



City of Palo Alto

City Council Staff Report

(ID # 9614)

Report Type: Study Session

Meeting Date: 10/1/2018

Summary Title: 980 Middlefield Road: Prescreening for PC Amendment

Title: 980 Middlefield Road [18PLN-00129]: Request for Prescreening of a Proposal to Amend the Existing Planned Community (PC) 2152 Zoning in Order to Change the Allowed Use From Mortuary to a Private Club or Similar Use with Collaborative Office Workspaces and Areas for Workshops and Special Events. The Study Session Will Give the Council and the Community an Opportunity to Comment on the Applicant's Proposal Prior to Submittal of a Formal Application. Environmental Assessment: Not a Project; any subsequent formal application would be subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Zoning District: PC 2152 (CONTINUED FROM SEPTEMBER 10, 2018)

From: City Manager

Lead Department: Planning and Community Environment

Recommendation

Staff recommends that Council conduct a preliminary review ("prescreening") and Councilmembers provide informal comments regarding the applicant's request to make changes to the Planned Community (PC) 2152 zoning. In addition, staff seeks Councilmembers' input on the proposed site improvements. Comments provided in the course of a prescreening are not binding on the City or the applicant.

Executive Summary

The applicant seeks preliminary feedback from the City Council concerning a proposal to amend the PC 2152 zoning for the subject parcel, located at the corner of Middlefield Road and Addison Avenue. The proposal includes changes to the development plan and to the proposed use of the site. The Comprehensive Plan land use designation is multi-family, while the site is currently zoned for use as a mortuary.

The applicant proposes interior and exterior alterations to the existing building for its reuse as a

private club or similar use that provides co-working/office space, areas for workshops and small classes, and space for lectures and speaker events, among other uses, as described in further detail in the applicant's project description in Attachment E. The project also includes exterior façade and site design modifications.

A prescreening review is required for legislative changes, including PC amendments, prior to application submittal in accordance with Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) Section 18.79.030(A). Prescreenings are intended to solicit early feedback on proposed projects and, like all study sessions, cannot result in any formal action.

Background

In July 1963, the subject site included three parcels zoned R-3-P, R-3, and R-2, all three of which were rezoned to a Planned Community Zoning (PC 2152) to accommodate the mortuary use. The ordinance outlining the PC 2152 Zoning is included in Attachment B. Permitted uses in this ordinance include "mortuary and necessary related facilities, including off-street parking and employee's residences." Therefore, the proposed use of the site for any primary use other than a mortuary would not be allowed under the existing zoning. In 2014, Council suspended the creation of new planned community districts, but remained open to amendments to previously approved PCs. The project applicant requests Council's preliminary feedback on an amendment to the existing PC Zoning at 980 Middlefield Road. The requirements for PC districts are stated in PAMC Section 18.38. To amend the PC, the Council would need to make the following required findings:

- (a) The site is so situated, and the use or uses proposed for the site are of such characteristics that the application of general districts or combining districts will not provide sufficient flexibility to allow the proposed development.
- (b) Development of the site under the provisions of the PC planned community district will result in public benefits not otherwise attainable by application of the regulations of general districts or combining districts. In making the findings required by this section, the planning commission and city council, as appropriate, shall specifically cite the public benefits expected to result from use of the planned community district.
- (c) The use or uses permitted, and the site development regulations applicable within the district shall be consistent with the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan, and shall be compatible with existing and potential uses on adjoining sites or within the general vicinity.

Project Description

A location map of the proposed site is included in Attachment A. The preliminary schematic drawings included in Attachment F communicate a concept plan as is appropriate for this stage

of project consideration. As shown in these schematic drawings and noted in the applicant's project description in Attachment E, the applicant is proposing a modification to the use of the site as well as several modifications to the site design and exterior facades.

The applicant's description generally outlines the proposed use of the site as an establishment focused on providing "a vibrant, welcoming space for traditional and non-traditional professionals to collaborate, work, learn, find support, build community, and spend time with their families, friends, and neighbors." Use of facilities would mostly be restricted to members. The three main uses are described as collaboration spaces, classes and workshops, and special events, as described further below. The applicant notes that on average, there would be approximately 150 members/guests utilizing the site at any given time during the day and 125 people using the site in the evening or on the weekend. However, the applicant proposes a maximum concurrent number of people that may use the site at up to 300 people during the day and up to 400 people during the evening or weekend hours. The applicant anticipates four to eight full time employees and ten to twenty part-time employees to manage the facility. The hours of operation would generally be 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. seven days a week, but the applicant notes that (1) the people using the office space would arrive earlier and/or depart later, and (2) special events and classes may occur outside of those hours. The project description seems to anticipate outdoor events with amplified sound occurring until 9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, and until 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Indoor events are anticipated to last until midnight.

Proposed exterior modifications to the building would primarily include the creation of a new drop-off area parallel to Addison Avenue, revisions to the parking area; the addition of a new play area; and revisions to the exterior facades. The interior floor plan would be redesigned to include individual and co-working spaces, classroom areas, a gallery, a small gym, a multipurpose room with a stage, and kitchen areas.

Classes and Workshops

The applicant states that the facility would host up to 20 classes per day for youth and adults with up to 25 attendees per class. Types of classes could include music classes, visual and/or performing art programs, cooking, professional development, dance, fitness, health/wellness, language or academic/tutoring programs. Participation of classes would require pre-registration and registration fees. Some classes would be open to all members of the public while others would be open to those paying for regular membership of the facility.

Collaboration Space

The majority of the interior would be redesigned to accommodate co-working/office space with several adjacent conference/meeting room spaces. Approximately 100 people would have access (through membership) to the co-working and other breakout space monthly. The applicant states that, although there would be up to 100 members, they anticipate that no

more than 50 people would utilize this collaboration space at any given time throughout the day because they would arrive and depart at various times. The facility would also offer food and beverage options to members and guests and include spaces that would be ancillary to the office use, including a fitness room, an atrium/lounge area, garden and outdoor space, and a patio area with tables.

Special Events

The applicant proposes up to ten events per week with up to 75 attendees, no more than 250 times per year, and up to four events per week with more than 75 attendees, no more than 150 times per year. As stated in the project description, the organization would offer membership to the public. The applicant also explains that, as a community benefit, the rental space would:

- be made available for non-profit and/or charity events at least twelve times a year;
- host free and under-market rate classes, workshops, or other events for the public community at least six times per year; and
- host, free of charge, at least ten meetings and/or small gatherings per year for the purpose of community outreach, volunteering, charity or other like uses.

The project site currently consists of three parcels. It is anticipated that any formal application would also include a request to merge the three lots. Therefore, the project data on the conceptual plans reflects the area of the resulting merged lot.

Surrounding Uses

Adjacent zoning and uses include Addison Elementary School on a PF zoned parcel to the South (across Addison Avenue), single-family residential uses to the east in the R-1 zone district (across Middlefield Road), and multi-family residential uses to the north and east on a large parcel zoned PC 2836. Surrounding buildings generally range from one to two stories in height.

Discussion

Staff has identified the following key considerations for Council, and summarizes each below:

- A. Conformance with the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Designation;
- B. Traffic and Parking;
- C. Historical Evaluation; and
- D. Public Comments

Conformance with Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Designation

The project site is designated multi-family residential on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. The definition in the Land Use and Community Design Element for this designation does not speak to uses other than housing; however, the City's Zoning Code does allow for some

additional uses within residential zoned districts either by right or with approval of a Conditional Use Permit.

It should be noted that the City defines community center in Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) Section 18.04.030(34) as “a place, structure, area, or other facility used for and providing religious, fraternal, social and/or recreational programs generally open to the public and designed to accommodate and serve significant segments of the community.” Though the applicant likens the proposed use to a community center, it is not clear that the project, as currently proposed, meets the City’s definition of a community center. Membership is generally open to the public and the applicant has offered, as a community benefit, use of the site on a limited basis to non-members. However, use of the facilities is generally restricted to paying members, and membership is limited. Therefore, the proposed use may also be considered a private club use, which is permitted in certain districts, but not specifically defined in the municipal code. In addition, a significant portion of the floor plan is dedicated to co-working use, which may not be consistent with either a community center or a private club use. The co-working use and ancillary space is most consistent with the definition of general office use and; therefore, the use would likely be subject to the citywide office/Research and Development cap requirements, which limits the addition of new office space in the City to 50,000 square feet of new space per year.

Staff notes that the residential zoning regulations in the City’s Zoning Code do allow Community Centers as a conditionally permitted use in any residential district, while private club uses are conditionally permitted only in the RM-40 district. Office uses (other than home occupation) are not permitted in any residential zones. The current PC 2152 Zoning only allows a mortuary use; therefore, an amendment to the PC would be required to accommodate the proposed use. Because the project proponent seeks to amend an existing PC zone, any use may be considered by the City Council.

Traffic and Parking

There are currently 45 parking spaces provided on the site. The proposed project would reduce the number of on-site parking spaces to 36 spaces. For a private club use, the City’s Zoning Code typically requires one space for each four seats, or four person capacity, based on maximum use of all spaces at any one time. Office spaces typically require one space per 250 square feet of gross floor area. The applicant has stated that up to 150 people would be anticipated to use the facilities on average throughout the day, a maximum of 300 people may utilize the space during regular work/school hours, and up to 400 people may utilize the space during evening or weekend hours. The applicant notes that the facility would “encourage walking, biking, rideshare, carpooling, or public transportation for all patrons” and notes that the neighborhood is walkable. The applicant also states that they may utilize off-site lots and shuttles and/or valet parking for large events. However, even with special accommodations for larger events, as currently proposed, it is not clear that the proposed parking would be

sufficient to accommodate the day-to-day use at the site.

If there is Council interest in changing the current PC zoning, staff would recommend that as part of any future project, specific parameters be defined for the use of the facility in order to ensure that the number of parking spaces is appropriate for the maximum anticipated number of users at any given time. Staff also notes that the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant spaces on the plans do not appear to meet the City's municipal code or California Building Code requirements. Therefore, further consideration of the parking layout would also be necessary as part of any formal application.

Staff also notes that the proposed size and hours of operations could be impactful to operation of Addison Elementary. Further consideration and coordination with the school would be required as part of any formal application to ensure the proposed operation of the facility would not conflict with school operations. The project also includes changes to the site to create a drop-off area, which would require a new curb cut on Addison Avenue. This drop-off zone would allow transit network companies (e.g. uber, lyft, etc.) or parents with children to drop-off and pick-up passengers without impacting traffic flow on Addison Avenue. Further analysis of pick-ups and drop-offs, in coordination with the City's Transportation Division, would be required as part of any formal application, to ensure that the site is designed appropriately to prevent queueing from impacting local vehicular circulation.

The applicant notes that during construction, workers would park on site, and arrival and departure times would be scheduled to avoid school pick-ups and drop-offs. The applicant is also aware of concurrent construction activities occurring at Addison Elementary and anticipates further coordination with Addison Elementary School's contractor to reduce cumulative construction impacts to the neighbors and school.

Historical Evaluation

The City contracted with Page & Turnbull to prepare a Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) for the existing buildings on the subject parcels. The HRE prepared for these properties is included in Attachment D. The HRE concludes that the existing mortuary building is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) under Criterion 3, Architecture/Design, for its "distinctive Midcentury Modern design, as a midcentury property type, and as work of architect Leslie Nichols." As described further in the report Leslie I. Nichols was a prominent local architect best known for designing the Palo Alto City Hall at 1313 Newell Road (now the Palo Alto Art Center). Characteristic Midcentury Modern elements include projecting eaves, cantilevered overhangs, flat roof forms, a vaulted roof form, an articulated primary façade, wood siding, brick veneer, stones used as accent material, and several other features seen on this building. Because the building is found to meet the criteria for eligibility for the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR), site and building exterior modifications would be required to comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards),

which would require modifications to the proposed façade revisions as part of any formal application. If the plans are not modified for compliance with the Standards, preparation of an environmental analysis analyzing the project's significant impact on a historic resource would be necessary.

Public Comment

Several public comments were received following noticing of this prescreening application. Some of these comments were provided verbally; written comments are included in Attachment C. One nearby resident wanted to better understand how the site would be used, expressing that they would not be supportive of an office use but may be supportive of a true community center use. This same resident and one additional nearby resident expressed that, in the past, the site has been used for unpermitted events that have generated excessive noise and traffic and impacted parking in the vicinity. Therefore, the neighbors want to better understand the parking and noise impacts of the proposed project.

In addition, two members of the public noted that construction is anticipated over the next two years at Addison Elementary and in the adjacent right-of-way. Therefore, if a formal application is approved, construction at 980 Middlefield Road might coincide with construction activities at the elementary school.

As part of any formal application, staff would further assess the potential impacts of noise, traffic, and parking associated with construction, especially simultaneous construction with the adjacent elementary school, as well as those impacts associated with the ongoing use of the site.

Timeline

Following the prescreening review, the applicant will consider Council's comments and determine how they want to proceed. Any formal application would be subject to the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) and Council's purview, similar to a zoning code text amendment process. Physical changes to the site are also anticipated to require a recommendation from the Architectural Review Board (ARB) as part of the Architectural Review process and may also require a recommendation from the Historical Resources Board (HRB).

Environmental Review

The prescreening is a preliminary review process in which Councilmembers may provide comment, but no formal action will be taken. Therefore, no review under the California Environmental Quality Action (CEQA) is required at this time. A full review under CEQA would be initiated with the formal filing of a development application.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Location Map(PDF)

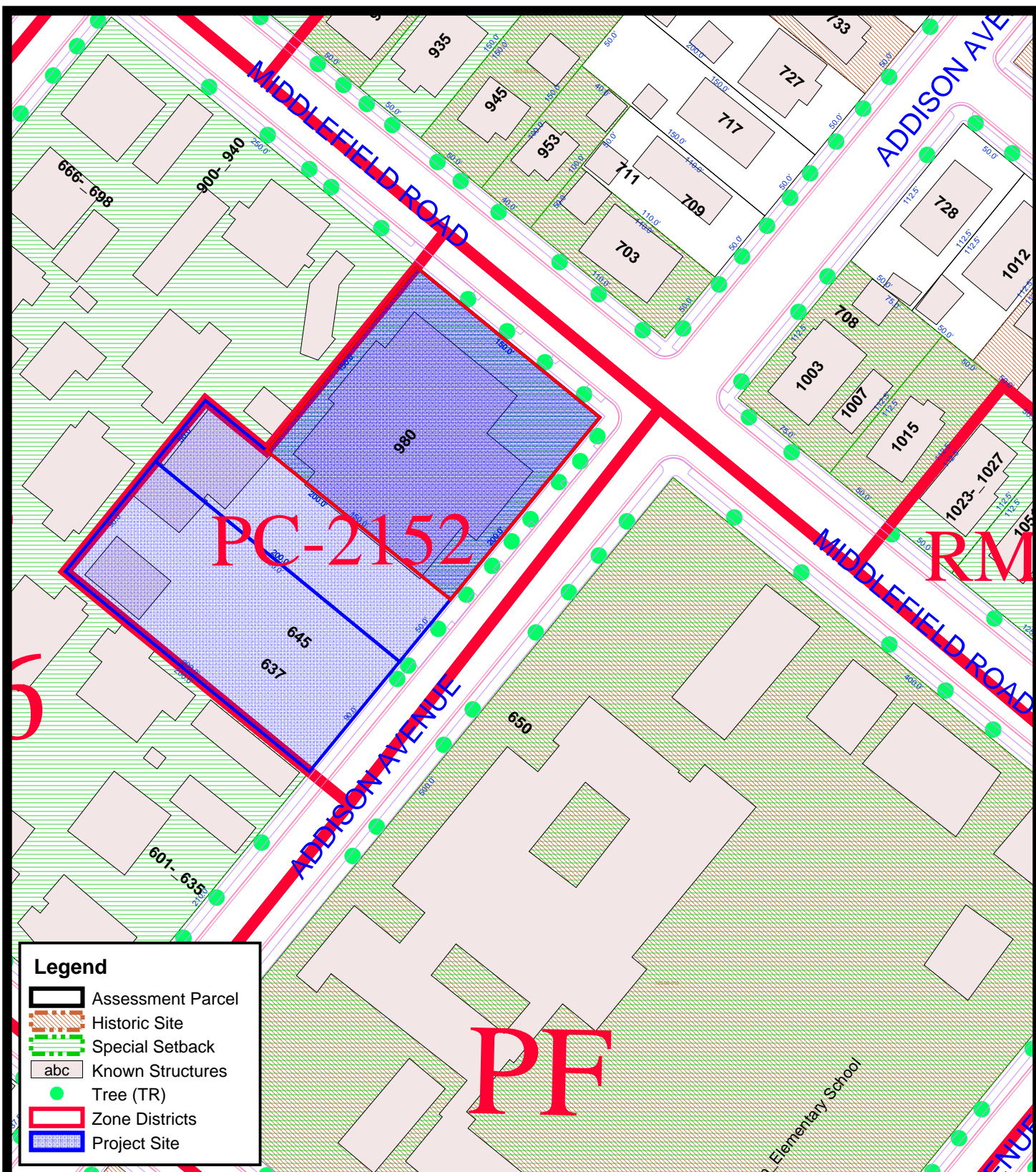
Attachment B: Planned Community (PC) Ordinance 2152 (PDF)

Attachment C: Public Comments (PDF)

Attachment D: Historic Resource Evaluation (PDF)

Attachment E: Project Description (PDF)

Attachment F: Project Plans (DOCX)

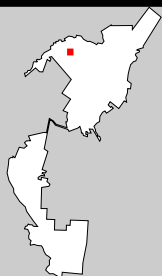


Legend

- Assessment Parcel
- Historic Site
- Special Setback
- Known Structures
- Tree (TR)
- Zone Districts
- Project Site



The City of
Palo Alto



980 Middlefield Road

This map is a product of the
City of Palo Alto GIS



ORDINANCE NO. 2152

ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALO ALTO
AMENDING SECTION 3.02 OF ORDINANCE NO. 1324, THE
ZONING ORDINANCE, CHANGING THE ZONING OF CERTAIN
PROPERTY KNOWN AS 980 MIDDLEFIELD ROAD FROM R-3-P,
R-3 AND R-2 TO P-C

The Council of the City of Palo Alto does ORDAIN as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 3.02, the Zoning Map, of the Zoning Ordinance No. 1324, is hereby amended to change a district from R-3-P, R-3 and R-2 to P-C for the property at 980 Middlefield Road.

SECTION 2. A map describing said affected property and the zone change contemplated hereby, and a Development Plan under Section 16.07 of the Zoning Ordinance is affixed hereto, marked EXHIBIT A and by reference made a part hereof.

SECTION 3. The Development Plan is approved in accordance with the following conditions:

(a) Permitted Uses:

The permitted use shall be a mortuary and necessary related facilities, including off-street parking and employees' residences.

(b) Nature of Development:

Off-street parking, landscaping, building location dimension and height shall be substantially as indicated on the approved development plan.

(c) Signs:

Signs shall be limited to those signs existing on the premises.

(d) Exterior Lighting:

Exterior lighting shall be designed, constructed, and installed in such a manner as to protect neighboring residential properties.

(e) Development Schedule:

Construction toward completion of the entire complex shall begin within six months from Council approval and shall be completed within one year thereafter.

SECTION 4. This ordinance shall become effective upon
the expiration of thirty days from its passage.

INTRODUCED: July 9, 1963

PASSED: July 22, 1963 by unanimous vote

ATTEST:

Gail Davis
City Clerk

APPROVED:

Dean R. Chesab
Mayor

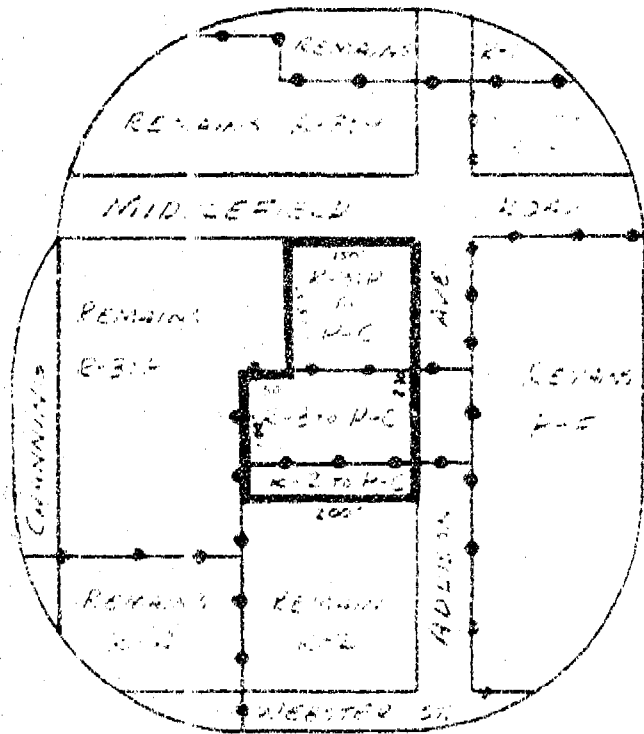
APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Robert E. Michalski
City Attorney

Ordinance by Res. 5914, 5/24/64

APPROVED:

Louis J. Furcay
Planning Department



— ZONE CHANGE BOUNDARY

— EXISTING ZONE BOUNDARY

SCALE 1" = 200' ±

9-0

9-3-1, R-3

8, 19-3

From: Kunjan Shah
To: [Hodgkins, Claire](#)
Cc: [Tom Hodges](#)
Subject: Re: 980 Middlefield Road Question
Date: Wednesday, May 09, 2018 1:35:25 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)

Hi Claire,

My boss - Tom Hodges is copied here. Please reach out to him to coordinate when the 980 Middlefield projects starts the Planning entitlement process.

Thank you very much for taking the time to explain everything so well!

K.

Kunjan Shah

fs3|Hodges

714.864.8186

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On Tue, May 8, 2018 at 3:20 PM, Hodgkins, Claire <Claire.Hodgkins@cityofpaloalto.org> wrote:

Good afternoon Kunjan,

I wanted to follow up on an e-mail you had sent to Amy French a few weeks back. I'm not sure if she has already responded to you but this project ended up being assigned to me at intake so I wanted to follow up and make sure you received a complete answer to your question.

First, I want to clarify that the current [980 Middlefield Road](#) proposal for a prescreening with Council is not a formal application in that the applicant is currently seeking preliminary feedback from Council and whether there would be any interest from them/the city in considering this proposed project. Council would not make any formal decision on the project—they would only provide comments. Based on those comments, the applicant will choose whether to move forward with filing a formal application or not.

It's difficult to assess the exact process and how long it may take given that the project may change significantly based on input from Council and the findings of a historic evaluation. However, I think it will likely take up to six months to process any entitlements, and if

approved, another month or two to process the building permit so the answer is yes, it is possible that if approved, construction could start within the next two years. The prescreening is on June 11, 2018 so we will know more after we receive comments from Council. I will highlight your concerns as part of my staff report to Council. I will be sure to keep you in the loop if/when a formal application is filed. Feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Regards,
Claire



Claire Hodgkins, Associate Planner
[250 Hamilton Avenue | Palo Alto, CA 94301](#)
O: 650-329-2116 | E: claire.hodgkins@cityofpaloalto.org

French, Amy

From: Kunjan Shah <kunjan@fs3h.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 11:48 AM
To: French, Amy
Subject: 980 Middlefield Road

Hi Amy,

I am the project manager for the PAUSD Addison Elementary School modernization project across the road from 980 Middlefield. The Addison project will start construction on June 4, the 1st day of summer break.

We were just informed of the upcoming project at 980 Middlefield and I was writing to get some information on the timeline.

Is the pre-screening being conducted for a possible zoning variance? My intent is to try and gauge if there is any possibility of construction on this project starting while the 2-yr long project at Addison is underway.

If possible, could you please give me a call to discuss? My cell: 510-2999382.

Thank you for your help!

--

Kunjan Shah

fs3|Hodges

[510.299.9382](tel:510.299.9382)

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French, Amy

From: Peter Phillips <pkphillips@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 10:34 AM
To: French, Amy
Subject: Project at 980 Middlefield Road

Hi Amy,

We met a few yrs ago about the Addison Elem remodel project. Recently some signs went up at 980 Middlefield - the previous mortuary. We are about to start construction - June of this year - lasting for approx 2yrs. The work that is planned for 980 Middlefield - will that require construction and if so when is that anticipated?

A concern is with two construction projects occurring at the same time that close to one another - the limited parking around will be impacted.

Thanks,

- *Peter*

From: Peter Phillips
To: [Hodgkins, Claire](#)
Subject: Re: 980 middlefield Road question
Date: Thursday, May 10, 2018 10:46:13 AM

Hi Claire,

Thanks for your response, I was beginning to wonder as I had not heard from Amy.

I knew this was in the early stages of planning, I guess we have to tune in on June 11th to figure out what kind of project is being considered.

Peter

- *Peter*

On Tue, May 8, 2018 at 3:27 PM, Hodgkins, Claire <Claire.Hodgkins@cityofpaloalto.org> wrote:

Peter,

I wanted to follow up on an e-mail you had sent to Amy French a few weeks back. I'm not sure if she has already responded to you but this project ended up being assigned to me at intake so I wanted to follow up and make sure you received a complete answer to your question.

First, I want to clarify that the current [980 Middlefield Road](#) proposal for a prescreening with Council is not a formal application in that the applicant is currently seeking preliminary feedback from Council and whether there would be any interest from them/the city in considering this proposed project. Council would not make any formal decision on the project—they would only provide comments. Based on those comments, the applicant will choose whether to move forward with filing a formal application or not.

It's difficult to assess the exact process and how long it may take given that the project may change significantly based on input from Council and the findings of a historic evaluation. Currently there is some remodeling planned but the scope of the remodeling could change. Based on current plans, I think it will likely take up to six months to process any entitlements, and if approved, another month or two to process the building permit so it is possible that, if approved, construction could start within the next two years. The prescreening is on June 11, 2018 so we will know more after we receive comments from Council. I will highlight your concerns as part of my staff report to Council. I will be sure to keep you in the loop if/when a formal application is filed. Feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Regards,
Claire



Claire Hodgkins, Associate Planner
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O: 650-329-2116 | E: claire.hodgkins@cityofpaloalto.org

980 MIDDLEFIELD ROAD AND 637-45 ADDISON AVENUE
HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION

PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA
[18144]

PREPARED FOR:
CITY OF PALO ALTO

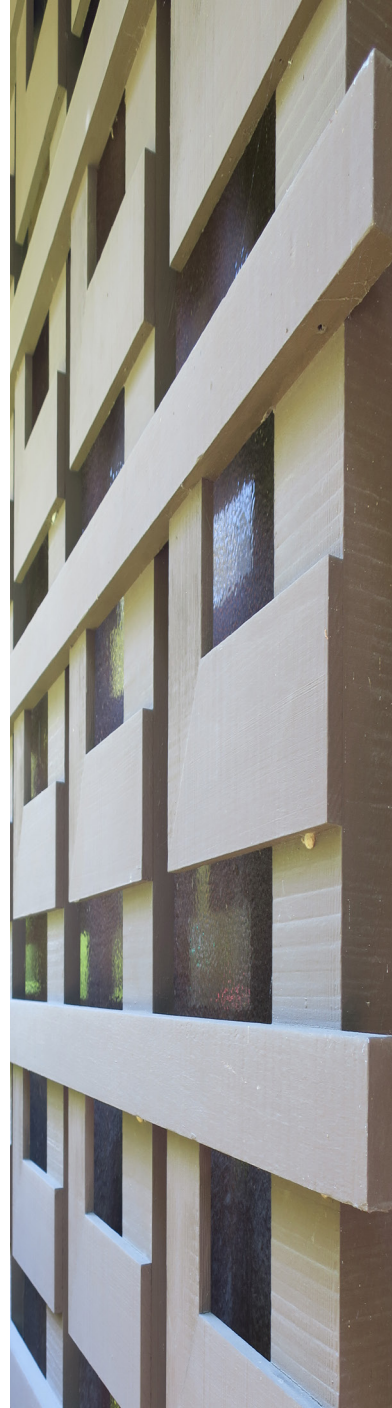


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This Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) has been prepared at the request of the City of Palo Alto Planning and Community Environment Department for 980 Middlefield Road (APN 120-05-077) and two associated rear lots addressed 637-45 Addison Avenue (APN 120-05-052 and APN 120-05-076) in Palo Alto, California (**Figure 1 to Figure 2**).¹ The mortuary building at 980 Middlefield Road (the subject building) was designed by prominent local architect Leslie Nichols and constructed in 1951 by the contracting firm Aro & Okerman. 980 Middlefield Road is located at the junction of the University South and Community Center neighborhoods, immediately west of the Middlefield Road and Addison Avenue intersection. The subject building is set on a square lot; a driveway extends along the northwest edge of the lot and provides access to the rear lots. The rear lots contain a 1964 caretaker residence, a garage, a carport, asphalt parking spaces, and a faux turf lawn.



August 8, 2018



Figure 2. Aerial view of 980 Middlefield Road and rear lots 637-45 Addison Avenue, shaded orange.
Source: Google Earth, 2018. Edited by Page & Turnbull.

The subject building has not been previously listed, or found eligible for listing, to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), or local City of Palo Alto Historic Inventory, nor is it located within the boundaries of any recorded historic district.

METHODOLOGY

This Historic Resource Evaluation provides a summary of previous historical surveys and ratings, a site description, historic context statement, and an evaluation of the property's individual eligibility for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources.

Page & Turnbull prepared this report using research collected at various local repositories, including the Palo Alto Rinconada Public Library, Palo Alto Historical Association, City of Palo Alto Building Inspection, Ancestry.com, and various other online sources. Page & Turnbull conducted a site visit in June 2018 to review the existing conditions and to photograph the property in order to prepare the descriptions and assessments included in this report. All photographs were taken by Page & Turnbull in June 2018, unless otherwise noted.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Upon evaluation of 980 Middlefield Road and 637-45 Addison Avenue, Page & Turnbull finds the mortuary building at 980 Middlefield Road to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 3 (Architecture) for its Midcentury Modern design, as a representative midcentury property type, and as a work of architect Leslie Nichols. Thus, the property appears to qualify as a historic resource for the purposes of review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The ancillary buildings and landscape features on the two associated parcels at 637-45 Addison Avenue do not contribute to the mortuary's historic significance or eligibility.

II. CURRENT HISTORIC STATUS

The following section examines the national, state, and local historical ratings currently assigned to 980 Middlefield Road and 637-45 Addison Avenue.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation's most comprehensive inventory of historic resources. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service and includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level.

980 Middlefield Road and 637-45 Addison Avenue are not currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places individually or as part of a registered historic district.

CALIFORNIA REGISTER OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. Resources can be listed in the California Register through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register-listed properties are automatically listed in the California Register. Properties can also be nominated to the California Register by local governments, private organizations, or citizens. The evaluative criteria used by the California Register for determining eligibility are closely based on those developed by the National Park Service for the National Register of Historic Places.

980 Middlefield Road and 637-45 Addison Avenue are not currently listed in the California Register of Historical Resources individually or as part of a registered historic district.

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL RESOURCE STATUS CODE

Properties listed by, or under review by, the State of California Office of Historic Preservation are assigned a California Historical Resource Status Code (Status Code) between "1" and "7" to establish their historical significance in relation to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register or NR) or California Register of Historical Resources (California Register or CR). Properties with a Status Code of "1" or "2" are either eligible for listing in the California Register or the National Register, or are already listed in one or both of the registers. Properties assigned Status Codes of "3" or "4" appear to be eligible for listing in either register, but normally require more research to support this rating. Properties assigned a Status Code of "5" have typically been determined to be locally significant or to have contextual importance. Properties with a Status Code of "6" are not eligible for listing in either register. Finally, a Status Code of "7" means that the resource either has not been evaluated for the National Register or the California Register, or needs reevaluation.

980 Middlefield Road and 637-45 Addison Avenue are not listed in the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) database as of 2012. This means the property has not been formally evaluated using California Historical Resource Status Codes and/or the status code has not been submitted to the California Office of Historic Preservation.

PALO ALTO HISTORIC INVENTORY

The City of Palo Alto's Historic Inventory, completed in 1979, lists noteworthy examples of the work of important individual designers and architectural eras and traditions as well as structures whose background is associated with important events in the history of the city, state, or nation. The survey that produced the inventory encompassed approximately 500 properties and was largely limited to areas in and near the historic core of Palo Alto. The inventory is organized under the

following four Categories:

- **Category 1:** An “Exceptional Building” of pre-eminent national or state importance. These buildings are meritorious works of the best architects, outstanding examples of a specific architectural style, or illustrate stylistic development of architecture in the United States. These buildings have had either no exterior modifications or such minor ones that the overall appearance of the building is in its original character.
- **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.
- **Category 3 or 4:** A “Contributing Building” which is a good local example of an architectural style and relates to the character of a neighborhood grouping in scale, materials, proportion or other factors. A contributing building may have had extensive or permanent changes made to the original design, such as inappropriate additions, extensive removal of architectural details, or wooden facades resurfaced in asbestos or stucco.

980 Middlefield Road and 637-45 Addison Avenue are not listed in the Palo Alto Historic Inventory under any category.²

PALO ALTO HISTORICAL SURVEY UPDATE

Between 1997 and 2000, a comprehensive update to the 1979 Historic Inventory was undertaken by historic preservation firm Dames & Moore. The goal of this update was to identify additional properties in Palo Alto that were eligible to the National Register. This effort began with a reconnaissance survey of approximately 6,600 properties constructed prior to 1947. The reconnaissance survey produced two Study Priority lists. In January 1999, Dames & Moore prepared an interim findings report that listed preliminary evaluations of the National Register and California Register eligibility of Study Priority 1 and 2 properties.³ Approximately 600 properties were identified as Study Priority 1, indicating they appeared individually eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C (Architecture). Approximately 2,700 properties were identified as Study Priority 2, representing those properties that did not appear individually eligible to the National Register under Criterion C (including common local building types) but retained high integrity.

The reconnaissance survey was followed by an intensive-level survey of all Study Priority 1 properties.⁴ Historic research was conducted on the owners, architects/builders, and past uses of the Study Priority 1 properties. Research also informed the preparation of historic context statements on topics such as local property types, significant historical themes, and prolific architects and builders, in order to identify any potential significant associations of Study Priority 2 properties. 291 properties were found potentially eligible as individual resources to the National Register and California Register. 1,789 further properties were found potentially eligible to the California Register only.

The survey update effort concluded with California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms prepared for those 291 properties that initially appeared eligible for listing in the National

² “Palo Alto Historic Buildings Inventory.” <http://www.pastheritage.org/inventory.html>

³ Dames & Moore. “Study Priority 1 and Study Priority 2 Properties: Preliminary Assessments of Eligibility for the National Register or California Register.” Prepared for the City of Palo Alto Planning Division. January 1999.

⁴ Dames & Moore. “Final Survey Report – Palo Alto Historical Survey Update: August 1997-August 2000.” Prepared for the City of Palo Alto Planning Division. February 2001.

Register. Of the 291 properties, 165 were ultimately found to be eligible to the National Register. These DPR 523 forms were submitted to the California Office of Historic Preservation. Because the survey focused on determining National Register eligibility, the project did not finalize the preliminary evaluations regarding potential California Register eligibility. The City of Palo Alto did not formally adopt any findings from the Dames & Moore study.

The subject property was not surveyed due to the fact that 980 Middlefield Road was constructed in 1951, the caretaker's residence at 637 Addison Avenue was constructed in 1964 (both after 1947), and the building at 645 Addison Avenue was demolished in 1976.

III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The following architectural description applies to 980 Middlefield Road, located west of the Middlefield Road and Addison Avenue intersection in the Palo Alto. The separate, yet associated rear lots are described in the “Landscape Features and Outbuildings” section that follows. The 10,000 square-foot subject parcel is situated on flat land. The one-story midcentury building was constructed in 1951 and features an irregular rectilinear plan. The facades, as described in this report, are outlined in the diagram below (**Figure 3**). The main, double-height volume of the building is capped with a composite shingle-clad gable roof; the remainder of the building features a multi-level flat roof (**Figure 4**). All roof portions feature overhanging eaves with wood paneled soffits. The building is primarily clad in stucco and wood siding; a portion of the primary façade features sawtooth stone construction. Fenestration includes wood doors, steel-sash wood-frame casement/fixed windows, fixed wood-sash and wood-frame windows, and fixed ribbon windows. Windows retain their original sashes and frames, unless otherwise noted. Windows are casement, unless otherwise noted as fixed.

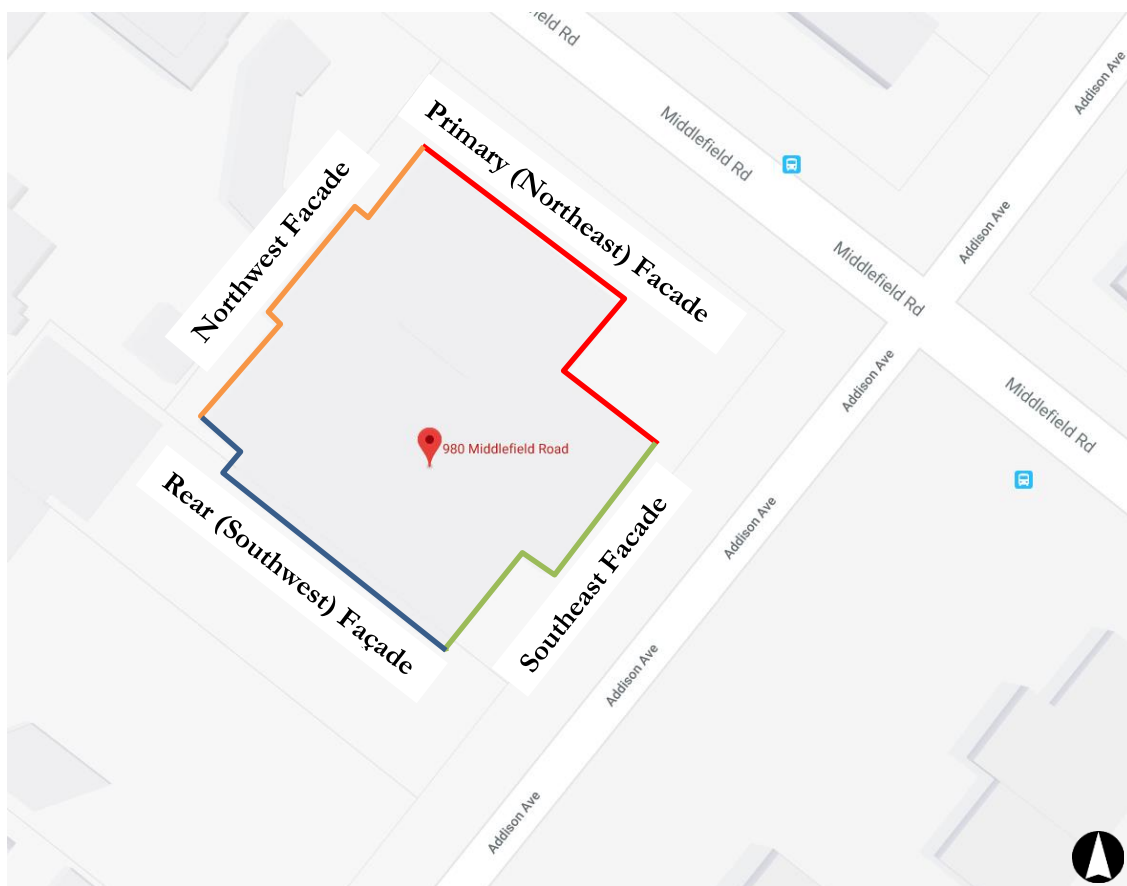


Figure 3: 980 Middlefield Road, facades labeled and colored. Source: Google Maps, 2018.



Figure 4: 980 Middlefield Road, view looking west from the intersection of Middlefield Road and Addison Avenue.

Primary (Northeast) Façade

The primary (northeast) façade fronts Middlefield Avenue. The far left (south) portion of the northeast façade consists of a recessed, stuccoed, flat roofed volume containing a primary entrance vestibule (**Figure 5 to Figure 6**). The recessed primary entrance vestibule contains a wood door with three punched lites, set within a wood surround featuring 16 lites set behind geometric wood screens (**Figure 7**). To the right of the primary entrance is a southeast-facing plane with an open gable clad in v-pattern wood siding (**Figure 8 to Figure 9**). A wood-carved geometric relief sits within the gable. A wood pergola structure projects above a stone base planter and the lower portion of the plane, which is clad in vertical wood siding (**Figure 10**). The recessed stuccoed volume and the southeast-facing gabled plane form two sides of a sheltered entrance courtyard, to be discussed in the “Landscape Features” section to follow.

The main, double-height portion of the northeast façade features a stone sawtooth wall (**Figure 11**). Fixed southeast-facing windows are located within the sawtooth fins, above sections of vertical wood siding (**Figure 12**). At the far right (north) portion of the façade is a geometric wood screen that shields an opaque fixed window (**Figure 13**).



Figure 5. Recessed stuccoed portion of primary façade with recessed entrance vestibule at image right, view looking southwest.



Figure 6: Recessed stuccoed portion of primary façade with recessed entrance vestibule, view looking southwest.



Figure 7: Detail of wood door with punched lites, wood surround, 16-lite geometric wood screen



Figure 8. Southeast-facing plane of primary façade, view looking northwest.



Figure 9: V-pattern wood siding within southeast-facing open gable, with central geometric relief.



Figure 10: Lower portion of southeast-facing plane, clad in vertical wood siding, situated above a stone base planter.



Figure 11: Main sawtooth portion of primary façade fronting Middlefield Avenue, view looking southwest.



Figure 12: Sawtooth stone wall with fixed windows above wood siding, view looking northwest.



Figure 13: Geometric wood screen shielding opaque fixed window, view looking southeast.

Northwest Façade

The northwest façade faces an asphalt driveway. The main gabled volume sits at the far left (north) portion of the façade and largely mirrors the southeast-facing gabled plane (**Figure 14**).⁵ The central portion of the northwest façade features a recessed vestibule with a deeply cantilevered roof. The recessed vestibule contains two wood doors (**Figure 15 to Figure 16**). The stone construction of the double-height volume partially wraps around into the recessed vestibule. The right (south) portion of the northwest façade contains a wood single door with opaque glazing and a lower vent, two paired steel-sash wood-frame casement windows flanked by fixed lites, and a wood single door (**Figure 16 to Figure 17**).



Figure 14. Northwest façade, view looking south.



Figure 15. Stone wall and wood door leading into double-height volume, view looking northeast.



Figure 16: Recessed vestibule with cantilevered roof. Partially glazed door and paired casement windows at image right, view looking south.



Figure 17. Two casement windows flanked by fixed lites, and wood door at image right, view looking south.

Rear (Southwest) Façade

The rear façade features recessed planes at the far left (north) and right (south) (**Figure 18**). The left recessed portion contains a roll-up wood paneled garage door and a northwest-facing plane with a partially glazed wood door (**Figure 19**). The central portion of the façade contains two paired metal-sash wood-frame windows flanked by fixed lites, a single casement window, a wood door, and colored glass vertical ribbon windows (**Figure 20 to Figure 24**). The central portion of the facade also features a multi-level flat roof. Twelve fixed clerestory windows sit above the main overhanging

⁵ The southeast-facing plane features a stone base planter, whereas the stone base of the northwest façade does not contain a planter.

eave; a third, smaller, wood-paneled volume sits above the clerestory windows. The right recessed portion of the southwest façade features a recessed vestibule containing a wood door with three punched lites (**Figure 25**).



Figure 18: Rear southwest façade, view looking northeast.



Figure 19: Roll-up wood paneled garage door and partially glazed wood door, view looking southeast.



Figure 20: Two casement windows with outer fixed lites, view looking east.



Figure 21: Single casement window, view looking northeast.

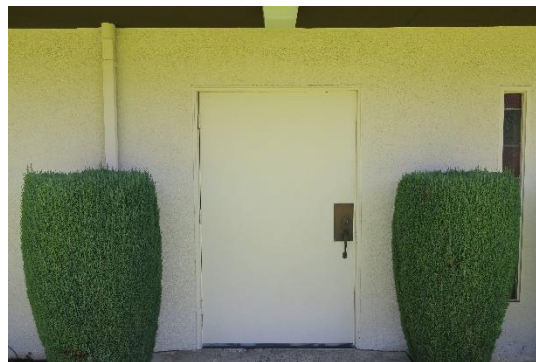


Figure 22: Wood door, view looking northeast.



Figure 23: Central portion of southwest façade, view looking northwest.



Figure 24: Detail of stained glass vertical ribbon windows.



Figure 25: Recessed vestibule at the far right (south) portion of the southwest façade, view looking northeast.

Southeast Facade

The southeast façade fronts Addison Avenue (**Figure 26**). The far left (south) section of the façade features a seven-lite wood-sash and wood-frame fixed window above a brick veneer base. A southwest-facing plane contains a tripartite window consisting of a center fixed lite flanked by two metal-sash wood-frame casement windows (**Figure 27**). The main portion of the southeast façade contains one five-part window consisting of a center fixed lite flanked by metal-sash casements and fixed lites (**Figure 28**).



Figure 26: Southeast façade, view looking northwest.



Figure 27: Southeast façade with southwest-facing plane, view looking northeast.



Figure 28: Southeast façade, view looking west.

Landscape Features and Outbuildings

The subject building at 980 Middlefield Road fills much of its square lot. The courtyard located at the building's primary entrance is bounded by partial-height stone walls with built-in wood benches (**Figure 29 to Figure 30**). A tree bordered with hedges is located within the courtyard (**Figure 31 to Figure 32**). Narrow lawn areas located at the southeast and northeast facades contain stepping stones, a partial-height stone wall, and varied trees, shrubs, and hedges (**Figure 33 to Figure 34, and Figure 28**). An asphalt driveway from Middlefield Road runs along the northwest property line, which is bordered by a wood plank fence (**Figure 35 to Figure 36**). Rose bushes and topiaries are planted along the main portion of the rear southwest façade (**Figure 23**).

The rear lots are addressed 637-45 Addison Avenue (APN 120-05-052 and APN 120-05-076) and contain a rear caretaker's residence, a garage, a carport, parking spaces, and a turf lawn (**Figure 37 to Figure 41**). The one-story gabled caretaker residence, the flat-roofed garage, and the shed-roofed carport all feature overhanging wood eaves. The caretaker residence and garage are stucco clad and the carport is clad in vertical wood siding.



Figure 29: Partial-height stone wall with wood bench, view looking north.



Figure 30: Partial-height stone wall with wood bench, view looking east.



Figure 31: Tree and hedge within courtyard, view looking southeast.



Figure 32: Tree and hedge within courtyard, view looking east at Middlefield Road and Addison Avenue.



Figure 33: Northeast lawn, view looking northwest.



Figure 34: Partial-height stone wall, view looking southeast.



Figure 35: Driveway at northwest façade, view looking southwest.



Figure 36: Wood plank fence across from the northwest façade, view looking west.



Figure 37: Turf lawn at southwest façade of subject building, view looking southwest.



Figure 38: Carport at far end of turf lawn, view looking southwest.



Figure 39: One-story caretaker residence at 637-45 Addison Avenue (built 1964).



Figure 40: Garage, view looking northwest.



Figure 41: Wood plank fence and garage outbuilding, view looking north.

SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOOD

The subject property is located at the junction of the University South and Community Center neighborhoods in Palo Alto. The remainder of the subject block is entirely residential, containing one large apartment complex called Webster Wood Apartments (**Figure 42 to Figure 45**). Constructed in 1978, Webster Wood Apartments consists of approximately two dozen one- and two-story multi-unit buildings. There are 56 units in total.⁶ There are multiple parking areas which include sheltered carports. The subject lot appears to contain two buildings within the Webster Wood Apartments complex that do not date to 1978: 940 Middlefield Road and 664 Channing Avenue (**Figure 46 to Figure 47**).⁷

Southeast of the subject property is Addison Elementary at 650 Addison Avenue, built in 1925 in the Spanish Colonial Revival style (**Figure 48**). The school takes up the full block bounded by Addison Avenue, Middlefield Road, Lincoln Avenue, and Webster Street. Northeast of the subject property are one story bungalows at 953 Middlefield Road (vernacular style, built 1922) and 703 Addison Avenue (Craftsman style, built 1922) (**Figure 49 to Figure 50**).

None of the buildings described above are listed in the Palo Alto Historic Buildings Inventory.

⁶ “Webster Wood Apartments.” <https://www.apartmentfinder.com/California/Palo-Alto-Apartments/Webster-Wood-Apartments>.

⁷ These buildings are addressed as 940 Middlefield Road and 664 Channing Avenue on Google Maps. Based on Sanborn maps, 664 Channing Avenue dates to at least 1908, and 940 Middlefield Road dates to at least 1949. Sanborn maps indicate that 664 Channing Avenue was addressed 654 Channing Avenue in 1908, 654-56 Channing Avenue in 1924, and 656 Channing Avenue in 1949. 940 Middlefield Road was addressed 936 Middlefield Road in 1949.



Figure 42: Webster Wood Apartments.



Figure 43: Webster Wood Apartments.



Figure 44: Webster Wood Apartments.
Source: Apartments.com



Figure 45: Webster Wood Apartments.
Source: Apartments.com



Figure 46: 940 Middlefield Road.



Figure 47: 664 Channing Avenue.



Figure 48: Addison Elementary School (built 1925), shaded red. Red arrow pointing to 980 Middlefield Road across Addison Avenue. Source: Google Maps, 2018.



Figure 49: 953 Middlefield Road (built 1922).



Figure 50: 703 Addison Avenue (built 1922).

IV. HISTORIC CONTEXT

PALO ALTO HISTORY

The earliest known inhabitants of the current-day location of Palo Alto area were the Ohlone people. The region was colonized by Gaspar de Portola in 1769 as part of the Spanish territory of Alta California. The Spanish and Mexican governments carved the area into large ranchos, and the land that later became Palo Alto belonged to several of these land grants, including Rancho Corte Madera, Rancho Pastoria de las Borregas, Rancho Rincon de San Francisquito, and Rancho Rinconada del Arroyo de San Francisquito.⁸ The Rancho Rinconada del Arroyo de San Francisquito encompassed more than 2,200 acres and covered all of the original Palo Alto town site. The northern boundary of the rancho was defined by San Francisquito Creek, while the southwestern boundary was located near El Camino Real, and the southeastern boundary lay parallel to the current-day Embarcadero Road.⁹ These land grants were honored in the cession of California to the United States during the 1840s, but parcels were subdivided and sold throughout the nineteenth century.

The earliest township within the current boundaries of Palo Alto was called Mayfield. In 1882, railroad magnate and California politician, Leland Stanford, purchased 1,000 acres adjacent to Mayfield to add to his large estate in northwestern Santa Clara County. Stanford's vast holdings became known as the Palo Alto Stock Farm. After Leland and Jane Stanford's teenage son, Leland Jr., died in 1884, the couple chose to create a university in his honor. The Stanfords wanted a co-educational and non-denominational university, which contrasted with many contemporary institutions.¹⁰ On March 9, 1885, the university was founded through an endowment act by the California Assembly and Senate. Using their Stock Farm land, the Stanfords began constructing Leland Stanford Junior University, which ultimately opened in 1891.

While the university was in its planning stages, Leland Stanford considered Mayfield an appropriate service town to support the school's operations. However, the Stanfords believed that the university's mission and community would be negatively affected by the presence of alcohol.¹¹ With 13 popular saloons then operating in the town, Mayfield rejected the Stanfords' request to go dry. Seeking an alternative, Stanford decided in 1894 to found the town of Palo Alto with help from his friend Timothy Hopkins of the Southern Pacific Railroad. Hopkins purchased and subdivided 740 acres of the former Rancho Rinconada del Arroyo de San Francisquito.¹² Known as both the Hopkins Tract and University Park, the townsite was bounded by the San Francisquito Creek to the north, the railroad tracks and Stanford University campus to the southwest, and Embarcadero Road to the south (**Figure 51**).

⁸ "Palo Alto, California," Wikipedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palo_Alto,_California#cite_note-12.

⁹ Ward Winslow and the Palo Alto Historical Association, *Palo Alto: A Centennial History* (Palo Alto Historical Association: Palo Alto, CA, 1993), 16-17.

¹⁰ "History of Stanford," Stanford University. <http://www.stanford.edu/about/history/>.

¹¹ "A Flash History of Palo Alto," Quora. <http://www.quora.com/How-is-the-historical-city-Mayfield-CA-related-to-Palo-Alto-CA>.

¹² "Comprehensive Plan," City of Palo Alto, section L-3.

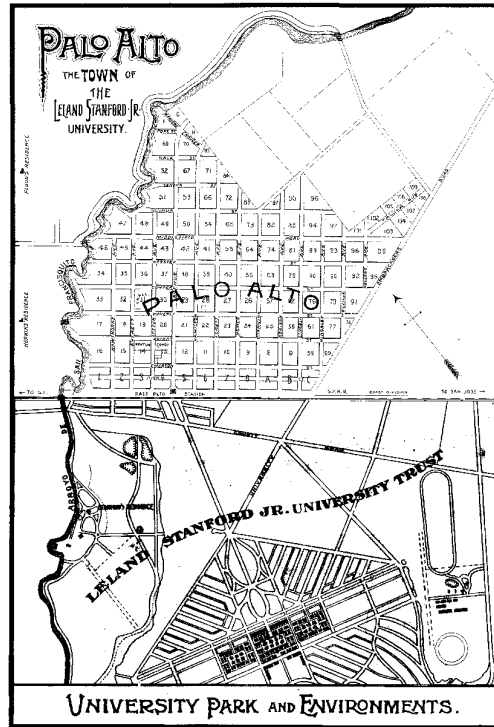


Figure 51. Map of the original Palo Alto townsite.

Source: Branner Earth Sciences Library and Map Collections, Stanford University.

Following the Stanford's wishes, Palo Alto was founded as a temperance town where no alcohol could be served. A new train stop was created along University Avenue, and the new town flourished around the young university. Palo Alto grew to be much more prosperous than its southeastern neighbor, Mayfield. Many people who were employed at Stanford University chose to move to Palo Alto, which was considered the safer and more desirable alternative of the two towns.¹³ The residents were mostly middle and working class, with a pocket of Stanford faculty members clustered in the neighborhood named Professorville. The development of a local streetcar in 1906 and the interurban railway to San Jose in 1910 facilitated access to jobs outside the city and to the university campus, encouraging more people to move to Palo Alto.¹⁴ Mayfield continued its decline, and its residents voted to become a "dry" town in 1904—although allowed the Mayfield Brewery to continue operation. However, the town was plagued by financial issues and could not compete with Palo Alto's growth. In July 1925, Mayfield was officially annexed into the city of Palo Alto.¹⁵

Palo Alto was one of the first California cities to establish a City Planning Commission (CPC). In 1917, this advisory commission considered zoning matters in order to control new development and design within the city. The CPC's purview included regulations on signage, public landscaping and lighting, and residential development. Palo Alto's regulations on development have resulted in its relatively low density and consistent aesthetic. However, zoning controls in the early part of the twentieth century contributed to racial segregation in the city and the exclusion of certain groups from residential areas. Several neighborhoods were created with race-based covenants, which persisted until this practice was ruled unconstitutional in 1948.¹⁶

¹³ Matt Bowling, "The Meeting on the Corner: The Beginning of Mayfield's End," Palo Alto History.org, <http://www.paloaltohistory.org/the-beginning-of-mayfields-end.php>.

¹⁴ Dames & Moore, "Final Survey Report – Palo Alto Historical Survey Update: August 1997-August 2000," prepared for the City of Palo Alto Planning Division, February 2001, 1-4.

¹⁵ "A Flash History of Palo Alto," Quora.

¹⁶ Dames & Moore, "Final Survey Report," 1-7.

The depression of the 1930s impacted the design, construction, and financing of buildings across the nation. In many areas, there was little to no building in the 1930s; however, this was not the case in Palo Alto. While Palo Alto did suffer through the Great Depression, new development did not come to a halt. The United States government assisted in providing housing through several programs in the 1930s. Architectural journals and newspapers showed a substantial amount of construction between 1931 and 1944. 800 buildings (including the subject building) were built between these years, most before 1941.¹⁷

The United States' involvement in World War II brought an influx of military personnel and their families to the San Francisco Peninsula. When the war ended, Palo Alto saw rapid growth. Many families who had been stationed on the Peninsula by the military or who worked in associated industries chose to stay. Palo Alto's population more than doubled from 16,774 in 1940 to 33,753 in 1953.¹⁸ Stanford University was also a steady attraction for residents and development in the city. The city greatly expanded in the late 1940s and 1950s, as new parcels were annexed to house new offices and light industrial uses (**Figure 52**). As a result of this development, the city evolved somewhat beyond its "college town" reputation.¹⁹

Palo Alto annexed a vast area of mostly undeveloped land west of the Foothill Expressway (Interstate 280) between 1959 and 1968. This area has remained protected open space. Small annexations continued into the 1970s. Palo Alto remains closely tied to Stanford University, its largest employer. The technology industry currently dominates other sectors of business, as is the case with most cities within Silicon Valley.

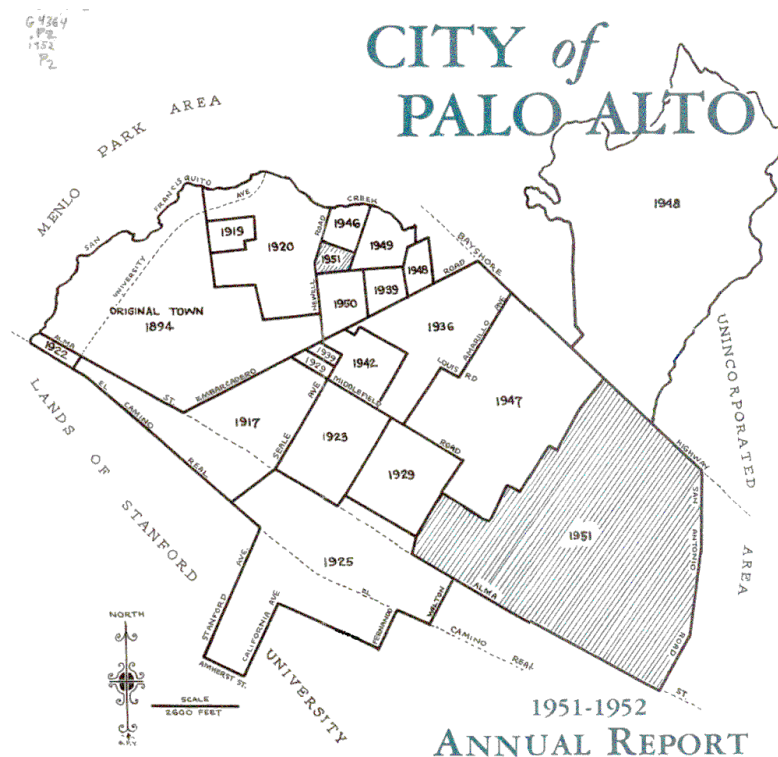


Figure 52. The expansion of Palo Alto from 1894 to 1952.

Source: Branner Earth Sciences Library and Map Collections, Stanford University.

¹⁷ Dames & Moore Final Survey Report Update pg. 1-9.

¹⁸ "Depression, War, and the Population Boom," Palo Alto Medical Foundation- Sutter Health, accessed March 24, 2016, <http://www.pamf.org/about/pamfhistory/depression.html>.

¹⁹ "Comprehensive Plan," section L-4.

ROLLER HAPGOOD & TINNEY

Prior to its closure in 2013, Roller Hapgood & Tinney was one of the oldest family-owned and operated funeral homes on the Peninsula and was the oldest in Palo Alto. The business was established in 1899 by Josiah Roller, a San Francisco-based retired cabinet maker who was often called upon to make coffins. He began working for the Nathaniel Gray Company, one of the largest undertaker establishments in San Francisco. Although promotional material produced throughout the twentieth century claims that Roller Hapgood & Tinney was established in 1899, it appears as though Josiah Roller did not open his own establishment in Palo Alto until 1900.²⁰

The *Palo Alto Times* reported in January 1900 that Roller, a “well known undertaker,” would open undertaking parlors in Palo Alto and would bring his family to Palo Alto to reside.²¹ There appears to have been some resistance to Roller opening an undertaking parlor in a then-residential portion of Palo Alto. A petition was circulated, and many opposed Roller’s plan out of fear that “such an establishment would injure the value of their property.”²² Despite the opposition, by August 1900, Roller, “Undertaker and Embalmer,” had established an office/residence at 421 Margaret Street, and had opened a mortuary chapel and warerooms at 420 Cowper Street.²³ Josiah’s funeral home business quickly grew. Some accounts report that his son, Arthur Roller, took over the business in 1906 or 1910, but most report that the transfer occurred in 1912, when Josiah fully retired. In 1913, the Roller Undertaking Company secured a Pierce Arrow limousine, “the first fully equipped automobile hearse on the coast” (**Figure 53**).²⁴ Arthur appears to have then partnered with Frank A. Hapgood by 1913, when the business was re-named Roller & Hapgood.²⁵ Even with the limousine, Roller & Hapgood continued to offer regular horse-drawn service for those uninterested in motorized transport.

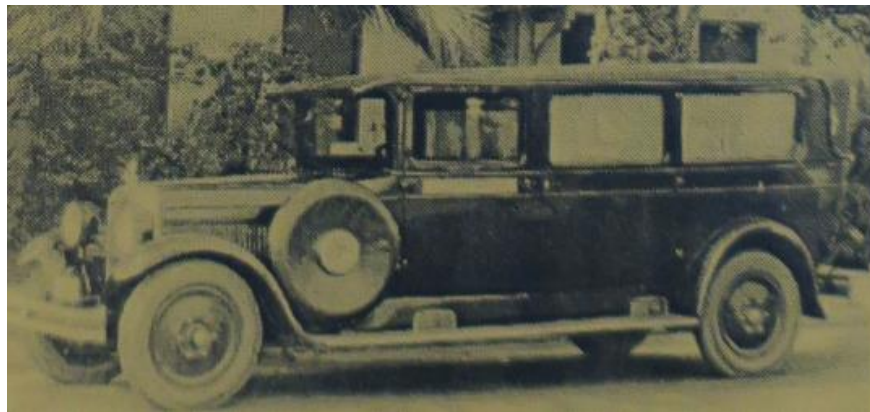


Figure 53: New and modern ambulance service (ca.1913). Source: Palo Alto Historical Association.

In February 1924, Roller & Hapgood announced plans to construct a funeral home at the southwest corner of Cowper Street and University Avenue.²⁶ The new building was completed by August 1924, at a cost of \$35,000. As reported in the *Palo Alto Times*, “the most attractive feature of the new funeral home is the chapel, with a seating capacity of over 100, where services can be held without removal to a church. The chapel is finished along simple Gothic lines, with stained glass windows

²⁰ *Palo Alto Daily News* (June 9, 1905).

²¹ *Palo Alto Times* (January 23, 1900).

²² *Palo Alto Live Oak* (February 12, 1900).

²³ *Palo Alto Times* (August 10, 1900).

²⁴ *Palo Alto Times* (January 11, 1913).

²⁵ “New of 25 Years Ago (from files of the Times)” *Palo Alto Times* (July 27, 1912).

²⁶ “\$20,000 Mortuary to be Built by Local Firm,” *Palo Alto Times* (February 22, 1924).

and the reverent atmosphere of a church auditorium. A choir loft at the rear provides for the musicians. In addition to the reception rooms, which are attractively furnished in subdued taupe, and the chapel, there are the office and workroom on the main floor, a basement display room for caskets and an apartment upstairs for the use of a caretaker.”²⁷

In 1946, Arthur Roller’s son Willis, and Frank Hapgood’s son Robert, became partners. In February 1949, Tom Kearney, former chief of police in Menlo Park, announced his association with Roller & Hapgood- his role at the company is unknown, and the firm name remained unchanged.²⁸ Following Kearney joining the company, Roller & Hapgood purchased a Redwood City funeral home called Franklin & Crowe in late February 1949 and changed the name to Roller, Hapgood & Lorentzen. Articles of incorporation for Roller Hapgood & Lorentzen, Inc., were filed in Sacramento to engage in the mortuary business. Directors of the new company were Arthur Roller and Frank A. Hapgood of 481 University Avenue, Palo Alto, and Laura Lorentzen of 926 Middlefield Road, Redwood City.²⁹ The mortuary at 481 University Avenue in Palo Alto remained as Roller & Hapgood. The firm Roller, Hapgood & Lorentzen built the White Oaks Chapel in San Carlos in 1949 and the Redwood Chapel in Redwood City, in 1951; Willis Roller (son of Arthur Roller) and Frank Hapgood sold both of these funeral homes in September 1965.³⁰

In 1950, after having occupied the building at 481 University Avenue since 1924, Roller & Hapgood began planning a new, larger mortuary establishment at 980 Middlefield Road (see section to follow under “Site History”).³¹ In 1960, Arthur Roller’s other son, Robert, and Robert F. Hapgood’s son, Walter, also became partners.

In 1970, Roller & Hapgood took on two more partners, Keneth C. Welch and Ernest R. Duranti, who had been employees of the firm since 1953.³² In 1971, a lawsuit asking \$375,000 in damages was filed against Roller & Hapgood regarding a payment dispute.³³ Also in 1971, a gravediggers strike occurred, closing all but two cemeteries in San Mateo County and requiring funeral homes like Roller & Hapgood to store bodies.³⁴ Embalmers also went on strike in 1971 for a total of 88 days.³⁵

In September 1971, Roller & Hapgood acquired their oldest competitor, Tinney & Sons Funeral Chapel.³⁶ The new combined business was renamed Roller Hapgood & Tinney. The previous Tinney chapel at 555 College Avenue was closed (**Figure 54**). At the time, Roller & Hapgood was owned by Robert Roller, Ferrell Hapgood (Robert Hapgood’s widow), Kenneth Welch, and Ernest Duranti. The Tinney Funeral Home had been started in 1910 by George W. and May E. Tinney. The firm had been operated by their son, Ray Tinney, until 1947, when his widow, Edith, and their son, Raymond, took over. As reported in the *Palo Alto Times*, “declining patronage and a trend towards simple funerals had left Tinney a less-than-lucrative operation.”³⁷ A nationwide trend saw many funeral homes merging because they could no longer afford to operate independently.

²⁷ “New Funeral Home is Completed Here,” *Palo Alto Times* (August 5, 1924).

²⁸ “Ex-MP cop joins Roller & Hapgood,” *Palo Alto Times* (February 3, 1949).

²⁹ “Articles Are Filed in State Capital for New Mortuary,” *Palo Alto Times* (February 23, 1949).

³⁰ “Funeral Homes sold by area undertakers,” *Palo Alto Times* (September 2, 1965).

³¹ “Roller & Hapgood planning mortuary on Middlefield Road,” *Palo Alto Times* (November 28, 1950).

³² “Roller & Hapgood takes 2 ‘outsiders’ as partners,” *Palo Alto Times* (September 9, 1970).

³³ “\$375,000 Palo Alto Suit Filed Over Funeral Costs,” *Palo Alto Times* (February 26, 1971).

³⁴ “Plenty of room for body storage during strike, morticians say,” *Palo Alto Times* (June 26, 1971). A second strike occurred later, in 1985.

³⁵ “Embalmers’ Strike Settled,” *San Francisco Chronicle* (July 15, 1971).

³⁶ “Roller & Hapgood acquires a competitor,” *Palo Alto Times* (September 8, 1976). Two other remaining local competitors were Bishop-Bronzini-Girouard, 744 San Antonio Road, and Palm O’Dell, 935 Industrial Avenue.

³⁷ Ibid.

By 1999, Deborah Hapgood, fourth generation of the Hapgood family and great granddaughter of Frank Hapgood, headed the company.³⁸ At the time, the mortuary was still accommodating more than 600 funerals a year and remained the largest funeral home on the Peninsula.^{39 40}

On November 1, 2013, Roller Hapgood & Tinney closed after 114 years of business. At time of Roller Hapgood & Tinney's closure, only one remaining funeral home operated in Palo Alto, at Alta Mesa Cemetery (est. 2010, located at 695 Arastradero Road). Earlier local competitors Bishop Jordan/Bishop-Bronzini-Girouard/Palo Alto Chapel (constructed in 1961, located at 744 San Antonio Road) and Palm O'Dell (constructed in 1960, located at 935 Industrial Avenue) had already closed **(Figure 55 to Figure 56)**.⁴¹ According to Ward Winslow, author of *Palo Alto: A Centennial History*, the shuttering of Palo Alto's third-oldest business left only three local businesses more than 100 years old: Thoits Insurance (1890); Dahl Plumbing (1897); and Mills the Florist (1903).



Figure 54: 555 College Avenue (built 1958). Source: Palo Alto Historical Association (no date).



Figure 55: 744 San Antonio Road, Palo Alto (built 1961). Source: 744-750 San Antonio Road Environmental Impact Report (March 2017).



Figure 56: 935 Industrial Avenue, Palo Alto (built 1960). Source: Google Street View, 2017.

³⁸ "100 Years Caring For Yours- the Funeral Business in Palo Alto," PAHA (October 3, 1999).

³⁹ Emily Richmond, "Changing views about death over funeral homes' 100 years," *Palo Alto Daily News* (October 1, 1999).

⁴⁰ Melinda Sacks, "Death in the family," *Palo Alto Weekly* (November 6, 1991) 21.

⁴¹ 744 San Antonio Road is slated for demolition as part of a proposed hotel development. 935 Industrial Avenue is vacant.

SITE HISTORY: 980 MIDDLEFIELD ROAD AND 637-45 ADDISON AVENUE

The subject property was first depicted on the 1901 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, when the block was only minimally developed with a few single-family homes (**Figure 57**). By 1904, additional homes had been developed at the southern half of the block, and by 1908, the northern half of the block began to be developed, as well (**Figure 58 and Figure 59**). The 1924 and 1949 Sanborn maps reflect the full development of the subject block, with the exception of the subject site itself (**Figure 60 and Figure 61**).



Figure 57: 1901 Sanborn Map depicting the subject block; approximate location of future subject property shaded. Source: Digital Sanborn Maps, San Francisco Public Library.

Edited by Page & Turnbull.

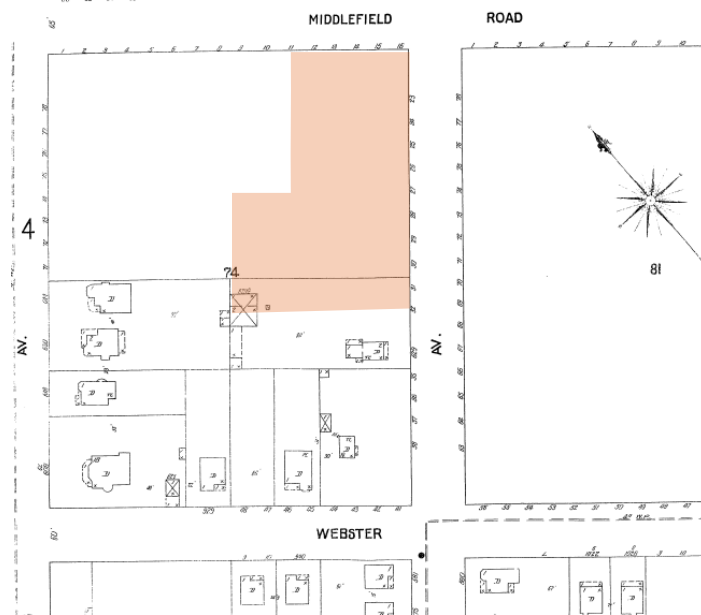


Figure 58: 1904 Sanborn Map depicting the subject block; approximate location of future subject property shaded. Source: Digital Sanborn Maps, San Francisco Public Library.
Edited by Page & Turnbull.

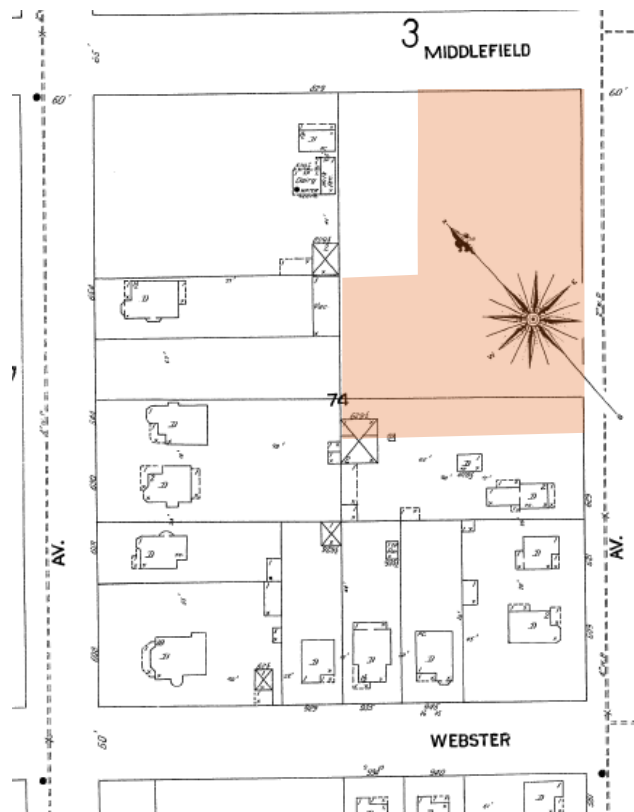


Figure 59: 1908 Sanborn Map depicting the subject block; approximate location of future subject property shaded. Source: Digital Sanborn Maps, San Francisco Public Library.
Edited by Page & Turnbull.

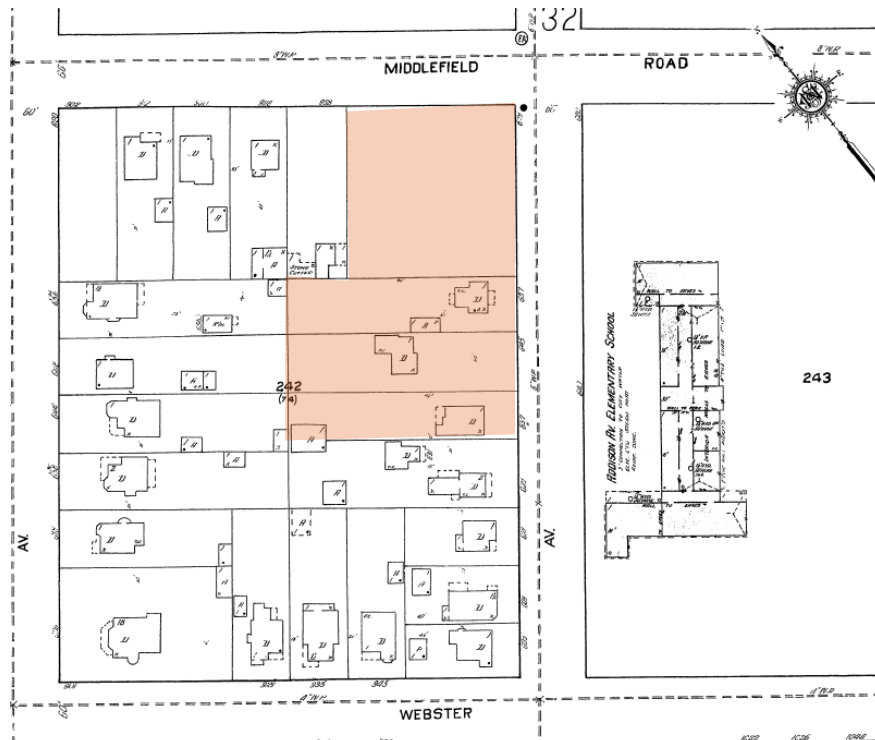


Figure 60: 1924 Sanborn Map depicting the subject block; approximate location of future subject property shaded. Source: Digital Sanborn Maps, San Francisco Public Library.
Edited by Page & Turnbull.

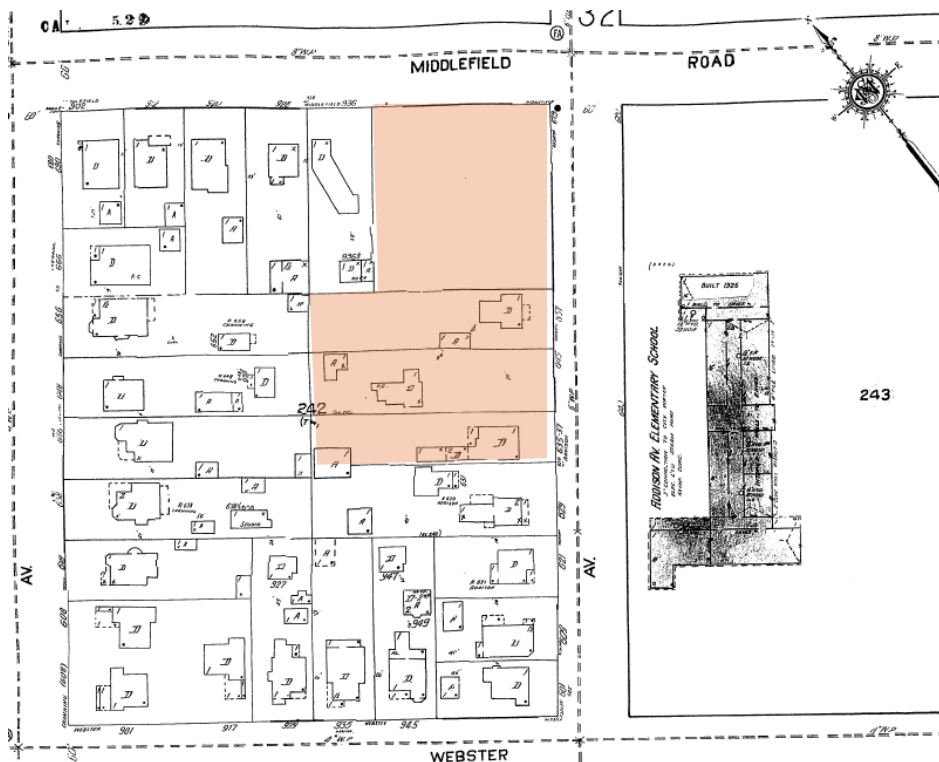


Figure 61: December 1949 Sanborn Map depicting the subject block; approximate location of future subject property shaded. Source: Digital Sanborn Maps, San Francisco Public Library.
Edited by Page & Turnbull.

In 1950, a permit for a \$100,000 building was issued for the new Roller & Hapgood mortuary, designed by local architect Leslie I. Nichols to be more than double the size of the firm's previous building at 481 University Avenue.⁴² In February 1951, construction of the subject building at 980 Middlefield Road commenced at the previously undeveloped corner lot at Middlefield Road and Addison Avenue. An architectural drawing published in the *Palo Alto Times* just prior to the building's grand opening depicts the building with the same footprint it has today; a rear garage (since expanded) is also depicted (**Figure 62**). The building officially opened to the public on December 1, 1951. An advertisement for the mortuary read: "We have chosen this location away from the congested downtown area, in quiet surroundings, yet readily accessible, as it is on a main thoroughfare...On entering the building, one is greeted with a quiet garden-like atmosphere created by an indoor patio. The chapel carries out the same feeling. There is also a smaller drawing-room chapel for families desiring private services. Every effort has been made in planning to provide for the comfort and convenience of the families we serve. The entire building has the most modern facilities, is air-conditioned and spacious. Immediately adjoining is a fifty-car parking lot."⁴³ As of late December 1951, the landscaping and paving of a parking lot were not yet complete, but they appear to have been completed shortly thereafter (**Figure 63**).⁴⁴ The new building was constructed to accommodate as many as 300 funeral guests. The large chapel, with a vaulted ceiling and exposed beams, sat 180 guests. The stone accent wall of the chapel was sourced from a calcium carbonate quarry near Santa Cruz.⁴⁵

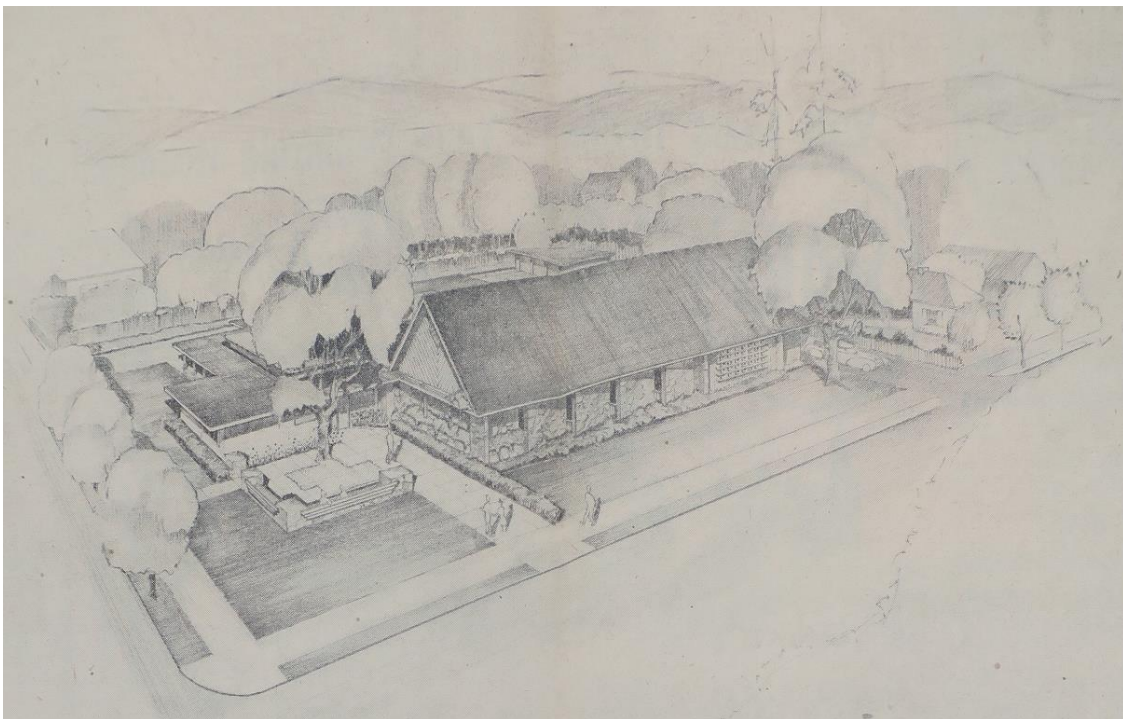


Figure 62: Drawing of subject building upon its grand opening, view from Middlefield Road and Addison Avenue.

Source: *Daily Palo Alto Times* (November 29, 1951).

⁴² "Roller & Hapgood planning mortuary on Middlefield Road," *Palo Alto Times* (November 28, 1950).

⁴³ "An Addition of Beauty and Dignity," *Daily Palo Alto Times* (November 29, 1951).

⁴⁴ "New Mortuary," *San Jose Mercury News* (December 27, 1951).

⁴⁵ "Roller Hapgood Tinney," <http://www.shoppaloalto.com/rollerhapgoodtinney/?listing.action=about>



Figure 63: Subject building, recently after opening, view from Middlefield Road and Addison Avenue looking west. Source: *San Jose Mercury News* (December 27, 1951).

In 1964, a rear caretaker's residence addressed 637 Addison Avenue was constructed at the far west corner of the property. A three-stall carport at the southwest property of 637 Addison Avenue was constructed at an unknown date. A second garage was constructed next to the 1951 garage; the two garages were joined at an unknown date after 1976. In 1976, a residential building at 645 Addison Avenue was demolished to make way for additional parking spaces to the southwest of the mortuary building. The Palo Alto Architectural Review Board approved the demolition on November 2, 1976. The request read: "Remove building, add 8 parking spaces, fence and landscaping...the dwelling to be removed is uninhabitable and the changes will be an improvement to the site."⁴⁶ By 1980, the area southwest of the subject building (currently a turf field) appears to have been fully paved.

The subject building itself at 980 Middlefield Road appears to have remained unaltered. An article published in 1981 in the *Peninsula Times Tribune* describes the building interior with "the wide entrance hallway framed on one side by an expanse of glass, affording a view of a school across the street, where life is very much in progress."⁴⁷ Advertisements and published photographs featuring the subject building reflect no apparent exterior additions or alterations (**Figure 64 to Figure 65**). Roller Hapgood & Tinney closed in 2010, and in 2013, the subject property was sold to Marissa Mayer.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Palo Alto Planning Department Files (NA (93-ARB-19)).

⁴⁷ "Helping the Living to Carry On," *Peninsula Times Tribune* (May 11, 1981).

⁴⁸ "Yahoo CEO buys funeral home," *Palo Alto Daily Post* (October 29, 2013).

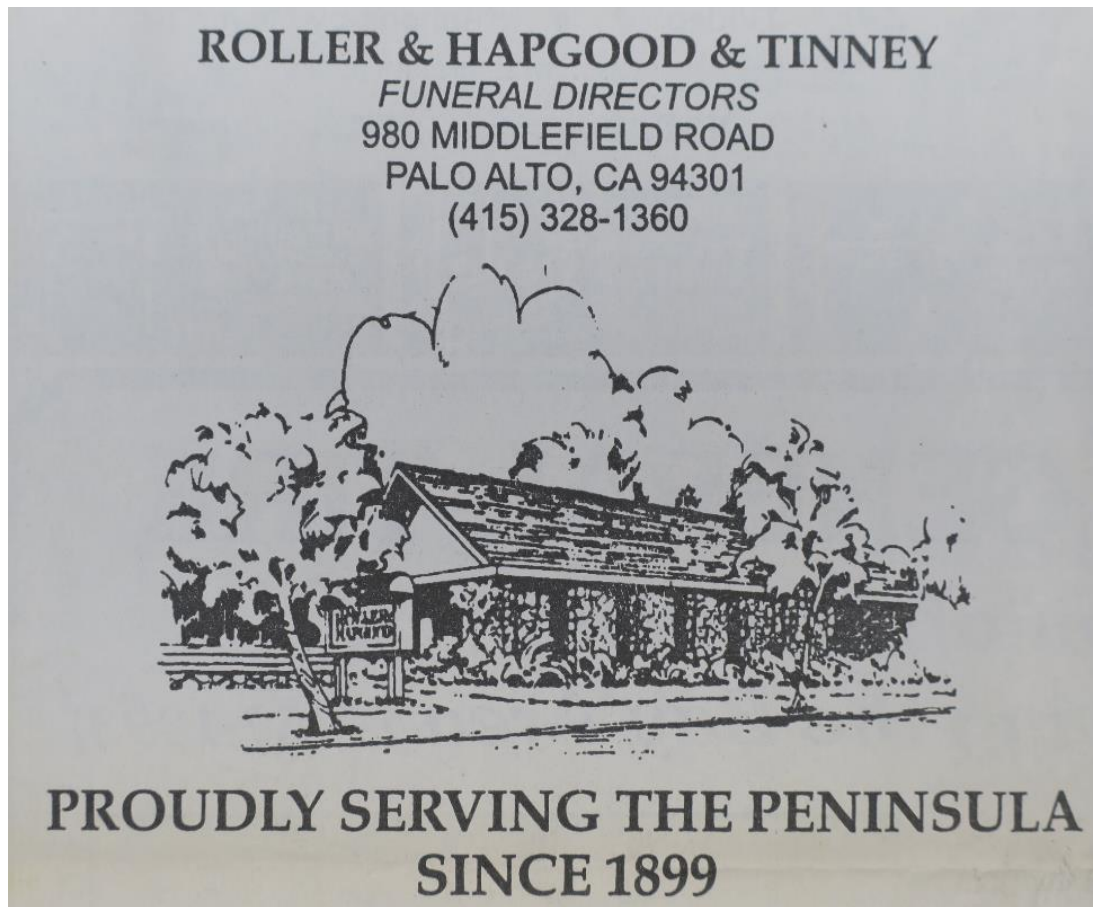


Figure 64: Advertisement for Roller Hapgood & Tinney.
Source: *Peninsula Times Tribune* (February 28, 1993).



Figure 65: Subject building in 1991. Source: *Palo Alto Weekly* (November 6, 1991).

CONSTRUCTION CHRONOLOGY

The following table and narrative provides a timeline of construction activity at 980 Middlefield Road/637-45 Addison Avenue based on building permit applications filed with the City of Palo Alto Building Inspection Division, records provided by the Palo Alto Planning Department, and historic newspaper articles.⁴⁹ Research did not uncover any original building permits. The only known exterior alteration of the mortuary building at 980 Middlefield Road is a reroofing project in 2011. Physical observation did not indicate unpermitted alterations.

Date	Permit #	Scope of Work
7/22/1963	NA (76-ZC-14)	Change of zoning from R-3-P, R-3 and R-2 to P-C
7/16/1976	NA	Building removal (645 Addison Avenue) and screen fence for Roller & Hapgood. Plans by John W. Cole, Architect.
1/29/1993	NA (93-ARB-19)	Architectural Review Board approval of new fence at rear cottage (caretaker residence)
8//12/2011	11-2108	Replace redwood shake roof with black composition shingle roof

MIDCENTURY MODERN STYLE

The following information is excerpted from the City of San Francisco's *San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, 1935-1970, Historic Context Statement* (2011). The information below is not San Francisco-specific, but rather, describes general characteristics of the Mid-Century Modern style (1945-1965) which can be applied to buildings in Palo Alto.

Midcentury Modern is a term used to describe an expressive, often exuberant style that emerged in the decades following World War II. Influenced by the International Style and the Second Bay Tradition, Midcentury Modern was a casual, more organic and expressive style, and was readily applied to a wide range of property types. Custom-designed houses, residential tract developments, churches, and commercial buildings incorporated Midcentury Modern design. Extant Midcentury Modern storefronts reflect the post-war innovations and changes in American retailing in the post-war era.

Midcentury Modern is the most common Modern style built in the San Francisco Bay Area from 1945-1965. The style incorporates an array of design elements including cantilevered overhangs, projecting eaves, canted windows, projecting boxes that enframe the upper stories, stucco siding, the use of bright or contrasting colors, spandrel glass, large expanses of windows, flat or shed roof forms, stacked brick veneer, asymmetrical facades, and occasionally vertical wood siding. Historic references or revival influences are notably absent from the Midcentury Modern style. The term Midcentury Modern was generated by the public rather than scholars.⁵⁰

General character defining features:

⁴⁹ Note that permits were not collected at Palo Alto Building Inspection for 637-45 Addison Avenue. However, the Palo Alto Planning Department did provide relevant documents on file for 637-45 Addison Avenue.

⁵⁰ The Riverside Modernism Context Statement provides a similar definition for the sub-style it refers to as "Mid-Century" Modern design. Recent Modern Age context statements developed by Pasadena, San Diego, and Fresno, California, have defined region-specific versions of Midcentury Modern design. Fresno and San Diego deemed their regional versions the Contemporary Style, while Pasadena defined its Midcentury Modern style as the postwar iteration of the International Style.

- Projecting eaves and exposed rafters
- Cantilevered overhangs
- Flat, shed or low-pitched gable roof forms
- Vaulted roofs and overhangs
- Articulated primary facades
- Stucco, wood (often vertical), or corrugated siding
- Stacked Roman brick or stone often used as accent material
- Expressed post and beam construction
- Strong right angles and simple cubic forms
- Projecting vertical elements
- Large steel- or wood-framed windows
- Canted windows
- Painted finish is often stained, earth tone, or brightly colored
- Projecting boxes that enframe the upper stories
- Atrium or courtyard entryways
- Overhanging trellises, sunshades, and pergolas

Character-defining features specific to commercial and institutional buildings:

- Spandrel glass
- Stacked roman brick veneer
- Integrated planters
- Angled or deeply recessed vestibules
- Terrazzo paving
- Projecting vertical elements
- Metal awnings or canopies (zigzag, corrugated metal, or sheet metal)
- Small geometric tiles set in geometric patterns
- Slightly projecting vertical mullions
- Jalousie windows, particularly at the transom
- Base mounted signage or “advertising front” lettering
- Textile block screens or metal sheathing.⁵¹

980 Middlefield Road features numerous character-defining features of the Midcentury Modern style listed above, including: projecting eaves, cantilevered overhangs, flat roof forms, a vaulted roof form (chapel interior, not pictured in this report), an articulated primary façade, wood siding, brick veneer, stone used as accent material, strong right angles and simple cubic forms, projecting vertical elements, large windows, painted stained finishes, atrium (interior, though not pictured in this report), courtyard, overhanging pergola, integrated planter, and deeply recessed vestibules.

ARCHITECT LESLIE I. NICHOLS (1894- 1969)

Leslie Nichols, a Chicago native, earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Architecture at Cornell University. Upon graduating in 1920, Nichols began practicing with the firm Gordon and Kaelber in Rochester, New York. While at Gordon and Kaelber, Nichols studied classical Beaux Arts traditions and modern trends in hospital and apartment building construction. In 1924, Nichols formed a New York City-based partnership with his father-in-law, Arthur Gibb. Together, they

⁵¹ Mary Brown, San Francisco Planning Department, *San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, 1935-1970, Historic Context Statement*, Final Draft (12 January 2011) 189.

contributed to the design of the Holland Tunnel. While working in New York, Nichols won an architectural competition to design a tuberculosis hospital.

Nichols moved to Palo Alto in 1932 and opened an architectural office the following year. He moved to Atherton in the late 1930s and resided at 369 Atherton Avenue. He worked throughout the Midpeninsula region and primarily designed residences, churches, and commercial buildings. He built over 36 houses, several of which are located on Webster Street, Hamilton Avenue, and Forest Avenue in Palo Alto. His residences ranged in style from French Eclectic/Italian Renaissance Revival (419 Maple Street), to Colonial Revival (39 Crescent Drive).

In the early 1940s, Nichols “undertook a program of special work with the U.S. [A]rmy engineers...doing designing and postwar planning for a construction industry. In that work he spent considerable time in the development of kitchens and planned storage.”⁵² After World War II, Nichols successfully made the transition to modernism. His best-known work of the period is the 1953 Palo Alto City Hall (now the Palo Alto Art Center) across the street from Rinconada Park, which was based on the design of Modern Ranch style houses. When designing the Palo Alto City Hall building at 1313 Newell Road, Nichols intended for the redwood and brick exterior and shake roof to harmonize with the surrounding residential neighborhood. His plans provided for off-street parking and buried utility lines. Other amenities included a lunchroom, council chambers with seating for 132, and a drive-in utility payment window.⁵³

Interestingly, Nichols’ designs between 1955 and 1969 often included a touch of Japanese influence. This can be seen at the subject building (use of crane motif at the interior, use of wood screen at exterior), and at Nichols’ own Atherton home.

Nichols appears to have worked both independently and with partners. In 1946, he partnered with contractor Ross White and formed the architect-contractor firm of Nichols-White, Inc. The pair constructed the commercial building at 145 Addison Avenue in 1946.⁵⁴ Ca. 1955, he was Principal of Leslie I. Nichols, Architect.⁵⁵

Nichols served on the Atherton Planning Commission until 1968 and was a member of the San Mateo County Planning Commission for 25 years, until 1964. He was a fellow of the American Institute of Architects and won several architectural awards prior to his retirement in 1967. Nichols was referenced in the 2002 City Council report (CMR 272:02) for the Art Center and Rinconada Library expansion as an architect of demonstrated importance.⁵⁶ The Palo Alto Historical Association regards Nichols as a widely-acclaimed architect. He is also discussed as an architect of note in the Final Survey Report for the Palo Alto Historical Survey Update by Michael Corbett and Denise Bradley of Dames & Moore (February 2001).⁵⁷

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Nichols was a founder of the Palo Alto Club, a charter member of the Fellowship Forum of Menlo Park, a member of the Palo Alto Rotary Club, a member and president of the American Fuchsia Society and American Badminton Club, an active member of Palo Alto Camera Club, and a member of the Christian Science Church.⁵⁸ Nichols died in 1967.

⁵² “Nichols, Ross, will discuss home planning,” *Palo Alto Times* (January 26, 1945).

⁵³ “The three incarnations of 1313 Newell Road,” *The Tall Tree* (October 2016) 3.

⁵⁴ “Architect firm is putting up its own building,” *Palo Alto Times* (January 4, 1946).

⁵⁵ “Leslie I. Nichols,” PCAD. <http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/5922/>

⁵⁶ <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/5031>

⁵⁷ <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/61623>

⁵⁸ “Leslie Nichols, noted architect in Midpeninsula, succumbs at 75,” *Palo Alto Times* (December 17, 1969).

Leslie I. Nichols' known commissions include, but are not limited to:

Residential

39 Crescent Drive, Palo Alto (1925-27)
419 Maple, Palo Alto (1928-29)⁵⁹
1407 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto (1933)
553 Center Street, Palo Alto (1934)
1045 Alma Street, Palo Alto (1934)
1230 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto (1934)
215 Lowell Avenue, Palo Alto (1935)
470 Santa Rita Avenue, Palo Alto (1935)
570 Chaucer Street, Palo Alto (1934-35)
123 Island Drive, Palo Alto (1935)
2150 Cowper Street, Palo Alto (1936)
2164 Webster Street, Palo Alto (1936)
2020 Webster Street, Palo Alto (1936)
1436 Emerson Street, Palo Alto (1936)
1448 Emerson Street, Palo Alto (1936)
1452 Emerson Street, Palo Alto (1936)
1464 Emerson Street, Palo Alto 91936)
2440 Bryant Street, Palo Alto (1936)
2044 Webster Street, Palo Alto (1936)
2430 South Court, Palo Alto (1936)
2420 Bryant Street, Palo Alto (1936)
2176 Webster Street, Palo Alto (1936)
450 Nevada Street, Palo Alto (1936)
436 Santa Rita Avenue, Palo Alto (1936)
1664 Emerson Street, Palo Alto (1937)
1910 Webster Street, Palo Alto (1937)
450 Santa Rita Avenue, Palo Alto (1937)
220 Churchill Avenue, Palo Alto (1940, demolished)
1331 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto (1940, demolished)
1729 Cowper Street, Palo Alto (1941)
532 Emerson Street, Palo Alto (1941)
215 Lowell Avenue, Palo Alto (1945)⁶⁰
1115 Forest Avenue, Palo Alto (1945, demolished)
511 Alma Street, Palo Alto (1946)
545 Bryant Street, Palo Alto (1946)
1431 Waverly Street, Palo Alto (1953)⁶¹
369 Atherton Avenue, Atherton (unknown, demolished)

Commercial

240 University Avenue, Palo Alto (1936)
616 University Avenue, Palo Alto (1938)
541 Bryant Street, Palo Alto (1946)

⁵⁹ Nichols designed 419 Maple remotely, from New York City. Birge Clark was the on-site architect. The home was commissioned by Nichols' Palo Alto-based parents.

⁶⁰ Garage and laundry additions only.

⁶¹ "Gamble, Edwin and Elizabeth L. House," PCAD. <http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/building/16676/>. Note that 1431 Waverly Street, known as the Gamble House, was constructed ca.1908 by Charles Kaiser Sumner and Henry Mather Greene. Nichols is responsible only for a later porch alteration in 1953.

145 Addison Avenue, Palo Alto (1946)
330-44 California Avenue, Palo Alto (1946)
643 Emerson Street, Palo Alto (1947)
J.C. Penney's (now, Walgreens) at 300-312 University Avenue, Palo Alto (1948)
Roller and Hapgood Mortuary at 980 Middlefield Road (1951)⁶²

Ecclesiastic

First Presbyterian Church, Menlo Park (1950)
First Presbyterian Church at 1140 Cowper Street, Palo Alto (1955-57)
Christian Science Church at 401 University Avenue, Los Altos (unknown)
Congregational Church (now, Peach United Church) at 900 High Street, Santa Cruz (unknown)

Institutional

Palo Alto City Hall (now, Palo Alto Art Center) at 1313 Newell Road (1953)
Fire Station 6 at 700 Oak Grove, Menlo Park (1953, demolished)
Fire Station 1 at 300 Middlefield Road, Menlo Park (1955)
Fire Station 2 at 2290 University Avenue, East Palo Alto (1956)

Recreational

1899 Park Boulevard, Palo Alto (1952)
Lawn Bowling Club House, Palo Alto (1954)⁶³

⁶² Note the mortuary was not associated with any particular religion, and operated as a business.

⁶³ Peter Danner, "A Timeline of the Palo Alto Lawn Bowls Club," <https://www.palbc.org/history/>. Nichols' design has since been substantially added on to.

V. EVALUATION

CALIFORNIA REGISTER OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. Resources can be listed in the California Register through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register-listed properties are automatically listed in the California Register. Properties can also be nominated to the California Register by local governments, private organizations, or citizens. The California Register of Historical Resources follows nearly identical guidelines to those used by the National Register, but identifies the Criteria for Evaluation numerically.

In order for a property to be eligible for listing in the California Register, it must be found significant under one or more of the following criteria.

- *Criterion 1 (Events):* Resources that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
- *Criterion 2 (Persons):* Resources that are associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
- *Criterion 3 (Architecture):* Resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values.
- *Criterion 4 (Information Potential):* Resources or sites that have yielded or have the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

The following section examines the eligibility of 980 Middlefield Road/637-45 Addison Avenue for listing in the California Register.

Criterion 1 (Events)

980 Middlefield Road/637-45 Addison Avenue does not appear to be individually significant under Criterion 1 in association with historical events important to the history of Palo Alto, the state of California, or the United States. The primary mortuary building at 980 Middlefield Road was constructed in 1951, many decades after Palo Alto's incorporation in 1894. The subject property was the last portion of the subject block to be developed. Although Roller Hapgood was a very prominent and long-standing local business in Palo Alto, the subject property itself does not fully represent the company's legacy. Roller Hapgood (initially Roller Undertaking Company and later, Roller Hapgood & Tinney) operated out of at least three previous sites before its relocation to 980 Middlefield Road. Further, the firm was not the only business of its kind in Palo Alto; competitors Bishop Jordan/Bishop-Bronzini-Girouard, Palm O'Dell, and Alta Mesa offered similar services to the Palo Alto community. As a result, the subject property at 980 Middlefield Road/637-45 Addison Avenue does not appear individually significant under Criterion 1.

Criterion 2 (Persons)

The subject property at 980 Middlefield Road/637-45 Addison Avenue was owned and operated by four generations of the Roller and Hapgood families, as well as multiple members of the Tinney family. The property did not experience turnover in ownership prior until 2013, when it was purchased by Marissa Mayer. Although the generational legacy of the Roller Hapgood, and Tinney families is notable, no individuals stand out as having made important contributions to local, state, or

national history such that the subject property would be eligible for individual significance under Criterion 2. As a result, the subject property at 980 Middlefield Road/637-45 Addison Avenue does not appear individually significant under Criterion 2.

Criterion 3 (Architecture/Design)

980 Middlefield Road was constructed in 1951 by prominent local architect Leslie I. Nichols in the Midcentury Modern style. Leslie Nichols, best known for designing the Palo Alto City Hall at 1313 Newell Road (now the Palo Alto Art Center), completed dozens of commissions throughout the San Francisco Peninsula. He is an accomplished architect of local importance. 980 Middlefield Road features many characteristic Midcentury Modern elements, including projecting eaves, cantilevered overhangs, flat roof forms, a vaulted roof form, an articulated primary façade, wood siding, brick veneer, stone used as accent material, strong right angles and simple cubic forms, projecting vertical elements, large windows, painted stained finishes, atrium, courtyard, overhanging pergola, integrated planter, and deeply recessed vestibules. The subject building does not appear to have undergone exterior alterations. As a property type, the subject building exhibits key characteristics of midcentury mortuary buildings, including an indoor-outdoor connection and interaction with natural environment (courtyard, atrium, and lawns), straightforward use of materials, and exaggerated roof form.

A rear garage at 645 Addison Avenue was constructed in 1951 and was later attached to a second garage, constructed at an unknown date prior to 1976. A rear caretaker's residence at 637 Addison Avenue was constructed in 1964. A three-stall carport at 637 Addison Avenue was constructed at an unknown date prior to 1976. The architect/builder of the rear caretaker's residence and garages is unknown. These outbuildings and carport structure do not appear to contribute to the property's significance.

980 Middlefield Road is significant for its distinctive Midcentury Modern design, as a representative midcentury property type, and as a work of architect Leslie Nichols. Thus, the subject building at 980 Middlefield Road does appear to be eligible for individual listing in the California Register under Criterion 3.

Criterion 4 (Information Potential)

The "potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of California" typically relates to archeological resources, rather than built resources. Evaluation of 980 Middlefield Road/637-45 Addison Avenue under Criterion 4 (Information Potential) is beyond the scope of this report.

This evaluation does not address whether the building would qualify as a contributor to a potential historic district. A cursory inspection of the surrounding area does not reveal a high concentration of buildings that would warrant further study.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

For a property to be eligible for national or state designation under one of the significance criteria, the essential physical elements (or character-defining features) that enable the property to convey its historic identity must be evident. To be eligible, a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics, and these features must also retain a sufficient degree of integrity. Characteristics can be expressed in terms such as form, proportion, structure, plan, style, or materials.

As an individually significant historic resource under Criterion 3 with a period of significance of 1951 (date of construction), the character-defining features of 980 Middlefield Road include:

- Form and massing
- Stucco cladding, wood siding, brick veneer, and stone exterior
- Gable and flat roof forms
- Sawtooth chapel wall
- Fenestration
 - Wood doors throughout (some with punched lites)
 - Geometric wood screens at primary facade
 - Fixed sawtooth windows at primary facade
 - Large fixed windows at southeast facade
 - Fixed ribbon windows and clerestory windows at southwest facade
 - Fixed/casement paired windows throughout
- Courtyard at primary entrance with partial-height stone walls and built-in benches
- All Midcentury Modern elements, including: projecting eaves, cantilevered overhangs, flat roof forms, a vaulted roof form, an articulated primary facade, wood siding, brick veneer, stone used as accent material, strong right angles and simple cubic forms, projecting vertical elements, large windows, painted stained finishes, atrium, courtyard, overhanging pergola, integrated planter, and deeply recessed vestibules
- Landscape Features
 - Lawns at northeast and southeast, facades
 - Driveway at northwest facade

INTEGRITY

In order to qualify for listing in any local, state, or national historic register, a property or landscape must possess significance under at least one evaluative criterion as described above and retain integrity. Integrity is defined by the California Office of Historic Preservation as “the authenticity of an historical resource’s physical identity by the survival of certain characteristics that existing during the resource’s period of significance,” or more simply defined as “the ability of a property to convey its significance.”⁶⁴

In order to evaluate whether 980 Middlefield Road retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance, Page & Turnbull used established integrity standards outlined by the *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. Seven variables, or aspects, that define integrity are used to evaluate a resource’s integrity—location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. A property must stand up under most or all of these aspects in order to retain overall integrity. If a property does not retain integrity, it can no longer convey its significance and is therefore not eligible for listing in local, state, or national registers.

The seven aspects that define integrity are defined as follows:

Location is the place where the historic property was constructed.

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plans, space, structure and style of the property.

Setting addresses the physical environment of the historic property inclusive of the landscape and spatial relationships of the building(s).

⁶⁴ California Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistance Series No. 7: How to Nominate a Resource to the California Register of Historical Resources* (Sacramento: California Office of State Publishing, 4 September 2001) 11.

Materials refer to the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern of configuration to form the historic property.

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history.

Feeling is the property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

Location: 980 Middlefield Road retains integrity of location because the building does not appear to have been moved since its construction.

Setting: 980 Middlefield Road retains integrity of setting because the property and the surrounding neighborhood have maintained original spatial relationships between the buildings and streets. The buildings on Middlefield Road across from the subject property remain strictly residential in use, and Addison Elementary School appears largely as it was in 1951. Although much of the subject block itself was demolished to accommodate the Webster Wood Apartments complex, this does not appear to have removed integrity of setting for 980 Middlefield Road, nor has the construction of the rear caretaker's residence at 637 Addison Avenue or the demolition of the building 645 Addison Avenue.

Design: 980 Middlefield Road retains integrity of design. Physical evidence, building permit records, and historic photographs indicate the building has been very minimally altered. The building retains all of its character-defining features.

Materials: 980 Middlefield Road retains integrity of materials. The 1993 removal of redwood shingles at the gable roofed portion does not compromise the building's integrity of design.

Workmanship: 980 Middlefield Road retains integrity of workmanship. All original features of the building have been retained. The physical evidence of the craft and technology used in constructing the building are still evident.

Feeling: 980 Middlefield Road retains integrity of feeling. The building still conveys its identity as an architect-designed midcentury mortuary building. The subject building's overall aesthetic and historic sense has been retained.

Association: 980 Middlefield Road retains integrity of association, as the building retains its identity in community memory as a long-standing mortuary in Palo Alto.

Overall, 980 Middlefield Road retains integrity.

VI. CONCLUSION

The mortuary building at 980 Middlefield Road was constructed in 1951 west of the intersection of Middlefield Road and Addison Avenue. The building is eligible for individual listing in the California Register under Criterion 3 for its distinctive Midcentury Modern design, as a representative midcentury property type, and as a work of architect Leslie Nichols. The building retains integrity. Thus, 980 Middlefield Road appears to qualify as a historic resource for the purposes of review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Two associated rear lots addressed 637-45 Addison Avenue do not contribute to the mortuary's significance or integrity.

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The Corner House on Addison
980 Middlefield Road

Introduction to the facility:

The Corner House on Addison would be home to various classes, workshops, special events and collaborative spaces. The mission of the facility would be to provide a vibrant, welcoming space for traditional and non-traditional professionals to collaborate, work, learn, find support, build community, and spend time with their families, friends, and neighbors.

Most specifically, the establishment would focus on providing a supportive place for working women, especially mothers, as they seek to balance their work and family lives. While not excluding any groups or individuals, the majority of programming will be of interest to mothers, children and families.

The Corner House will concentrate on the welfare and success of our (female/mother) workforce, while supporting women's (and men's) desire to be an active, present, and productive parent. The organization would provide space, time, and energy to support professionals on their path to self-defined success while raising thriving families.

The facility would meet the goals of the Palo Alto community by repurposing land and/existing buildings to address these important needs of our community.

The facility design itself will include various multipurpose rooms (that can function as classrooms or meeting spaces), a kitchen, administrative spaces, a fitness room, playground, atrium, patio and garden. We anticipate that the facility would offer light food and beverage service (a coffee bar in the morning, a lunch buffet around lunchtime, etc.) and some specialty retail (for example, logo wear or materials needed for classes).

Programming:

To achieve its goals, the facility would offer to house or host these types of programming and uses:

- Flexible collaboration spaces, such as coworking tables and desks, conference rooms, and presentation spaces
- Workshops, classes, and lectures for all ages, including cultural, art, musical education, literary, visual and/or performing arts, culinary arts, professional development, and health/wellness
- Special events such as speaker series, small performances, networking events, and family bonding experiences
- Specific family-oriented programming such as tutoring, lifelong learning programs, support groups, and more
- Light food and beverage service to support community building: coffee bar, lunch buffet, snacks, tea time, catering for events.
- Venue rental for private and special events such as non-profits, alumni associations and more
- An accepting and accommodating setting for nursing mothers
- A concentration on well-rounded health, wellness, and fitness
- Collaborative groups and programming aimed at furthering the professional development of working women
- Networking and relationship building among the community
- Safe and thoughtfully designed workspace accommodations for non-traditional working parents (such as freelancers, writers/artists, entrepreneurs, consultants, or those in remote roles) to thrive professionally

Public Benefits:

- Providing professional women and their families with access to previously unavailable resources that are of inherent value to the community at large

- Making available free or affordable rental space for non-profit and/or charity events at least 12 times per year*
- Hosting various free or undermarket rate classes, workshops or other events for the public community at least six times per year*
- Offering to host, free of charge, at least 10 meetings and/or small gathering per calendar year for the purpose of community outreach, volunteering, charity or other like use cases

Daily & Monthly Use:

Classes and workshops:

On a daily basis the facility would hold classes and workshops for youth and adults that may include music, visual and/or performing art programs, cooking, professional development, dance, fitness, health/wellness, language and academic/tutoring programs. These programs will be scheduled to control the influx and egress from the building and the property.

The facility anticipates producing an estimated:

- 10-20 classes per day
- An average of 5-25 students each
- We anticipate that for each student in the class, there will be an adult that likely stays on the premises -- either participating in a parent-participation class or taking advantage of the facility's amenities.
- *Variable: depending on schedule, time of year, interest, etc.*

Collaboration spaces:

Normal use of the facility will also include parents or individuals utilizing collaboration spaces (such as coworking tables and conference rooms) to work, read, write, reflect, seek support from mentors or peers, network with others in the community, and share ideas. We anticipate that many of those utilizing the collaboration spaces are guardians or partners of participants in classes and workshops. Others may be mothers/parents that require a welcoming space to tend to a young child (such as a nursing infant) while also conducting calls or tending to other personal or professional needs.

The facility anticipates:

- Approximately 100 patrons with access to collaboration spaces on a monthly basis utilizing this space at different windows of time and for different lengths of times.
- We anticipate no more than 50 patrons with accessing these collaboration spaces at one time.
- We do not expect these patrons to arrive, gather or depart en mass.

Special Events:

The facility anticipates other special events or programs to occur irregularly.

The facility hopes to produce or host:

- Approximately 250 small events, with less than 75 attendees and no more than 10 per week.
- Approximately 150 large events with more than 75 attendees, no more than 4 per week.
- Special Events will not ever exceed Code Standards for the building, or 400 attendees, whichever is less.

An example of a small event might be a special guest hosting a group discussion on child rearing practices or diversity in the workplace. An example of a large event might be a family bonding experience such as an indoor picnic or a charity fundraiser.

Other Patrons of the Facility:

Guests and members may also enjoy utilizing the following spaces on a daily basis:

- *Coffee bar and light buffet lunch*
- *Health and wellness room*
- *Garden and outdoor play space*
- *Patio*
- *Atrium*

We anticipate that these spaces will be used for varying intervals of time throughout the day.

Food & Beverage:

- The facility will offer light food and beverage options to members and guests on a normal day.
- Special events may require catering services.

Fitness Space:

- The facility would like to incorporate a room within its design specifically focused on health and wellness to support and encourage an active lifestyle.
- The room will be used for things like: meditation, pilates, yoga, stretching, wellness seminars.
- This room would include up to 10 pieces of exercise equipment, including treadmills, stationary bikes or like machines.

Comparison to prior use of the property :

	Our Proposed Use			Previous Funeral Home Use		
	Minimum Concurrent	Maximum Concurrent	Expected Average	Minimum Concurrent	Maximum Concurrent	Expected Average
Daily						
During Work/School Hours	50	300	150	30	500	200
During Evening or Weekend Hours	25	400	125	30	500	200

Prior use of the facility:

- Mortuary

Weekly use:

- Multiple services per week, often multiple per day, with tens to hundreds of mourners

Supporting Data:

The National Funeral Directors Association [published](#) in January 2018 that the NFDA-member Firm Caseload (i.e., number of decedents cared for) ranged normally from 1-1000/per year [a median of 500.2].

- 58.4% reporting near 150 per year *or less* (assumed average of 12.5 per month or 2.88 per week)
- 46.1% reporting 151-1000 *or more* (median/average of 575.5 per year or assumed average of 47.9 per month or 11.06 per week).

With no formula to assess the average number of mourners at a funeral, conversations with Funeral Homes concluded that attendance numbers normally reflect age of the deceased and involvement in the community and can range from 10-600 people. The prior owners of this property noted at sale that they could hold multiple funerals a day and expected tens to hundreds of attendees on a normal day.

In comparison, 2.8-11 funerals per week with tens to hundreds of mourners gathering en masse is presumed to have been a greater strain on noise and traffic due to a private event than the facilities newly suggested model and use.

Employees:

In order to run smooth and successful operations of the facility and the programming, the facility plans to employ:

- 4-8 full-time employees.
 - Full time positions *may be*: Director, Programs Manager, Facilities Manager, Teacher/Children's Coordinator, IT Manager, HR Manager, and Kitchen Manager.
- 10-20 part-time, internship or contract employees in an effort to offer flexibility and optionality for working parents, students, and others.
 - Part-time, internship or contract positions or departments may be: receptionist, teachers, children's programming, security, accounting, janitorial, marketing, landscaping and grounds, food service, and special programs/events.
 - For special events, food service and other staffing as required based on size.

Hours of Operation:

- The hours of operation will be 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. seven days a week.
- Those with access to the collaboration spaces may arrive or depart earlier or later than normal business operation hours.
- Some special events and classes may occur outside of regular operation hours.
- All outdoor events with amplified sound shall cease operations no later than 9:00 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and 10:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday.
- All indoor events shall cease operations no later than 12:00 a.m., with clean-up no later than 1:00 a.m.

Public Access & Membership:

- As with children's classes, adult classes, workshops and speaker events throughout both many public and private facilities in the area, The Corner House would require participants to register and submit appropriate registration fees.
 - Registration will help to ensure safety and security for young children and mothers, to control the influx of guests and traffic flow, as well as meet the financial requirements to operate and meet the cost of overhead.
- The majority of classes, workshops and many special events will be available for registration to all members of the community.
- Some programs and workspaces will be available to members only as the organization aims to create an established, supportive community of regular attendees encouraging mentor-mentee relationships and peer-to-peer dynamics.

As with Lucie Stern Community Center and other Palo Alto Community Centers, as well as like facilities such as the JCC, Women's Center, and Hanahaus reservation for picnic spaces and facility rentals are subject to availability, application approval, and to specific cost and conditions.

Parking/Traffic Considerations:

- The property will be able to accommodate 36 cars in the lot for self-park.
- We will have 25 bike parking spaces.
- A designated curbed in drop-off and pick-up area to reduce disruptions of traffic flow on Addison.
- Special events may require valet parking in the facility's lot in order to accommodate additional vehicles.
- Large events may require the facility or the host (if external) to accommodate driving guests at offsite lots, offer shuttles or rideshare credits to attendees in order to best manage parking.

The facility will encourage walking, biking, rideshare, carpooling or public transportation for all patrons. The neighborhood is a walkable and the organization expects that this will be a preferred option for many residents utilizing the facility. Rideshares and public transportation are readily available and close in proximity.

Construction activities (Noise & traffic):

We are sensitive to the fact that having two construction projects next to one another with some level of concurrent schedule imposes some challenges. In order to mitigate those complexities, we will work closely with the city and Addison Elementary contractor as needed to review, agree upon and implement the following:

Trade Parking and Arrival Time

We will encourage all trades to carpool as much as possible to reduce total number of vehicles on site for daily forces. Additionally, our site allows for all trade parking to be within site limits, therefore not impacting street parking. As for arrival times, though work cannot begin until 8am, we would require tradespersons to arrive by 7:30 to work around child drop-off and school hours.

Work Hours and Departure

Work hours would be 8am-6pm daily with site departure after 3:30pm, allowing for school pick up.

Deliveries and Staging

We will work with the city on traffic control plans on when large material drop offs are needed, so we can have the trucks delivered in a timely matter, and will coordinate deliveries with Addison Elementary so we do not have multiple at one time. Optimally, we will be able to have trucks arrive early to the site before morning drop off occurs as to not interfere with children and their parents. If that is not possible, we would schedule material deliveries around critical school hours. All materials will be staged within site fence limits.

Construction Noise

A majority of our work is internal to the current structure and therefore, our work can be sequenced to maintain the exterior envelope as long as possible to minimize noise. We will also have screened fencing around site throughout project and can install absorptive materials to inside of fence as needed once we move to exterior work in order to lessen impact on surrounding areas.

Parcel(s) Consideration/Design:

Facility is pursuing a certificate of compliance to merge the three lots as part of any formal application.

Attachment F

Project Plans

Hardcopies of project plans are provided to Councilmembers. These plans are available to the public online and by visiting the Planning and Community Environmental Department on the 5th floor of City Hall at 250 Hamilton Avenue.

Directions to review Project plans online:

1. Go to: <http://bit.ly/PaloAltoPlanningProjects>
2. Scroll down the center of the page and click “View pending projects”
3. Scroll to find “980 Middlefield” and click the address link
4. On this project specific webpage you will find a link to the project plans and other important information

Direct Link to Project Webpage:

<https://tinyurl.com/980-Middlefield>