Report Type: Action Items  Meeting Date: 7/18/2011

Council Priority: Land Use and Transportation Planning

Summary Title: Historic/Seismic Bonus for Rehab 668 Ramona

Title: PUBLIC HEARING: Approval of a Request and Record of Land Use Action for On-site Use of 4,940 Square Feet of a 5,000 Square-Foot “Double Bonus” From a Proposed Historic Rehabilitation and Seismic Retrofit, to Increase the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 668 Ramona Street (Palo Alto Art League), Listed as a Category II Structure on the Palo Alto Historic and Seismic Inventories

From: City Manager

Lead Department: Planning and Community Environment

Recommendation
Staff, the Historic Resources Board, and the Architectural Review Board recommend that the City Council approve the on-site use of 4,940 square feet of bonus floor area generated for historic and seismic upgrades pursuant to Palo Alto Municipal Code section 18.18.070(b)(8), based upon the findings and recommended conditions of approval in the Record of Land Use Action (Attachment A).

Executive Summary
The Pacific Art League (PAL) is proposing a historic and seismic rehabilitation of the building at 668 Ramona Street in order to expand the existing 7,606 square foot facility by 4,940 square feet to total 12,546 square feet using bonus floor area, which is permitted based upon the provisions of PAMC Section 18.18.070. Because the project site is listed as a Category 2 Historic Resource and as Seismic Category 2 on the Seismic Structures Inventory, historic and seismic rehabilitation allows a combined historic and seismic Floor Area Bonus (“double bonus”) whereby the building may increase its floor area by 5,000 square feet or 50 percent of the existing building, whichever is greater, without having this increase count toward Floor Area Ratio (FAR) limits or requiring parking for the additional area.

Background
Council Purview
PAMC section 18.18.070(b)(8) requires the Council to approve on-site use of a double floor area bonus. To grant approval of the on-site use, the Council must find that:
(i) The exterior modifications for the entire project comply with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings" (36 CFR §67,7); and

(ii) The on-site use of the FAR bonus would not otherwise be inconsistent with the historic character of the interior and exterior of the building and site.

These findings are outlined in the Record of Land Use Action (Attachment A). The Historic Resources Board (HRB) and Architectural Review Board (ARB) reviewed the rehabilitation project and determined that the rehabilitation will comply with these requirements.

Site Information
The 5,610 square foot Project site is located in Downtown Palo Alto on the corner of Ramona Street and Forest Avenue within the Downtown Parking Assessment District. The subject parcel has 66 feet of frontage on Forest Avenue and 85 feet of frontage on Ramona Street.

The adjacent site on Forest Avenue is developed with a two-story commercial building (office use). The adjacent site on Ramona Street is separated from the Project site by an alley (Lane 11 West) and a two-story commercial building (restaurant on the ground floor and office upstairs).

The existing three-story building on the Project site was originally developed in 1926 as the Winsor Cabinet Shop and remained as such until 1965 when the Pacific Art League (formerly called Palo Alto Art Club) bought and occupied the building. The building currently contains 7,606 square feet of floor area. No on-site parking is provided. The 16 foot wide paved building setback area, accessible via Lane 11 West, on the south side of the building is regularly used for tandem parking for two to three vehicles. The Pacific Art League operates as a non-profit organization that provides classes and hosts art exhibitions.

Historic Designation
In 1980 the City Council designated 668 Ramona to the Historic Inventory in Category 3. In 1988, the City Council reclassified the building as a Category 2 “Major Building” which is defined as follows in the Historic Preservation Ordinance: “‘Major Building’ means any building or group of buildings of major regional importance, meritorious works of the best architects or an outstanding example of

![Figure 1. Rendering of Proposed Project (new addition to the rear left)](image-url)
an architectural style or the stylistic development of architecture in the state or region. A major building may have some exterior modifications, but the original character is retained." The Historic Inventory form emphasizes that 668 Ramona is "a building of presence and strong visual interest….that anchors the end of this commercial block and turns the corner gracefully." Also, “along with the two-building complex at 628-632 Ramona, this structure forms the dominant historic character of most of the block." The most significant historic features of the exterior are the central castle tower with diamond-shaped wood muntins at the tower windows, the Palladian gable vents, the strongly textured pebble dash stucco, several second floor windows with clay tile awnings and unique bent wood balcony railings that simulate wrought iron, and the unusual wood detailing of the first floor window frames of the south wing. The building was also evaluated by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) several years ago as part of a Section 106 federal review of a proposed project. SHPO classified the building as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Historic Structure Report is included as Attachment H.

Historic Integrity
The Palo Alto Art League building retains a high level of integrity. The most significant alteration that has occurred was carried out in 1965 when the original north wing recessed entry on Ramona Street was replaced with a window grouping of divided lights and transom windows closely similar to the original window groups on either side. Because the demolished entry was narrower than the flanking window groups, the replacement group had to be slightly reduced in height and the panes, though in the same pattern as the flanking windows, had to be slightly smaller. The goal was likely to replicate the historic window groupings but because of the needed size reductions it is actually clear that the replacement window group is not original. The resulting new window group is highly compatible but still differentiated.

The other principal alterations occurred after the 1978 Historic Inventory photo of the building: on the Forest Avenue elevation, the ornate ribbon of second-floor wood windows was replaced by incompatible aluminum sliders and the large first floor multi-pane window was replaced by a simple wood panel.

The great majority of the building retains its original character, and with the exception of the replacement of the north wing Ramona entry in 1965, the most significant features of the building have not been altered, or have been altered compatibly such as the replacement of the original corrugated metal roofing with composition roofing in 1980.

Project Description
The major component of the project is the 4,940 square foot addition proposed along the south side of the existing building. The project also includes minor improvements to the existing building, such as a replacement door for the recessed main entrance (Ramona Street), replacement wood windows for the aluminum second-floor windows (Forest Avenue), new windows to replace the infill wall on the first floor (Forest Avenue), and repainting of the building to match the existing colors. The new floor area of the building would be 12,546 square feet.
The addition to the building provides a new primary entrance on the Forest Avenue frontage for the future tenants of the second and third floor spaces. The “for lease” space is identified in the plans on Sheet A-23 (5,213 s.f.) and the remaining 7,333 s.f. of the building will be utilized by the Pacific Art League. The proposed addition is differentiated from the historic building by setting it back 10 feet from the existing building wall face and with the use of a smooth cement plaster wall finish. The addition incorporates architectural elements (windows, arches, colors, etc) that are complimentary to the existing historic building.

Discussion

Rehabilitation Plan
The four primary components of the rehabilitation plan are: (1) a 4,940 square-foot addition expanding the existing three stories and redesigned spaces within the existing historic building providing additional artist studios, gallery spaces, and classrooms to meet the expanding needs of PAL; (2) an expansion and alteration of the building to provide compliance with the handicap accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) including an elevator serving all floors, enlarged restrooms, doorways sufficient for wheelchair access, and ADA-code compliant stairs and corridors; (3) seismic rehabilitation of the building which is currently classified by the City of Palo Alto as a seismic hazard; and (4) remediation of all the known historic rehabilitation needs of the eighty-five year old building.

The applicant proposes to seismically upgrade the building so that it is consistent with the structural standards of the current Seismic Code. Such rehabilitation would provide major protection of the building in the long term. Components of the seismic upgrade will not be located on the exterior of the building. Steel columns will be positioned on the inside faces of the 12" x 12" existing concrete columns making the columns minimally visible from the street. The steel ceiling beams will be clearly seen from the sidewalk but the circular perforations will give the beams a decorative character. Although the full details have yet to be determined for the depicted seismic upgrade, the applicant’s engineer has provided a memo verifying that the proposed seismic upgrade is generally feasible (Attachment C). This detail is required to return to the HRB and ARB for review and final approval.

Floor Area Bonus and TDR
The requirement that the City Council review the use of the double floor area bonus on significant (Category 1 and 2) historic sites was established in the Municipal Code in 1995, and was part of the ongoing evolution of a stronger development-based historic incentives program in Palo Alto.

The Floor Area Bonus program initially restricted historic-seismic properties to a single Floor Area Bonus for either historic or seismic rehabilitation even if both rehabilitations were carried out. In 1995, the “double bonus” was created to combine historic and seismic bonuses into a single incentive that generated 5,000 square feet of FAR-exempt floor area (or 50 percent of the existing building, whichever is greater), which can be used on-site or as transferable development rights (TDRs).
The Floor Area Bonus program has been further strengthened by requiring applications to include a Historic Structure Report (HSR), prepared by a qualified consultant according to federal standards, to guide the development of the rehabilitation plan. In addition, owners of properties receiving a Floor Area Bonus must enter into a protective preservation covenant ensuring retention of the property’s historic character in perpetuity.

For a historic and seismic rehabilitation, the building would be allowed to increase its floor area by 5,000 square feet (PAMC 18.18.070(4)), but not to exceed a floor area ratio of 3:1. The applicant proposes to use 4,940 square feet for the addition and the remaining 60 square feet would be available as Transferable Development Rights (TDR). As an added benefit of the historic and seismic rehabilitation, parking is not required for the bonus floor area added to a project.

**Board Reviews and Recommendations**

**Historic Resources Board**
On June 15, 2011, the HRB conducted a public hearing on the project and unanimously recommended approval (7-0) of the project with added conditions. The HRB staff report and verbatim minutes are attached for review. There were no members of the public present to speak to this item. The HRB conditioned the project to return on Consent with design details of the following items:

- The new wood-frame ribbon-style casement windows on the second floor of the existing building on the Forest Avenue elevation;
- The new skylight located on the three-story addition;
- The arched canopy over the new Forest Avenue entrance;
- An alternative street lamp fixture at the new Forest Avenue entrance;
- The seismic upgrade plan; and
- The trash enclosure and the location of the bike racks.

**Architectural Review Board**
On June 16, 2011, the ARB conducted a public hearing on the project and unanimously recommended approval (4-0-0-1) of the project with added conditions similar to those listed above. There was minimal discussion of the project by the Board, but they concurred with the HRB in that additional details were needed on some of the items for the project. The ARB staff report and verbatim minutes are attached for review and the complete list of approval conditions is provided in Attachment A.

**Director’s Decision**
On June 27, 2011, following staff review and recommendations from the HRB and ARB, the Director of Planning and Community Environment (“Director”) approved the Architectural and
Historic Review of the project contingent upon Council approval of the on-site use of the bonus floor area.

**Resource Impact**
The proposed project is not expected to have significant impacts on City revenue or expenses. With the 4,940 square feet of additional office development, there will be a negligible increase in property tax collected, little if any sales tax increase, and very little additional cost of City services.

**Policy Implications**

**Comprehensive Plan**
The proposed project is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and staff believes there are no other substantive policy implications. The project design and intent is in general conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. The project is consistent with and supported by the following Land Use policies:

*Policy L-23: Maintain and enhance the University Avenue/Downtown area as the central business district of the City, with a mix of commercial, civic, cultural, recreational and residential uses. Promote quality design that recognizes the regional and historical importance of the area and reinforces its pedestrian character.*

*Policy L-49: Design buildings to revitalize streets and public spaces and to enhance a sense of community and personal safety. Provide an ordered variety of entries, porches, windows, bays and balconies along public ways where it is consistent with neighborhood character; avoid blank or solid walls at street level; and include human-scale details and massing.*

*Policy L-51: Encourage public and private upkeep and preservation of resources that have historic merit, including residences listed in the Historic Inventory.*

*Policy L-56: To reinforce the scale and character of University Avenue/Downtown, promote the preservation of significant historic buildings.*

*Policy L-58: Promote adaptive reuse of old buildings.*

**Environmental Review**
The project is Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15301 and 15331 of the CEQA Guidelines. The project is consistent with the Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation.

**Attachments:**
- Attachment A: Record of Land Use Action (DOC)
• Attachment B: Location Map   (PDF)
• Attachment C: Applicant's Project Description/Information   (PDF)
• Attachment D: HRB Staff Report, June 15, 2011 (w/o attachments)   (PDF)
• Attachment E: HRB Verbatim Meeting Minutes and Summary of Motion, June 15, 2011   (DOC)
• Attachment F: ARB Staff Report, June 16, 2011 (w/o attachments)   (PDF)
• Attachment G: ARB Verbatim Meeting Minutes, June 16, 2011(DOC)
• Attachment H: Historic Structures Report   (PDF)
• Attachment I: Project Plans   (TXT)

Prepared By: Clare Campbell, Planner

Department Head: Curtis Williams, Director

City Manager Approval: James Keene, City Manager
On July 18, 2011, the Council of the City of Palo Alto approved a request for on-site use of 4,940 square feet of a 5,000 square-foot combined Historic and Seismic Rehabilitation Floor Area Bonus from a proposed historic rehabilitation and seismic retrofit to increase the floor area of a property listed on the Palo Alto Historic Inventory as a Category 2 historic resource and on the Seismic Structures Inventory as a Seismic Category II building, making the following findings, determination and declarations:

SECTION 1. Background. The City Council of the City of Palo Alto ("City Council") finds, determines, and declares as follows:

A. On January 4, 2011, William Bruner, on behalf of the Pacific Art League, applied for Historic and Architectural Review of the historic rehabilitation and seismic upgrade of an existing Category 2 Historic Resource generating a combined Historic and Seismic Rehabilitation Floor Area Bonus ("Double Bonus") of 5,000 square feet, of which 4,940 square feet would be used on site and the remainder would be available as Transfer of Development Rights ("The Project").

B. Following staff review, the Historic Resource Board (HRB) reviewed the project on June 15, 2011, and recommended approval of the project (7-0). The Architectural Board (ARB) reviewed the project on June 16, 2011, and recommended approval of the project (4-0-0-1). The HRB’s and ARB’s recommendations are contained in the CMR #1661.

C. On June 27, 2011, the Director of Planning and Community Environment ("Director") approved the Architectural and Historic Review application contingent upon City Council approving the on-site use of bonus floor area.

SECTION 2. Environmental Review. The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") Guidelines, per sections 15301 and 15331.

SECTION 3. Floor Area Bonuses – Findings. The project is eligible for a combined bonus totaling 5,000 square feet for both historic and seismic rehabilitation. 4,940 square feet of the combined bonus will be used on site. The City Council, pursuant to
Section 18.18.070(b)(8)(A) of the Palo Alto Municipal Code, finds that:

1. The exterior modifications for the entire project comply with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings" (36 CFR § 67, 7), in that:

   The improvements to the existing building have been determined by the City’s Historic Resources board to be compatible with the existing historic elements of the building and meets the definition of “historic rehabilitation” as set forth in Municipal Code 18.18.030(b):”...returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values.. and shall remedy all the known rehabilitation needs of the building, and shall not be confined to routine repair and maintenance as determined by the director of planning and community environment.”

   The major component of the project is a 4,940 square foot addition to the three-story building proposed along the south side of the existing building. The project also includes minor improvements to the existing building, such as a replacement door for the recessed main entrance (Ramona Street), replacement wood windows for the aluminum second-floor windows (Forest Avenue), new windows to replace the infill wall on the first floor (Forest Avenue), and repainting of the building to match the existing colors.

2. The on-site use of the floor area bonus would not otherwise be inconsistent with the historic character of the building and site, in that:

   The addition includes compatibility and differentiation strategies, especially the contrast between the smooth stucco finish of the addition and the rough finish of the historic walls. Also, the addition is recessed 10 feet which is an effective differentiation strategy. The entry doors and sidelights with the large glass arch above appeared to be a distinctly modern entry feature which is also compatible with the traditional form and references of the addition.

   The great majority of the interior is utilitarian in character reflecting the original repair shop use of the building. This character will generally remain and may even be enhanced by the seismic framing system. Also, the general shapes and sizes of the main rooms on the first and second floors and the general circulation pattern will be largely retained by the project. The two interior features that are rated as contributing are the
hardwood floors and the built-in cabinets in the Library. The project appears to preserve these features.

SECTION 4. Floor Area Bonuses. Floor area bonuses in the amount of 5,000 square feet are granted for Historic Rehabilitation and Seismic Upgrades performed. 4,940 square feet are used on-site as part of the Project. 60 square feet are eligible for transfer to other sites.

SECTION 5. Conditions of Approval.

Planning Division

1. The project shall be in substantial conformance with the approved plans and related documents received May 26, 2011, except as modified to incorporate these conditions of approval.

2. The project’s Record of Land Use Action documenting the Council approval of the on-site use of bonus floor area and all associated project approval conditions shall be printed on one of the initial sheets of the Building Permit Plan Set (final construction plans).

3. The Historic Rehabilitation Plan for 668 Ramona Street shall comprise the applicant’s written “Project Description” document, the “Treatment Recommendations” listed on pages 49-50 of the Historic Structure Report by PAST Consultants, LLC, dated May 11, 2010, the rehabilitation items depicted in the revised project Plan Set dated May 22, 2011, and two rehabilitation items added by staff: (a) a pest report if evidence of pests is found, and implementation of recommendations contained in that report, and (b) an assessment of the building for water leaks and, if found, the repair of the leaks.

Specifying Temporary Protection of Historic Interiors During Construction and Repair.” (Staff will provide these documents to the project applicant for guidance on rehabilitation details.)

5. That details of the following project components shall return to the full HRB on the Consent Calendar:
   a. The new wood-frame ribbon-style casement windows on the second floor of the Forest Avenue elevation of the historic building;
   b. The new skylight over the new addition;
   c. The arched projecting glass canopy over the entry doors of the new addition including the type of glass and non-glass components of the canopy;
   d. An alternative design or designs for the street lamp that will illuminate the entry area to the new addition;
   e. The seismic upgrade structural steel system proposed for the interior spaces of the historic building;
   f. The trash enclosures at the alley elevation;
   g. The location of the bicycle racks.

6. That details of the following project components shall return to the full ARB on the Consent Calendar:
   a. The window details on the addition;
   b. The modification of the sidelights on the Forest Avenue entrance;
   c. The alternative light fixtures for the lamp and at the alley side roll-up door;
   d. Provide a sample of the roof material with the accurate color proposed;
   e. Provide details of the exterior treatment of the recessed entry on Forest Avenue, with detail on planters, furniture, etc;
   f. Provide details on the new canopy element above the new Forest Avenue entrance;
   g. Provide location of the bike racks; and
   h. Reconsider the roofline on the addition and provide an alternative solution.

7. Any proposed revisions to approved materials and colors for the exterior of 668 Ramona Street proposed during the project construction phase shall be submitted for review by the Historic Preservation Planner.

8. The project shall include the installation of two bicycle parking spaces on-site. Contact the Transportation Division for the approved bike racks and return for final review and approval (see 5(g) and 6(g) above).
9. The applicant shall install planters, and possibly a bench, along the new entry façade on Forest Avenue; the proposed plan shall be submitted for review and approval (see 6(e) above).

10. The applicant shall install a covered trash enclosure; the details are required to return for review and approval (see 5(f) above).

11. Any signage proposed to be attached to the exterior façade of the building shall be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Planner prior to ordering manufacture of the sign in conjunction with Architectural Review.

12. No demolition or permanent removal of significant historic fabric that is not included in the project approval shall be carried out in any amount for any reason except with written permission by the Department of Planning and Community Environment.

13. The California Historical Building Code shall be applied to all eligible aspects of the historic and seismic rehabilitation of the building exterior and interior when needed to preserve character-defining features.

14. The ten Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation shall be printed on one of the initial sheets of the Building Permit Plan Set (final construction plans).

15. The Historic Preservation Planner shall participate in the Planning Department’s Final Inspection of the completed project.

16. Upon Planning Department approval of the completed project the owner of the site shall enter into an unsubordinated protective covenant running with the land in favor of the city, in a form satisfactory to the city attorney, to assure the property will be rehabilitated and maintained in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, as they may be amended from time to time.

17. Development Impact fees are required for the proposed development. The estimated total of the Development Impact Fees is $133,039. These fees must be paid prior to building permit issuance.
Fire
1. Install a monitored NFPA 13 fire sprinkler system throughout the entire building.
2. All sprinkler drains, including auxiliary, inspector’s test and main drain, shall not discharge within the building. Water discharged from these points shall be directed to an approved landscape location or to the sanitary sewer system. NOTE: The maximum flow capacity of sanitary sewer in the area is 30 gpm. Main Drain test discharge flow rate shall be impounded and attenuated to below sanitary sewer capacity before discharge.
3. Elevator car shall be sized for Fire Department gurney access requirements based on gurney dimensions of 24 in. x 84 in. plus a minimum of two emergency response personnel.
4. Provide project data, including Type of Construction and an allowable area analysis.

Electrical Engineering (Utilities)
1. The applicant shall comply with all the Electric Utility Engineering Department service requirements noted during plan and building review.
2. Applicant/Developer must notify Utilities Engineering (Electric) if the proposed renovation/change of use has any impact on the existing electrical service size, voltage, or location. If there are any changes, the Utilities will provide comments and/or conditions along with any applicable fees and cost estimate.

Building
Architectural Comments:
1. List the following project data information on the Cover Sheet of the plans: a. Building Occupancy Group: (M, B, etc) b. Type of Construction: ( V-B, III-B, etc) c. Sprinklered: (Y/N) d. Building Area: First Floor (E) & (N) Second Floor (E) & (N) Third Floor (E) & (N)
3. Clarify on the Proposed Floor Plans for the 1st, 2nd & 3rd Floors the intended use of each room and/ or space shown, e.g. Retail, Classroom, Office, etc. 4. On sheet A-4, First Floor Plan: it appears that the (N) stairwell (located in the rear addition) connects more than two-stories and serves as a required means of egress rated exit enclosure for the 2nd and 3rd floors. The exit enclosure shall lead directly to the exterior of the building or shall be extended with an exit passageway conforming to CBC 1023. Please revise the exit enclosure to comply. (CBC 1002.1) 5. On sheet A-6, Third Floor Plan and on sheet A-12, Southwest Elevation: there are three (3) windows shown in the rear addition in the exterior wall that is located 6" from the property line and is not permitted. Exterior wall openings that are protected or unprotected...
are not permitted with the fire separation distance is less than 3-ft. Please delete these windows from the floor plan and elevation views. (CBC 705.8.1)

Please note that once the project has received Building Division approval the following conditions of approval will apply:

General Comment: 1. The completed plan submittal package should be sent to an approved Outside Plan Check Consultant for plan review.

Architectural Comments: 1. On the Proposed First to Third Floor Plan, the minimum required plumbing fixture(s) count for the restrooms will based on the 2010 CA Plumbing Code, CFC Table 4-1.

Structural Comments: 1. A geotechnical report is required for the construction of the addition to the commercial building. 2. A lateral seismic evaluation and/or upgrade of the (E) building to the current Building Code is required. Where the addition is not structurally independent of the existing structure, the exiting structure and its addition acting together as a single structure shall meet the requirements of CBC Section 1609 and 1613 for Wind and Earthquake Loads. In addition where the alteration decreases the capacity of the any existing lateral load-carrying structural element, the structure of the altered building shall meet the similar requirements of CBC 1609 and 1613. This appears to be the case of the addition to the rear of the (E) building that demolishes the majority of the rear exterior wall. (CBC 3403.4, 3404.4)

Water-Gas-Wastewater (Utilities)

1. The applicant shall submit a completed water-gas-wastewater service connection application - load sheet for City of Palo Alto Utilities. The applicant must provide all the information requested for utility service demands (water in fixture units/g.p.m., gas in b.t.u.p.h, and sewer in fixture units/g.p.d).

2. The applicant shall submit improvement plans for any utility construction. The plans must show the size and location of all underground utilities within the development and the public right of way including meters, backflow preventers, fire service requirements, sewer mains, sewer cleanouts, sewer lift stations and any other required utilities.

3. Utility vaults, transformers, utility cabinets, concrete bases, or other structures can not be placed over existing water, gas or wastewater mains/services. Maintain 1’ horizontal clear separation from the vault/cabinet/concrete base to existing utilities as found in the field. If there is a conflict with existing utilities, Cabinets/vaults/bases shall be relocated from the plan location as needed to meet field conditions.
4. The applicant must show on the site plan the existence of any auxiliary water supply, (i.e. water well, gray water, recycled water, rain catchment, water storage tank, etc).

5. The applicant shall be responsible for installing and upgrading the existing utility mains and/or services as necessary to handle anticipated peak loads. This responsibility includes all costs associated with the design and construction for the installation/upgrade of the utility mains and/or services.

6. Sewer drainage piping serving fixtures located less than one foot above the next upstream sewer main manhole cover shall be protected by an approved backwater valve per California Plumbing Code 710.0. The upstream sewer main manhole rim elevation shall be shown on the plans.

7. Flushing of the fire system to sanitary sewer shall not exceed 30 GPM. Higher flushing rates shall be diverted to a detention tank to achieve the 30 GPM flow to sewer.

8. Sewage ejector pumps shall meet the following conditions:
   1. The pump(s) be limited to a total 100 GPM capacity or less.
   2. The sewage line changes to a 4” gravity flow line at least 20’ from the City clean out.
   3. The tank and float is set up such that the pump run time not exceed 20 seconds each cycle.

9. Existing wastewater laterals that are not plastic (ABS, PVC, or PE) shall be replaced at the applicant’s expense.

10. The applicant shall pay the capacity fees and connection fees associated with the installation of the new utility service/s to be installed by the City of Palo Alto Utilities. The approved relocation of services, meters, hydrants, or other facilities will be performed at the cost of the person/entity requesting the relocation.

11. Each unit or place of business shall have its own water and gas meter shown on the plans.

12. An approved reduce pressure principle assembly (RPPA backflow preventer device) is required for all existing and new water connections from Palo Alto Utilities to comply with requirements of California administrative code, title 17, sections 7583 through 7605 inclusive. The RPPA shall be installed on the owner's property and directly behind the water meter, within 5’ of the property line. Show the location of the RPPA on the plans. Inspection by the utilities cross connection inspector is required for the supply pipe between the meter and the assembly. The
13. An approved reduced pressure detector assembly is required for the existing or new water connection for the fire system to comply with requirements of California administrative code, title 17, sections 7583 through 7605 inclusive. Reduced pressure detector assemblies shall be installed on the owner's property adjacent to the property line, within 5' of the property line. **Show the location of the reduced pressure detector assembly on the plans.**

Inspection by the utilities cross connection inspector is required for the supply pipe between the City connection and the assembly.

14. All existing water and wastewater services that will not be reused shall be abandoned at the main per WGW utilities procedures before any new utility services are installed.

15. All utility installations shall be in accordance with the City of Palo Alto utility standards for water, gas & wastewater.

**Public Works Engineering**

1. **SIDEWALK, CURB & GUTTER:** As part of this project, the applicant must replace those portions of the existing sidewalks, curbs, gutters or driveway approaches in the public right-of-way along the frontage(s) of the property that are broken, badly cracked, displaced, or non-standard. Contact Public Works' inspector at 650-496-6929 to arrange a site visit so the inspector can determine the extent of replacement work. The site plan submitted with the building permit plan set must show the extent of the replacement work or include a note that Public Works' inspector has determined no work is required. The plan must note that any work in the right-of-way must be done per Public Works' standards by a licensed contractor who must first obtain a **Street Work Permit** from Public Works at the Development Center.

2. **STREET TREES:** The applicant may be required to replace existing and/or add new street trees in the public right-of-way along the property's frontage. Call Public Works' arborist at 650-496-6905 to arrange a site visit so he can determine what street tree work, if any, will be required for this project. The site plan submitted with the building permit plan set must show the street tree work that the arborist has determined, including the tree species, size, location, staking and irrigation requirements. The plan must note that in order to do street tree work, the applicant must first obtain a **Permit for Street Tree Work in the Public Right-of-Way** from Public Works' arborist.

The following comments are provided to assist the applicant at the building permit phase. You can obtain various plan set details,
forms and guidelines from Public Works at the City's Development Center (285 Hamilton Avenue) or on Public Works’ website: http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/pwd/forms_permits.asp.

Include in plans submitted for a building permit:

3. GRADING & DRAINAGE PLAN: The plan set must include a grading & drainage plan prepared by a licensed professional that includes existing and proposed spot elevations and drainage flow arrows to demonstrate proper drainage of the site. Adjacent grades must slope away from the buildings a minimum of 2%. Downspouts and splashblocks should be shown on this plan, as well as any site drainage features such as swales. Grading will not be allowed that increases drainage onto, or blocks existing drainage from, neighboring properties. Public Works generally does not allow rainwater to be collected and discharged into the street gutter, but encourages the developer to keep rainwater onsite as much as feasible by directing runoff to landscaped and other pervious areas of the site.

Site grading, excavation, and other site improvements that disturb large soil areas may only be performed during the regular construction season (from April 16 through October 15th) of each year the permit is active. The site must be stabilized to prevent soil erosion during the wet season. The wet season is defined as the period from October 15 to April 15. Methods of stabilization are to be identified within the Civil sheets of the improvement plans for approval.

4. GRADING & EXCAVATION PERMIT: Show the amount of soil that will be excavated and filled. For new basement projects or if more than 100 cubic yards of soil is disturbed, a Grading and Excavation Permit needs to be obtained from Public Works at the Development Center. Refer to the Public Works’ website for “Excavation and Grading Permit Instructions.”

5. STORM WATER POLLUTION PREVENTION: The City's full-sized "Pollution Prevention - It's Part of the Plan" sheet must be included in the plan set. Copies are available from Public Works at the Development Center or on our website. Also, the applicant must provide a site-specific storm water pollution control plan sheet in the plan set.

6. IMPERVIOUS SURFACE AREA: If the project will be creating or replacing 500 square feet or more of impervious surface, the applicant shall provide calculations of the existing and proposed impervious surface areas with the building permit application. The Impervious Area Worksheet for Land Developments form and instructions are available at the Development Center or on our website.
7. WORK IN THE RIGHT-OF-WAY: The plans must clearly indicate any work that is proposed in the public right-of-way, such as sidewalk replacement, driveway approach, curb inlet, storm water connections or utility laterals. The plans must include notes that the work must be done per City standards and that the contractor performing this work must first obtain a Street Work Permit from Public Works at the Development Center.

8. LOGISTICS PLAN: The contractor must submit a logistics plan to the Public Works Department prior to commencing work that addresses all impacts to the City’s right-of-way, including, but not limited to: pedestrian control, traffic control, truck routes, material deliveries, contractor’s parking, concrete pours, crane lifts, work hours, noise control, dust control, storm water pollution prevention, contractor’s contact, noticing of affected businesses, and schedule of work. The plan will be attached to a Street Work Permit.

PASSED:
AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTENTIONS:

ATTEST: APPROVED:

City Clerk Director of Planning and Community Environment

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Senior Deputy City Attorney

PLANS AND DRAWINGS REFERENCED:

The Application:

The purpose of this application is to present to City Staff, the HRB, the ARB, and the City Council information about the proposed renovation of the building located at 668 Ramona Street that is owned and occupied by the Pacific Art League (PAL). PAL is in the process of developing plans for redevelopment of the current building from 7,606 square feet to approximately 12,546 square feet.

Our construction project will include; (1) rehabilitation of the existing historic building façades in conformance with the Standards of the Secretary of the Department of the Interior; (2) seismic upgrade of this concrete and un-reinforced hollow tile building in accordance with applicable building codes and to a level sufficient to remove it from the City’s seismic hazards inventory; and (3) expand portions of the building necessary to comply with handicapped accessibility requirements and historic rehabilitation for a private building, with an elevator serving all floors, enlarged restrooms, code compliant stairs, corridors, doorways sufficient for wheelchair access, and additional space on three floors for studios and galleries totalling 4,940 square feet.

Request of the City Council:

A. In order to develop our project, the PAL requests that the City Council grant bonus areas for both seismic upgrade and historic rehabilitation as allowed under PAMC 18.49.060 (b)(3)(B) in advance of beginning the upgrade and rehabilitation work.

Project Construction Process:

As part of this project, the original existing facades that faces out toward Forest Avenue, Ramona Street, and the Alley would be repaired and rehabilitated. There is an existing “shed” in the rear, which is constructed entirely of un-reinforced hollow clay tile. It is not part of the original building and would be demolished. The remainder of the rear facade, most of which has been altered over the years, would also be removed. The upgrade of the entire interior including floors, walls, mechanical/electrical systems, and a new structural system to support the original facade are part of the project.

A new three-story addition would be constructed on the existing unused portion of the original site. This new addition would be set back in plan from the original building and the upper levels of the addition configured to highlight and preserve the character defining elements of the original structure. In response to the League’s program, the existing main floor public entrance would remain and a new auxiliary entrance would be provided on Forest Avenue. This would be enhanced by the existing large Box Elder street tree. From the street level, the new addition is related to the original building in form and in massing. The exterior finish materials and colors, although similar in general color tone, differentiate the addition from the original with a finer stucco texture, and the fenestration is characterized by simple detailing and multiple lights as present in the existing facade.
The League:

The Pacific Art League was founded approximately ninety years ago as the Palo Alto Art Club. Since then the league has grown to be a community/region-wide organization that promotes visual arts. It provides approximately 200 classes in various media, exhibit galleries, art outreach programs, an art rental program, annual art shows, and monthly receptions. In recent years, the League has been studying ways to enhance its services, increase their efficiency, and improve its facility. Recently, the League decided that for purposes of its own recognition and for the benefit of their programs, it would be in their best interest to remain at their present downtown location and explore ways to improve the current facility.

The Building:

The League purchased the building in 1965. The building was designed and constructed in two phases in the 1920's by H. L. Winsor. The ground floor was the Winsor cabinet and furniture shop and the upper floor contained family apartments. The Winsor family owned the building until the League acquired it. The main building is constructed of a concrete frame system, infilled with unreinforced hollow clay tile walls and is faced with a pebble texture stucco. The roof is framed in wood and covered with composition shingles. The building is listed in the City's historical inventory under Category 2 and it is included in the city's Seismic Hazard Reduction Program.

Zoning:

The building is in the downtown CD-C(P) district and its current and continuing use is permitted. Adjacent properties are commercial. The Police Department is across Ramona Street and a three and four story condominium (PC 2967) is across Forest Avenue. The Site Development Regulations of section 18.49.060 permit additional floor area of 2500 square feet each for voluntary seismic upgrade and for historic rehabilitation.

Schedule of Phases

Starting from the date of final Board planning approval the project schedule is as follows:

City Planning Approvals ................................................................. 4 months

Preparation of
Construction Documents.............................................................. 4 months

Value Engineering,
Bidding and Building Permit ....................................................... 4 months

Construction and Occupancy ......................................................... 1 year

Total: 2 years
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* SITE IS PART OF PARKING DISTRICT.
Art of League of Palo Alto
668 Ramona St.
Palo Alto, CA 94041

Attention: Bill Bruner

Regarding: Preliminary Structural

Our previous memo dated September 19, 2011, still applies to the present. The structure can be updated in substantial compliance with the current building code.

Per our previous correspondence, we advise considering the seismic enhancement of the existing building and the addition as separate structural entities. This way, they can be treated as independent structures.

The purpose of the enhancements is to mitigate falling hazards (particularly, from the hollow clay tile infill walls) and to prevent major structural damage during a large seismic event. As you know, the structural properties of the existing building are largely unknown, other than that it is a concrete frame. Likewise, configuration and properties of foundations are unknown.
In this regard, the existing frame and foundation are assumed to be adequate provided that frames are braced, instead of relying on frame action for resistance to lateral loading. Therefore, bracing has been added for this purpose.

The hollow clay tile infill can fracture and become dislodged when subjected to stress from lateral load from seismic activity. Therefore, we recommend that they be wrapped with fiber (FRP) to prevent fracture of disengagement, or be removed and replaced with stud walls. The sketches attached herewith indicate that they are to be fiber wrapped. The FRP must be attached directly to the hollow clay. In this regard, it is placed on the interior side of the wall so as to avoid removing the stucco exterior wall covering. The FRP is structural, in nature, and wrapped walls may be used as shear walls. In this light, the wall at Line 4, between the two buildings, is to be wrapped on both sides and used as a shear wall.

The enhancements are as follows:

1. Clamp the tower walls to the tower roof using tension rods.
2. Add bracing below the second floor ceiling to brace the roof and prevent the walls from displacing.
3. Add bracing below the first floor ceiling as per Item 2.
4. Brace the exterior walls for shear resistance.
5. Add FRP at Line 4 for shear resistance.
6. FRP the interior hollow clay tile walls to mitigate falling hazards.
Please note that the bracing and bracing details are shown schematically. The details of the attachment to the concrete frame and connection details will be developed after determining the size and configuration of the floor and wall framing. The attachment details included herein are for rough cost estimating purposes only. It may be possible to drop the new ceiling bracing below the existing ceiling to avoid wholesale removal of the existing ceiling, depending on the existing conditions. This can be determined after examining the actual building conditions.

Regrets:

A.J. Miller
FIRST FLOOR

- AREA "A" = 1072 SF
- CREDIT FOR (E) 11" = 33 SF

SECOND FLOOR

- AREA "B" = 253 SF
- AREA "C" = 288 SF
- AREA "D" = 295 SF
- AREA "E" = 252 SF

TOTAL ADDITIONS:
- 1072 SF
- 253 SF
- 288 SF
- 295 SF
- 252 SF
- 3953 SF
- 2160 SF

2/10/11

AREA TAKEOFFS
THIRD FLOOR ADDITIONS:

1072
253
416

1741 SF

TOTAL ADDITIONS:

1st flr 2160 SF
2nd flr 1072 SF
3rd flr 1741 SF

4973 SF
-33 SF

TOTAL 4940 SF

2/10/11

AREA TAKEOFFS
Date: June 15, 2011

To: Historic Resources Board

From: Dennis Backlund
Historic Preservation Planner

Department: Planning and Community Environment

Subject: 668 Ramona Street [11PLN-00007]: Request by Pacific Art League of Palo Alto for Architectural Review Board and Historic Resources Board review of the historic rehabilitation and seismic upgrade of an existing Category II historic resource which would generate 5,000 sq. ft. of bonus floor area, 4,959 sq. ft. of which would be used on site and 41 sq. ft. of which would be available as Transferable Development Rights. Zone District: CD-C(P). Environmental Assessment: Exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act per Section 15331.

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that the Historic Resources Board recommend to the Architectural Review Board, the City Council, and the Director of Planning and Community Environment (1) that the proposed historic and seismic rehabilitation of the Pacific Art League building at 668 Ramona Street meets the definition of "historic rehabilitation" set forth in Municipal Code 18.18.030(b), and (2) that the proposed historic and seismic rehabilitation plan as presented in the applicant's written "Project Description" document (Attachment A), and in the "Treatment Recommendations" listed on pages 49-50 of the Historic Structure Report by PAST Consultants, LLC, dated May 11, 2010 (Attachment B), and in the revised project Plan Set dated May 22, 2011 (Attachment C) complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings with respect to long-term preservation of the building and with respect to the historic compatibility of new features, subject to the following Conditions of Approval:
1. The Historic Rehabilitation Plan for 668 Ramona Street shall comprise the applicant’s written “Project Description” document (Attachment A), the “Treatment Recommendations” listed on pages 49-50 of the Historic Structure Report by PAST Consultants, LLC, dated May 11, 2010 (Attachment B), the rehabilitation items depicted in the revised project Plan Set dated May 22, 2011 (Attachment C), and two rehabilitation items added by staff: (a) a pest report and implementation of recommendations, if any, contained in that report, and (b) an assessment of water leaks in the building and, if found, the repair of leaking plumbing.

2. The project shall be constructed in substantial conformance with the approved ARB/HRB plans received May 26, 2011 except as modified to incorporate these conditions of approval.

3. The 2007 California Historical Building Code shall be applied to all eligible aspects of the historic and seismic rehabilitation of the building exterior and interior when needed to preserve character-defining features.

4. The historic and seismic rehabilitation, restoration, and new construction at 661 Bryant Street shall be based on the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation and on consideration by the applicant of recommendations provided in the Department of the Interior’s “Preservation Briefs” #9 (“The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows”), #18 (“Rehabilitating Interiors in Historic Buildings: Identifying and Preserving Character-Defining Elements”), #22 (“The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco”), #24 (“Heating Ventilating, and Cooling Historic Buildings”), #32 (“Making Historic Properties Accessible”), #41 (“The Seismic Retrofit of Historic Buildings: Keeping Preservation in the Forefront”), and “Preservation Tech Note: Specifying Temporary Protection of Historic Interiors During Construction and Repair.” (Staff will provide these documents to the project applicant for guidance on rehabilitation details.)

5. No demolition or permanent removal of significant historic fabric that is not included in the project approval shall be carried out in any amount for any reason except with written permission by the Department of Planning and Community Environment.

6. Any revisions to approved materials and colors for the exterior of 668 Ramona Street proposed during the project construction phase shall be submitted for review by the Historic Preservation Planner.

7. The color of the frame of the new skylight for the roof of the addition shall be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Planner for similarity to the color of the roofing material.

8. Any new exterior lighting added to the project during the construction phase shall be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Planner with respect to the style, materials, and color of the fixtures, and the light bulb types.
9. Any signage proposed to be attached to the exterior of the historic building or the new addition shall be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Planner, in conjunction with Architectural review, prior to ordering manufacture of the sign.

10. The design and location of the two required bicycle racks shall be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Planner.

11. The design, materials, and colors of the required covered trash enclosure shall be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Planner in conjunction with Planning staff review.

12. The Director of Planning’s project approval letter, including the approved Conditions, shall be printed on one of the initial sheets of the Building Permit Plan Set (final construction plans).

13. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation shall be printed on one of the initial sheets of the Building Permit Plan Set (final construction plans).

14. Prior to issuance of the building permit the Historic Preservation Planner shall review the Building Permit Plan Set (final construction plans) for consistency with the Director of Planning’s project approval based on the recommendations of the Historic Resources Board and approval by the City Council.

15. The Historic Preservation Planner shall participate in the Planning Department’s Final Inspection of the completed project.

16. Upon Planning Department approval of the completed project the owner of the site shall enter into an unsubordinated protective covenant running with the land in favor of the city, in a form satisfactory to the city attorney, to assure the property will be rehabilitated and maintained in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, as they may be amended from time to time.

**STAFF COMMENT ON THE RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

Staff recommends that the overall historic and seismic rehabilitation project as presented by the applicant complies with the Secretary’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation. The two primary purposes of staff’s recommended Conditions are (a) to ensure that the numerous details and possible future revisions involved in this project will receive ongoing evaluation throughout construction for consistency with the Secretary’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation and (b) to ensure that the numerous details of the project shall cohere into a unified compatible design in order to maintain and enhance the building’s historic “sense of place” that is indicated in the Historic Inventory form (Attachment D). Staff requests that the HRB determine whether any of the recommended Conditions of Approval need to be modified for enhanced compliance with the Secretary’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation, or if additional Conditions should be provided.
THE HISTORIC BUILDING

A Significant Historic Resource
In 1980 the City Council designated 668 Ramona to the Historic Inventory in Category 3. In 1988 The City Council reclassified the building as a Category 2 “Major Building” which is defined as follows in the Historic Preservation Ordinance: “Major Building’ means any building or group of buildings of major regional importance, meritorious works of the best architects or an outstanding example of an architectural style or the stylistic development of architecture in the state or region. A major building may have some exterior modifications, but the original character is retained.” The Historic Inventory form emphasizes that 668 Ramona is “a building of presence and strong visual interest....that anchors the end of this commercial block and turns the corner gracefully.” Also, “along with the two-building complex at 628-632 Ramona, this structure forms the dominant historic character of most of the block” (see Attachment D). The most significant historic features of the exterior are the central castle tower with diamond-shaped wood muntins at the tower windows, the Palladian gable vents, the strongly textured pebble dash stucco, several second floor windows with clay tile awnings and unique bent wood balcony railings that simulate wrought iron, and the unusual wood detailing of the first floor window frames of the south wing.

The building was also evaluated by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) several years ago as part of a Section 106 federal review of a proposed project. SHPO classified the building as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Architect
On page 10 of the Historic Structure Report, PAST Consultants states, “Henry R. Winsor designed the building in two sections, constructing the north wing first. Wells Goodenough was the builder....Henry Winsor chose elements of the Mission or Spanish Revival style for his detailing, undoubtedly influenced by the impressive [Birge] Clark and [Pedro] de Lemos buildings being constructed on Ramona Street, merely one block to the north.” The Historic Inventory form cites Birge Clark as the architect which is generally considered to be an error which may have arisen because of the close relationship between Clark and his favored builder, Wells Goodenough. It is possible that the castle component of the building came from Henry Winsor and stemmed from his English background, while Wells Goodenough may have provided some of the Spanish Colonial Revival ideas based on his relationship with Birge Clark

A High Degree of Historic Integrity
The Palo Alto Art League building retains a high level of integrity. The most significant alteration that has occurred was carried out in 1965 when the original
north wing recessed entry on Ramona Street was replaced with a window grouping of divided lights and transom windows closely similar to the original window groups on either side. Because the demolished entry was narrower than the flanking window groups, the replacement group had to be slightly reduced in height and the panes, though in the same pattern as the flanking windows, had to be slightly smaller. The goal was likely to replicate the historic window groupings but because of the needed size reductions it is actually clear that the replacement window group is not original. The resulting new window group is highly compatible but still differentiated, an outcome achieved 10 years before development of the Secretary’s Standards.

The other principal alterations occurred after the 1978 Historic Inventory photo of the building: on the Forest Avenue elevation the ornate ribbon of second-floor wood windows was replaced by incompatible aluminum sliders and the large first floor multi-pane window was replaced by a simple wood panel.

The great majority of the building retains its original character, and with the exception of the replacement of the north wing Ramona entry in 1965, the most significant features of the building have not been altered, or have been altered compatibly such as the replacement of the original corrugated metal roofing with composition roofing in 1980.

**Chronology of Alterations**
PAST Consultants has provided an alteration chronology of the building on pages 26-28 of the *Historic Structure Report*.

**THE REHABILITATION PLAN**

**Summary**
The four primary components of the project are:

1. An expansion of the building to meet needs of an expanding and increasingly regional clientele by providing additional artist studios, gallery spaces, and classrooms. To achieve these goals a 4,940 square-foot three-story addition is proposed, and spaces within the existing historic building are being redesigned to integrate with uses in the addition;

2. Expansion and alteration of the building to provide compliance with the handicap accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) including an elevator serving all floors, enlarged restrooms, doorways sufficient for wheelchair access, and ADA-code compliant stairs and corridors;

3. Seismic rehabilitation of the building which is currently classified by the City of Palo Alto as a seismic hazard, and
4. Remediation of all the known rehabilitation needs of the eighty-five year old building.

The Palo Alto Art League desires to remain in its current building where it has contributed a significant art presence to downtown Palo Alto for forty-five years. However, the City's zoning restrictions for the 5,610 square-foot site would not allow the building to expand to the size the Art League finds to be required for service to its growing clientele. The City's historic preservation program provided the solution through the Floor Area Bonus program which would allow the building to be expanded beyond the limits required by the Zoning Code. The Floor Area Bonus program also allows a substantial building expansion to be carried out in a uniquely cost effective manner by exempting the expansion from normal costly parking requirements. The significant savings in parking "in lieu" fees will help the Art League to finance two long-term historic preservation goals of the City for major downtown historic buildings: seismic upgrades of unreinforced landmarks and rehabilitation and restoration of damaged and deteriorating design features of downtown's defining period buildings. The Bonus Floor Area program, in summary, is a partnership that achieves both private and public goals, both business and cultural objectives.

Staff Comments on the Proposed Historic Rehabilitation Plan

Proposed Alteration: Just inside the open arched entry at the center of the Ramona elevation the project proposed removal of the original stair to the Winsor residence on the second floor (currently the Norton Gallery), removal of the original window opening and mail slot beside the stair, and removal of the raised landing between the lowest step of the stair and the sidewalk. These demolitions will make way for a new porch that is level with a new wider entry door located several feet from the arch. A new code-compliant stair to the second floor will be located just behind the new entry door area.

Staff Response: This is the most significant alteration proposed by the Rehabilitation Plan. The basis of the alteration is the ADA component of the Rehabilitation Plan. Staff recommends that the HRB review the area behind the arch during a site visit. The historic stair is very steep and comments have been made over the years about the unnerving character of the stair especially when descending. The raised landing at the bottom of the stair has caused continuing difficulties for those baking art materials in and out of the building because one must proceed up two steps and then immediately down two steps to enter the building. The landing is needed with the existing stair because if the stair descended to a landing level with the sidewalk then the final two steps of that stair would be located in front of the entry door which is infeasible. The only way to
provide ADA access is to replace the existing stair with a new stair inside the building. Because these alterations would not directly impact the front wall of the building staff concluded that these necessary changes are compliant with the Secretary’s Standards provided the new entry door within the new porch is compatible with the building.

**Proposed Alteration:** Replace the incompatible second-floor aluminum slider windows on the Forest elevation with a replication of the original ornate ribbon of wood windows, and replace the plain wood panel on the first floor of the Forest elevation with a wood and glass panel reminiscent of the early multi-pane window.

**Staff Response:** These components of the Rehabilitation Plan help return the Forest elevation to its original character.

**The New Rear Addition:** The three-story addition will be set back 10 feet from the adjacent historic street wall. The walls of the addition will be stucco like the historic building but the finish will be smooth. There are several references to the historic building in the design of the addition: the new window groupings refer to the adjacent replication of the original wood ribbon window on the second floor. The small arched windows refer to the small arched stair openings on the Ramona façade and the large arched window above the pair of entry doors refers to the large wood arch over the recessed entry door on Ramona. The gabled roof and gable vent echo the historic gables and vents on Ramona.

**Staff Response:** The addition includes compatibility and differentiation strategies, especially the contrast between the smooth stucco finish of the addition and the rough finish of the historic walls. Also, the addition is recessed 10 feet which is an effective differentiation strategy. The entry doors and sidelights with the large glass arch above appeared to staff to be a distinctly modern entry feature which is also compatible with the traditional form and references of the addition. Staff was unclear about one component of the entry, the tempered glass canopy depicted on Sheet A-17 of the Plan Set, particularly the term “canopy” which suggests a covering projecting element. Various views of the addition don’t indicate that the glass arch is other than a flat window. The nature of the glass canopy should be clarified at the HRB meeting. The HRB may wish to discuss the three small arched windows on the addition and whether they should be arched or rectangular (the three windows are stairwell windows as shown on the proposed floor plans). Staff recommends that the HRB discuss the proposed street lamp. The historic building appears to be a mixture of Spanish Colonial Revival and Craftsman references but the proposed street lamp refers to Victorian gas-lit street lighting. Therefore, street lamp may contrast too greatly with the character of the historic building and the modern addition.
Interior Preservation
Staff finds the great majority of the interior to be utilitarian in character reflecting the original repair shop use of the building. This character will generally remain and may even be enhanced by the seismic framing system. Also, the general shapes and sizes of the main rooms on the first and second floors and the general circulation pattern will be largely retained by the project. On pages 31-38 of the Historic Structure Report the features of the building are described and depicted in chart form and are classified as “Very Significant,” “Significant,” “Contributing,” and “Non-Contributing.” No interior features are classified as “Very Significant” or “Significant.” Two interior features are rated as contributing and they are located on the second floor in the former Winsor residence (currently the Norton Gallery and the Library): these contributing features are the hardwood floors and the built-in cabinets in the Library. The project appears to preserve these features although the new stairway would be located in the Library area which will be reduced in size and called a Study (see Sheet A-23 of the Plan Set. Staff considers these interior features as distinctive and recommends their preservation.

Proposed Seismic Rehabilitation Plan
The applicant is proposing to seismically rehabilitate the building so that it is consistent with the structural standards of the current Seismic Code. Such rehabilitation would provide a major protection of the building in the long term, and the Planning Division is evaluating the proposed seismic upgrade methodologies for historic preservation appropriateness. The Conditions of Approval states that the seismic rehabilitation shall be based on the Secretary’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation, and the Condition also refers the applicant to the Department of the Interior’s Preservation Brief # 41: “The Seismic Retrofit of Historic Buildings: Keeping Preservation in the Forefront.”

The project Plan Set (Attachment C) clarifies that components of the seismic upgrade will not be located on the exterior of the building. Sheet A-41 of the Plan Set depicts the new steel framing system in two key spaces of the historic first floor, the Main Gallery and Studio One, and shows how the steel columns will be positioned on the inside faces of the 12” x 12” existing concrete columns making the columns minimally visible from the street. The steel ceiling beams will be clearly seen from the sidewalk but the circular perforations will give the beams a decorative character.

MATERIALS AND COLORS
A materials and color board will be presented at the HRB meeting. The images on the board are reproduced on Sheet A-38 of the Plan Set. Staff supports the “terra cotta” red which would replace the black found on much of the historic wood
currently. The black color resulted in a visual loss of detailing on the wood elements because there is no shadowing. The terra cotta red would restore detailing to view and in addition it is a unifying design factor in combination with the terra cotta red roof.

RECOMMENDED KEY DECISIONS TO BE MADE BY THE HRB

1. Whether the scope of work proposed in the project’s Historic Rehabilitation Plan is consistent with the definition of “historic rehabilitation” set forth in Municipal Code 18.18.030(b): “As used in this chapter, ‘historic rehabilitation’ means returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values. ‘Historic rehabilitation’ shall remedy all the known rehabilitation needs of the building, and shall not be confined to routine repair and maintenance as determined by the director of planning and community environment.”

2. Whether the project proposed for 668 Ramona Street conforms to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation with respect to preservation of the historic character of the building’s exterior and interior.

3. Whether the Rehabilitation Plan conforms to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation with respect to the historic compatibility of the proposed new addition

4. Whether the HRB should modify or delete any of staff’s recommended Conditions of Approval for the project, or add further Conditions.

MUNICIPAL AND STATE LAWS AND POLICIES APPLICABLE TO THE PROJECT

Because this is a project affecting a designated Category 2 building in the Downtown Area and includes an application for a combined historic and seismic floor area bonus, use of 4,940 square feet of bonus floor area on-site, and Transferable Development Rights, it requires discretionary design review by the Architectural Review Board, review by the Historic Resources Board, and approval by the City Council of the on-site use of bonus floor area. A description of local and state regulations applicable to the project follows:

Palo Alto Municipal Code: The project is subject to the City’s Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 16.49 which requires application by the Historic Resources Board of the following standards of review in 16.49.050 (b) and (b)(1): “In evaluating applications, the review bodies shall consider the architectural style,
design, arrangement, texture, materials and color, and any other pertinent factors. The prime concern should be the exterior appearance of the building site. On buildings not in a historical district, the proposed alterations should not adversely affect the exterior architectural characteristics or the historical or aesthetic value of the building and its site.” In 1987, the City Council adopted the Secretary’s Standards for Rehabilitation as the HRB’s primary standards of review.

The project is also subject to review by the Architectural Review Board. The Board’s ordinance comprises Section 18.76.020 of the Municipal Code’s Zoning Ordinance, and requires the Board to make 16 findings in behalf of an orderly and harmonious built environment in the City that is consistent with the goals, policies, and programs of the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan. Finding # 4 is related to historic preservation: “In areas considered by the board as having a unified design character or historical character, the design is compatible with such character.”

Also, when an application is requesting a floor area bonus, the project is subject to the Floor Area Bonus regulations of Municipal Code Section 18.18.070 which require the following. “In the case of the floor area bonus for historic rehabilitation of a building in Historic Category 1 or 2, the director, taking into consideration the recommendations of the historic resources board, has found that the project complies with the Secretary of the Interior’s ‘Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings’ .... In the case of a bonus for both seismic and historic rehabilitation that is proposed to be used on-site, the city council has made the findings set forth in subsection (b)(8) ....” (Sections 18.18.070(d)(4)(B)(C). The two findings cited in Subsection (b)(8) that the City Council must make in order to approve an on-site use of a combined bonus are as follows: “The exterior modifications for the entire project comply with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s ‘Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings’ ....” and “The on-site use of the FAR bonus would not otherwise be inconsistent with the historic character of the interior and exterior of the building and site” (Subsection (b)(8)(A)(i)(ii)).

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): The inclusion of 668 Ramona Street on the Historic Inventory establishes the property as a historic resource under CEQA. CEQA applies to a historic project if the project application is discretionary and the project may cause impacts. The project at 668 Ramona Street is subject to discretionary Architectural Review. However, the CEQA Guidelines state that “Generally a project that follows...the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (1995)...shall be considered as mitigated to a level of less than a significant impact on the historical resource” (Section 15064.5(3). Staff recommends that the 668 Ramona Street project follows the Secretary’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation, and if
the HRB concurs, then the project is categorically exempt from CEQA because it will not result in a significant environmental impact.

**Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan**: The historic preservation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan ("Goal L-7") begins on page L-35 of the Land Use Element. The 668 Ramona Street project is consistent with the following Land Use policies and programs:

**Policy L-51**: Encourage public and private upkeep and preservation of resources that have historic merit, including residences listed in the Historic Inventory.

**Policy L-56**: “To reinforce the scale and character of University Avenue/Downtown, promote the preservation significant historic buildings."

**Policy L-58**: Promote adaptive reuse of old buildings.

**Program L-58** establishes the historic standard of review: “For proposed exterior alterations or additions to designated Historic Landmarks, require design review findings that the proposed changes are in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.”

**NEXT STEPS**
1. Following HRB and ARB review and recommendation of approval, the project would be forwarded to a City Council public hearing for review of on-site use of the combined historic and seismic Floor Area Bonus including findings that all exterior modifications comply with the Secretary's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation and that both interior and exterior modifications are consistent with the historic character of the building.
2. If the City Council approves the on-site use of the combined Floor Area Bonus, the project will return to the Director of Planning for final approval.
3. The project will be submitted for the Building Permit.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**
The project is Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15301 and 15331 of the CEQA Guidelines upon recommendation by the Historic Resources Board that the project is consistent with the Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation.
ATTACHMENTS
Attachment A: Project Description prepared by the applicant, Pacific Art League.
Attachment B: Historic Structure Report for 668 Ramona Street, prepared by PAST
Consultants, LLC, dated May 11, 2010 (HRB Members Only).
Attachment C: Project Plan Set, dated May 22, 2011 (HRB Members Only)
Attachment D: Historic Inventory Form for 668 Ramona Street.

PREPARED BY:  
Dennis Backlund
Historic Preservation Planner

REVIEWED BY:  
STEVEN TURNER
Advance Planning Manager
Historic Resources Board Action: Chair Bower moved, seconded by Board Member Smithwick, to recommend approval of the project, specifically the following items:

A. That the scope of work proposed in the project’s Historic Rehabilitation Plan is consistent with the definition of “historic rehabilitation” set forth in Municipal Code Section 18.18.030(b);

B. That the project conforms to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation with respect to preservation of the character of the historic building’s exterior.

C. That the project conforms to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation with respect to the compatibility of the proposed new addition;

D. That details of the following project components shall return to the full HRB on the Consent Calendar:

- The new wood-frame ribbon-style casement windows on the second floor of the Forest Avenue elevation of the historic building;
- The new skylight located on the roof of the new addition;
- The arched projecting glass canopy over the entry doors of the new addition including the type of glass and non-glass components of the canopy;
- An alternative design or designs for the street lamp that will illuminate the entry area to the new addition;
- The seismic upgrade structural steel system proposed for the interior spaces of the historic building;
- The trash enclosures at the alley elevation;
- The location of the bicycle racks.

E. That the following staff-recommended Conditions of Approval, as modified by the HRB, are included:

1. The Historic Rehabilitation Plan for 668 Ramona Street shall comprise the applicant’s written “Project Description” document (Attachment A), the “Treatment Recommendations” listed on pages 49-50 of the Historic Structure Report by PAST Consultants, LLC, dated May 11, 2010 (Attachment B), the rehabilitation items depicted in the revised project Plan Set dated May 22, 2011 (Attachment C), and two rehabilitation items added by staff: (a) a pest report if evidence of pests is found, and implementation of recommendations contained in
that report, and (b) an assessment of the building for water leaks and, if found, the
repair of the leaks.
2. The project shall be constructed in substantial conformance with the approved
ARB/HRB plans dated May 22, 2011 and received May 26, 2011 except as
modified to incorporate these conditions of approval.
3. The California Historical Building Code shall be applied to all eligible aspects of
the historic and seismic rehabilitation of the building exterior and interior when
needed to preserve character-defining features.
4. The historic and seismic rehabilitation, restoration, and new construction at 668
Ramona Street shall be based on the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and
Guidelines for Rehabilitation and on consideration by the applicant of
recommendations provided in the Department of the Interior’s “Preservation
Briefs” #9 (“The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows”), #18 (“Rehabilitating
Interiors in Historic Buildings: Identifying and Preserving Character-Defining
Elements”), #22 (“The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco”), #24
(“Heating Ventilating, and Cooling Historic Buildings”), #32 (“Making Historic
Properties Accessible”), #41 (“The Seismic Retrofit of Historic Buildings:
Keeping Preservation in the Forefront”), and “Preservation Tech Note: Specifying
Temporary Protection of Historic Interiors During Construction and Repair.”
(Staff will provide these documents to the project applicant for guidance on
rehabilitation details.)
5. No demolition or permanent removal of significant historic fabric that is not
included in the project approval shall be carried out in any amount for any reason
except with written permission by the Department of Planning and Community
Environment.
6. Any revisions to approved materials and colors for the exterior of 668 Ramona
Street proposed during the project construction phase shall be submitted for
review by the Historic Preservation Planner.
7. The color of the frame of the new skylight on the sloping roof of the addition shall
be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Planner for similarity to the color of the
roofing material.
8. Any new exterior lighting added to the project during the construction phase shall
be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Planner with respect to the style,
materials, and color of the fixtures, and the light bulb types.
9. Any additional signage proposed during the construction phase to be attached to
the exterior of the historic building or the new addition shall be reviewed by the
Historic Preservation Planner, in conjunction with Architectural Review, prior to
ordering manufacture of the sign.
10. The Director of Planning’s project approval letter, including the approved
Conditions, shall be printed on one of the initial sheets of the Building Permit Plan
Set (final construction plans).
11. The ten Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation shall be printed on
one of the initial sheets of the Building Permit Plan Set (final construction plans).
12. Prior to issuance of the building permit the Historic Preservation Planner shall review the Building Permit Plan Set (final construction plans) for consistency with the Director of Planning’s project approval based on the recommendations of the Historic Resources Board and approval by the City Council.

13. The Historic Preservation Planner shall participate in the Planning Department’s Final Inspection of the completed project.

14. Upon Planning Department approval of the completed project the owner of the site shall enter into an unsubordinated protective covenant running with the land in favor of the city, in a form satisfactory to the city attorney, to assure the property will be rehabilitated and maintained in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, as they may be amended from time to time.

Vote: 6-0-0-1 (DiCicco absent)
Wednesday, June 15, 2011

REGULAR MEETING – 8:00 AM

Council Chambers
Civic Center, 1st Floor
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, California 94301

ROLL CALL:

Board Members:       Staff:
David Bower, Chair   Steven Turner, Advance Planning Manager
Scott Smithwick      Dennis Backlund, Historic Pres. Planner
Martin Bernstein     Diana Tamale, Admin. Associate
Roger Kohler         Clare Campbell, Planner
Patricia DiCicco     
Beth Bunnenberg      
Michael Makinen       

Board Member Bower: Let’s move onto the second agenda item. While they are setting
up I would like to welcome Nancy Shepherd here, our Council representative. Nancy is
here every week with us.

So let me just read while they are changing things the item number two application. It is
668 Ramona Street. It is a request by Pacific Art League of Palo Alto for Architectural
Review Board and Historic Resources Board review of the historic rehabilitation and
seismic upgrade of an existing Category II historic resource which would generate 5,000
square feet of bonus floor area, 4,959 square feet of which would be used on site, and 41
square feet of which would be available as Transferable Development Rights. The
zoning district is CD-C(P). The environmental assessment is this project is exempt from
provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act, per Section 15331.
I guess I will open the public hearing and while they are finishing setup maybe Staff could do a relatively brief overview.

NEW BUSINESS

2. **668 Ramona Street [11PLN-00007]**: Request by Pacific Art League of Palo Alto for Architectural Review Board and Historic Resources Board review of the historic rehabilitation and seismic upgrade of an existing Category II historic resource which would generate 5,000 sq. ft. of bonus floor area, 4,959 sq. ft. of which would be used on site and 41 sq. ft. of which would be available as Transferable Development Rights. Zone District: CD-C(P). Environmental Assessment: Exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act per Section 15331.

Mr. Dennis Backlund, Historic Preservation Planner: Thank you very much Chair Bower and members of the Board. We would like to introduce this morning the Planner, Clare Campbell, who has done a very great deal of work on this project, partly because it will also go to the Architectural Review Board. I believe that is tomorrow morning at 8:30 the meeting begins. So I will note here that the Board Members present could consider which Board Member would be able to represent the HRB tomorrow with a short presentation to that Board on what the HRB accomplishes today, and what the motion was, and be available to answer questions from the ARB.

According to the Municipal Code the HRB recommends to the ARB, and that would be part of the presentation tomorrow. Because this project is involving as a nonresidential building architectural review that is discretionary design review. The project is subject to CEQA, and the City is only allowed to grant the building permit upon a finding of the City based on the HRB’s recommendation that the project overall conforms to the Secretary Standards. Therefore the
Architectural Review Board will have certain issues that they will talk about, for example the correspondence with a Downtown urban plan and other items. However, the ARB for discretionary CEQA projects can only put together an approval that the City regards as also complying with the Secretary Standards and that is why the ARB benefits greatly by a presentation from the HRB and to answer any questions the ARB might raise on their issues, and the compliance of those with the Secretary Standards.

So with that said, the Staff Report has recommended that the project complies with the Secretary Standards. However, as modified by the Conditions of Approval there are 16 Conditions of Approval, and there are two items that I will mention that we asked the Board to give special attention to because the Historic Staff is fairly certain that these two items will be raised by Architectural Review Board review. So we would appreciate if these items that I will mention are included in the Board’s motion.

Before I mention those, in the 16 Conditions of Approval most of those are standard conditions. The project does include on the addition a joined pair of skylights fairly close to Forest Avenue that will be on top of the addition. Those skylights are there in the plans because there is a classroom building that is underneath, whose usage will require as much light as possible for artistic creation and instruction. Therefore the Staff accepts those skylights. We are aware that the Secretary Standards recommends that skylights be placed well away from a primary façade. The primary façades are Forest Avenue and Ramona Street, but we accepted those skylights because they are pretty far up, and we believe that they will be not interusably visible from the street. We do have a condition that Staff wants to make a final review of the frames of those skylights.
skylights, to have them colored about the same as what the roof is, and that will make the
skylights even less obtrusive. So that is one condition that is not standard but we have added it
for the project.

As I said, the other conditions are things that might happen, but may not. That is any additional
signage that might be affixed to the building would be reviewed, we recommend by Staff in
conjunction with Architectural Review Board Staff. No additional signage may be submitted,
however.

Then there are two required bicycle racks and we recommended that the location of those and
their design be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Planner also in conjunction with
Architectural Review.

Then there will be need to be a trash enclosure. Usually trash enclosures given location and the
usual materials work out well. We have had a couple of examples where there were all steel and
steel mesh enclosures that did not correspond well with the historic building. So we did provide
a condition that Historic Staff can look at any final design for a trash enclosure in conjunction
with ARB.

The two items that we would like the Board to rule on, Staff was uncertain about the compliance
with the Secretary Standards. We would like the Board to make their judgment on that. One of
them occurs on page A-16, the Forest Avenue elevation plans. That is a new streetlamp in front
of the addition. The sheets that were attached at the front of your plans show a larger cut-sheet
scenario for that streetlamp. The addition is a contemporary interpretation of Spanish Colonial Revival, in fact, quite contemporary. It will be well differentiated, but Staff believes compatible with the historic building. The streetlamp in Staff’s judgment does have a rather Victorian gas lit type of appearance that is an earlier type of look, quite a bit earlier than the 1926 construction of the historic building, and then the contemporary nature of the addition. So we would appreciate it if the Board’s motion could include a conclusion if this streetlamp design appears to you compatible with the project. We suspect that the ARB that generally looks at lighting pretty closely may raise that issue, and would appreciate your comment on it. If the Board feels that the design is a problem then a different type of streetlamp closer to the contemporary look of the addition or with references to something that would be appropriate to Spanish Colonial Revival could be indicated. That could be reviewed by Staff or come back to a Board subcommittee at a later time. So that is one of the two items we would like the Board to make a ruling on.

The other one is found on Sheet A-17, and that is the proposed glass canopy in the front. I apologize that Historic Staff did not interpret correctly the drawing that is on the far right of Sheet A-17. It was not labeled and we didn’t notice that that is a sideways view of that glass canopy, and shows that it would project approximately three and a half feet out from the building. So in fact it is a glass awning. What the canopy is is when you look back at the half circle type glass window above the front doors that is not projecting. The only thing that projects is above the sort of rust colored, red arch above the sign Pacific Art League. That thin strip of glass above that is the projecting canopy. So it would be a half circle glass structure of some size as indicated in the sideways view, and would project out. So it is intended to be an all-glass awning projected out from the addition. We would appreciate a Board’s ruling on that whether
an all-glass awning of that height and projection appears to you compatible with the new
addition and with the historic site in general, or if there should be some different detailing or
material than that glass awning has. You could include that in your motion.

Otherwise, we regarded the project in our estimation as very compliant with the Secretary
Standards. We regarded one very happy change from existing conditions is the proposal to do a
rusty red color approach to all of the wood elements, as you can see on the cover sheet of the
plans. Some of the upper windows and the bentwood railings on the second floor that are
historic are already colored in this rusty red. So the rusty red wood coloration would be
extended throughout the first floor of the historic building and would also be used on the addition
to help tie the addition to the historic building. We regarded that as a very beneficial component
of the project because when the wood elements on the first floor were painted black several years
ago black is the same color as the darker shadowing that would happen from the detailing of the
wood. So when the wood elements were painted black most of the historic detailing on the first
floor tended to disappear. You can see it through studying very close up but it is not prominent
to the street. You don’t any longer see the detailing.

The lighter rusty red color would make the detailing of the wood elements, kind of molded
elements, and detailing on those window frames particularly wrapped around Forest Avenue
much more apparent to the street and we regard that as a great benefit of the project.

One thing I will point out. When you look at the model you will see some substantial connecting
structures partly in stucco, partly in a glass canopy that connects the new addition with the tower
that is on Ramona Street. We would like to emphasize that those elements do not show even in
the rendering that is on the front cover of your plans. You wouldn’t be able to see any of these
elements from the street, only from up in the air. The large photograph that we provided on the
wall of the front taken from an actual bystanders viewpoint holding a camera shows that that area
connecting the tower and the new addition would be even less visible than the rendering on the
covers of your plans, because the photograph shows from an actual person’s vantage point. All
you can see is the historic elements of the building and not what happens behind there. So that is
one way to look at the model.

The photograph also shows, since it shows the whole of Ramona Street down to the Cardinal
Hotel, it is intended to illustrate Staff’s opinion that there is no historic building in the whole of
the Downtown that has a dominance and strong character contribution to the Downtown area, no
historic building that quite equals this one. Therefore, we regard the rehabilitation of this
historic building, the new color scheme and other aspects of the project as extremely beneficial
to the historic character of the Downtown by preserving this building, and particularly
seismically upgrading an unreinforced, hazardous masonry building that is threatened at this time
by any very strong earthquake that would occur in the 8.0 range. Since it contributes more than
any other historic building because of its scale and castle-like character to the Downtown this
project was very essential. I think only the Christian Science Church could possibly compare to
this building in the contribution it makes to the Downtown.

So there were a lot of details of this project that the Board has reviewed in a site visit. We invite
the Board’s questions on any project aspect.
Mr. Steven Turner, Advance Planning Manager: Chair Bower, just to follow up on Dennis’s presentation. In your Staff Report on page 9 Staff has outlined the recommended key decisions that could be made by the Historic Resources Board, and that could be used as a tool in your questions and comments to Staff and the applicants, and then finally as you perhaps make your motion about the items that Staff would appreciate the Board’s comments on. Thank you.

Board Member Bower: Thank you Steven. Let’s move to the applicant presentation. We will have questions of everyone after this.

Mr. Bill Bruner, Architect, Pacific Art League: Good morning Board, a pleasure to be here before you and great pleasure to see some of you yesterday and the day before.

Board Member Bower: Could you tell us your name first.

Mr. Bruner: Yes, Bill Bruner, Pacific Art League architect. I enjoyed giving the tours, and the tower was very popular.

I wanted to say one thing, for what it is worth, the last time I stood here in this Chamber was 40 years ago. I was representing the seniors of Palo Alto. My mother-in-law was bringing the project to the Council. The proposal was to take the police and fire station of Birge Clark and convert it to the use for the seniors. She asked me if I would do that, do some drawings, and do a model, which I did showing the addition to Avenidas, the Comida, the dining hall. Well, it
carried the day and the City sold us the building for one dollar. You probably know the story.

So it went from there to Birge Clark’s firm and they created the final solution, Kohler, Potter, Scomquist & Earlich. So that was a little bit of my history and it is really at the other end of the cross axis here at Cogswell Park. I feel like I am helping to anchor both ends here.

Let me just get going then with this. Here is the aerial photograph, of course where we are. Here is where we are now in the Council Chamber. If you look out the window we can see the Art League. This is a close up looking from down the street at that roof. It is very prominent, which we had some skylights on, and Dennis reminded us they are not historically appropriate. I agreed with him, and I would like to thank Dennis and Clare both for being of great service over the years here. Especially Dennis since about three years ago we got involved and started meeting and so he has kept me on track pretty well. This is the tower here, which almost disappears with the sky. So that is the view.

Then this is my take on the Forest Avenue streetscape, which shows the three buildings along here. I thought that was a very good point that Dennis said about the coloration of the windows. You look now at this rendering down here or this photograph and these are just black holes. I knew we put black fences in front of properties so you don’ see the fence like along the Palo Alto High School area there, but in some ways they almost jump out at you. In this case they are definitely hiding some of the strongest features of the building, these windows, and the windows along here. So I think that is a good strategy to go to red. It was suggested by Patty Tarkwell and the members of the board that we get the black out of there, and there we are.
So these I think are probably the most strongest most interesting features are the corner windows with the false balconies. One thing you might not realize is these balconies, which appear very substantial and of an iron nature are actually wood, like one-by wood. Winsor was a cabinetmaker and he did a lot of built-in work so the scale – he thought no problem doing wood exterior balconies. Of course, they have been there now for close to 90 years. I think what we would do is just go over them and make sure they were anchored properly. We have had some work done on this particular one where Bernard Riley who was with the Trust of England who is now doing roofing here did secure some of these more substantially. So what we want to do is just basically restore and tighten up and have good painting all around here. We found some dry rot in some of the roofing areas, I mean the windows. Just some more.

Our plan here is to keep this as a main entrance to the gallery, and here is some more window detail with the gallery behind. More detail. I think you have the time at your leisure to look at these. We will also be retaining some of the casework that he had built upstairs in the gallery.

Here is our site. As you can see we pretty much filled in the property. We are setback here ten feet, which is the setback line for the residential across the area there. Then we have an eight by 16 square area here, which we will have to put in a shelter for the trash.

This shows now the addition as seen in elevation. All of this is existing as you can see, and all to remain. There will be new doors here setback six to seven feet from the arch, which will stay at a four foot width. Then these will be open, stay open on up. Then we will be able to remove the stair without affecting the light quality in here. The stairway does not meet code in terms of its
rise and run. It would be a liability in spite of its historic nature. It was the entrance to the 
Winsor’s apartments upstairs.

This is the elevation. We are going to be restoring these windows to the wood casement. They 
are aluminum sliders now. Then we will be putting this panel back as nearly as we can surmise 
with wood panel and windows. This shows the entrance, which will be a main entrance to the 
building off of Forest. I am sorry I don’t have what the address will be.

Here is the canopy. I thought we just need something to kind of shield people standing at the 
doors ready to come in. So I was thinking maybe a laminated glass canopy, maybe have some 
texture to it perhaps. A decidedly modern element, but almost an art element. Maybe bolted on 
that could be considered a piece of sculpture, maybe just announcing that we are the Art League 
and that is what we do.

Now this is interesting, and this is mis-noted here these windows as wood frames. They are 
actually all steel frame, steel and wire glass, and all of these windows on the alley are steel. It is 
interesting that that was a requirement at the time even then. So we are setback here so we are 
flush with the neighbor. In this area we will have the trash receptacle. So we will probably want 
to do a different treatment on the door. We have discussed it and we just really feel we don’t 
need anything quite that large to get in, just go with a double high door to bring in materials.

This of course is the elevation next to the adjacent building. There are no openings in it. It is on 
the property line.
This is the entrance to the building. Right now we have steps in here that go up and down, and it is quite hazardous for people bringing their materials in so we wanted to level all that off and fill in this area a few inches so that it is level with the studio area, Studio 2. Then we will take that same level all the way back, but then keep the main galleries here at the lower level, which is approximately six inches lower so that we could continue to come directly in off of this entrance. This one as well. So there is a ramp and step requirement between those two levels.

Okay, so the second floor. The pumpkin color is all addition including what is now the open porch upstairs, which we will skylight as much as we can of it with some light control but also to give light to these spaces. It is intended, I mean we could keep it open that is another option. This becomes all the new, considered new area then, because it is enclosed on four sides.

This is looking down on it. A bridge at that level that takes you over to the tower. We are removing the stair, which is a noncompliant stair too. It is very steep. These numbers refer to the – a little different format, but they are the same numbers that you have in your pamphlets there.

The overall roof plans showing the solar array, the skylights that were mentioned, and this skylight over the courtyard.
This is the final level to the tower. You can come up some steps inside here to walk out on the top of that. I was thinking it would be nice to have an observatory of sorts, but that is my bent. I am an amateur astronomer.

The biggest feature I think for most members in their minds is adding the elevator. This shows it. It is accessible on three levels. This is the new stair. The old stair was in here. This is a new stair, which takes us up.

Looking towards the southwest at the addition, cutting through the patio area, and the existing print room and the skylight and the bridge above which leads to the exit stair and the elevator. There will be under 50 people, 50 occupancy as I am interpreting it requires one exit, one protected exit in three levels.

This is the model again photoshopped into its surroundings, or the surroundings photoshopped into the model. There is the tree, actually the level of where the drip line of the tree goes well into here. They recently trimmed it so it is looking pretty good, but it is a nice element obviously to have that tree on the south side. It kind of gives us a courtyard sense, a little protection from the sun.

Looking down here, I am not showing the streetlamp, which would be right here on our property. It was meant to be kind of a gathering point where you would come to with just a cone of light that would be as light as -- not as bright as it would be to be a safety light so much, but it is enough to allow you to have the door protected there.
I can switch back to any of these if you have questions. Another view showing the little bridge here.

The color scheme as Dennis mentioned is an off-rust terra cotta. What you see there now would be duplicated in both the new, we are saying aluminum windows, and there are treatments to get the colors in aluminum.

This is the rendering of the new addition. A little close up here. Here is the canopy. The way this started to work in photoshop it started suggesting other shapes to me. So the story is still on the boards as far as this canopy, but I just think that going to Hanoi and back to Paris and seeing the beautiful glass and steel canopies, protection, the Metro and other places that it would do something that would not maybe – I mean whatever period you want to capture. I am not sure we need to capture the period of the 1920s. It might be something to do a counter or like if the structure inside is definitely going to be 2010 structure, right? But maybe a little bit of it can come outside. That is just my bias.

Here are some of the steel inside, just one version of what could happen there. We want to take out a column in the center so we would have steel, like a Barron Deal or cut web steel in there probably just a straight shot without any curvature to it itself.

This is the other studio here where we have a lecture going on, and the windows all open to Ramona at that point. So okay, that is the slide presentation. I would be happy to take questions.
Board Member Bower: Well, thank you for this. Appreciate your coming to us in the Study Session before you actually did this. I think that was helpful. The plans look very carefully considered. In light of the time let’s try to make questions for Staff and applicant short. Scott, do you want to start?

Board Member Smithwick: I will direct my first questions here to Staff. Under Condition number one you have under B, an assessment of water leaks. I am assuming that it looks like from the later part of that statement is repair leaking plumbing inside the building. That is not looking for water leaks in the existing roof or structure, is that correct?

Mr. Backlund: It could be anywhere on the building. Staff is not aware that there is a leaking problem. It is just a reminder that that is something that the fixing of which preserves the building in the long-term. The building has had the same ownership and use for decades, and it appears to us that it has been maintained quite well over the decades. It appeared to us when we went through the interior we didn’t notice noticeable leaks, but we put it in there as a reminder as they kind of get into the building for the rehabilitation that a leaking situation if it is seen anywhere is something to think about. It is the same thing with our recommendation for a pest report. It may be that there have been periodic pest reports up until recent times that have found that there is not significant intrusion because the building has been maintained for decades. If it is not leaking and it has not been a restaurant use there may not be a pest situation, but it simply is a reminder that that is something always good to include as you go through a building and rehab it.
Board Member Smithwick: Okay. In comment number three I would just suggest, well the 2007 code is no longer in force, we are at the 2010. So I would just suggest striking that out and just leaving California Historical Building Code.

Under number four, I think just to be clear, 661 Bryant is a mistake again. Is that correct?

Mr. Backlund: Yes. That condition had so much detail on the preservation briefs from the National Park Service that would be used. We regarded those as educational documents for the applicant. There are many things in those documents that they don’t have to do and don’t apply to this project, but they are good to consult those projects while you do a rehab. Unfortunately, I lifted that from an almost identical project and forgot to change the address. So it should read 668 Ramona Street with these same documents as applicable to the Ramona project.

Board Member Smithwick: Thank you. Under number seven you talked about the skylights and this is specifically referencing the skylights on the new addition and not the skylight above the courtyard, correct?

Mr. Backlund: Yes, it is noted here that it is on the roof of the addition. So as the project proceeds we will just confirm as actually shown in the plans that the frame of the skylight will be a similar color to the roof of the addition. That will tend to make the skylight very much less intrusive.
Board Member Smithwick: Okay, thank you. The project is really good. I just have a few comments, and as Staff has asked the new streetlamp I think should be looked at for alternative types, and agree with Staff’s assessment that it is not quite in keeping with either the contemporariness of the new addition nor the historic building.

I do have a question on the wood and glass panel that is being replaced on Forest. I forget what sheet it is, but it looked like there is an existing elevation that you are taking your cues from on the replacement of that. Is that correct?

Mr. Bruner: Yes, we believe that prior to purchasing the building in 1965 that there was a panel movable that Winsor could bring his materials in and out of to build his furniture. Bob Peterson who was the architect at that time had suggested that, and where he got his information was in historical context…..

Board Member Smithwick: On page A-14 there is an existing elevation.

Mr. Bruner: Okay, A-14. Yes, this was Bob’s drawing. Rather than having the glass – we could consider having the glass going down, having the top two rather than just the top one panel. It would be more accurately correct to have six lights there with the wood below. So what you are seeing here on A-14 are original drawings done for the Art League back in 1965 by Bob Peterson. They have been enormously helpful. If that answers your question.

Board Member Smithwick: Yes, thank you.
Board Member Bower: Scott, could I, since we are on this I had a question about this too. I see
five places where this window is shown in these plans and they are all different. So which one is
actually going to be the style? I don’t particularly like the one on A-16. I think that is
inconsistent with the existing and the new. These are these replacement windows. If you go to
A-39 and A-40 they look a little different. We are actually being asked to approve these
replacement windows but I don’t see exactly where.

Mr. Bruner: I borrowed that from the other sketch. It shows a two light on A-40 but we want
three. I am thinking now, we had the kitchen here at one time. So we needed to cover up the
bottom panels for the cabinetry. I am thinking now that is just an opening into the gallery. So
we could go to just have six lights as the Peterson drawings show. That would be acceptable.
We could certainly make that a condition if that works for you. It works for us. I don’t know.

Board Member Bower: I guess my question is is this drawing on A-16 what you were
proposing?

Mr. Bruner: Yes, this was the proposal, yes.

Board Member Smithwick: You are now saying that would be the proposal only making all six
of those lights glass.

Mr. Bruner: Yes.
Board Member Smithwick: Which would be consistent with the 1965 drawings by Bob Peterson.

Board Member Bower: Can’t we do better than that? So I am looking at the existing windows. They are adjacent on the front and on the Forest Street side. This is the only window on your drawings that has multiple lights and they are small. Your new building, which is to be differentiated from the old, has a small upper transom and then a larger lower transom in the vertical dimension but they are all the same width. So I am just wondering why there are so many lights in this one window and there is no other part of this building that has that many lights.

Mr. Bruner: You are speaking of the wood frame panel?

Board Member Bower: No, I am actually speaking of this window that is replacing the one that is shown on A-14 as an aluminum slider.

Mr. Bruner: You are talking about the second floor.

Board Member Bower: Yes, I am talking about the one on the second floor.

Mr. Bruner: I am sorry. Yes, it is aluminum frame now.
Board Member Bower: So while we are on A-14, and I know we are short of time. Look at all the windows across the Forest Street side of this building on the first floor. They consist of a single straight line from the transom area windows down to the lower windows. This on A-16, this new proposed window, actually has a horizontal transom and then three vertical divisions under each of those making what I think is a very busy look to a building. It is going to add a whole new dimension to this. I am just wondering why.

Mr. Bruner: The purpose is to restore to the photograph we have and the drawings that Bob did, restores it to that look.

Board Member Bower: So you are going to restore to the 1960s look?

Mr. Bruner: Those windows, we don’t want them the way they are, which are the aluminum sliders. We found on the drawings and some photographs that they had these multiple light casement windows.

Board Member Bower: Prior to the aluminum windows put in in the 1960s. Okay, so you are matching a photograph of what was there before the existing windows were installed.

Mr. Bruner: Yes, and I believe probably Bob was aware. They were there at the time and they removed them at that time in 1965.
Board Member Bower: I am sorry to take so long on this I just want to be sure I understand. So this is what you are proposing to do.

Mr. Bruner: That is what we are proposing and it goes all the way back. Scott, I apologize for stepping in.

Mr. Backlund: Chair Bower, if I could clarify. The historic inventory photo that was taken in the 1970s shows those second floor ribbon of windows as they are on Sheet A-16. Then at a later date then that, we are not sure when, the aluminum sliders were put in. We do not have evidence or plans from the very early period of what that ribbon of windows was like. We regarded that those showing in the 1978 photograph could well be the early windows, because the project from 1965 from Bob Peterson only had a very limited scope, and we don’t believe that it included the Forest elevation but just changes on the Ramona elevation. So we took the Forest second floor windows in the 1970s photograph to be the original ones.

Board Member Bower: Okay, fine. So we can assume that those windows shown on the drawing that is what we are going to see when the project is built. That’s all.

Mr. Bruner: Yes, yes.

Board Member Bower: Thank you sir. Scott, continue.

Mr. Bruner: Sorry I misunderstood.
Board Member Smithwick: So my final two comments are about the seismic scheme and the glass canopy. The seismic scheme in these documents is fairly limited but what it appears to me is that it is a steel structure that is going to be inside and bracing the existing concrete frame. Is that correct?

Mr. Burner: Yes, yes, and it will be evident that is there. It will be physical presence. We are not hiding it. It will be differentiated in that sense. We have a slightly simpler scheme that was done by the engineer but it featured diagonal four by tubing across the windows, and we just felt that that was just not the look we wanted. The old Café Barona had those, which is now the Repesada has the movement-resisting frame, which is much nicer. So we need to consult with an engineer to make sure we can actually do it that way and have those movement-resisting frames or some combination of. Almost now that we are looking at the corner of the building with those 12 by 12 columns would become like a rigid bench with legs and triangular in each corner almost to at least catch the corner. It is a work in progress and we haven’t work with an engineer now for a couple of years, so we have to get back on track with that. He is very competent and will come up with something. I thought something that had more of a tensegrity, you know tinsel and compression nature inside. It would be more freeform or something that would conform to the walls. That was my idea years ago. I think we want something that is going to be cost effective and the engineering of course has advanced so much now that I can’t pretend to know what his calculations are. So that is a long-winded reply, sorry.
Board Member Smithwick: The last comment I have is on the glass canopy. While I am not opposed to that concept I think that the success of that is going to live and die on the detailing of it. So I guess essentially I approve of it in concept, but I am hesitant to approve it at this stage not knowing exactly what it is going to end up looking like once it is fully detailed and engineered. That is essentially my general same comment on the seismic scheme. I think it is an appropriate scheme but without having a more detailed plan of what that is based on my previous experience of like what happened at the College Terrace Library, I am hesitant to approve a seismic scheme that has yet to be fully defined.

Mr. Bruner: Yes. If I may, the other element to the seismic solution is the stabilization of the walls themselves, the infill clay. We are proposing to use an FRP, fiber reinforced polymer, sheets much like fiberglass, doing a fiberglass hull or something, in layers of this material. It really is everywhere in the existing building on the exterior, even up into the gables, this block, which we have been told would literally explode out of those frames in a significant earthquake. What we want to do is anchor them together on the inside with this material that would glue itself to it. Just what that combination would be, but it is primarily an FRP solution. That would also happen to one large interior wall to stabilize that and make that also keep within its frame in a shake. So it is not so much structural in terms of lateral stability but it is definitely to keep the things from popping out of the walls.

Board Member Smithwick: I was actually going to mention that, and I am glad you said that. I have used I call it fiber wrap on concrete frame buildings before. It is a pretty slick solution for reinforcing hollow clay tile and concrete.
Board Member Bower: Thank you Scott. Michael comments or questions.

Board Member Makinen: Is it questions?

Board Member Bower: Either. Everything.

Board Member Kohler: This is a fairly large project so to come in pointblank without it. We usually get a Study Session at some point. Now we are expected to – first I saw this building was yesterday. It didn’t come earlier to us. So now we are expected to approve this, is that it?

Mr. Turner: Staff is recommending a series of recommendations regarding this project. It is not required that projects go through study sessions or preliminary reviews. We seek to provide that to the HRB but it is not required. We think Staff has provided all of the information that is necessary for an HRB review of this project. Certainly if the HRB feels that there is not enough material, or the review needs to be continued that certainly can be part of the Board’s motion.

Board Member Bower: I am sorry I thought they came before us in a Study Session, because I thought we had seen this. I must be thinking of another project, no? If the answer is no, it is no.

Mr. Backlund: It had not come before. The Board could create this meeting as a kind of Study Session by a continuance in which this would be the first look and then the second look, or a subcommittee on certain conditions. However you choose.
Board Member Bower: Okay, well let’s see what the rest of the Board feels. Go ahead.

Board Member Makinen: Do you want to take up that matter right now before we proceed?

Board Member Bower: No, let’s go through.

Board Member Makinen: Just a couple of brief questions. You are going to put an elevator in the new part of the building.

Mr. Bruner: Yes.

Board Member Makinen: Does that provide ADA accessibility to the tower and other parts of the building completely?

Mr. Bruner: Yes, yes it will. It is going to be a hospital type gurney accessible for fire. So the doors on the short side of the elevator are fully four feet wide and eight feet deep.

Board Member Makinen: But it allows you to get into all parts of the original building.

Mr. Bruner: The original building, yes, and all parts. That would be our intent to be able to move through. Even with ramps where we have that change in floor level by six inches.
Board Member Makinen: My second question is I am looking at the historic structures report, on the early sketch here, page 2. I see on the second floor upper level would be on the corner windows, it shows a little bit. It looks like a different arrangement than it is currently at. I don’t know if that was ever built or not.

Mr. Bruner: The sketches, those are Winsor’s sketches himself that he did.

Board Member Makinen: Right up in there, this area.

Mr. Bruner: In that area on the left hand side.

Board Member Makinen: It shows like a little canopy going over there up to the corner.

Mr. Bruner: Yes, they are on there. In the corners on each side.

Board Member Makinen: See this right here on page 2? I am looking at it and it looks like that canopy goes all the way to the corner. I guess my question was is that the way it was built or was that just the way it was originally sketched out and never built that way?

Mr. Bruner: Never built. That was his original concept. He was not an architect. He was a furniture maker. That was his, they are all his sketches, and he signed them. He decided as he was going along that he would just do the two windows on each side.
So it is very interesting. The building was built in two parts. The alley side was the original building, gable, simple gable. Then a few years on he added the tower and the Ramona-Forest corner elements.

Board Member Makinen: Okay, thank you.

Board Member Bower: Roger.

Board Member Kohler: I just have a couple of things. So the approval for this is in the design as presented today, but we are going to comment on this. It is not coming back to us.

Mr. Turner: It would not if the Board recommends approval of the project today.

Board Member Kohler: Well I think it is great. The first time I totally walked through the building yesterday and it was quite interesting to see how it is all operating. I was just curious one comment you made while we were there was that you were going to be renting out the back half of this, or part of this building, to other tenants to help pay for all the work you are doing on this. In the floor plans is there any kind of division or is there a wing or something that will be rented, or is it just that each room will be rented out separately?

Mr. Bruner: We have had several recommendations in talking with people that lease properties. The strongest recommendation is that we actually lease the second floor, because a lessee would like to be able to control the floor and the exits and entrances to it, and security. It would be the
5,000 square feet. So that would be the simplest solution. The way we had originally thought we would have the new addition it would be all leased out.

Ms. Campbell: If I could add to that. On Sheet A-23 and A-24 there is a differentiation showing the areas that will be used by the Art League as well as what is proposed for the leasing. So it is shown on the plans.

Board Member Kohler: You show the entire second floor being leased out.

Mr. Bruner: Yes.

Board Member Kohler: So the Art League is gaining – so on the upper floor there are a couple of classrooms and restrooms. So the third floor will be Art League.

Mr. Bruner: Yes, with the exception of the tower at this point. It is being leased now as you saw yesterday.

Board Member Kohler: No? The whole third floor is Art League.

Mr. Bruner: I am sorry I didn’t introduce Rick, who is our Executive Director, and Joy Chase, President of the Board. Jack Woodson is our Board Member.
Board Member Kohler: Okay. I was just trying to see how the logistics of this works, whether or not we have purview over that or not I don’t know. Did you try any other elevations on this major view that is facing Forest than the one we see here? I am having a little trouble…

Mr. Bruner: Page A-16.

Board Member Kohler: So the exit door from the stair has a panel up there, and then a wood panel below. Then there are sidelights on each side of the doors but there are wood panels down low, and the doors are up high. Is that because of the wheelchair situation you have to have the panel there on those main doors?

Mr. Bruner: Yes it is required to be like a ten-inch or 12-inch.

Board Member Kohler: I am having trouble getting a handle on the whole proposed elevation situation with the windows. Somehow it just looks a little random. I guess you could argue the whole building is random because it has a lot of different things. I will curious to see what the ARB says about that elevation. I am not sure what to do with it but I am just having a hard time with it.

I think the project as a whole is a good idea. I like the way it maintains the majority of the existing structure. Being able to rent out the whole floor makes the whole project viable. Just the logistics of the Art League kind of sandwiched above and below the rental space could create issues depending on who that rental person is on the second floor, but I can see that is a simple
way to divide out that this is the rental area. The Art League people are going to have to get on
that second floor to continue their way up to the third floor. Will there be rules that say you
can’t – I don’t know.

Mr. Bruner: Well, the elevator would be a direct access, but then the stairway, the one enclosed
in addition.

Board Member Kohler: I agree with other comments and David’s questions about the windows,
but they are similar. In general I think it is a great project to be able to preserve the building
essentially as it is, and to come up with a way to pay for it. It works out quite well.

Board Member Bower: Thanks, Roger. Martin.

Board Member Bernstein: Thank you Chair. I will also disclose that Mr. Bruner gave me a fine
tour of the building. So thank you for that. It was great to see all four or five levels of the
existing structure.

I have a question on page 9 of 12 of the Staff Report. It is the in the category of Recommended
Key Decisions to be made by the HRB. Item number two, the last portion of that says “respect
to preservation of the historic character of the building’s exterior and interior.” On this particular
project are we to address character of the interior?
Mr. Backlund: The review of the review of the interior of any project that is allowed to do that under the Municipal Code, and this one, it is a question of historical character defining features. One of the reasons we have a historic structure report is they always have a section identifying all the major character defining features of the property. The historic consultant, PAST Consultants of Petaluma, concluded that only the hardwood floors and the built-in cabinets of the second floor that were the former residence of Winsor were character defining features. Staff concurred with that because the rest of the spaces are generally utilitarian in character, but that is very appropriate to an art studio use that use is often located in old warehouse buildings and things around the state. We also regarded that the seismic girders and upgrading are industrial in character but so are those interior spaces so those were generally compatible. But on the second floor if the Board chose to be consistent with the historic structure report you could recommend that you include the preservation of the wood floors and build-in cabinets of the second floor.

Board Member Bernstein: Alright, thank you. Mr. Bruner, you showed a sketch of some open web steel beams.

Mr. Bruner: Yes.

Board Member Bernstein: Would those be visible from the street?

Mr. Bruner: Yes, because we will access through the windows, looking through the windows at artwork and you would see those.
Board Member Bernstein: Okay, so that would tie into my – I think Board Member Smithwick brought up the idea of those steel beams. So if that is going to be part of the street presence does that enhance, or is it compatible, or does it distract from the historical structure here? So that would be one of my concerns.

The other item I would like to bring up quickly is the proposed arch glass awning, a new addition. I think the form is very compatible with the historic. If you look on page A-6 and A-7 of our files, certainly we have arches on the historical part of the structure. So by having a sculptural arch contemporarily expressed I think that is most appropriate since it is different and yet it is compatible. So I would support that. Again, support the question that Board Member Smithwick brought up about seeing the details of it and so making sure it is fine enough so it is not a distraction but a compatible addition then I would support that.

Then the light fixture, as Mr. Backlund brought up, of how that style looks more Victorian and I would say not compatible with the Colonial direction of the existing structure. So I would take a look at a different direction for that. Okay, not Colonial but the Spanish influence, Spanish/Colonial, whatever we are going to be deciding this structure is. Those are my comments. Thanks.

Board Member Bower: Beth.
Board Member Bunnenberg: One little question of Staff. Our historic inventory sheet indicates Birge Clark might have been the architect for this building, and it appears from the things that have been presented in the historic structures report we may want to take a look at that notation.

Mr. Backlund: Yes, we think that that is one of the very few historic inventory forms that may need to be revised. Our conclusion on how that got into the historic inventory form is that the builder was Wells Goodenough and he and Birge Clark worked very closely together on a number of Downtown buildings. We know that that builder was there, but that doesn’t mean automatically that every Wells Goodenough building was Birge Clark. We simply don’t have documentary evidence that Birge Clark was involved in this particular structure.

Board Member Bunnenberg: Certainly interesting to see that Winsor had some sketches at least that were presented in the historic structures report.

Mr. Backlund: Yes, those were included simply as a historical document for information, not that it indicated anything about the actual building that got built.

Board Member Bunnenberg: Alright, let’s see in terms of comments. I don’t have a problem with the windows along the Forest Street side because I think that that wooden framework actually echoes some of the shapes of the windows on the front façade. So replacing those second story windows with wood frames I think looks appropriate as far as I can see.
The glass canopy I would be concerned about what holds it up, and again that is in the details of how that is done.

The streetlamp I concur that I feel a different choice would probably be appropriate and perhaps even a contemporary lamp since that is being differentiated.

Seismic scheme, I have one great concern, which is something we learned on another building that the how you get the steel into the building can be a really difficult problem, and if you decide to drop it in through the roof you have all sorts of problems.

Mr. Bruner: That is a very good point.

Board Member Bunnenberg: So just a cautionary note on that. It was interesting to hear about the fiber wrap. That sounded like a good kind of solution. I think that those basic comments.

Mr. Backlund: If I can point out that Staff is going to continue to pursue, as we already have with the applicant over time, the treatment of those new steel elements for the seismic upgrading through color strategies in relation to the colors of the interior to get that beam work as unobtrusive as color strategies can possibly make it. A frame does have to go in there. It is currently unreinforced masonry.
Board Member Bower: Thanks, Dennis. So I have a couple of brief comments. One, I think this is a fabulous project and I like the concept of building out the alley area. I think the addition is compatible. I think it is perfect for this.

I am a little uncomfortable that we are being asked to make decisions and basically approve details on parts of the building that we have no details of. The skylight, not a big deal, but it is not on any of the elevations. I don’t think you could see it, but probably should have seen it.

Still bothered by the replacement windows on the Forest Avenue side, and if those are going to be ribbon type as it describes in the Staff Report I think that we should have seen more detail on that.

I like the idea of the glass canopy but I would like to know whether it is clear, whether it is obscure. Those would actually have a significantly different impact on the building.

Streetlight, I think Staff could figure that out, not a big deal.

Then there are three other areas garbage enclosure, bike racks, and signage. If signage was being done the way it is on page 7, as it is now I think that is a very compatible method. While that is not exactly the Historic Resources Board’s purview it could be because if the signage isn’t compatible we could be approving something that is going to take away from the beauty of this particular building.
Then again as Martin and I both picked up we are being asked to make some interior decisions and we have basically one page, which is A-41, where we have a sketch of the interior steel. The building is going to have steel but if it is going to be part of our approval process it seems to me we ought to be a little further along on the project.

So those are comments. I guess my feeling is that maybe we could have more detail here. We are being asked to make fairly substantial decisions about things we can’t see.

Mr. Backlund: Chair Bower, one of the options that you have in making an approval that is not a complete approval is simply for the Board to confer and make a list of those detailing items that you have been listing and recommend that all of those come back subsequently when the final details are in place to an HRB subcommittee of up to three members. That is one option that you can do. Therefore if you choose you could approve the project subject to additional conditions, list those detailing items, and say all of those are to come back to a Board subcommittee with final details.

Board Member Bower: Okay, I don’t want to actually delay this project. I would like to see this move forward. Maybe other Board Members have comments. Scott.

Board Member Smithwick: That is exactly what I was actually going to entertain making a motion along the lines of what Dennis just said. I think this project in concept and in large part does meet the standards, and I am comfortable with approving that with listing these specific items that we would like to see in subcommittee. That being the seismic scheme, the glass
canopy, and the streetlight to a lesser extent. I am not as concerned about the second floor windows as you, but I would be happy to include those as well.

Board Member Bower: Anybody else have comments on this?

Board Member Kohler: I think it should just come back to the full Board for the interior seismic review, and it ought to be open to the public for their review as well. If that is our required purview that we are supposed to review that and approve it, it should not be done behind closed doors in a subcommittee. It is a major. If you walk through that space what they do in there to seismically upgrade is going to have a huge impact on how those spaces feel. To just say we are going to do it upstairs and that becomes it, and the public doesn’t have a chance to comment and other Board Members don’t have a chance I just think that is a major, major part of the whole project. We can approve in general the exterior but that the detail of the insides ought to come back to us.

Mr. Turner: Chair Bower, Board Member Kohler’s recommendation would be for the full Board to review those details. The appropriate motion in that case could be that the project is approved but that those details come back to the full Board perhaps on Consent Calendar, and the Board would be getting a report and those details in your packet. If you feel like you wanted to discuss those details at the meeting you could pull the item off of the Consent Calendar and review it. If the items appear to be appropriate and there is no need for discussion then the HRB could approve the Consent Calendar item. So it does provide you with an ability to either review the
materials, find them to be acceptable and move on, or review the materials and pull it off the Consent Calendar and review it as a full Board.

Board Member Kohler: I think that is better than none of us being aware of it and two or three of us voting on it. I still think there may be public members, once they see what is going on inside that may or may not be happy or maybe it is great. I just think they ought to have the opportunity to know that it is coming.

Mr. Turner: So Chair Bower, the formation of a motion might start to make that clear amongst the other Board Members about who would support that.

Board Member Bower: First I want to get through all the discussion and then we will move to that. Any other discussion about this? Beth.

Board Member Bunnenberg: Simply that I feel that in general the project does meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards with these few concerns.

Board Member Bower: Alright, any final comments? Let’s move onto the final applicant comments. You are not required. You have done a lot of explaining. I think we all understand it.

Mr. Bruner: Well, like yourselves I am concerned about what the solution is for the structural frame that is going to be holding our building together. That will be done by a structural
engineer, myself, and our committee. That requires a commitment on our part in obviously fees
to have that structural work done, and it is going to come on down the road. We need to form
our LLC and get other partnership issues resolved before we get into the technical, my drawings
and the structural engineers, and the request for proposals for mechanical, electrical. We have a
lot of old pipes in there. I want to assure you that we are going to be presenting this and
pursuing this for the most beautiful solution all around. Hopefully some excitement to it so that
when you look in the windows you will say, yes, I want to go in and see what is going on in there
besides the art, of course. I agree with Dennis, I think whiting it out, most of the gallery itself,
the galleries, and studios themselves are light colored just to bounce the light around when you
are water coloring and whatnot. So I don’t see making the structure as strongly coming forward
from the background at all. I could see it blending in but still there. So that would be I guess my
preference. Just the way the process works we can’t do really definitive. We could do a
structural analysis but we would have to make some agreements with our partner, _________
Oliver that we will be going ahead with it.

Board Member Bower: Alright, well thank you. Obviously we are sympathetic to the process
that you have to go through to finance this, and it is complicated. But our job as a Board is to
deal with this. Thank you for your presentation.

Mr. Turner: Chair Bower, were there any members of the public wishing to speak to this item?

Board Member Bower: I was just going to get to that. We didn’t have anybody present cards.
So I think at this point, unless there is more discussion, I will close the public hearing, and we
can have motions from the Board about how to proceed. Do we have a motion? Somebody want
to create one? I could attempt to create one.

I think I am going to move that we use Staff’s outline here that we confirm that the project meets
the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. I think we want to confirm that the
added floor area and the bonus, what is the language we need to use for this?

Mr. Backlund: Let’s see in the first one, since it is a rehabilitation that generates the bonus it is
that the project has enough elements for rehabbing the building to meet the definition in the
Municipal Code, and therefore is eligible for the bonus.

Then secondly that the project with respect to preservation of the historic character of the
building’s exterior and interior conforms to the Secretary’s Standards.

Then the third one that the rehabilitation plan component regarding the new addition’s
compatibility with historic building is concluded in the positive by the Board.

The four, what we have already discussed is whether the HRB should modify Staff’s
recommended conditions or add further conditions as you have been discussing several detailing
subjects to come back to the full Board.

MOTION
Board Member Bower: Okay, so to start over, number one the project does meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for renovation. Secondly that the addition is compatible based on the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards. I can’t remember your third.

Mr. Backlund: Actually, the first one is indicated on page 9, is whether the scope of the proposed work is adequate as a rehabilitation plan for remedying the needs of the building. Therefore, the approval would generate the requested bonus.

Board Member Bower: Okay, the scope of the project meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and thus would generate the floor area bonus.

Mr. Backlund: Technically that the scope of the project meets the Municipal Code’s definition.

Board Member Bower: Should we just use your number one and recommendation on page 9?

Mr. Backlund: Yes, that would be fine. I know it is a little complicated.

Board Member Bower: Alright, the scope of the work proposed in the project’s historic rehabilitation plan is consistent with the definition of Historic Rehabilitation set forth in the Municipal Code 18.18.030(b). I won’t read the rest of that, because I think the quotation part in this paragraph is in that code section, correct?

Mr. Backlund: It is.
Board Member Bower: Okay. So we can say that it meets that. The second point is that the project conforms to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation with respect to preservation of the historic character of the building’s exterior. I don’t want to say at this point interior because I don’t feel we have enough information about that. So we will just say the exterior.

As I said the third point would be that the proposed addition meets the Rehabilitation Plan in this case, conforms to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards with respect to the compatibility of the proposed addition.

I would then as a fourth point say that we would like to have these details that I could articulate if you – do you want me to articulate the details we would like to come back?

Mr. Backlund: Yes. There have been different comments by the Board so if there could be one master list of what should come back.

Board Member Bower: So my fourth point in my motion is that details about the skylight, the replacement windows on Forest, the glass canopy, garbage enclosure, and the location of the bike rack, I am no concerned so much about the design of it but I would like to know where that is, and some more detailed accounting of the interior structural elements. I just pause there, is there anything that other Board Members would like to add to that list?
Mr. Backlund: Do you want to add or not the consideration of final streetlamp scenario?

Board Member Bower: No, I don’t want to that. No, I am seeing no.

Mr. Backlund: Okay.

Board Member Bernstein: I support having a different streetlamp than what is shown on the drawing.

Board Member Bower: Okay, two members would like to have that as part of our considerations, so add the streetlamp to the list. I think that would be the end of my motion. So elements need to come back to us for approval. Is that right Steven?

Mr. Turner: Yes, is there a second to the motion?

Board Member Bower: I just want to be sure that is clear motion.

Mr. Turner: Well, as part of your motion you didn’t indicate how to come back to you. We have discussed either a subcommittee or the full Board on the Consent Calendar.

Board Member Bower: Full Board, so I amend that to say that it comes back to the full Board.

Board Member Bunnenberg: Is it important to say on Consent?
Board Member Bower: No. I don’t actually want it to come back on Consent. I want it to come back to the Board.

Mr. Turner: Well, in terms of the project approval your recommendation is forwarded to the ARB, which would then be forwarded onto eventually the City Council. The City Council would make a decision on the project, and the project would be approved. There would be no further action required by any Board or Commission. By returning the project to the Consent Calendar you would finding that the items that you have requested are acceptable and meet your original intent with the motion of looking at these. So you would not be approving anything else you would finding that these details are acceptable. If they are not acceptable then you would have that discussion with the applicant so that they can make the changes to the point that they are acceptable to the HRB.

Board Member Bower: So this is after the Council has approved the project. Am I understanding that correctly?

Mr. Turner: That is correct.

Board Member Bower: So the applicant could come back. I am sure this applicant won’t, but could come back with something that we didn’t like that we thought was incompatible. We would effectively be handing off our approval before we saw elements that could come back to be unacceptable.
Mr. Turner: Well, if you find those elements that come back to you are unacceptable then the applicant would have to go back and make revisions until they are acceptable to the HRB.

Board Member Bower: Okay, so the project can’t just move forward even though we don’t find some part of it compatible.

Mr. Turner: Right. Your motion is to recommend approval of the project. So if the votes are there and come back in the affirmative that recommendation will be forwarded to the ARB and then eventually to the City Council with your conditions that these specific items come back to the HRB for review. That doesn’t stop the project from moving forward it is merely saying that the HRB would like to see certain details come back to them, and the HRB wants the opportunity to find those details to be acceptable or not.

Board Member Bower: Does that work? Martin.

Board Member Bernstein: Thank you Chair. So just for me to understand this. If it gets then to the City Council’s agenda and they vote approval of the project but it hasn’t come to the HRB yet for these details can the applicant apply for a building permit?

Mr. Turner: No, they cannot.

Board Member Bernstein: Okay, so that would be the protection.
Mr. Backlund: I could remind the Board that there is a precedent for this that some Board
Members will remember. The 800 High project was approved at the City Council on the
condition that certain details come back to the ARB, after the Council, and that was what
happened. So it is a regular type of process.

Board Member Bower: Okay, I am comfortable with that if other Board Members are. I would
like the project to move forward in Planning and as long as these details come back to us for
review, if it is Consent that we need, if it is the appropriate phrase, I am comfortable with that if
others are.

Board Member Bernstein: My understanding of the Consent Calendar is if any HRB Member
wants to pull it from the Consent Calendar for discussion we can do that, correct?

Mr. Turner: That is correct.

Board Member Bower: If we have no problems then it just goes through. So that is my motion.
Is there a second?

SECOND

Board Member Smithwick: I second the motion.
MOTION PASSED (6-0-1-0, Board Member DiCicco absent)

Board Member Bower: Okay, there is no discussion. So all in favor? (ayes) That is unanimous.

Thank you very much. It is a great project.
Architectural Review Board

Staff Report

Agenda Date: June 16, 2011

To: Architectural Review Board

From: Clare Campbell, Planner

Department: Planning and Community Environment

Subject: 668 Ramona Street [10PLN-00007]: Request by Pacific Art League of Palo Alto for Architectural and Historic Review of the historic rehabilitation and seismic upgrade of an existing Category 2 historic resource generating 5,000 sq. ft. of bonus floor area, 4,940 sq. ft. of which would be used on site and 60 sq. ft. of which would be available as Transferable Development Rights. Zone District: CD-C(P); Seismic Category II. Environmental Assessment: Exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act per Section 15331

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends the Architectural Review Board (ARB) recommend approval of the proposed project to the City Council, based upon the findings in Attachments A and B and subject to the conditions of approval in Attachment C.

BACKGROUND

Review Process
The proposed rehabilitation and seismic upgrade of a Category 2 historic resource requires review by the Historic Resources Board (HRB) and, if exterior modifications are proposed, Architectural Review. Because this project involves a double bonus (historic and seismic), the boards' recommendations will be forwarded to City Council for final action. The project is scheduled for review and recommendation by the HRB on June 15, 2011. The HRB report is available on-line\(^1\) and staff will provide an oral summary of the HRB’s recommendation and meeting issues to the ARB on June 16. Any conditions added by the HRB and ARB would be incorporated into the Conditions of Approval for Council review.

\(^1\) HRB Staff Report: [http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/nowzone/agendas/historic/default.asp](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/nowzone/agendas/historic/default.asp)
Site Information
The 5,610 square foot project site is located in Downtown Palo Alto on the corner of Ramona Street and Forest Avenue within the Downtown Parking Assessment District. The subject parcel has 66 feet of frontage on Forest Avenue and 85 feet of frontage on Ramona Street.

On the Forest Avenue frontage, the adjacent site is developed with a two-story commercial building (office use), and the building on the subject parcel is set back 16 feet from the common property line. There are no required setbacks for commercial buildings in the CD(C) zone district, though some streets have special setbacks. Ramona Street has a six foot special setback on this block. On the Ramona Street frontage, the project site is separated from the adjacent two-story commercial building (restaurant on the ground floor and office upstairs) by an alley (Lane 11 West).

The existing three-story building on the subject site was originally developed in 1926 as the Winsor Cabinet Shop and remained as such until 1965 when the Pacific Art League (formerly called Palo Alto Art Club) bought and occupied the building. The building is currently 7,858 square feet and provides no legal on-site parking; the 16 foot wide paved building setback area, accessible via Lane 11 West, on the south side of the building is regularly used for tandem parking for two to three vehicles. The Pacific Art League operates as a non-profit organization that provides classes and hosts art exhibitions.

The project is in the Downtown Commercial – Community (CD-C) zone district and is part of the Pedestrian Shopping (P) combining zone district. The Pedestrian Shopping combining district is intended to foster the continuity of retail stores and display windows and to avoid a monotonous pedestrian environment. The site is within the downtown parking assessment district, which allows for a “blended” parking rate of 1 space per 250 square feet of commercial floor area such that a change of use from one commercial use to another does not trigger provision of additional parking spaces.

Project Description
The major component of the project is the 4,940 square foot three-story addition proposed within the 16 foot setback along the south side of the existing building. The project also includes minor improvements to the existing building, such as a replacement door for the recessed main entrance (Ramona Street), replacement wood windows for the aluminum second-floor windows (Forest Avenue), new windows to replace the infill wall on the first floor (Forest Avenue), and repainting of the building to match the existing colors. The new floor area of the building would be 12,546 square feet.

The addition to the building provides a new primary entrance on the Forest Avenue frontage for the future tenants of the second and third floor spaces. These “for lease” spaces are identified in the plans on Sheets A-23 (5,213 s.f.) and A-24 (380 s.f.); the remaining 6,953 s.f. of the building will be utilized by the Pacific Art League. The proposed addition would match the existing smooth cement plaster wall finish and the existing composition tile roof. The addition incorporates architectural elements (windows, arches, colors, etc) that are complimentary to the
existing historic building. The project does not include any new signage at this time, but any future proposed signage would require Architectural and Historic review.

DISCUSSION

Downtown Urban Design Guide

The proposed addition to the historic building is consistent with the Downtown Urban Design Guide (Guide). The improvements are intended to attract and enhance the pedestrian experience. The Guide provides direction to the applicant, staff and ARB regarding development and design in the downtown area. The Guide divides the downtown area into districts, each having a unique identity and design characteristics. The project site is in the Civic Cross Axis District which crosses University from Lytton to Hamilton Avenue, joining two major public open spaces – Civic Center Plaza and Cogswell Plaza. The goals of the district are to “create a city center for Palo Alto which encompasses two major public plazas, and which functions as the primary activity center of the Downtown... emphasize the pedestrian and visual connections”... and “transform Civic Center Plaza and Cogswell Plaza into appealing and active public spaces.” The proposed rehabilitation project enhances the district and preserves a significant historic resource for the Palo Alto community.

Pedestrian Shopping Combining District

The project is required to comply with regulations of the Pedestrian Shopping Combining District (P), which require that, on any site adjoining a designated pedestrian sidewalk, new construction and alterations to existing structures provide design features intended to create pedestrian or shopper interest, to provide weather protection for pedestrians, and to preclude inappropriate or inharmonious building design and siting. The design features are: (1) Display windows, or retail display areas; (2) Pedestrian arcades, recessed entryways, or covered recessed areas designed for pedestrian use with an area not less than the length of the adjoining frontage times 1.5 feet; and (3) Landscaping or architectural design features intended to preclude blank walls or building facades. The primary façade along Ramona Street currently has large display windows consistent with the Pedestrian combining district. The addition on the Forest Avenue side is set back 10 feet creating an opportunity for landscaping and other pedestrian friendly features at the new entrance. The building elements on this side are relatively simple, in keeping with the architecture of the existing historic building. Staff has added a condition of approval that requires the applicant to install planters, and possibly a bench, along the new entry façade on Forest Avenue. This proposed plan shall be submitted for staff review and approval.

Zoning Compliance

The project’s compliance with CD-C(P) development standards and parking requirements is indicated on the attached Zoning Compliance table (Attachment E). To address the City’s requirements for bike parking and screening for trash containers, staff has added conditions of approval to ensure these that requirements are sufficiently met.

The project site is designated as a Category 2 historic resource and is listed as a Seismic Category II site. For both a historic and seismic rehabilitation, the building would be allowed to increase its floor area by 5,000 square feet (PAMC 18.18.070(4)), but not to exceed a floor area ratio of 3:1.
The applicant proposes to use 4,940 square feet for the addition and the remaining 60 square feet would be available as Transferable Development Rights (TDR). An eligible receiver site of TDR must be (a) located in the CD commercial downtown district; (b) neither an historic site nor a site containing a historic structure; and (c) have a minimum separation from residential zones. As an added benefit of the historic and seismic rehabilitation, parking is not required for the bonus floor area added to a project.

**Context-Based Design Considerations and Findings**
In addition to Zoning Compliance and Architectural Review approval findings, Context-Based Design Considerations and Findings are applicable to this project pursuant to Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) 18.18.110(b). For ARB discussion, context-based design considerations for the project are provided as Attachment B.

**Comprehensive Plan**
The project design and intent is in general conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. The project is consistent with and supported by the following Land Use policies:

**Policy L-23:** Maintain and enhance the University Avenue/Downtown area as the central business district of the City, with a mix of commercial, civic, cultural, recreational and residential uses. Promote quality design that recognizes the regional and historical importance of the area and reinforces its pedestrian character.

**Policy L-49:** Design buildings to revitalize streets and public spaces and to enhance a sense of community and personal safety. Provide an ordered variety of entries, porches, windows, bays and balconies along public ways where it is consistent with neighborhood character; avoid blank or solid walls at street level; and include human-scale details and massing.

**Policy L-51:** Encourage public and private upkeep and preservation of resources that have historic merit, including residences listed in the Historic Inventory.

**Policy L-56:** To reinforce the scale and character of University Avenue/Downtown, promote the preservation of significant historic buildings.

**Policy L-58:** Promote adaptive reuse of old buildings.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**
Pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the project is categorically exempt from CEQA, per Section 15331, Historic Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation.

**ATTACHMENTS**
Attachment A: ARB Findings
Attachment B: Context-Based Design Findings
Attachment C: Conditions of Approval
Attachment D: Project Description*
Attachment E: Zoning Compliance Table
Attachment F: Development Plans (Board Members Only)*

* Prepared by Applicant; all other attachments prepared by Staff

COURTESY COPIES
William Bruner, Pacific Art League

Prepared By: Clare Campbell, Planner

Manager Review: Amy French, Manager of Current Planning/Acting Chief Planning Official
Thursday June 16, 2011
REGULAR MEETING - 8:30 AM
City Council Chambers, Civic Center, 1st Floor
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301

ROLL CALL:
Board members: Staff Liaison:
Clare Malone Prichard (Chair) Russ Reich, Senior Planner
Heather Young (Vice Chair)  
Alexander Lew
Grace Lee  
Judith Wasserman  
Jason Nortz, Planner
Clare Campbell, Planner

Board Member Malone Prichard: So 668 Ramona Street. Request by Pacific Art League of Palo Alto for Architectural and Historic Review of the historic rehabilitation and seismic upgrade of an existing Category II historic resource generating 5,000 square feet of bonus floor area, 4,959 square feet of which would be used on site and 41 square feet of which would be available as Transferable Development Rights. The zone district is CD-C(P). Do we have a Staff presentation, Clare?

NEW BUSINESS

2. **668 Ramona Street [11PLN-00007]**: Request by Pacific Art League of Palo Alto for Architectural and Historic Review of the historic rehabilitation and seismic upgrade of an existing Category II historic resource generating 5,000 sq. ft. of bonus floor area, 4,959 sq. ft. of which would be used on site and 41 sq. ft. of which would be available as Transferable Development Rights. Zone District: CD-C(P). Environmental Assessment: Exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act per Section 15331.

Ms. Clare Campbell, Planner: Good morning. This rehabilitation project was reviewed by the HRB yesterday and was unanimously recommended for approval with the following added condition. The details of the following items need to return to the HRB on Consent for review.
The first item is the skylight details on the addition. The second floor replacement windows along Forest Avenue. The glass canopy over the Forest Avenue entrance with particular attention to the attachment of this canopy. The trash enclosure. The location of the bike racks. Provide an alternative to the proposed streetlamp on Forest, and the details of the interior structural supports required for the seismic upgrade. So these items are requested to come back to Consent for the HRB review.

Staff will modify the Conditions of Approval for the project to incorporate these added conditions as well as include any additional conditions recommended by the HRB. Staff has provided the Board at places a copy of the unmodified Conditions of Approval that were in the HRB Staff Report just for your review. Again, I will consolidate all of these conditions for the Council review, which is tentatively scheduled for July 11.

We have a representative from the HRB. Chair David Bower is present here today to report out on the discussions and recommendations from the discussion yesterday. Thank you.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Good morning.

Board Member Bower: Good morning Chair Prichard and Board Members. I am David Bower. I am the current Chair of the Historic Resources Board. I don’t know if you received an email last night but you should have received a printed version this morning of our findings. I wanted to spend a few minutes just describing them. Clare has done a pretty good job of summarizing a couple of the key issues we would like to see again, but primarily and most importantly the
Board unanimously and enthusiastically supports the project and its efforts to rehabilitate and
preserve this important building. I think the Staff has identified this building as the second most
important historic structure in the Downtown area. The Christian Science Church across the
street being probably the most important.

We have found that this project meets the City of Palo Alto’s Historic Rehabilitation Standards
as set forth in the code section 18.18.030, subparagraph B. I don’t want to read this whole thing,
but that was critical in order to establish for our Board the floor area bonus. We also found that
these plans do in fact meet the Rehabilitation Standards of the Secretary of the Interior’s
Guidelines. So those two critical issues were addressed yesterday at our meeting, and we again
enthusiastically support this project.

I want to make one brief comment about the conditions. Because of the complexity of this
project the architectural details have not been developed completely. Our Board was concerned
about approving details that we couldn’t see. So we asked for the conditions that Clare just read
to you to be returned to us once they are developed. We don’t want to stop the project, we want
it to continue to move forward, but we thought it was important to see the window detail that is
being replaced.

There was one note in my email that is not exactly accurate. We wanted to see the details of the
skylight that is being added to the second story building, the highest building that you see there
on the model. We don’t want to review that skylight that is the interior skylight, because that is
really not seen from the street. So that is probably not part of the purview of our Board.
So I can answer any questions you have.

Board Member Wasserman: Can you explain please what your concern was about the streetlight?

Board Member Bower: Board Members felt that that was too Victorian. I think we just wanted to see something that was a little bit different, and other than that. I should say, I guess I will talk to you about these other things. We just wanted to make sure the bike rack wasn’t positioned in a way that obscured the building. Bike racks, obviously we don’t have a lot of input we on. Same thing with the trash enclosure. It is not that we have a problem with where it is going to be located we just want to know what it is going to look like even though it is on the back of the building. Then our concern about the seismic upgrade material is that steel structure we imagine, and that the architect will talk to you about further, is probably going to be visible through the front windows. So we just wanted to sure that that is compatible with the building as one views it from the outside. We are not concerned with the inside because that is not part of the purview of our committee. The glass canopy, we just wanted to see what that looks like. It wasn’t established as being clear or frosted. I am sure that prior to a building permit being issued architects and engineers will figure out a way to make sure it says on the building, but we just wanted to see what that was going to look like in its final form.
Board Member Wasserman: I have one other question regarding the color of the addition. I know they changed the texture of the stucco to make it distinct from the original historical building, but you did not require them to vary the color slightly as well?

Board Member Bower: No. The existing texture is a very distinctive material finish for that particular vintage of building. This new texture will be so different we felt, we didn’t really discuss this very much, so I am basically giving you my opinion of this but I think the other Board Members would share it. Just the texture itself will be so much smoother that you will easily be able to distinguish the old and the new.

Board Member Wasserman: I just want to thank the HRB for having similar concerns that we do. It is refreshing to hear that. Thank you very much.

Board Member Young: David, I had a quick question about the Ramona Street entrance into the central tower portion. I know it is the original sized entry, and then the design proposes the pair of double doors inboard. I wondered if the HRB had any reaction to that either in the pair of double doors being potentially modified, or the street arch being potentially modified.

Board Member Bower: As it was explained to us that revision or that change is driven by code requirements for the stairway and the entry and the ADA entrance. I think that it is our understanding that that arch entry would not be changed, but just that this new entry would be set back. It is a compromise that our Board has to make frequently because of this ADA
requirements. But the essential character of the building is still retained even though that door is
going to be moved back.

Board Member Young: Okay. My other question had to do with the quantity of ground floor
punched openings on the existing building contrasted with the proposed quantity of punched
openings in the new Forest elevation. I wondered if you guys had any comments on that.

Board Member Bower: There was a discussion about the new entry, the sidelights on either side
of that new door.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Yes.

Board Member Bower: I guess the way I would characterize it or summarize that discussion is
that the other architects on the Board felt that maybe that could be a little more imaginatively
configured, but basically our job as the Historic Resources Board is to look at how this
compliments or works with the existing architecture. So we didn’t really move very far down
that road in that discussion. We did look at it and basically felt that it was compatible and that is
a very key term in our purview with the rest of the building.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Thank you. I just had one question. Normally the additions
you are looking for some differentiation, and I understand you are looking at the cement plaster
texture as the clue that it is something different and newer than the existing building. Was the
Board pretty confident that that was sufficient? Because so many of the other details appear to
be matching existing.

Board Member Bower: That is the issue we struggle with as a Board in every review. Two
things that we, I think, were comfortable with in terms of this addition. One is it is set back so
that the original building still remains in tact and prominent. The second is that the windows are
complimentary, another one of the C words that we use a lot on our Board, but not identical.
They are going to be aluminum frame. They will be insulated glass so the low E glass
reflectivity will automatically kind of pull them apart. Really it is the fact that it is set back I
think that was most important.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Thank you. One more?

Board Member Young: Sorry. The roof pitch on the new Forest three story component, in the
model it is shown that the I will call it west for lack of better word, has an overhanging eave but
the drawings are showing it as a parapet wall where the roofline dies into it. I can understand
there might be some building code issues that the applicant is struggling with, but from an HRB
perspective did you all address that as a design issue?

Board Member Bower: Not really. We talked about general design. I think that that roof is so
high that except from the tower building here you probably wouldn’t see it. The overhang I
think you are talking about this, I am looking at the building and it is the right hand side here.
Board Member Young: Yes.

Board Member Bower: Again, that is in the back and we didn’t really address any more than that.

Board Member Young: Thank you.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Thanks very much for coming in. Okay, the applicant, you have ten minutes to present your project.

Mr. Bill Bruner, Architect, Pacific Art League: Chairperson Prichard and the Board. I will be speaking to you today through the PowerPoint of the process and our results. If you will note the numbers on the screen will correspond with the numbers in your packets. Do you have those? You have your packets? Great.

So we started looking at this project about three years ago. At that time I had been a member of the Art League for close to 20 years and had thought really very little about the building. I was there to take classes, do etchings, painting, all of that, and my architectural practice was not involved. Back in 2007 the desire then was to sell our building and there was a huge outcry. So at that point the process for doing the seismic upgrade was halted. I said, well it is still the 800 pound gorilla in the building is that we have a seismically unsafe building in any kind of earthquake, and we have the hazard sign on the door. I said, let’s get this fixed. So I got on the
Board with eight other people and I thought it would just be whizzing right through, and the first year we would have it. But here it is, three years later and we are going to do it now.

So let me just quickly show you the overview. Of course we are across the street here. This is the view from down Ramona. Here is the roof of the existing building. We had some skylights on this and the HRB, Dennis particularly, wanted us to take care and not have any additional skylights that affect the look of the building. So we don’t have them there.

This would be the Forest Street and then the new addition entrance. Here is the portion of the Ramona streetscape proposed. Of course, our windows, and interestingly enough here if you haven’t seen these and I was unaware until just a few weeks ago that this is wood detail. These are made out of three-eighths by three-eighths carved wood, and one inch square tubing. So it is really a false balcony. You wouldn’t want to lean on it, but it is quite interesting. The person who designed and built this, designed it primarily was a cabinetmaker. So some of these details like up here are these one-by fascia boards with a detail, but you can’t see it. It is not architecturally scaled for being 35 feet in the air. We will fix them anyway.

Here is the entrance door we have now, and you see the step up here, and then another shorter step. Then when you get inside you go to a landing, you step down twice again, and then you start going up a sloped floor to get into the gallery. It has not been a happy entrance for especially elderly people and we have many people that have to bring all their equipment with them. It is a struggle to get up. So we said let’s just make it a level entrance. So the main gallery entrance is level, it is six inches lower than the gallery up the way. Here is some more
detail of that which we will be taking good care of. This will be a six-inch entry. When we
move the step we can go straight in and that will be the level of the main gallery. We will raise
this level in there so that it matches that, and we will leave this at six inches down so you can
also get in here on the level.

Part of our desire is to retain some of the cabinetwork up in his residential portion of the
building. So in our library we will keep these cabinets and relocate these, because this stair will
be coming out.

The floor plan. Here this shows the entrance stepped back with a wider entry, and that will be a
detail arch there with glass below it, kind of a scala reggia feeling except it would be an
expanding arch there as you walk in, and offset slightly. Then we have the two bike racks in
here, which may be happier over here. We will see, but right now we are showing them in here.

The front entrance, everything remains the same. The openings, you can see the new door
behind here, and then the addition in the rear. Here of course the Forest Street we will be putting
the panel back in here with windows in it, which is similar treatment that we can determine from
the 1965 drawings that Bob Peterson, the architect, did for the building when he did the original
remodel when we purchased the building.

So here the attempt was, well we are going to have these three arches, we will recall the --- so on
the front this is a defining feature, the three arches going up. They are open to the stairwell
beyond. So the stairwell is coming out but the space will remain. Then I thought we would
recall in the memory here, kind of a contextual thing, of having the three again here. They will be on a stairway, which will be the primary code requirement to exit the third floor. So these are at the landings that is why they are offset slightly. Then we have some windows that will be the painted aluminum windows slightly setback from the face but as much as these, and sharper obviously being aluminum, a little different scale. So we feel that will differentiate it.

There are other features. Here is the door from the exit stair and the two sidelights on the main entrance. This would be a main entry for that part of the building. As the use varies over the years we may be relying on this more as an entry, but we wanted to establish it now as a major entry. There it is again.

This is the curved rain canopy. The detail I haven’t looked at. It could be case acrylic with maybe a kind of a bubbly surface to it. I thought it would be a decidedly modern addition, and some of the Board felt that was a good idea, but we need a detail anyway. It is primarily to keep the rain off the people.

The backside, the alley side. These are all steel windows, but we will have aluminum on this side. So the scale will be a little larger even though the lights are similar in size. Here is the feature of the wall that cuts off the gable. I would of course prefer to have the gable go down and over onto at least level with our property line, but judging from what I see across the street and around we need to have that two-hour wall, which is a certain number of inches or feet above. We will have to clarify that, just what that will be, but we know we can’t have any openings in it. That would be typical until the neighbor decides to build up too.
This is the first floor as envisioned. The pumpkin color is the alleyway now, which becomes our addition at that level, galleries, and storage. If you have additional questions about any of these plans we can go over them. Here is the secondary main entrance over here and the service entrance on this side where we will have the trash enclosure.

The second floor, again the pumpkin. Here we are showing this area, which is a rooftop deck now and would have skylight over most of it, and it would be considered conditioned space. In any case, in the future if it were not covered it would have to be considered a future conditioned space. So we are saying that is part of the 5,000 square feet that we are asking for.

Then the third floor, which is all new. The tower is there of course, accessed by a stair from the second floor, which we will eliminate. We will have a low bridge that connects it to the third floor here, which again is some more facility. Here are the exits code stair.

Then the roof with the skylight below, and then the new skylights here over the classroom. Mechanical equipment. Here is the section, the new stair inside, just inside where the old stair was here, but this of course will be code compliant. The elevator that will be a boon to the building. This is the major criticism is where is the elevator. It is like a 15-foot climb to get up there with all your stuff.

This is the section through looking at the addition with the bridge across here and the skylight, which allows the whole area to be leased.
Here are some massing model studies. It is the same model just photoshopped in the surroundings. You can see the little bridge here, which is well down from the ridges here. So the whole tower will have the sense of standing alone. It will actually be visually standing by itself, which was a request and we agree with.

Here is a solar array on the addition. This tree here is a major tree. It was just trimmed. It is going to be a nice shading element to the south side. We are setback ten feet. This is a 12-foot sidewalk here. So we have a 22-foot pedestrian zone, and we think it could be a gathering point. I don’t show the light. I was thinking of the light standard here just as a gathering point with a low cone of light that people would come stand by, kind of a noir feature or something. We will have some planters and bench, or some other seating out there, but we will need to determine all that of course.

Here is looking down on it. Here of course the neighbor is here. They could come up to the same height as we are so that would make our gable moot at that point or our fascia. Again the massing model. This is the primary – the building will remain the same on one, two, three, and even this side returning to here. So it is really four sides that we are honoring here.

The color scheme would remain the same, at least the red. Right now, there is a lot of black in these windows and it deadens the thing. It doesn’t draw you in. So we want to definitely make this – it is the end of the cross axis zone that extends from Lytton to Forest, and we are kind of one of the anchoring elements of that. So we really want people to come by. We want the traffic
to come by and people to stop saying, well we didn’t know you were here. We have lived here for 20 years and have never been by.

Here is a rendering of the total project and a little close-up. This is starting to suggest some kind of form in cast material. I think it is an art piece. We will have to say maybe it is a percentage of art, but it will definitely be with historic review on that. The green is just to show what might be a solution to the structure inside, although we will probably cover the beams with gypsum board so that it doesn’t – this will probably have to come in in several pieces because of its length. We are removing the column in the center of that space in both cases. So it will probably have to be built, actually brought in, and constructed in the space. To get a 40-foot element through there is probably not – but we will see. All that is to come. That’s it. So thank you very much.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Thank you. So we will have questions and comments for you. You might want to stay up because there may be questions for you. So let’s start with Judith. Is there a member of the public here to speak? I have no cards. Okay, so Judith.

Board Member Wasserman: Thank you very much. Thank you. I am delighted to see this project. I am a former member of the Art League, when it was the Art League, and have been known to model for classes.

I had a couple of questions about the floor plan. On the first floor on Sheet 21 it looked like that floor areas A and E had no daylight at all.
Mr. Bruner: Let’s see A, yes, yes that would be true other than some bald light from the front entrance, yes.

Board Member Wasserman: So those are galleries and studios with no daylight.

Mr. Bruner: Galleries and studies with as I say very little, but typically we will have lighting that will …..

Board Member Wasserman: Okay, I just wanted to clarify. There was some discussion about leasing space. It wasn’t clear which space was to be leased.

Mr. Bruner: The second floor.

Board Member Wasserman: On page what?

Mr. Bruner: Let’s see, the second floor would be ….

Board Member Wasserman: Page 23?

Mr. Bruner: Page 23, right. All of that space there both …

Board Member Wasserman: All of the orange space?
Mr. Bruner: Yes, all of the space. Do you see the bottom comments there below the title? It says existing gross floor area.

Board Member Wasserman: The entire second floor is to be leased.

Mr. Bruner: Yes, because we need the entire 5,000 square feet in order to manage the mortgage and so forth.

Board Member Wasserman: I appreciate what the issue is. It just wasn’t clear to me how. So the first floor is going to be studios and galleries, and the second floor is going to be leased, and the third floor is going to be studios and offices, more or less.

Mr. Bruner: Partly, yes.

Board Member Wasserman: Okay. I had a question about the patio on the second floor that was going to have the skylight. How are you going to deal with the solar heat gain in that greenhouse?

Mr. Bruner: Yes, we will need to control the heat gain and heat loss as well, with maintaining a good level of light. So that is a very strong design consideration. We want to be able to have that as a light source to carry out from it but without contributing to the heat load. So there are methods of ….
Board Member Wasserman: Interesting problem. There was a condition from Public Works that said you might be asked to plant street trees on Ramona. Is there any further development with that requirement?

Mr. Bruner: No. They are referring to primarily replacing a tree that was knocked down by a truck coming out of alley some years back. The area where it was was cemented in, but it might not behoove us to create the hazard again of that.

Board Member Wasserman: So I only have really two issues. One is with the light fixture shown on Sheet 31. I think you could find something more in keeping with the spirit of the building perhaps, and more attractive. Also I am with Heather on where she was going with the sidelights on the Forest Avenue side. I think I would pull them in to the doors. It is not a big deal, but I would just pull them so that there weren’t so many punched openings one right after the other.

Mr. Bruner: Good point.

Board Member Wasserman: I like a lot of things about your design. I like the proportions and the respect that you have offered the building. I also like the way you draw the people. I think they are very cool.

Mr. Bruner: Thank you, thank you.
Board Member Wasserman: That is all I have to say on this one. I think it is great.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Heather.

Board Member Young: Thank you for your presentation. I want to echo Judith’s comments about the streetlights, not just the one on the service wall on Sheet A-31 but also the one that the HRB noted as too Victorian. It does look like someone is going to come out and light the gaslight in that particular fixture. Especially as you are trying to make some subtle gestures that this a more modern addition there are some other opportunities I think you can explore there.

Mr. Bruner: Yes, I agree with you very much. We had determined that light before we saw the new library lights, the light sabers in front of the library, which are quite modern. So I think we can do something really in a modern vein that would be very exciting there. I wanted a little bit of the French Momarf or something.

Board Member Young: I also wanted to follow up on my earlier question to our HRB representative, who has left. On the Forest elevation I notice that the massing is such that the gable roof is not continuing all the way from Forest back to the alley.

Mr. Bruner: Yes.
Board Member Young: I wonder if that perhaps gives you an opportunity to reconsider the roofline such that the area over the stairs has a flat roof more like the tower element on Ramona, and the ridgeline shifts over to better align with the entrance and the spaces below it.

Mr. Bruner: An indentation.

Board Member Young: It just might give you an opportunity to address your two-hour rating and make some stronger connection to the Ramona elevation without being a sort of a left over element right now where the parapet wall comes up and it dies into. I mean I agreed with David that the true gable going all the way across would be preferable but if you have a two-hour requirement that you are trying to meet then there might be other ways to make it a more cohesive element.

Then finally just if you could reexamine the Forest entrance and perhaps make it a larger single opening. Also the sidelight horizontal mullion, I am not sure why it rose up above the horizontal mullion in the doors. It seems to be calling attention to itself, and I am not quite sure why.

Mr. Bruner: Yes, it does. That was purposeful, but I can see maybe like you are saying there is a lot going on there now with the exit door. It is like one, two, three, four, five, and maybe simplify it down to three elements or something.

Board Member Young: I think you are very close and it is going to be a welcome addition to the community. Thank you.
Mr. Bruner: You are welcome. Thank you.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Alex.

Board Member Lew: I did want to say first off I think this is a very nice design. I think you have struck the right balance between a new addition and the historic renovation of the old building. So just in general I think it all looks good.

I did have a question for Staff first off, which is the six-foot setback that is required for new buildings on Ramona Street. I was wondering what was the intent of that because that seems kind of strange to me. Was that trying to get a wider sidewalk in the Downtown district?

Mr. Riech/Nortz: It is an interesting question and we don’t necessarily really know. There are several special setbacks throughout the city. Many of them are typically on busier streets, more thoroughfares. We have seen some in the Downtown like the ones on Bryant Street where we are trying to get wider sidewalk for a better connection to University. I don’t know that we have an answer for why this was originally created. It was so long ago that little piece of history is not known to us.

Board Member Lew: Yes, because that doesn’t seem to make sense with an historic building like this, and then also that all the building frontages here they align with the Birge Clark or the
Pedro de Lemos block. So it just seems an anomaly, but I understand we have a long history of zoning stuff here. Okay. So I will move on.

On the building, to my mind it all looks good. I think that I guess my question for the rest of the Board is just how we want to look at some of these details if we want it to come back to subcommittee or Consent, or whatnot. I think in addition to the HRB’s details, the details that they requested, which I think are all good I was curious if you would provide the new window details. You mentioned that new aluminum windows are going to be recessed but not as much as the old building. So if you have like a typical detail of that that would be useful

Mr. Bruner: Yes.

Board Member Lew: I would also be interested in seeing if you actually have the red roof specified. I know you can get a red asphalt roof but there are not a lot of them out there.

Mr. Bruner: Matching.

Board Member Lew: Yes, and if you are trying to match an existing thing then I think it is even harder. So I would kind of like to see that just to see that the new roof is compatible with the old roof. If you have an actual sample.

Mr. Bruner: Yes, like over time just the aging of the roof there it is lighter than it was then you might have to have a special run or something to match it.
Board Member Lew: Yes, and I find and I have specified red roofs on projects before and it is easy to find, but not necessarily in California. So I just want to make sure that you guys can source something.

Then I think I am in agreement with the other Board Members about the sidelights and the light fixtures. I would be happy to see this project come forward. I think it is a very handsome project.

Mr. Bruner: Thank you.

Board Member Malone Prichard: I also am in support of this project. Thank you for bringing it forward. I think you have given a lot of thought to how to make it work with the existing building and yet not look exactly the same. I think you have been very successful in that.

I am in agreement with the other Board Members as far as the things we would like to see back, the window details, the roof sample, and I would like to see the sidelights modified.

Board Member Wasserman: And the solution to the fire separation at the roofline.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Absolutely. In addition, I am interested in the setback area. I think Staff had mentioned whether it was appropriate to put landscaping or something in there. I would be interested to know what you are planning to do with the ground plane in that location.
Mr. Bruner: Yes, it would be planting either in pots or in planters. We might have something more like pots that are actually designed and made by Art League people, ceramic flatwork, and some colorful stuff.

Board Member Malone Prichard: This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase some of the things that happen at the Art League.

Mr. Bruner: Yes, and a bench or seating. We will have temporary things we can bring out too of course. I think it will be a popular place to sit there in the partial sun. So yes.

Board Member Malone Prichard: So I would add that to the list of things we want to look at. Then a question on the bike racks. You are actually showing them within the building essentially. I know it is open but did you look at whether there is a place to put them on the street instead, or is there a strong preference for putting them inside?

Mr. Bruner: Well, it is allowed to put them on public sidewalk. I have seen that down at the circle. That would certainly – the tree is there. We could put the racks on the 12-foot wide sidewalk rather than take any of our space if that is allowable. I like the ones that we move them up like that and lock them in place. They wouldn’t have to be covered though, right? It could just be open?
Board Member Malone Prichard: I think, Clare could you confirm this? They don’t need to be lockers?

Ms. Campbell: I think there is a qualification that a certain percent, I think there are only two spaces so I think we can work it out with our Transportation Division what the requirements would be.

Board Member Wasserman: You could have two at each entrance so that there were two on Ramona and two on Forest. You have the space to do that. It is true, not too many people come on their bicycles with their art supplies, but other people might.

Mr. Bruner: We have some longstanding members that come on the bikes. They bring them inside or they chain them to the post outside. You are right, it is mostly foot traffic.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Then the other thing I know HRB wants to look at is the detailing for the canopy at the new entrance. I would also like to see what that is made out of and how it is attached.

Mr. Bruner: Yes.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Those are all of my comments. Anybody else have any follow-ups?
MOTION

Board Member Wasserman: No. I move that we approve this project with the conditions listed by Clare.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Before we do so I think Alex had a follow-up.

SECOND

Board Member Lew: Nope, I was going to make a motion. So I will second the motion.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Okay. Do you have all of those comments?

Mr. Turner: Let me repeat those back to you just make sure that we have everything. So you want to see the new window details to come back, the modification of the sidelights, the light fixtures both the lamp and the light fixture at the side of the building, a sample of the roof material, you want to see what they plan to do at the ground plane in the recess at the new addition, and the location of the bike racks, and the canopy details.

Board Member Malone Prichard: That is it.

Board Member Young: I think there might have been one more about the roof, the separation.
Board Member Malone Prichard: You are right. How to resolve the two-hour issue.

Board Member Young: Are we proposing Consent or subcommittee?

Board Member Malone Prichard: I would propose Consent, but actually I am not the motion maker.

Board Member Wasserman: I was actually thinking subcommittee but Consent would be okay. What happens on Consent is that it gives us one more chance to take a look at it. Yes, let’s do it on Consent.

Board Member Malone Prichard: Alex, do you agree?

Board Member Lew: Yes. Either way is fine with me.

MOTION PASSED (4-0-1-0, Board Member Lee absent)

Board Member Malone Prichard: Okay. So it is on Consent. All in favor? (ayes) Opposed? None. Thank you.

Board Member Wasserman: Easier than you thought.

Mr. Bruner: Yes, it has been very nice, thank you. Appreciate the chance to present it.
Board Member Wasserman: It is not often we get the architect’s signature on the owner line.

Board Member Malone Prichard: So we will give you a couple of minutes to setup so we will take a brief break.
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APPENDIX A: 1926 Drawings of Winsor’s Cabinet Shop (6 Sheets)
APPENDIX B: 1965 Drawings of the Pacific Art League Remodeling (4 Sheets)

Cover Photo: Courtesy of Pacific Art League Archives
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Pacific Art League retained PAST Consultants, LLC (PAST) to produce a Historic Structure Report (HSR) for Winsor’s Cabinet Shop (Winsor Building), located at 668 Ramona Street in Palo Alto, California. Constructed in 1926 for the Winsor family’s cabinet and furniture-making operation, the building is located one block south of the National Register, Ramona Street historic district and has been occupied by the Pacific Art League since purchasing the building from the Winsor family in 1965.

This HSR is divided into eight chapters. Following the Executive Summary, the report provides a Contextual History that details the circumstances in which Henry R. Winsor chose to leave his position at Dudfield Lumber Company and start his own furniture-making shop. The designer of the building itself, Henry Winsor chose a hybrid Spanish-Revival and Arts & Crafts style, likely influenced by the Spanish-styled buildings being erected on Ramona Street in the middle years of the 1920s. The Winsor family occupied the building until 1965 when it was purchased by the Palo Alto Art Club, renamed the Pacific Art League, in 1984. Thus, only two tenants have occupied the Winsor Building: Winsor’s Cabinet Shop (1926-1965) and the Pacific Art League (1965 – today), the latter having the interior spaces redesigned for art education by Robert C. Peterson, a student of Birge Clark at Stanford University and currently principal of Peterson Architects in Palo Alto.

The Construction History provides a physical description of the Winsor Building and documents the various modifications to the building, including a series of repairs following the primary 1965 remodeling campaign. The Architectural Evaluation rates the significance of specific historic fabric (i.e., exterior and interior architectural features, ornamentation, finishes, materials, and methods of construction) according to a system of ranked character-defining features. The Existing Conditions Assessment describes the condition of materials systems within the building,
emphasizing the identification and condition of the building’s historic character-defining features.

The Treatment Recommendations provide guidelines for retaining and rehabilitating the historic fabric of the Winsor Building. Treatment recommendations maximize the preservation of historic fabric; all recommendations follow the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Standards).

A Bibliography follows, which lists the sources cited. All references are provided in the last section, Endnotes, which give reference sources and provide additional historical information relative to the development of the building. Lastly, the Appendices include copies of the original drawings of Winsor’s Cabinet Shop (Appendix A – six sheets) and copies of the original drawings of the 1965 remodeling for the Palo Alto Art Club (Appendix B – four sheets).

Project Team

Client
Pacific Art League
668 Ramona Street
Palo Alto, CA 94301

Historical Consultant
PAST Consultants, LLC
104 8th Street, #4
Petaluma, California 94952
Principal: Seth A. Bergstein (Architectural Historian, Conservator, HSR Author)

Architect
William Bruner Architect
326 Church Street
Mountain View, CA 94041
Methodology and Research Materials

The project commenced on October 4, 2007, with a kickoff meeting held at the Winsor Building. PAST conducted site visits to assess and photograph the building on October 11, 16, 21, and 23, 2007. Additional visits to local historical archives occurred on these days and subsequent days in October 2007.

PAST revisited the building on February 17, 2010 for a kickoff meeting with Executive Director Richard Ambrose and William Bruner, Chair of the Building Committee and architect for the proposed seismic and historic rehabilitation. In addition on this date, PAST inspected the building to address any changes to its existing condition for purposes of this HSR.

PAST reviewed primary and secondary research material in libraries and repositories of public record in the following institutions:

- **Palo Alto Historical Association, Palo Alto, California**
  
  Housed in Palo Alto’s main library at 1213 Newell Road, the archives of the Palo Alto Historical Association were freely accessible and provided the most complete historical information for this study. Items examined included Sanborn maps, historical issues (on microfilm) of the *Palo Alto Times*, building history files, city directories and secondary histories on Palo Alto. The staff at the Association was extremely knowledgeable and instrumental in providing information for this report.

- **City of Palo Alto Development Center, Palo Alto, California**
  
  The City of Palo Alto’s planning department was consulted for the examination of building permit records and building files relevant to the subject property.
• **Pacific Art League Archives**

  Located on-site in the Winsor Building, the author consulted numerous scrap books of the Pacific Art League (formerly the Palo Alto Art Club), which contained newspaper clippings, photographs, and histories of the organization and its numerous noteworthy and local artists. Various files also contained invoices of repairs to the building during the Pacific Art League’s occupancy.

**Existing Conditions Summary**

The exterior of the Winsor Building is in fair condition and displays most of its historic character-defining features from the 1926 design, including virtually all of its Spanish Revival detailing and the delightful carvings in the display window surrounds on the southeast corner, at the intersection of Ramona Street and Forest Avenue. The existence of most of the Winsor Building’s architectural details on the Ramona Street and Forest Avenue facades has elevated the building to Category 2 status on the City of Palo Alto’s Historic Resource Inventory. A location map of for the Winsor Building appears in **Figure 1**.

![Figure 1](image_url)

**Figure 1.** Location map for Winsor Building, based on 1924 (Updated 1949) Sanborn Map. The north/south wings facing Ramona Street and the rear addition are indicated by arrows (Palo Alto Historical Association).
PAST inspected the building in October 2007 and February 2010. The latter inspection revealed little changes to the building’s existing condition since 2007. However, several conditions are noted in this summary and in the *Conditions Assessment* chapter of this document. For example, cracks and deteriorated plaster in the front stairwell walls on the Ramona Street façade have been repaired since the 2007 inspection. These areas are noted in *Chapter V: Existing Conditions Assessment*, in the narrative and the associated photograph captions.

Evidence of the 1929 fire reported in the *Palo Alto Times* remains in the roof framing of the southwest portion of the original building. The fire did not appear to mar the building’s original detail on the Ramona Street or Forest Avenue facades. As part of the fire repairs to the rear and southwest corner, a one-story addition was added to the west of the original building sometime after 1929. This rear addition is approximately 10 feet deep and runs from the outer southwest wall of the north wing, southerly to a point recessed approximately 6 feet from the building’s south façade wall on Forest Avenue. This addition is in poor condition, with evidence of movement of the addition with respect to the main building displayed in cracks where the addition meets the main building. These cracks have been filled since the original building inspection in 2007 and show evidence of new cracking through these repairs.

Examination of maintenance files at the Pacific Art League’s archives located in the Winsor Building indicates that the original metal roof leaked in various locations and that a new asphalt-composition shingle roof was installed in 1981. This current roof appears to be functioning adequately at this time.

The Winsor Building is classified as a Category I Building under the City of Palo Alto’s Seismic Hazards Identification Program. The building is considered an Unreinforced Masonry (URM) structure because of its hollow clay tile construction. The seismic classification of the Winsor Building was discussed in a letter from the City of Palo Alto to Stephanie Demos, Executive Director of the Pacific Art League, dated November 14, 2007. Various structural engineering
reports have been prepared describing the seismic hazards of the building dating back to 1996. These reports are discussed in Chapter V: Existing Conditions Assessment.

Proposed Rehabilitation Plan

The proposed rehabilitation plan is intended to qualify for both the Historic Rehabilitation Bonus and the Seismic Rehabilitation Bonus, as defined in Chapter 18 of the City of Palo Alto’s Municipal Code. As stated in this code, the proposed rehabilitation plan must meet with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Standards). Review of the preliminary rehabilitation design plan with architect William Bruner indicates that the proposed rehabilitation plan will restore many of the historic character-defining features of the building, while locating the new addition to the rear of the historic building. While the proposed rehabilitation design plan has not been finalized at the time of the writing of this HSR, the design plan appears to support the Standards.

It should be noted that seismic retrofitting will likely necessitate the insertion of steel reinforcement within the building to take seismic loads off the original and poorly-performing hollow-clay tile and concrete frame. While the steel will be visible in the interior (not when viewed from outside), it will be clearly differentiated from the historic structure. This clear demarcation of new structure from the historic supports the Standards.

Acknowledgements

Steve Staiger of the Palo Alto Historical Association provided his usual gracious assistance in locating documents relevant to this study. The Pacific Art League gave the author access to historic scrapbooks and building maintenance files, which informed this project greatly. The author also thanks Robert Peterson, AIA and Guy Frazee, AIA of Peterson Architects for granting an interview to discuss the history of the building. Robert Peterson also provided copies of the original 1926 and 1965 remodeling drawings for reproduction in this report.
II. CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

Introduction
In 1769, Gaspar de Portola, with his party of soldiers, Indian guides and clergy, camped before an immense twinned Redwood tree (“El Palo Alto”), seeking the ideal location for a new Mission. As the party explored the surrounding drainage of San Francisquito Creek, their journal entries commented on the unbridled natural beauty and bounty of the landscape. Although the mission was never constructed, today’s Palo Alto, with its combination of cosmopolitan culture (led by Stanford University, a leading international institution), progressive city government, and beautiful natural setting, lives up to the accolades bestowed upon it by the first non-Native explorers. Excellent histories of this prosperous city, which trace its development from native Ohlone occupation to thriving university town, have been written, such as Winslow Ward’s Palo Alto: A Centennial History (see Bibliography). Such fine historical work needs no duplication. Rather, this chapter will paint a more refined contextual picture of a thriving university town as it appeared when Henry R. Winsor decided to build his cabinet shops in the rapidly-expanding commercial district of the city.

Historical Sketch of Palo Alto: 1860 - 1930
Palo Alto, like many peninsula towns of the late 1800s, was little more than an agrarian community, and smaller than its southern neighbor, Mayfield, when several key events led to its early-20th Century dominance. Before the 1860s, the notion of acquiring large tracts of peninsula land as a haven from the bustle of San Francisco attracted few big city investors. However, the completion of the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad in 1864 inspired wealthy San Franciscan business owners to acquire huge tracts of land around the new railroad’s right of way. In 1874, Leland Stanford, one of the “Big Four” and California’s Civil War governor, chose the Palo Alto region for the location of his stock farm, as he considered it an ideal place to raise his famous racehorses. By 1880, Stanford had amassed over 8,000 acres along the San Francisquito creek drainage. All seemed well until the death of their only child while the family...
vacationed in Europe. According to the lore, Leland had a vision the night of his son’s death, in which the boy urged his father to contribute to humanity. With his wife Jane, Leland decided to fund an institution in honor of their only child. Initially, Stanford hoped to develop a complete educational system, from kindergarten through college; the famed university would become the actual realized creation. His first choice for location was the agrarian town of Mayfield. However, the town refused to close its saloons, as requested by Leland Stanford, as he felt college towns should be dry. Stanford turned to his holdings in Palo Alto to locate his university, hiring Timothy Hopkins, son of Mark Hopkins and a peninsula neighbor, to lay out the university and neighboring town. Stanford University opened on October 1, 1891. The university grew slowly but steadily, leading to Palo Alto’s incorporation on April 9, 1894. However, Leland Stanford never witnessed the ceremony, having passed in June of 1893. As the 19th Century drew to a close, Palo Alto was about to enter a stage of considerable growth.

The lure of the burgeoning university led many Mayfield businesses to relocate to neighboring Palo Alto. Mayfield incorporated in 1903, and was already feeling its decline running hand-in-hand with Palo Alto’s rise to prominence. Despite considerable loss rendered by the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake, Palo Alto continued to grow with strong civic leadership and the attractive power of Stanford University. Mayfield’s fortunes were clearly in jeopardy; the town officially merged with Palo Alto on July 6, 1925. The merger led to a near doubling of Palo Alto’s population in the 1920s, when the combined population of Palo Alto and Mayfield reached approximately 7,000. During this time, the city experienced a substantial building boom, with the shopping district expanding beyond Waverly Street to the east and the construction of handsome residential districts. Prominent local architects, such as Birge Clark and Pedro de Lemos, were designing handsome buildings in a signature style that would become known as the Spanish Revival. To accommodate the bulge in population, construction continued in earnest. In 1926, the year Henry R. Winsor would design and construct the Winsor Cabinet Shop, an article in the *Palo Alto Times* announced, “1925 construction work exceeded the record highest by almost $1,000,000.” By 1930, Palo Alto’s population had ballooned to over 13,500.
The Spanish Revival Style

Birge Clark, perhaps Palo Alto’s most important architect, described the Spanish Revival style in his memoirs, using such terms as “Early California” and “Mission Revival.” The architect describes the style as “a sort of untutored Spanish village type of architecture which is exemplified by arches – round, elliptical, and pointed; balconies recessed into the building or wrought iron balconies projecting out from the building; real or false chimneys; and above all, a tile roof, which if it could not cover the whole building, would at least slope back from the street to a ridge and look as though there might be more tile behind it.”8 The first example, designed by the style’s earliest proponent, George Washington Smith, appeared in Palo Alto in 1924, at 1336 Cowper Street.9 Clark designed his first residence in this style, the Dunker house, in 1926, noting the use of thick stucco walls to resemble adobe and the liberal use of decorative ironwork.10

Birge Clark himself would design numerous buildings in the Spanish Revival style, a design paradigm that would prove to encompass most of his important Palo Alto buildings. An outstanding example of his work in this style is the four-story Medico-Dental Building on the corner of Ramona and Hamilton streets, completed in 1928. The building was considered novel for its time with “… drive-in auto storage in its basement, the first auto garage/storage of this type in Palo Alto.”11 Designed in a sumptuous Spanish Revival style, the building utilized Clark’s characteristic “pointed and round arched windows,” extensive ceramic tile in the multi-story lobby and copious amounts of decorative ironwork. Clark commented that the Medico-Dental Building, “established the character of this block on Ramona.”12

In addition to George Washington Smith, Clark notes another architect who practiced the Spanish Revival and inspired Clark to explore this burgeoning style. Pedro de Lemos was an artist, craftsman and architect of a variety of handmade buildings in and around Palo Alto. In 1925, he designed the Gotham Shop, at 520-26 Ramona Street, the first commercial storefront building on the street, constructed shortly after the Cardinal Hotel (designed by W.H. Weeks...
with Birge Clark).\textsuperscript{13} This building included a rambling courtyard that encompassed a live oak tree and contained niches, benches and handmade ceramic tile. Clark would later comment that de Lemos’ designs for the Gotham Shop inspired him to explore the Spanish Revival style fully.\textsuperscript{14} It is interesting to note that the Winsor Building, which displays stylistic elements of the Arts & Crafts and Spanish Revival styles, was constructed during the same period as Birge Clark’s and Pedro de Lemos’ signature buildings on Ramona Street one block to the north.

\textbf{Henry R. Winsor’s Family Business}

Unlike Birge Clark and Pedro de Lemos, very little biographical information exists regarding Henry R. Winsor. He is not featured as one of the more prominent Palo Alto residents at that time. City directories from 1918 and 1919 list Henry Winsor as employed by Dudfield Lumber Company, located on Alma Street and Forest Avenue, one of the region’s larger building supply companies at that time.\textsuperscript{15} Around 1920, Mr. Winsor left the Dudfield Lumber Company to pursue his own furniture-making business, placing his first advertisement for “built-in furniture” in the \textit{Palo Alto Times} on April 20, 1920.\textsuperscript{16} He apparently operated his business from his home at 668 Ramona Street for nearly six years, before beginning construction on the Winsor Building.

Given the rapid expansion of Palo Alto in the mid-1920s, the \textit{Times} regularly announced new building permits, with amounts, that were taken out in the City. On August 28, 1926, the first permit for Winsor’s Cabinet shop appears.\textsuperscript{17} Henry R. Winsor designed the building in two sections, constructing the north wing first. Wells Goodenough was the builder. The original drawings for Winsor’s Cabinet Shop, dated 1926, are included as Appendix A.\textsuperscript{18} Henry Winsor chose elements of the Mission or Spanish Revival style for his detailing, undoubtedly influenced by the impressive Clark and de Lemos buildings being constructed on Ramona Street, merely one block to the north.

On October 30, 1929 a fire struck the rear of the building along Forest Avenue, and ravaged the structure’s south wing on the corner of Forest Avenue and Ramona Street. Henry Winsor’s son,
Mervyn Winsor, then only seven years old, discovered the blaze. According to the *Times* flames were “shooting high into the air” by the time firemen arrived.\(^{19}\) Although the *Times* article announced that Winsor’s was “completely burned,” interviews conducted with Mervyn Winsor in the mid-1990s indicate otherwise. Mervyn stated that fire only destroyed a rear section of the building (that stood in the position of the current rear addition to the west) and only partially destroyed the cabinet-making shop, which occupied the building’s southern wing.\(^{20}\) One of the building’s earliest views located, likely from the 1940s – 1950s, appears below as **Figure 2.**

![Figure 2. Circa 1940s-1950s view of Winsor’s Cabinet Shop (Palo Alto Historical Association).\(^{21}\)](image)

**Figure 3** below depicts an additional view.

![Figure 3. View of Winsor’s Cabinet Shop in the 1950s (Palo Alto Historical Association).\(^{22}\)](image)
The Winsor family lived in the apartment above the cabinet shop, which was accessed via the front stairs. The operation became a family business with sons Alvin and Mervyn eventually joining Henry Winsor. The Winsors sold the building directly to the Palo Alto Art Club in 1965.

The Palo Alto Art Club

Although Birge Clark and Pedro de Lemos were not involved in the construction of the Winsor Building, they were among the founders of an informal art club that would continue to be one of Palo Alto’s art centers to this day. On February 12, 1921 nationally-renowned sculptor A. Phinister Proctor held a meeting in his home for the purposes of developing an art club in Palo Alto. By the end of February, the Palo Alto Art Club was formed, with charter members including Palo Alto’s budding architectural talents, Birge Clark and Pedro de Lemos (also curator of the Stanford Museum). Additional charter members that connected Palo Alto art with architecture included Stanford University Professor A. B. Clark and his wife, Grace Birge Clark. Professor Clark himself was a talented architect, head of the Stanford Art Department and Birge Clark’s father. Membership encompassed representatives of virtually all of the visual arts, and included: printmaker Mary Denison Thomas, Frank Duveneck Jr. (son of international artist Frank Duveneck), Stella McKee, art teacher at Palo Alto High School, and James Swinerton, nationally-famous cartoonist and painter. Meetings began immediately in members’ homes for sketch groups, art discussions (or chalk talks), art instruction, and for engaging the community with a host of artistic talent that lived in the area.

After only several years, it became clear that the Club’s membership was growing quickly. In 1926 noted sculptor, painter and woodcut-maker, Elizabeth Norton, was elected president. An integral leader and member of the Palo Alto Art Club her entire life, Elizabeth Norton was able to secure the Club’s first Palo Alto location, at 340 Melville Avenue, in 1939. The Club embraced all of the visual arts, including photography: the Palo Alto Camera Club joined the group at the Melville Avenue location in 1946. By the 1950s, enrollment had reached 400, with
11 weekly art classes offered. The group quickly outgrew its first location. With Board approval in 1953, the Club moved into the Unitarian Church (partially designed by Bernard Maybeck – now demolished). By October of 1954, the Palo Alto Art Club had grown to 600 members. It was becoming clear that newer and larger quarters would be needed.

The Club Occupies Winsor’s Cabinet Shop
In the early 1960s club president Lucille Ostrum, a real estate broker connected to the community, sold the Unitarian Church for $79,000, enabling the purchase of Winsor’s Cabinet Shop. The club hired Robert C. Peterson, an architect who studied with Birge Clark, to design a master plan for the Art Club in its new location and to oversee the building’s conversion. Jane O’Neill, a “firecracker of a president,” rallied a considerable volunteer effort to increase membership and raise funds for the renovation. As part of this campaign, the Club published an elegant brochure to increase awareness and raise funds. The brochure opened with renderings of old club locations and a sparkling face lift for Winsor’s Cabinet Shop; scans of these images appear as **Figures 4 and 5**.


On August 13, 1965 the *Palo Alto Times* announced that an “obscure downtown business building will soon be transformed into Palo Alto’s ‘castle of art.’” The *Times* article noted the Club’s plans to occupy Winsor’s Cabinet Shop and presented the reader with a sketch of the building as it would appear after restoration. The Club endeavored, as it did with the Maybeck wing of the old Unitarian Church, to retain and restore as much of the building as possible. The sale price of the building was $92,500.
For the article, the *Times* photographed the building shortly after its purchase. These images appear as **Figures 6 and 7**.

![Figures 6 & 7](image1.jpg)

**Figures 6 & 7.** Views of Winsor’s Cabinet Shop shortly after purchase in 1965. These images accompanied the August 13, 1965 article in the *Palo Alto Times* (Pacific Art League Archives).

The Club’s plans to occupy the Winsor Building actually were announced in the *San Jose Mercury News* in January of the same year. The paper declared, “A new home for the fast-growing Palo Alto Art Club has been announced – in a Spanish-style building which the club will restore as a symbol of a vanishing era.” The following accompanied the article (**Figure 8**).³³

![Figure 8](image2.jpg)

**Figure 8.** Image that accompanied the 1965 *San Jose Mercury News* article, showing the southwest building corner at the intersection of Ramona Street and Forest Avenue. On the Forest Avenue façade, the first floor display window and an upper-level sash window are shown with arrows (Pacific Art League Archives).
Robert C. Peterson, AIA, principal of Peterson Architects of Palo Alto, maintains copies of both the 1926 Winsor Cabinet Shop drawings and the 1965 remodeling drawings. When he arrived to design the master plan in 1965, he noted that the building was unpainted: the pebble stucco finish was dark gray from dirt and grime. The splash marks seen beneath the windows in the historical photographs are where runoff has washed away the darker areas of grime.34

The Palo Alto Art Club changed its name to the Pacific Art League in 1984 and continues to occupy the building.

**Historical Analysis**

The Palo Alto Historic Resources Board nominated the building in 1978 as a Category 3 historic resource. The City has since upgraded the Winsor Building to Category 2 status. As defined by the Palo Alto Municipal Code, a Category 2 Building is:

**Category 2:** A "Major Building" of regional importance. These buildings are meritorious works of the best architects, outstanding examples of an architectural style, or illustrate stylistic development of architecture in the state or region. A major building may have some exterior modifications, but the original character is retained.

The period of significance is 1926 – 1965 and spans the occupancy dates for the building’s historic use as a furniture manufacturing shop and residence. This date period follows standard National Register criteria, which establishes a period of significance based on a historic resource’s most significant historic use. For this building, the most significant use would be the building’s original use, as Winsor’s Cabinet Shop, constructed in 1926. In 1965, the Winsor Building was bought and occupied by the Palo Alto Art Club. Thus the period of significance would include the dates of the Winsor occupancy, 1926 to 1965. Only two tenants have occupied the Winsor Building – a relatively uncommon occurrence for commercial buildings in Palo Alto.

Regarding National or California Register eligibility, the Winsor Building may possibly be significant at the national and state levels under National Register Criterion C (California
Criterion 3): Design and Construction. The following is a brief discussion about the criteria categories, as applied to this building.\textsuperscript{35}

National Register Criterion A (California Criterion 1) relates the resource to a specific historic event. Although Winsor’s Cabinet Shop opened to meet the demand of an expanding Palo Alto in the mid-1920s, it is unlikely that the building would qualify for its association with this event alone, as the same distinction can be made for any other Palo Alto commercial operation in business during the city’s greatest time of growth.

Criterion B relates a historic resource to significant individuals in national and state history. Although Henry R. Winsor and his family manufactured interior furniture for the thriving housing and commercial markets, the Winsor family is not recorded as making significant civic contributions to Palo Alto or the local region. It is not likely that Henry Winsor or his sons would qualify under National Register Criterion B (California Criterion 2), “Significant Persons,” as they do not have national or state significance.

National Register Criterion C (California Criterion 3) refers to a historic resource’s unique method of design and construction. The original Winsor’s Cabinet Shop, designed by Henry Winsor and built by local builder Wells Goodenough, may be potentially eligible as an example of the region’s vernacular Spanish Revival style. Likely influenced by the new buildings designed by Birge Clark and Pedro de Lemos one block to the north, the Winsor Cabinet Shop employed interesting elements of the local Spanish style, such as arched windows, false balconies with clay tile roofs, the illusion of thick walls rendered with a pebble stucco finish, and the elegant bent wood details found on all of the extant false balconies. Given the building’s proximity to the Ramona Street Architectural District, and its use of the Spanish Revival Style, the Winsor Building may potentially qualify as significant under National Register Criterion C and/or California Criterion 3.
III. CONSTRUCTION HISTORY

Introduction
Additions and alterations to the Winsor Building are presented in Table 1, Construction Chronology, which lists the various changes to the building and their associated dates. Drawings for the 1926 Winsor Building and the 1965 remodeling appear in Appendix A and B, respectively.

Appendix A includes copies of six drawings of the Winsor Building prepared by Henry Winsor. Sheet One shows a perspective sketch of the building’s north wing, located at the intersection of Ramona Street and the alley on the north edge of the site. This north wing was constructed first. Sheet Two depicts rough elevations of the completed building, indicating the placement of windows, doors and architectural detailing. Sheet Three is a plan view of the north wing; Sheet Four provides sections for the north wing, indicating concrete framing, window openings and hollow clay tile placement. Sheets Five and Six are first and second floor plans, respectively, of the south wing. The locations of the various building wings are indicated in Figure 9 below.

Figure 9. Sanborn map scan showing location of the north/south wings facing Ramona Street and the rear addition, all indicated by arrows (Palo Alto Historical Association).
It should be noted that the 1926 Winsor drawings are conceptual at best. The drawings are not as-built documents as one would see prepared today. As was typical building practice in the 1920s, an owner could present a set of schematic drawings to a builder who would execute the work. The 1926 Winsor Building drawings provide an indication of the overall stylistic composition of the building; rather than a record of what was constructed. However, the 1926 drawings do serve as a useful guide to determining what historic fabric is original to the building. Copies of blueprints for the 1926 building campaigns reside in the offices of Peterson Architects in Palo Alto.

Appendix B includes copies of four drawings of the 1965 remodeling campaign for the Pacific Art League, by Robert C. Peterson (now principal of Peterson Architects). Included are plans and elevations of the Winsor Building, with indications of changes to be made for the new tenant. While these drawings are more detailed than those by Henry Winsor, they also should not be considered as as-built drawings. These four sheets detail the changes to the 1926 building for the 1965 remodeling campaign. These sheets also provide a glimpse at what the Winsor Building looked like prior to the 1965 remodeling.

Physical Description
Merely two tenants have occupied the Winsor Building: Winsor Cabinet Shop (1926-1965) and the Pacific Art League (1965 – today). Based on an examination of the 1965 remodeling drawings, it appears that the Pacific Art League occupation has installed relatively few changes to the building’s exterior from the early period as a cabinet shop.

Site
The Winsor Building site is bounded by an alley to the north, Ramona Street to the east, Forest Avenue to the south, and a driveway to the west. The essentially flat site was originally located in a more commercial area of the city, just two blocks south of fashionable University Avenue. Review of period Sanborn maps indicate that the surrounding blocks included similar
commercial operations, such as furniture stores, upholstering operations and laundries. The building takes advantage of its corner location, with ornate bay windows and wood railings in the Spanish Revival style (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Southeast corner of building at the intersection of Ramona Street and Forest Avenue. The fence at extreme left is part of the site (PAST Consultants).

Site features include the north alley intersecting Ramona Street and an open, paved area immediately behind (west) of the building (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Paved driveway behind the building, looking south toward the fence along Forest Avenue (PAST Consultants).
Building Exterior

Ramona Street (East) Facade

The building’s primary façade at 668 Ramona Street is a symmetrical composition featuring a pair of gable ends flanking a central tower. The north wing fronts Ramona Street and the north alley; the south wing fronts Ramona Street and Forest Avenue. The gable ends have rooflines perpendicular to Ramona Street, vents near their apex, and a varied fenestration pattern with arched openings. The facade has upper-story, corner false balconies sporting elegant wood railings which are hallmarks of the Spanish, or Mission Revival style. The use of arched window openings, arched vents, and an arched entrance also provide Spanish Revival stylistic elements.

As it appears today, the building’s primary entrance is through an arched opening located off-center in the central tower’s Ramona Street façade. An additional entrance to retail spaces, utilizing one of the original entrances to the 1926 cabinet shop, is located on the south wing’s Ramona Street façade, between the display windows (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Ramona Street façade of the building, the south wing entrance shown by an arrow (PAST Consultants).
The first floor of the Ramona Street façade is dominated by a series of wood-framed, multiple-paned display windows running the length of the façade and wrapping around the corners of the building. The windows contain multiple-paned toplights that were originally operable. In the 1926 composition, the display windows flanked an entrance centered within each building wing. On the north wing, this entrance was replaced by a smaller display window during the 1965 remodeling campaign (Figure 13). The south wing, as seen in Figure 12 on the previous page, still contains the original entrance flanked by the display windows. The display window surrounds on the south wing bear a number of turned wood elements and carved decorative wood details that were possibly intended to highlight the woodworking shop within (Figure 14).

Alley (North) Façade

The alley facade displays a false balcony with a narrow window in the upper story, placed close to the east façade, to enhance the visual effect when viewed from the northeast building corner (Figure 13 above). This smaller false balcony echoes the design details of the false balconies on the Ramona Street façade with a decorative wood railing and a shallow-pitched shed roof.
finished with clay tiles. The remainder of the alley (north) façade was the more service-oriented section of the building, with a service entrance near the west side of the façade and casement windows in the upper story. The pebble stucco finish changes to a flat finish several inches behind the border of the alley façade’s display window (Figures 15 & 16).

Figures 15 & 16. To the left, a view of the alley (north) façade, taken from the northwest (rear) building corner. The upper-level casement windows are shown with arrows. On the right, a view of the alley (north) façade, taken from the northeast building corner, showing the change in stucco finish with an arrow (PAST Consultants).

Forest Avenue (South) Façade
The Forest Avenue (south) façade displays similar design elements to the Ramona Street façade, including an upper-level false balcony and a large, first-floor display window (Figure 17).

Figure 17. View of Forest Avenue (south) façade, taken from the corner of Ramona Street and Forest Avenue (PAST Consultants).
As seen in Figure 17 on the previous page, the opening for the upper-story windows to the rear of the Forest Avenue façade has been infilled with sash replacements installed after 1965, as the sash configuration does not match what is shown on the 1965 Peterson drawings. Similarly, the first floor opening has been boarded up with wood sometime after the 1965 remodeling campaign.

The first-floor, Forest Avenue display window contains wood decorative elements rendered into a series of flattened arches capped by fans, trefoils and a dentil course (Figure 18).

Figure 18. View of Forest Avenue facade display window (PAST Consultants).
Rear (West) Façade

A single-story addition with a shed roof was constructed on the rear (west) façade of the building and displays a band of fixed-sash windows with wood frames (Figure 19). Although the exact date of construction could not be verified, it is possible that this addition was constructed by Henry Winsor shortly after the 1929 fire. The rear addition is constructed of the same materials as the original building – hollow clay tile and concrete – and is poorly tied to the earlier building. Above this addition, a parapet wall protecting an upper-level deck was also added (Figure 20).

Figures 19 & 20. Views of the rear addition constructed on the rear (west) façade (PAST Consultants).
Building Interior

During the Winsor era, a potential client entered the building through the central tower’s doorway and proceeded down a central hallway to Henry Winsor’s office on the left. The Winsor family lived in an apartment above the shops, accessed via a stairway left of the main entrance and running just behind the Ramona Street façade wall (Figures 21 and 22).

Figures 21 & 22. On the left, the primary entrance and window to Henry Winsor’s office, viewed through the arched entrance. On the right, the stairs to the upstairs apartment (PAST Consultants).

Originally, the south wing housed the manufacturing side of the business, with the north wing used for displaying completed work. The present staircase at the rear of the first floor was installed as part of the 1965 remodeling campaign. On the second floor, the apartment displays several built-in cabinets, most likely made at the cabinet shop, and hardwood floors (Figures 23 and 24). Table 1, on the next page, outlines the building’s construction chronology.

Figures 23 & 24. Two views of the upstairs apartment looking northeast. The entrance to the apartment from the Ramona Street stairs is shown in both images with an arrow (PAST Consultants).
### Table 1. Construction Chronology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1926</strong>:</td>
<td><em>Palo Alto Times</em> announces the granting of building permits to Henry R. Winsor for construction of the Winsor Cabinet Shop. Construction was likely completed in the autumn of 1926 (<strong>Figure 25</strong>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>See Appendix A for copies of original drawings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>October 30, 1929</strong>:</td>
<td><em>Palo Alto Times</em> reports of the fire that struck the Cabinet Shop, which was housed in the south wing of the building. Evidence of fire damage remains in the roof framing of the south wing, in both the east section and in the smaller rear section currently housing the Executive Director’s office. (<strong>Figure 26</strong>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No Verified Date</strong>:</td>
<td>Construction to repair fire damage included repairs to the south wing and construction of the rear addition and parapet wall present today (<strong>Figure 27</strong>).</td>
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</tbody>
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**Figure 25.** Early historic image of building, undated, but likely 1940s-1950s (*Palo Alto Times*).

**Figure 26.** Fire damage in roof framing of the south wing (PAST Consultants).

**Figure 27.** View of rear addition looking northeast (PAST Consultants).
1965: Building remodeled for the Palo Alto Art Club. Modifications to the original building include:

- Replace entrance on Ramona Street façade, north wing, with display window (Figure 28).
- Install operable door in Ramona Street façade, south wing, entrance.
- Replace glass in north façade first floor display window with wire glass.
- Install smaller door in west entrance on alley façade; infill the larger opening with cinder block.
- On rear (west) façade, north wing, remove larger doors and install vents to accommodate new furnace. Infill the openings with cinder block (Figure 29).
- On rear (west) façade, south wing, remove window and install door with jalousie window toplight (Figure 30).
- Install new landing in center hall entrance.
- Install new concrete ramp in rear of hall.
- Install rafters and gypsum board ceiling in rear addition.
- Install gypsum board wall finishes onto existing hollow clay tile walls at various locations.
- Install restrooms and associated sinks and infrastructure for art school remodeling.

See Appendix B for copies of remodeling drawings.

Figure 28. Center display window replacement on Ramona Street façade’s north wing (PAST Consultants).

Figure 29. Vents, cinder block infill, and boiler exhaust on rear (west) façade of north wing (PAST Consultants).

Figure 30. 1965 door and jalousie window on rear (west) façade of south wing (PAST Consultants).
1967: Installation of tar-and-gravel roof and 2x6” cedar decking boards to second-floor roof deck on rear of building. Installation of tar-and-gravel roof on tower, as well as “miscellaneous repairs as directed by the P.A. Club president.” These repairs were likely the modification to window openings that are evident in the rear facades of the building in the vicinity of the roof deck (Figure 31).

These same surfaces were re-roofed in 1981.

**Date Not Verified:** On Forest Avenue façade, aluminum slider windows installed in original window openings on upper floor; first-floor service entrance boarded up with wood (Figure 32).

1981: Primary roofs replaced with asphalt composition shingles; new flashing and sheet metal installed at all chimneys; vents not in use closed off; gutters and downspouts replaced. The roofing replacement involved the removal of the original “corrugated metal roof.” (Figure 33)

![Figure 31. View of roof deck, looking southeast from north wing (PAST Consultants).](image)

![Figure 32. Replacement entry door and aluminum slider windows in south facade (PAST Consultants).](image)

![Figure 33. Replacement roofing on north wing viewed from third-floor tower window (PAST Consultants).](image)
IV. ARCHITECTURAL EVALUATION

Introduction
This section lists and assigns significance ratings to the historic character-defining features of the Winsor Building. A character-defining feature is an aspect of a building’s design, construction, or detail that is representative of the building’s function, type, or architectural style. Generally, character-defining features include site characteristics, landscaping, specific building systems, architectural ornament, construction details, massing, materials and craftsmanship within the period of significance. For a historic resource to retain its historic significance, its character-defining features must be retained to the greatest extent possible. An understanding of a building’s character-defining features is a crucial step in developing a rehabilitation treatment plan that maximizes the retention of specific historic fabric and communicates the historic significance of a given building, structure, site or other historic resource.

This section also rates the character-defining features according to their degree of significance. Significance ratings were assigned to individual character-defining features and newer elements found throughout the Winsor Building as a better method of understanding the importance of individual components. The ranking system presented on the next page identifies and rates the character-defining features as a means of understanding the building’s individual aspects or elements that contribute to its architectural and historic significance.
Methodology in Determining Significance Rating

Character-defining features were grouped by location throughout the building and analyzed according to significance. Individual features were identified as very significant, significant, contributing, or non-contributing.

- **Very Significant** classifies those character-defining features that date within the period of significance of the building and communicate the greatest degree of historic integrity for the site. Their retention and restoration should be prioritized.

- **Significant** features are often ancillary or supportive of the very significant features that contribute to the understanding of the overall design. Alteration or removal of these features may be necessary for programmatic or building system requirements; however, removal of these features should be minimized or mitigated.

- **Contributing** features are elements of the building, or modifications to the building, that are of lower importance relative to the understanding of the original design. Alteration or removal of these features, if necessary, would have a limited effect on the integrity of the building.

- **Non-contributing** features are elements of the building that are recent modifications and/or are constructed outside the period of significance and whose removal or alteration would not have an effect on the original integrity of a building. In some cases, removal of the non-contributing features may have a positive effect on the building’s overall integrity.

Character-defining Features

This section lists and ranks the character-defining features of the Winsor Building. The listings begin on the next page with a table for each significance category:

- Table 2: Very Significant Character-defining Features
- Table 3: Significant Character-defining Features
- Table 4: Contributing Character-defining Features
- Table 5: Non-contributing Features
### Table 2: Very Significant Character-defining Features

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<th>Description</th>
<th>Image</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Three-part massing consisting of a central tower flanked by the north and south wings (Figure 34).</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Figure 34" /> View of Ramona Street façade showing three-part massing and tower (PAST Consultants).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Thick, Spanish Revival pebble-stucco finish on Ramona Street, Forest Avenue and alley facades (Figure 35).</td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Figure 35" /> Pebble stucco finish (PAST Consultants).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Central tower with arched openings, diamond-paned upper-level windows on Ramona Street, upper-level steel windows in tower sides, off-center entrance on Ramona Street, and crowning cement plaster parapet (Figure 36).</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Figure 36" /> Central tower with Ramona street diamond-pane windows, steel side windows, and a crowning parapet, shown by arrow (PAST Consultants).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Fascia boards and pendants on gable ends of Ramona Street façade (**Figure 37**).

![Figure 37](image).

**Figure 37.** Ramona Street gable end, showing fascia boards, peak “pendant” and arched vent (PAST Consultants).

5. Arched window vents on Ramona Street gable ends (**Figure 37 above**).

6. Stepped arched openings to light front staircase to upstairs (former) apartment (**Figure 38**).

![Figure 38](image).

**Figure 38.** Stepped arch openings lighting front staircase behind Ramona Street façade wall, shown by arrows (PAST Consultants).

7. Upper-level false balconies on Ramona Street, Forest Avenue, and alley facades, with all associated casement windows, bent-wood rails, barrel-tiled shed roofs and roof supports (**Figure 39**).

![Figure 39](image).

**Figure 39.** View of false balcony, with associated rails, casement windows, bent-wood rails, and barrel-tiled shed roofs (PAST Consultants).
8. Original casement and fixed windows on Ramona Street, and alley façades visible from Ramona Street, examples shown by arrows (Figure 40).

Figure 40. View of northeast building corner, showing Ramona Street and alley façades. Arrows indicate original casement windows (PAST Consultants).

9. 1926 south entrance on Ramona Street façade (Figure 41).

Figure 41. View of southeast building corner, at Ramona Street and Forest Avenue, showing the 1926 south entrance, shown by arrow (PAST Consultants).

10. First floor display windows and associated mullions, wood surrounds, and glass on the Ramona Street, Forest Avenue, and alley façades; with the exception of the central window on the Ramona Street façade’s north wing, which was installed in 1965 (Figure 42).

Figure 42. Ramona Street façade, north wing, showing display windows. The middle window was installed in 1965 (PAST Consultants).
Table 3: Significant Character-defining Features

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<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Front stairs to upper-level apartment (Figure 43).</td>
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<td></td>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Figure 43" /> View through the tower’s arched Ramona</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Street entrance, showing stairs, office window and mail</td>
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<td></td>
<td>slot (PAST Consultants).</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Original office window and mail slot in rear wall of stairs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Figure 43 above).</td>
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</table>
Table 4: Contributing Character-defining Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature Description</th>
<th>Image Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Rear addition, of unverified date, constructed behind the building (Figure 44).</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Figure 44" /> View of rear addition and parapet wall crowning the roof of rear addition (PAST Consultants).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Upper-level industrial sash windows on the rear of the alley façade (Figure 45).</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Figure 45" /> View of north alley façade, looking east toward Ramona Street, showing original upper-level windows with arrows (PAST Consultants).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. On Forest Avenue façade, upper-level window opening and first-floor service entrance (Figure 46). Although the openings are original, the sash windows and board infill were installed at a later date.</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Figure 46" /> View of Forest Avenue façade, showing upper-level opening with replaced sash and the first-floor service entrance boarded up with wood (PAST Consultants).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Hardwood floors in upstairs rooms (*Figure 47*).

![Figure 47](image1.jpg)  
*Figure 47.* Typical view of hardwood floors in upstairs rooms. (PAST Consultants).

5. Built-in cabinets in upstairs rooms (*Figure 48*).

![Figure 48](image2.jpg)  
*Figure 48.* Example of built-in cabinet in upper room (PAST Consultants).
Table 5: Non-contributing Features

1. 1965 remodeling of original, northernmost Ramona Street entrance into a smaller display window (see Figure 42).

2. Modified entrance and cinder block infill on alley (north) façade, near rear (west) building corner (Figure 49).

3. Modifications to rear (west) façade to accommodate 1965 furnace installations, including new furnace vent opening, associated vents and cinder block infill (Figure 50).

4. On Forest Avenue façade, aluminum slider windows placed in second-story opening; and installation of wood covering over first-floor service entrance (Figure 51). Although the openings are original, the sash windows and board infill were installed at a later date.
5. Roof deck and associated decking boards and trellises (**Figure 52**).

![Figure 52](image)  
*Figure 52.* View of roof deck, taken adjacent to parapet wall, looking southeast (PAST Consultants).

6. Window sash replacements in rear façade openings surrounding rear terrace (**Figure 53**).

![Figure 53](image)  
*Figure 53.* Example of sash modification, shown by an arrow (PAST Consultants).
V. EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

Introduction
The building is in fair condition, due primarily to the building’s potential seismic hazards as a result of its structural framing system. With the exception of changes to the rear façade following the 1929 fire, and modification to window and door sash in several openings on the Forest Avenue facade, many original architectural details and finishes survive. Surviving exterior historic fabric includes the exterior stucco finishes (both “pebble” and flat); the false balconies on the upper stories, including the balcony roof framing, supports and railings; historic casement windows (with original glass) on all facades; first-floor display windows on the alley, Ramona Street and Forest Avenue facades; and original roof fascia boards.

Structural Framing System
The building’s structural framing system consists of a reinforced concrete frame infilled with hollow clay tile, a typical framing system for a structure of this vintage. Based on inspection of the building walls from the interior, it is not clear how the hollow clay tiles are connected to the concrete frame or if the reinforced concrete frame contains enough steel and shear resistance for the building to sustain the impact of moderate to severe earthquakes (Figure 54).

Figure 54. Typical concrete and hollow clay tile framing detail at ceiling (PAST Consultants).
Concerns about the Winsor Building’s performance in moderate to severe earthquakes have been raised in various structural engineering evaluation reports written since the mid-1990s. As discussed in this report’s executive summary, a letter from the City of Palo Alto’s Department of Planning and Community Environment to Pacific Art League Executive Director Stephanie Demos, dated November 14, 2007, outlined the seismic constraints of the Winsor Building. The letter specifically noted that the Winsor Building is classified as an Unreinforced Masonry (URM) building and that earthquake hazard signs should be placed on building entrances warning occupants that they are entering a URM building.39

Previous structural engineering reports have made similar recommendations. A report generated in 1996 stated, “The building should be expected to sustain extensive damage during a major seismic event that has a good probability of occurring in the next several decades.”40 The report also commented on the rear addition of the Winsor Building: “The clay tile walls of the room addition are very poorly constructed, cracked and extremely unsafe in their present condition.”41 A structural evaluation of the Winsor Building undertaken in 2000 echoed the 1996 report, stating “If this building is to be occupied in the long-term, it should be retrofitted to prevent severe damage in the event of a moderate to large earthquake.”42 Regarding the rear addition, the report recommends, “Remove the shed at the back of the building. It is very poorly constructed, apparently of ungrouted masonry block.”43

It should be noted that a structural engineering evaluation was not part of the scope of work for this HSR, but will be conducted prior to the Winsor Building’s rehabilitation phase.
Winsor Building: Exterior

Foundation

The foundation support consists of a system of reinforced concrete footings and piers. Individual structural elements of the foundation were not visible and should be inspected during the building’s structural engineering evaluation, as part of the rehabilitation design phase.

Walls

Exterior cement plaster walls display two types of stucco finishes: pebble and flat. The exterior walls of the Ramona Street, Forest Avenue and alley facades bear the pebbled finish; the flat finish occurs on rear facades and on the portion of the alley façade that is not visible from the street (Figures 55 & 56).

Figures 55 & 56. On the left, a detail of the alley façade wall, where the finish changes from pebble to flat (arrow). Several unpatched holes are also visible below the arrow. On the right, a detail of typical base spalls in original exterior pebble stucco, likely due to water splashing (PAST Consultants).

The stucco finishes on the original building are in good condition, with scattered cracking, base spalls, and holes where old mounting brackets have been removed without patching the stucco. A large corner spall appears at the top of the rear (west) tower wall, above the left window.

A prominent character-defining feature of the building is its front staircase that runs parallel to Ramona Street outside the main building, but is hidden by the exterior wall. Originally, this staircase led to an apartment above the cabinet shops. A series of stepped openings in the
Ramona Street façade wall light the staircase. Within the staircase, the flat stucco finish on the building wall is in poor condition with areas of cracking and voids of missing cement plaster and exposed lath. The cement plaster surrounding these exposed areas is likely deteriorated also, due to water infiltration behind the wall (Figures 57 and 58).

Figures 57 & 58. On the left, a view of the front staircase from the second floor landing, showing areas of cement plaster damage (arrows). On the right, a detail of a cracked and exposed area of cement plaster. These areas have been repaired subsequent to the original inspection in 2007 (PAST Consultants).

On the rear façade of the building, the flat stucco finish contains areas of cinder block infill around modified openings in the north wing’s rear (west) façade (Figure 59). The west parapet wall above the rear addition has areas of peeling paint and exposed cement plaster. In addition, exposed rebar is visible at the base of the parapet wall (Figure 60).

Figures 59 & 60. On the left, a detail of the modified wall openings in the north wing’s rear (west) façade. On the right, a view of the rear (west) parapet wall and exposed rebar, indicated by an arrow (PAST Consultants).
Rear Addition

As discussed in previous sections, the 1929 fire attacked primarily the rear façade and the west side of the Forest Avenue facade. The rear addition present today was possibly added when the fire damage was repaired. Various construction details indicate that the rear addition was constructed later than the original building. First, the hollow clay tile of the rear addition measures 8 x 12 inches, whereas the tile used on the 1926 building walls measures 5 ½ x 11 inches (Figure 61). In addition, examination of the framing connections indicates that the original concrete framing was notched to accept the roof beam of the addition (Figure 62).

Figures 61 & 62. Left is a view of the addition’s rear wall where it interfaces with the north wing’s building wall. The arrow points to the addition’s hollow clay tile unit, which is larger than the tile in the adjacent wall. Note the wide vertical crack where the two walls meet. On the right, the addition’s roof beam notched into the column of the original building (PAST Consultants).

The rear addition’s building wall contains numerous cement plaster cracks, typically around windows and door frames. These cracks also correspond to visible cracks and evidence of movement of hollow clay tiles when viewed inside the addition. In Figure 61 above, a wide vertical crack where the addition wall meets the north wing’s building wall corresponds to an open crack viewed in the exterior wall (Figure 63, next page).

It appears that the rear addition’s foundation may not have been tied into the existing building, as the walls of the addition bear evidence of considerable movement manifested by multiple-tile,
cracking, especially where the addition walls meet the 1926 structural walls. These cracks have been repaired since the original inspection in 2007 and displayed cracking through these repairs during the February 2010 inspection (Figures 63 & 64).

Figures 63 & 64. The left view shows a crack where the rear addition’s building wall meets the north wing and corresponds to the crack shown in Figure 61 (arrow). On the right, a wide crack beneath the window on the south façade of the rear addition, indicated by an arrow. Since these photos were taken in 2007, the cracks have been repaired; however, the same cracks have appeared through the recent repairs (PAST Consultants).

Roof

The replacement shingle (with plywood sheathing) roofing system appears to be in good condition. Attic roof framing is in good condition with scattered areas of moisture staining, likely from water intrusion prior to the re-roofing campaign. The roof framing was inspected on the south wing only (Figure 65). Replacement gutters and downspouts appear to be adequate.

Figure 65. View of attic roof framing looking east toward vent in south wing. Smoke damage is evident in various framing elements and in the arched wall vent. Note the addition of plywood sheathing (PAST Consultants).
Roof fascia boards display openings and end deterioration where they meet at the corners of gable ends. Replacement fascia boards from the re-roofing campaign are unpainted. Fascia boards display end-grain deterioration, gouges, and peeling paint (Figure 66).

Figure 66. View of typical fascia board condition. The middle board, likely a replaced element during the 1981 reroofing campaign, is unpainted; the boards are open where they meet at the corner (PAST Consultants).

Windows and Doors

Display windows and associated frames on the first story are in fair condition, with scattered areas of gouging in the wood mullions and surrounds. The window on the alley facade has replacement glass in many locations. The display windows on the southeast corner, where the Ramona Street and Forest Avenue facades meet, feature delightful turned and carved wood details and original glass. It is possible that these windows were completely gutted by the 1929 fire as the mullions and frames bear so much more architectural detail than their counterparts on the north wing (Figure 67). The sill boards are in poor condition with considerable wood decay.

Figure 67. View of southeast corner display windows (PAST Consultants).
The Ramona Street and alley facades contain numerous examples of extant wood casement windows. The window frames and sash typically have gouges, peeling paint, wood deterioration, and cracked or missing panes (Figure 68).

Figure 68. View of extant upper-floor casement windows at northeast building corner (PAST Consultants).

The false balconies and associated casement windows are important character-defining features of the building. Original windows, surrounds, rails and associated shed roofs remain at all four locations and are in good condition. The clay tile finishing the shed roofs is intact and in good condition with various chips and misaligned units (Figure 69). The bent wood rails are intact and in good condition, with scattered gouges, missing paint, and deterioration where the rails meet the exterior walls. The rails have been reinforced with steel connections at various locations (Figure 70).

Figures 69 & 70. View of south wing’s Ramona Street false balcony, showing historic detailing. A steel reinforcing bar has been added to the rail, as shown by an arrow in the right image (PAST Consultants).
Winsor Building: Interior

The circulation patterns of the 1926 cabinet shop remain virtually unchanged on the first floor, where a central hallway leads to Henry Winsor’s original office to the left. Views of the north wing’s first floor space show the concrete framing and exposed clay tile. As discussed previously, a display window has replaced the 1926 entrance of the north wing’s Ramona Street facade (Figure 71).

![Figure 71. View of north wing’s interior looking northeast (PAST Consultants).](image)

A 1926 entrance remains in the center of the south wing’s Ramona Street façade, likely the same configuration as what was replaced on the north wing. The entrance has original glass and window and door surrounds, with scattered gouges and deterioration (Figure 72).

![Figure 72. Interior view of 1926 entrance in south wing looking toward Ramona Street (PAST Consultants).](image)
In the upstairs apartment, original built-ins and hardwood floors are in good condition, with scattered wood gouges and areas of worn finish (Figure 73).

Figure 73. Hardwood floor finishes and built-ins (shown with arrows) in upstairs apartment (PAST Consultants).

Building Systems

The building contains the same furnace installed during the 1965 remodeling campaign for the Pacific Art League (Figure 74). The evaluation of mechanical and electrical systems was not part of this study’s scope of work and should be undertaken during the rehabilitation phase.

Figure 74. View of furnace room with 1965 boiler (PAST Consultants).
VI. TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction
The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Standards), commonly referred to as the Standards, provide a system for identifying, prioritizing and preserving extant historic fabric. The Standards recognize that buildings and their associate uses change over time, and provide guidelines for establishing the most important elevations of a building (such as a front facade), where historic integrity may be highlighted, versus less visible elevations (i.e., rear facades) for locating remodeling campaigns, or the installing of ADA entries or elevators. For the Winsor Building, which retains many historic character-defining features, the following treatment sequence adopts the Standards and emphasizes the retention of historic fabric on the most important facades: the Ramona Street and Forest Avenue facades, as well as the portion of the alley (north) which contains the pebble-stuccoed finish.

Proposed Rehabilitation Sequence

- Perform structural engineering assessment of building.
- Based on programmatic requirements and the engineering assessment, either repair or remove the poorly-constructed rear addition.
- Inspect all roof framing, coordinated with the engineering assessment.
- Perform seismic retrofit the building, as required by engineering assessment.
- Inspect and repair roof fascia boards and pendants at gable peaks. Historic wood repairs should entail removal of deteriorated wood sections from individual members for preparation of Dutchman installation; or the use of an epoxy wood fill/patching compound formulated for historic wood and matching in color and texture to the original surrounding wood. Repair, rather than replace as much historic wood as possible.
- Inspect and repair arched vents in the Ramona Street gable ends of the north and south wings.
- Inspect and locate all exterior stucco cracks, holes and spalls. Remove poor, non-binding stucco patches, or, if desired, remove poorly-matched patches. Fill in cracks and spalls, as required. All stucco repairs should match the texture of the historic stucco as closely as possible.
- Repair large corner spall in rear (west) façade of central tower.
• Remove all exposed concrete reinforcing bars in rear (west) façade. Repair holes in historic stucco using appropriate techniques mentioned previously.

• Inspect and repair any splits, gouges, or other damage to the first floor display windows on the Ramona Street, Forest Avenue, and alley (north) facades. Historic wood repairs should entail removal of deteriorated wood sections from individual members for preparation of Dutchman installation; or the use of an epoxy wood fill/patching compound formulated for historic wood and matching in color and texture to the original surrounding wood. Prioritize the retention of original historic glass and wood surrounds of southeast corner display windows.

• Inspect and restore all historic fabric related to the four false balconies on the second floor. Use Dutchman or appropriate wood fill repair methods that match the historic wood rails, shed roof supports and casement windows as closely as possible.

• Inspect and restore clay barrel-tile roofs of the false balconies. If the surfaces require a new roofing membrane, remove and salvage all historic clay tiles for reinstallation. Locate replacement tiles from salvage operations or from the original manufacturer that match the original tiles in size, color and texture.

• Restore 1926 Ramona Street entrance to south wing with appropriate wood repair techniques mentioned previously.

• Inspect and repair historic wood casement windows in the upper stories of the Ramona Street, Forest Avenue and alley (north) facades using the appropriate wood repair techniques mentioned previously.

• Inspect and repair wood diamond-pane detail on the Ramona Street, third-floor tower windows.

• Inspect and repair fixed steel sash tower windows.

• Inspect and repair all remaining fixed-sash wood window frames using appropriate wood repair techniques mentioned previously.

• If programmatically possible, retain hardwood floor finishes on second floor.

• If programmatically possible, retain original built-ins on second floor. If built-ins will be removed, photo-document and salvage them.

• Clean dirt and grime from the building facades, particularly the pebble-stuccoed surfaces. Use the gentlest means possible on all cleaning methods, paying particular attention to keeping the historic stucco finishes intact.

• Paint the building.
VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Newspaper and Magazine Articles


“Building Permits,” *Palo Alto Times*, July 26, 1926.


“Building Permits,” *Palo Alto Times*, October 11, 1926.


“New Building Record Made Here,” *Palo Alto Times*, January 1, 1926.


*Palo Alto Times*, April 20, 1920 (First advertisement for Winsor’s Cabinet Shop).

*Palo Alto Times*, May 8, 1920 (First advertisement Winsor’s Cabinet Shop with telephone number).

*Palo Alto Times*, January 11, 1975 (For undated historical image of Winsor’s Cabinet Shop).

*Palo Alto Times*, May 5, 2000 (For undated historical image of Winsor’s Cabinet Shop).


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Building Clippings Files, Palo Alto Historical Association.


Clark, Birge M. *Commercial Buildings in Palo Alto Designed by the Office of Birge M. Clark* (Copy of Manuscript), Archives of the Palo Alto Historical Association, Palo Alto, California, 1976.

*Historic Resources Inventory: Winsor’s Cabinet Shop (DPR Form 523).* Completed 1978; Revised 1985.

Invoice from Delano H. Large, General Contractors, Mountain View, dated March 10, 1981.

Invoice from Lefholz Construction Company, General Contractors, Menlo Park, for roofing repairs, November 28, 1967.

Letter from William E. Delucchi, Coordinator of National Register Project (and PAL member), to Mildred Mario, City of Palo Alto Historic Resources Board dated April 3, 1996.


Letter to Stephanie Demos, Executive Director, Pacific Art League from Curtis Williams, AICP and Larry Perlin, Chief Building Official, City of Palo Alto Department of Planning and Community Environment, Re: 668 Ramona Street, November 14, 2007


*Ramona Street (Advertising Booklet Privately Published, circa 1928 - 1930).* Archives of the Palo Alto Historical Association.


Website: [http://charityadvantage.com/Pacific_Art_LeagueBZTEZU/History.asp](http://charityadvantage.com/Pacific_Art_LeagueBZTEZU/History.asp).

Website: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayfield,_California#History](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayfield,_California#History).
VIII. ENDNOTES

1 Letter to Stephanie Demos, Executive Director, Pacific Art League from Curtis Williams, AICP and Larry Perlin, Chief Building Official, City of Palo Alto Department of Planning and Community Environment, November 14, 2007. This letter summarizes the seismic hazards of the Winsor Building. It lists a structural engineering report, dated March 20, 2004, which provided the support for the recommendations outlined in this letter. PAST attempted to find a copy of this report at the City of Palo Alto Development Center, but the report could not be located. The letter identifies section 16.42.070(a) of the Palo Alto Municipal Code which requires that the building owner of a Category I building notify all tenants, in writing, that the structural engineering report is available for review. The letter also quotes Section 8875.8 of the State of California Government Code, which requires that the building owner of a URM building in Seismic Zone 4 (which includes the Winsor Building site) post notice prominently on entrances to the building stating: “EARTHQUAKE WARNING. This is an unreinforced masonry building. You may not be safe inside or near during an earthquake.”


3 Website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Francisco_and_San_Jose_Railroad.

4 Winslow, pp. 2-5.

5 Website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayfield,_California#History.

6 “New Building Record Made Here,” *Palo Alto Times*, January 1, 1926.

7 Census figures quoted in Winslow, p. 8.


9 Winslow, p. 111.


12 Clark, Birge M., *Memoirs*, p. 25. Clark notes, “In fact, this block was very successful commercially, anchored by the Gotham Shop and the Homeware Store.”


14 In Clark’s *Commercial Buildings*, p. 6, he describes de Lemos as “a gifted artist and artisan, who not only designed but actually did some of the concrete work, woodcarving, and colorful decorations.”


16 City Directories no longer list Henry Winsor as employed by Dudfield Lumber Company after 1919. In addition, City Directories list “Winsor’s Cabinet Shop” for the first time in the 1920 – 1921 directory.

17 “Building Permits,” *Palo Alto Times*, August 28, 1926. The article states, “HR Winsor, owner and builder, at 660 – 668 Ramona Street, stores, $7,040.” An addition to this permit was announced in the *Times* on October 11, 1926, for the sum of $6,000. Around this time, HR Winsor also took out permits for “stores,” with the address listed as 652-654 Ramona Street,
indicating he owned the adjacent lot on Ramona Street as well. The permit dates and amounts for the latter address are: June 10, 1926, $6,030; and July 26, 1926, $5,979. Wells Goodenough, one of the more prolific contractors of the time, is listed as builder.

18 Although Henry Winsor was a furniture designer, he was no architect. The drawings are not what one would expect by a modern architecture firm. The drawings are difficult to decipher, as several of the sheets are copies of blueprints. The first sheet shows an interesting perspective drawing of the north wing fronting the alley (north) façade. This wing was constructed first. This sheet also depicts a standing seam metal roof bordered by Mission-style barrel tiles. The second sheet presents the building’s Ramona Street elevation with both wings indicated. Various details on the building are somewhat different than what is drawn: for example, the false balconies show three corbeled supports; only one was actually installed beneath the center of each balcony. However, the 1926 drawings do confirm Henry Winsor as the designer. It should be noted that even in the mid-1920s, buildings were still being “designed” by owners who would find their favorite contractor to execute the work. This explains the various discrepancies between what was drawn and what exists on the building.


20 Letter from William F. Delucchi to Mildred Mario, Chairperson of Palo Alto Historic Resources Board, dated April 3, 1996. A member of the Pacific Art League, Mr. Delucchi was working on nominating the building to the National Register of Historic Places at this time. He performed document searches throughout Palo Alto and conducted interviews with Mervyn D. Winsor. He summarized his research in this letter.

21 Photo featured in the May 8, 2000 edition of the Palo Alto Times and from the archives of the Palo Alto Historical Association.

22 Photo featured in the May 29, 1999 edition of the Palo Alto Times and from the archives of the Palo Alto Historical Association.

23 Obituaries for Alvin R. Winsor (September 26, 1969) and Grace Winsor, Henry’s wife (February 26, 1968), both appearing in the Palo Alto Times.

24 William Delucchi’s letter states the deed was recorded on January 27, 1965.


26 Website of the Pacific Art League:
http://charityadvantage.com/Pacific_Art_LeagueBZTEZU/History.asp.

27 Early History of the Palo Alto Art Club, p. 2.

28 Ibid, pp. 3-5.

29 Ogle, Helen. The Pacific Art League—A Brief History. Unpublished history located in the archives of the Pacific Art League. According to this history, the purchase price of Winsor’s was $93,000.

30 Quote from Ogle, Helen. The Pacific Art League—A Brief History.

31 The 1965 brochure was called, A Story of Progress about the Palo Alto Art Club. Copies reside in the archives of the Pacific Art League.
32 “Palo Alto Art Club Plans Move,” Palo Alto Times, August 13, 1965. The rendering of the building was by Club member Dan LeGear and included a proposed addition to be constructed immediately behind the existing structure fronting Forest Avenue. The addition was not built.


34 Interview with Robert C. Peterson, AIA and W. Guy Frazee, AIA of Peterson Architects, October 29, 2007. Robert Peterson was the Pacific Art League’s architect of record from 1965 until 2003. He recollects the unpainted nature of the building and its overall haphazard design and detailing. He also expresses concern about the building’s potentially poor seismic performance, noting a 2003 structural engineering evaluation that recommended considerable retrofitting to enable the building to sustain catastrophic earthquake loads. Peterson Architects have copies of the various drawings from the 1926 Cabinet Shop. A number of the sheets are copies of blueprints, which did not reproduce well for this report. Appendix A provides a representative sample of the original drawings.


37 Invoice from Delano H. Large, General Contractors, Mountain View, dated March 10, 1981 and located in the file, Building Renovation Info, in the archives of the Pacific Art League.


43 Ibid, p. 2.
APPENDIX A  1926 Drawings of Winsor’s Cabinet Shop (6 Sheets)

Note: Sheet numbers and north arrows added for this HSR
APPENDIX B  

1965 Drawings of the Pacific Art League Remodeling (4 Sheets)