



DATE: October 23, 2017

AGENDA ITEM #4

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Historical Commission
FROM: Sean Gallegos, Staff Liaison
SUBJECT: 17-H-06 – 189 N. Gordon Way

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of a new accessory structure to a Historic Resource property subject to the listed findings

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is an application for alterations to a designated historic resource property at 189 N. Gordon Avenue. The scope of work includes demolition of non-historic accessory structure along the right (south) side and its replacement with a 497 square-foot one-story accessory structure (pool house) along the right (south) side of the property.

BACKGROUND

The residence at 189 N. Gordon Avenue was constructed in 1943 during Los Altos' post World War II residential development period and retains a good degree of integrity of feeling, materials, design, and workmanship. The form and detailing of the main house is a mid-century adobe Ranch-style house. The character defining features of the main house include its overall form and massing, successive, low-sloping gable roofs with broad eave overhangs; exposed rafter tails and roof beams, wood shake roof cladding, post-adobe wall construction, multi-pane wood casement windows, wood plank shutters, and open central courtyard. The Department and Parks primary record (DPR 523A) provides additional information about the structure's historic significance and physical integrity, is included in Attachment A.

Historical professional Leslie Dill with Archives and Architecture reviewed the proposed removal of the accessory structure along the right side of the house. As outlined in the attached report in attachment D, the accessory structure does not embody the artistic merit of the main house, and it does not embody exceptional significance for quality or workmanship. While the main house continues to meet the criteria for designation as a Historic Resource, the accessory structure does not individually represent an architectural association significant in Los Altos, and the accessory structure does not lend significance to the main house. Therefore, the demolition of the accessory building would not have a significant effect on the historic resource designation of the site.

DISCUSSION

There are no alterations to the main house, and the demolition of the existing accessory structure and the construction of a new 497 square-foot accessory structure is minor in scope.

The proposed new accessory structure is compatible with the historic property in size, scale, proportion and materials. It is physically separate, subordinate from historic house and differentiated in design from the historic house in its shed roof form. The stucco siding, wood clad windows, stone veneer and composite roof shingle are compatible with the main house. Since the accessory structure is detached, the critical character defining features of the house and the site will be unimpaired on this project.

As outlined in the report from Leslie Dill, the preservation of the accessory building is not important to the overall understanding of the historic property. Demolition or major alteration of the detached accessory structure would not have a significant effect on the environment, and it would not adversely affect the physical integrity or the historic significance of the property.

In order to make a positive advisory recommendation, the Commission will need to find that the project is consistent with the provisions of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and does not adversely affect the physical integrity or the historic significance of the property. Once the Commission provides a recommendation, the project will be reviewed at an administrative level by staff. Since the demolition of the existing structure, new accessory structure and improvements will not adversely affect the physical integrity or the historic significance of the historic structure, staff recommends approval of the project.

Cc: Jonathan E. Adams III, Applicant and Owner
John Hammorschmidt, Designer

Attachments

- A. Application
- B. Area Map and Vicinity Map
- C. Department and Parks primary record (DPR 523A)
- D. Historic Property Evaluation, Archives and Architecture
- E. Updated Department and Parks primary record (DPR 523A)

FINDINGS

17-H-06 – 189 N. Gordon Avenue

With regard to the Advisory Review, the Historical Commission finds the following in accordance with Section 12.44.140 of the Municipal Code:

1. The project complies with all provisions of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 12.44);
and
2. The project does not adversely affect the physical integrity or the historic significance of the subject property.



ATTACHMENT A

CITY OF LOS ALTOS GENERAL APPLICATION

Type of Review Requested: (Check all boxes that apply)

Permit # 1107902

<input type="checkbox"/>	One-Story Design Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Commercial/Multi-Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Review
<input type="checkbox"/>	Two-Story Design Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sign Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rezoning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Variance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	R1-S Overlay
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lot Line Adjustment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tenant Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	General Plan/Code Amendment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tentative Map/Division of Land	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sidewalk Display Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appeal
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Historical Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Preliminary Project Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

Project Address/Location: 189 North Gordon Way
 Project Proposal/Use: Cottage/Pool House Current Use of Property: Cottage/Pool House
 Assessor Parcel Number(s): 170-29-067 Site Area: 26674
 New Sq. Ft.: ~~499~~ 239 Altered/Rebuilt Sq. Ft.: 497 Existing Sq. Ft. to Remain: 497
 Total Existing Sq. Ft.: 4644 Total Proposed Sq. Ft. (including basement): 4883
 Is the site fully accessible for City Staff inspection? YES

Applicant's Name: Jonathan E. Adams III
 Telephone No.: 650 949-2910 Email Address: JEADAMS@SONIC.NET
 Mailing Address: 189 North Gordon Way
 City/State/Zip Code: Los Altos, CA 94022

Property Owner's Name: Jonathan E + Marcia H. Adams
 Telephone No.: 650 949-2910 Email Address: JEADAMS@SONIC.NET
 Mailing Address: 189 North Gordon Way
 City/State/Zip Code: Los Altos, CA 94022

Architect/Designer's Name: John Hammerschmidt
 Telephone No.: 650-948-4200 Email Address: JOHN@HAMMERSCHMIDTINC.COM
 Mailing Address: 1574 Country Club Drive
 City/State/Zip Code: Los Altos, CA 94024

* If your project includes complete or partial demolition of an existing residence or commercial building, a demolition permit must be issued and finalized prior to obtaining your building permit. Please contact the Building Division for a demolition package. *

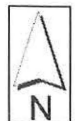
ATTACHMENT B

AREA MAP



CITY OF LOS ALTOS

APPLICATION: 17-H-06
APPLICANT: J. and M. Adams
SITE ADDRESS: 189 N. Gordon Way



Not to Scale

VICINITY MAP



CITY OF LOS ALTOS

APPLICATION: 17-H-06
APPLICANT: J. and M. Adams
SITE ADDRESS: 189 N. Gordon Way

ATTACHMENT C

State of California The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION PRIMARY RECORD	Primary # _____ HRI # _____ Trinomial _____ NRHP Status Code _____
Other Listings _____ Review Code _____	Reviewer _____ Date _____

Page 1 of 3 *Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 189 N. Gordon Way

P1. Other Identifier: _____

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

- *a. County Santa Clara and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)
- *b. USGS 7.5' Quad _____ Date _____ T _____; R _____; _____ of _____ of Sec _____; _____ B.M.
- c. Address 189 N. Gordon Way City Los Altos Zip 94022
- d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone _____, _____ mE/ _____ mN
- e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)
 APN: 170 29 067

*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

This one-story Ranch is generally square in plan with an open central courtyard. The property sits in the center of its square lot and is enclosed at the front lot line by a wrought iron fence with stucco fence posts and vehicular gate. The lot is extensively landscaped with small plantings, brick sidewalks and low stucco garden walls. A swimming pool is located in the backyard. The successive, low-sloping gable roofs have ample eave overhangs, exposed raftertails and roof beams; all roof surfaces are covered with wood shakes. The exterior walls are of post-adobe construction and fenestration consists primarily of multi-pane wood casement windows. Select windows are elaborated with wood plank shutters. A wood frame arbor extends along the north elevation and a gabled shed toward the rear property line appears to serve as a secondary residential unit. The property appears to be in excellent condition.

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP2. Single family property

*P4. Resources Present: Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)



P5b. Description of Photo:
 Primary Elevation _____
 Date _____

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: Historic Prehistoric
 Both
 Built 1943
(Los Altos Planning Dept)

*P7. Owner and Address:
Jonathan E. III & Marcia H. Adams Trust.
189 N. Gordon Way Los Altos, CA
94022

*P8. Recorded by:
Circa: Historic Property Development
1 Sutter St., Ste. 910
San Francisco, CA 94104

*P9. Date Recorded: _____
June-08

*P10. Survey Type:
Intensive

*P11. Report Citation:
Los Altos Historic Resources Inventory Update - Phase III (Circa: Historic Property Development, 2011).

*Attachments: NONE Location Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record
 Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record
 Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List): _____

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*NRHP Status Code CA Reg. 5S3

Page 2 of 3

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 189 N. Gordon Way

B1. Historic Name: _____

B2. Common Name: _____

B3. Original Use: Residence

B4. Present Use: Residence

*B5. Architectural Style: Ranch

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Built 1943. Pool, 1971 (#A11712); fence along front lot line, 1978 (#A15365); reroof, n.d. (#74837).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____

*B8. Related Features:

Pool, courtyard.

B9a. Architect: Unknown

b. Builder: Unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme Residential Development

Area Los Altos

Period of Significance 1943-1961 (50-year mark)

Property Type Residence

Applicable Criteria CA/Local

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

Present day Los Altos became part of Santa Clara County in 1851. Associated with the Fremont Township, the area remained largely rural through the latter half of the 19th century, with much of the land devoted to cultivation of wheat crops, orchards and vineyards. By the end of the century, the larger ranches began to give way to a number of smaller farms and orchards. The initial establishment of Los Altos is attributed to Paul Shoup, a Southern Pacific Railroad executive who proposed it as a stop on a commuter rail line between Palo Alto and Los Gatos. Shoup formed the Los Altos Land Company in 1907 and, with the help of his business partners, purchased and laid out the original townsite along the east side of what is now Foothill Expressway, then the future rail line. The Land Company began selling lots for development in 1907 and many of the early houses were used as summer homes for wealthy San Francisco families while others served as year-round residences for commuters. The first steam train service from Los Altos to San Francisco began in 1908 and by 1911, some fifty residences had been constructed and a number of commercial office buildings had been built in the small downtown core. The rail line brought prosperity and growth to Los Altos and existing farms and orchards gradually gave way to residential subdivisions. Better roads and the availability of the automobile continued this development through the 1920s and 1930s when a number of (See Continuation Sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) _____

*B12. References:

Los Altos Historical Commission: Los Altos Historic Resources Inventory (9.28.1997); McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002; Building permit records; Chamber of Commerce website - http://www.losaltoschamber.org/history_two_cities.html.

B13. Remarks:

Sketch map created by Circa using Google Maps aerial photograph.

*B14. Evaluator: Circa: Historic Property Development

*Date of Evaluation: April 2011

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary # _____

HRI # _____

Trinomial _____

Page 3 of 3

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 189 North Gordon Way

*Recorded by: Circa: Historic Property Development

*Date April 2011

Continuation Update

B10. Significance (cont.)

automobile suburbs were developed. The post-World War II population boom led to increased residential and commercial development for the community and the city officially incorporated on December 1, 1952.

Character Defining Features: overall form and massing, successive, low-sloping gable roofs with broad eave overhangs; exposed raftertails and roof beams; wood shake roof cladding; post-adobe wall construction; multi-pane wood casement windows; wood plank shutters; open central courtyard.

Evaluation: 189 North Gordon Way appears to retain a good degree of integrity of feeling, materials, design, and workmanship. It is a unique example of post adobe construction in Los Altos and is eligible for listing on the Los Altos Historic Resources Inventory. It is therefore is assigned the California Register Status Code 5S3: "appears to be individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation."

Note: This finding is based on architectural merit alone and further research for association with historically significant events and/or people should be conducted.

ATTACHMENT D

HISTORICAL EVALUATION

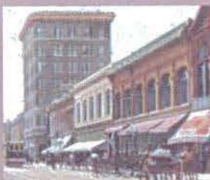
Detached Residential Accessory Building
189 N. Gordon Way
Los Altos, Santa Clara County, California
(APN #170-29-067)



Prepared for:

Ted Adams
189 N. Gordon Way
Los Altos, CA 94022

04/03/17



ARCHIVES & ARCHITECTURE, LLC
PO Box 1332
San José, CA 95109-1332
<http://www.archivesandarchitecture.com>

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Cover image: View of Detached Residential Accessory Building from the east, March 2017
 (Photograph by Leslie Dill, Archives & Architecture, LLC)

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This report constitutes an historic resource evaluation for a detached residential accessory structure located at 189 N. Gordon Way in the City of Los Altos, Santa Clara County (APN #170-29-067). The property at 189 N. Gordon Way is listed on the Los Altos Heritage Resource Inventory and identified for the architectural significance of the main house and as a "...contributor to the historic fabric of the community." The detached accessory structure, located on the property immediately to the south of the single-family residence, is being proposed for demolition.

The property at 189 N. Gordon Way has been documented for its architectural significance and listed on the Los Altos Heritage Resource Inventory. The property's significance is represented by the mid-twentieth-century, Ranch-Style design of the main house, with its post-adobe construction and its courtyard plan. The accessory building is a compact, wood-clad frame structure, and its footprint is to the rear and outside the area of the main house boundaries.

The property owner has contracted with Archives & Architecture, LLC, to prepare this report to update the information contained in the City's Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) listing for the property, to address the potential contribution of the accessory building. The report and accompanying California Department of Parks & Recreation 523 update forms (DPR523L) are intended to clarify the potential significance of the outbuilding within the listing of the property on the HRI.

It is the professional opinion of the consultants that the accessory building does not meet the criteria for listing as a City of Los Altos Historic Resource. Although the main house is recognized as significant in the larger context of the City of Los Altos, the vernacular accessory building does not help establish the significant architectural or historical character of the property, and is not a character-defining feature of the property. The demolition of the detached accessory structure, therefore, would not affect the significance of the property or the integrity of the historic resource.

Because the property will remain a listed property, modifications to the site (e.g., replacement of the outbuilding with a new structure) should be done in a sensitive way in order to retain the historic character of the site.

INTRODUCTION

Intent of this Report

An historical resource evaluation is required by the City of Los Altos to accompany a project submittal for an HRI-listed property. The report provides an intensive-level historical investigation of the detached accessory structure, along with an evaluation according to State of California and City of Los Altos historic significance criteria. This report is being prepared for review by staff of the Planning Division of the Department of Community Development of the City of Los Altos, and may be forwarded to the Los Altos Historical Commission for recommendation to staff on the project.

Policy and Regulatory Background

Los Altos is a community that celebrates its history. This rich past has been incorporated into the fabric of the City and provides a link to the community's heritage and history. The remaining sites and structures of architectural and/or historic significance enhance the community's unique character and contribute to a sense of place.

As outlined in the Los Altos General Plan, it is a goal of the City to preserve and enhance historic and cultural structures and resources within the community. To support that goal, the General Plan identified specific historic preservation policies:

- Ensure that the integrity of historic structures and the parcels on which they are located are preserved through the implementation of applicable design, building, and fire codes.
- The City shall regard demolition of landmark structures and historic structures listed in the Historic Resources Inventory as a last resort. Demolition would be permitted only after the City determines that the resource has lost its integrity, retains no reasonable economic use, that demolition is necessary to protect health, safety and welfare, or that demolition is necessary to precede with a new project where the benefits of the new project outweigh the loss of the historic resource.
- Work with property owners to preserve historic resources within the community.

These goals and policies are implemented through the City's Historical Preservation Ordinance. The primary purpose of the Ordinance is to ensure the protection of irreplaceable historic resources, enhance visual character through architectural compatibility, and encourage appreciation and recognition of the City's past.

The historic significance criteria are defined in Los Altos Municipal Code Article 12.44 (Historical Preservation) and explained in Section I of the City's Historic Resources Inventory as adopted by the Los Altos City Council in 2011. The policy requires that this review be done by a qualified preservation professional when a project involves a historic resource listed on the Inventory.

Qualifications

Archives & Architecture, LLC, is a cultural resource management firm located in San Jose, California. The partners of the firm are Leslie A.G. Dill, Historic Architect and Architectural Historian, Franklin Maggi, Architectural Historian and Preservation Planner, and Charlene Duval, Public Historian. The firm was founded in 1989 by the late Glory Anne Laffey, Historian, and has been constituted in its current partnership since 2003.

The principal author of this report was Leslie A.G. Dill, Architect, who consults in the field of historic architecture and architectural history. Ms. Dill has a Master of Architecture with a Program Certificate in Historic Preservation from the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, and is an architect licensed in the State of California. Ms. Dill meets the Secretary of the Interior's qualifications to perform identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment activities within the field of Architectural History and Historic Architecture, in compliance with state and federal environmental laws. She is listed as qualified to do this work within the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS). The Northwest Information Center, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, operated under authority of the California State Office of Historic Preservation, maintains a list of Historical Resources Consultants who are qualified to do work in the area. CHRIS utilizes the criteria of the National Park Service outlined in 36 CFR Part 61.

Historical Evaluation Process¹

The Los Altos Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) is the official list of historic resources, designated historic landmarks and designated historic districts that are significant at the local level (contribute to the history of Los Altos). If a property is over 50 years old, retains its integrity, and has association with one or more of the criteria of significance, then it is eligible for designation as a Historic Resource.

The Los Altos historic evaluation process has been developed using the criteria outlined in the State and National evaluation practices and is intended to coordinate the areas of integrity, significance, and association between the California Register and the City of Los Altos, in order to avoid conflicting information or interpretations. The evaluation process consists of three steps, which are summarized below.

The first step is to determine whether the property development is over fifty years of age – buildings must, in most cases, be fifty years old or older to be considered historic resources.

The next step is to determine whether the property retains enough original materials and features to convey its value as a historic resource.

¹ Policies excerpted from City of Los Altos Historical Resource Inventory, 2011.

If a resource meets the age requirement and retains physical integrity, the next step is to determine if the resource is associated with a person or event of importance and therefore has significance with an Event, Person/People, Architecture/Design, and/or Yields Important Information based on national, state or local definition. Once it has been determined whether or not a property qualifies as a historic resource, the final step is to assess how it is associated with an important historic context. This context could be an association with a person, event or pattern of events significant in local, state or national history or themes within these associative values. It could be an association with a notable architect or an important architectural style or method of construction. A building, structure or object could also be important for its ability to provide information about prehistory. If a property is found to have a clear association with an important historic context then it is determined to have significance as a historic resource on a national, state or local level.

Methodology of This Review

1. The site was examined in March 2017 by Leslie Dill. Notes on the architecture and characteristic features of the extant main house and detached residential building, as well as the surrounding setting and neighborhood context, were made. Photographs of the accessory building and views of the setting were taken at this time. Photographic documentation was taken digitally by Leslie Dill.

Historical research was provided in part by the current owner of the property, and a preliminary investigation into the history of the property and its associations was further conducted by Leslie Dill, which included review of historic maps, city directories, census enumerations, local histories, and vital statistics. The buildings on the property were evaluated within the context of architectural design and the historical development in what is now the City of Los Altos.

2. The research and historical investigation was prepared utilizing the methodology recommended by the National Park Service, as outlined in *Preservation Briefs #17 -Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character* (1988), and #35 - *Understanding Old Buildings: The Process of Architectural Investigation* (1994).

This document is presented in a report format, and addresses the extant detached residential accessory building on the subject property. The attached DPR523L forms provides an update to the prior historical and architectural documentation.

Survey Status

In June of 2008, the property at 189 N. Gordon Way in Los Altos was identified by Circa: Historic Property Development as part of the Los Altos Historic Resources Inventory Update. The evaluation is presented on California Department of Parks & Recreation Form 523 (DPR523). The evaluation form notes that the property “is a contributor to the historic fabric of the community and appears to meet the criteria for listing on the Los Altos Historic Resources Inventory.” The description defines the main house as a Ranch, and identifies the use of post-adobe construction at the main house, the low-sloping gable roofs, multi-pane windows, and its courtyard scheme. The property was placed on the Los Altos Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) in 2009. The vernacular residential accessory building on the property was included in the description of the property but was not evaluated at the time specifically as a character-defining feature or supporting significant structure on the property.

The property at 189 N. Gordon Way has not been previously evaluated locally at an individual level (the previous work was part of a citywide survey). The property is not listed or designated as a part of any state or national survey of historic resources. The preparers of this report reviewed the subject building, at an intensive level, under local, state and national criteria to determine its potential for historical significance.

Historical and Architectural Information

The attached DPR523L update recording forms includes a technical description of the detached accessory building, some historical context and property history, as well as an integrity statement and the evaluation. The DPR523L forms also contain digital photographs of the exterior of the detached building, taken in March 2017.

Locational Information

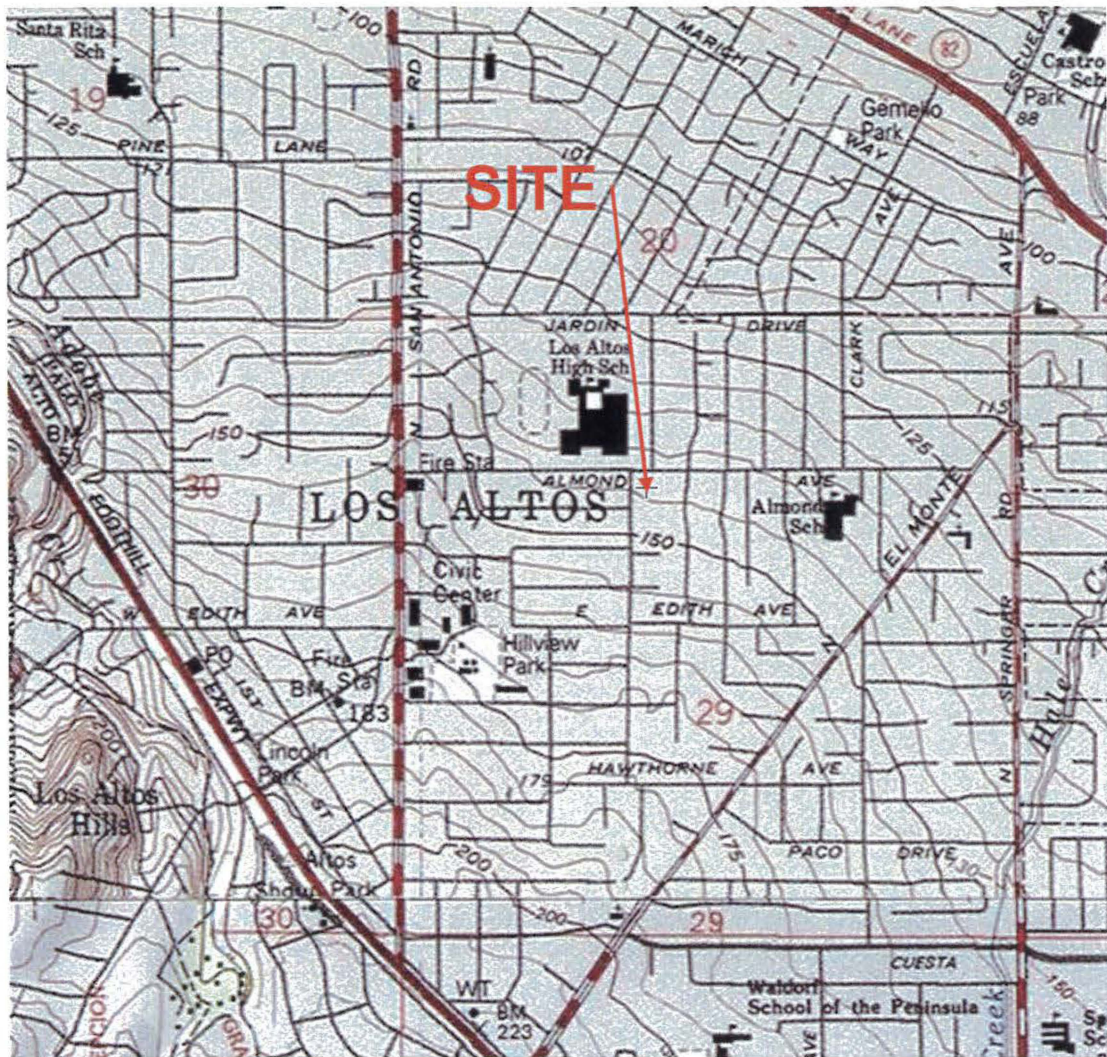
Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM): Zone 10S; 579057 mE/ 4137902mN

Coordinates: Lat. 37.38450°, Long. - 122.10697°

USGS Map: 7.5' Mountain View Quad, 1997 T. 6S.; R. 2W.; Mount Diablo Base Meridian

The subject property is located in a suburban residential neighborhood near the corner of Almond Avenue and North Gordon Way, not far from Los Altos High School. The property is less than a mile northeast of the downtown area of Los Altos. The property includes the main house, a detached accessory building (the subject of this report), and a second ancillary structure.

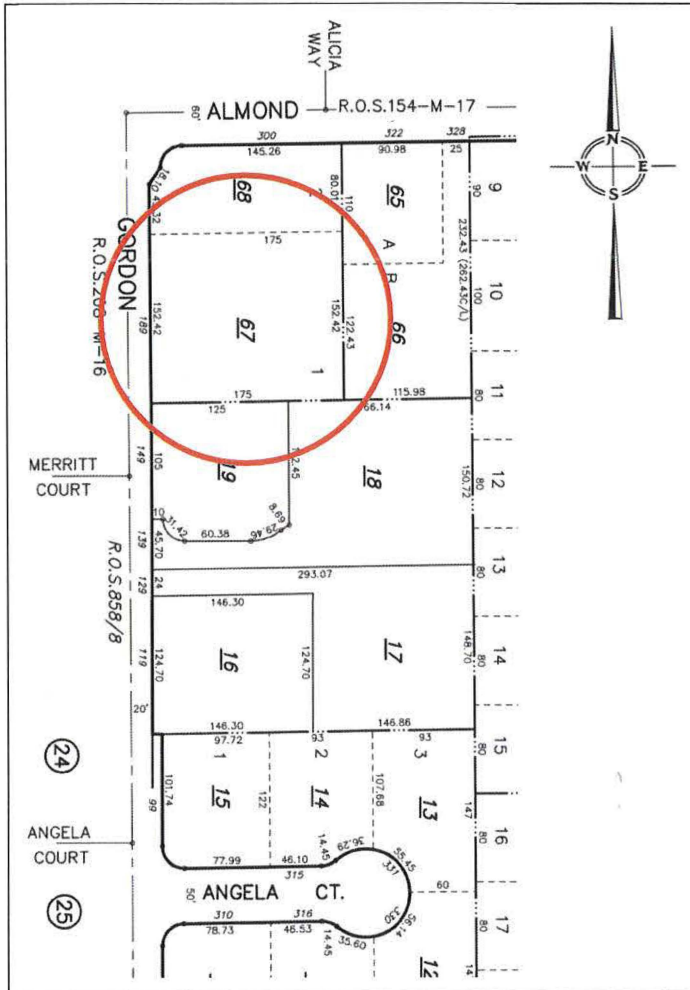
LOCATION MAP



USGS

ACME MAPPER 2.1

Assessor's Parcel Map



Assessor's Parcel Map 170-29-067

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Historical Context

During the period when the house was built, Los Altos, was an unincorporated, largely rural, district, with a small downtown developing to the southwest of the incorporated City of Mountain View. Late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century growth in the area is associated with the development of local transportation routes, particularly the Peninsular Railway. The Altos Land Company and the University Land Company originated the City of Los Altos as a station stop for the Peninsular Railway, conceived

and built post-Earthquake, around 1906-1909. Even as the railroad was built and downtown Los Altos and its residential neighborhoods were starting to grow, much of Los Altos, including the subject area, continued to be planted as orchards into the middle of the twentieth century.

Maps show that the subject property was once an American 240-acre land grant that was slowly subdivided over the years into its current configuration. The 240 acres was shown proposed for 8- to 10-acre lots by about the 1906 establishment of the city. The current area was shown as a 10-acre parcel. By the late 1920s, the land was identified as 8 acres. Further subdivision created a 2-acre parcel by the late 1930s, just before the house was built. Almond Avenue was unpaved for much of this time.

In the post-World-War-II years, suburbia began to fill the neighborhood with new subdivided parcels and arrays of ranch-style homes. With the incorporation of the City of Los Altos in 1952, the subject property ultimately became a part of a Los Altos suburban neighborhood, losing its original rural context, but contributing to the planned residential character of the city.

Site Development

The current property is an approximately square parcel of just under two thirds of an acre. The main house is generally centered in the parcel. When the residence was first built, the property contained about 2 acres and was planted as an orchard. Until the 1960s, the front (north) façade of the main house faced Almond Avenue across an expansive front orchard area. The house was addressed as 316 Almond Avenue. Now the front of the house opens into a moderately sized side yard adjacent to a neighboring property that was subdivided from the larger parcel.

Personages

The current owners of the property provided a title search with the names of the owners during the initial development of the property. Archives & Architecture researched these personages and referred to historic maps and aerial views to confirm the information. The adobe house construction has been reported to have begun around 1943 although the first documentation is an aerial view of the house and orchard from 1948, so it is possible that the house was begun after the end of World War II.

The property owner from 1937-1944 is identified as Amy B. Rutherford. Amy Rutherford was born Amy Dahl in St. Paul, MN in 1888. She married Clinton S. Rutherford in Seattle in 1911, and they soon moved to San Francisco, where she worked for the IRS briefly in the 1920s. Somewhat later in the 1920s, the couple traveled together extensively for his work as an international paperboard salesman. In 1930, Amy is recorded as living in Chicago with Clinton, where his career had taken them. In 1937, two years before the couple's divorce proceedings were initiated, the orchard property was acquired under her name. In 1939, aerial photos indicate that the property did not

yet have buildings, but the orchard has a clearing at the location of the future house. In 1940, while she still owned the orchard property in Los Altos, Amy is reported as living in Philadelphia with her sister. There are no known records of Amy living in Los Altos, but she is identified as living in San Mateo from at least the early 1950s until her death in 1966.



1939 Aerial 286-009 of Santa Clara County

UC Santa Cruz University Library

The property passed in 1944 to the next owners, William B. and Fay C. (Sawyer) Soffel. He was an accountant at Western Union in San Francisco for his full career; she was not identified with a profession. There are annual records of the Soffels living in San Francisco by 1917 until the 1930s; they then lived in San Carlos until the early 1940s. The Soffels' bank deed of trust for the subject property contains language that indicates that the land still had value as an orchard (it required them to cultivate, irrigate, fertilize, fumigate, prune..." and more). There are no records of their residence from 1944-1948, the years that they owned the property in Los Altos, but it can be assumed that they did live in the house. The land is sold in 1948 to the Dowley family, when the main house is documented as partially completed. The Soffels are then documented living in Redwood City from 1948 until at least the 1970s. William passed away in San Carlos in 1980. Fay passed away in San Carlos in 1981.

None of these families is significant in a way that would associate the main residence or the smaller accessory structure at 189 N. Gordon Way with larger historic significance in the City of Los Altos.



1948 USGS Aerial View

Google Earth

Description of the Building

The form and detailing of the main house confirms its age; the mid-century adobe Ranch-style houses were at their peak before and after World War II, culminating in a 1948 book, *Post-Adobe*, by renowned architect Hugh W. Comstock.

The detached accessory building, meanwhile, is a vernacular structure with the character of a Minimal Traditional design. Minimal Traditional residences are an early-to-mid-twentieth-century transition between the revival styles of the 1920s and 30s and post-war Ranch-style design. The simple gabled form, the dog-ear-trimmed gable-end siding, and the horizontal window muntins at the focal window are the detailing that are recognizable from this era.

The current setting is a modest side yard of the main house (formerly part of the rear yard). There are a few small fruit trees and some succulents in the area, but it is a utilitarian setting, outside the main landscaping. A low brick stoop leads from the recent walkway built up of terra-cotta pavers.

The north-facing residential structure has a low, one-story, rectangular mass with a moderately pitched side-gabled roof. The eaves are shallow in depth with exposed rafter tails and without original gutters. The rim joists are exposed between the rafter tails. The roof features abutting wood sheathing at the eaves and exposed skip sheathing at the gable ends. The roofing is wood shake or shingle.

The wood-frame structure is constructed on a concrete slab foundation. The lower walls are clad with horizontal, unpainted wood, v-groove siding that is trimmed by flat-

boards at the corners. The gable ends are clad with vertical v-groove siding trimmed with dog-ear design typical of a Minimal Traditional design from the 1930s through 1950s.

Entry is through a replacement flush door that faces the rear of the main house (north). The trim has been removed. The window side casings and headers are flat boards with architrave trim; there are no aprons. Fenestration consists of a late-1930s-to-early-1940s casement window unit on the north façade, to the side of the front door. This window features a pair of 1x3 sash with horizontal muntins. On the east side is a slightly off-center 1/1 double-hung window. On the rear (south) are two individually placed 1/1 double hung windows, in an asymmetrical configuration. There are no windows on the west side.

Integrity

Integrity is a critical component of the City of Los Altos evaluation process. According to the Office of Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Series #6

Integrity is the authenticity of a historical resource's physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance. Historical resources eligible for listing in the California Register must meet one of the criteria of significance described above and retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. Historical resources that have been rehabilitated or restored may be evaluated for listing. Integrity is evaluated with regard to the retention of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It must also be judged with reference to the particular criteria under which a resource is proposed for eligibility. Alterations over time to a resource or historic changes in its use may themselves have historical, cultural, or architectural significance.

The detached accessory structure maintains most of its historic integrity per the National Register/California Register's seven aspects of integrity. The building maintains its original location within the larger property. It remains to the rear (south) of the original adobe house on the remaining portion of a former orchard property near Almond Avenue at North Gordon Way. It has lost its original rural orchard setting, and is now surrounded by a residential subdivision. Although one small part of the building's exterior has been altered by the alteration of the front door, the building has obvious visual integrity with its vernacular Minimal Traditional design. Its original unpainted siding, gable roof form, and underlying structure are intact and represent the era's basic workmanship and use of materials. Its original character-defining materials have been preserved, including its low one-story form, gable form, exposed rafter tails, skip roof sheathing, vertical and horizontal wood siding, 1/1 double-hung windows. The small residential structure continues to embody feelings of a mid-twentieth-century detached outbuilding and is differentiated from the property's associations with the adobe house and the residential development of Los Altos post-World War II.

The City of Los Altos uses five criteria for its determination of historical integrity: design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling. These are a subset of the National Register criteria as presented above.

The property would maintain its historic integrity within the City of Los Altos if the detached accessory structure were removed. The design, materials, workmanship, and feeling of the historically significant adobe main house and the remainder of the property would be unchanged. The immediate setting of the house would be altered in a non-significant way with the removal of the detached outbuilding, and no character-defining features of the setting would be removed. The location and associations of the main house would also be unchanged, to address the two additional criteria of the California's integrity analysis.

EVALUATION

California Register of Historic Resources

The California Office of Historic Preservation describes the California Register as a "...program [that] encourages public recognition and protection of resources of architectural, historical, archeological and cultural significance, identifies historical resources for state and local planning purposes, determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding and affords certain protections under the California Environmental Quality Act." There are four criteria for designation, evaluated 189 N. Gordon Way detached accessory structure, as follows:

Historic Events and Patterns

The property as a whole, with its mid-century adobe house and relatively expansive grounds, is a residential representation of the transition of this area of Los Altos from orchard lands to suburban neighborhood. Although 70 years old or older, the detached accessory building was not found to be supportive of that narrative, and is not individually representative of any broad historical patterns of development. The property would therefore not appear to be eligible for the California Register based on significant events or patterns of history under California Register Criterion (1).

Personages

No significant personages were discovered to be associated with this property during this evaluation. The property owners at the time of construction have been identified as either Amy B. Rutherford or William B. and Fay C. Soffel, and the construction of the detached accessory structure could not be specifically associated directly with either family. As the small building is not directly associated with residents who are identified as important in the larger history of the City of Los Altos, the property is not eligible for the California Register under Criterion (2).

Architecture

Although recognizable as a modest, vernacular accessory structure from the early-to-mid-twentieth century, the subject building is not a distinguished example among designs from this period. The wood-clad, frame structure and gabled form are relatively common and used in a vernacular manner, so do not embody exceptional significance for their quality or workmanship. A Minimal Traditional design is modest by definition, and, although this style can capture the feelings and association of an austere and family-oriented era, this example is not an exceptional representation of the use of materials or composition from that era. Furthermore, the compact outbuilding does not embody the artistic merit found in the remainder of the residential property. It does not exhibit or support any of the Ranch-style design or adobe construction techniques for which the subject property was identified in its Los Altos HRI listing, and its footprint is to the rear and outside the area of the main house boundaries. The vernacular accessory building does not help establish the significant architectural character of the property, and is not a character-defining feature of the property. As would be expected for a modest vernacular structure, the designer of the house was not discovered during the research for this preliminary study, so there are no identifiable associations with a particular designer or architect. The property would therefore not qualify for the California Register under Criterion (3).

Potential to Provide Information

The accessory structure has no known associations or identified materials that indicate that it might lead to the discovery of significant information. The building would therefore not qualify for the California Register under Criterion (4).

Los Altos Historic Preservation Ordinance

As a part of this investigation and evaluation, the detached accessory structure was evaluated according to the City of Los Altos Historic Preservation Ordinance. While the larger property meets the criteria for designation as an Historic Resource according to the Municipal Code Section 12.44.040, the detached building does not meet the criteria and does not support the previous finding of significance:

- A. Age: The detached building was built after 1939 and prior to 1948, making it at least 69 years old, and likely older than 70, meeting the 50-year age criteria;
- B. Integrity: As noted above, the building is substantially unchanged, retaining its historical integrity. The majority of the character-defining features remain, and the small building and its immediate setting reflect the original design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling from the mid-twentieth century;
- C. Significance: The property has previously been identified for its significance based on its "architecture/design" per 12.44.040.C.3, embodied by the mid-century adobe house. The main house can also be generally associated with a

pattern of local history or “events,” per 12.44.040.C.1 within the context of the transition of this part of Los Altos from orchards to residential neighborhoods although this era is at the end of the Context Statement’s described period of significance. As stated in the previous evaluation, the property “is a contributor to the historic fabric of the community and appears to meet the criteria for listing on the Los Altos Historic Resources Inventory.”

The vernacular accessory structure does not individually represent architectural associations significant in Los Altos, and its construction as an outbuilding near the main house does not lend significance to the larger property. The associations of the owners since the house was building are not strong enough to provide significance of the property based on “person/people,” 12.44.040.C.2. Archeological significance is not evaluated 12.44.040.C.6.

REFERENCES

Circa: Historic Property Development. State of California Department of Parks & Recreation Form 523. June-08

City of Los Altos.

Historic Resources Inventory Section II, April 2011.

Historic Resources Inventory Section IV, October 2012.

Ordinance Chapter 12.44 Historical Preservation

Dill, Leslie of Archives & Architecture, LLC. HISTORICAL EVALUATION: Detached Residential Accessory Building, 189 N. Gordon Way, Los Altos, Santa Clara County, California. 04/03/17

Santa Clara County Office of the Clerk-Recorder. Subdivision Records, Deeds and Maps.

USGS Aerial. 1948 (Google Maps).

<http://digitalcollections.ucsc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/p16019coll5/id/1867/rec/1>

And information and images from the personal collection of the property owner

CONCLUSION

The preservation of the accessory building is not important to the overall understanding of the historic property at 189 N. Gordon Way, Los Altos. The compact form and wood-frame construction are conventional design features from the age while the adobe Ranch-style main house conveys the significant design associations and feelings of the mid-twentieth century in the post-War era.

Demolition or major alterations of the detached accessory building would not have a significant effect on the environment.

Because the property is identified on the Heritage Resource Inventory of the City of Los Altos, modifications to the site should be done in a sensitive way in order to retain the historic character of the adobe main house on the site.

PHOTOGRAPHS

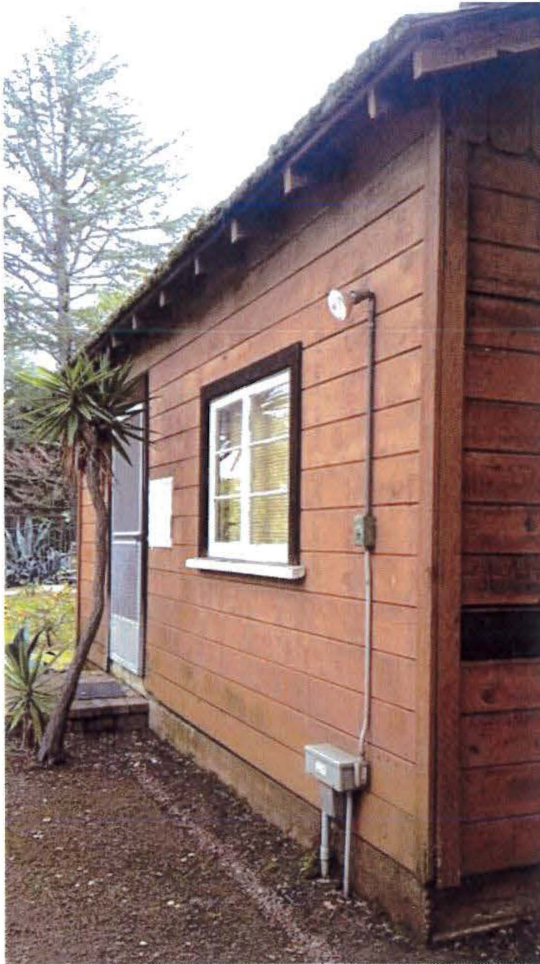
Historic Photograph



Detached Accessory Building, c. 1948

From the Owner

Current Photographs



*North (Front) Elevation
view from the northwest*



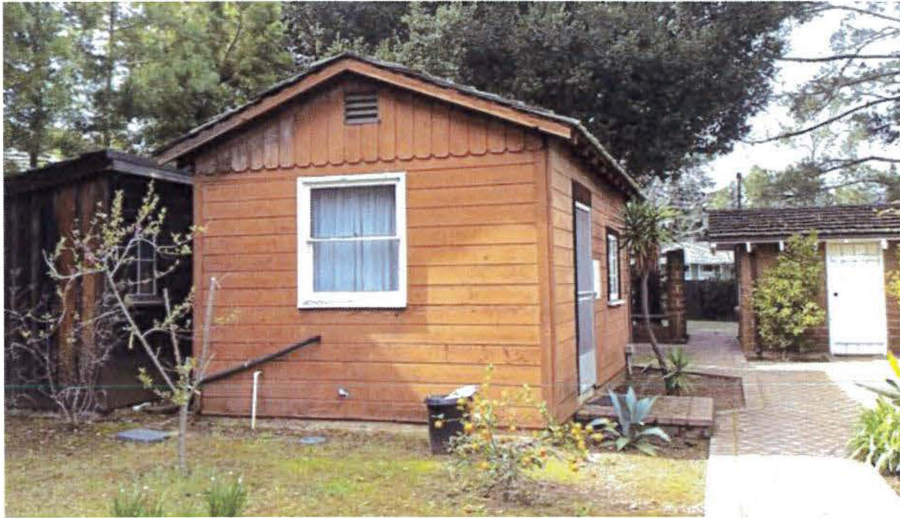
Detail of North Window



West Elevation, view from the west



South Elevation, view from the southwest



*East Elevation,
view from the northeast*



*Rear of Main House,
view from the southwest*

ATTACHMENT E

State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

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Trinomial

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 189 N. Gordon Way

*Recorded by Leslie Dill, Archives & Architecture LLC *Date 04/03/17 Continuation Update

Purpose of this Update

In June of 2008, the property at 189 N. Gordon Way in Los Altos was identified by Circa: Historic Property Development as part of the Los Altos Historic Resources Inventory Update. The evaluation is presented on California Parks & Recreation Form 523 (DPR523). The evaluation form notes that the property "is a contributor to the historic fabric of the community and appears to meet the criteria for listing on the Los Altos Historic Resources Inventory." The description defines the main house as a Ranch, and identifies the use of post-adobe construction at the main house, the low-sloping gable roofs, multi-pane windows, and its courtyard scheme. The property was placed on the Los Altos Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) in 2009. The vernacular residential accessory building on the property was included in the description of the property but was not evaluated at the time specifically as a character-defining feature or supporting significant structure on the property.

The property at 189 N. Gordon Way has not been previously evaluated locally at an intensive individual level (the previous work was part of a citywide survey). The property is not listed or designated as a part of any state or national survey of historic resources. The preparers of this report reviewed the subject building, at an intensive level, under local, state and national criteria to determine its potential for historical significance.

Historical Context

Los Altos, during the period when the house was built, was an unincorporated, largely rural, district, with a small downtown developing to the southwest of the incorporated City of Mountain View. Late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century growth in the area is associated with the development of local transportation routes, particularly the Peninsular Railway. The Altos Land Company and the University Land Company originated the City of Los Altos as a station stop for the Peninsular Railway, conceived and built post-Earthquake, around 1906-1909. Even as the railroad was built and downtown Los Altos and its residential neighborhoods were starting to grow, much of Los Altos, including the subject area, continued to appear as orchard lands into the middle of the twentieth century.

Maps show that the subject property was once a 240-acre land grant that was slowly subdivided over the years into its current configuration. The 240 acres was shown proposed for 8- to 10-acre lots by about the 1906 establishment of the city. The current area was shown as a 10-acre parcel. By the late 1920s, the land was identified as 8 acres. Further subdivision created a 2-acre parcel by the late 1930s, just before the house was built. Almond Avenue was unpaved for much of this time.

In the post-World-War-II years, suburbia began to fill the neighborhood with new subdivided parcels and arrays of ranch-style homes. With the incorporation of the City of Los Altos in 1952, the subject property ultimately became a part of a Los Altos suburban neighborhood, losing its original rural context, but contributing to the planned residential character of the city.

Site Development

The current property is an approximately square parcel of just under two thirds of an acre. The main house is generally centered in the parcel. When the residence was first built, the property contained about 2 acres and was planted as an orchard. Until the 1960s, the front (north) façade of the main house faced Almond Avenue across an expansive front orchard area, but now the front of the house opens into a moderately sized side yard adjacent to a neighboring property that was subdivided from the larger parcel.

Personages

The current owners of the property provided a title search with the names of the owners during the initial development of the property. Archives & Architecture researched these personages and referred to historic maps and aerial views to confirm the information. The adobe house construction has been reported to have begun around 1943 although the first documentation is an aerial view of the house and orchard from 1948, so it is possible that the house was begun after the end of World War II.

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*Recorded by Leslie Dill, Archives & Architecture LLC *Date 04/03/17 Continuation Update

(Continued from previous page, DPR523L, Update)

The property owner from 1937-1944 is identified as Amy B. Rutherford. Amy Rutherford was born Amy Dahl in St. Paul, MN in 1888. She married Clinton S. Rutherford in Seattle in 1911, and they soon moved to San Francisco, where she worked for the IRS briefly in the 1920s. Somewhat later in the 1920s, the couple traveled together extensively for his work as an international paperboard salesman. In 1930, Amy is recorded as living in Chicago with Clinton, where his career had taken them. In 1937, two years before the couple's divorce proceedings were initiated, the orchard property was acquired under her name. In 1939, aerial photos indicate that the property did not yet have buildings, but the orchard has a clearing at the location of the future house. In 1940, while she still owned the orchard property in Los Altos, Amy is reported as living in Philadelphia with her sister. There are no known records of Amy living in Los Altos, but she is identified as living in San Mateo from at least the early 1950s until her death in 1966.

The property passed in 1944 to the next owners, William B. and Fay C. (Sawyer) Soffel. He was an accountant at Western Union in San Francisco for his full career; she was not identified with a profession. There are annual records of the Soffels living in San Francisco by 1917 until the 1930s; they then lived in San Carlos until the early 1940s. The Soffels' bank deed of trust for the subject property contains language that indicates that the land still had value as an orchard (it required them to cultivate, irrigate, fertilize, fumigate, prune... and more). There are no records of their residence from 1944-1948, the years that they owned the property in Los Altos, but it can be concluded that they did live in the house. The land is sold in 1948 to the Dowley family, when the main house is documented as partially completed. The Soffels are then documented living in Redwood City from 1948 until at least the 1970s. William passed away in San Carlos in 1980. Fay passed away in San Carlos in 1981. None of these families is significant in a way that would associate the main residence or the smaller accessory structure at 189 N. Gordon Way with larger historic significance in the City of Los Altos.

Description of the Building

The form and detailing of the main house confirms its age; the mid-century adobe Ranch-style houses were at their peak before and after World War II, culminating in a 1948 book, *Post-Adobe*, by renowned architect Hugh W. Comstock.

The detached accessory building, meanwhile, is a vernacular structure with the character of a Minimal Traditional design. Minimal Traditional residences are an early-to-mid-twentieth-century transition between the revival styles of the 1920s and 30s and post-war Ranch-style design. The simple gabled form, the dog-ear-trimmed gable-end siding, and the horizontal window muntins are the detailing that are recognizable from this era.

The current setting is a modest side yard of the main house (formerly part of the rear yard). There are a few small fruit trees and some succulents in the area, but it is a utilitarian setting, outside the main landscaping. A low brick stoop leads from the recent walkway built up of terra-cotta pavers.

The north-facing residential structure has a low, one-story, rectangular mass with a moderately pitched side-gabled roof. The eaves are shallow in depth with exposed rafter tails and without original gutters. The rim joists are exposed between the rafter tails. The roof features abutting wood sheathing at the eaves and exposed skip sheathing at the gable ends. The roofing is wood shake or shingle.

The wood-frame structure is constructed on a concrete slab foundation. The lower walls are clad with unpainted, horizontal, wood, v-groove siding that is trimmed by flat-boards at the corners. The gable ends are clad with vertical v-groove siding trimmed with dog-ear design typical of a Minimal Traditional design from the 1930s through 1950s.

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Entry is through a replacement flush door that faces the rear of the main house (north). The trim has been removed. The window side casings and headers are flat boards with architrave trim; there are no aprons. Fenestration consists of a late-1930s-to-early-1940s casement window unit on the north façade, to the side of the front door. This window features a pair of 1x3 sash with horizontal muntins. On the east side is a slightly off-center 1/1 double-hung window. On the rear (south) are two individually placed 1/1 double hung windows, in an asymmetrical configuration. There are no windows on the west side.

Integrity

The detached accessory structure maintains most of its historic integrity per the National Register/California Register's seven aspects of integrity. The building maintains its original location within the larger property. It remains to the rear (south) of the original adobe house on the remaining portion of a former orchard property near Almond Avenue at North Gordon Way. It has lost its original rural orchard setting, now surrounded by a residential subdivision. Although one small part of the building's exterior has been altered by the alteration of the front door, the building has obvious visual integrity with its vernacular Minimal Traditional design. Its original unpainted siding, gable roof form, and underlying structure are intact and represent the era's basic workmanship and use of materials. Its original character-defining materials have been preserved, including its low one-story form, gable form, exposed rafter tails, skip roof sheathing, vertical and horizontal wood siding, 1/1 double-hung windows. The small residential structure continues to embody feelings of a mid-twentieth-century detached outbuilding and is separate, and not-supporting, of the property's associations with the adobe house and the residential development of Los Altos post-World War II.

Evaluation

Historic Events and Patterns

The property as a whole, with its mid-century adobe house and relatively expansive grounds, is a residential representation of the transition of this area of Los Altos from orchard lands to suburban neighborhood. Although 70 years old or older, the detached accessory building was not found to be supportive of that narrative, and is not individually representative of any broad historical patterns of development. The property would therefore not appear to be eligible for the California Register based on significant events or patterns of history under California Register Criterion (1).

Personages

No significant personages were discovered to be associated with this property during this evaluation. The property owners at the time of construction have been identified as either Amy B. Rutherford or William B. and Fay C. Soffel, and the construction of the detached accessory structure could not be specifically associated directly with either family. As the small building is not directly associated with residents who are identified as important in the larger history of the City of Los Altos, the property is not eligible for the California Register under Criterion (2).

Architecture

Although recognizable as a modest, vernacular accessory structure from the early-to-mid-twentieth century, the subject building is not a distinguished example among designs from this period. The wood-clad, frame structure and gabled form are relatively common and used in a vernacular manner, so do not embody exceptional significance for their quality or workmanship. A Minimal Traditional design is modest by definition, and, although this style can capture the feelings and association of an austere and family-oriented era, this example is not an exceptional representation of the use of materials or composition from that era. Furthermore, the compact outbuilding does not embody the artistic merit found in the remainder of the residential property. It does not exhibit or support any of the ranch-style design or adobe construction techniques for which the subject property was identified in its

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Los Altos HRI listing, and its footprint is to the rear and outside the area of the main house boundaries. The vernacular accessory building does not help establish the significant architectural character of the property, and is not a character-defining feature of the property. As would be expected for a detached vernacular structure, the designer of the house was not discovered during the research for this preliminary study, so there are no identifiable associations with a particular designer or architect. The property would therefore not qualify for the California Register under Criterion (3).

Potential to Provide Information

The accessory structure has no known associations or identified materials that indicate that it might lead to the discovery of significant information. The building would therefore not qualify for the California Register under Criterion (4).

Photographs

All photographs were taken by Leslie Dill on 03/07/17.



North (Front) Elevation, viewed from the northwest

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(Continued from previous page, DPR523L, Update)



Detail of North Focal Window



West Elevation, viewed from the west

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South Elevation, viewed from the southwest

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East Elevation, viewed from the northeast



Historic View, c.1948, viewed from the southwest

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USGS Aerial. 1948 (Google Maps).

<http://digitalcollections.ucsc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/p16019coll15/id/1867/rec/1>

And information and images from the personal collection of the property owner