



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Joseph Horwedel

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** September 29, 2008

Approved

*Deanna Jantua*

Date

*10/1/08*

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** 3

**SNI:** University

**SUBJECT: HL08-174. HISTORIC LANDMARK INITIATION FOR THE RENZEL HOUSE LOCATED AT 120 ARROYO WAY.**

## RECOMMENDATION

Planning Staff recommends that the City Council:

- a. Adopt a resolution to initiate proceedings to consider the single-family house located at 120 Arroyo Way as a landmark of special historic, architectural, cultural, aesthetic or engineering interest or value of a historic nature.
- b. Refer the matter back to the Historic Landmarks Commission for its consideration at a public hearing, report and recommendation.
- c. Adopt a resolution setting a public hearing on Tuesday, December 2, 2008, at 1:30 p.m. for Council consideration of City Landmark designation of the structure noted above.

## OUTCOME

Initiation of the Historic Landmark Designation by the City Council begins 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.

## BACKGROUND

In September 2008, the single-family house, located at 120 Arroyo Way, was evaluated in a Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) form and historic evaluation sheet. The evaluation was prepared by qualified historical consultants Archives and Architecture. The DPR form (see attached) for the property states that the house meets the criteria for City Landmark designation under the Historic Preservation Ordinance, appears eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources, and may qualify for the National Register with further research. The building owners, Donald Lieberman and Patricia A. Long, submitted an application for City

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Landmark designation of the house in September 2008, using the research documented in the DPR form.

Designation of the structure as a City 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 construction tax and the Commercial-Residential-Mobile Home Park (CRMP) building tax for work done in conformance with approved HP permits. The owner has submitted an application for a Mills Act contract.

### **ANALYSIS**

The following summary is based on the historical evaluation prepared for the property by Archives and Architecture. Please refer to the attached DPR evaluation form for a more detailed discussion and analysis of the building.

This Ranch-style house, constructed in 1939, is set within the Naglee Park Conservation area surrounded by early-twentieth-century residences. The residential property, historically known as the Ernest & Emily Renzel House, has special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value to the community for its distinctive character that is expressed through its preserved materials and overall design. The Renzel House represents a very early local implementation of a Ranch-style house within the Early Modern Period of local residential development. The house was featured in the local newspapers in 1941.

Consistent with the National Register of Historic Places eligibility findings, the building appears to qualify for City Landmark status based on: *Criterion (1), its character, interest or value as part of the local, regional, state or national history, heritage or culture*, as a distinctive building within the Naglee Park Conservation Area; *Criterion (3), identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the local, regional, state or national culture and history*, identified with Ernest H. Renzel, Jr., who contributed to local and regional history; *Criterion (6) as an embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen*, exemplifying distinguished Ranch-style architecture due to its form and detailing; and *Criterion (7) Its identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city of San José*, identified as the work of the architectural firm of Higgins and Root.

### **EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

As noted in the Recommendation section on the first page of this memorandum, once the process for Landmark designation has been initiated, the matter is then referred to the Historic Landmarks Commission for its consideration at a public hearing, followed by report and recommendation back to Council. Staff will schedule a public hearing for Tuesday, December 2, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. for Council consideration of City Landmark designation of the house.

**POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

In conformance with the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Title 13.48 of the San José Municipal Code, when the nomination documentation is complete, the city council, by resolution, shall initiate the procedure for the designation of a landmark so nominated. Without designation, the structure could undergo exterior alterations in the future without need of a Historic Preservation Permit reviewed by the Historic Landmarks Commission. However, exterior alterations would remain subject to review of a Single-Family House Permit by the Planning Director because the subject building is listed on the City's Historic Resources Inventory at a lesser level of significance by virtue of its location within the Naglee Park Conservation Area.

**Pros:** This alternative would not appear to confer any benefits, from a public policy perspective.

**Cons:** A decision not to designate the building in accordance with its eligibility as a City Landmark Structure would not further the objectives of the General Plan policies and the Historic Preservation Ordinance to promote and enhance the preservation of historically and architecturally significant sites and structures (see Fiscal/Policy Alignment section, below).

**Reason for not recommending:** On the basis of the evaluation prepared by qualified historical consultants, the house has been determined to meet the eligibility requirements for designation as a City Landmark Structure. To follow through with formal designation process as proposed would promote the General Plan and Municipal Code objectives relative to historic preservation.

**PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST**

- Criterion 1:** Requires Council action on the use of public funds equal to \$1 million or greater. **(Required: Website Posting)**
  
- Criterion 2:** Adoption of a new or revised policy that may have implications for public health, safety, quality of life, or financial/economic vitality of the City. **(Required: E-mail and Website Posting)**
  
- Criterion 3:** Consideration of proposed changes to service delivery, programs, staffing that may have impacts to community services and have been identified by staff, Council or a Community group that requires special outreach. **(Required: E-mail, Website Posting, Community Meetings, Notice in appropriate newspapers)**

Although this item does not meet any of the above criteria, staff has followed and will continue to follow Council Policy 6-30: Public Outreach Policy. Notices of the applications have been posted at the site and staff has been available to answer questions. Every designation of a proposed landmark, shall be considered by the Historic Landmarks Commission at a public hearing within ninety days from the date of City Council initiation. The Historic Landmarks Commission shall report to City Council within thirty days after the close of the public hearing

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on the nomination and no later than one hundred twenty days from initiation. Public hearing notices for the Historic Landmarks Commission and City Council hearings will be published in a local newspaper, and mailed to all property owners and tenants within at least 500 feet of the subject site. Information about the proposed project and the associated public hearings has been made available through the Planning Division web site and will continue to be available while the proposed designation remains pending.

### **COORDINATION**

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

### **FISCAL/POLICY ALIGNMENT**

This project is consistent with applicable General Plan policies. Approval of the City Landmark Designation for this structure would further the San Jose 2020 General Plan *Urban Conservation/Preservation* Major Strategy, which states that, at a strategic level, preservation activities contribute visual evidence to a sense of community. In particular, the *Historic, Archaeological and Cultural Resources (HACR) Policy No. 11* states that the City should use the Area of Historic Sensitivity overlay and the City Landmark designation process of the Historic Preservation Ordinance to promote and enhance the preservation of historically or architecturally significant sites and structures.

### **COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS**

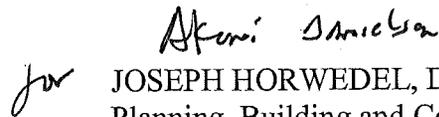
Not applicable.

### **BUDGET REFERENCE**

Not applicable.

### **CEQA**

Not a project.

  
JOSEPH HORWEDEL, DIRECTOR  
Planning, Building and Code Enforcement

For questions please contact Sally Zarnowitz, Historic Preservation Officer, at 535-7834.

Attachments: Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) form  
Location Map

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

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\*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) Ernest & Emily Renzel 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 East Date 1980 Photorevised T.7S.; R.1E.; Mount Diablo B.M.

c. Address 120 Arroyo Way City San Jose Zip 95112

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone 10S; 599892mE/ 4133459mN

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

Assessor's Parcel Number: 467-29-027,

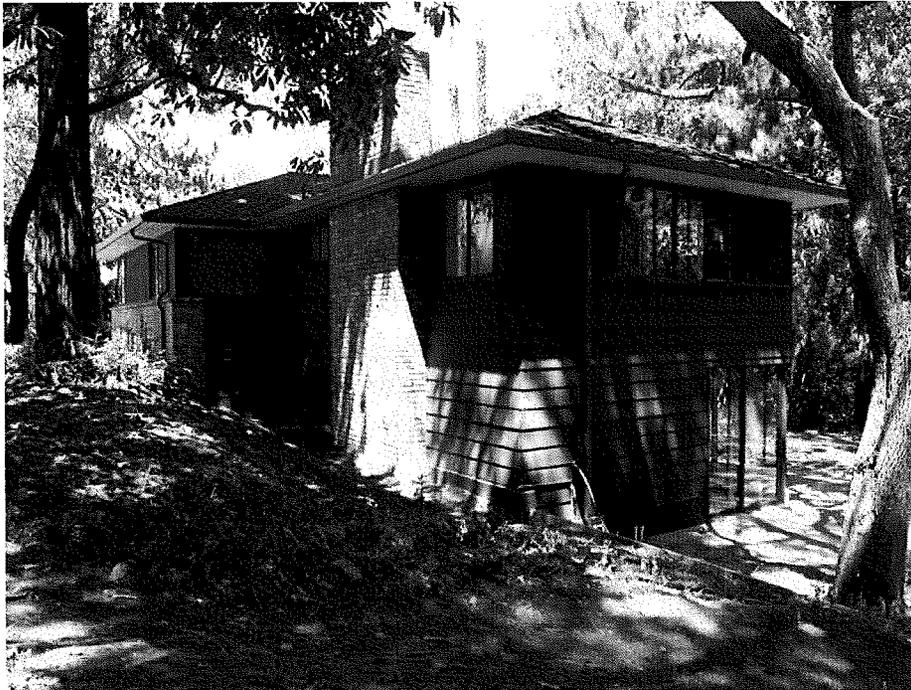
northeast side of Arroyo Way east of South Seventeenth Street.

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

This house embodies, through its form and detailing, a distinctive early Ranch-style residence with a compatible Ranch-style addition. Ranch-style houses became extremely popular after World War II, but had their roots in custom regional design of the late 1930s. This house is a very early example, utilizing brick and wood siding, Modernist steel corner windows, and horizontal proportions beneath the deep eaves. Chester Root, a well-known local architect, used this mix of Modern and traditional materials and forms to create a distinctive, unified composition for the main house in 1939-40. The 1949 addition, by Kress & Gibson, is harmonious with the original design in massing, materials and features. The property is surrounded by much of its historic residential setting, including surrounding properties, of a similar scale and setback, mature trees and other landscaping, and adjacent houses of similar age and scale although of differing styles. (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 #)

Front elevation, viewed facing north, Sept. 2008.

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

1939, building permits and directories, 69 years old.

\*P7. Owner and Address:

Don Lieberman  
& Patricia Long  
120 Arroyo Way  
San Jose, CA 95112

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

Franklin Maggi & Leslie Dill  
Archives & Architecture  
PO Box 1332  
San Jose CA 95109-1332

\*P9. Date Recorded: Sept. 15, 2008

\*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)

(Continued from page 1, DPR523a, P3a)

The immediate setting for the house is a wooded, sloped lot along Coyote Creek. The land slopes steeply down from Arroyo Way to the creek at the rear of the property. The long, rectangular footprint of the house follows the brow of the hill; it is one story at the front and two stories at the rear. The parcel includes a moderately shallow, level front yard that faces Arroyo Way (nominally west). There is no sidewalk along the curving street frontage, and a recent split-rail fence follows the curb. An earlier section of grape-stake, split-rail fence remains near the northwest corner of the parcel. The front entrance of the house is roughly centered in the width of the house; the recessed porch is accessed by a wide, exposed aggregate-concrete walkway; a brick stoop is recessed at the porch. Most of the front yard is landscaped with shrubs and low plants set between mature trees, including redwood, birch, laurel, and pine. Stepping stones and a brick walkway meander through the landscaping. A brick retaining wall and steps provide access to the lower floor near the south corner of the house, and a concrete bench accents the path. A wide concrete driveway serves the two-car garage at the northern end of the house. The north side yard features a brick patio within a large, wooded open space at approximately street level. Terraces wrap the corner of the house and step down to the rear yard. To the south of the house is a relatively large side yard that includes a tall wood retaining wall; a set of steps leads to the rear yard. The rear yard includes an expansive concrete patio in a Modernist curvilinear form, interrupted by two small planting islands and discrete foundation planting areas. The patio is edged by the riparian landscape along Coyote Creek. The parcel crosses the creek and includes paths to the water.

The house is set into the hillside. The main wing is one story and strikingly low in proportion at the front, and an expansive two stories at the rear, with a unique two-story room that spans the main rear façade and extends toward the creek with an original shed-roof projection. The front of the house is shallowly "U"-shaped; it includes a main volume that is flanked by an original, projecting bedroom wing to the south and a projecting garage wing to the north. The house is covered primarily by a low-sloped hipped roof, but the north end features a gable that connects to the hipped roof over the garage wing at the northwest corner of the house. At the south end of the original house is a large two-story addition. The front grade is somewhat lower at the addition, so the massing is more exposed. The addition features a walk-out, fully recessed corner room that was once an open, brick patio.

The deep eaves are boxed with v-groove soffits. The soffits project directly above the window line of the house, creating archetypal Modern low, horizontal wall proportions. The ends of the eaves incorporate integral metal gutters in a fascia shape. The roof is covered with new composition shingles. The central section of the original house is clad in full-height brick. In elegant contrast, the bedroom wing is clad in vertical wood siding above a brick wainscoting; the full-height brick wraps the corner and drops to the wainscot level under a corner window. Because of the wainscoting and soffit design, the windows in this wing are accentuated in a band. The garage and rear wings are clad in wide, horizontal wood lap siding. The southeast rear corner of the original house and the south addition are clad at the lower floor in horizontal lap siding, and at the main level with vertical siding; this design is a successful blending of the two end wings of the original house. The sill band that separates the vertical and horizontal siding is built up from simple flat boards in a 1930s stepped Modern pattern. The house is set on a concrete foundation, partially a slab. There are two large, brick chimneys; one partially projects from the rear two-story room and one from the front of the south addition. At the rear of the house are two sections of exposed rafter tails that project from the boxed eaves, at the two-story living-room wing and beneath the gabled roof at the north wing of the house.

Entry is through a low, recessed porch that features lap siding on the side walls inset within the brick front wall. The porch floor is brick and tile, and the ceiling is set only slightly below the level of the eaves. The front entry door is a simple mahogany flush door with a decorative knocker; it is flanked by unusual glass-block sidelights. The glass block has a horizontal ribbed pattern. Within the main wing, to both sides of the porch, are

(Continued on next page)

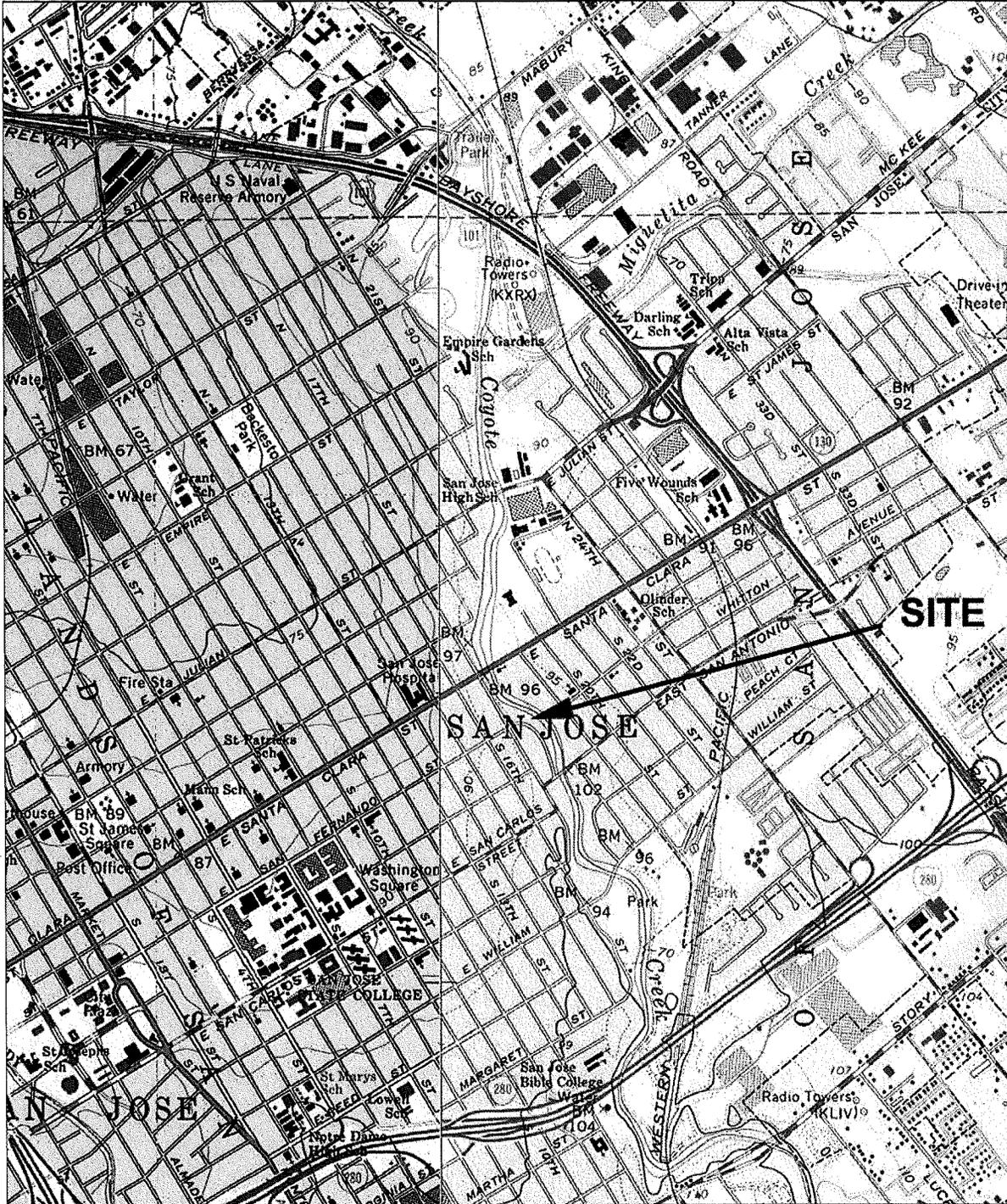
(Continued from previous page)

modest steel casement windows. One of the windows is a tripartite unit; another is paired, and a third is a single sash. At the prominent northwest corner of the bedroom wing, near the front door, is a corner window; this consists of a steel corner post, a tripartite unit facing front and a paired unit facing the side. Corner windows are Modern features that were first championed by Frank Lloyd Wright. This focal window is balanced by a simple paired unit to the south and a tripartite window around the corner, facing south. The original garage wing has a high, glass-block window facing south, toward the front door, and a pair of wood-faced overhead doors. The north side of the garage has a single window and a five-panel door. The north side of the house, the kitchen wing, includes an additional window, placed asymmetrically, and a corner window wraps from the north side to the rear of the house. More centered in the north wing of the rear façade is a tripartite window, at the main level. At the lower level is a five-panel door. The original, projecting rear wing is distinctive. A two-story room, with its shed roof, has a pair of asymmetrical full-height corner windows. These custom-designed and fabricated windows feature pipe columns at the outer corners and a large, 1x4 unit facing each side. At the north corner of the rear façade is a 3x4 unit, at the south corner facing rear is a 4x4 unit. A four-lite French door faces south, adjacent to the tall window unit. The upper story of the bedroom wing has a distinctive corner window (four sash facing rear and a tripartite unit facing the side) and a small paired unit facing the rear. At the lower level are paired units facing rear and side and a tripartite unit facing rear. The south addition steps back in plan at the rear, and features a full-width recessed porch, enclosed with glass in the early 1960s. The upper level has similar, but slightly different window patterns to the original bedroom wing; facing rear are high casement windows; facing the south side is a centered four-sash unit. The front of the addition features a wide brick chimney flanked by a high, small paired unit with textured glass and a larger casement unit to the south side. The front of the addition includes a two-panel lower-level door sunk into the grade; it is accessed by a brick garden stair.

The interiors include many exceptional original features, including main spaces that are integral with the character of the house. The paneled, two-story living room has a high, sloping ceiling and is open to the upper public areas via a cantilevered, angled balcony and a paneled straight stair. Beneath the balcony is a built-in cabinet area, with Moderne curved shelves and built-in full-width lower cabinet. The line of the lower cabinet flows into the minimalist design of the wide brick fireplace at a recessed firebox. The brick is very thin, and laid in a Modern stretcher bond with narrowly overlapping ends. The wall paneling and cabinetry consist of hardwood sheets with narrow battens. The dining room, an area open to the living room, also has built-in cabinets. It and the entry foyer share the same wall paneling as the living room below. There is pine paneling in the kitchen, original doors and trim throughout the house, and details include unique, original retracting screens, and a built-in brick barbeque wall in the addition.

Integrity and character-defining features:

The property maintains its historic integrity as per the National Register's seven aspects of integrity. The house maintains its original location on Arroyo Way, in a small 1930s neighborhood between Coyote Creek and Naglee Park. The property is surrounded by a traditional residential setting to the east of downtown San José, including surrounding properties of a similar scale and setback and adjacent houses of similar age, scale, and design. The subject property, including both the original house and the addition that was built a decade later, retains its 1930s and 40s residential scale and feeling and continues, through its low massing and Modernist detailing, to illustrate its associations with the architectural work of the locally significant firms of Chester Root and Kress & Gibson. This residence has a distinctive character and composition that is expressed through its preserved materials, workmanship, and eclectic design.



TN 15°

Map created with TOPO! © 2003 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 3CS

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Ernest & Emily Renzel House

B1. Historic Name: Ernest & Emily Renzel House

B2. Common Name: None

B3. Original use: Single family residential

B4. Present Use: Single family residential

\*B5. Architectural Style: Ranch

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

Constructed 1939-1940 (BP# 8424), Chester Root architect, Gibson & Wheeler Co., Inc. contractor. Addition 1949-1950 (BP# 8983), Kress & Gibson architects. Minor remodeling projects in 1963 and 1983.

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

\*B8. Related Features:

None

B9a Architect: Higgins & Root (Chester Root)

b. Builder: Gibson & Wheeler Co. Inc.

\*B10. Significance: Theme Architecture and Shelter Area Northside

Period of Significance 1896-1921 Property Type Residential Applicable Criteria (1), (2) and (3)

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

The house located at 120 Arroyo Way was constructed in late-1939-early-1940 for Ernest H. Renzel, Jr. and his wife Emily. The property is a portion of Lot 25 of Tract 39 (Arroyo Terrace) which was surveyed by the Herrmann Bros. in 1936 (Maps 1:26 & 27). This survey covered an easterly part of the neighborhood known as Naglee Park (east of South Seventeenth Street, South of San Antonio Street, and to the center of the Coyote Creek), and was owned by the Naglee Park Improvement Company in 1905 when sold to Thomas Derby (Deeds 290:189).

Naglee Park is a 140-acre neighborhood that was once the estate of General Henry M. Naglee, a veteran of the Civil War and local property developer during the later part of the nineteenth century. Although originally platted within the 84-block unrecorded Naglee & Sainsevain's Addition, the estate was re-surveyed in the early twentieth century. The first phase, between East Santa Clara and East San Antonio Streets was subdivided by the Naglee Park Improvement Company; Thomas Robins was president at the time of the recording of the tract. Established as a prestigious urban residential subdivision with many architect-designed homes and recorded deed restrictions governing use, house siting and cost, it was mostly built-out by the beginning of World War II. During the late 1970s, it was identified as a potential conservation area by the City of San Jose, and designated as such in the 1980s.

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

\*B12. References:

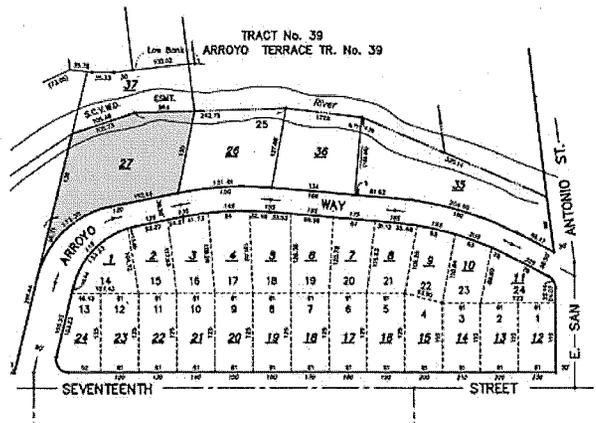
- Barrett, D., *A Century of Service*, 1977.
- Douglas, J., *Historical Footnotes of SCV*, 1993.
- Down, H.J., *The Historical Background of Keystone*
- Coffee, *Santa Clara County Business*, May-June 1978.
- San Jose building permits.
- San Jose city directories, 1939-1978.
- Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, 1939-1962.
- Santa Clara County Clerk-Recorder, Deeds, and Maps.

B13. Remarks: proposed landmark nomination

\*B14. Evaluator: Franklin Maggi

\*Date of Evaluation: Sept. 15, 2008

(This space reserved for official comments.)



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) Ernest & Emily Renzel House use

\*Recorded by Franklin Maggi & Leslie Dill

\*Date 9/15/2008

Continuation  Update

(Continued from previous page, DPR523b, B10)

Thomas Derby was an agriculturalist who developed a large prune orchard on McLaughlin Avenue in the late nineteenth century. By 1936 the property was owned by Charles C. and Mary Derby, when it was subdivided and sold off. Arroyo Way was constructed at this time, and although Lot 25 had originally included all the property between the new street and the Coyote Creek, the Derbys sold about 2/3-acre of the northern portion of Lot 25 to Ernest H. Renzel, Jr. (Deeds 785:165) about a month after the subdivision was recorded on July 20, 1936. A little over three years later, Renzel, who had been living in the Rosegarden area with his wife Emily, began construction of the single family house that exists on the property today.

Ernest Renzel, Jr.'s grandfather, Conrad Renzel - who had arrived in California from Hannover, Germany in the 1850s - was an early San Jose baker and grocery who founded a wholesale grocery firm in 1885, later to be known as C. Renzel & Son. Following Conrad's death in 1898, his son E. H. Renzel continued to operate the company until 1905, when it incorporated as the Keystone Company, with E. H. Renzel as president. In 1909, Keystone reorganized and appointed William G. Alexander as president and E. H. Renzel and vice-president, as it went into a rapid expansion period, building one of the largest coffee roasting facilities on the West Coast while also expanding its wholesale grocery business. In July 1922, E. H. Renzel, who had been heading the grocery division of Keystone, left the company with F. W. Withycomb to create a separate wholesale grocery operation, known as the E. H. Renzel & Co. The two companies remained separate until 1956, when Keystone re-entered the grocery business by acquiring the E. H. Renzel Company, which by then had become specialized in institutional and restaurant food supply.

Ernest (Ernie) H. Renzel, Jr. (1907-2007), went to work for E. H. Renzel & Co. after graduating from Stanford in 1929, married his wife Emily in 1930, and eventually rose to be president of the company. In the late 1930s, then working as a manager for the company, Ernie became actively involved in community issues. As a member of the Chamber of Commerce in 1938, he first envisioned a municipal airport for San Jose, and formed a committee of civic leaders to advocate for its development. He located 483 acres of the Crocker Estate north of the downtown, which had the capacity to serve this use, and on May 30, 1939, negotiated a purchase option at \$300/acre. He lead a voter campaign in 1940 that passed the first voter-approved bond issue in San Jose since 1911, to fund acquisition of the land for the future airport.

During most of the *Interwar Period* (1919-1945), construction of city infrastructure had lagged far behind urban growth. It has been well documented and was publically known at the time that local politics during this period was controlled by an outside political boss, Charlie Bigley. The new city charter that took effect in 1916 eliminated the position of mayor and vested authority under a council-appointed city manager, and Clarence Goodwin, who would take office as manager for 24 years, was appointed in 1920. During the early years of the Second World War, a young generation of reformists formed the "San Jose Progress Committee" to develop a slate of candidates for the San Jose City Council, which at that time had six of seven seats open for election. With Roy Rundel, Fred Watson, James Lively, Benjamin Carter, and Albert J. Ruffo, Ernest Renzel, Jr. joined to form a slate and reformist platform, advocating for more investment in the city's inadequate infrastructure, and long-range planning for growth in the post-war period. Renzel was top vote getter, and was soon appointed as City Council president, a position that he moved to have renamed mayor at the end of his term. Under Renzel's leadership, the long-term public safety officials were removed as well as City Manager Goodwin. Under new acting City Manager John Lynch, the City quickly reconstituted itself to prepare itself for the rapid expansion that would later occur during the City's management under Anthony "Dutch" Hamman. Although Renzel only remained in office for five years (1944-1948), under his leadership, the City exercised the option for the airport land, and by 1946 the first airplanes had landed. The San Jose Municipal Airport was dedicated the year after he left office in 1949. He 1949 he continued his involvement with the airport, as the Chamber's Airport Committee evolved into the future Airport Commission, on which he was appointed until 1977, serving for 28 years. In 2004, the City of San Jose recognized Ernie Renzel's visionary role in the early development of the airport by dedicating the "Ernie Renzel Airfield" in his honor. He is recognized today as "Father of the San Jose International Airport."

(Continued on next page)

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While a visionary in the development of the airport, and a reformer during a time of change in local politics, Ernest Renzel, Jr. and his wife Emily are also both recognized for their contributions to the community in many areas. They were both instrumental in the establishment of Kelley Park, loaning the City of San Jose money to insure its timely purchase, and Ernie is also responsible for the formation of the City's Historic Landmarks Commission during his term in office. They were both active in fund-raising for local non-profits, and were strong supporters of the arts and protection of the valley's natural environment.

The firm of Higgins and Root

Chester Root is the architect of record according to a family informant. The firm of Higgins and Root (William L. Higgins and Chester Root) was formed in the 1930s in San José and is attributed to a significant body of work throughout the county in the post-World War II period through the 1970s. In the 1930s, William L. Higgins went to work at his father's firm of Wolfe & Higgins. Following the death of his father in 1936, Higgins brought in Chester Root, who joined the firm as the architect of record. In the five-plus years prior to the beginning of World War II, the firm established itself as one of the earliest "modernist" firms in the area, and after the war developed a substantial body of work including many local school buildings, churches, banks, public and industrial buildings and structures.

Chester Root was educated in architecture at the University of California, Berkeley and earned a masters degree at Harvard in 1930. He worked for a time in New York for Grosvenor Atterbury and returned west in 1935. During his career, he was a long-time civic leader, serving on numerous non-profit boards, and was the first architect appointed to the Santa Clara County Planning Commission. He became a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, and helped form the local AIA chapter in Santa Clara Valley, and was their first president after serving as the president of the Central Coast Counties Branch Chapter of the AIA. The work of Higgins and Root during the thirty years following the war was rooted in the evolving modern movement in architecture. Buildings designed by the firm have a strong sense of functionalism and are related to the Second Bay Region style.

EVALUATION

This house, an Identified Structure (IS) to the Naglee Park Conservation Area, sits within a distinguished neighborhood of early-twentieth-century residences. The building has a distinctive character that is expressed through its preserved materials and overall design. The Renzel House represents a very early local implementation of a Ranch-style house within the early Modern Period. The house was featured in the local newspapers in 1941.

Ernest H. Renzel, Jr., who built and lived in this house with his wife Emily and their children, is a notable local figure from the late Interwar Period and the beginnings of the San Jose's period or Suburban Expansion in the post-war years. He is a recognized significant historic personage in San Jose due to his leadership in bettering the community, and was pivotal during a period when San Jose entered into its greatest expansion period.

The Renzel House is prominent within the context of houses in Naglee Park, and is a distinctive early modern house within greater San Jose. It remains today as a clear representation of its period, in both design and detailing, and is distinguished among many fine houses built with the neighborhood. Given the building's recognized historic context within the Naglee Park Conservation Area, it qualifies for the California Register under Criteria (1) and (3). It also qualifies under Criterion (2) of the California Register as the personage associated with this house, Ernest H. Renzel, Jr., a person important to our past, who played a decisive role in the history of the community.

Under the definitions for historical significance within the City of San Jose Historic Preservation Ordinance, the house clearly has historic, architectural, and aesthetic value of an historical nature. Its quality derives primarily from its distinction as an important architectural work due to its style and design, and from its association with Ernest H. Renzel, Jr. The property, when evaluated within the criteria of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, appears to qualify for designation as a City Landmark.

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\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Ernest & Emily Renzel House

\*Recorded by Franklin Maggi & Leslie Dill

\*Date 9/15/2008

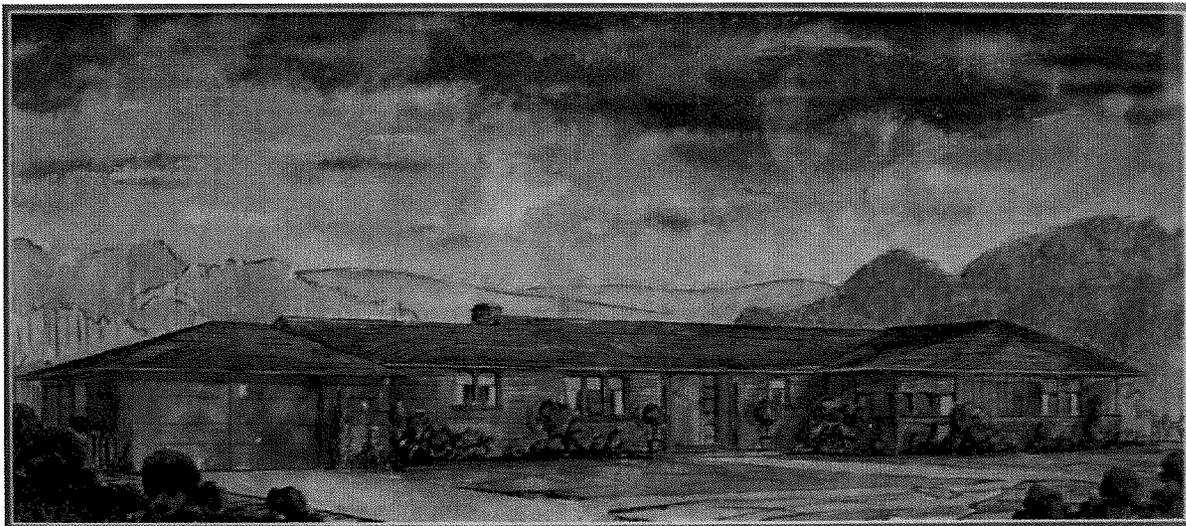
Continuation  Update



**PERMANENT PLANTING OF SHRUBS AND TREES KEEP HOME ATTRACTIVE AFTER  
FLOWERS FADE IN FALL.**  
... Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Renzel, Jr.'s home on Arroyo way. Note landscape  
value of trees along Coyote Creek ...

1941  
--Staff Photo

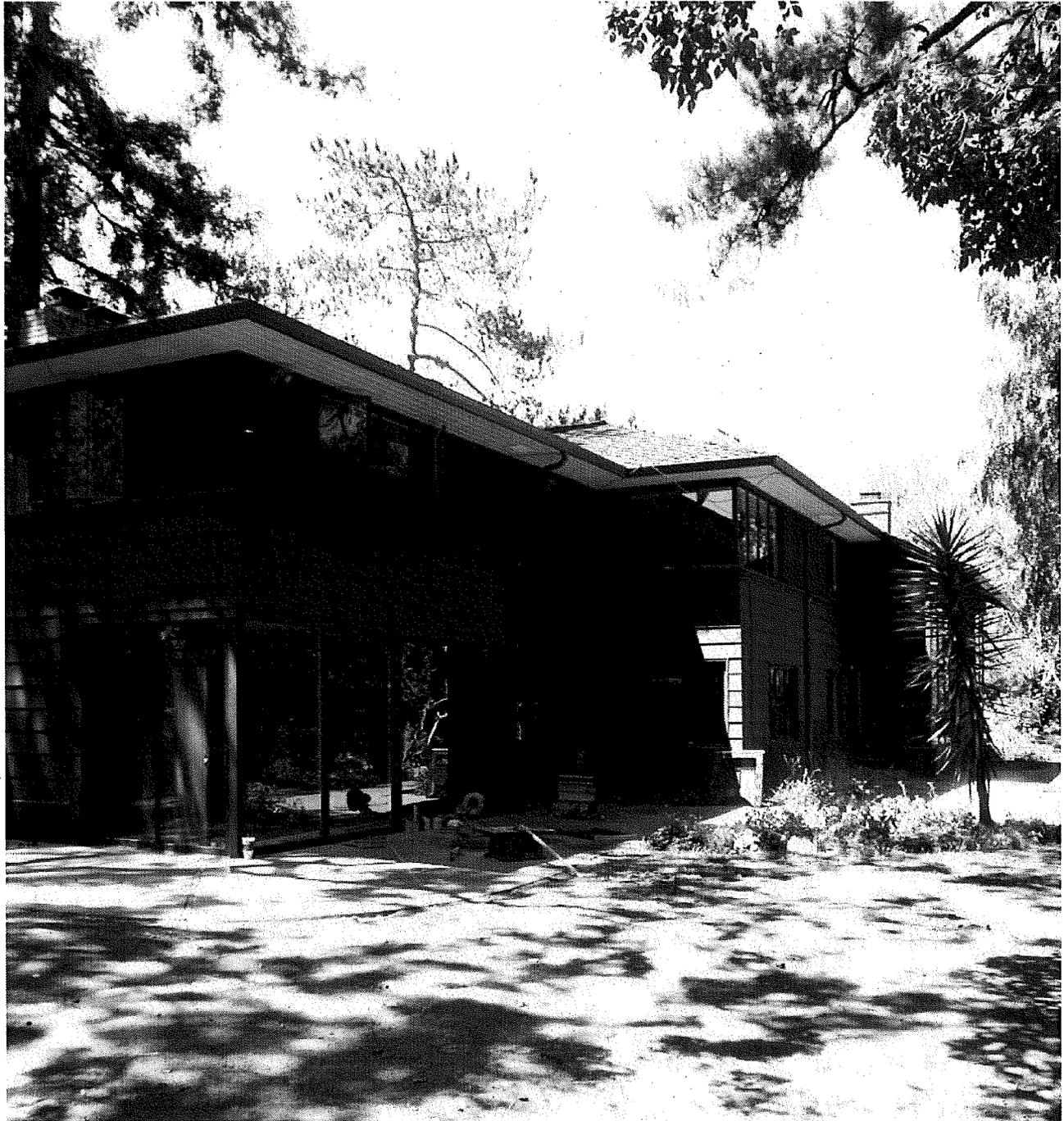
Published photo of house in 1941, *San Jose Mercury News*.



Artist's watercolor painting of house (in possession of current owner), prior to the 1949 addition



Rear elevation at main room windows, viewed facing south.



Rear elevation at creek, viewed facing northwest.



Partial view of addition, viewed facing east.



Partial view of front elevation, viewed facing north.



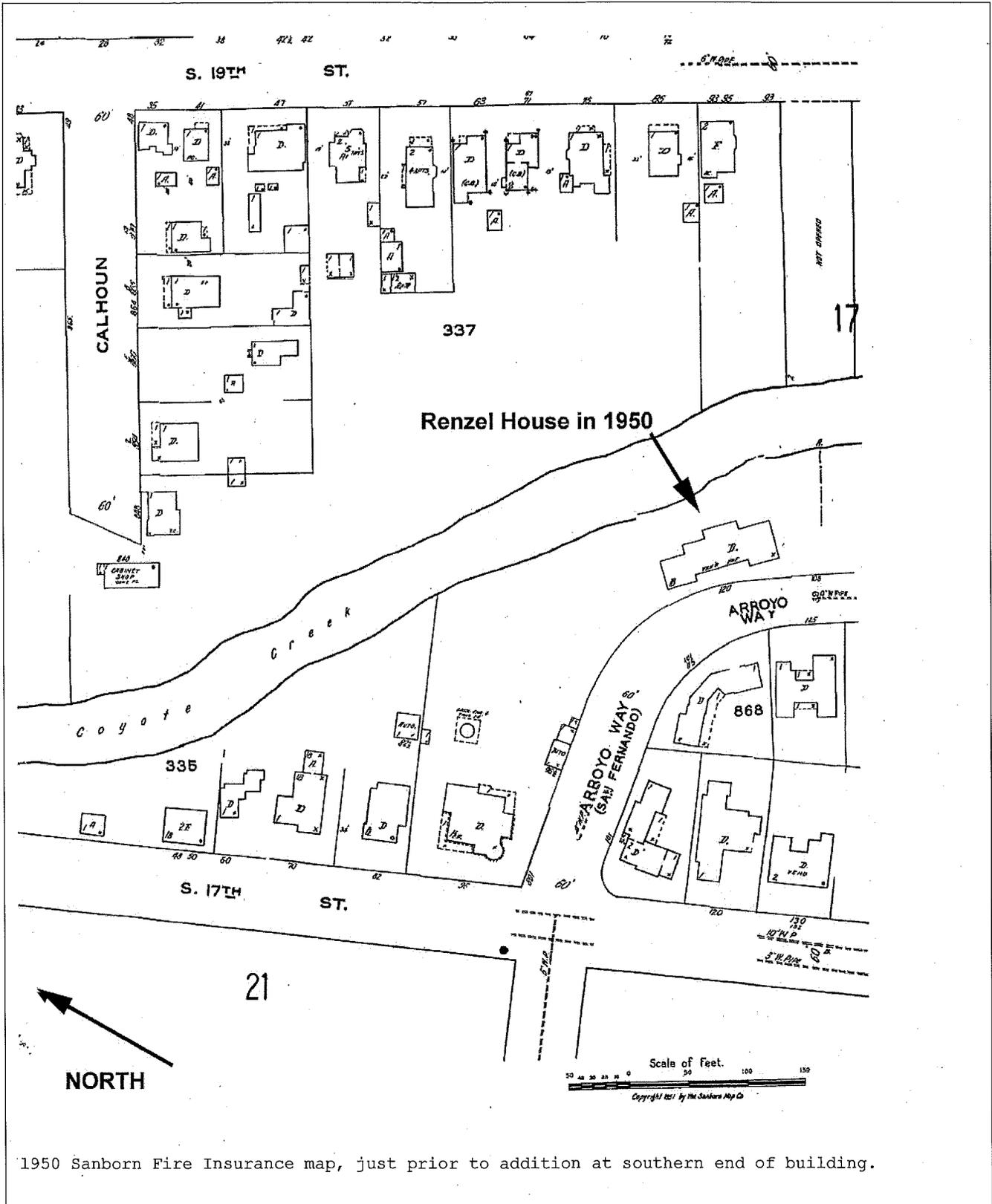
Detail view of front entry, viewed facing northeast.



Interior view of main room, viewed facing northwest.



Interior view of rear wall facing creek, viewed facing southeast.



1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance map, just prior to addition at southern end of building.

## HISTORIC EVALUATION SHEET

**Historic Resource Name:** Ernest & Emily Renzel House / 120 Arroyo Way

**A. VISUAL QUALITY / DESIGN**

**Justification**

		E	VG	G	FP
1. EXTERIOR	Excellent quality of form and composition	X			
2. STYLE	Extremely early example, many survive	X			
3. DESIGNER	Designers of primary importance	X			
4. CONSTRUCTION	Of no particular interest				X
5. SUPPORTIVE ELEMENTS	None				X

**B. HISTORY / ASSOCIATION**

		E	VG	G	FP
6. PERSON / ORGANIZATION	Ernie Renzel of primary importance	X			
7. EVENT	None				X
8. PATTERNS	Secondary neighborhood patterns		X		
9. AGE	1939-1940			X	

**C. ENVIRONMENTAL / CONTEXT**

		E	VG	G	FP
10. CONTINUITY	Maintains area of secondary importance			X	
11. SETTING	Maintains dominant character of area		X		
12. FAMILIARITY	Familiar to neighborhood			X	

**D. INTEGRITY**

		E	VG	G	FP
13. CONDITION	No apparent surface wear or problems	X			
14. EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS	Minor alterations		X		
15. STRUCTURAL REMOVALS	None	X			
16. SITE	Not moved	X			

**E. REVERSIBILITY**

		E	VG	G	FP
17. EXTERIOR	Almost all exists	X			

**F. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS / BONUS POINTS**

		E	VG	G	FP
18. INTERIOR / VISUAL	Excellent interior quality	X			
19. INTERIOR / HISTORY	Very good, original to Renzels		X		
20. INTERIOR ALTERATIONS	Minor changes - kitchen remodel	X			
21. REVERSIBILITY / INTER.	Almost all appears to exist	X			
22. NATIONAL OR CALIF. REG	Appears eligible for Cal Register		X		

**REVIEWED BY:** Franklin Maggi

**DATE:** 09/15/08

## EVALUATION TALLY SHEET

**Historic Resource Name:** Ernest & Emily Renzel House / 120 Arroyo Way

<u>A. VISUAL QUALITY / DESIGN</u>	E	VG	G	FP	Value	Value	Sub-total	Cumulative sub-total
1. EXTERIOR	16	12	6	0	16			
2. STYLE	10	8	4	0	10			
3. DESIGNER	6	4	2	0	6			
4. CONSTRUCTION	10	8	4	0	0			
5. SUPPORTIVE ELEMENTS	8	6	3	0	0		32	
<b><u>B. HISTORY / ASSOCIATION</u></b>								
	E	VG	G	FP				
6. PERSON / ORGANIZATION	20	15	7	0	20			
7. EVENT	20	15	7	0	0			
8. PATTERNS	12	9	5	0	9			
9. AGE	8	6	3	0	3		32	
<b><u>C. ENVIRONMENTAL / CONTEXT</u></b>								
	E	VG	G	FP				
10. CONTINUITY	8	6	3	0	3			
11. SETTING	6	4	2	0	4			
12. FAMILIARITY	10	8	4	0	4		11	75
(SUM OF A+C) =					43			
<b><u>D. INTEGRITY</u></b>								
	E	VG	G	FP				
13. CONDITION	.00	.03	.05	.10	0	x 75	0.0	
14. EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS	.00	.05	.10	.20	0.05	x 43	2.2	
	.00	.03	.05	.10	0.03	x 32	1.0	
15. STRUCTURAL REMOVALS	.00	.20	.30	.40	0	x 43	0.0	
	.00	.10	.20	.40	0	x 32	0.0	
16. SITE	.00	.10	.20	.40	0	x 32	0.0	
							3.1	
<b>ADJUSTED SUB-TOTAL:</b> (Preliminary total minus Integrity Deductions)								71.89
<b><u>E. REVERSIBILITY</u></b>								
	E	VG	G	FP				
17. EXTERIOR	3	3	2	2	3			74.89
<b><u>F. ADD'L CONSIDERATIONS/BONUS POINTS</u></b>								
	E	VG	G	FP				
18. INTERIOR / VISUAL	3	3	1	0	3			
19. INTERIOR / HISTORY	3	3	1	0	3			
20. INTERIOR ALTERATIONS	4	4	2	0	4			
21. REVERSIBILITY / INTERIOR	4	4	2	0	4			
22. NATIONAL / CALIFORNIA REGISTER	20	15	10	0	15		29	
<b>EVALUATION TOTAL:</b> (Adjusted subtotal plus Bonus Points)								103.89

