



# THE ALAMEDA ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

[www.alameda-preservation.org](http://www.alameda-preservation.org)

February 2009

## Restoring Deteriorated Wood

Presented by Smith & Co.

Sunday, February 8, 2009, 7:00 p.m.

*Learn how Smith & Co.'s Clear Penetrating Epoxy Sealer (C.P.E.S.)™, "Fill-It" Epoxy Filler and other products will restore deteriorated wood so it is like new.*

First Presbyterian Church (Corner of Santa Clara Ave. & Chestnut St. Parking available off Santa Clara Ave.)  
FREE for members; \$5 for non-members.

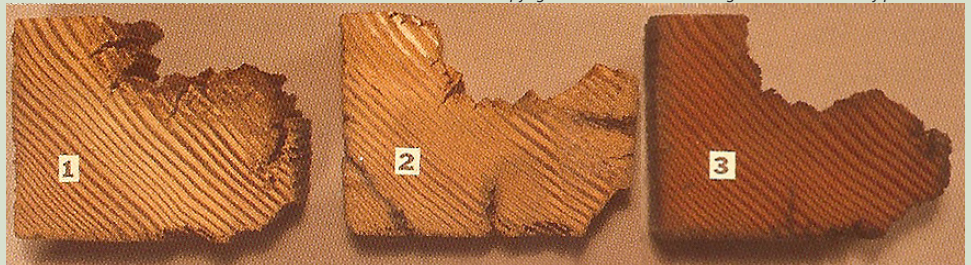
### Steve Smith saw a Market in Restoring Deteriorated Wood

"....providing it isn't too far gone. I can't make something out of nothing, but I can make something out of very little," was his enthusiastic reply to a newsletter interviewer in 1993. He started Smith & Company in 1972. "It didn't begin as a company, it was more of a sideline, since I was an electronics engineer and a scientist back then, involved with radar systems. A boat-owner asked me if I could make something that would fix the rot problem on his wood boat, and restore the wood."

"If you're going to restore wood, I thought, it is logical to use something made from the natural resins or oils of wood itself. Since wood has a porosity to it, you'd want to leave a similar kind of porosity in the wood after the treatment. Wood holds moisture, and wood with rot has some excess moisture. A treatment should dissolve that excess moisture, carry it off by evaporation and leave a porosity

*continued on page 2 . .*

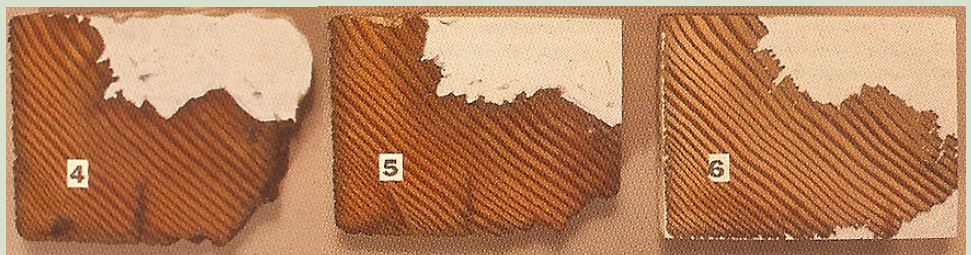
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1. Remove old paint and dry wood. Clear Penetrating Epoxy Sealer (CPES) will not work properly if the wood is waterlogged, and will not soak through old paint.

2. Clean off the loose, crumbly, completely deteriorated wood. CPES works best on wood that cannot be easily picked off.

3. Saturate the wood with CPES. The Fill-It Epoxy Filler sticks to wood treated first with the sealer.



4. After the solvents have evaporated (a day to a week, depending on ventilation and depth of decay) apply the Filler.

5. The next day the Fill-It Epoxy Filler may be sanded to shape.

6. Before painting, apply one more coat of Clear Penetrating Epoxy Sealer to help the paint stick better and last longer.

## Restoring Deteriorated Wood

... continued from page 1

which resembled that of natural wood, and the remaining wood fibers glued back together with something flexible, as is natural wood."

"I eventually came up with something that I thought worked. The boat owner tried my sample and soon was back with a couple of friends and they all wanted some. They told their friends, and word-of-mouth brought more customers. I named it Clear Penetrating Epoxy Sealer, since that seemed to describe what it was and what it did. "

"This was actually a sideline, as I was still busy being an engineer and a scientist. By the time the late eighties rolled around, and the Cold War ended, I and a lot of other engineers found themselves out of jobs. I looked around, and found that I had this other business that was actually putting bread on the table, and decided I had better pay attention to it. The first things I discovered was that I had thousands of loyal customers, painting contractors who swore their houses painted with my product on the bare wood first, still looked like the day they did it, even ten and fifteen years later. Boat-owners swore their varnish stuck better and lasted not just months but years longer. Deteriorated wood, restored (I had added a filler and some paints and glues to the product line by then), still looked sound, and was resisting further deterioration. I like to say that I invented the modern technology that restores deteriorated wood. "

"The factory is on the south side of the Bayview overpass on 580, on the south edge of Richmond, CA. It's open to the public, and you can buy anything at the Factory Store. You can call **1-800-234-0330** and we will gladly send you articles and product literature. The company website is **[www.smithandcompany.org](http://www.smithandcompany.org)**."

"I got started in this business talking to people; we will always have knowledgeable people that can answer your questions. I like that kind of business."



*Houses on Clement Avenue between Everett and Broadway now zoned industrial. Clement Avenue proposed under Strategic Plan as possible new location for auto-oriented uses relocated from Park Street.*

## City's Auto Row Plans Move Forward

**Opportunity Presented To Reduce 100' Height Limit and Preserve Historic Buildings. Design Guidelines to Include Entire Park Street Business District**

On October 7, the City Council endorsed the Park Street North of Lincoln Strategic Plan prepared by City Design Collective, a city planning consulting firm under contract to the City. The plan area was initially bounded by Lincoln Avenue, Oak and Everett Streets and the Estuary. AAPS is very pleased that the City initiated the Strategic Plan because the plan area has many important historic buildings that are inappropriately zoned, including for a 100' height limit.

### Background

In comments submitted to the City last spring, AAPS urged that the strategic plan accomplish the following objectives:

- 1. Ensure that all buildings within the study area are properly evaluated for historic significance, including the feasibility of restoration of altered buildings.** The study area includes some of Alameda's oldest and most historically important buildings. Some of these are well known, such as the 1886 Fossing Building (aka the "Silver Building") at 1629 Park Street, but others are less obvious. One of these, 1623 Park Street, dates from 1871, making it one of Alameda's oldest surviving commercial structures, but it has been severely altered. Although none of its original façade surfaces are currently visible, much of it may still be intact under the existing surfaces.
- 2. Rezone nonresidentially zoned historic residential areas to zones that permit residential uses and other uses compatible with the existing historic residences.** The study area has many historic residential structures that are currently not zoned residential. This has encouraged intrusive nonresidential uses, some of which are Auto Row related and which might leave when the auto dealers leave. Their departure could create opportunities for new infill residential or other uses that are more compatible with the historic residences. These areas should be rezoned to permit both residential use and other uses compatible with the existing historic residences. The present non-residential zoning can also make obtaining mortgages on residential properties more difficult, encourage disinvestment in historic residential structures and prevent restoring residential uses in buildings that have been converted to nonresidential. Restoration of such buildings should be considered in the strategic plan.



**3. Reduce the 100' height limit to 40' and three stories in nonresidential areas as called for in the City's General Plan, and 35'-40' in residential areas, as provided in the study area's existing residential zones.** Much of the study area now has a 100' height limit which is totally out of scale with the existing development and creates the risk that new development will be similarly out of scale.

AAPS also urged that the study area be expanded to Broadway on the east and to include the west side of Oak Street. Several large Auto Row related uses are on the west side of Oak Street. The eastern expansion area continues the study area's patchwork pattern of historic houses and incompatible nonresidential uses, including Auto Row related uses.

The Strategic Plan process involved extensive public review, including a public workshop, or "charrette" (see April, 2008 AAPS News), followed by review and comment on the draft Plan by the Historical Advisory Board (HAB), Economic Development Commission, Planning Board, and Transportation Commission before final consideration by the City Council. AAPS submitted extensive comments to the HAB and Planning Board, most of which were incorporated into the plan implementation process described below.

## City Council Action and Remaining Issues

The October 7 staff report to the City Council recommended specific steps to implement the Plan. These steps were included in the Council's endorsement. Plan provisions and implementation steps most relevant to AAPS's objectives were:

### Historic Resources

- Enhance and protect the diverse historic fabric of the district. Ensure proper evaluation of historic buildings. Encourage and support the adaptive re-use of historic buildings.
- Improve documentation and protection of historic resources. Change the (Plan's) map of historical buildings or reword the caption to reflect that it is incomplete.

### Neighborhood Protections

- Expand implementation, when applicable, to adjacent neighborhoods, such as east of Everett Street to Broadway.
- Ensure that residential areas are protected and maintain a residential character.

### Architecture and Design

- Express building height limit in terms of number of stories and specific height of 40 feet. Amend the current 100-foot height limit as soon as possible.

AAPS believes that the Plan provisions combined with the implementation steps lays a good groundwork for accomplishing the AAPS objectives listed above. **AAPS would like to thank the City and the Consultant for incorporating our recommendations.**

However, there are still two issues that require further consideration:

**1. Allowing "contemporary designs in addition to historical styles in new guidelines, while emphasizing high quality of materials".** This was a Planning Board recommendation. Developing contemporary-styled buildings in close proximity to historic

buildings presents special challenges, since contemporary designs are often incompatible with historic structures. One possibility is to limit contemporary designs to areas that are not in close proximity to historic structures. The issue can also be addressed in the design guidelines.

**2. Preserving Victorian and other historic houses on Clement Avenue between Everett Street and Broadway.** One of the Plan strategies encourages relocation of auto oriented uses from Park Street and residential streets like Buena Vista and Eagle, to Clement Avenue, in part because Clement Avenue is a truck route. AAPS is concerned that relocating such uses to the block of Clement Avenue between Broadway and Everett Street could be incompatible with the Victorian and other historic houses within this block. One approach might be to limit auto oriented uses along Clement Avenue to west of Everett Street and possibly to also allow these uses along Blanding Avenue, which currently has mostly commercial and industrial uses, and relatively few historic buildings.

In the October 7 City Council presentation, AAPS was encouraged by the consultant's statements that this issue would be addressed as part of the plan implementation.

## Next Steps

To implement the plan, the City Council on December 12, 2008 awarded another contract to CDC to develop zoning regulations and design guidelines for the Park Street Business District. Important features of this follow-up contract include:

- **Design guidelines for the entire Park Street Business District, not just the north of Lincoln area.** AAPS supports this expansion since Park Street, unlike Webster Street, currently does not have adequate design guidelines.
- **Custom architectural renderings illustrating renovations to the existing structures that would depict "before" and "after" conditions for buildings illustrating renovations that embrace the plan guidelines.** This provision could encourage restoration of insensitively altered historic properties. However, the "after" designs should require researching the building's original design, using old photographs and other documentation. AAPS has requested the opportunity to suggest specific buildings for these design treatments.

City staff expects that a new series of public meetings to review the draft zoning text and design guidelines will begin in March or April. We will keep you informed on the exact dates.

**AAPS encourages its members to attend these meetings.**



*Nonresidentially zoned Victorian houses on Buena Vista Avenue east of Park Street.*



## City considers removal of Victorian house at 2413 Buena Vista Avenue from Historic Building Study List

The need for the Park Street North of Lincoln Strategic Plan implementation is illustrated by a recent proposal to remove the Queen Anne Victorian house at 2413 Buena Vista Avenue from the City's Historic Buildings Study List. The owner would like to have the building removed from the site in order to facilitate a new retail project at the northeast corner of Park Street and Buena Vista Avenue on the property formerly occupied by Cavanaugh Motors, one of Park Street's recently departed car dealers. Removal of the building from the Study List would be the first step in a process that could lead to the building's demolition or relocation to another site.

Although AAPS would prefer that the house be preserved within its existing block, we understand the importance of the project proposed for the house's site due to the departure of the auto dealers and the major reduction in City sales tax revenues that their departure has caused during a time of fiscal crisis. AAPS therefore supports the project, but we are urging that the City require the owner to make a good faith effort to have the house moved.

At its November 20 meeting, the Historical Advisory Board voted to keep the house on the list, primarily because the Board felt that the house still met the Study List criteria. The Board's decision has been appealed to the City Council. A Certificate of Approval application to demolish the house has been submitted for Board consideration, tentatively scheduled for a special Board meeting on January 21.

The project sponsor has stated that the house is available – FREE to a developer who can move it to a lot in Alameda. For more information contact Chris Buckley at 510-523-0411 or [cbuckley@alamedanet.net](mailto:cbuckley@alamedanet.net).

## Second Unit Ordinance: Worth a Second Look

In November, the City of Alameda Planning Board reviewed a draft ordinance that responds to a state law requiring cities and counties to allow second units "by-right", even in one family neighborhoods, with no public review, and no design review or other "discretionary" approvals if the second unit meets certain standards. This local ordinance is needed because, in the absence of the ordinance, second units could be established by conforming to only the relatively minimal standards set forth in the state law. Under the state law, local governments can adopt such ordinances to establish more restrictive standards. However, the standards cannot be so restrictive so as to preclude a reasonable number of by-right second units.

Because of the potential damage to the character of Alameda's neighborhoods and historic buildings by second units installed without design review, Alameda's ordinance must be very carefully crafted.

AAPS considered the initial draft ordinance prepared by planning staff to be too permissive. The only proposed standard that had the potential to limit excessive proliferation of by-right second units was a parking provision that required an additional parking space for the second unit. The remaining standards were relatively easy to meet. The ordinance therefore could have eventually allowed by-right second units on every lot in Alameda with a one family dwelling where the parking requirement could be met. Over time, single-family neighborhoods could be converted to duplex neighborhoods.

AAPS therefore recommended to the Planning Board that the ordinance include the following additional provisions. All of these were accepted by the Planning Board at its November 24, 2008 meeting except as noted.

- 1. Require a minimum lot size for lots with 'by-right' second units.** The Planning Board agreed to a 7,500 sq. ft. minimum lot size.
- 2. Require owner-occupancy for one of the units.**
- 3. Limit the amount of building coverage, paving and other impervious surfaces created by the second unit to no more than 1000 sq. ft.** The Planning Board decided instead to limit impervious surfaces to 60 percent of the lot area.
- 4. Require that by-right second units be separated by a certain minimum distance (e.g. 300') from an existing second unit on another property to prevent over concentration.** This is the only AAPS recommendation that the Board did not accept. Boardmembers felt that this provision would be too restrictive and expose the ordinance to successful legal challenges.
- 5. Specify that the creation of a second unit, when attached to the primary dwelling, shall not involve any changes to existing street-facing elevations nor to existing floor and roof elevations.** Among other things, this provision will prevent buildings from being jacked-up to create another story without going through design review.
- 6. Limit how much an existing building can be demolished to create a by-right second unit.** This provision will prevent conflict with the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, which requires Historical Advisory Board approval for demolition of pre-1942 buildings if the demolition exceeds 30 percent of building value.

AAPS would like to thank the Planning Board for accepting the majority of our recommendations. The draft ordinance still needs final approval from the City Council.

# Holiday Party Thank You!

The AAPS thanks the Wilkins family and Lisa Dosa for their warm hospitality and helping the AAPS top off a very successful year in the spirit of the season. The Wilkins made their beautiful home available for the occasion, and Lisa Dosa was our thoughtful co-host for the event.



## CONTEST

### What's Missing? Name the Newsletter

**Have you ever noticed  
something missing in the  
AAPS Newsletter?  
We don't have a name  
for our publication.**

An impromptu contest was started at our Holiday Party to name the newsletter.

We have two entries so far:

*The Preserve*  
*The Preservation Connection*

Do you have an idea to submit?  
Please e-mail it to Nancy Hird  
at [nancy@alamedanet.net](mailto:nancy@alamedanet.net)  
by March 1, 2009.

The Board will make the selection and the winner will receive a prize of a  
**1 year membership to AAPS  
and a set of note cards.**

NANCY HIRD  
AAPS PRESIDENT 2009

## Dear AAPS Members

One hundred years ago Victoriana was passé and the Arts and Crafts Movement was in full swing. Stucco was just around the corner. What would we now tell the people of that era if we could? What can we tell people today who are involved in restoration projects that range from Victorian, Colonial Revival, Stick or Stucco, etc? Demonstrating and discussing optimal architectural preservation methods is a primary goal of AAPS. We work hard to maintain our full range of historical resources in Alameda so they may tell, and/or make the inquirer able to make a story of their own. With abundant architectural information, history, and photographs, from inside to out—our City has wonderful resources to offer our community. A walk up and down many of our streets is a wonderful way to appreciate history and being a part of AAPS provides many activities, events and resources to all who seek Preservation information.

Our preservation efforts allow the story to continuously be told, and require the work of many to continue this important—yet fun—work. Your help is always appreciated and we are asking for your participation in this New Year! Specifically, volunteers are welcome and needed to assist in the following activities:

- Greeting and/or providing refreshments at the General Membership Meetings: Meetings scheduled so far in 2009 are 2/8 (Restoring Deteriorated Wood), 4/19 (Woody Minor), 6/7 (Preservation Awards) and 10/18 (Alameda Point Naval History). AAPS reimburses refreshment expenses.
- Preservation Awards: Join the committee to select award recipients and/or write up articles about selected award winners.
- July 4th Parade: Help organize our entry in the annual Mayor's Parade and join in the walk, or ride the parade route.
- Annual Legacy Home Tour: Be a Docent or assist with the "Thank You Dinner" and see the tour for free with rights to go to the head of the line.
- Holiday Party: Volunteer to bring the coffee, meat, plates/silverware, wine and refreshments, and help set up before the guests arrive. AAPS reimburses all expenses. Or, volunteer to clean up – the Hosts will love you forever!

In addition, the Preservation Action Committee (PAC) is always looking for new members to investigate ongoing and new architectural projects happening in Alameda. This group is an excellent way to learn more about architectural preservation and activism at the same time. Many AAPS friendships start here and nearly all board members have contributed to this very important committee.

As a strong and growing organization, AAPS influences the City and it's residents/businesses and communities to make wise choices when it comes to maintaining our neighborhoods and shopping districts in an architecturally and historically sensitive manner. As individuals, we can all make a difference by volunteering to further advance the preservation goals of AAPS.

As the 2009 AAPS Board President, I look forward to the many ways we can work together to preserve Alameda's architectural heritage. You can call me at 523-0825 to further discuss these volunteer opportunities and I certainly welcome your thoughts and ideas about preservation throughout our island City.

Sincerely,





P.O Box 1677  
Alameda, CA 94501

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**In this issue:** Restoring Deteriorated Wood, City's Auto Row Plan, Second Unit Ordinance and more!

## AAPS BOARD MEMBERS 2009

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Nancy Hird 523.0825

### *1st Vice President*

Valerie Turpen 522.3734

### *2nd Vice President*

Rachel Bennett 748.9470

### *Treasurer*

Bob Risley 864.1103

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### *Recording Secretary*

Kevis Brownson 522.4966

### *Member at Large*

Jeannie Graham 769.9287

### *Advisor to the Board*

Christopher Buckley 523.0411

For more information, please contact:  
Alameda Architectural Preservation Society  
P.O. Box 1677, Alameda, CA 94501

## AAPS SCHEDULE of EVENTS for 2009

FEBRUARY 8

Restoring Deteriorated Wood  
by Smith and Co.

APRIL 19

Marcuse & Remmel: A New Approach  
by Woody Minor

JUNE 7

Twelfth Annual Preservation Awards

SEPTEMBER 27

The Alameda Legacy Home Tour

OCTOBER 18

History of Alameda Naval Air Station  
by Dick Rutter