

# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Stephen M. Haase

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** July 27, 2005

Approved



Date

August 3, 2005

**SUBJECT: HL05-153. HISTORIC LANDMARK INITIATION FOR THE DENNIS HOUSE, 237 NORTH AUTUMN STREET**

Council District: 3

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Planning Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution to:

1. Initiate proceedings to consider the Dennis House as a landmark of special historic, architectural, cultural, aesthetic or engineering interest or value of a historic nature.
2. Set a public hearing on September 27, 2005, at 1:30 p.m.
3. Refer the matter back to the Historic Landmarks Commission for its consideration at a public hearing, report and recommendation.

## **BACKGROUND**

In April 2005, the Dennis House, located at 237 North Autumn Street, was evaluated in a Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) form and Historic Evaluation Sheet. The DPR form (attached) states that the building exceeds the threshold for City Landmark status and appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C and for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 3 as a significant and distinguishable entity in the context of mid-to-late nineteenth-century residential architecture in San Jose. The building owner, Earl Paden, recently submitted an application for Historic Landmark designation of the residence using the research documented in the DPR form.

Designation of the structure as a Landmark would establish the requirement for the issuance of Historic Preservation (HP) permits for City approval of any exterior changes proposed to the structure. The designation would also allow the owner to apply for property tax reduction under the Mills Act and for exemption from the Building and Structure (B&S) construction tax and



Commercial-Residential-Mobilehome Park (CRMP) building tax for work done in conformance with approved HP permits.

### **ANALYSIS**

The subject site is located in the LI Light Industrial Zoning District. The Landmark Designation for this structure on a 0.14 gross-acre site conforms to the San Jose 2020 General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation of Light Industrial utilizing the General Plan's Discretionary Alternate Use Policy for Structures of Historical or Architectural Merit. Under this policy, alternate land uses may be allowed on sites with structures of significant historical or architectural merit if to do so would preserve the structures' historic and architectural qualities, and the use would not otherwise be incompatible with the surrounding area.

Evaluation information included in the DPR form, completed by Archives and Architecture, provides the basis for initiation of City Landmark status. The one and one-half story house is a rare and distinctive representation of an early brick residence built in 1870 in the Greek Revival Style in San Jose. Although the majority of commercial structures built in downtown San Jose during the later half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were of brick, house construction focused mainly on redwood as the structural material of choice. These early brick houses tended to be associated with brick masons who built these houses for themselves. An imposing volume of classical proportions, the main section of the house is a simple rectangle with front and rear gables. An arched window is set prominently within the front gable, and the original composition has an offset front door and fluted corner pilasters with capitals. The solid multi-layered soffit, which tops the side elevations but does not continue across the front and rear elevations, is a character-defining feature of this style. Although some alterations have occurred, the house has preserved the greater part of its integrity of design, workmanship, and materials.

The building qualifies for landmark status based on 1) its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of the Greek Revival architectural type or specimen, and 2) its embodiment of elements of brick residential architectural design detail, materials and craftsmanship which represent a uniqueness within the city. (Municipal Code Section 13.48.110).

### **OUTCOME**

Initiation of the Historic Landmark Designation by the City Council would begin the process for 1) referral to the Historic Landmarks Commission for report and recommendation, and 2) a subsequent public hearing for Council action on the designation of the Historic Landmark.

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August 16, 2005  
Subject: HL05-153  
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### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

The property owners requested City Landmark designation and a public hearing notice for the Historic Landmark Designation hearings will be published in a local newspaper, posted at the site and mailed to all property owners and tenants within 500 feet of the subject site.

### **COORDINATION**

Preparation of the City Council resolution to initiate proceedings has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office.

### **CEQA**

Exempt, File No. HL05-153.

  
 STEPHEN M. HAASE, DIRECTOR  
Planning, Building and Code Enforcement

#### Attachments

- Location Map, Dept. of Parks and Recreation (DPR) form



File No: H05-153

District: 03

Quad No: 83

Scale: 1"=200'

Map Created On: 05/26/2005



State of California – The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI # \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 6 \*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) Dennis House

P1. Other Identifier: None

\*P2. Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted \*a. County Santa Clara  
and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad San Jose West Date 1980 photorevised T 7S; R 1E; Mount Diablo B.M.

c. Address 237 North Autumn St. City San Jose Zip 95110

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone 10S ; 599998 mE/ 4133198 mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)

Assessor's Parcel Number: 259-29-021,

west side of North Autumn St. between West Julian and West St. James Streets

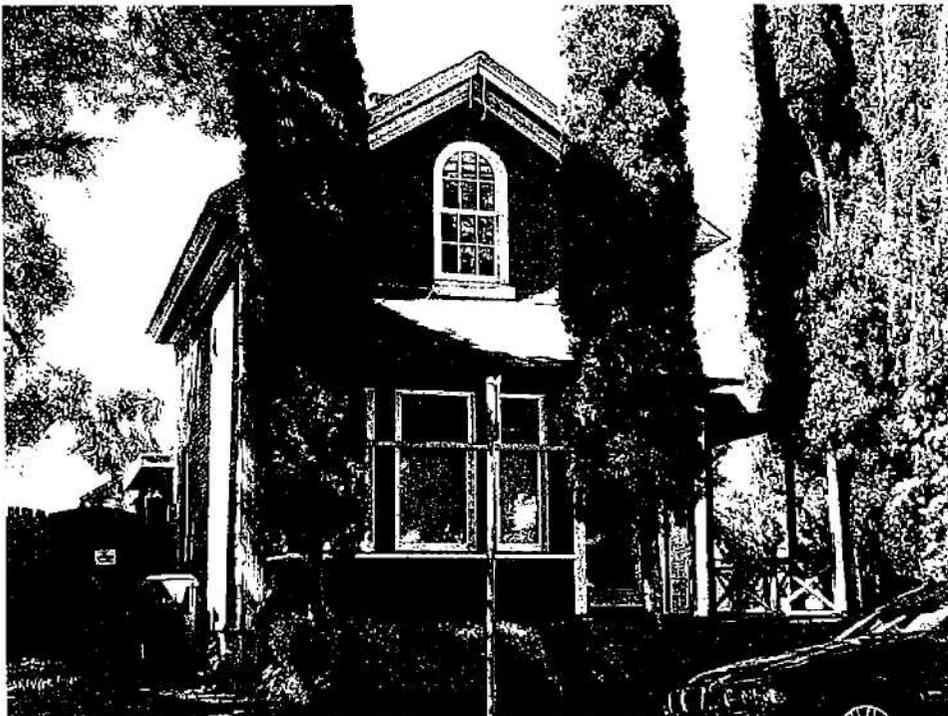
\*P3a Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

This one and one-half story building is a rare brick residence built in 1870 in the Greek Revival Style within what was then the edge of the city limits in San Jose's First Ward district. An imposing volume of classical proportions, the main section of the house is a simple rectangle with front and rear gables. An arched window is set prominently within the front gable, and the original composition has an offset front door and fluted corner pilasters with capitals. Above the pilasters, the solid multi-layered soffit tops the side elevations, but is discontinuous across the front and rear elevations; a character-defining feature of this style. The brick walls rise the full height of the building without break other than for the multi-lite windows placed over heavy timber sills and capped with vertically placed bricks.

(Continued on page 2, DPR523L)

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

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



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)

View looking west,  
April 2005

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:  
 Historic  Prehistoric  Both

1870, tax records/  
directories, 135 years old

\*P7. Owner and Address:

Earl Paden  
237 North Autumn St.  
San Jose, CA 95110

\*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address)

Franklin Maggi  
& Charlene Duval  
Archives & Architecture  
PO Box 1332  
San Jose CA 95109-1332

\*P9. Date Recorded: 5/16/05

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe)  
Intensive

\*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none".)

None

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

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

Primary #  
HRI #  
Trinomial

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\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Dennis House

\*Recorded by Franklin Maggi & Charlene Duval

\*Date 5/16/05

Continuation  Update

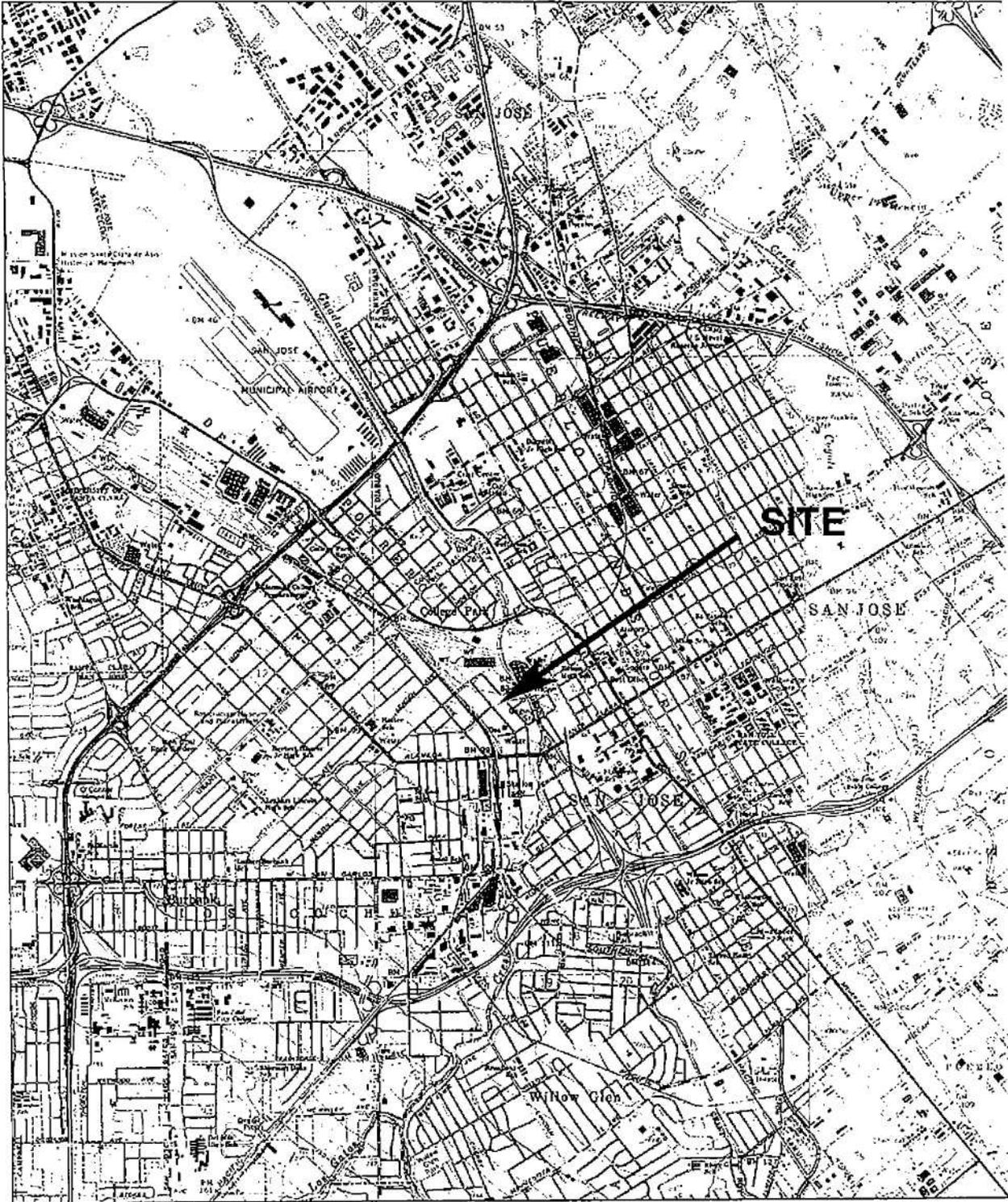
(Continued from previous page, DPR523a, P3a)

The original building as evidenced by the 1884 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map appears to have had a full-width front wood porch and two one-story rooms to the rear of the larger volume that were narrower in width than the front of the house. One of these rooms was (and is) of brick construction, and the rear room was framed with wood and connected to an accessory shed to the northwest. Both of these rooms have a slight offset along the south elevation from the main volume.

Sometime after 1891, the front (hipped) porch was partially enclosed - expanding the front pallor, and the porch was expanded by wrapping it around the north side of the building to where the rear wood-framed room was expanding slightly to the north. As noted in the historical overview on page 5, this modification was mostly likely done to accommodate the inclusion of a small grocery store within the building and the new porch probably provided a secondary access to the residence. The present porch has brick steps (possibly original) and cross-board balustrades that are of an early style but of replacement construction. The porch roof is in deteriorated condition but appears to be associated with the 1890s remodeling. The windows have all been replaced with multi-lite double-hung wood windows as a part of the airport sound-proofing program coordinated by the City of San Jose. The new windows stylistically relate to the early windows but are not exact matches, and some of the brickwork was replaced to set the windows within the structure.

The interior of the building has some original features, such as the original fireplace and flue in the center of the large volume, and the entry hall has circa 1870s trimwork and stair railing. The front door, although not original, retains the original frame and sidelights that are visible from the inside, and a double-pane glass door has been added for sound-proofing.

To the rear of the building is a two-story barn that appears on the Sanborn Maps as early as 1884. A front wing has been added to the barn, and both this wing and portions of the barn have been clad with plywood. Other small additions to the rear and side of the house also have been clad with plywood indicating their contemporary nature. The house has a large sideyard with small ancillary structures and does not have a garage.



Map created with TOPO 6 ©2007 National Geographic, www.nationalgeographic.com/topo

State of California – The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD**

Primary #  
HRI #

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\*NRHP Status Code 3S

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Dennis House

B1. Historic Name: Dennis House

B2. Common Name: None

B3. Original use: Single family residential B4. Present Use: Single family residential

\*B5. Architectural Style: Greek Revival

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

Constructed 1870. Barn constructed sometime between 1870 and 1884. Remodeled to accommodate the inclusion of a grocery store circa 1893. Additional additions at rear post 1909 (date unknown). Windows retrofitted per airport sound abatement program post 2000.

\*B7. Moved?  No  Yes  Unknown Date: n/a Original Location: n/a

\*B8. Related Features:

Barn at rear of property

B9a Architect: Unknown b. Builder: Probable Thomas Malloy

\*B10. Significance: Theme Architecture & Shelter Area Downtown San Jose frame

Period of Significance 1870-1909 Property Type Residential Applicable Criteria C (3)

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

The Dennis House at 237 Autumn Street, constructed between April and August 1870, is locally unique as one of the few remaining brick residences built in San Jose during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although the majority of commercial structures built in downtown San Jose during the later half of the 19th century were of brick, few residences used this building technology. The first brick residences were built at the southwest corner of North Fifth and East St. John Streets in the 1850s, but with the quick evolution of the logging industry in the 1850s, house construction focused mainly on redwood as the structural material of choice. These early brick houses tended to be associated with brick masons who built these houses for themselves.

The neighborhood along Autumn Street to the west of the Guadalupe River in the late 1860s and 1870s was largely ethnic Irish, later supplanted by Italian immigrants by the early 20th century. Some large estates were located on the east side of Autumn Street during the 19th century that included homes of prominent local residents such as J. J. Owen and B. H. Cottle, owners of the San Jose Mercury, F. E. Spencer, prominent attorney and later judge; and Edgar Pomeroy, a local businessman and government official (Guinn p. 638). However, most of the area evolved as a working class neighborhood - many laborers, teamsters, and tradesmen settled in the nearby blocks that worked at Froment's Mill to the south on Autumn Street.

(Continued on next page, DPR523L)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) None

\*B12. References:

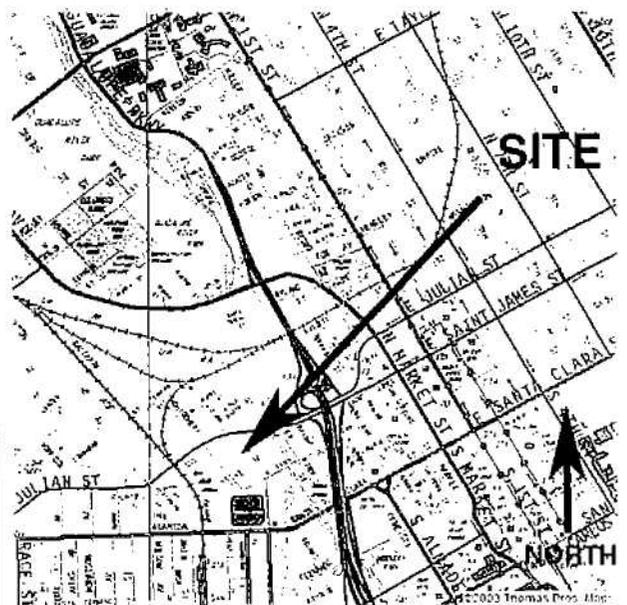
California Death Index, 1905-1997.  
San Jose City Block Books, 1871-1924.  
San Jose City Directories, 1870-1926.  
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, San Jose, 1884-1915.  
San Jose Tax Assessment Rolls, 1866-1871.  
Santa Clara County Voter Registration, 1866-1892.  
United States Population Census, 1860-1930.

B13. Remarks: Proposed landmark nomination

\*B14. Evaluator: Franklin Maggi

\*Date of Evaluation: 5/16/05

(This space reserved for official comments.)



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

Primary #  
HRI #  
Trinomial

Page 5 of 6 \*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Dennis House

\*Recorded by Franklin Maggi & Charlene Duval \*Date 5/16/05  Continuation  Update

(Continued from previous page, DPR523b, B10)

The property located at 237 Autumn Street was part of a 336' by 124' parcel owned in 1868 by Thomas Malloy, an Irish immigrant and brick mason. By March 31, 1869, Malloy had sold a 50' by 116' parcel to fellow Irish immigrant, Joseph Dennis, but the property was a vacant lot at that point. In August 1870, the federal census of that year showed Joseph Dennis and his family living on this property. The household consisted of Joseph Dennis (also going by Dennison), age 35, a laborer; his wife Margaret, age 27, and infant daughter Belle, born in January 1870. Also living on the property were Owen Connolly, age 23, a tinsmith, and Mary Cronin, age 16, a house servant. Joseph Dennis was living in San Jose as early as 1867 as he was naturalized in July 1867. He married Margaret Conlee on February 9, 1869. Margaret died a few years later, however, as in January 1873, Joseph married again, this time to Sarah Moran. In 1878, Joseph and Sarah had a daughter named Teresa. City directories describe Joseph as a laborer and a teamster until 1892.

There is no directory entry for the Dennis family in 1893. In 1894, they reappear, with Joseph listed as a grocer operating at his home address on Autumn Street. It appears that the house must have undergone a level of remodeling in order for the building to accommodate the store as well as living quarters. When the federal census was taken in June 1900, the Dennis household consisted of Joseph, a widower, and his daughter Teresa, then age 22. Ellard Knapp, age 25, was listed as a lodger. Joseph Dennis operated the grocery in his house until his death in December 1900. Joseph's heir was his daughter Teresa who by then had married Ellard Knapp. His daughter Belle had previously married Frank Pancera. Ellard Knapp was a candymaker and he and Teresa made the Dennis house their home until Ellard's death in 1907. Teresa maintained ownership of the house until at least 1909, but it was subsequently used as a rental as were most of the houses in the Autumn Street neighborhood by this time.

None of the early brick residences from the 1850s remain extant. It is very likely the Dennis House was constructed by Thomas Malloy, the previous owner of the property. Malloy was naturalized in July 1867, at the nearly the same time as Joseph Dennis. The Malloy family remained residents nearby at 199 Autumn Street until at least the end of the 19th century.

**Integrity:**

The property maintains integrity to many of the National Register's seven aspects of integrity. It maintains its location, long-term historic setting, feeling, and associations with the early development of the downtown frame area. The house has preserved the greater part of its integrity of design, workmanship, and materials although some of the rear of the structure has been modified with added space. The changes to the front of the building are part of the period of significance of the house as they were done by the original owner. The changes at the rear do not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, but are not within public view. The residence is a distinctive representation of an early brick house of the Greek Revival Style in San José.

**Significance:**

Criteria A/1: Residential development of this area occurred piecemeal during the 19th century peaking in the late 1930s. The house is therefore not associated with a distinguishable pattern of neighborhood residential development. The property would therefore not be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A or the California Register under Criterion 1.

Criteria B/2: The Dennis House is associated with the family of Joseph Dennis until at least 1909. Neither Dennis, members of his family, or later tenants are known for contributions to the community. The property would therefore not be eligible for the National Register under Criterion B or the California Register under Criterion 2.

Criteria C/3: Based on an assessment of the architectural qualities of the house as a rare and distinctive local example of an 1870 Gothic Revival brick house, it appears to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3, as the building is a significant and distinguishable entity in the context of mid-to-late nineteenth-century residential architecture in San Jose. The integrity has only been slightly compromised with contemporary changes that are inconsistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Due to the distinctive nature of the building, it appears to qualify for the National Register under Criterion C and the California Register under Criterion 3. It also therefore appears eligible for listing as a local historic landmark.



Rear upper elevation, viewed looking northeast



Barn at rear of property, viewed looking west

## HISTORIC EVALUATION SHEET

**Historic Resource Name:** 237 North Autumn St.

**A. VISUAL QUALITY / DESIGN**

**Justification**

1. EXTERIOR	Very good quality of form
2. STYLE	Excellent example few survive
3. DESIGNER	Excellent example few survive
4. CONSTRUCTION	Very early few survive
5. SUPPORTIVE ELEMENTS	Rare (unusual) barn in central city

E	VG	G	FP
	x		
x			
x			
x			
	x		

**B. HISTORY / ASSOCIATION**

6. PERSON / ORGANIZATION	No connection with persons of importance
7. EVENT	None
8. PATTERNS	Tertiary patterns
9. AGE	1870

E	VG	G	FP
			x
			x
		x	
	x		

**C. ENVIRONMENTAL / CONTEXT**

10. CONTINUITY	Maintains character of secondary area
11. SETTING	Compatible with area
12. FAMILIARITY	Familiar to neighborhood

E	VG	G	FP
		x	
		x	
		x	

**D. INTEGRITY**

13. CONDITION	Minor surface wear
14. EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS	Minor alterations only
15. STRUCTURAL REMOVALS	No structural removals
16. SITE	Not moved

E	VG	G	FP
	x		
	x		
x			
x			

**E. REVERSIBILITY**

17. EXTERIOR	2/3s or more original exists.
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E	VG	G	FP
x			

**F. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS / BONUS POINTS**

18. INTERIOR / VISUAL	Good 1870s detail
19. INTERIOR / HISTORY	Fair
20. INTERIOR ALTERATIONS	Only 1/3 to 2/3 remains
21. REVERSIBILITY / INTER.	Not easily reversible
22. NATIONAL OR CALIF. REG.	Appears eligible

E	VG	G	FP
		x	
			x
		x	
		x	
	x		

**REVIEWED BY:** Franklin Maggi

**DATE:** 05/16/05

# EVALUATION TALLY SHEET

Historic Resource Name: 237 North Autumn St.

<u>A. VISUAL QUALITY / DESIGN</u>	E	VG	G	FP	Value	Value	Sub-total	Cumulative sub-total
1. EXTERIOR	16	12	6	0	12			
2. STYLE	10	8	4	0	10			
3. DESIGNER	6	4	2	0	6			
4. CONSTRUCTION	10	8	4	0	10			
5. SUPPORTIVE ELEMENTS	8	6	3	0	6		44	
<b><u>B. HISTORY / ASSOCIATION</u></b>								
	E	VG	G	FP	Value	Value	Sub-total	Cumulative sub-total
6. PERSON / ORGANIZATION	20	15	7	0	0			
7. EVENT	20	15	7	0	0			
8. PATTERNS	12	9	5	0	5			
9. AGE	8	6	3	0	6		11	
<b><u>C. ENVIRONMENTAL / CONTEXT</u></b>								
	E	VG	G	FP	Value	Value	Sub-total	Cumulative sub-total
10. CONTINUITY	8	6	3	0	3			
11. SETTING	6	4	2	0	2			
12. FAMILIARITY	10	8	4	0	4		9	64
<i>(SUM OF A+C) =</i>					53			
<b><u>D. INTEGRITY</u></b>								
	E	VG	G	FP	Value	Value	Sub-total	Cumulative sub-total
13. CONDITION	.00	.03	.05	.10	0.03	x 64	1.9	
14. EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS	.00	.05	.10	.20	0.05	x 53	2.7	
	.00	.03	.05	.10	0.03	x 11	0.3	
15. STRUCTURAL REMOVALS	.00	.20	.30	.40	0	x 53	0.0	
	.00	.10	.20	.40	0	x 11	0.0	
16. SITE	.00	.10	.20	.40	0	x 11	0.0	
							4.9	
<b>ADJUSTED SUB-TOTAL:</b> (Preliminary total minus Integrity Deductions)								59.1
<b><u>E. REVERSIBILITY</u></b>								
	E	VG	G	FP	Value	Value	Sub-total	Cumulative sub-total
17. EXTERIOR	3	3	2	2	3			62.1
<b><u>F. ADD'L CONSIDERATIONS/BONUS POINTS</u></b>								
	E	VG	G	FP	Value	Value	Sub-total	Cumulative sub-total
18. INTERIOR / VISUAL	3	3	1	0	1			
19. INTERIOR / HISTORY	3	3	1	0	0			
20. INTERIOR ALTERATIONS	4	4	2	0	2			
21. REVERSIBILITY / INTERIOR	4	4	2	0	2			
22. NATIONAL / CALIFORNIA REGISTER	20	15	10	0	15		20	
<b>EVALUATION TOTAL:</b> (Adjusted subtotal plus Bonus Points)								82.10