources, the subject property has not yielded and at this juncture, beyond the contents of this report, does not appear to have any potential to yield additional information of any historical importance.

Conclusion – The subject building at 1822-1828 San Pablo Ave. in Berkeley lacks potential historical significance per the California Register criteria.