THE ALAMEDA ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

www.alameda-preservation.org August, 2006

Q & A with the Candidates for Alameda Mayor & City Council

With a rash of illegal demolitions, an approved Preliminary Design Concept for Alameda Point which calls for the removal of historic buildings, proposed revisions to the Historic Preservation Ordinance and a host of other construction projects in Alameda, AAPS felt that it was important to assist Alameda residents in learning each candidate's views on preservation issues so that they can cast informed votes in November.

Candidates Night

Sunday, October 15, 7:00 PM

First Presbyterian Church
(Corner of Santa Clara Avenue & Chestnut Street)

Parking available behind the church, enter from Santa Clara
Doors open at 6:30 PM • Free, open to all

This is an opportunity for you to get your questions answered regarding preservation issues. Therefore, we are asking you to submit your questions to us in advance. We will review the questions, select the most appropriate, and present them to the candidates at the forum. Submit questions by email to chuckbirgitt@alamedanet.net. Please put "Candidates' Night Questions" in the email subject line. Or by mail to AAPS, P.O. Box 1677, Alameda, CA 94501 or call AAPS at 510.986.9232.

by Birgitt Evans

Alameda Legacy Home Tour

Recycling History *by Judith Lynch*

Eight alluring homes and a rescued church will be open for a tour in September to benefit AAPS; these structures have been carefully recycled by people who love the craftsmanship and sense of history that animate these vintage places.

The collection of bizarre taxidermy at the Baldwin-Pell house alone is worth the price of admission. The "Temple of Taxidermy" showcases several dozen splendid specimens of that 19th century pastime: a peacock in full regalia, an egret, an armadillo, a beaver, a badger, a stoat, two skunks, and a pair of dainty horse fetuses. Another treat on the tour: many examples of stunning decorative glass, including the brilliantly colored "Lady of Challot" window.

A cadre of prominent artisans, vendors, and woodwrights will be available during the tour to discuss house renovation: Lee Jester, The Craftsman Home; master plasterer Lorna Kollmeyer; Diane Hayes, The Alameda Shade Shop; Jeannie and Janelle Ruiz, Ruiz Antique Lighting; and Ken Matthias, Alameda Art Glass.

The Alameda Legacy Home Tour is Sunday, September 17, 2006 from 11:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. Tickets are $20 in advance, $25 on tour day. The tour benefits AAPS and the Alameda Museum; it is sponsored by the Perforce Software Foundation.

For information and reservations call 510.523.5907 or check out www.alameda-home-tour.org, where you can use a credit card to buy tickets through PayPal. You can also buy tickets at Spellbinding Tales, 1910 Encinal Ave., Daisy's, 1347 Park Street and Thomsen's Nursery, 1113 Lincoln Ave.. On tour day, get tickets at Franklin Park, Morton Street at San Antonio Ave., and at the Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Ave. near Park Street.

This Queen Anne tower house epitomizes the fanciful excess of the Victorian era. It and several others of the same style will be open for the Alameda Legacy Home Tour September 17. Image: Gordon Newell

PRESERVATION ACTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Illegal Partial Demolition at 1343 Fernside Boulevard

by Christopher Buckley

In early May, the new owners of the Craftsman house at 1343 Fernside Boulevard removed most of the structure's shingles, clapboard siding, windows, porch columns and railing, chimney, and architectural details. They also began relocating the window openings. This work exceeded the scope of the building permit which was limited to 'like for like' replacement of the existing wood windows and shingles.

The City issued a stop work order after receiving complaints from neighbors, and at least one AAPS member. Plans submitted by the owners after issuance of the stop work order indicated that the building would be much plainer than it was before the illegal demolition, missing important features such as two kinds of siding, the original design of the porch columns, and various details.

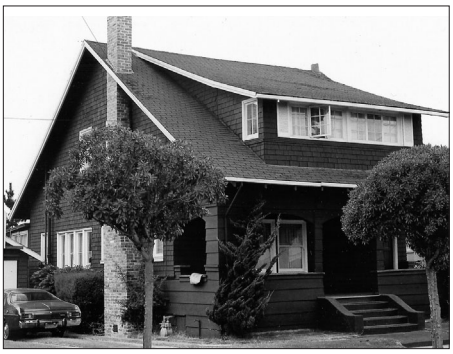
The City's Historical Advisory Board (HAB) considered the project at its August 3 meeting. AAPS submitted comments urging the Board to require that the front 20 feet of the building be restored to its pre-demolition condition. This expanded the staff recommendation, which required restoration of a more limited range of original elements. Both the HAB and staff supported AAPS's recommendations. The HAB also accepted a staff recommendation to add the building to the Historic Building Study List and to deny additional demolition for a two story addition with a two car garage that was out of character with the building.

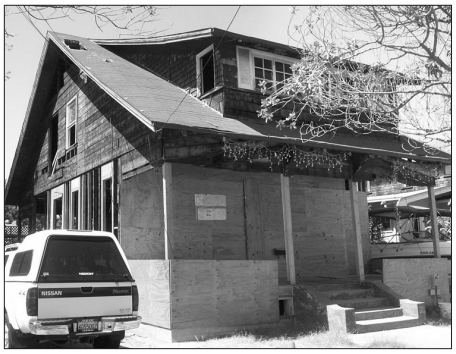
This demolition work is part of a recent wave of illegal demolitions that ironically began after the City strengthened its historic preservation ordinance to require HAB approval of demolition exceeding 30 percent of the value of pre-1942 buildings and to impose additional penalties for illegal demolition. Other examples have occurred at 1104 Oak Street and 500 Central Avenue (see March 2005 and March 2006 AAPS News).

Because of these illegal demolitions, the City, with major input from AAPS, is investigating more effective penalties for illegal demolition, including prohibiting contractors who do such work from doing business in Alameda. After several delays, these penalty proposals are expected to be considered at the HAB's September 6, 2006 meeting.

Stopping illegal demolitions, and other work without permit when such work is in progress, is critical to preserving historic buildings. If you see work occurring that appears to be without permit, photograph the building, if possible, and contact the Planning and Building Department at 747.6800 to determine whether permits have been issued. If permits have not been issued, ask Code Compliance Officers Tim Higares at 747.6847 or Dave Valeska at 747.6846 to investigate, and if appropriate, to issue stop work orders. The Code Compliance staff has been very diligent in following up on complaints. Names of those who call in complaints are kept confidential.

1343 Fernside in 1979 and after recent illegal demolition





NAS UPDATE

by Elizabeth Krase

After an extended delay, the Navy has agreed to sell the former Naval Air Station (NAS) to the City for $108,000,000. Among other things, the deal is subject to Alameda Point Community Partners' (APCP, the City's developer), agreement to pay this amount. APCP is supposed to respond by August 21.

If APCP decides to move forward, the City will prepare an Environmental Impact Report to assess the impacts of the City's Preliminary Development Concept (PDC); the EIR process will last about 18 months. The PDC will construct approximately 1,735 new housing units and a retail and transit center on the Seaplane Lagoon, but would demolish over a third of the historic buildings, including all of the Big Whites and the Bachelor Officers' Quarters (BOQ). The PDC would create much new infill housing, which will intrude into the historic NAS setting, especially the view of the Seaplane Lagoon, Ramps, Flight Control Tower, and Seaplane Hangars. Similarly, blocks of infill housing proposed to replace the BOQ, Big Whites, and other buildings would make it difficult to identify the historic district. During the EIR process there will be more opportunities for public input.

AAPS has been active in recent months in various efforts to preserve the NAS historic buildings. Tours of the interiors of the Bachelor Enlisted Quarters (BEQ), the most prominent Art Deco/Moderne buildings around a landscaped quad, and the BOQ have been made with City officials.

AAPS is very concerned that the City and its property manager, PM Realty Group, are not doing enough to protect the vacant historic buildings from vandalism, or making a sound effort to attract tenants for these important buildings. Vandals have removed copper downspouts, broken windows and stolen original interior equipment and fixtures. The City has agreed to purchase additional portable motion detectors, but greater efforts are needed. Poor maintenance of the NAS grounds does not create an atmosphere likely to attract tenants, and having tenants in historic buildings is the best kind of preservation.

During June and July meetings with the Navy, (federal) Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, State Historic Preservation Officer, and City, AAPS continued to press for a better effort to reuse and preserve the historic NAS buildings. The meetings are required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to develop a mitigation agreement for the historic district. Among the important issues are getting the City and Navy to put in writing a covenant stating exactly which buildings will be preserved, and ensuring that a greater effort be made to reuse historic buildings rather than to automatically resort to demolition.

Other AAPS recommendations include: a Preservation Master Plan, design guidelines for new construction; and complete surveys of the landscaping, Cold War period buildings, and additional resources AAPS has identified as significant. Additional meetings will occur in the coming months.

Alameda Museum Lectures on Local History

August 31: Paul Roberts investigates the work of the Newsom Brothers, prominent Bay Area architects who designed the magnificent Carson Mansion in Eureka and a dozen homes in Alameda.

September 28: Architect Richard Rutter presents "Steamboating on San Francisco Bay and the Sacramento Delta from 1850 through 1950."

Both lectures take place at the Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue near Park Street. Starting time is 7:00 p.m., admission free for Museum members, $5 for others. For information leave a message at 510.748.0796 or check alameda-museum.org.

Donations

AAPS warmly thanks our contributors:

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Dick and Annie Rutter & A Rule Design

Other:

Elizabeth Krase

Bill Essert & Wooden Window

Bettye Stratton

Matt and Monica Zuck

GET INVOLVED AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

The Preservation Action Committee meets at 7:00 pm on the first Monday of each month to address issues important to the architectural preservation of the City of Alameda. Committee meetings are open to all AAPS members. If you would like to attend a meeting or would like more information, please call Chris Buckley at 510.523.0411. We are making an impact within the community. It's fun and informative. We encourage all members to get involved!

AAPS Board Members 2006

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For more information, please contact:
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In this issue Alameda Legacy Home Tour, Meet the Candidates & Preservation Committee updates . .

AAPS Membership Coupon

If you would like to join the AAPS or renew your membership, please send this portion back with your payment. Membership Chairperson - Nancy Hird @ 523.0825

Name: _____

Address: _____

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❏ renewal ❏ new member

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P.O. Box 1677, Alameda, CA 94501

AAPS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS for 2006

September 17, Sunday
Alameda Legacy Home Tour

October 15, Sunday
Candidates Night

December TBA Sunday
AAPS Holiday Party
For AAPS members