



Alameda PRESERVATION Press

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALAMEDA
ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Woody Walk at Waterside Terrace: Meeting the Modern

Sunday, August 25, 2013 at 1:00 pm

Tour begins at Lincoln Park, corner of Santa Clara Avenue & High Street

Free for AAPS members; \$5 for non-members

A Discovery in Alameda's East End

This year's walk puts the focus on a groundbreaking 20th century tract. With its curving streets, concrete entrance pedestals, and shoreline access paths, Waterside Terrace introduced modern concepts of subdivision planning to the Island City. Situated across High Street from Fernside, this well-preserved neighborhood is an open-air museum of the single family residence as it evolved in the 1910s and 1920s, from Arts & Crafts to Period Revival. The extraordinary collection of Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired Prairie designs to be found here is unlike anything else in Alameda.

Laid out in 1912, Waterside Terrace was the first residential tract opened along the route of the Southern Pacific's new interurban line in the East End. The broad right-of-way, named Fernside Boulevard, curved along the shorelines of San Leandro Bay and the Tidal Canal, linking up with other lines to create a continuous loop in Alameda for the SP Red Trains. The tract's 25-acre site, mostly wetlands, had lain vacant

continued on page 2...



3244 Bayo Vista Avenue, a 1916 Prairie-influenced model by the developer. Eccentric details like hefty brackets and decorative panels of molded concrete are recurring motifs in the tract. Photo: Valerie Turpen.

Meeting the Modern...continued from page 1.

since its purchase by the Gibbons family during the gold rush. Dredged material from the Tidal Canal was deposited on the property in the 1890s, in the hope of future development; now, with trains running down its center, that time had arrived.

Shaped like a piece of pie rimmed by water, the subdivision included 160 terraced lots fronting on High Street, Fernside Boulevard, and three new avenues, Bayo Vista, Fairview, and Monte Vista. Early ads touted the shoreline setting. "Property facing San Leandro Bay and the tidal canal will be able to have boat landings and all the features of aquatic life in their back yards," proclaimed the *Times-Star* in a 1912 article which also praised a system of public walkways leading to the water (one shoreline-access path survives). Construction came in two big waves—around 65 houses went up in the first five years, followed by an equal number in the 1920s—imparting an architectural character evocative of the early 20th century.

In a very real sense, Waterside Terrace was the sequel to Mastick Park, the 1907 subdivision covered on last year's walk. Both tracts were created by the same Oakland developers, both were marketed by the same local realtor, and both were driven by similar modernist concerns. If Mastick Park attended the bungalow's birth,




3228 Bayo Vista Avenue, another Prairie model built in 1916 by the developer. Stucco veneer, boxy massing, and wide flat eaves are characteristic features of the style. Photo: Valerie Turpen.

inducing its emergence from Colonial Revival forms, Waterside Terrace nurtured its growth and development. The redoubtable Strang brothers designed and built around 20 bungalows in each tract, providing continuity. Radical change is represented by the marvelous group of Prairie-style houses, whose origins are more mysterious.

"We want to show you the finest opportunity in Alameda for acquiring a modern, up to date home," wrote the realtor C. C. Adams in a 1914 ad for Waterside Terrace. He wasn't kidding. After describing a sleek stucco-clad model with solarium and roof garden, he summed it up: "The architecture is known as the Frank Lloyd Wright type."

A 1915 ad in the "Alameda Times-Star" promoted Waterside Terrace as the place to make your start—for \$50 down. The Arts & Crafts imagery is a softer version of the tract's radical residential architecture.



The Man Who Never Makes a Start Never Gets Anywhere Worth While

You can't get something for nothing. Just getting along is getting nowhere. Did you ever figure it out that the man in dead earnest to help himself is the man most worthy of help? If there is one thing you are justified in going into debt for, it is a Home, for you must pay rent somewhere. Why not pay the rent to yourself? You can start with \$50.00 by buying a beautiful Waterside Terrace lot. Every month you will own more of that lot. You can sell it or when you own about one-fourth let it you can have a \$4500 home on it if you wish. Can you beat it? Come out now, and make a start toward something worth while. Start to put your own roof over your head and then beautify that Home during your spare time. Then, and not till then, will you begin to live.

C. C. ADAMS & CO.

Open Sunday 3200 Fernside Phone Alameda 2482

Looking for a Home
—IN—
WATERSIDE TERRACE
10 per cent Down—Monthly payment 1 per cent of Balance Due.

September Home Tour Features a Victorian Way of Life

This year's tour features six Victorian-era homes in Central Alameda and the East End. Refreshments will be available in the recently renovated Meyers House garden. Vendors will be showing their products and services; a demonstration on gate building will take place; and the architectural exhibit in the Meyers studio will be open. Visit www.alameda-home-tour.org or call 510-523-5907 for information.

Docents Needed

Have you been a docent on the house tour? You receive FREE admission to the tour in exchange for being a docent at either the early or late shift and it is a lot of fun! Costumes are admired, but not required.

Morning shift is 11:00 am – 2:00 pm and afternoon shift is 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm.

Enjoy a day of Alameda's finest architecture and finish off with a wonderful party afterwards for docents and homeowners. **To sign-up as a docent e-mail alamedahometour@aim.com.**

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Newsletter Design: Valerie Turpen 510-522-3734

Hosted by: The Alameda Museum & The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society • Sponsored by: Little House Cafe

ALAMEDA LEGACY HOME TOUR

A Self-guided Tour of Six Victorian-era Homes
& Refreshments in the Meyers House Garden

Sunday, September 22, 2013

11:00 am to 5:00 pm

\$30

**Advance
ticket vouchers
available at:**

**Daisy's
1347 Park Street**

**Thomsen's Garden Center
1113 Lincoln Avenue**

**Wescafe
1518 Webster Street**

\$35

**Tour day tickets
available at
Franklin Park
Morton Street &
San Antonio Avenue**

Painting by Linda Weinstock

**Tickets online: alameda-home-tour.org
Information: 510-523-5907**

New Chapter for the Sherman Street Depot *by Corri Jimenez*

In April of this year, I received an email blast via the Alameda Museum's Robbie Dileo requesting volunteers for hands-on preservation work. Director Amy Wooldridge from Alameda Recreation & Parks was soliciting people to help with painting and repairing the exterior of the Sherman Street Depot with Barbara Rasmussen and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS).

The depot, located in the Alameda Belt Line/Jean Sweeney Open Space Preserve on Sherman Street, had been abandoned for years by first the railroad and is currently now owned by the city. Jean Spencer Sweeney (1939-2011) conducted extensive research on the former Western Railroad property, also known as the Alameda Belt Line, and discovered an interesting twist, which allowed the city to buy it back at its original low price.¹ Sweeney "discovered a 1924 agreement the city made to sell its railroad to the Alameda Belt Line—an agreement that included a buyback provision".² Sweeney's efforts lead to the acquisition of the former railroad lands that included the little depot; her work lead to this Alameda city-owned open space, which is named in her honor.

Working with approximately 20 volunteers that ranged in age from 18 on up, I scraped paint from the wood siding, removed litter from the building's foundation, removed plywood from covered windows, and analyzed random pieces of wood trim, which actually turned out to be historic materials that were set aside for reattachment. "Carhartt" was my job site name because of my sturdy work pants.

On an architectural level, the Sherman Street Depot building was easy to read as buildings constructed in different campaigns; however, general questions of its history and significance kept me a-pondering. Were the clapboard buildings added to the circa 1890s hipped building or were these entirely separate, individual buildings moved and attached? As I worked with the LDS Church's amazing crew of volunteers, the big question I still ponder is: What will be its next use, its next chapter in life?

Buildings need a continuous use, like a pet needs an owner, because buildings without uses become eyesores in neighborhoods, which lead to vandalism and illicit activities. The depot before was tagged with graffiti, had broken windows,



With a fresh coat of paint and the windows secure, the site is less of a target for vandals while its future use is determined. Photo: Corri Jimenez.

and had seen its share of illicit activities, best represented in the stored bags of trash I dug out from its foundation. Now, the depot is cleaner and has a fresh coat of paint; however, the work the volunteers and I did was all just a temporary fix. As a historic preservation professional, I advocate and encourage fellow AAPS members, Alamedans, and the city to give the depot a new use starting with a preservation plan that includes a condition assessment and highlights both its architecture and history. Many uses are proposed for the overall open space that includes bike trails, athletic parks, and garden spaces.² Possible uses for the depot could be as an open space amenity like a meeting place for the garden clubs, kiosk for bike rentals, and/or even a permanent home office for AAPS! Interpretation of the Western Railroad, Alameda Belt Line, and other historic railways in the city would be an asset, and would educate Alamedans and its many tourists to all the rail transport the city historically saw, which led to its development.

continued on page 5...



A crew of volunteers spent a day in April scraping paint and removing debris at the Sherman Depot. An eyesore for many years to many along the route to Marina Village and the Posey Tube. Photo: Corri Jimenez.

Sherman Street...continued from page 4.

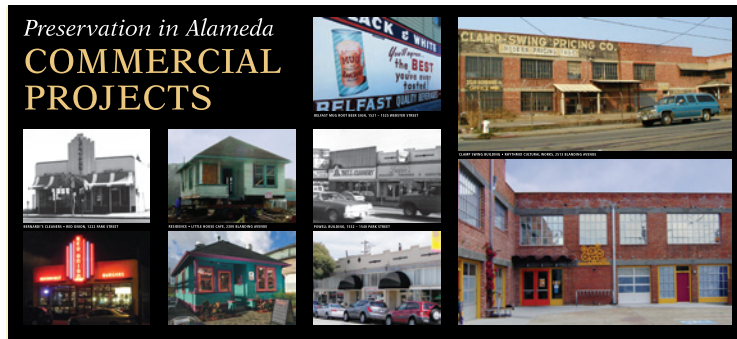
I implore all AAPS members to visit the depot over on Sherman Street, and check out its new coat of paint; in the meantime, ponder what would be a great use for it. AAPS donated money to the bricks and mortar efforts with the LDS church; however, much more is needed. Jean Sweeney worked hard to conserve the Alameda Belt Line for all Alamedans and future generations, and with our creativity, we can continue her passion with the Sherman Street depot.

¹ *Alameda Sun*, "Jean Sweeney Passes Away," December 5, 2011.

(www.alamedasun.com/local-and-hometown/9429-jean-sweeney-passes-away)

² Anderson, Jess. "Residents Offer Their Thoughts on Future Alameda Belt Line Park,"

The Alamedan. February 11, 2013. (www.thealamedan.org/news/residents-offer-their-thoughts-future-alameda-belt-line-park)



Preservation Awards Exhibit on Display at City Hall

Imagine Alameda as a tourist destination. Well, it is! Now, you can visit City Hall and see a fascinating exhibit of "before and after" pictures of building projects that have been undertaken in Alameda over the years. The projects include both commercial and residential buildings thoughtfully preserved by owners for future generations to enjoy. When viewing the exhibit, one can walk through architectural history starting in the 1880s to the 1940s just touring the first floor hallway. The exhibit illustrates how dilapidated old worn-out structures can be brought to life with the skills of talented craftspeople that lovingly rehabilitate older buildings from foundations to rooftops.

The current display replaces one that hung in the hallway for many years. The Preservation Awards have honored several outstanding projects recently and the presentation deserved an update. A committee was formed and a variety of projects were selected. The examples cover rebuilding after fire, removal of siding, removal of stucco, restoration to an earlier historical period, and adaptive reuse. AAPS hopes that those visiting the Planning Department for a permit will be inspired by the photos while working on their own homes and storefronts.

When the exhibit was installed July 11, by Gary Colbert, Public Works Facility Maintenance Team Leader, there was a buzz amongst city employees and those who came in to do business. Passersby offered their comments. "That was really ugly!" "I remember *that* house." "Is that the same place?" So, stop by and make a few comments of your own — the display will be on the first floor for an indefinite period of time.



THE ALAMEDA ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

(AAPS) has been protecting the architectural legacy of Alameda's historic buildings for more than 35 years. Through AAPS action committees, educational seminars and home tours, citizens of Alameda have learned to embrace their diverse older neighborhoods. Over 4,000 buildings are on the City's Historic Building Study List. Alameda City Hall, one of the oldest in California, is a historical monument.

Alameda retains the rich charm of a bygone era, in both residential neighborhoods and commercial districts. Alamedans responded to AAPS's preservation mission back in the early 1970s, when Victorians were being demolished in order to construct large apartment buildings. AAPS, then called the Alameda Victorian Preservation Society (AVPS), helped pass a local initiative, Measure A, that preserved vintage homes by forbidding the construction of buildings with more than two housing units. To learn more about Alameda architectural treasures and the organization, visit the AAPS web site:

www.alameda-preservation.org

AAPS MEMBERSHIP

Join the AAPS or renew your membership by sending this form back with your payment or visit our web site and pay with PayPal. Call AAPS at 510-479-6489 if you have any questions.

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☐ Senior \$20 each

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☐ Sponsor \$250

Mail to: AAPS P.O. Box 1677, Alameda, CA 94501

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IN THIS ISSUE:

- *Woody Walk at Waterside Terrace:
Meeting the Modern*
- *Alameda Legacy Home Tour*
- *New Chapter for the Sherman Street Depot*
- *Preservation Award Exhibit
on Display at City Hall*

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PAC

GET INVOLVED & MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

The Preservation Action Committee meets at 7:00 pm usually on the first Monday of each month to address issues important to the architectural preservation of the City of Alameda.

We also maintain a Google Group list to advise AAPS members on ongoing issues that could affect historic properties and provide an opportunity to review and comment on draft AAPS position statements. If you would like to attend a meeting, be added to the Google Group list or would like obtain more information, please contact
Christopher Buckley at
510-523-0411 or cbuckleyAICP@att.net.

We are making an impact within the community. It's informative and fun. We encourage all members to get involved in making decisions.

AAPS SCHEDULE of EVENTS 2013

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25

1:00 pm

WOODY WALK

Waterside Terrace: Meeting the Modern

TOUR BEGINS AT LINCOLN PARK
CORNER OF SANTA CLARA AVENUE & HIGH STREET

•

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

11:00 am – 5:00 pm

Alameda Legacy Home Tour

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT FRANKLIN PARK ON TOUR DAY

•

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3

7:00 pm

Rynerson OBrien Architecture:

Historically Appropriate Additions & Alterations to Period Structures

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH