

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
LANDMARK DESIGNATION
STAFF REPORT

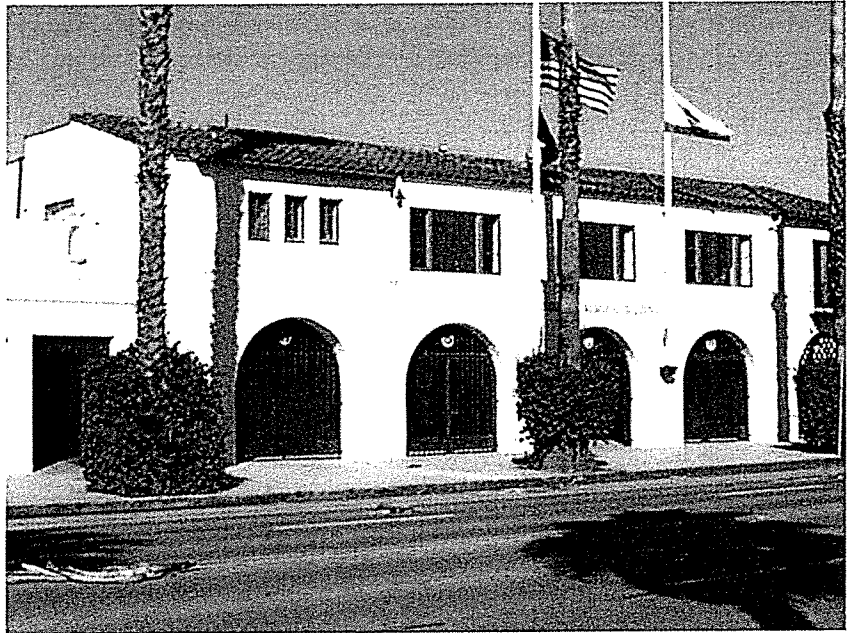
VETERANS MEMORIAL
112 WEST CABRILLO BOULEVARD
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA
APN 033-101-013
JANUARY 16, 2013

Background:

The Santa Barbara Veterans Memorial Building is located within El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District. The property was designated a Santa Barbara Structure of Merit in 1983 based on the following criteria: a) Its character, interest or value as a significant part of the heritage of the City, State or the Nation; b) Its location as a site or a significant historic event; c) Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the City, State or the Nation; d)

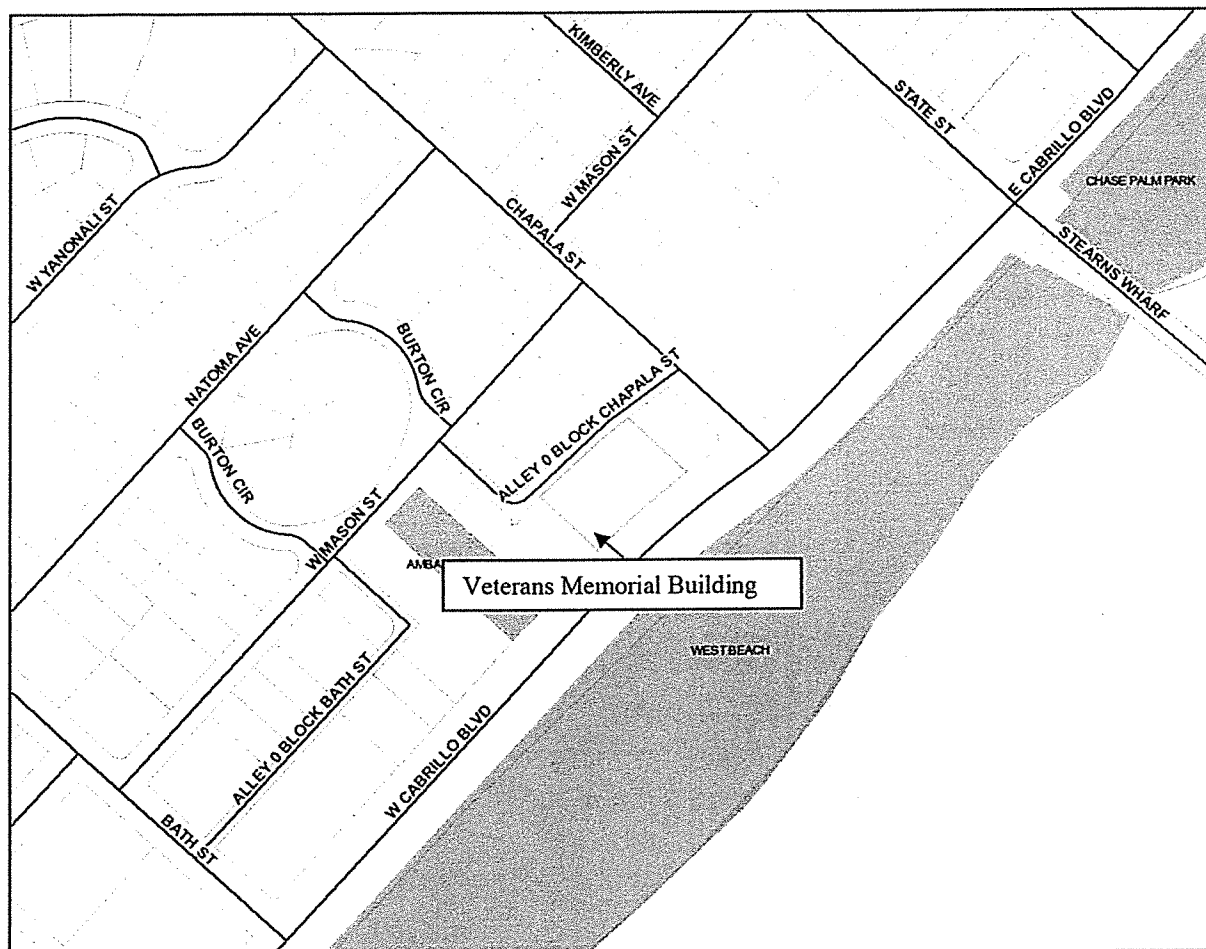
Its exemplification of a particular architectural style or way of life important to the City, the State, or the Nation; and e)

Its exemplification of the best remaining architectural type in a neighborhood. In addition, the property was identified in the Waterfront Survey in 2001 as a contributing resource to the proposed West Beach Residential and Tourist Historic District based on its significance in contributing to the broad patterns of the history of Santa Barbara (see exhibit A).



*Front elevation of the Veterans Memorial,
December 2012*

Based on the extensive archeological prehistoric resources discovered below grade of the site, in 2012, the County Board of Supervisor's, upon the request of the community, has authorized the County Architect to pursue elevating the status of the building to a City Landmark in addition to submitting a 2012 application to list the building on National Register of Historic Places (see exhibits B and C).



*Vicinity Map, City of Santa Barbara Mapping
Analysis and Printing System, 2013*

Historic Context:

The general coastal area and the Santa Barbara Veterans Memorial property in particular are well known and documented areas along the Santa Barbara Coastal region that supported a thriving Native American culture. The prehistoric Chumash community inhabited the coast of California dating from roughly 5000 to 3200 years before present. Their communities were made of village settlements up and down the coast, many of those villages were located in Santa Barbara. There is a volume of cultural resources subsurface to current day land development and specifically below the 5-foot mark directly under the Veterans Memorial property. The “kitchen” and burial areas of the Amolomol Village are under the site of the Veterans Memorial property. Thus, the “period of significance” is not only when the existing building was constructed, but when the prehistoric village was present, 5,000 to 3,200 years before present. In 1923, Burton Mound, housing the prehistoric settlement of Amolomol, was excavated by the Museum of the American Indian in New York. Dense domestic debris, house floors, hearths, stone features and over three hundred burials were discovered. A small portion of the mound was then deeded to the City as Ambassador Park.

It is located at the western end of the City in the potential West Beach Residential and Tourist historic District, west of State Street and north of West Cabrillo Boulevard. The portion of the district includes the area historically known as the Ambassador Tract, land occupied by the Potter hotel until 1921 and subsequently subdivided for residential use. Property types associated with the district include: multiple family residential, single-family residences, courtyard apartments, hotels/motels, and small commercial buildings. Significant architectural styles represented in the district include: Spanish Colonial Revival, Minimal Traditional,



Spanish Colonial Revival designed arched openings of the Veterans Memorial, December 2012

Craftsman/Bungalow and Streamline Moderne. The potential district was significant for its association with the historical development of the area as a tourist destination. The majority of the West Beach section of the waterfront area from 1902 to 1922 was taken up by the Potter Hotel, the Plaza del Mar, and bathhouses. The Potter Hotel was constructed in 1901 and was sold several times and was renamed the Ambassador before burning in 1921. The demise of the Ambassador Hotel left a void of high-class tourist facilities on Cabrillo Boulevard. Consequently, West Beach became the center for smaller hotels and cottages. In the early 1920s, a group of Santa Barbara architects proposed designs for several buildings along Cabrillo Boulevard in the West Beach area. However, the Veterans

Memorial building was the only one that was constructed. The building was originally constructed in 1927 as a dance hall. In 1936, noted local architects Winslow Soule and John Frederick Murphy designed a renovation of the dance hall in the Spanish Colonial Revival Style that completely changed its exterior design and interior layout. Its name was changed to the Veterans Memorial Hall in 1935. It remained in use as a dance hall for many years. During World War II, when the U.S. Army maintained a redistribution center in the oceanfront area, the building was an important recreation spot. It is owned and maintained by the County, serving as a Veterans service office and meeting place for Veterans organizations.

Architects:

Winsor Soule and John Murphy

Winsor Soule and John Frederick Murphy were partners in an architectural practice based in Santa Barbara. Winsor Soule's architecture career began on the East Coast after graduating from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1907. Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson, one of the most prolific and well-known architectural firms in the country at the time, hired Soule. Specializing in ecclesiastical architecture and public buildings, the firm designed some of the most notable buildings of early twentieth century America. While Soule only worked for the firm for a year, his contacts with the firm's partners, particularly Bertram Goodhue, who would later practice in California, were invaluable. Soule then became an associate architect for Bryn Mawr College, where he collaborated with the renowned architect and designer, Lockwood de Forest, Sr. on a number of projects. It was through Soule's professional association with De Forest that he met, and later married de Forest's daughter, Judith. In 1911, Soule visited Santa Barbara, where his father-in-law had been spending annual summer holidays since the late 1880s. In 1912, less than a year after his visit, Soule and his wife relocated to Santa Barbara. Soule's early career on the East Coast provided him with critical exposure to some of the foremost practitioners of Period Revival architecture in the United States. Soule partnered with architect Russell Ray until 1917, where he hired architect John F. Murphy in 1915. Murphy studied at Columbia University in New York and moved to Santa Barbara to join the firm with Soule. The firm was developing a regional architectural style inspired by Spanish precedents. Russell Ray left the firm in 1917 and Murphy was elevated to full partnership. Over the next decade the firm of Soule and Murphy continued to refine its interpretation of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style. In 1922, the firm received a commission to build Lincoln and Nelson elementary schools in Santa Barbara. So successful was their reception, that for the next 20 years, the firm would design many public elementary schools in Santa Barbara. These schools brought the Spanish Colonial Revival Style to the attention of the public. In Santa Barbara, a concerted effort was made to make Mediterranean and Spanish Colonial Revival the City's dominant architectural styles. Architects, such as Soule and Murphy helped play an important and pivotal role in this process.

Architectural Style:

Spanish Colonial Revival Style

The Spanish Colonial Revival style was part of the Eclectic Movement that stressed relatively pure copies of the classical, Medieval, and Renaissance classical movements in different European countries and their New World colonies. The Eclectic movement began

as European-trained architects began to design landmark period houses. The trend gained momentum with the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition, which stressed the correct historical interpretations of European Styles. From 1913-1915, architect Bertram Goodhue (formally of Cram, Goodhue, and Ferguson), author of a book on Spanish Colonial architecture, helped to promote the new Spanish Colonial Revival style with his designs for the Panama-California Expo in San Diego. Until then, the only Spanish themed architecture was based on Mission prototypes. The Spanish Colonial Revival style flourished throughout the Southwestern States that were once territories originally settled by the Spanish. As early as 1909, Santa Barbara was looking for a visual image with which to link its Spanish past to future developments within the City. A Civic League of citizens hired the planner Charles Mulford Robinson to determine the City's assets and to offer plans for development. Robinson pointed to the City's Hispanic heritage as a focal point for a unifying architectural style.

Significance:

The City of Santa Barbara establishes historic significance as provided by the Municipal Code, Section 22.22.040. Any historic building that meets one or more of the eleven criteria (Criteria A through K) established for a City Landmark or a City Structure of Merit can be considered significant. The Veterans Memorial Building meets the following criteria:

Criterion A. Its character, interest or value as a significant part of the heritage of the City, the State or the Nation;

The building does possess qualities that are significant to the heritage of Santa Barbara, California, and the Nation, as it is property is on the site of a prehistoric Chumash kitchen and burial ground with a large amount of cultural resources subsurface.

Criterion D, its exemplification of a particular architectural style or way of life important to the City, the State, or the Nation;

The building embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Spanish Colonial Revival style that are important to the Santa Barbara's character.

Criterion F, its identification as the creation, design, or work of a person or persons whose effort significantly influenced the heritage of the City, the State, or the Nation;

Windsor Soule and John Fredrick Murphy played an important role in developing a regional architectural style for California inspired by the state's Colonial period and Spanish and Mediterranean antecedents. They designed numerous buildings in Santa Barbara including residential, commercial and government buildings that significantly influenced the heritage of the City.

Criterion G, its embodiment of elements demonstrating outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials and craftsmanship;

The Veterans Memorial displays a pedestrian loggia behind five arched bays that form an outdoor colonnade. Three part wood windows, a French door and wrought-iron balcony are elements which embody outstanding attention to design, detail, materials, and craftsmanship.

Criterion J, its potential of yielding significant information of archaeological interest;

There are extensive prehistoric Chumash resources below grade on the site.

Historical Integrity:

In addition to determining significance, there are essential physical features that must be considered to evaluate the integrity of a significant building. The building has retained a high level of historical integrity. Since 1936, its location, setting, association and footprint have not changed. Its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship have not been diminished by alterations.

Recommendation:

Staff Recommends that the HLC adopt a resolution to recommend to City Council that the Veterans Memorial be designated as a City Landmark.

Works Cited:

Ooley, Robert. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. 2012. The form is on file with the City Planning Division.

Post Hazeltine Associates, Historic Structures/Sites Report for 2132 Mission Ridge Road. August 21, 2012. This report is on file with the City Planning Division.

Department of Parks and Recreation District Record. Proposed West Beach Residential and Tourist Historic District. August 20, 2001. This survey is on file with the City Planning Division.