PRESERVING MID-CENTURY LANDSCAPES:

A Call to Action

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Welcome to Heritage News electronic edition: the ability to change and adapt is an important attribute of enduring institutions such as Heritage. As we strive to communicate and interact more effectively with the broader community, stay tuned for a new Heritage website that will debut early in 2010.

This issue showcases the latest in “green” and sustainable preservation projects, and the design and stewardship of Modernist architecture and cultural landscapes. I recommend Eric Bricker’s new documentary “Visual Acoustics” on the life and work of Julius Schulman, photographer. Mr. Schulman’s stunning images of the architecture of Neutra, Schindler and others continue to inform and inspire us. The film capped off AIA San Francisco’s September Architecture in the City, fittingly screened at Autodesk. Heritage also welcomes the National Trust’s Modernism and Recent Past Initiative and its new director, Christine Madrid-French, based here at the Trust’s Western Office.

Speaking of Modernism, Heritage supported a thematic landmark nomination of San Francisco branch libraries designed during the 1950s and 60s by Appleton & Wolfard, with the understanding that preservation alternatives must be carefully vetted as part of the environmental review process. We’ve also been vigilant around advocating for SF’s Public Libraries to improve and better steward its branches—notably Park Branch, these concerns also raised by the Historic Preservation Commission.

As the city plans an update of Articles 10 and 11 of the Planning Code, Heritage will weigh in: we’ve assembled a task force comprised of both board and community members addressing a number of sticking points in the coming rewrite, such as how demolition is defined. Heritage also supported Supervisor Alioto-Pier’s proposed Ordinance updating the Mills Act contract provisions. The Mills Act, which offers property tax incentives for property owners to rehabilitate and maintain historic properties, is a powerful and underutilized preservation tool in San Francisco. Heritage will continue advocating in 2010 for use of Mills Act contracts.

San Franciscan Woody LaBounty presented Heritage’s fifth and final lecture of the 2009 series: “Carville by the Sea: San Francisco’s Streetcar Suburb” (check out www.carville.com). Woody recounts how surplus trolley cars transformed a then rural outpost into a unique place. In July, Mark Ellinger kicked off the lecture series with a stunning presentation on the architecture and street signage of San Francisco’s central city (www.upfromthe deep.com.). Mark also contributed to Heritage’s ongoing “I’m a Preservationist” series on www.sfheritage.org : see: I’m a Preservationist.

The Haas-Lilienthal House continues to inform and educate. Next year Heritage will begin significant fire-safety and special-needs access improvements in order to comply with current public access and dwelling-use requirements. We will launch a fundraising campaign to meet these challenges. Thanks to our loyal docents, the Volunteer Steering Committee, and the House Committee, the 114-year-old Haas-Lilienthal House endures as a thriving cultural and educational hub. In case you missed it, the November 16th episode of NBC’s “Trauma” included a short clip filmed at the House.

The holiday season is a time to reflect and cherish our families, our neighborhoods and the places that evoke memories and inspire us. Heritage will continue to work to preserve and protect San Francisco’s unique architecture and cultural identity, and will weigh in on urban design issues that affect us all. Stay tuned for our next issue and an important update from President Charles Olson on an impressive list of new Heritage Board members.

With warm regards and best wishes during the Holiday Season,

Jack A. Gold
Executive Director
MINT PROJECT ANNOUNCES PLANS TO DEVELOP THE FIRST PLATINUM LEED-CERTIFIED NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK IN THE US

The Mint Project, the extensive restoration effort focused on the preservation of the historic Old Mint Building at the corner of Fifth and Mission Streets in downtown San Francisco, and led by the San Francisco Museum and Historical Society (SFMHS), recently appointed Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum, Inc. (HOK) as the lead architect for the project. With a worldwide acclaimed architectural practice, HOK joins The Mint Project to continue the extensive restoration and transformation of this National Historic Landmark into a new, one-of-a-kind San Francisco experience, and aims to achieve the first Platinum LEED certification for a National Historic Landmark in the United States.

“The Mint Project’s plans for sustainable innovation will make it a model for other historic buildings,” explains Erik Christoffersen, Executive Director of The Mint Project. “We also hope to provide an extraordinary educational opportunity where visitors are able to learn more about ecology and sustainable design through this historic building’s restoration. With HOK’s support, we are enthusiastic about developing this highly innovative cultural institution in San Francisco that will also be a vibrant portal to the rest of the Bay Area.”

With a roster of significant architectural and design projects spanning more than 40 years in San Francisco, HOK’s Bay Area accomplishments include the original Moscone Center and Levi’s Plaza Paul Woolford, Senior Vice President and Director of Design will lead the HOK team for The Mint Project. His team will also include his design partner Yann Weymouth, Museum Specialist who is recognized for museum-specific designs such as the Frost Museum in Miami, FL and collaboration with architect I.M. Pei on the Louvre Museum in Paris. HOK has teamed with Arup, a progressive engineering services firm focused on sustainability, to collaborate on the building systems strategy for the building.

HOK and Arup will merge the best of their past experiences to identify a ground-breaking design strategy for the Old Mint Building with an emphasis on sustainability. In addition to striving for the first Platinum LEED certification for a National Historic Landmark in the U.S., HOK and Arup are developing a plan that will convert the building from a 19th century landmark to an innovative 21st century cultural institution. The design concept leverages the building’s inherent sustainable features and minimizes the need for additional mechanical systems, resulting in a naturally ecological design solution. HOK and Arup are also developing ways to offset the building’s carbon (continued on Page 7)

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

I’m sure you’ve noticed that reading the newsletter is a different experience this time around. We’ve temporarily stopped publishing Heritage News as a paper copy, and will issue electronic versions for this edition and all three 2010 issues.

The upside of an electronic newsletter is that we are no longer limited to the 16-page format and are able to expand the number of articles and enable more in-depth coverage. You’ll notice that this issue is a full 20 pages, and we’re happy to include new regular columns and multiple features.

Hopefully you’ve all been able to access the electronic version easily and are able to enjoy the thoughtful and diverse articles in the new format. I encourage members to please contact me at 415.441.3000, ext 11 or abevk@sffheritage.org to add your email address to our email list, and we’ll send you notifications as soon as the newsletter is posted to the Heritage website.

Enjo(e)Heritage News,
Alex Bevk
Historic Preservation Commission: Trials and Expectations

By Friends of Appleton-Wolfard Libraries/ Howard Wong, AIA

With consideration of landmark designations for Appleton-Wolfard Libraries, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) undertook one of its first major challenges. Although routine in many cities around the world, the landmark evaluations stirred political and economic undercurrents. In the San Francisco Chronicle’s “Insight” Section (Sunday, October 11, 2009), the front cover pictures a large pickle jar filled with San Francisco buildings and the header “Pickling the Past”. An editorial is entitled “Does the city’s new Historic Preservation Commission have too much power?” The article warns of “sweeping powers” and laments the landmark initiation of five Appleton-Wolfard Libraries (all eligible for the National and California Registers). Another opinion article links past NIMBY (Not In My BackYard) uprisings to anti-growth measures, neighborhood power and the preservation movement.

Such ad hominem attacks reflect unjustified fears and traditional power tussles. In actuality, Prop J and the HPC will augment, rather than diminish, the processes for good design, development and economic vibrancy.

Many cities and nations have created Historic Preservation Commissions - by example, the 2,000 such commissions in the United States, the French National Historic Landmark Commission, UNESCO and its advocacy for vulnerable world heritage sites. San Francisco’s historic and cultural resources are economic engines, of immeasurable appeal to 16 million visitors who spend $8 billion annually. The HPC protects such historical and financial assets.

From every period of time, historically significant sites and high-quality architecture should be professionally evaluated. Enriching the texture of the urban realm, historic resources are temporal markers of great societies and cultures.

Contrary to critics’ dire warnings, the HPC’s recent landmarking of libraries demonstrated restraint, or rather political pragmatism in the eyes of many preservationists. The HPC balanced landmark designations with project schedules and permits. The 100-year-old Park Branch Library’s landmarking was deferred, but the HPC brought a historic preservation architect into the project. Landmark designations for the Western Addition, Excelsior, Marina, Eureka Valley and North Beach Libraries were initiated, although renovations of the first four have already been completed (not necessarily in compliance with the Secretary of Interior’s Standards). Threatened with demolition, the North Beach Library has the highest architectural integrity of all the Appleton-Wolfard Libraries. It is currently in the CEQA phase, requiring an EIR with a preservation alternative. The HPC also deferred landmarking for Merced and Parkside Libraries until completion of on-going construction. Unfortunately, during the preservation debates, the Ortega Library and the Merced Library’s interiors were demolished.

In time, the presence of the Historic Preservation Commission will institutionalize respect for our historic resources. Preservation guidelines, processes and standards can become second nature. Deferential maintenance and compatible designs are neither costly nor inconvenient—simply a mindset and a worthy responsibility.

In its formative years, the Historic Preservation Commission may have trials and tribulations, but ultimately will fulfill expectations for substantive preservation performance. For America’s often-voted favorite city, San Francisco’s essence includes venerable historic resources, which need to be honored and their value protected for the enjoyment of visitors, residents, families, children and future generations.
Three New Properties for the National Register

San Francisco is now home to two more properties listed on the National Register, with a third in the works. This fall, the California State Historic Resources Commission approved the listing of the Doolan Home and Shopfronts at the corner of Haight and Ashbury, and the Roos House at the corner of Jackson and Locust.

The Doolan Home and Shopfronts, whose nomination was written by Vincent Marsh of Marsh and Associates, was listed under National Register Criterion A for its association with the history and evolution of Haight-Ashbury storefronts and neighborhood and the primary years of the Hippie Movement, and Criterion C as a rare surviving example of Colonial Revival architecture in San Francisco. The corner building was constructed in 1903, designed by Frank T. Doolan.

Caitlin Harvey of Page & Turnbull prepared the nomination for Bernard Maybeck’s Leon L. Roos House. Constructed in 1909, the Roos House meets National Register Criterion C as an exceptional example of the work of nationally prominent master architect Maybeck. The period of significance for the Roos House is 1909-1926, encompassing the original design and construction of the house, as well as all later alterations, which were also the work of Maybeck.

The nomination for Sacred Heart Church, at the corner of Fillmore and Fell, is complete and waiting for approval from the SHRC. Chris VerPlanck of Kelley & VerPlanck prepared the nomination for the currently vacant property built in phases between 1897-1923. Sacred Heart Church appears eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as a building that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type (Roman Catholic church), period (pre-1906 Earthquake), and method of construction (iron-frame, brick and concrete construction). Within the context of San Francisco’s Romanesque Revival-style religious buildings, Sacred Heart Church embodies the distinctive characteristics of this period and style.

The building is also the work of an early master architect in San Francisco (Thomas J. Welsh) and possesses high artistic values in regard to its architecture (exterior and interior), as well as its extensive art program, consisting of stained glass windows, altars, and other elements donated by parishioners throughout the history of the church.

(Clockwise from top) The Roos House designed by Bernard Maybeck; the Doolan Home as seen in 1969; a famous photo of The Grateful Dead, across the street from the Doolan Home (seen in back left); Sacred Heart Church at the time of its closing.
The Bluepeter Building: A Mid 20th Century Connection to Central Waterfront Maritime History

By Janet Carpinelli, President, Dogpatch Neighborhood Association

The Friends of Bluepeter—including neighbors in the adjacent Dogpatch Historic District, Potrero Hill and other interested individuals are working to save this two-story, industrial modern maritime building, with its interesting bow-string truss roof, for re-use within the planned new park in the southern-most tip of the Mission Bay (MB) Redevelopment Agency Project Area where Terry Francois Blvd. meets Illinois St. and Mariposa St.

Slated for demolition in the MB Redevelopment Plan Agreement of 1998, the proposed fate of this unimposing, neighborhood-scale building went unnoticed by the surrounding community until the plans for the park were unveiled at the Mission Bay Community Advisory Committee meeting of September 2007.

Friends of Bluepeter believe this building with its 6500 sq. ft. footprint can be creatively reused to benefit future park users as well as the residents of the three adjoining neighborhoods of Dogpatch, Mission Bay and Potrero Hill, local workers in these areas including those who will come from the future UC Hospital and those who will be using the budding eastern waterfront Bluegreenway. Friends of Bluepeter have been spreading the word at neighborhood events and meetings and have been in discussion with the Port of San Francisco (which owns the building) and SF Redevelopment Agency, which is set to have the land transferred to its Mission Bay project. Though in deteriorating condition, as are many of the Port buildings, the Bluepeter was continually occupied until 2006.

Built of heavy timber construction in 1943 by Martinolich Repair Basin for boat building and WWII Navy contract repair work, the building housed aircraft parts for CJ Hendry Company Ships Chandlers from 1947-1961. CJ Hendry, Ships Chandler, began in 1890 at the corner of Sacramento and Market St., eventually moving its headquarters to 27 Main St. and its rigging department to Clay St., Folsom St. and then to 555 Illinois St. (later to be known as the Bluepeter building). CJ Hendry Co. grew into a thriving family-run business, with operations in Los Angeles and San Diego as well as San Francisco. Internationally known Jotz Sail Makers occupied the loft from 1970-1979, while other businesses leased the lower level as the maritime industry declined. The open floor plan, high exposed truss roof and ample daylight were especially well suited for the design and construction of large sails. The Bluepeter Industrial Design company occupied the main floor of the building in the late 1970s – mid 1980s where its owners built twin 42 foot sailboats which were launched into the Bay, one to travel around the world, the other to Sausalito where it sails today.

Located on what was once the southern edge of a 300-acre body of water known as Mission Bay, the Bluepeter was built on one of the last areas of the bay to be filled, over the site of the Hooper Lumber Company Wharf. Originally with waterfront access, the southeast corner of the building was notched out in 1951 to accommodate China Basin Street (later called Terry Francois Blvd), built on fill. The building’s structural system consists of 12” x 12” posts that support beams spanning the width of the building. The westernmost bay was added in 1953 when Illinois St. was narrowed. The building, clad in flush tongue & groove redwood siding, has a bank of divided light windows spanning the second floor, bringing sunlight to its interior.

The recent, in-depth Historic Resource Evaluation by Kelly & Verplanck for the Dogpatch Neighborhood Association (DNA), concurred with a 2001 survey by the SF Planning Dept., which states that the building, though not eligible for Landmark designation, “should be given special consideration in local planning.” DNA, through donations to its fiscal sponsor, SF Heritage, retained Equity Community Builders (ECB) to conduct an Economic Feasibility Study for rehabilitation and re-use of the building. Completed in June 2009, the study shows that while the rehabilitation/re-use is not economically feasible today—in this economy, it can be a feasible and worthwhile project within the context of the upcoming build-out of Mission Bay, the new UC hospital, the recently completed rezoning of the eastern neighborhoods and the future Historic Pier 70 project.

Heritage supports the neighborhood effort with its 501c3 fiduciary agreement with Dogpatch Neighborhood Association for the collection and disbursement.
of tax-deductible contributions for outreach/education, the Historic Resource Evaluation, the Feasibility Study and future restoration efforts.

The Friends of Bluepeter invite all to join them in helping to save and give new life to this neighbor of Dogpatch Historic District and one of the last maritime buildings left standing in the once thriving Mission Bay working waterfront. As John King pointed out in a Cityscape item (SF Chron, 10/25/09) regarding another “humble” building in the quickly evolving SOMA area, “By its atmospheric presence, this survivor helps us to measure how the surroundings have changed—which is one of the best arguments for saving the truest buildings from different eras, no matter how humble they might be.”

For more information and to view/download pdfs of the Historic Resource Evaluation, the Economic Feasibility Study, and the Mission Bay Park P24 Plan showing the building in place, go to www.bluepetersf.org. To get involved, contact bluepeterp24@comcast.net or call 415 282 5516. To donate, make checks payable to and send to SF Heritage, 2007 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109, earmarked for DNA for Bluepeter building.
Richmond Civic Center Blends Modern, Historic

By Michael Walden, director of design for Nadel Architects

After nearly seven years of planning, design and construction by a multi-disciplinary development group, City of Richmond employees recently moved back into the completed Phase I of its revitalized Civic Center complex, the new $100 million-plus facility that puts Richmond ahead of the curve in urban revitalization. The new Civic Center campus celebrates the modernist architecture of famed 1940s architect Timothy Pflueger, but has all of the comforts of a 21st century property to meet the needs of the bustling city.

“The revitalization of Richmond Civic Center is one of the most significant historic civic center rehabilitations California has seen in decades,” said Steve Duran, director of the Community & Economic Development Department for the City of Richmond. “With the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the buildings, we believe the Civic Center pays tribute to the city’s architectural heritage and reestablishes Richmond’s place as a city of the future.”

Now complete, Phase I includes the renovation of three landmark buildings: City Hall, 440 Civic Center Plaza (the former Hall of Justice) and the Civic Auditorium. Arranged around a striking landscaped plaza, the Civic Center facilities were originally conceived by famed architects Richard Neutra and R.M. Schindler in the 1930s and executed by San Francisco’s most famous civic architect, Timothy Pflueger. The low, linear forms—from the prominent colonnades that form a band around the plaza to the horizontal brickwork cladding to the slender 65-foot wide City Hall building—reflect the mid-century modern style popularized in the late 1940s and 1950s.

The development team had a goal of bringing critical city administrative functions, which had been relocated offsite for 12 years due to damage from the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, back to downtown—honoring the original architecture while also reviving the central business district.

Richmond has always been a hard-working community: home to the Rosie the Riveter Museum which features the women of the World War II war effort who “kept the home fires burning” and the shipyards humming, it has faced good times and bad, but is now poised to make a comeback. “We envisioned the Civic Center as a representative sample of the hard-working soul of the community of Richmond,” Duran says. “Many of the materials used in the renovation have been sourced or manufactured locally, if not retained from the original structures.” A 63-foot long recycled glass and concrete service counter installed in City Hall’s One-Stop Permit Center was made locally by “green” countertop manufacturer Vetrazzo. Glass art walls by artist Gordon Huether in City Hall’s entryway feature a photo montage tribute to the industrial history of Richmond, showing scenes of ship-building, commercial fishing, car manufacturing and the like.

Being green in the revitalization process was a priority for the team, and such elements abound throughout the project.
City Hall's performance for energy use exceeds the State's energy code by 20 percent, and 440 Civic Center Plaza exceeds State energy code by 38 percent. Photovoltaics installed on the roof of City Hall and the Civic Center Auditorium provide 15 percent of the Civic Center’s electricity.

Richmond’s City Hall, 440 Civic Center Plaza and Civic Auditorium underwent complete seismic upgrades. These include exterior envelope rehabilitation, with replacement of all exterior glazing, stone panels and large portions of the brick exterior with brick that replicates the original cladding; as well as system upgrades and interior renovations. Enclosing and retrofitting the ground floor of City Hall expanded it by approximately 15,000 square feet, which creates a floor similar in size to the upper levels. City Hall’s once leaky basement has been completely retrofitted and reinforced to federal standards, thus allowing it to house the City’s Emergency Operations Center.

Some City Hall functions were transferred to 440 Civic Center Plaza, which opened up 56,000 square feet of space for community services, modernized City Council chambers and accompanying broadcast facilities for Richmond’s Public Television station, KCRT. Thanks to cost savings identified by the construction team during the process, additional funds were put towards City Hall and the Community Services Center to raise them from LEED® Silver to Gold certification.

One of the most dramatic changes to the Civic Center is the two-acre public plaza itself, which has undergone significant modifications in terms of scale, function and use. The historic brick steps remain, but the expansive “parade-scale” open interior of the plaza has been re-designed to encourage public use, with a central sculpture and water feature and the introduction of intimately-scaled relaxation areas. Landscape design reduced water use by 46 percent with new water-wise landscaping and other water-saving features.

Public art abounds throughout the property, both indoors and outdoors, in public spaces and employee-only areas. Eight pieces of site-specific, commissioned art are featured and 56 pieces of existing fine art were acquired. Some of the unique pieces include: etched elevator doors in City Hall and a mural by Daniel Galvez in the Auditorium’s Bermuda Room, quilts by Marion Coleman, stainless steel metal sconces by Nyls Jonge- waard on the Auditorium’s exterior, and the dramatic plaza fountain sculpture by local Richmond artist Archie Held.

“We see the Richmond Civic Center as the centerpiece to the revitalization of the entire Richmond community,” explained Mayor Gayle McLaughlin. “It is now a gathering place that is a true representation of our City’s hard-working and resilient spirit.”

The project was a collaboration between the city and developer Alliance Property Group, which assembled a team that included Nadel Architects, preservation consultant Mark Hulbert, landscape designers WRT, and Pankow Builders. Perkins + Will headed the master plan work that set the stage for the current restoration.
Thoughts on Preservation

Changing Uses in Historic Buildings to Facilitate Restoration and Maintenance

By M. Brett Gladstone, Esq

Property owners are sometimes reluctant to request landmark status for their properties, or resist the attempt of neighborhood groups and City officials to landmark the property. In addition to the tax benefits of creating a landmark for one’s property, one can also potentially change the use to one that creates more income for maintenance of the historic resource.

There are two ways this can be accomplished. One is applicable to residential districts (other than those in the eastern portion of the City), and is found in Section 209.9(e) of the Planning Code, and another is applicable only in neighborhoods in the eastern side of the City. Those eastern neighborhoods are eastern SOMA, Showplace Square, the Mission, and the Central Waterfront.

Section 209.9(e) allows the owner to convert a landmark to a use not otherwise allowed by the zoning district if the owner can show the use is “essential” to the feasibility of retaining and preserving the landmark. For example, residential districts generally prohibit any commercial use. Under Section 209.9(e), an owner could apply to convert a portion of a landmark to a commercial use that otherwise would not be allowed if the owner can show the new use will generate resources that will help restore and/or maintain the landmark, and are essential to maintain or restore the property effectively. The intent is to provide owners of landmark buildings with a financial mechanism and incentive for preserving landmarks.

In order to obtain approval under Section 209.9(e), an owner must make the property into a Landmark, and then file an application requesting approval of the new use from the Planning Commission. Technically, the application is for a conditional use, which means the use is permitted with certain conditions. These conditions typically are referred to as conditions of approval. Examples of conditions of approval are limiting the hours of operation, visitation by appointment only, and limiting deliveries.

The Planning Commission decides whether to approve the conditional use application at a hearing. The public will be notified of the hearing and has an opportunity to comment on the new use before and during the hearing.

One example is 301 Lyon Street, which contains a large Victorian structure known as the Clunie House. The Victorian was constructed in 1898 as a single family home and later converted to a nursing home and then a five-room guest house. In 1981, the Clunie House was officially designated a landmark. In 1983, the owner applied for approval under Section 209.9(e) to convert the Clunie House to a 12-room hotel/guest house. In approving the conversion, the Planning Commission found: (i) the conversion would be an “insignificant intensification” of its use as a five room guest house; (ii) the parking garage could accommodate the parking demand; (iii) the Victorian still appeared as a residential structure; and (iv) and the conversion would provide financial resources for restoration work and upkeep. (Planning Commission Motion No. 9746M).

The eastern neighborhoods mentioned above contain similar provisions allowing historic buildings to contain a use that would otherwise be prohibited. (Planning Code Section 803.9) For properties located in the South of Market area, the provision applies to an historic building or non-historic buildings within historic districts. For properties located in the other eastern neighborhoods mentioned above, the provision applies only to buildings that are historic. For both these districts, the proposed use must “enhance” the feasibility of preserving the building. However, in the residential districts in which Section 209.9(e) is applicable (mostly north of Market and west of Van Ness), the standard requires the use be “essential” to the building’s maintenance, which is a much more difficult standard to achieve.

While the approval process may deter some owners, the benefits are great for both the property owner as well as the City. With the financial benefits obtained from a conversion of use under Section 209.9(e) or 803.9, owners of historic buildings could for the first time afford to undertake restoration and maintenance work that otherwise might be too expensive, which in turn benefits not only the property owner but the neighbors and City as a whole. The neighborhoods would benefit by experiencing upgrades to their most historic buildings.

Despite these benefits, some neighbors may have concerns about the impact the new use would have on the neighborhood. However, the approval process provides an opportunity to address neighbors’ concerns. As mentioned above for Section 209.9(e) applications, neighbors receive notice of a Planning Commission conditional use permit hearing and are given an opportunity to comment. Further, the Commission can incorporate conditions of the approval that would protect the neighborhood.

M. Brett Gladstone is a land use and real estate development attorney, and founder of Gladstone & Associates. Mr. Gladstone regularly lectures on a variety of topics, including real estate legal issues, development entitlements, condominium law, and planned developments.
**Preservation Green Lab Shows Path for Greening Historic Properties**

By Leiasa Beckham, LEED AP

In March 2008, the National Trust for Historic Preservation launched the Preservation Green Lab (PGL) in Seattle, Washington. The goal of the PGL is to provide technical assistance to local and state governments that make preservation a component of their Climate Change Strategies. The PGL will select projects that can provide a national model for blending preservation activities with sustainable development for historic buildings and neighborhoods.

Seattle was chosen as the location for the PGL due to its long-standing commitment to the fight against climate change. Liz Dunn, a Seattle developer of historic properties, was selected as the executive director. Her work as a developer of historic buildings “has made her acutely aware of how policy can get in the way.” She says, “she also understands how to navigate building and zoning codes for reusing existing properties.”

Liz Dunn says that cities face a real challenge when trying to balance their sustainability goals with the existing built environment. “It is exactly the old, walkable, urban villages with character that give cities their economic advantage over the suburbs,” she says. “It’s not financially feasible to tear down an old building and reconstruct a building of the same size. As a result, developers will usually tear down 3 or 4 buildings for a plot of dirt; eliminating the very character that made the area economically viable in the first place.”

The PGL has a two-prong approach in demonstrating the effectiveness of Preservation Green Policy. First they partner with a government agency and provide technical assistance in the creation of policy. Once the policy is in place, the PGL will select a historic property that can provide a national model to showcase how the policy works in the built environment.

To date, PGL has partnered with the City of Seattle and the City of Dubuque, Iowa for their pilot projects.

In Seattle the PGL assisted in the creation of new Outcome-Based Energy codes. These codes allow for the flexibility of building types, retrofit strategies and alternative energy sources. The codes will also require ongoing compliance for measurable post-construction performance guidelines by using yearly metered reports.

The Outcome Based Energy Codes will allow the City of Seattle to rate and rank their entire building stock. Seattle will then have the capacity to identify the buildings that perform the worst and provide incentives for compliance to the performance guidelines. The PGL is now considering several possible buildings to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Outcome Based Energy Codes.

Iowa is not necessarily the first place one thinks of when considering progressive sustainable policy; however, the City of Dubuque, recently adopted their Sustainable Historic Millwork District Redevelopment Plan. This plan incorporates preservation as a key component for sustainable redevelopment of the district. The PGL and the City of Dubuque are working with four large property owners within the Historic Millwork District to create a district-wide energy solution and a combined heating and cooling system.

The PGL is now looking to partner with the City of San Francisco to showcase a project, but the specifics have yet to be worked out. A partnership with San Francisco would be ideal, considering our reputation for progressive policies. Liz Dunn says that preservation is really an economic development issue and San Francisco would provide a great national model because “San Francisco really understands that our existing built environment, with the old smaller storefronts, provides an incubator for small business in a way most cities are just beginning to comprehend.”

Leiasa Beckham is a USGBC LEED AP. She is also the owner and project manager for Dunham Properties LLC, specializing in historic residential property. She holds a BS and an MS in Urban Studies and Planning from CUNY and MIT with a concentration in Downtown and Neighborhood Redevelopment Strategies.
**Preserving Mid-Century Landscapes: A Call to Action**

By Gretchen A. Hilyard

Although the study of cultural landscape has been around for many years—it seems that historic landscapes have only recently jumped into the spotlight, as efforts are initiated by various advocacy groups to preserve the vitality of these resources. In the mid-twentieth century, the study of cultural landscapes evolved out of the geography field, where writers such as J.B. Jackson began to investigate how landscapes reflected the culture of the people who were living on them. Since this time, the National Park Service (NPS) has taken the lead in developing an official methodology for the documentation of cultural landscapes, which is widely used and accepted by members of the historic preservation field. The NPS defines a cultural landscape as “a geographic area that includes cultural and natural resources associated with an historic event, activity, person, or group of people.”

As this definition implies, landscapes evolve and change over time in response to the cultural forces that shape them, which makes them interesting yet especially vulnerable historic resources. In the Bay Area, some of the most important cultural landscapes were designed by budding landscape architects of the mid-twentieth century in attempts to renew landscape design and set an example for idealized Post-War living. Landscapes like Thomas Church’s Donnell Garden in Sonoma are recognized in some circles as icons of modern design. However, the appreciation of landscape design of this period is not yet widespread. Although a recent revival of mid-century pop culture has spurred public interest in modern landscapes, an equal interest in urban and suburban development has threatened the very existence of these important mid-century cultural landscapes.

Despite the loss of many landscapes of the modern era, grassroots efforts are underway on the West Coast and serve to inspire others to join their ranks. On October 23-25, the University of California, Berkeley hosted the symposium “Landscares for Living: Post-War Years in California,” co-sponsored by the Cultural Landscape Foundation, the Garden Conservancy, the University of California, Berkeley’s Landscape Architecture program, California Garden and Landscape History Society, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The regional symposium celebrated the “unique Post-War legacy of public and private landscapes in Northern California,” and also served as a call to action to preserve these rapidly disappearing projects.

Speakers including Marc Treib, Ken Kay, Steven Koch, Walter Hood, Charles Birnbaum, J.C. Miller, Cheryl Barton, Asa Hanamoto, and others discussed the influence of master landscape designers of the Post-War period, such as Robert Royston, Hideo Sasaki, Garrett Eckbo, and Lawrence Halprin. These designers (and many others) transformed the role of the landscape architect and reinvented the landscape design process in the Post-War era, which was intrinsically tied to concurrent movements in art and architecture. Their designs provided tangible evidence of a new way of thinking about Post-War living. Ken Kay stated that their designs were a way of thinking transformed into forms which are still relevant today and provide a glimpse into a bygone era.

A panel discussion by former colleagues of Lawrence Halprin, (who passed away on October 25th, see right column) served as a moving personal tribute to Halprin’s life and work and showed the influence of these mid-century landscape architects on 21st century designers. The symposium not only celebrated the designs of the mid-century masters, but also acknowledged the serious challenges faced in preserving cultural landscapes, especially those associated with the recent past. The symposium was timely, as many landscapes of the modern era are currently under threat in Northern California. For example, here in the Bay Area, recent development pressures have threatened Church’s gardens at Parkmerced and Royston’s Estates Drive Reservoir in Oakland.

Charles Birnbaum of the Cultural Landscape Foundation introduced the symposium with a powerful message, that there are currently no designated mid-century landscapes in Northern California, which is shocking for an area many consider the “mother load” of mid-century landscape design. Christine Madrid French of the National Trust discussed the applicability of the existing National Register criteria to mid-century resources, acknowledging that the criteria are not easily applied to these resources. French challenged that the National Register guidelines need to be revised.
to accommodate all types of resources, including those of the recent past and cultural landscapes.

In other parts of the West Coast, more proactive efforts are being undertaken to preserve landscapes of the recent past. In Portland, Oregon, landscape architects Laurie Matthews and Andrea Vanelli are assisting the Halprin Landscape Conservancy in completing National Historic Landmark (NHL) documentation for Halprin’s Portland Sequence, a series of four parks and fountains completed in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Matthews emphasizes the importance of this effort, as “it will provide some protection for these landscapes and establish national status for Halprin’s seminal work.” The project is underway and has been preliminarily vetted by the City of Portland and the National Park Service. This effort will result in the first NHL nomination of a modern landscape in Oregon, and is an excellent example of the types of grassroots initiatives that must be undertaken to document cultural landscapes. Documentation is a critical first step in raising awareness and informing advocacy efforts about these valuable historic resources.

The cultural landscape movement has been in its infancy long enough, and more efforts like those of the Halprin Landscape Conservancy in Portland need to occur to proactively take a stand against the 21st century pressures that threaten these places, including concerns about sustainability, density, conservation and related factors that are often seen in contention with cultural landscape preservation. Through the efforts of such organizations as the Cultural Landscape Foundation, the Garden Conservancy, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Halprin Landscape Conservancy, the call to action has been raised, and now preservationists, designers, developers, private property owners, local governments, and others must respond to the call to action to preserve significant cultural landscapes of the modern era before they are erased.

Gretchen A. Hilyard is an architectural historian and cultural landscape specialist at Page & Turnbull in San Francisco. She holds an M.S. in Historic Preservation from the University of Pennsylvania and a B.A. in Architectural History from the University of Virginia. Gretchen is an active member of the Northern California chapters of Docomomo and the Historic American Landscape Survey.

Lawrence Halprin, FASLA, Dies at Age 93

Lawrence Halprin, FASLA, one of the world’s leading landscape architects, passed away at the age of 93. His six-decade career encompassed such prominent works as the FDR Memorial in Washington, D.C.; Freeway Park in Seattle; Ghirardelli Square, Levi’s Plaza and the United Nation’s Plaza in San Francisco; among many others.

A Fellow of ASLA, Halprin also received the ASLA Medal in 1978 and the ASLA Design Medal in 2003. Among his many other accolades includes the 2002 National Medal of the Arts, the nation's highest honor for an artist.

Mr. Halprin is survived by his wife; his daughters Daria of Kentfield and Rana of Mill Valley; and four grandchildren.
A unique building type evolved in San Francisco in response to our challenging topography. The rectilinear street grid created some very awkward building sites when draped over the hills. Sometimes a level shelf was carved out of the hill at the street-front to accommodate a building. Other times a building was perched at the top of the lot with a long flight of stairs up from the street. Some lots with steep slopes were left for later development.

Nine apartment complexes built in San Francisco between 1909 and 1921 came to be known as “hillside apartments.” You can look at these nine hillside apartments and see Craftsman or Tudor or Mission Revival, but under their garment lies a new building type. Dwelling units are not stacked in a vertical tower, but are pushed up against the hill to follow its ascending grade. An otherwise monolithic block is broken down into a terraced assembly of discreet units, where the roof of the unit below may serve as an outdoor terrace for the unit above.

Our first example is The Terraces at 3834-42 Sacramento. Architect Henry C. Smith designed this five-flat complex in 1905. I don’t know if this is the first hillside apartment complex and I don’t know if Smith should be credited with inventing the type. The Terraces and his five succeeding such projects earned him the title “the hillside architect.” Smith designed the 9-unit La Hacienda next door at 3848-54 Sacramento in 1907. He must have been pleased with his work, because he lived for 23 years in units in these complexes. Smith went on to design hillside apartments at 2255-63 Vallejo in 1909 with five flats, at 2115-19 Hyde in 1910 with eight flats, and at 1234-54 Washington in 1913 with nine apartments.

Architect Arthur J. Laib specialized in residences and apartment houses. Glenlee Terrace at 1925-45 Jackson with sixteen flats was his first hillside apartment complex. This artful Mission Revival collage ascending its hillside more than holds its own across the street from the
two Matson mansions at 1950 and 1960 Jackson, and also just downhill from the even more imposing Spreckels mansion. Glenlee Terrace and the Spreckels mansion were quite a contrast when built on the same block in 1912. Laib’s other hillside apartment complex was built in 1914 at 2772-86 Jackson Street and comprises six flats and a studio.

Architect T. Patterson Ross in partnership with engineer Albert W. Burgren designed many types of buildings and were known for their luxury apartments. They produced two exemplary hillside apartment complexes, but these projects had a unique genesis. Both Greenwich Terrace at 1103-35 Greenwich and Union Terrace at 1020 Union were among five apartment projects developed in association with developer William F. Chipman as “community homes.” Today these buildings are known as “cooperative apartments,” where residents are not renters but own shares in the corporation owning the building. So the 16 terrace apartments at Greenwich Terrace and the 29 units at Union Terrace have been owned by their occupants from the beginning.

What would have been the ultimate hillside apartment project was never built. We know of the project from an article about the work of Henry C. Smith by B.J.S Cahill in The Architect & Engineer of January, 1916, “The very last word in this type of building is a projected community apartment to be known as Marine View Terrace, and to be built on the southeast corner of Green and Taylor Streets.” The composition was complex but the objective was clear: as the units tiered up, each apartment was exposed to fresh air and a marine view. But the most unique feature was “a raking automatic elevator running in a ‘slantingdicular’ way clear through the open court in the center of the block from the street sidewalk to the topmost rear apartment with landings at each story as the apartments rise and recede on the hillside.”

Alas, a six-story apartment building by Smith was built on the site instead. 899 Green was built in 1923 with 37 apartments. I don’t know how many apartments Marine View Terrace might have had. A tower certainly seems more cost-effective, when one thinks of the expense of grading and foundation work and the complexity of massing and scarcity of replication entailed in hillside apartment construction. But think what a marvelous addition might have been made to Herb Caen’s Babylon-by-the-Sea if Marine View Terrace had been realized.
Spotlight on a Docent: Jeremy Battis

What are your volunteer responsibilities with Heritage?
I give the Sunday walking tour of Pacific Heights and in 2010 I’ll be starting up with the Volunteer Steering Committee.

How long have you been volunteering with Heritage?
Since the beginning of 2004.

How did you first learn about Heritage and decide to get involved?
I think it was at a forum to link organizations with people looking to volunteer. I was new to the city and looking for ways to get plugged in. I joined up at the same event with a community art space in SOMA. I enjoyed it also, but chose Heritage for the long haul.

Are you a San Francisco native?
I was born here, oddly enough, but moved away before starting Kindergarten. I call Washington state home. There are enough cultural similarities between Seattle and San Francisco that this place feels really familiar and comfortable.

What do you do when you’re not volunteering with Heritage?
I work for the San Francisco Planning Department, primarily conducting environmental analysis for plans and projects in the city. In my free time, I tend to get out of the city to take in the outdoors. When in town, I like trying out the newest spots, especially if there within walking distance. I’m planning to renew my SFJazz membership for another year.

What’s the most memorable experience you’ve had as a Heritage volunteer?
It hasn’t happened a whole lot, but it’s always a bit surprising and flattering when people try to tip you at the end of a tour.

What one Haas-Lilienthal fact or story do you find the most compelling?
I find fascinating the story of Samuel Holiday’s former villa at the top of Lafayette Square and how a private residential building came to be sited within a public park.

Describe your perfect San Francisco day.
Morning coffee, a pastry, and a newspaper on 24th Street with a walk up to Bernal Heights park to take in the view and fresh air. Brunch at Tangerine on 16th Street (or if there’s no wait, Ella’s on Presidio Ave). A scenic drive through the Presidio to Sutro Park, followed by an afternoon hike along the Land’s End bluff to the Legion. Dinner somewhere in the Avenues, probably on Clement. And if there’s room, a stop at Ottimista on Union for dessert.

If you could offer one piece of advice to your fellow volunteers, what would it be?
Good eye contact with is key. People are more apt to listen to a good story than to a list of figures. Props and illustrations are good, but try to lose the note cards as soon as you feel the least bit comfortable doing so.

Do you volunteer with any other organizations?
For now, Heritage is all.

What keeps you coming back to share your time with us every month?
It’s something I enjoy doing. It forces me to get out of the Mission District, to slow down, and take a nice walk with nice people.

What was the last great book you read or the last great movie you saw?
“Snoop: What Your Stuff Says About You” pop psychology and personality typing.

Anything else you’d like to share?
I have to confess that I don’t enjoy talking over the traffic on Franklin Street. I recently let it be known to Heritage that on my shift I’ve been giving a non-scripted alternative tour of Pac Heights based on materials from House training and independent research that covers the quieter northerly parts of the neighborhood. The audiences have been receptive so far and I’m hoping it might go mainstream within the Heritage organization.
Heritage Volunteers

INTERNING AT SAN FRANCISCO ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

By Taryn Joswig

As the new intern at San Francisco Architectural Heritage, I am working under Volunteer Coordinator Grace Pegan Weltner to update the Heritage Hikes program, which teaches San Francisco elementary school students about Victorian architecture and home life. It’s an interactive and entertaining way to educate, and I’m glad to be here to provide the program with the extra attention it deserves. Lately, I’ve been organizing and digitizing Heritage “Architrunks,” classroom resources for teachers to share with their students, including a video and slideshow, as well as books, games and worksheets. Architectural moldings, finials and corner pieces that students can see and touch are my favorite part of the “Architrunks.” The program also consists of docent-led, child-oriented tours of our beautiful Haas-Lilienthal house museum and a teacher-led neighborhood architectural “treasure hunt.”

I’m currently a senior history major at UC Berkeley, completing my thesis on San Francisco’s very own Cliff House, Sutro Baths and Playland amusement park. I have previously worked at the Berkeley Art Museum, the Hall of Health Children’s Museum, and as a lead coach in an afterschool tutoring program, so working on Heritage Hikes is a wonderful opportunity to combine my favorite fields – history, museums and education. I feel honored to work side-by-side with staff and help the Heritage Hikes program bring history to life for San Francisco’s young people.

DONOR SOUGHT:
PLEASE HELP US BUY AN ELECTRIC IMPRINTER FOR OUR DOCENTS

We have tightened our belts need $189.90 to buy an electric credit card imprinter for our docents to use when visitors charge tours and books. Our docents have been struggling with the old hand-crank device which jams and produces often illegible charge slips. We estimate that we lose about $300 per year in revenue because of such unreadable prints. We have found an imprinter that is fast and accurate – and would make life a whole lot easier for our volunteers/your fellow volunteers. Please consider making a contribution toward this purchase. Contact Jack Gold: at 415.441.3000, ext 10.

FROM THE HAAS-LILIENTHAL HOUSE GUESTBOOK...

“A step back in time! Beautiful house and a privilege to view.”
Debra Hall Jones, Durham NC

“An amazingly beautiful piece of history steeped in time and love.”
Allison McGraw, Ft. Collins CO

“AN absolutely exquisite piece of history!” Brianna Cross and Christopher Darbel, “Somewhere in Canada”

“Tre belle maison!” Annie Guillemol, France

“Great presentation—one could close their eyes and imagine a bygone era! Thank you.”
John and Carol Booth, Durham NC

“IT’S A TOUGH WALK TO GET HERE, BUT WORTH THE SWEAT” Fon and Leah Stonum, Houston TX

“Amazing feeling part of history!” Karina Peralta, Mexico

“Best in-house tour I’ve ever witnessed!” Shawn Prouty, LA CA
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<td>Exhibit: “Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs”</td>
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<td>Exhibit: The San Francisco Seals Goodwill Baseball Tour of Japan (1949)</td>
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Heritage News
Fall/Winter 2009

Events

San Francisco Architectural Heritage invites you to its annual

Holiday Open House

Haas–Lilienthal House
2007 Franklin Street

Sunday, December 6, 2009
12:00pm–3:00pm

Featuring holiday music and refreshments, a visit by Santa Claus at 2:00, holiday decor throughout the House, our tree in the parlor, and the restored family train.

Heritage News invites you to its annual holiday open house! Join us Sunday, December 6, from 12:00pm to 3:00pm for a festive celebration at the historic Haas–Lilienthal House. Enjoy holiday music, a visit with Santa Claus, and the beautifully decorated house with a tree in the parlor. The rest of the restored family train will also be on display.

Heritage Tours

Haas-Lilienthal House Tours
Wednesdays 12 noon to 3:00 pm
Saturdays 12 noon to 3:00 pm
Sundays 11:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Walking Tours
• Pacific Heights Sundays, 12:30 pm
• A Walk Along Broadway Second Saturday monthly, 1:30 pm
• Beyond Union Street: A Walk Through Cow Hollow
  Third Saturday monthly, 1:30 pm
• Walk the Fire Line: Van Ness Avenue
  Fourth Saturday monthly, 1:30 pm

Heritage tours are free to members and their guests, $8 for the general public/$5 for seniors and children 12 and under.

To arrange Group Tours call 415-441-3000 x24

Tour/Event Information
Call 415-441-3004 or go to: www.sfheritage.org

Heritage programs supported in part by City of San Francisco Grants for the Arts

YOUR AD HERE

Increase visibility and promote your company RIGHT HERE - Place an ad in Heritage News. Reach over 900 Heritage members and contributors.

1 full page ad: $600
1/2 page ad: $350
1/4 page ad: $200
business card size ad: $100

email abevk@sfheritage.org for more information.
Join San Francisco Architectural Heritage!

Please enter my membership in the following category:

- $60  Individual
- $75  Family
- $30  Young Preservationist (YP)
- $125 Contributing
- $250 Definition
- $500 Resource
- $1500 Landmark
- $2500 Monument
- $5000 Icon

Name ____________________________________________________________
Address __________________________________________________________
City, State, Zip ____________________________________________________
Phone ______________________ E-mail ________________________________

Make checks payable to:
San Francisco Architectural Heritage
2007 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109

Or charge by phone:
415-441-3000

Contributions are tax-deductible.

Haas-Lilienthal House

A property of San Francisco Architectural Heritage, the historic Haas-Lilienthal House is a great venue for weddings, corporate, or personal event. The house is ideal for small parties or retreats, and can accommodate up to 150 guests.

For more information, call 415-441-3000, ext 14.