Appendix Z

Hoover Pavilion Historic Site Development and Viewsheds
Hoover Pavilion/Palo Alto Hospital:
Historic Site Development and Viewsheds

Prepared by Laura Jones, Ph.D.
Heritage Services, Stanford University
December 8, 2010
Overview

The City’s DEIR found that the proposed Medical Office Building and parking structure would be in close proximity to the Hoover Pavilion; however, significant views would be retained and many non-historic buildings are in the surrounding area. “And therefore, the changes to the surrounding setting resulting from these two new buildings would not result in an adverse, material alteration of significant characteristics and would result in a less-than-significant impact.” (DEIR pg. 3.8-20, 3.8-21)

The City of Palo Alto in responding to comments on the DEIR has asked for additional information to address the following questions:

1) What is the primary façade of Hoover Pavilion?
2) Is the Quarry Road side a primary façade?
3) Does the proposed project substantially obstruct views of the Hoover Pavilion such that the significance of the Hoover Pavilion would be materially impaired?

The analysis that follows is based upon historical evidence in the form of building plans, aerial photographs, maps and other primary sources. The analysis supports the DEIR’s findings that the main entrance side of the building (facing Palo Road and El Camino Real) is the primary façade and that the proposed construction of the Medical Office Building on Quarry Road would not substantially obstruct views of the building such that the significance of the Hoover Pavilion would be materially impaired.¹

Summary of Site Development in the Hoover Pavilion Area

Prior to the construction of the Palo Alto Hospital in 1930, the site was lightly wooded (see 1928 aerial photo). El Camino Real was a paved state highway; Palm Drive was an improved roadway with an oiled and graveled roadbed. Quarry Road was an unpaved dirt farm road leading from El Camino to the Stanford Winery Barn (then in operation as a dairy). A second unpaved road led from El Camino Real to the Stanford Mausoleum.

With the construction of the hospital, two new roads were added: Palo Road as the main entrance drive to the facility and a service road on the opposite side of the site. A service/ambulance driveway was created as a loop leading from the service road to the ambulance entrance and then to Quarry Road and Palo Road. See 1930 site plan.

The main entrance to the hospital faced El Camino Real and Palo Road. The public lobby was on the second floor, reached via a grand entry staircase (see architectural elevations and historic photograph).

¹ In this context, the CEQA Guidelines state that the significance of a historic resource is materially impaired when a project materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of the historic resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources, as determined by the City of Palo Alto. (CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5(b)(2).)
On the Quarry Road side, the ground floor contained service and ambulance entrances to the emergency room and support uses including storage, the laundry, staff locker rooms, and the morgue (see first floor plan). There was no public access to these areas; all the visitor and waiting rooms were on the second floor. In the 1930 site plan, there was a small staff-only parking area on this side of the building.

The aerial photographs of the property from the 1940s through the 1980s (pages) show a dense grove of trees on the Quarry Road side of the building, and a relatively open formal entry landscape on the El Camino Real side. The hospital is clearly oriented to face Palo Alto and the circulation network was designed to bring people from El Camino Real to the main entry on Palo Road through the 1930s, 40s and 50s.

Quarry Road was widened and improved in the late 1950s to support the new Stanford Shopping Center and the new Palo Alto/Stanford Hospital and medical office complex on Welch Road and Pasteur Drive. The secondary roads lost their connections to El Camino Real and Palm Drive and became exclusively service drives. See 1957 and 1960 aerial photographs.

The dense grove of trees between the main building on the Hoover Pavilion site and Quarry Road is a major feature throughout the 1980s, obscuring the Quarry Road façade from public viewpoints west of Palo Road (see 1981 aerial photo). In the early 1990s a large number of trees were removed to expand the Quarry Road facing parking lot (see 1993 aerial photo). In about 1998, Quarry Road was widened in association with the Sand Hill Road project improvements and new street trees were added at this location (see 2010 aerial photo).

A the present time, the west façade of the Hoover Pavilion is partially visible from the Quarry Road-Palo Road intersection, but only intermittently and partially visible through breaks in the street tree canopies along Quarry Road as one moves toward the west end of the building. The majority of the Quarry Road façade is partially obscured from all viewpoints in the public right-of-way west of Palo Road. The facade is completely obstructed from many vantage points along Quarry Road by street trees, a stand of large evergreen trees on the site, and the Palo Alto Utilities Substation (see photographs). Accordingly, placing the proposed new medical office building between the Hoover Pavilion and Quarry Road would not materially alter the context or feature of the Hoover Pavilion that justify its inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources.
Conclusions

1) What is the primary façade of Hoover Pavilion?
   The façade facing El Camino Real and Palo Road is the primary façade. While some buildings have more than one primary façade, this occurs generally in cases where a building is located on a corner facing two public streets and has public entrances on each street-facing façade. The single historic public entry to the Palo Alto Hospital was the entry facing El Camino Real. Therefore, the building does not have two primary facades.

2) Is the Quarry Road side a primary façade?
   No, the Quarry Road façade is a secondary façade. The ambulance entrance was not publically accessible and the ground floor was a service area for the hospital. Quarry Road was a minor farm road during the majority of the period of significance for the Palo Alto Hospital, obtaining its more urban character only after the primary hospital functions had moved to the current Stanford Hospital location.

3) Does the proposed project substantially obstruct views of the Hoover Pavilion such that the significance of the Hoover Pavilion would be materially impaired?
   No, the proposed project retains views of the building from the historic entry road and landscape plaza, as well as from the Quarry Road-Palo Road intersection. The area of the site in which the medical office building would be located is partially obscured from public vantage points by street trees. The project would not alter the context of the Hoover Pavilion such that it’s eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources would be materially impaired.
List of Figures


2) Plot Plan. Hospital Building for the City of Palo Alto. Reed and Corlett, Architects and Engineers. 1930.

3) North-East and South-West Elevations. Hospital Building for the City of Palo Alto. Reed and Corlett, Architects and Engineers. 1930.

4) North-West Elevation. Hospital Building for the City of Palo Alto. Reed and Corlett, Architects and Engineers. 1930.

5) First Floor and Details. Hospital Building for the City of Palo Alto. Reed and Corlett, Architects and Engineers. 1930.

6) Photograph of Palo Alto Hospital from Palo Road before 1939 addition. Palo Alto Historical Association.

7) Map of vicinity, circa 1941. Stanford University Archives M300.

8) Oblique aerial photograph, circa 1941. Palo Alto Historical Association.

9) Aerial photograph, 1941. Stanford University Archives GP13133.


14) Detail, 1960 aerial photo.


16) Detail, 1993 aerial photo.


18) Existing conditions.
Detail, 1928 aerial photo