

CITY OF OAKLAND
AGENDA REPORT

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND
2005 APR 13 PM 6:22

TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Deborah Edgerly
FROM: Community and Economic Development Agency
DATE: April 26, 2005

RE: **AN ORDINANCE REZONING 1600-1642 7TH STREET (7TH STREET
COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT) TO AN S-7 PRESERVATION
COMBINING ZONE PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 17.84 AND 17.102.030
OF THE OAKLAND PLANNING CODE**

SUMMARY

The City Planning Commission recommends rezoning 1600-1642 7TH Street (7th Street Commercial Historic District), consisting of three buildings and sites all contiguous on one block and all under one ownership, to an S-7 Preservation Combining Zone.

The historic designation nomination was submitted to the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board by the owner, Lucy Lee Lequin. On February 9, 2004, the Landmarks Board unanimously recommended rezoning of the area described to an S-7 Historic Preservation Combining Zone. There is no known opposition to the rezoning.

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the attached ordinance rezoning 1600-1642 7th Street as an S-7 Preservation Combining Zone.

FISCAL IMPACT

There may be an insignificant loss in permit revenues because the three buildings and sites in the new historic district will now be eligible for waiver of design review fees.

BACKGROUND

The block that is being nominated is part of a larger Seventh Street Commercial District in West Oakland that was identified and documented as an Area of Secondary Importance by the Cultural Heritage Survey in 1988. The present district nomination includes the three buildings and sites listed below, all contiguous on one block and all under one ownership:

- 1600-16 7th Street, Flynn (Edmund) Saloon – McAllister (James) Plumbing Shop

Item: _____
CED Committee
April 26, 2005

- 1620-28 7th Street, the site of the Lincoln Theater
- 1632-42 7th Street, The Arcadia Hotel – Isaac & Schwartz Block

KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

Historical and Architectural Significance: The 7th Street Commercial area is eligible for rezoning to an S-7 Preservation Combining zone in that:

the nominated Seventh Street Historic District represents the best surviving fragment of 7th Street, West Oakland's legendary commercial street of the 19th and early 20th centuries; and

Seventh Street, historically known as Railroad Avenue, was from 1863 the route of commuter trains through West Oakland to the ferry wharf at Oakland Point, which in 1869 became the terminus of the first transcontinental railroad; and

Seventh Street from Center Street to Bay Street was for a century a thriving business district serving the surrounding Prescott and South Prescott neighborhoods; and

West 7th Street was renowned as a center for African-American musical clubs from the early 20th century until this culture was displaced in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the south side of the street was cleared for BART and the post office; and

the buildings between Peralta and Campbell, despite ground-floor alterations as they shifted from retail to other uses, have their upper stories largely intact and establish a strong presence as distinctive period commercial buildings; and

the histories of the buildings on this block embody the important themes of 7th Street – railroad-related businesses and lodgings, entertainment, and the ethnic and economic evolution of the neighborhood; and

the Arcadia Hotel building, 1632-42 7th Street, designed in 1906 by Thomas Dean Newsom of the Oakland-based Newsom architectural dynasty, is an excellent example of early 20th century Mission Revival commercial architecture, and housed many early lodgers who worked for the railroad as well as Oscar Breiling's West Oakland Bank and Trust Company which handled the Southern Pacific payroll; and

the complex at 1600-16 7th Street was built and occupied by the Flynn and McAllister families, Irish immigrant in-laws who operated a saloon and a plumbing shop, and even with alterations the pair of two-story Italianate commercial buildings is rare and unmistakable; and

the Lincoln Theater, formerly on the parcel at 1620-28 7th Street, was an anchor of the commercial district and a social and entertainment center as well as a visual landmark, remembered by generations of West Oaklanders; and

the significance of Seventh Street has been widely recognized in formats ranging from publications to performances including the 1993 documentary video *Crossroads, A Story of West Oakland*, the 1997 book *Sights and Sounds: Essays in Celebration of West Oakland*, the Bay Area Blues Society's exhibit, program, and recording *The Music they Played on 7th Street*, and the recent art installation *Landscape in Blue* and streetscape plan by Walter Hood; and

designation of this small district also highlights the significance of the other surviving fragments of West Seventh Street: the cluster from the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters building to Esther's Orbit Room west of Willow Street (1716, 1720, and 1722 7th Street); the four buildings at 1550, 1558, 1568, and 1570, separated from the nominated district by a vacant corner lot; and the former West Oakland Library and Alcatraz Masonic Hall-Booker Emery House, just off 7th Street at 712 and 713 Peralta Street.

District Rating: Though the Board's point-system evaluation sheet is designed more for individual properties than for districts, adapting it to the present district gives a "B" rating with 24 points, which seems appropriate. (For the district rating, individual property ratings were averaged to arrive at ratings for the more building-specific items.) This district is comparable to the small "Downtown Brooklyn" commercial district on the 1100 block of East 12th Street, designated as an S-7 district in 1982.

1600-16 7th Street, Flynn (Edmund) Saloon – McAllister (James) Plumbing Shop: The building has a 'B' Present Rating and Contingency Rating. This building is a district contributor.

1620-28 7th Street, the site of the Lincoln Theater: Although the building is demolished, the applicant wishes to include the site as part of the district. Under the Landmarks evaluation system the site gets a 'D' Present rating; the building would have been an 'A.' The system is designed to allow for individual designation of extremely significant sites – for example, Landmark #49, site of the Oakland Mole, designated in 1981. The present site, without the building, would not appear significant enough for individual designation, but it is customary to include vacant parcels within designated districts, to protect the character and continuity of the district in future development.

1632-42 7th Street, The Arcadia Hotel – Isaac & Schwartz Block: The building has a 'B' Present rating and an 'A' Contingency rating, reflecting its reversible ground floor alterations.

'A' and 'B' rated buildings are eligible for individual Landmark designation.

Item: _____
CED Committee
April 26, 2005

Regulatory Effect of Designation: Existing zoning along 7th Street from Center Street to Cedar Street is C-35 District Shopping, S-4 Design Review Combining zone from Cedar to Peralta (including the nominated block) and S-15 Transit Oriented Development from Peralta to Center. Both 'S' zones establish design review requirements for alterations and new construction. Thus the nominated block and the rest of historic 7th Street are already subject to design review; designation would establish that design review is conducted by the Landmarks Board or its staff, and that the historic character of the buildings and district is to be protected. In addition, S-7 designation establishes specific findings for demolition or removal, up to 240 days delay of demolition, and an explicit duty to keep in good repair. Designated Historic Properties are eligible for the State Historical Building Code and waiver of design review fees. They are historic resources for environmental (CEQA) review purposes.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Landmark designation encourages maintenance and careful rehabilitation of buildings, which creates skilled employment opportunities. Maintenance and rehabilitation of existing buildings also stabilize and enhance property values.

Environmental: Landmark designation encourages the maintenance and re-use of existing historic buildings and therein helps to conserve the materials and energy used to construct those buildings.

Social Equity: Landmark designation encourages continued maintenance and restoration or rehabilitation of existing buildings. Therefore, it acts as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization and further enhances the community by creating community identity.

DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS

Landmark designation does not prohibit modifications to achieve compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and can facilitate such modifications through use of the State Historical Building Code.

RECOMMENDATION(S) AND RATIONALE

Adopt the attached ordinance rezoning 1600-1642 7th Street to an S-7 Preservation Combining Zone.

Historic district designation has the potential to be a catalyst for further revitalization of Oakland's distinct and diverse neighborhoods and its strong historical character. The honorific designation and requirements for maintenance and repair would continually

Item: _____
CED Committee
April 26, 2005

promote economic, quality of life and sense of community goals throughout the city as the building is restored or rehabilitated.

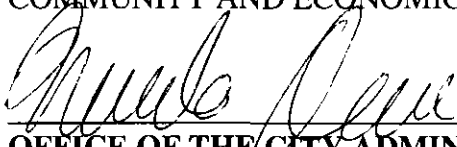
Respectfully submitted,



CLAUDIA CAPRIO
Development Director

Prepared by:
Joann Pavlinec, Planner III
Historic Preservation/Major Projects
Community and Economic Development Agency

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE
COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY:



OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR

ATTACHMENTS:

- A) Ordinance rezoning 1600- 1642 7th Street as an S-7 Preservation Combining Zone
- B) Landmarks Board Resolution 2004-2
- C) April 7, 2004 and May 19, 2004 Planning Commission Staff Reports, including S-7 Preservation Combining Zone Application and eligibility rating sheets

Ref: Mydocumetns/citycouncilreports/LM-7th StreetCommercial

Item: _____
CED Committee
April 26, 2005

NOTICE & DIGEST

AN ORDINANCE REZONING 1600-1642 7TH STREET (7TH STREET COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT) TO AN S-7 PRESERVATION COMBINING ZONE PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 17.84 AND 17.102.030 OF THE OAKLAND PLANNING CODE

This Ordinance rezones 1600-1642 7th Street as a City of Oakland Historic District.

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
APPROVED AS TO FORM LEGALITY

Mark [Signature]
2005 APR 13 PM 6:22

CITY ATTORNEY

INTRODUCED BY COUNCIL MEMBER _____

ORDINANCE No. _____ C.M.S.

AN ORDINANCE REZONING 1600-1642 7TH STREET (7TH STREET COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT) TO AN S-7 PRESERVATION COMBINING ZONE PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 17.84 AND 17.102.030 OF THE OAKLAND PLANNING CODE

WHEREAS, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board at its meeting of February 9, 2004, recommended rezoning of the 1600-1642 7th Street to an S-7 Preservation Combining Zone pursuant to Sections 17.84 and 17.102.030 of the Oakland Planning Code; and

WHEREAS, notice of public hearing on this matter was given to the owner of the subject property, the property was posted, and a hearing was held by the City Planning Commission on April 7, 2004 and May 19, 2004; and

WHEREAS, after the hearing, the City Planning Commission voted on May 19, 2004, to recommend rezoning to an S-7 Preservation Combining Zone; and

WHEREAS, the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the guidelines as prescribed by the **Secretary for Resources, as amended, have been satisfied**, and pursuant to Sections 15061(b)(3), 15308, and 15331 of the **California Code of Regulations**, this designation is exempt from CEQA; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that the proposed Historic District has historical and architectural significance as described and presented in the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board Resolution 2004-2, and are unique assets to the City; and that for these reasons the Historic District is worthy of preservation; now therefore

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OAKLAND DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. 1600-1642 7th Street is hereby rezoned to an S-7 Preservation Combining Zone pursuant to Sections 17.84 and 17.102.030 of the Oakland Planning Code as described and presented in Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board Resolution 2004-2, attached as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 2. Said Historic District shall be preserved in all its particular exterior features as existing on the date hereof, and as described and depicted in the photographs, case reports, Case File RZ04-107, and other material in the Department of City Planning;

provided, however, it may be modified to replicate or more closely resemble its original appearance.

SECTION 3. The Development Director is hereby directed to execute and cause to be recorded in the Recorder's Office of the County of Alameda a notice of designation of said Landmark.

SECTION 4. This ordinance complies with the California Environmental Quality Act.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, _____, 20__

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES-

NOES-

ABSENT-

ABSTENTION-

ATTEST: _____

LaTONDA SIMMONS
Interim City Clerk and Clerk of the Council
Of the City of Oakland, California

RESOLUTION 2004-2
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
CITY OF OAKLAND

WHEREAS, a proposal to rezone the area described below to the S-7 Historic Preservation Combining Zone pursuant to proposed Chapter 17.84 of the Oakland Planning Code has been submitted by the property owner and considered by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board; and

WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed and examined the material pertaining to this district contained in Case File RZ04-107, the Landmark and S-7 Preservation Combining Zone Application Form, and Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey documentation, copies of which are attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that the proposed district meets the criteria found at proposed Section 17.84.010 of the Oakland Planning Code, as an area of "special importance due to historical association," in that

the nominated Seventh Street Historic District represents the best surviving fragment of 7th Street, West Oakland's legendary commercial street of the 19th and early 20th centuries; and

Seventh Street, historically known as Railroad Avenue, was from 1863 the route of commuter trains through West Oakland to the ferry wharf at Oakland Point, which in 1869 became the terminus of the first transcontinental railroad; and

Seventh Street from Center Street to Bay Street was for a century a thriving business district serving the surrounding Prescott and South Prescott neighborhoods; and

West 7th Street was renowned as a center for African-American musical clubs from the early 20th century until this culture was displaced in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the south side of the street was cleared for BART and the post office; and

the buildings between Peralta and Campbell, despite ground-floor alterations as they shifted from retail to other uses, have their upper stories largely intact and establish a strong presence as distinctive period commercial buildings; and

the histories of the buildings on this block embody the important themes of 7th Street – railroad-related businesses and lodgings, entertainment, and the ethnic and economic evolution of the neighborhood; and

the Arcadia Hotel building, 1632-42 7th Street, designed in 1906 by Thomas Dean Newsom of the Oakland-based Newsom architectural dynasty, is an excellent example of early 20th century Mission Revival commercial architecture, and housed

many early lodgers who worked for the railroad as well as Oscar Breiling's West Oakland Bank and Trust Company which handled the Southern Pacific payroll; and

the complex at 1600-16 7th Street was built and occupied by the Flynn and McAllister families, Irish immigrant in-laws who operated a saloon and a plumbing shop, and even with alterations the pair of two-story Italianate commercial buildings is rare and unmistakable; and

the Lincoln Theater, formerly on the parcel at 1620-28 7th Street, was an anchor of the commercial district and a social and entertainment center as well as a visual landmark, remembered by generations of West Oaklanders; and

the significance of Seventh Street has been widely recognized in formats ranging from publications to performances including the 1993 documentary video *Crossroads, A Story of West Oakland*, the 1997 book *Sights and Sounds: Essays in Celebration of West Oakland*, the Bay Area Blues Society's exhibit, program, and recording *The Music they Played on 7th Street*, and the recent art installation *Landscape in Blue* and streetscape plan by Walter Hood; and

designation of this small district also highlights the significance of the other surviving fragments of West Seventh Street: the cluster from the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters building to Esther's Orbit Room west of Willow Street (1716, 1720, and 1722 7th Street); the four buildings at 1550, 1558, 1568, and 1570, separated from the nominated district by a vacant corner lot; and the former West Oakland Library and Alcatraz Masonic Hall-Booker Emery House, just off 7th Street at 712 and 713 Peralta Street; and

WHEREAS, an Evaluation Sheet for Landmark Eligibility has been prepared for the district in accordance with the Board's Guidelines for Determination of Landmark Eligibility and confirms that the district meets the Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed and accepted the Evaluation Sheet, a copy of which is attached; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that this district merits designation, protective regulations, and preservation for the enjoyment of present and future generations;

Now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board hereby initiates, under the provisions of Section 17.84 of the Oakland Planning Code, action to recommend to the Planning Commission and City Council as an S-7 Historic Preservation District the following area:

HISTORIC NAME: Seventh Street Commercial District, West Oakland, block

COMMON NAME: including the Arcadia Hotel, Flynn-McAllister Building,
and site of Lincoln Theater
Seventh Street – Lincoln Theater block

DATE OR PERIOD Period of significance: 1880s-1970s

ADDRESSES and 1600 through 1642 7th Street;
PARCEL NUMBERS: parcels 006 -003-018-00, -019-00, -020-00, -021-00

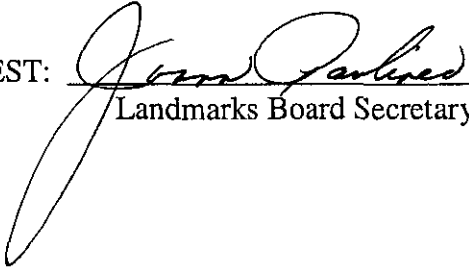
And be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the structures on these properties shall be preserved generally in all their exterior features as existing on the date hereof or may be modified to restore, replicate, or more closely resemble their original or other historical appearance; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this recommendation be forwarded to the Oakland City Planning Commission for public hearing and consideration.

Approved by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board,
Oakland, California: February 9, 2004

ATTEST:


Landmarks Board Secretary

Case File Number RZ04-107

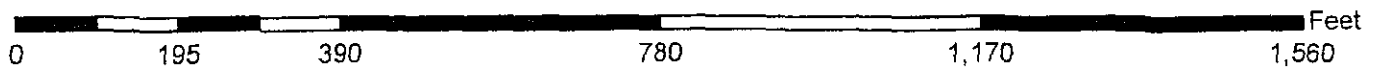
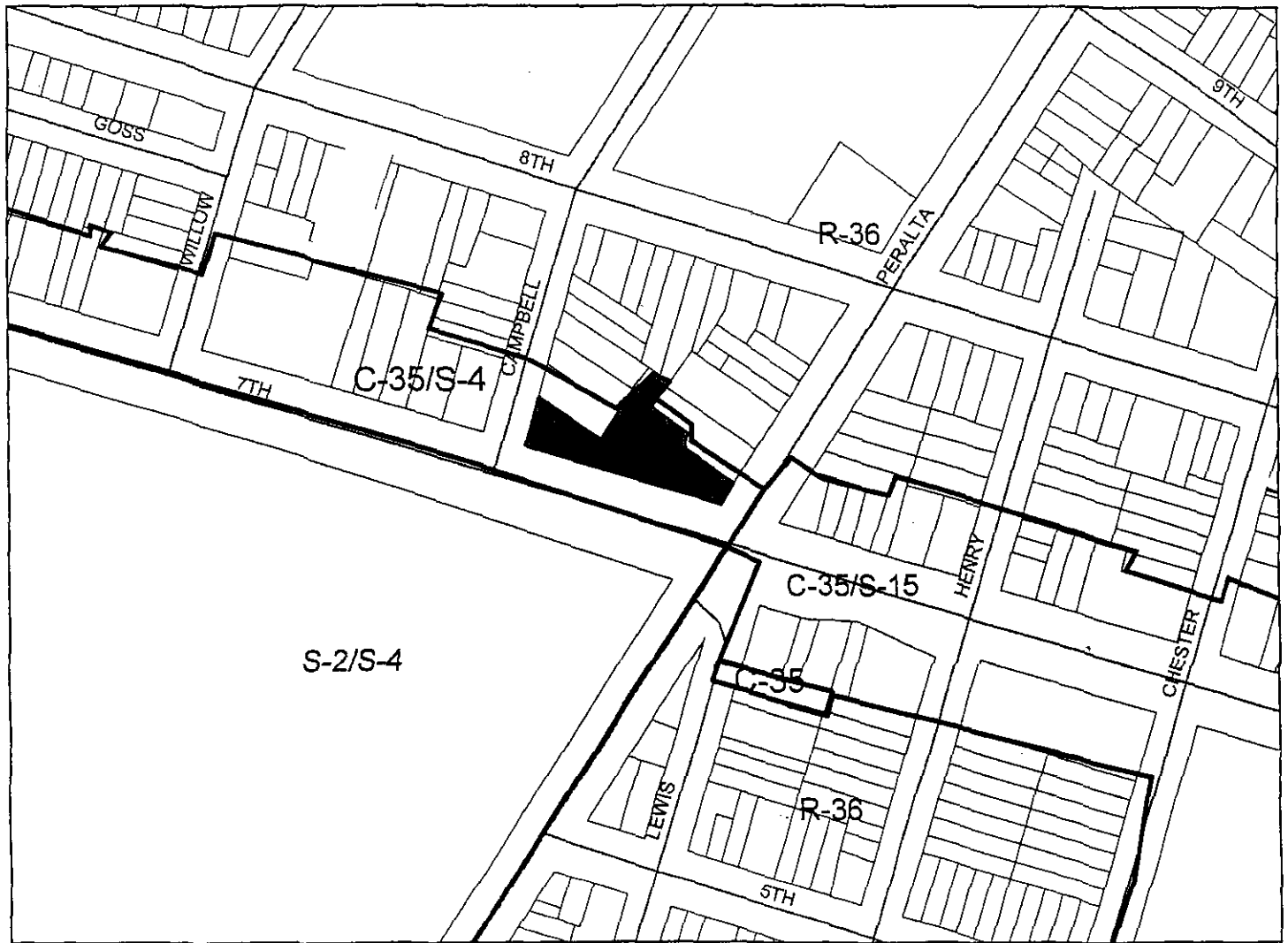
April 7, 2004

5.	Location: 1600 – 1642 7 th Street, (APN's: 006-0003-018-00; 006-0003-019-00; 006-0003-020-00; 006-0003-021-00)
	Proposal: Application to establish the 7 th Street Commercial District as a Historic District and to Re-zone to S-7 Preservation Combining Zone.
	Applicant/Owner: Lucy Lee Lequin
Contact Person/Phone Number:	(510) 986-1016
	Case File Number: RZ04-107
Planning Permits Required:	Re-zone to an S-7 Preservation Combining Zone
General Plan:	Community Commercial
Zoning:	C-35 – District Shopping Commercial Zone, S-4 – Design Review Combining Zone
Environmental Determination:	Exempt per Sections 15061(3) and 15331 of the State CEQA Guidelines.
Historic Status:	1600-16 7 th Street: PDHP, Area of Secondary Importance contributor. 1632-42 7 th Street: PDHP, Area of Secondary Importance anchor - primary contributor.
Service Delivery District:	1 – West Oakland
City Council District:	3
Status:	Landmark Preservation Advisory Board adopted a Resolution to initiate action to establish 1600-1642 7 th Street as a Historic District and forward action to the Planning Commission for public hearing and consideration.
Action to be Taken:	Recommend Re-zoning to S-7 Preservation Combining Zone and forward to City Council.
Finality of Decision:	City Council
For Further Information:	Contact case planner Joann Pavlinec at (510) 238-6344 or by email: jpavlinec@oaklandnet.com .

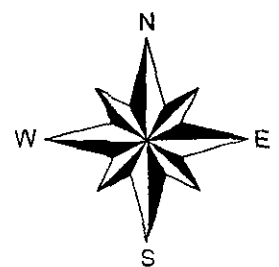
SUMMARY

At this meeting the Planning Commission is to hold a formal public hearing and consider for recommendation to City Council the 7th Street Commercial Historic District nomination. This block of 7th Street proposed for district designation is the best surviving fragment of West Oakland's legendary commercial street of the 1860s to 1960s. It consists of three parcels in a single ownership on the north side of 7th Street from Peralta Street on the east to Campbell Street on the west. It was nominated by the owner of all three properties, Lucy Lee Lequin, and unanimously found eligible at the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board January 12, 2004 meeting. At the February 9, 2004 Landmarks Board meeting, the LPAB unanimously accepted the draft resolution recommending rezoning of the area described to an S-7 Historic Preservation Combining Zone and directed staff to forward the nomination to the Planning Commission. District designation would take the form of an ordinance rezoning the area.

CITY OF OAKLAND PLANNING COMMISSION



Case File: RZ04-107
Applicant: Lucy Lee Lequin
Address: 1600-1642 7th Street
Zone: C-35 / S-4



proposed for district designation is the best surviving fragment of West Oakland's legendary commercial street of the 1860s to 1960s. It consists of three parcels in a single ownership on the north side of 7th Street from Peralta Street on the east to Campbell Street on the west. It was nominated by the owner of all three properties, Lucy Lee Leguin. Staff has provided alternative recommendations should the Commission, based on its inquiries at the previous review, find that the Landmark's Board recommendation cannot be supported.

Landmark Preservation Advisory Board Recommendation: At the January 12, 2004 meeting, the application was reviewed by the LPAB. The Board visited the site prior to the meeting and viewed a video presentation prepared by the applicant. The applicant informed the Board of the process she had gone through in rehabbing the buildings. She expressed her concern that the recent vibrant community, still remembered by many seniors in the area, be preserved and expressed her desire to bring it back. She also expressed hope that adjacent properties would become part of the historic district. She stated her intention to contact Caltrans to address the noise from BART, which has a negative effect on the all of the street. She also plans to rebuild the façade of the Lincoln Theater. The LPAB unanimously adopted the Evaluation Sheets for Landmark Eligibility for the Lincoln Theater Block and directed staff to prepare a draft resolution.

At the February 9, 2004 LPAB meeting, the Board unanimously adopted the Resolution to Initiate Designation to an S-7 District (attached), and directed staff to forward the nomination to the Planning Commission. District designation would take the form of an ordinance rezoning the area.

VISION AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

At the April 7, 2004 Planning Commission meeting, several Commissioners requested information on the owner/applicant's vision and timetable for construction of the vacant lot, and on the spirit and meaning of the historic district and how its history and significance would be represented or conveyed. Prior to responding to these specific questions, staff has outlined below various City policies and current plans in progress for this area in order to provide the big picture view and support for designation of this district.

General Plan Policy - Land Use and Transportation Element

Community Commercial Classification

The General Plan Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) classifies the property as Community Commercial. The Community Commercial classification is intended to identify, create, maintain, and enhance areas suitable for a wide variety of commercial and institutional operations along the City's major corridors and in shopping districts or centers. Community Commercial areas have historically served Oakland's major shopping, service and employment needs and should continue to do so in the future. Pedestrian-oriented design is encouraged but these areas may also accommodate larger-scale, auto-oriented developments which require sizable off-street parking areas.

Areas may include neighborhood center uses and larger scale retail and commercial uses, such as auto related businesses, business and personal services, health services and medical uses, educational facilities, and entertainment uses. Community Commercial areas can be complemented by the addition of urban residential development and compatible mixed-use development.

Staff Response: The historic district designation, encourage and enhance opportunities for renewed commercial and institutional activities along one of the City's earliest thriving major corridors

Relevant Neighborhood Objectives and Policies

The following Neighborhood Goals and Objectives in the General Plan strongly support designation of these properties as an historic district:

Policy N9.1 Recognizing Distinct Neighborhoods

The City should encourage and support the identification of distinct neighborhoods.

Staff Response: The historic designation of this commercial block would recognize the significance of 7th Street and West Oakland. It could begin the process for a larger district, and recognition of not only a distinct commercial district, but a distinct residential neighborhood.

Policy N9.8 Preserving History and Community

Locations that create a sense of history and community within the City should be identified and preserved where feasible.

Staff Response: The historic designation of this commercial block recognizes an area of utmost historic significance to the West Oakland community. This small district could become the nucleus of a larger historic 7th Street commercial district, and perhaps a residential historic district. Please see maps, Attachment C.

Policy N9.8 Respecting Architectural Integrity

The City encourages rehabilitation efforts which respect the architectural integrity of a building's original style.

Staff Response: This is the exact approach the applicant took in working on the two existing buildings, to refresh and enhance the existing historic character of the buildings.

Policy N10.1 Identifying Neighborhood “Activity Centers”

Neighborhood Activity Centers should become identifiable commercial, activity and communication centers for the surrounding neighborhood. The physical design of neighborhood activity centers should support social interaction and attract persons to the area. Some of the attributes that may facilitate with interaction include plazas, pocket parks, outdoor seating on public and private property, ample sidewalk width, street amenities such as trash cans and benches and attractive landscaping.

Staff Response: The revitalization of the two existing buildings and the proposed new construction for the vacant lot, intended to include a community use, in conjunction with the streetscape plans described below (7th Street Corridor Plan) would begin to identify this once thriving commercial street, again as an activity center for the neighborhood.

Policy N1.1 Concentrating Commercial Development

Commercial Development in the neighborhoods should be concentrated in areas that are economically viable and provide opportunities for smaller scale, neighborhood-oriented retail.

Staff Response: Designation as a Historic District and continued respectful maintenance, as has been started on the two existing buildings, can stimulate rehabilitation of surrounding older structures, bring new commercial business to this area, and inspire improved design quality for new buildings.

Policy N1.2 Placing Public Transit Stops

The majority of commercial development should be accessible by public transit. Public transit stops should be placed at strategic locations in Neighborhood Activity Centers and Transit-Oriented Districts to promote browsing and shopping by transit users.

Staff Response: The existing 7th Street Commercial area is already set in place to address this policy because the West Oakland BART station is within walking distance. Also, this commercial area will be highly visible from BART and thereby promote its use.

Policy N1.3 Locating Parking Facilities

Wherever feasible, and desired by merchants and residents, the City should construct strategically located, safe, and attractive parking facilities in Neighborhood Activity Centers.

Staff Response: The Streetscape plan for this area, discussed later in this report, addresses this Policy.

Policy N1.5 Designing Commercial Development

Commercial development should be designed in a manner that is sensitive to surrounding residential uses.

Staff Response: The existing pattern of development and existing buildings being proposed for designation are sensitive to the neighborhood residential character. Designation as a Historic District would insure compatibility of design for proposals of vacant properties. Please see Attachment C. This attachment illustrates that the majority of the adjacent residential neighborhood is historic in architectural character. The commercial area along 7th Street is an important component to this historic neighborhood.

Policy N1.8 Making Compatible Development

The height and bulk of commercial development in “Neighborhood Mixed-Use Center” and “Community Commercial” areas should be compatible with that which is allowed for residential development.

Staff Response: The proposed existing building’s height and bulk are compatible with the residential neighborhood development. This zone already requires Design Review, and therefore, any design proposal for this lot would be required to be compatible with the character of the neighborhood. However, considering the symbolic importance of the demolished Lincoln Theater and the owner’s intent to reconstruct the façade, district designation could insure a higher design quality.

Area Views – West Oakland

The LUTE sets forth specific implementation strategies for six areas of the city, including West Oakland. This area view provides a richer description of different parts of the City, to indicate how the Element is applicable to local issues, and to provide direction for the implementation priorities.

The West Oakland Area is described as an area that boasts a rich and powerful history. West Oakland serves as the gateway for travelers to and from San Francisco, whether traveling by BART, bus, car, or ferry. Staff notes that the future development of this proposed 7th Street Commercial Historic District will have high visibility by BART users and thereby provides an opportunity to celebrate and promote West Oakland’s ‘powerful history’ by thoughtful maintenance and enhancement of 7th Street’s historic character provided in its ‘older built’ environment, which clearly distinguishes it as a link to the past. Future rehabilitation and revitalization can support and enhance this character. The LUTE further states that West Oakland hosts a diverse mix of people who are actively engaged in improving their historic neighborhoods and business communities.

The relocation of the Cypress Freeway is an opportunity for West Oakland neighborhoods to knit back together. The Mandela Parkway development and

beautification are part of this effort. The implementation strategies outlined in the LUTE define maintaining and enhancing established neighborhood areas as a key objective. It calls for economic assistance and overall improvements to the appearance of the community. It recommends neighborhood cleanup, investment and maintenance of infrastructure, encouragement for adaptive reuse of vacant buildings and development of compatible infill projects.

Staff Response: These recommendations are exactly the direction taken by the applicant and promoted by historic designation.

7th Street Corridor Plan

A \$185,000 Caltrans Environmental Justice Grant (10% match) was awarded and accepted by the City of Oakland to complete an urban design and development plan for the Seventh Street Corridor. The plan involves participatory community outreach process and will build upon existing studies and plans. The Plan will be coordinated with other community and landscape design projects proposed or underway in the project area.

Walter Hood, Hood Design, was selected as the lead consultant for this Community Plan. The Plan is scheduled for completion by Summer, 2005. Construction funds have not yet been identified or secured for the implementation of the Plan. The West Oakland Seventh Street Design Development Plan will produce schematic designs and preliminary engineering for streetscape improvements on Seventh Street, between Union and Wood Streets, in the vicinity of the West Oakland BART Station. It will design pedestrian and bicycle amenities, connect neighborhoods to the main BART entry and the Seventh Street commercial corridor, and will explore alternatives to reduce the impact of auto and truck traffic along Seventh Street. Implementation of the Plan will enhance the quality of life for local residents, promote economic revitalization, encourage additional residential development, and provide incentives for residents of the City of Oakland to access the West Oakland BART station by foot, bicycle, and local transit.

The designation of a 7th Street Historic Commercial District is consistent with this plan.

Zoning

The proposed designated block is located between Peralta and Campbell Streets. The existing zone for the proposed historic district and areas to the east and west is C-35 District Shopping Commercial Zone. This block and areas to the west are also zoned S-4 Design Review Combining Zone. Areas to the east of this proposal (east of Peralta) are zoned S-15, Transit Oriented Development Zone. See Attachment D, the West Oakland Land Use Study Adopted Land Use Changes.

The intent of the C-35 Zone is to create, preserve and enhance areas with a wide range of retail establishments serving both short and long term needs in compact locations oriented toward pedestrian comparison shopping, and is typically appropriate to commercial clusters near intersections of major thoroughfares.

The designation of a 7th Street Historic Commercial District is consistent with this zoning intention.

Owner’s Vision

The owner plans on new construction at the vacant lot, breaking ground within five years. The owner plans on replicating the façade of the Lincoln Theater. This block is significant with or without new construction at the Lincoln site. (Please see discussion below under Inclusion of Vacant Lots in Districts.)

SIGNIFICANCE AND EFFECT OF THE DESIGNATION.

Benefits of Historic District Designation

The 7th Street Historic Commercial District Designation would assist in the rehabilitation of the existing buildings, as follows:

- Use of the State Historical Building Code (provides more flexible construction standards for older buildings);
- Waiver of City Design Review fees;
- Readiness to apply for a Mills Act contract for reducing property taxes;¹

Effect of Landmark Designation

Existing zoning along 7th Street from Center Street to Cedar Street is C-35 “District Shopping” plus S-4 Design Review Combining zone from Peralta to Pine (including the nominated block) and S-15 Transit Oriented Development from Union to Peralta. Both ‘S’ zones establish design review requirements for alterations and new construction. Thus the nominated block and the rest of historic 7th Street are already subject to design review; designation would establish that within the designated district, design review is conducted by the Landmarks Board or its staff, and that the historic character of the buildings and district is to be protected. In addition, S-7 designation establishes specific findings for demolition or removal, up to 240 days delay of demolition, and an explicit duty to keep in good repair. Designated Historic Properties are eligible for the State Historical Building Code and waiver of design review fees, they are historic resources for environmental review purposes, and they are expected to be eligible for future incentives such as a Mills Act program.

REGULATORY IMPLICATIONS OF S-7 STATUS

	Existing	Proposed
Zone	C-35 – District Shopping Commercial Zone, S-4 – Design Review Combining Zone	C-35 – District Shopping Commercial Zone, S-4 – Design Review Combining Zone, S-7 Preservation Combining Zone
General Plan	Community Commercial	Community Commercial
Historic Status	OCHS ² 1600-16 7 th Street: PDHP, Area of Secondary Importance contributor.	S-7 Designated Historic Property (DHP)

¹ The city has received a National Trust grant and approval for matching funds to pursue the development and adoption of a City of Oakland Mills Act program, to be completed in one year.

	1632-42 7 th Street: PDHP, Area of Secondary Importance anchor - primary contributor.	
Design Review	Required by S-4. C-35 zoning only for telecommunications facilities and, under specific circumstances, for residential. Design Review findings for compatibility with the neighborhood character.	Landmarks Board Design Review required for any exterior changes. Requires public notification. Includes opportunity for appeal. Fees are waived. Note: Does not prevent future additions, alterations, or new construction.
Demolition	Demolition Permit may be postponed for up to 60 days by the Development Director. Development Director may provisionally designate as Heritage Property. May require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).	Demolition Permit may be postponed for up to 240 days. Requires one of two findings (Table 4.1 Historic Preservation Element). Requires an Environmental Impact Report.
Environmental Review	May be required with any discretionary action depending on scope of proposal.	Any actions affecting the exterior of a landmark are discretionary and may require environmental review. An S-7 Preservation Combining Zone property is treated as a historic resource for environmental review purposes (Historic Preservation Element Policy 3.8). May be exempt if the proposal meets the Secretary of Interior Standards.
State Historical Building Code		Eligible to use as Contributor to a Historic District.
Tax Advantages	None	May participate in a Mills Act Program ³ (City Adoption of Mills Act Program scheduled for 2005).

RESPONSES TO PLANNING COMMISSION REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION

Outlined below are responses to Planning Commission inquiries not already covered in this report.

Request to view Video developed by Applicant

The applicant has arranged with KTOP to show this video at the Planning Commission meeting. In addition staff has included in your packet a copy of the video, "*Crossroads: A Story of West Oakland*", which provides a more in-depth history of this area of West Oakland than could be viewed during the meeting timeframe.

² Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey

³ The Mills Act is a preservation incentive adopted by California in 1976 that allows reductions of property tax assessments for historic properties if the owner signs a contract with the local government agreeing to preserve the property, maintain its historic characteristics, and, if necessary, restore the property.

District Size

The Historic Preservation Element defines a *District* as “a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of buildings, structures, objects, sites, natural features related to human presence or activities united historically or aesthetically by plan, appearance, or physical development.” There are no specific size limitations for historic districts. Almost all districts include some vacant parcels and /or non-contributing structures; about two-thirds of the properties should usually be contributors. There is another City of Oakland Historic District of about the same size as this proposed district. That is the Downtown Brooklyn District, designated in 1982, on the northerly side of East 12th Street between 11th Avenue and 12th Avenue, on one side of one block. There is a vacant lot as a result of fire which occurred after the designation. As is evident from the Attachment C maps the majority of the West Oakland area has some historic significance and contributes to an identified district (Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey).

Although the nominated block has two of the most prominent surviving buildings on 7th Street and the nomination process is simplified because the properties are all owned by the applicant there are other scattered historic 7th Street commercial buildings that reflect the same significant themes. They include:

- Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, 1716-18 7th Street;
- Esther’s Orbit Room at 1720 7th Street;
- the four buildings at 1550, 1558, 1568, and 1570, separated from the proposed district by a vacant corner lot;
- 1666 7th Street standing alone on its block;
- the former West Oakland Library at 712 Peralta Street;
- the Alcatraz Masonic Hall-Booker Emery House at 713 Peralta Street.

The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB) discussed an expanded historic district. The Board concluded that it would be appropriate to allow this small district to be designated and serve as the impetus for others to append their property(s) to the district. These additional potential contributors might be added at some future time by amendment to the proposed ‘master,’ small owner-nominated district before the Commission today. This approach is modeled on the National Register “multiple property listing.” A master nomination is presented for a significant property type, and resources can be added by documenting that they contribute to the theme. Oakland’s four Landmark Carnegie branch libraries were listed on the National Register in 1996 under this program. A multiple-property treatment of scattered fragments of old 7th Street might be a way to appropriately recognize the scattered fragments without applying S-7 zoning to existing or future modern infill. Nothing in the S-7 regulations or Historic Preservation Element appears to preclude a discontinuous district or multiple property approach.

The larger 7th Street Commercial area, while intermittent, could be used for relocation of buildings of the same era, in a similar manner as Preservation Park.

Inclusion of Vacant Lots in Historic Districts

In the context of the district, the Lincoln Theater is the most memorable and well-known building and neighborhood institution, with something for all members of the neighborhood families. The site, therefore, has cultural value. The theater was built in 1919 by John Vaughan, builder and designer, for Allen E. King's King Realty and Amusement Company, which also operated the Gem/Moulin Rouge Theater in Old Oakland. The name Lincoln may or may not have been chosen as a nod to the African American community which was already prominent in West Oakland by 1919 - certainly the theater advertised regularly in the *Western American*, a local black newspaper of the 1920s. It has a stage and offered live shows along with films; a recent informant, Geraldine Washington, in 2001 recalled dancing in vaudeville with her parents at the Lincoln Theater. As the neighborhood theater, it was an anchor of the commercial district and a social and entertainment center, as well as a visual landmark. In the 1993 documentary *Crossroads, A Story of West Oakland*, Landon Williams points to the tile on the Lincoln Theater as a symbol of the lively, prosperous mid-20th century 7th Street he remembers. The Lincoln was one of the many theaters that closed in the late 1950s with the coming of television, and in 1961 a permit was taken out for use as the Damascus Missionary Baptist Church. By 1970 the Sanborn map shows it as vacant (though the marquee and sign remain in a c.1974 photograph). Under a later ownership it suffered neglect, earthquake, and fire damage, and despite Ms. Lequin's desire to restore it, the roof and sides collapsed in early 2003 and the façade was demolished as a hazard.

Although the Lincoln Theater building is demolished, the applicant wishes to include the site, 1620-28 7th Street, as part of the district. The present site, without the building, would not appear significant enough for individual designation, but it is customary to include vacant parcels within designated districts, to protect the character and continuity of the district in future development. The Historic Preservation Element defines *Site* as "the location of a significant event, a prehistoric occupation or activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location itself possesses historic, cultural, commemorative, or archaeological value regardless of the value of any existing building or structure. Under the Landmarks evaluation system the Lincoln site

gets a 'D' Present rating; the building would have been an 'A.' The system is designed to allow for individual designation of extremely significant sites – for example, Landmark #49, site of the Oakland Mole, designated in 1981.

Staff Response: Based on the above discussion, staff recommends that the site be include in the district.

Spirit and Meaning of Historic District Designation as Proposed – How it is Physically Represented

Preservation of older buildings encourages knowledge and respect for a community's character, history and culture. The distinctive designs of older buildings often make them important symbols of the community, help give it a special identity, and avoid the

anonymity and uniformity of much new development. The existing two buildings and their distinct architecture and the site of the Lincoln Theater clearly provide a visual link to the past. In conjunction with the proposed interpretive pieces that will be part of the 7th Street Corridor Plan, visitors are easily transported to the distinct 'rich and powerful' history of this 7th Street commercial area. In addition to the proposed music history markers proposed, possible tours and additional building markers could greatly increase public awareness and appreciation of significant older properties by introducing these properties and their role in the history of the community to passersby who would normally not have this information. The very existence of markers shows that a community values its heritage and promotes a sense of stability, continuity and civic pride.

Retention and respectful maintenance, as has been started on the two existing buildings, can stimulate rehabilitation of surrounding older structures and inspire improved design quality for new buildings. The special character and atmosphere of well-managed old buildings sometimes helps attract customers and can act as a catalyst for investment in neighboring properties.

SUMMARY

There are numerous policies in the City's General Plan that support historic designation of the nominated 7th Street Commercial District. West Oakland is the heart of the City's history. Although a small beginning, these three properties could be viewed as a raised awareness and impetus for an expanded 7th Street Commercial Historic District, and as incentive for the extensive historic adjacent neighborhoods to follow. Oak Center, designated last year, is an example of the benefit of this slow but stabilizing process. The 7th Street Streetscape plan now in progress is one of the first implementations to directly affect this 7th Street Commercial district by diverting street traffic, providing increased parking, installing trees and street furniture to invite pedestrians and business development, and providing references to the blues music history of the area, perhaps in the sidewalks. How 7th Streets historic significance and spirit are conveyed and linked to the past begins with preserving and retaining positive continuity with the past through a special sense of place that is expressed by well-maintained older properties.

In addition to furthering many General Plan policies, designation of this 7th Street Commercial District is consistent with Zoning District intentions, and would enhance the current Corridor Landscape improvement plans currently in progress. The rehabilitation furthered by historic district designation will provide a symbol of special character that, with the proposed interpretive sidewalk markers and possible historic tours, could stimulate rehabilitation of other historic contributors along 7th Street, give the community an acknowledged special identity, inspire improved design quality for new buildings, and raise the broader community's awareness and appreciation of Oakland's history.

RECOMMENDATION

The Landmarks Board and staff recommend historic district designation (S-7 zoning) for the proposed 7th Street Commercial Historic District on the basis of the nomination submitted by the owner and Cultural Heritage Survey information, which clearly demonstrate that the commercial area is eligible for historic district designation.

1. Affirm the environmental determination.
2. Recommend that ~~City Council~~ adopt an ordinance rezoning the proposed 7th Street Commercial Historic District, as shown on the attached map and property list, to the S-7 zone.

Based on the Commission's inquiries and direction at the April 7, 2004 meeting, staff is also providing alternative recommendations, should the Commission determine that a modified approach to nomination is supported over the Landmarks Board recommendation, as follows:

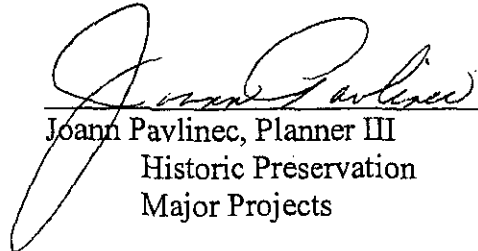
- 2a. Direct the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board to adopt as a goal for 2005, the designation of a larger 7th Street Commercial District, including the properties listed on page 10. or
- 2b. Designate the Flynn Saloon and McAllister Plumbing Shop and the Arcadia Hotel as City of Oakland Landmarks. or
- 2c. Designate the Flynn Saloon and McAllister Plumbing Shop and the Arcadia Hotel as an S-7 discontinuous district or multiple property approach.

Respectfully submitted:



CLAUDIA CAPPIO
Development Director

Prepared by:



Joann Pavlinec, Planner III
Historic Preservation
Major Projects

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Planning Commission Report – April 7, 2004:
 - a. Landmark Eligibility Rating Sheet for the district and individual properties
 - b. Oakland Landmark and S-7 Preservation Combining Zone Application
 - c. State Historic Resources Inventory for, 7th St./West Oakland Commercial ASI (1988)
 - d. Landmarks Board Resolution 2004-2
 - e. S-7 Preservation Combining Zone regulations
- B. 'Crossroads A Story of West Oakland' Video
- C. Figure 11-2 Local Register of Historical Resources and Potential Historic Properties, and 11-3, Historic Districts.
- D. West Oakland Land Use Study Adopted Land Use Changes October 31, 2000
- E. Articles on 7th Street and West Oakland
- F. "The 7th Street Commercial Historic District," prepared by Lucy Lequin.

Ref: PlanningCommissionReports/IIRZ04-107 S-7 Seventh Street Commercial District

Case File Number RZ04-107

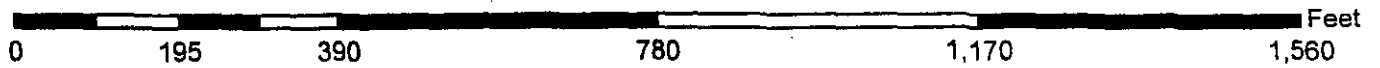
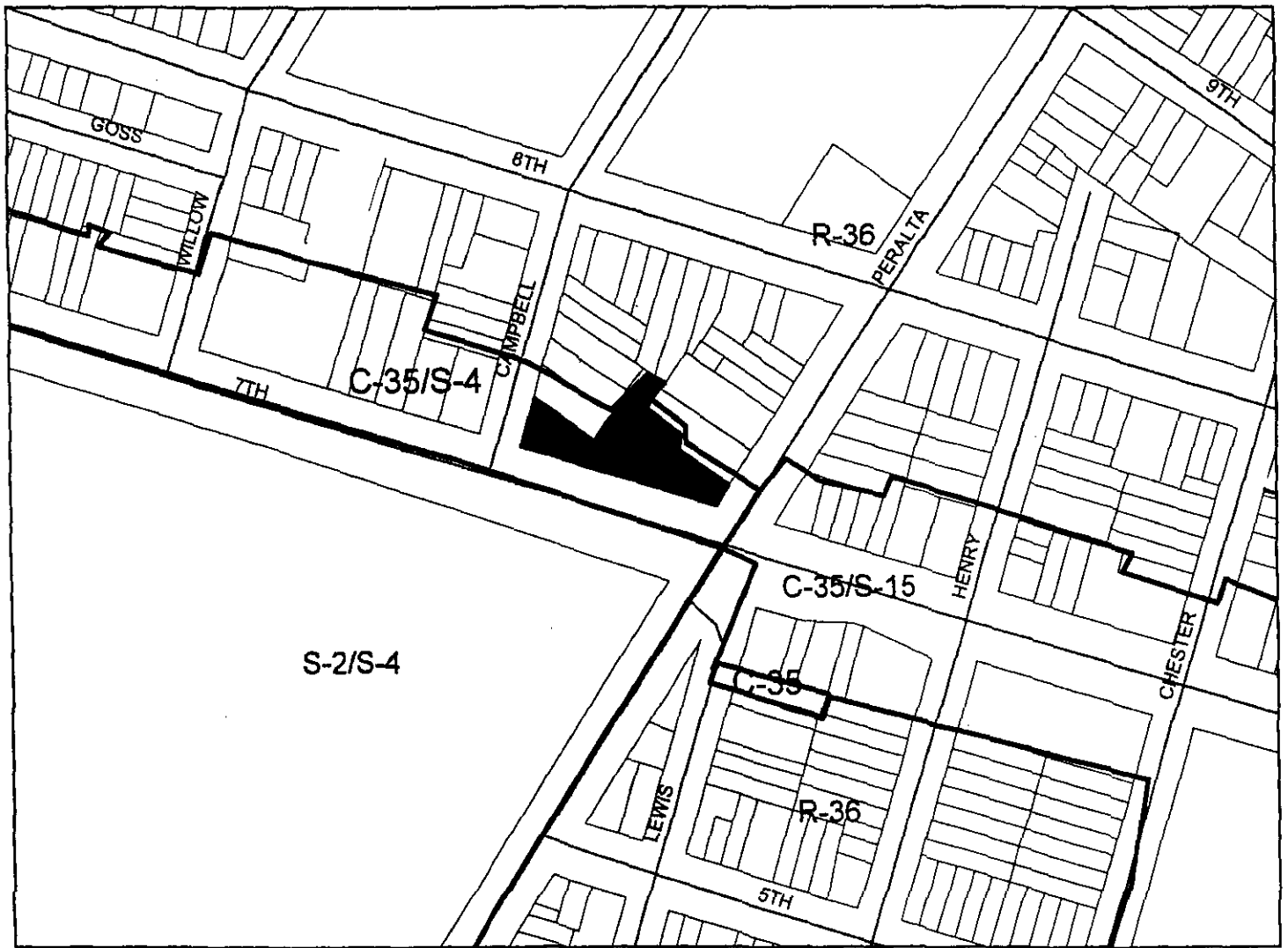
April 7, 2004

5.	Location: 1600 – 1642 7 th Street, (APN's: 006-0003-018-00; 006-0003-019-00; 006-0003-020-00; 006-0003-021-00)
	Proposal: Application to establish the 7 th Street Commercial District as a Historic District and to Re-zone to S-7 Preservation Combining Zone.
	Applicant/Owner: Lucy Lee Lequin
Contact Person/Phone Number:	(510) 986-1016
	Case File Number: RZ04-107
	Planning Permits Required: Re-zone to an S-7 Preservation Combining Zone
	General Plan: Community Commercial
	Zoning: C-35 – District Shopping Commercial Zone, S-4 – Design Review Combining Zone
	Environmental Determination: Exempt per Sections 15061(3) and 15331 of the State CEQA Guidelines.
	Historic Status: 1600-16 7 th Street: PDHP, Area of Secondary Importance contributor. 1632-42 7 th Street: PDHP, Area of Secondary Importance anchor - primary contributor.
	Service Delivery District: 1 – West Oakland
	City Council District: 3
	Status: Landmark Preservation Advisory Board adopted a Resolution to initiate action to establish 1600-1642 7 th Street as a Historic District and forward action to the Planning Commission for public hearing and consideration.
	Action to be Taken: Recommend Re-zoning to S-7 Preservation Combining Zone and forward to City Council.
	Finality of Decision: City Council
	For Further Information: Contact case planner Joann Pavlinec at (510) 238-6344 or by email: jpavlinec@oaklandnet.com .

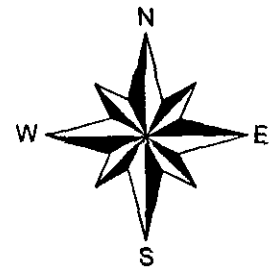
SUMMARY

At this meeting the Planning Commission is to hold a formal public hearing and consider for recommendation to City Council the 7th Street Commercial Historic District nomination. This block of 7th Street proposed for district designation is the best surviving fragment of West Oakland's legendary commercial street of the 1860s to 1960s. It consists of three parcels in a single ownership on the north side of 7th Street from Peralta Street on the east to Campbell Street on the west. It was nominated by the owner of all three properties, Lucy Lee Lequin, and unanimously found eligible at the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board January 12, 2004 meeting. At the February 9, 2004 Landmarks Board meeting, the LPAB unanimously accepted the draft resolution recommending rezoning of the area described to an S-7 Historic Preservation Combining Zone and directed staff to forward the nomination to the Planning Commission. District designation would take the form of an ordinance rezoning the area.

CITY OF OAKLAND PLANNING COMMISSION



Case File: RZ04-107
Applicant: Lucy Lee Lequin
Address: 1600-1642 7th Street
Zone: C-35 / S-4



BACKGROUND

Historical and Architectural Significance

The block of 7th Street proposed for district designation is the best surviving fragment of West Oakland's legendary commercial street of the 1860s and 1960s. It consists of three parcels in a single ownership on the north side of 7th Street from Peralta Street on the east to Campbell Street on the west. A boxy two-story 1880s Italianate stores and flats complex at 1600-16 7th Street anchors the Peralta Street corner. The vacant middle parcel at 1620-28 is the site of the Lincoln Theater and its attached storefronts, where the stated intent of the owner is to rebuild to conform to the original design. At 1632-42, the Campbell Street corner, is the 1906-07 Mission Revival Arcadia Hotel.

Historically known as Railroad Avenue, 7th Street was from 1863 the route of commuter trains through West Oakland to the ferry wharf at Oakland Point. In 1869 the Point became the terminus of the transcontinental railroad. Seventh Street was a thriving business district for its entire length, with a full range of neighborhood shops and services serving the surrounding Prescott and South Prescott neighborhoods, as well as railroad-related businesses. It was said the West Oaklanders never needed to go downtown. At the outer end of Seventh Street, on the 1700 and particularly the vanished 1800 blocks, the nearby railroad yards and terminus supported numerous hotels and rooming houses, restaurants saloons, billiard rooms, union halls and "female boarding houses." From casual railroad-related entertainment, West 7th Street also evolved into a noted center for African-American musical clubs as early as the 1910s. This culture was displaced in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the entire south side of the street was brought up and cleared for the Bay Area Rapid Transit station and post office.

The block that is being nominated is part of a larger Seventh Street Commercial District in West Oakland that was identified and documented as an Area of Secondary Importance (ASI) by the Cultural Heritage Survey in 1988. The classification of this historically very significant area as an ASI rather than a National Register eligible district was based on loss of integrity, through mid-20th century remodelings, scattered demolitions, and most notably the destruction of the whole south side of the street. Since 1988 the district has been further fragmented by demolitions related to earthquake and fire damage – all but one building on the block from Campbell to Willow, and most recently the Lincoln Theater in the middle of the proposed district – and some new construction. On the other hand, as surviving examples become rare, their protection becomes more important and their value as "first, last, or only" increases.

The present district nomination includes the three buildings and sites listed below, all contiguous on one block and all in one ownership. Individual landmark eligibility rating sheets have been prepared for each of the three, based on Cultural Heritage Survey information and ratings (although none is being nominated for individual designation), as well as for the mini-district as a whole. The proposed district is part of a Survey-identified ASI, and under the hierarchy proposed in the Preservation Element would

probably be a Class 2 Preservation District. As defined in the Preservation Element, an ASI differs from an Area of Primary Importance (API)¹ in that:

- Potential contributors to the ASI are counted for purposes of the two-thirds threshold as well as contributors; and
- ASIs do not appear eligible for the National Register.

District Rating: Though the Board's point-system evaluation sheet is designed more for individual properties than for districts, adapting it to the present district gives a "B" rating with 24 points, which seems appropriate. (For the district rating, individual property ratings were averaged to arrive at ratings for the more building-specific items.) This district is comparable to the small "Downtown Brooklyn" commercial district on the 1100 block of East 12th Street, designated as an S-7 district in 1982.

1600-16 7th Street, Flynn (Edmund) Saloon – McAllister (James) Plumbing Shop: The building has a 'B' Present Rating and Contingency Rating. This building is a district contributor.

1620-28 7th Street, the site of the Lincoln Theater: Although the building is demolished, the applicant wishes to include the site as part of the district. Under the Landmarks evaluation system the site gets a 'D' Present rating; the building would have been an 'A.' The system is designed to allow for individual designation of extremely significant sites – for example, Landmark #49, site of the Oakland Mole, designated in 1981. The present site, without the building, would not appear significant enough for individual designation, but it is customary to include vacant parcels within designated districts, to protect the character and continuity of the district in future development.

1632-42 7th Street, The Arcadia Hotel – Isaac & Schwartz Block: The building has a 'B' Present rating and an 'A' Contingency rating, reflecting its reversible ground floor alterations. 'A' and 'B' rated buildings are eligible for individual Landmark designation.

The Evaluation Sheets and Landmark & S-7 Designation Application are attached.

Landmarks Board Action

At the January 12, 2004 meeting, the application was reviewed by the LPAB. The Board viewed a video presentation prepared by the applicant. The applicant informed the Board of the process she had gone through in rehabbing the buildings. She expressed her concern that the recent vibrant community, still remembered by many seniors in the area, be preserved and expressed her desire to bring it back. She stated her intention to contact Cal Trans to address the noise from BART, which has a negative effect on the all of the

¹ Areas of primary Importance (APIs) are defined in the Preservation Element as historically or visually cohesive areas or property groups which usually contain a high proportion of individual properties with ratings of 'C' or higher and appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places either as a district or as a historically-related complex. At least two-thirds of the properties in an API must be contributors to the API, i.e. they reflect the API's principal historical or architectural themes and have not had their character changed by major alterations.

Street. She also expressed hope that adjacent properties would become part of the historic district. She also plans to rebuild the façade of the Lincoln Theater.

The LPAB unanimously adopted the Evaluation Sheets for Landmark Eligibility for the Lincoln Theater Block and directed staff to prepare a draft resolution. At the February 9, 2004 LPAB meeting, the Board unanimously adopted the Resolution to Initiate Designation to an S-7 District (attached), and directed staff to forward the nomination to the Planning Commission.

The Board discussed an expanded historic district. Although this block has two of the most prominent surviving buildings on 7th Street and the nomination process is simplified because the properties are all owned by the applicant there are other scattered historic 7th Street commercial buildings that reflect the same significant themes. The Board specified that these be noted. They include:

- Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, 1716-18 7th Street;
- Esther's Orbit Room at 1720 7th Street;
- the four buildings at 1550, 1558, 1568, and 1570, separated from the proposed district by a vacant corner lot;
- 1666 7th Street standing alone on its block;
- the former West Oakland Library at 712 Peralta Street;
- the Alcatraz Masonic Hall-Booker Emery House at 712 and 713 Peralta Street.

These additional potential contributors might be added at some future time by amendment to the proposed 'master,' small owner-nominated district before the Commission today. This approach is modeled on the National Register "multiple property listing." A master nomination is presented for a significant property type, and resources can be added by documenting that they contribute to the theme. Oakland's four Landmark Carnegie branch libraries were listed on the National Register in 1996 under this program. A multiple-property treatment of scattered fragments of old 7th Street might be a way to appropriately recognize the scattered fragments without applying S-7 zoning to existing or future modern infill. Nothing in the S-7 regulations or Historic Preservation Element appears to preclude a discontinuous district or multiple property approach.

Effect of Landmark Designation

Existing zoning along 7th Street from Center Street to Cedar Street is C-35 "District Shopping" plus S-4 Design Review Combining zone from Cedar to Peralta (including the nominated block) and S-15 Transit Oriented Development from Peralta to Center. Both 'S' zones establish design review requirements for alterations and new construction. Thus the nominated block and the rest of historic 7th Street are already subject to design review; designation would establish that design review is conducted by the Landmarks Board or its staff, and that the historic character of the buildings and district is to be protected. In addition, S-7 designation establishes specific findings for demolition or removal, up to 240 days delay of demolition, and an explicit duty to keep in good repair. Designated Historic Properties are eligible for the State Historical Building Code and


waiver of design review fees, they are historic resources for environmental review purposes, and they are expected to be eligible for future incentives such as a Mills Act program.

RECOMMENDATION

The Landmarks Board and staff recommend historic district designation (S-7 zoning) for the proposed 7th Street Commercial Historic District on the basis of the nomination submitted by the owner and Cultural Heritage Survey information, which clearly demonstrate that the commercial area is eligible for historic district designation.

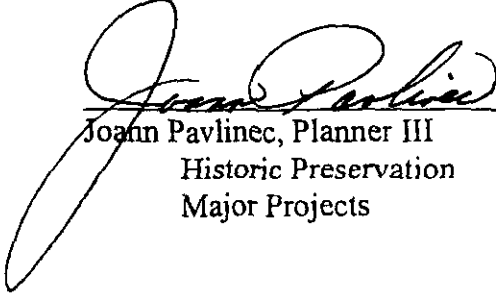
1. Affirm the *environmental* determination.
2. Recommend that City Council adopt an ordinance rezoning the proposed 7th Street Commercial Historic District, as shown on the attached map and property list, to the S-7 zone.

Respectfully submitted:



CLAUDIA CAPPIO
Development Director

Prepared by:



Joann Pavlinec, Planner III
Historic Preservation
Major Projects

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Landmark Eligibility Rating Sheet for the district and individual properties
- B. Oakland Landmark and S-7 Preservation Combining Zone Application
- C. State Historic Resources Inventory for, 7th St./West Oakland Commercial ASI (1988)
- D. Landmarks Board Resolution 2004-2
- E. S-7 Preservation Combining Zone regulations

**City of Oakland – Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board
EVALUATION SHEET FOR LANDMARK ELIGIBILITY**

Preliminary Final

Address: 7th Street Commercial mini-ASI (1600-42)

Name: _____

A. ARCHITECTURE

- | | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------|--------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. | Exterior/Design: | <u>VG + VG + VG</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>FP</u> |
| | Interior: | <u>N/A</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>FP</u> |
| 3. | Construction: | <u>G + VG + G</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>FP</u> |
| 4. | Designer/Builder: | <u>VG + F + F</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>FP</u> |
| 5. | Style/Type: | <u>VG + VG + VG (E?)</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>FP</u> |

B. HISTORY

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|----------------------|---|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| 6. | Person/Organization: | <u>F + G + G</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>FP</u> |
| 7. | Event: | <u>N/A</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>FP</u> |
| 8. | Patterns: | <u>7th Street-commercial, RR, ethnic history</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>FP</u> |
| 9. | Age: | <u>V + G + G</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>FP</u> |
| 10. | Site: | _____ | <u>E</u> | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>FP</u> |

C. CONTEXT

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|--------------|---|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| 11. | Continuity: | <u>Establishes an ASI</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>FP</u> |
| 12. | Familiarity: | <u>Familiar in neighborhood - citywide, for 7th St. as a whole</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>FP</u> |

D. INTEGRITY

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------|------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 13. | Condition: | _____ | <u>E</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>F</u> | <u>P</u> |
| 14. | Exterior Alterations: | <u>G + F + P</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>F</u> | <u>P</u> |

Evaluated by: Betty Marvin 1/8/04

STATUS	
Rating: Ba	
City Landmark Eligibility: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible	<input type="checkbox"/> Not eligible
National Register Status: <input type="checkbox"/> Listed	<input type="checkbox"/> In process
<input type="checkbox"/> Determined eligible	<input type="checkbox"/> Appears eligible
<input type="checkbox"/> Appears ineligible	
Site of Opportunity <input type="checkbox"/>	

This evaluation sheet was accepted by the landmarks Preservation Advisory Board at its meeting of January 12, 2004
(Date)

Attest: 
Secretary

**City of Oakland – Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board
EVALUATION TALLY SHEET FOR LANDMARK ELIGIBILITY**

Preliminary Final

Address: 7TH Street Commercial mini-ASI (1600-42)
Name: _____

12	<u>6</u>	3	0	1. Exterior/Design	6
6	3	2	<u>0</u>	2. Interior	0
6	3	<u>2</u>	0	3. Construction	2
4	2	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	4. Designer/Builder	1
6	<u>3</u>	2	0	5. Style/Type	3
A. ARCHITECTURE TOTAL (max. 26)					12
30	15	<u>8</u>	0	6. Person/Organization	8
30	15	8	<u>0</u>	7. Event	0
<u>18</u>	9	<u>5</u>	0	8. Patterns	18
8	4	<u>2</u>	0	9. Age	2
<u>4</u>	2	1	0	10. Site	4
B. HISTORY TOTAL (max. 60)					32
4	<u>2</u>	1	0	11. Continuity	2
14	<u>7</u>	4	0	12. Familiarity	7
C. CONTEXT TOTAL (max. 14)					9
PRELIMINARY TOTAL (Sum of A, B and C) (max. 100)					53
-0	<u>-3%</u>	-5%	-10%	13. Condition (From A, B, and C total)	-1.6
-0	-25%	<u>-50%</u>	-75%	14. Exterior Alterations (From A, B and C total excluding 2)	-26.5
D. INTEGRITY					-28
ADJUSTED TOTAL (Preliminary total minus Integrity)					25

STATUS/RATING

Present Rating (Adjusted Total): A(35+) B(23-34) C(11-22) D(0-10)

Contingency Rating (Preliminary Total): A(35+) B(23-34) C(11-22) D(0-10)

City Landmark Eligibility: Eligible (Present Rating is A or B) Not eligible

**City of Oakland – Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board
EVALUATION SHEET FOR LANDMARK ELIGIBILITY**

Preliminary Final

Address: 1600-16 7th Street
 Name: Flynn (Edmund) Saloon – McAllister (James) Plumbing Shop

A. ARCHITECTURE

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|-----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. | Exterior/Design: <u>tall arched windows, high parapets w/cornice, transoms, recessed entries</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| | Interior: <u>N/A</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | <u>FP</u> |
| 3. | Construction: <u>Wood frame & millwork, generic</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | FP |
| 4. | Designer/Builder: <u>Unknown</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | <u>FP</u> |
| 5. | Style/Type: <u>Italianate Commercial, good /few survive</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |

B. HISTORY

- Edmund & Ann Flynn Saloon – 1886-1912:
- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|-----------|---|-----------|
| 6. | Person/Organization: <u>James McAllister Plumbing – 1891-1918</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | <u>FP</u> |
| 7. | Event: <u>N/A</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | <u>FP</u> |
| 8. | Patterns: <u>Early 7th St. comm. dev., long-term owners, ethnic, RR-rare surviving example</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 9. | Age: <u>1885-86, add. 1889-90 & after 1911 (1-story c.1606); bet. 1902-11(triangular bldg. c.1616)</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 10. | Site: <u>Has not been moved</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |

C. CONTEXT

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|-----------|----------|----|
| 11. | Continuity: <u>In ASI, establishes character</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 12. | Familiarity: <u>Prominent in neighborhood streetscape</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | <u>G</u> | FP |

D. INTEGRITY

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|----------|---|---|
| 13. | Condition: <u>Wear & tear; recent rehab</u> | E | <u>G</u> | F | P |
| 14. | Exterior Alterations: <u>Bays on corner bldg. remv'd; stucco facades, storefronts reworked (F?)</u> | E | <u>G</u> | F | P |

Evaluated by: Betty Marvin 9/18/88 and 1/8/04

STATUS

Rating: **B**

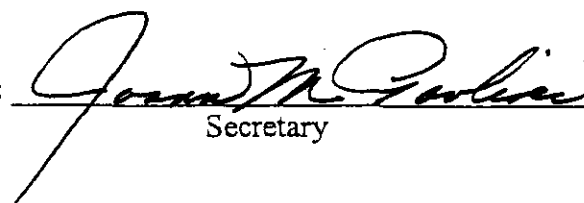
- | | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| City Landmark Eligibility: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible | <input type="checkbox"/> Not eligible |
| National Register Status: | <input type="checkbox"/> Listed | <input type="checkbox"/> In process |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Determined eligible | <input type="checkbox"/> Appears eligible |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Appears ineligible | |

Site of Opportunity

This evaluation sheet was accepted by the landmarks Preservation Advisory Board at its meeting of January 12, 2004

(Date)

Attest:


Secretary

**City of Oakland – Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board
EVALUATION TALLY SHEET FOR LANDMARK ELIGIBILITY**

Preliminary Final

Address: 1600-16 7th Street
Name: Flynn (Edmund) Saloon – McAllister (James) Plumbing Shop

12	<u>6</u>	3	0	1. Exterior/Design	6
6	3	2	<u>0</u>	2. Interior	0
6	3	<u>2</u>	0	3. Construction	2
4	2	1	<u>0</u>	4. Designer/Builder	0
6	<u>3</u>	2	0	5. Style/Type	3
A. ARCHITECTURE TOTAL (max. 26)					11
30	15	8	<u>0</u>	6. Person/Organization	0
30	15	8	<u>0</u>	7. Event	0
18	<u>9</u>	5	0	8. Patterns	9
8	<u>4</u>	2	0	9. Age	4
<u>4</u>	2	1	0	10. Site	4
B. HISTORY TOTAL (max. 60)					17
4	<u>2</u>	1	0	11. Continuity	2
14	7	<u>4</u>	0	12. Familiarity	4
C. CONTEXT TOTAL (max. 14)					6
PRELIMINARY TOTAL (Sum of A, B and C) (max. 100)					34
-0	-3%	<u>-5%</u>	-10%	13. Condition (From A, B, and C total)	-1.7
-0	<u>-25%</u>	-50%	-75%	14. Exterior Alterations (From A, B and C total excluding 2)	-8.5
D. INTEGRITY					-10
ADJUSTED TOTAL (Preliminary total minus Integrity)					24

STATUS/RATING

Present Rating (Adjusted Total): A(35+) B(23-34) C(11-22) D(0-10)

Contingency Rating (Preliminary Total): A(35+) B(23-34) C(11-22) D(0-10)

City Landmark Eligibility: Eligible (Present Rating is A or B) Not eligible

**City of Oakland – Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board
EVALUATION SHEET FOR LANDMARK ELIGIBILITY**

Preliminary Final

Address: 1620-24 7th Street
Name: Lincoln Theater

A. ARCHITECTURE

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|-----------|---|----|
| 1. | Exterior/Design: <u>Stepped & peaked parapet, 3-part semi-symmetrical facade, arched entry</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| | Interior: <u>N/A</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 3. | Construction: <u>Wood frame & millwork, generic (some stucco)</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 4. | Designer/Builder: <u>John Vaughan (builder)</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 5. | Style/Type: <u>Spanish Colonial/Arts & Crafts theater & stores</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |

B. HISTORY

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|-----------|---|----|
| | <u>Important West Oakland institution & social center.</u> | | | | |
| 6. | Person/Organization: <u>(Allen) King Amusement Co.-Lincoln Theater (to 1950's)</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 7. | Event: <u>N/A</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 8. | Patterns: <u>Early 7th St. Commercial development; entertainment; storefront churches</u>
<u>7th St. as 20th c. African American neighborhood & business center</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 9. | Age: <u>1919</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 10. | Site: <u>Has not been moved</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |

C. CONTEXT

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|-----------|---|----|
| 11. | Continuity: <u>Established character of ASI</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 12. | Familiarity: <u>Neighborhood institution</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |

D. INTEGRITY

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|----------|
| 13. | Condition: <u>N/A</u> | E | G | F | <u>P</u> |
| 14. | Exterior Alterations: <u>Demolished</u> | E | G | F | <u>P</u> |

Evaluated by: Betty Marvin 9/18/88 and 1/8/04

STATUS	
Rating: Da	
City Landmark Eligibility: <input type="checkbox"/> Eligible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not eligible
National Register Status: <input type="checkbox"/> Listed	<input type="checkbox"/> In process
<input type="checkbox"/> Determined eligible	<input type="checkbox"/> Appears eligible
<input type="checkbox"/> Appears ineligible	
Site of Opportunity <input type="checkbox"/>	

This evaluation sheet was accepted by the landmarks Preservation Advisory Board at its meeting of January 12, 2004

(Date)

Attest: 
Secretary

**City of Oakland – Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board
EVALUATION TALLY SHEET FOR LANDMARK ELIGIBILITY**

Preliminary Final

Address: 1600-24 7th Street
Name: Lincoln Theater

12	<u>6</u>	3	0	1. Exterior/Design	6
6	3	2	<u>0</u>	2. Interior	0
6	<u>3</u>	2	0	3. Construction	3
4	2	1	<u>0</u>	4. Designer/Builder	0
6	<u>3</u>	2	0	5. Style/Type	3
A. ARCHITECTURE TOTAL (max. 26)					12
30	15	<u>8</u>	0	6. Person/Organization	8
30	15	8	<u>0</u>	7. Event	0
18	<u>9</u>	5	0	8. Patterns	9
8	4	<u>2</u>	0	9. Age	2
<u>4</u>	2	1	0	10. Site	4
B. HISTORY TOTAL (max. 60)					23
4	<u>2</u>	1	0	11. Continuity	2
14	7	<u>4</u>	0	12. Familiarity	4
C. CONTEXT TOTAL (max. 14)					6
PRELIMINARY TOTAL (Sum of A, B and C) (max. 100)					41
-0	-3%	-5%	<u>-10%</u>	13. Condition (From A, B, and C total)	-4.1
-0	-25%	-50%	<u>-75%</u>	14. Exterior Alterations (From A, B and C total excluding 2)	-31
D. INTEGRITY					-35
ADJUSTED TOTAL (Preliminary total minus Integrity)					6

STATUS/RATING

Present Rating (Adjusted Total): A(35+) B(23-34) C(11-22) D(0-10)

Contingency Rating (Preliminary Total): A(35+) B(23-34) C(11-22) D(0-10)

City Landmark Eligibility: Eligible (Present Rating is A or B) Not eligible

**City of Oakland – Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board
EVALUATION SHEET FOR LANDMARK ELIGIBILITY**

Preliminary Final

Address: 1632-42 7th Street
Name: Arcadia Hotel – Isaac & Schwartz Block

A. ARCHITECTURE

- Mission Revival, square corner tower, tile roofs, overhanging bays, stucco
- | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|-----------|---|----|
| 1. | Exterior/Design: <u>quoins and crests on the bays, 3-D window trim, shaped parapet</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| | Interior: <u>N/A</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 3. | Construction: <u>Wood frame with stucco</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 4. | Designer/Builder: <u>T. D. Newsom/A. Davis</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 5. | Style/Type: <u>Mission Revival stores & apartments; very good example/few survive (E?)</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |

B. HISTORY

- Isaac & Schwartz (owner/developer); West Oakland Bank & Trust
- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|-----------|---|----|
| 6. | Person/Organization: <u>Co. headed by Oscar Breiling; Chrystal & Arcadia Hotels</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 7. | Event: <u>N/A</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 8. | Patterns: <u>Early 7th Street commercial development; earthquake & railroad boom</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 9. | Age: <u>1906-07</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 10. | Site: <u>Has not been moved</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |

C. CONTEXT

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|-----------|---|----|
| 11. | Continuity: <u>ASI anchor; establishes character</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |
| 12. | Familiarity: <u>Prominent in neighborhood streetscape</u> | E | <u>VG</u> | G | FP |

D. INTEGRITY

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|----------|---|---|
| 13. | Condition: <u>Ground floor storefronts: half remain although infilled or boarded over</u> | E | <u>G</u> | F | P |
| 14. | Exterior Alterations: <u>Storefronts covered up, windows changed, drawing exists</u> | E | <u>G</u> | F | P |

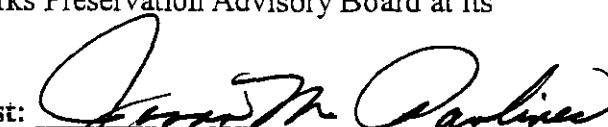
Evaluated by: Betty Marvin 9/18/88 and 1/8/04

STATUS	
Rating: Ba	
City Landmark Eligibility: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible	<input type="checkbox"/> Not eligible
National Register Status: <input type="checkbox"/> Listed	<input type="checkbox"/> In process
<input type="checkbox"/> Determined eligible	<input type="checkbox"/> Appears eligible
<input type="checkbox"/> Appears ineligible	
Site of Opportunity <input type="checkbox"/>	

This evaluation sheet was accepted by the landmarks Preservation Advisory Board at its meeting of January 12, 2004

(Date)

Attest:


Secretary

**City of Oakland – Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board
EVALUATION TALLY SHEET FOR LANDMARK ELIGIBILITY**

Preliminary Final

Address: 1632-42 7th Street

Name: Arcadia Hotel – Isaac & Schwartz Block

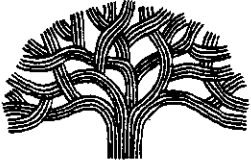
12	<u>6</u>	3	0	1. Exterior/Design	6
6	3	2	<u>0</u>	2. Interior	0
6	3	<u>2</u>	0	3. Construction	2
4	<u>2</u>	1	0	4. Designer/Builder	2
6	<u>3</u>	2	0	5. Style/Type	3
A. ARCHITECTURE TOTAL (max. 26)					13
30	15	<u>8</u>	0	6. Person/Organization	8
30	15	8	<u>0</u>	7. Event	0
18	<u>9</u>	5	0	8. Patterns	9
8	4	<u>2</u>	0	9. Age	2
<u>4</u>	2	1	0	10. Site	4
B. HISTORY TOTAL (max. 60)					23
4	<u>2</u>	1	0	11. Continuity	2
14	7	<u>4</u>	0	12. Familiarity	4
C. CONTEXT TOTAL (max. 14)					6
PRELIMINARY TOTAL (Sum of A, B and C) (max. 100)					42
-0	<u>-3%</u>	-5%	-10%	13. Condition (From A, B, and C total)	-1.3
-0	<u>-25%</u>	-50%	-75%	14. Exterior Alterations (From A, B and C total excluding 2)	-10.5
D. INTEGRITY					-12
ADJUSTED TOTAL (Preliminary total minus Integrity)					30

STATUS/RATING

Present Rating (Adjusted Total): A(35+) B(23-34) C(11-22) D(0-10)

Contingency Rating (Preliminary Total): A(35+) B(23-34) C(11-22) D(0-10)

City Landmark Eligibility: Eligible (Present Rating is A or B) Not eligible



Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board

OAKLAND LANDMARK AND S-7 PRESERVATION COMBINING ZONE APPLICATION FORM

This form is for use in requesting the City of Oakland pursuant to its Zoning Regulations to establish a landmark or landmark site or to rezone one or more properties to the S-7 Preservation Combining Zone. See instructions in "HOW TO COMPLETE OAKLAND LANDMARK AND S-7 PRESERVATION COMBINING ZONE APPLICATION FORM."

1. IDENTIFICATION

- A. Historic Name: Seventh Street Commercial District, West Oakland (part)
Arcadia Hotel – Isaac & Schwartz Block (1632-42 7th St.); Flynn (Edmund) saloon –
McAllister (James) plumbing shop (1600-16); site of Lincoln Theater (1620-28)
- B. and/or Common Name: Lincoln Theater Block

2. ADDRESS/LOCATION

Street and number: 1600 through 1642 7th Street, Oakland CA Zip Code: 94607

3. CLASSIFICATION

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| <p>A. Category</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Building(s) X</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Structure</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Site X</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Object</p> | <p>D. Present Use (P) and Historic Use (H)</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Museum</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P, H Commercial</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Park</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Educational</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> H Entertainment</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Religious</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Government</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Scientific</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Industrial</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Transportation</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Military</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify):</td> </tr> </table> | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P, H Commercial | <input type="checkbox"/> Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> H Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious | <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Museum | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P, H Commercial | <input type="checkbox"/> Park | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> H Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify): | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>B. Status</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Work in progress</p> | <p>E. Number of Resources within Property</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Contributing</td> <td>Non-contributing</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>2</u></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> buildings</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> sites</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> structures</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> objects</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>2</u></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Total</td> </tr> </table> | Contributing | Non-contributing | <u>2</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> buildings | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> sites | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> structures | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> objects | <u>2</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Total | | |
| Contributing | Non-contributing | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>2</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> buildings | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> sites | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> structures | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> objects | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>2</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Total | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>C. Accessible</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes: restricted</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes: unrestricted</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

Name: Lucy Leguin

Address: 1902 Castro Street, Oakland CA 94612

Assessor's Parcel Number: 006 -0003-018-00, -019-00, -020-00, -021-00

5. EXISTING FEDERAL/STATE DESIGNATIONS

A. Federal

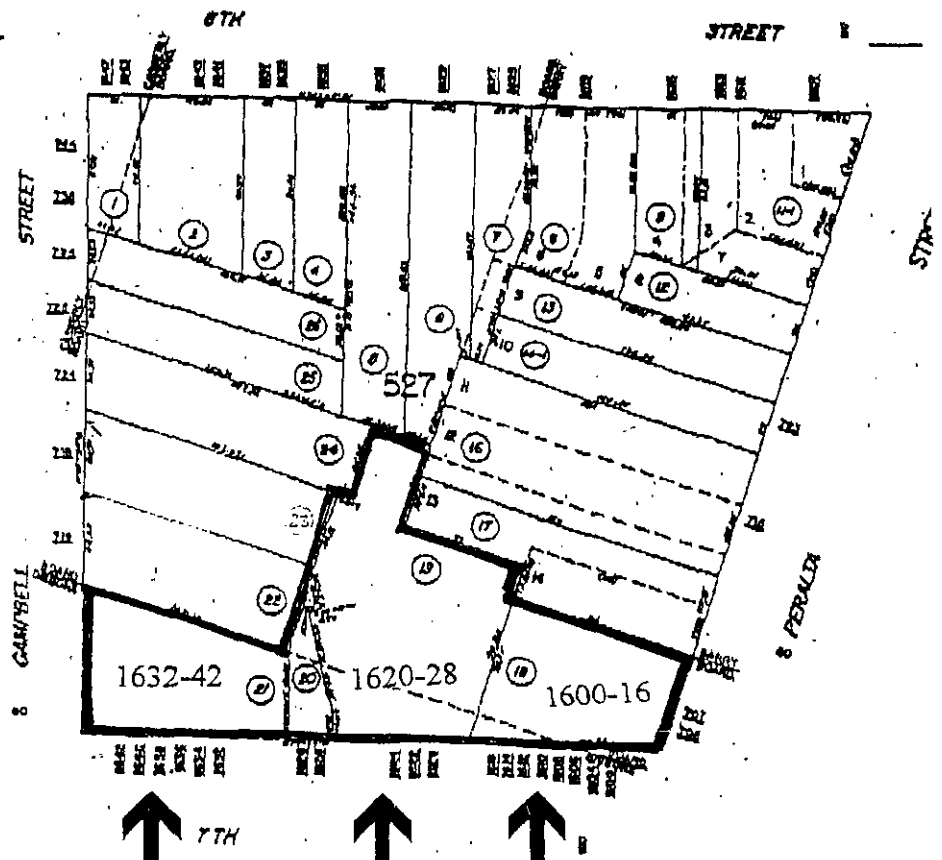
- National Historic Landmark
- Included in National Register of Historic Places
- Determined eligible for inclusion in National Register of Historic Places

B. State

- California Historical Landmark
- California Point of Historic Interest
- State Historical Resources Inventory
(as contributors to 7th Street/West Oakland Commercial ASI - 1988)

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

Name of Survey	Rating (if applicable)	Date	Depository
Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey	Db-2+(1632), Ec2* (1600) (both rehabbed since)	1988	Oakland City Planning Dept.
OCHS 1981 neighborhood pilot survey noted this block as "the key building group of this part of 7th Street."			



7. DESCRIPTION

A. Condition:	B. Alterations: (Check one)	C. Site (Check one)
<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved (Date _____)
<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed	

D. Style/Type: Mission Revival hotel building; Italianate commercial with early 20th century addition

E. Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance:

The block of 7th Street proposed for district designation is the best surviving fragment of West Oakland's main commercial street of the 1860s to 1960s. It consists of three parcels in a single ownership on the north side of 7th Street from Peralta Street on the east to Campbell Street on the west. Boxy two-story Italianate stores and flats at 1600-16 7th Street anchor the Peralta Street corner. The vacant middle parcel at 1620-28 is the site of the Lincoln Theater and its attached storefronts, where the intent of the owner is to rebuild to conform with the original design. At 1632-42, the Campbell Street corner, is the Mission Revival Arcadia Hotel.

1600-16 7th Street, the Flynn (Edmund) saloon – McAllister (James) plumbing shop building, is a joined pair of two-story late 19th century woodframe commercial buildings, each approximately a cube in proportion, with one-story additions between, behind, and to the west. The earliest part, at the corner, appears to have been built in 1885-86. It has tall wood-sash windows with segmental-arched tops grouped in twos and threes on its street frontages, ground-floor storefronts, and a wide flat molded cornice with a wide plain frieze at the top of the parapet. The facades have been stuccoed and cornice brackets and window hoods and trim removed, but the west side (over the one-story connection) retains original siding and trim. The other two-story section, to the west, a few years newer, is generally similar to the corner section. Its cornice matches the other in height and shape but is only a false front instead of wrapping around the building; the windows are not quite as tall and have rectangular tops. The one-story sections, fairly basic early 20th century commercial vernacular structures, were added between 1902 and 1911 (the triangular piece on the west along the diagonal lot line of the Lincoln Theater) and after 1911 (the piece linking the two-story structures). All the storefronts have been variously altered over the years but generally retain at least the outlines of transoms and recessed entries.

1632-42 7th Street, the Arcadia Hotel – Isaac & Schwartz Block is a two-story woodframe building, hotel over stores, fully covering a trapezoidal corner lot. It is Mission Revival in style, with tiled pent roofs on closely spaced brackets, shaped parapets, and two overhanging rectangular bays – a shallow center one with a big espadaña gable and flagpole, and a square corner tower with pyramid tiled roof. Exterior walls are stucco, with stucco quoins and crests on the bays and three-dimensional window trim. The building had storefronts along the entire 7th Street facade; about half remain (though filled in or boarded over). The Campbell Street side has high windows and two small doors. Upstairs windows were replaced with metal sliders sometime before 1988.

Setting: Elevated BART tracks run along the middle of 7th Street, and the entire historic south side of the street was replaced in the late 1960s by the main post office, BART station, and their extensive

parking lots. Until the 1989 earthquake the north side from Henry to Wood Street was still a nearly continuous row of one and two-story frame and brick buildings with no setback, storefronts, upstairs flats, projecting cornices, and classical or Spanish or Victorian detailing, built between 1877 and 1940. With loss of almost all of the buildings on the block from Campbell to Willow, 7th Street has been reduced to fragments. Other surviving scattered historic commercial buildings are the cluster from the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters building to Esther's Orbit Room west of Willow Street (1716, 1720, and 1722 7th Street); the four buildings at 1550, 1558, 1568, and 1570, separated from the proposed district by a vacant corner lot; and the former West Oakland Library and Alcatraz Masonic Hall-Booker Emery House, just off 7th Street at 712 and 713 Peralta Street.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

A. Period:

- Prehistoric
- Pre-1869
- 1869-1906
- 1906-1945
- Post-1945

B. Areas of significance--check and justify below:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape architecture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Military |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Music |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Politics/government |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Planning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economics | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exploration/settlement | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | |

C. Period of Significance: 1880s-1970s

D. Significant dates: 1885ff, 1906-07

E. Builder/Architect/Designer: unknown (1600); Thomas D. Newsom (a) & Albert Davis (b) (1632)

F. Significant persons:

G. Statement of Significance (include summary statement of significance as first paragraph):

This block represents the best surviving fragment of 7th Street, West Oakland's legendary commercial street of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Seventh Street, historically known as Railroad Avenue, was from 1863 the route of commuter trains through West Oakland to the ferry wharf at Oakland Point, which in 1869 became the terminus of the transcontinental railroad. Stations were located at about six-block intervals and Seventh Street was a thriving business district for its entire length, with a full range of neighborhood shops and services at each station, serving the surrounding Prescott and South Prescott neighborhoods. It was said that West Oaklanders never needed to go downtown. At the outer end of Seventh Street, the 1700 and particularly the vanished 1800 blocks, the nearby railroad yards and terminus supported numerous hotels and rooming houses, restaurants, saloons, billiard rooms, union

halls, and “female boarding houses.” From casual railroad-related entertainment, West 7th Street also evolved into a noted center for African-American musical clubs as early as the 1910s – Slim Jenkins’ was probably the most famous of these. Esther’s Orbit Rom at 1722 and the John Singer’s building at 1720 are surviving representatives of this activity. This culture was displaced in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the entire south side of the street was bought up and cleared for the Bay Area Rapid Transit station and post office.

The block between Peralta and Campbell, halfway between Center Street and Point (Wood Street) stations, is late 19th and early 20th century development, replacing earlier smaller buildings. As in most older commercial areas, the existing buildings have evolved through additions and remodeling. 1600-16 is a complex pieced together from 1885 to the 1910s. Both it and the Arcadia Hotel have had ground-floor storefronts closed off in recent decades as they shifted from retail to other uses, yet their upper stories are reasonably intact and establish a strong presence as distinctive period commercial buildings. Their histories embody the important themes of 7th Street – railroad-related businesses and lodgings, entertainment, and the ethnic and economic evolution of the neighborhood.

The Arcadia Hotel building, 1632-42 7th Street, was built in 1906-07 under permit #65574, dated December 20, 1906, for a 2-story 26-room stores and rooming house building to cost \$11,500, owners Swartz & Isaacs, builder A. Davis, architect T.D. Newsom. Thomas Dean Newsom was a member of the Oakland-based Newsom architectural dynasty. He practiced with his brother John J. from about 1873; notable works included the 1874 Alameda County Courthouse. They were older brothers of the more famous “Newsom Brothers,” Samuel and Joseph. Thomas was an active designer of houses, flats, and commercial buildings in Oakland up to about 1910. This building is an excellent example of early 20th century Mission Revival commercial architecture as practiced by the Newsoms and others..

Owners or developers Schwartz and Isaacs have not been further identified. On March 16, 1907, the *Oakland Tribune* published a drawing of the building, which was described as stores and apartments. The 1910 census lists 20-plus lodgers, several of whom worked for the railroads. From around 1917 to 1922 directories show the building as the Chrystal Hotel, and from 1923 to at least 1967 as the Arcadia Hotel. A notable early-1910s commercial occupant was the West Oakland Bank and Trust Company headed by Oscar Breiling, West Oakland legislator and memoirist also associated with the landmark Western Market Building, 1485 8th Street, where his family had a meat market for many years. The *Tribune* in 1905 described the West Oakland Bank as “capitalized for \$50,000, and one of their largest accounts is with the Southern Pacific Railroad whose payroll for that division is handled by the bank. ...about 5000 men call at this bank each month for their wages.” Among the directors of the bank was also Henry P. Dalton, county assessor, of 1454 8th Street. Later commercial occupants included a bakery, billiard hall, and three stores (c. 1936 Sanborn map); Loreen’s Hamburgers, Jumping George Linkhouse, Lucky Liquors, and Jumping George Barbecue (1954 Hubbard Advertising Agency map); and Royal Cafe, Lucky Liquors, Star Co. Used Merchandise, and Wash Palace Self-Service Laundry (Polk’s 1967 reverse directory).

The complex at 1600-16 7th Street was built and occupied by the Flynn and McAllister families, Irish immigrant in-laws. Edmond Flynn, a neighborhood resident from about 1877, operated a grocery business and saloon in San Francisco before developing the corner building and opening his own 7th Street saloon in 1885-86. Within a few years he had retired and assumed the title of “capitalist” in census and directory listings, and the store was occupied by son-in-law James McAllister’s plumbing shop until about 1920. Family members lived in the upstairs flats into the 1910s, and owned the buildings at least into the 1940s. The Flynn and McAllisters enlarged the complex over the years – the

two-story building at 1610-14 probably in 1889-90 (block books), the triangular one-story lean-to at 1616 between 1902 and 1911 (Sanborn maps), and the one-story link between the larger buildings sometime after 1911 (Sanborn maps). Designers and builders are unknown, and there are no permit records for the various storefront and facade alterations. Sanborn maps show front and side bays on the corner building, but these had vanished by the time of the earliest known photograph of the block, c. 1974. Even with alterations, the pair of two-story Italianate commercial buildings is rare and unmistakable.

Commercial occupants have included a restaurant and six stores (c. 1936 Sanborn map); 7th Street Wine and Liquor Store, House of Joy, and Dandy Shoe Shine (1954 Hubbard Advertising Agency map); 7th Street Wine and Liquor, M&W Cleaners, Busy Bee Tonsorial Parlor, House of Joy Tavern, Fields Bar None Bar-B-Q, and M&W Shine Parlor (Polk's 1967 reverse directory).

The vacant lot at 1620-28 7th Street was the site of the Lincoln Theater. The theater was built in 1919 by John Vaughan, builder and designer, for Allen E. King's King Realty and Amusement Company, which also operated the Gem/Moulin Rouge Theater in Old Oakland. It had a unique Arts and Crafts facade with peaked and stepped parapets, deep three-dimensional stucco trim, a wide arched entry, and colorful tile frieze and pilasters. The auditorium extended diagonally into the middle of the odd-shaped lot, and a small semi-detached store and flat building (sharing the main facade) occupied the west corner of the lot. The Lincoln was one of two large early 20th century movie theaters in the Prescott neighborhood (the Peralta, at 14th and Peralta Streets, is now the Mount Zion Spiritual Temple of King Louis Narcisse).

The name Lincoln may or may not have been chosen as a nod to the African American community which was already prominent in West Oakland by 1919 – certainly the theater advertised regularly in the *Western American*, a local black newspaper of the 1920s. It had a stage and offered live shows along with films; a recent informant, Geraldine Washington, in 2001 recalled dancing in vaudeville with her parents at the Lincoln Theater. As the neighborhood theater, it was an anchor of the commercial district and a social and entertainment center, as well as a visual landmark. In the 1993 documentary *Crossroads, A Story of West Oakland*, Landon Williams points to the tile on the Lincoln Theater as a symbol of the lively, prosperous mid-20th century 7th Street he remembers. The Lincoln was one of the many theaters that closed in the late 1950s with the coming of television, and in 1961 a permit was taken out for use as the Damascus Missionary Baptist Church. By 1970 the Sanborn map shows it as vacant (though the marquee and sign remain in a c. 1974 photograph). Under a later ownership it suffered neglect, earthquake, and fire damage, and despite the most recent owner's desire to restore it, the roof and sides collapsed in early 2003 and the facade was demolished as a hazard.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Oakland City Planning Department, Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, inventory forms on "7th Street/West Oakland Commercial AST", 1988 [part attached], and "Oakland Point District", 1989-90; research files on 1600, 1620, & 1632 7th Street.
- Caltrans, Historic Property Survey Report & Finding of Effect for I-880 Reconstruction, 1990-1; *Crossroads, A Story of West Oakland* (documentary video), 1993; *Sights and Sounds: Essays in Celebration of West Oakland*, 1997.

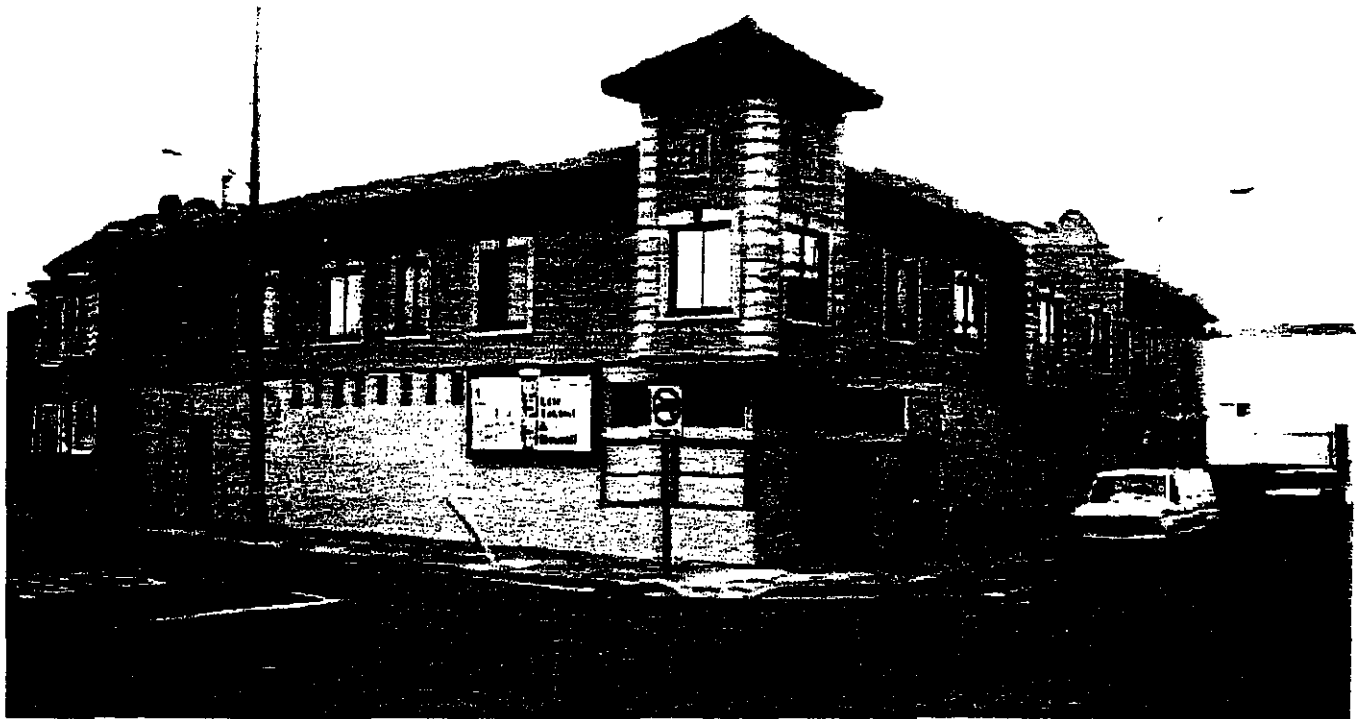
above: 1600 block, c. 1974 (Oakland History Room)

below: 1600-16 7th Street, 2003

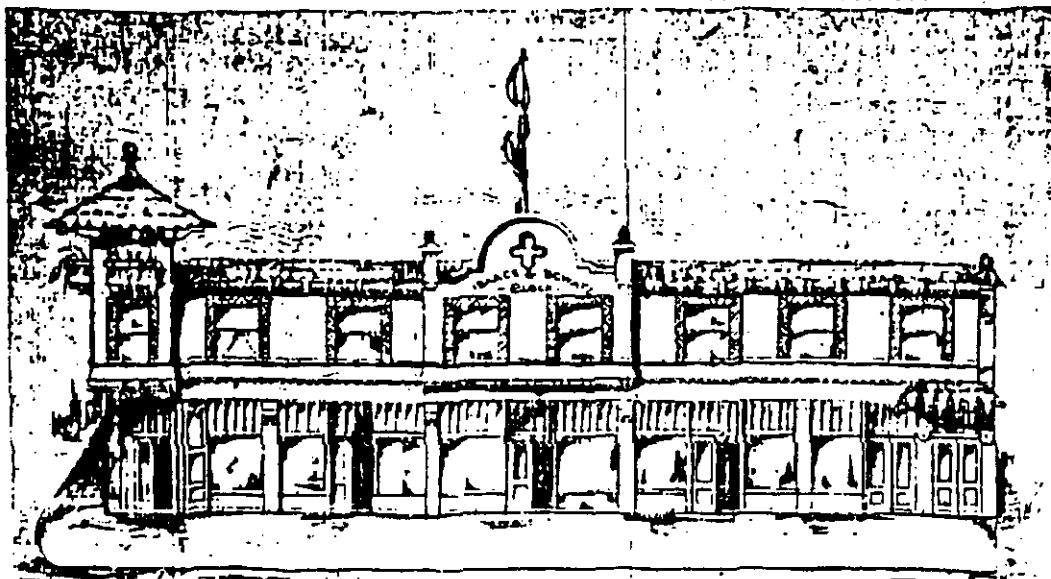


above: 1632-42 7th Street, 2003

below: 1632-42 7th Street, Oakland Tribune, March 16, 1907



ONE OF WEST OAKLAND'S BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS



Cole Pub. Mar 16, 1907 - Page 157

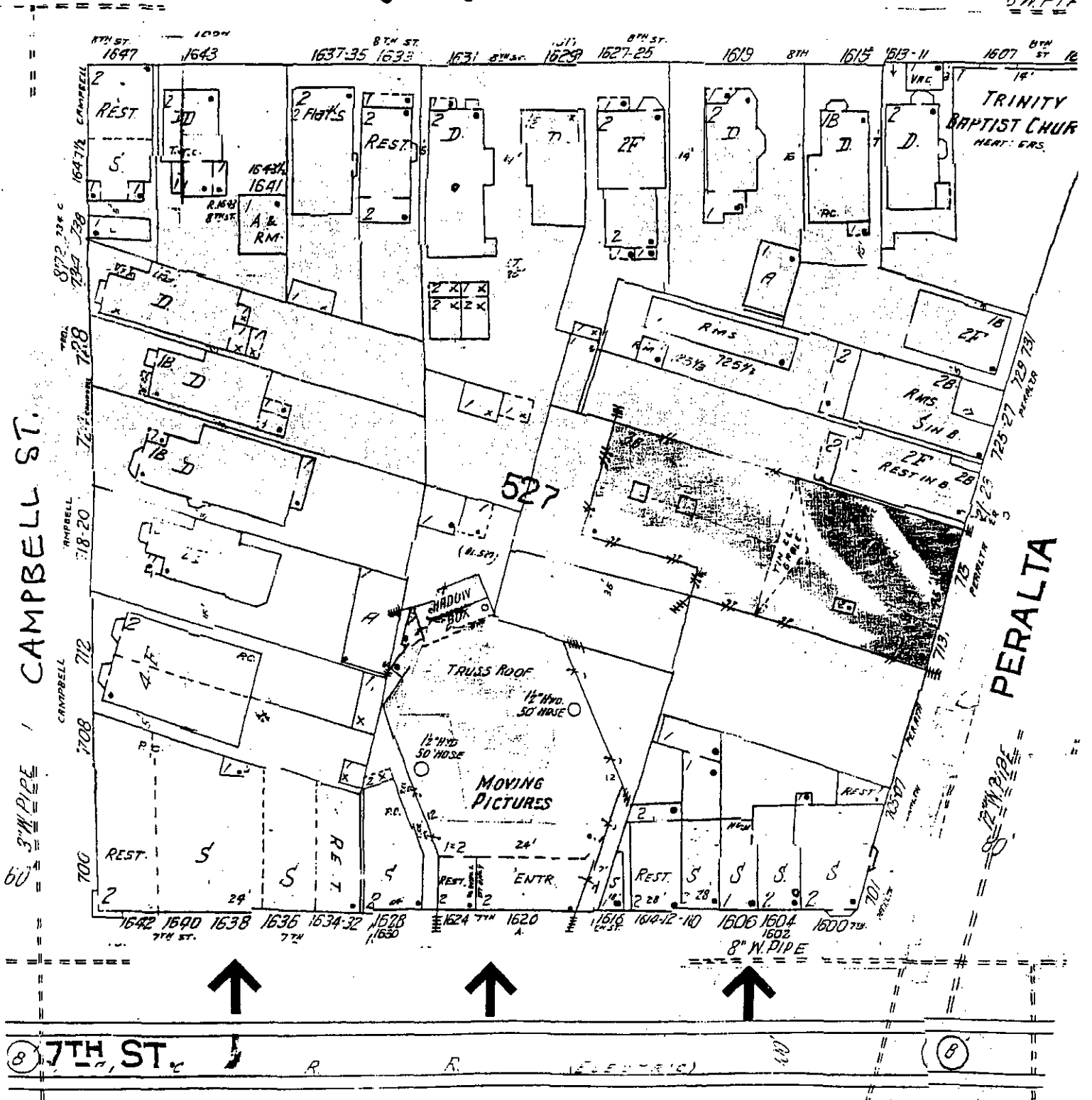
New Store and Apartment Building at the Northeast Corner of Seventh and Campbell Streets.

At a cost of \$22,000 Isaac A. Schwart has erected a two-story store and apartment building in West Oakland at the northeast corner of Seventh and Campbell streets. The building, which will be ready for occupancy in about one month, has been constructed with every up-to-date convenience, according to the plans of Architect Thomas Dean New-

Sanborn map, 1951 update, p.90

8TH ST

5" W. PIPE



7TH ST

Ser. No. _____
 HABS _____ HAER _____ Loc _____ SHL No. _____ NR Status 5
 UTM: A 10/561820/4184380 C _____
 B _____ D _____

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

IDENTIFICATION

1. Common name: 7th Street/West Oakland Commercial ASI
2. Historic name: None
3. Street or rural address: 1550 through 1722 7th Street and 713 Peralta Street
 City Oakland Zip 94607 County Alameda
4. Parcel number: See continuation pages
5. Present Owner: Various Address: _____
 City _____ Zip _____ Ownership is: Public Private
6. Present Use: Commerce/Vacant Original use: Commerce

DESCRIPTION

- 7a. Architectural style: 19th and early 20th century commercial
- 7b. Briefly describe the present *physical appearance* of the site or structure and describe any major alterations from its original condition:

The north side of 7th Street from Henry to Wood Street is a four-block-long, one-sided fragment of West Oakland's main commercial street of the 1860s to 1960s. The south side of the street from Cypress to Cedar is occupied by two huge public buildings from the late 1960s-early 1970s, the Oakland West Bay Area Rapid Transit station and the Oakland main post office, and their extensive parking lots. Elevated BART tracks run along the middle of 7th Street. The commercial buildings on the north side are mostly vacant, boarded up, and gradually decreasing in number. The cluster from Henry to Wood, consisting of 16 buildings on 7th Street and one on Peralta that is visually connected, is still recognizable as a neighborhood commercial strip. It is a nearly continuous row of one- and two-story frame and brick buildings with no setback, transomed storefronts, flats upstairs, projecting cornices, and classical or Spanish or Victorian detailing. Their construction dates range from 1877 to 1940. Most are altered to some degree - some radically - but the Main Street

(see continuation page 3)



8. Construction date:
 Estimated _____ Factual 1877-1940
9. Architect Various
10. Builder Various
11. Approx. property size (in feet)
 Frontage _____ Depth _____
 or approx. acreage 3 acres
 one side of 4 city blocks
12. Date(s) of enclosed photograph(s)

Photo No: 501- 5
 Date: 09/24/87
 Location: 7TH STREET ASI

ATTACHMENT C

- 13. Condition: Excellent ___ Good ___ Fair X Deteriorated ___ No longer in existence ___
- 14. Alterations: Extensive to storefronts, windows, surface materials
- 15. Surroundings: (Check more than one if necessary) Open land ___ Scattered buildings X Densely built-up X
Residential X Industrial ___ Commercial X Other: Institutional: Post Office and BART Station
- 16. Threats to site: None known ___ Private development ___ Zoning ___ Vandalism X
Public Works project X Other: _____
- 17. Is the structure: On its original site? X Moved? _____ Unknown? _____
- 18. Related features: None

SIGNIFICANCE

19. Briefly state historical and/or architectural importance (include dates, events, and persons associated with the site.)
 This group of 17 buildings, from 1550 to 1722 7th Street plus 713 Peralta Street, is considered an Area of Secondary Importance by the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, of local visual and historical significance although neither the area as a whole nor the individual buildings appear to meet National Register standards of integrity. These four one-sided blocks are the surviving fragment of the 7th Street commercial district, West Oakland's main business street from the 1860s to the 1960s. This was the commercial strip associated with the National Register-eligible Oakland Point Prescott residential district. Enough period storefronts and architectural features survive to indicate visually what the area once was, and individual buildings are historically significant as the Lincoln Theatre, West Oakland Free Reading Room, Alcatraz Masonic Hall, and International Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters headquarters. The buildings in this fragment date from about 1885 through 1940, and were mainly neighborhood-oriented businesses; the earliest,

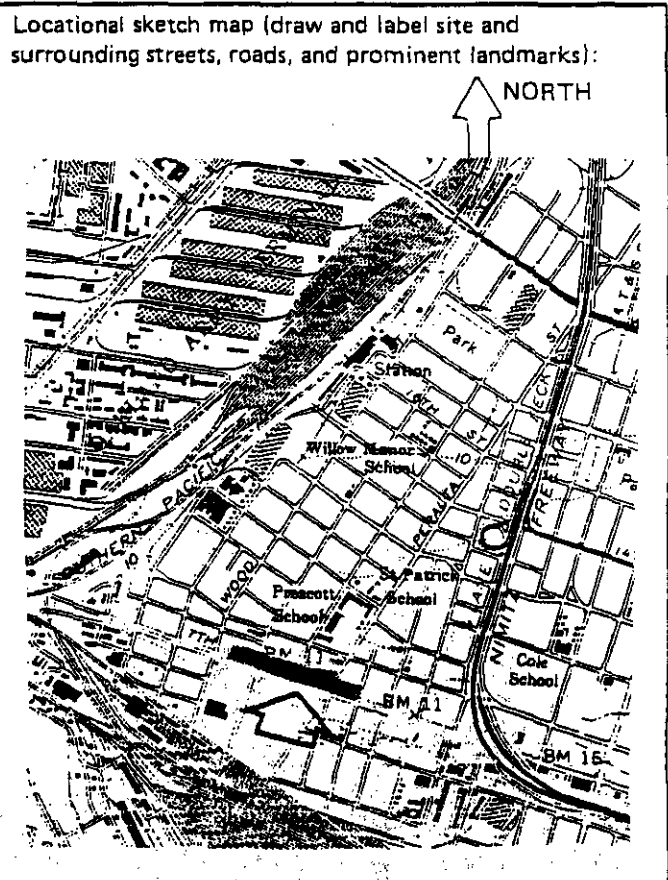
(see continuation page 5)

- 20. Main theme of the historic resource: (If more than one is checked, number in order of importance.)
 Architecture 3 Arts & Leisure _____
 Economic/Industrial 1 Exploration/Settlement _____
 Government _____ Military _____
 Religion _____ Social/Education 2

21. Sources (List books, documents, surveys, personal interviews and their dates).

See continuation page 11

22. Date form prepared Sept. 30, 1988
 By (name) Staff
 Organization Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey
 Address: 1 City Hall Plaza, 6th Fl.
 City Oakland Zip 94612
 Phone: (415)273-3941





HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

CP

Street or rural address: 7th Street Commercial ASI

7b. Physical Description (continued from page 1)

character remains. Half of the buildings are considered so altered that they would not contribute to a National Register district unless restored.

Prominent buildings are the boxy two-story stores and flats at 1550-56 and 1600-08 7th Street, which are heavily altered and nondescript in character but anchor the southeast corners of their blocks; the well-preserved two-story dark red brick Lekos Bros. Market (1921) at 1674 7th, with its peaked parapet, flagpole, and painted wall signs; the Lincoln Theatre and its attached storefront at 1620-24, with tiled pilasters, multi-stepped parapet, and big theater arch; and the Mission Revival Arcadia Hotel at 1632-42, with tiled pent roofs and two overhanging bays - a shallow center one with espadana gable and flagpole, and a square corner tower with pyramid tiled roof. Two two-story Victorian buildings at 1682-84 and 1716-18 retain much of their period character: these are described in more detail below. West of 1716-18, the last buildings in the group are also from the 19th century, but totally remodeled in the 1940s and 60s, with tarpaper brick, glass blocks, a streamlined stucco facade, and a tall metal screen replacing a demolished second story (1720 and 1722 7th). The period strip ends with these buildings; beyond is a small 1967 restaurant building, and then vacant lots, parking, deteriorated garages, and a recent Church's Fried Chicken. Two more 19th-century buildings survive on the block between Pine and Cedar (1828-30 7th, once a seamen's mission, and an 1897-98 house at 1822 7th), but they are now isolated from the remainder of the once-continuous commercial strip. Other buildings related to but isolated from the district are found along 8th Street: a pair of 1920s store and flats buildings at 1647 and 1651 8th on either side of Campbell, the 1895 firehouse at 1681 8th (see SHRI), and a 1904 meat market at 1671 8th.

1684-86 7th Street is a two-story late-Victorian commercial building with brick side and rear walls, asymmetrical wooden front, and low-pitched gable roof surrounded by brick parapets and a false front with a quasi-mansard pent roof. It occupies a 25'-wide mid-block lot fronting on 7th Street, flanked by attached 1-story commercial buildings.

The ground floor consists of a storefront with a centered trapezoidal inset entry, plate glass windows, and wide transom. At the far right is a single door to the upstairs entry, also with transom. The upstairs door is a solid replacement, and the glazing and orange brick veneered base of the storefront also appear more recent than the building. The upper story is surfaced in rustic siding and has a polygonal bay with 4 double-hung windows on the left (narrower than the storefront) and a single double-hung window on the right. The bay has tall rectangular windows with shallow molded panels below and above, pipestem colonettes, and a row of tiny brackets and rounded dentil-like molding under the eaves. A blank space on the wall over the right-hand window indicates that it also originally had a cornice. The pent roof of the false front rests on a row of 8 simple curved brackets along the frieze, and larger brackets at each end which serve as capitals to fluted pilasters which edge the upper story. There is a belt molding along the base of the second story, and a partial capital at its left end suggests that the fluted pilasters

(see continuation page 4)



HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

CP

Street or rural address: 7th Street Commercial ASI

7b. Physical Description (continued from page 3)

originally extended to the ground. Early Sanborn maps show a canopy over the sidewalk. The side walls are red brick in common bond, with tie rods visible about 18" below the parapet tops. On both sides are faded painted wall signs, for J.C. Bullock & Sons Plumbing, Tinning and Galvanizing and for Coca Cola. There are no windows on the side walls, which are on the lot lines; Sanborn maps show a skylight toward the rear. A two-story frame rear addition has been removed, exposing the rear brick wall.

1716-18 7th Street is a two-story Stick/Queen Anne commercial building on a mid-block lot, its first story of brick construction and its second story wood with an overhanging rectangular bay centered in front. Its roof is a low gable concealed by stepped side parapets and a false-front mansard in front. The mansard rests on tall brackets, the only original ornament remaining. Wall surfaces to either side of the bay, and the base of the bay, are asbestos-shingled. Sash in the bay is aluminum. The ground floor facade consists of a storefront for most of its width, with a narrow upstairs doorway at the right. The storefront has tall transoms; its lower portion is boarded up. The right (east) wall, exposed by demolition of the neighboring building, is stuccoed below and asbestos-shingled above.



Photo No: 501-14
Date: 09/24/87
Location: 7TH STREET ASI
VIEW WEST ON 7TH FROM 1666-68



HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

CP

Street or rural address: 7th Street Commercial ASI

19. Historical and/or Architectural Importance (continued from page 2)

more railroad-oriented section of the strip, visible from Wood Street west to the water in the 1871 Snow & Roos birdseye map, has almost entirely vanished.

Seventh Street, historically known as Railroad Avenue, was from 1863 the route of commuter trains through West Oakland to the ferry wharf at Oakland Point, which in 1869 became the terminus of the transcontinental railroad. Stations were located at about six-block intervals, and (though it is hard to see today) Seventh Street was a thriving business street for its entire length, with a full range of neighborhood shops and services at each station. It was said that West Oaklanders never needed to go downtown. At the outer end of 7th Street, the 1700 and particularly the vanished 1800 blocks, the nearby railroad yards and shops, ferry wharf, and terminus gave the local economy a strong transient flavor from the very beginning, with numerous hotels and rooming houses, restaurants, saloons, billiard rooms, union halls, and "female boarding houses."

From casual railroad-related entertainment, West 7th Street also evolved into a noted center for black musical clubs, as early as the 1910s - Slim Jenkins' was probably the most famous of these. John Singer's at 1720 7th and Esther's Orbit Room at 1722 are surviving representatives of this activity. This culture was displaced in the late 1960s and early 70s with the rest of the 7th Street economy when the whole south side of the street was bought up for the Bay Area Rapid Transit station and post office.

The surviving buildings once housed neighborhood businesses including furniture, plumbing, shoe repair, groceries, dry goods, confectionery, real estate, and a photography studio. Neighborhood institutions in the area included Masonic halls at 1692 7th and 713 Peralta (in the district), several other lodge, union, and assembly halls, the fire station at 1681 8th (see SHRI), and Prescott School and St. Partick's church on the blocks to the northeast. A "Sightseeing Tour Along Seventh Street in the Late Eighties or Early Nineties," printed in 1939 in the journal of the West of Market Boys, a local old-timers' club, gives a cross-section of businesses along the street and their proprietors, as well as transportation patterns, about the same date as the 1889 Sanborn map, and the date of construction of several of the existing buildings.

At the far west end of 7th Street were the ferry wharf, S.P. shipyard and roundhouse, and a "bathhouse where the rheumatic patients in Oakland go for their hot salt water baths," and duck-hunting and clam-digging grounds. All this lay beyond the unguarded grade crossing at Bay Street ("Death Curve") and beyond "Cedar Street where all of the freight trains switch off the main line into the West Oakland yards." Seventh and Wood, the outer end of the present district, is described as "a lively corner as it is the terminal of the street car line that runs out Wood Street to Twelfth and a branch runs out Eighth Street to Peralta." At this time commercial development tapered off in the 1650 block at Campbell; Eiben & Nor's grocery there was planning to move east to 7th and Peralta where there was "not much anything of interest" yet (their



HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

CP

Street or rural address: 7th Street Commercial ASI

19. Historical and/or Architectural Importance (continued from page 5)

new building at 1584-90 7th, a showy flatiron Stick/Italianate with lodge halls upstairs, was built in 1886-87 and demolished in 1987, a major loss to the district). Sanborn maps confirm that the blocks from Campbell to Henry were still mostly residential. Businesses mentioned in this memoir include groceries, drugstores, barbers, wood and coal yards, saloons, a jeweler ("railroad men take pride in their watches"), a Chinese laundry, a livery stable, and the "West Oakland Building and Loan Association [where] Andrea Sbarboro is making so much money that he is going into the banking business in San Francisco." Most of the proprietors have English, Irish, and German names - O'Gara, Fick, Loud, Naismith, Reisdorf, Loomis, Shuler.

After the turn of the century, as is clear from the buildings themselves, this section of 7th Street filled in eastward, and Sanborn maps suggest that saloons and billiard rooms spread in the same direction from the railroad yards, replacing a restaurant (1722 7th), glove factory (1710), reading room (1682), house (1674), grocery (1650), and drugstore (1550) on these blocks between 1902 and 1911. A notable development in the 1920s is the prominence of Eastern and Southern European names among the owners of buildings and businesses: Gus Laios confectionery (1720 7th), Lekos Bros. Market (1674), Michael Fakoury dry goods (and developer of 1666, 1676, and 1678 7th), Mark Jurich (1550 7th), Merced Aboumrad (1570 7th). This parallels changes in the population of the neighborhood: an Italian "West of Market Boy" remarked on how times had changed since the days when his was the only "foreign" name in a program at the largely Irish St. Patrick's Church. By the interwar years there was also a substantial black community in West Oakland, anchored by railroad employment but also well dispersed in other occupations. Black institutions included Liberty Hall - see SHRI for 1483 8th Street. A recurring theme in West Oakland memoirs is the melting pot of races and nations in this period, disrupted by redevelopment of the Campbell Village public housing site (north of 8th Street between Campbell and Peralta, 1938-39) and then by the mass immigration of black war workers. In its latter decades West 7th Street was considered Oakland's black Main Street as well as an entertainment center. Its decline from about the 1960s can be traced to the decline of railroad employment, urban renewal of the surrounding residential areas, and the hard times that hit main streets everywhere; its fate was sealed by the post office and BART projects around 1970. Renewal or redevelopment proposals for 7th Street have been repeatedly put forth; there is currently a plan for a city-sponsored mixed-use project (named for Slim Jenkins) on the 1650 block.

As in most long-established commercial areas, the 7th Street buildings have evolved by additions and remodeling. The stores at 1568 and 1570 7th appear to incorporate houses built in 1877-78 by John Ziegenbein, a major residential developer in the area. Structures from the 1870s probably also form part of 1550, 1692, and 1722 7th. The apartment building at 713 Peralta is a 1943 government-sponsored remodeling by Malcolm Reynolds of the Cunningham Bros.' 1899 Alcatraz Masonic Hall. 1600 and 1720 7th are more straightforward, recognizable 20th century remodelings of 1880s stores, and 1684 and 1716 7th (both 1889-90) are reasonably intact Victorian commercial buildings. The

(see continuation page 7)



HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

CP

Street or rural address: 7th Street Commercial ASI

19. Historical and/or Architectural Importance (continued from page 6)

early 20th century buildings in the group are reasonably intact, at least above storefront level, and include good examples of Mission Revival (1632 7th, 1906-07, designed by Thomas D. Newsom) and 1920s brick commercial (Lekos Bros. Market, 1674 7th, by James Plachek, and 1678 7th, by Theodore Bernardi, uncle of William Wurster's partner). The architect of the 1919 Lincoln Theatre (1620 7th) has not been identified, but it is a distinctive representative of its type.

Longtime district businesses in the existing buildings included Max Wolf's furniture store and warehouse (1558 7th; at various locations nearby from c.1924 to c.1967), A.J. Tait Real Estate (in business in West Oakland from the 1890s to the 1940s, operated by Mary Dearing at 1566 7th from about 1908), Edmond Flynn's saloon and son-in-law James McAllister's plumbing shop (sharing 1606-16 7th from the 1880s to the 1910s), the Lincoln Theater (successor to at least two storefront nickelodeons nearby, the neighborhood theater from 1919 to the 1950s), Fakoury's dry goods (at 1666 7th from 1913 to c.1946), Lekos Bros. Market (on 7th Street 1909-1947, at 1674 from 1921), and John Singer's bar and restaurant (1720, 1943 to the present). 1684-86 and 1716-18 7th and their occupants are discussed separately below.

1684-86 7th Street is not eligible for the National Register in its present condition. Were it restored, it might become eligible under Criterion A, patterns of history, and Criterion C, architecture, as a representative of the once-thriving 7th Street (Railroad Avenue) commercial district in West Oakland. It was built in 1889-90 by John C. Bullock to house his plumbing business and the West Oakland Free Reading Room, an early branch library. From about 1920 the library space was occupied by a billiard parlor, tying the building to the railroad-related services and black social and entertainment district along west 7th Street, now all but obliterated. The building is a good example of late Victorian semi-vernacular commercial architecture, and is one of the more prominent and better preserved structures in the fragmentary blocks that now remain of Seventh Street.

Tax records date this building 1889-90, original owner John C. Bullock. In an undated clipping in the Oakland Public Library's scrapbook for May 1890 to November 1895, the Reading Room Committee reports that "Mr. Bullock has agreed to erect a building for the purpose, 100 yards nearer Broadway than the present library, and to charge \$20 a month." The library was located at 1684 7th Street, and Bullock and Sons' plumbing shop downstairs at 1686, in time to be listed in the 1891 Oakland City Directory.

No reference to this building has been found in the limited 19th century sources for architects and builders (California Architect and Building News; contract notices in Edwards Transcripts), and it is conceivable that the Bullocks themselves designed or built the store. The building is good example of simple, functional, conservative, small-scale Victorian commercial design. Its stylistic features are loosely Italianate (the pipestem colonettes, tall windows, and cornice brackets) and Eastlake (the fluted pilasters), but it is

(see continuation page 8)



HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

CP

Street or rural address: 7th Street Commercial ASI

19. Historical and/or Architectural Importance (continued from page 7)

essentially a vernacular commercial type. The building is of structural interest for its wood-fronted brick construction; the Oakland survey has discovered only two others like it from the Victorian period. (Fire safety was probably a consideration, for the plumbing shop and the public assembly use above.) This is one of two reasonably intact Victorian commercial buildings still standing on 7th Street, and one of the anchors of this ghost of an 1870s-1940s commercial district.

The West Oakland Free Reading Room occupied the upper floor of the Bullock building from 1890 to 1901. The Library Annual Report for 1890 showed this to be the most heavily used of the three branches (245 patrons a day), and it subscribed to 52 daily newspapers - more than even the main library, and quite probably related to the traveling clientele. The same report described the new building, where "the owner offered to make special provisions for a reading room if the Board would establish the room there," as "lighted by electricity, well ventilated, and... one of the most pleasant reading rooms on the coast." The first West Oakland branch reading room was established in 1878. By 1890 there were 3 branches (the others were East and North), and 6 by 1906. Oakland's library system appears to have been a pioneer in establishing neighborhood branches, as well as "one of the first free public libraries in the state" (Bagwell, Oakland: The Story of a City, p.127).

Bullock's plumbing shop was here until about 1910. The 1911 Sanborn map shows the second floor as a billiard room - one of four on this block. As late as 1967 it was White's Pool Hall; in 1925 the proprietors were Andronis and Sirianos (and the building was owned by Gus Ponis), reflecting the strong European immigrant presence in West Oakland between the World Wars.

The building is now city-owned, apparently vacant and likely to be demolished for the Slim Jenkins project.

1716-18 7th Street is significant as a remnant of Victorian commercial development along 7th Street in West Oakland, and as the Pacific Coast headquarters for over 40 years of the International Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. However, like 1684-86 7th Street, its present condition and prospects make National Register eligibility doubtful.

Tax assessor's block books date construction of this building between the assessment dates of 1889 (old improvement removed) and 1891 (part of a total of \$4,000 improvements); the 1889 Sanborn map shows the building "being built." The owner was James de la Montanya of San Francisco, importer of stoves and metals and manufacturer of tinware" (father and/or son - both James, and both in the family business). A brother Matthew was in the stove and tin business in downtown Oakland in the 1880s and 90s, but the 7th Street building seems to have been rental property only, not de la Montanya business premises. Sanborn maps just show the occupancy as "store," but the brick lower walls may suggest that it was designed for quasi-manufacturing uses like tinning. (The other surviving Victorian commercial building on this fragment



HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

CP

Street or rural address: 7th Street Commercial ASI

19. Historical and/or Architectural Importance (continued from page 8)

of 7th Street, the Bullock plumbing shop at 1684-86 7th, also has brick side and rear walls.) Neighboring uses on the block in 1901 were a carpenter, a glove factory, a wood, coal, and hay dealer, a drugstore, 3 restaurants, and a saloon, in addition to a dozen nonspecific "stores" (Sanborn map).

By 1911 the same block had two saloons, two billiard rooms, and a bathhouse - a change which could be described as an increase in uses serving the traveling (and waiting) railroad workers from the nearby yards. The Oakland yards, at the terminus of the transcontinental railroad, were the birthplace in the mid-1920s of the West Coast branch of the Pullman porters' union, the International Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. The first all-black labor union chartered by the AF of L, the Brotherhood was organized in the east by A. Philip Randolph and in Oakland by Dad Moore and C.L. Dellums. After being fired by the railroad for union activity in 1927, Dellums went to work for the Brotherhood at its first Oakland office (517 Wood Street, no longer extant: see SHRI form in Ethnic Survey, 1980), and went on to serve for 40 years as Randolph's International Vice-President, and as President after Randolph's retirement in 1969. From 1934 to about 1978 the Brotherhood's Oakland Division (and sometimes West Coast, and sometimes national) headquarters was 1716 7th Street, upstairs from Dellums' pool hall at 1718. Dellums' 1973 oral history for the Bancroft Library includes a photo of the Brotherhood office here, and describes the union and civil rights activities that emanated from this office, and the 7th Street and railroad milieu.



HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

CP

Street or rural address: 7th Street Commercial ASI



Photo No: 501-26
Date: 09/24/87
Location: 7TH STREET ASI
VIEW EAST ON 7TH FROM 1726 7TH



Photo No: 501-20
Date: 09/24/87
Location: 7TH STREET ASI
VIEW EAST ON 7TH FROM 1686-98



HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

CP

Street or rural address: 7th Street Commercial ASI

21. Sources (continued from page 2)

Tax assessor's block books, 1877-1960
Sanborn insurance maps, 1889-1901, 1902-11, 1912-45
City directories and telephone books, 1870s-1970s
Property files, City of Oakland Inspectional Services Dept

C.L. Dellums, International President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Civil Rights Leader, Bancroft Library Regional Oral History Office, Berkeley, 1973

International Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, Silver Jubilee Anniversary and 7th Biennial Convention program, September 10-15, 1950

Mike McGrath, "Railroad Ties," The Express, March 2, 1979

Lee Hildebrand, "Where the Train Stopped," The Express, June 3, 1988

J.M. Guinn, History of the State of California and Biographical Record of Oakland and Environs, Los Angeles, c. 1908, v.2, pp.787-88 (de la Montanya)

The Bay of San Francisco, v.2, p.430 (de la Montanya)

Oakland Public Library, Annual Report, July 1, 1890; scrapbook, May 1890 - November 20, 1895; "Historical Data" file (West Oakland Reading Room)

"Picturesque A.E. King," Oakland Tribune, Jan. 11, 1942 (Lincoln Theatre)

Sallie Mae Bridges, oral history for Oakland Museum, c.1970 (Slim Jenkins and 7th Street businesses)

Beth Bagwell, Oakland: The Story of a City, Presidio Press, Novato CA, 1982

Eleanor Edwards, "Memories of West Oakland," The Montclarion, July 7, 1982

Ed. H. Anthony, "A Sightseeing Tour Along Seventh Street in the Late Eighties or Early Nineties," West of Market Boys Journal, September-December 1939

Charles F. Tilghman, Colored American Directory, Oakland, 1915

East Bay Colored Business Directory, 1930

The Official California Negro Directory & Classified Buyer's Guide, 1942-43 (Oakland listings, pp.156-163)

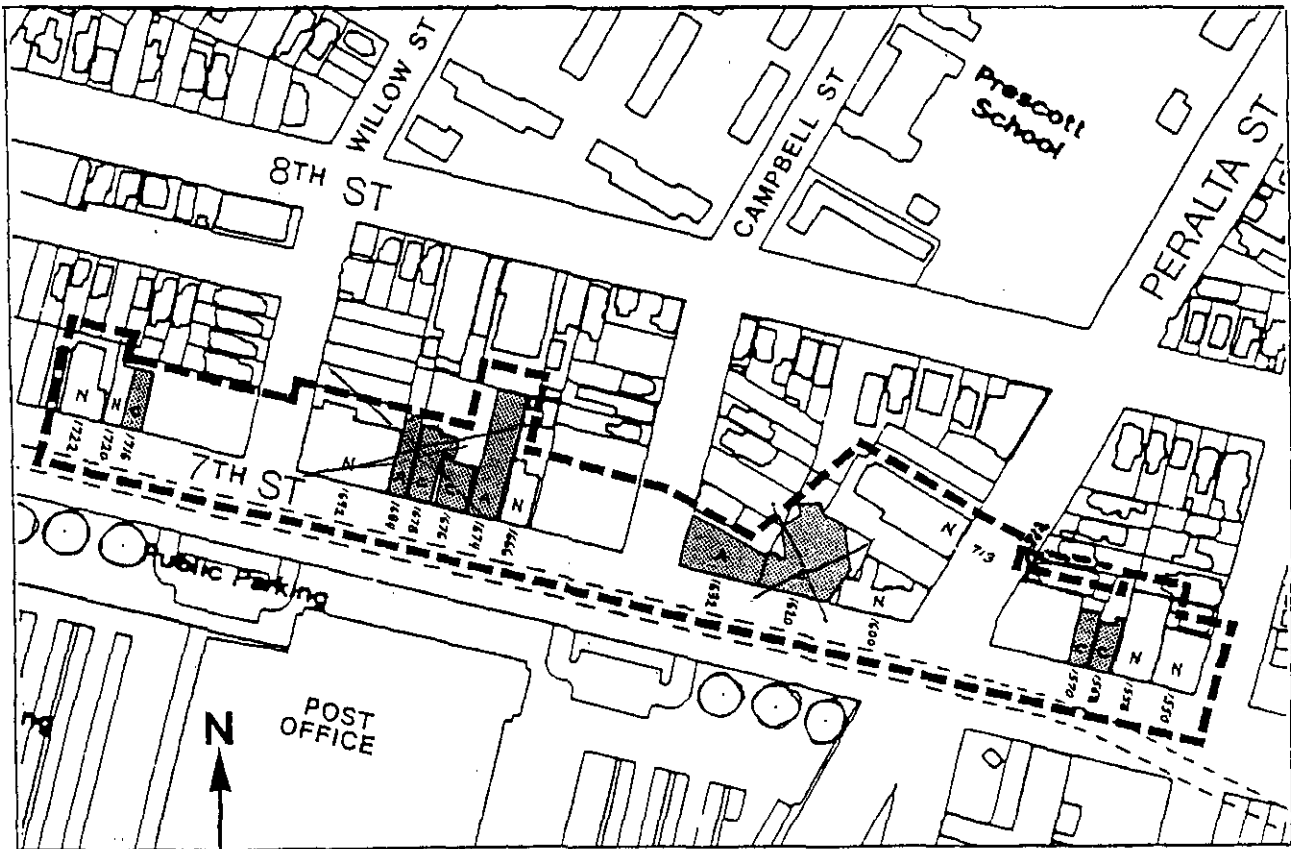
Diane Reinbolt Judd, "Gibbons Folly," University of California class paper, April 1976

Rachel Lorenz, "The Eiben & Nor Building," University of California class paper, December 1985

RANK	HISTORIC NAME	ADDRESS	DATE	STYLE
Ec/N	Alcatraz Masonic Hall	713 PERALTA ST	1899 rem.1943	Classical Revival
Dd/N	Gardiner (Wm) confectionery, Bank Buffet	1550 7TH ST	1878 add.1889	19c commercial
Ed/N	Wolf (Max) furniture warehouse	1558 7TH ST	1940	Mid 20c utilitarian
Cc/C	Tait (A.J.)-Dearing (Mary) office & res.	1568 7TH ST	1907-08 inc.1878-79?	Colonial Revival
Dd/C	Siedentopf paint shop-Aboumrad dry goods	1570 7TH ST	1920 inc.1878-89?	Colonial Revival
Ec/N	Flynn (Ed.) saloon-McAllister plumbing	1600 7TH ST	1885-86 add.1890ff	Italianate commerc'l
DEM	Cb+/C Lincoln Theatre	1620 7TH ST	1919	Spanish Colonial
	Db-/A Arcadia Hotel; Isaccs & Schwartz Block	1632 7TH ST	1906-07	Mission Revival
	Ed/N Fakoury (Michael) dry goods store	1666 7TH ST	1913	Colonial commercial
DEM	Cb-/A Lekos Bros. Market	1674 7TH ST	1921	Colonial commercial
DEM	Dd/C Unknown	1676 7TH ST	1924	Early 20c utilitarian
DEM	Dd/C Unknown	1678 7TH ST	1928	Early 20c commercial
DEM	B-b+/A Bullock plumbing, West Oak. Reading Room	1684 7TH ST	1889-90	Late 19c commercial
DEM	Ed/N Unknown	1692 7TH ST	1915 inc.1877ff	Early 20c commercial
	B-b+/C Intl. Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters	1716 7TH ST	1889-90	Stick-Queen Anne com
Ec/N	Smith (Jason) photo studio	1720 7TH ST	1889 rem. 1928ff	Late 19c commercial
Ed/N	Unknown, later Villa (Dewey) restaurant	1722 7TH ST	1870s rem.1944/64	Italianate commerc'l?

not in original ASI but part of historic 7th Street business district:

Cb- Eiben & Nor house-West Oakland Free Reading Room 712 PERALTA ST 1880-81 add 1907 Italianate/Early 20c comm'l



Individual RANK: A = Highest importance; B = Major importance; C = Secondary importance; D = Minor importance; E = Of no particular interest; * = Post-1945 — lower case letter = Potential RANK if restored

District RANK: /A = Anchor; /C = Contributor; /N = Non-contributor (based on present condition)

UNLAKED CULTURAL HERITAGE SURVEY - AREA OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE-CONTINUATION SHEET
 Page 15 of 21 pages
 7th Street Commercial

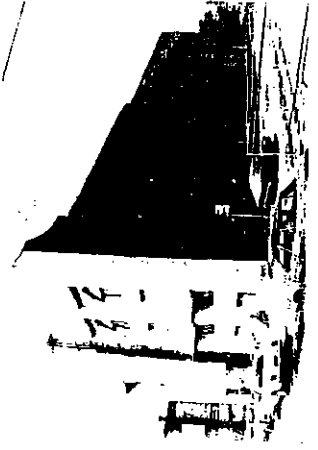


Photo no: 407-0
 Date: 07/24/07
 App: 4- 97- 4- 9
 Survey Rating: EC
 Non-Contributor
 IR Status: 0/50

Address: 315 7th St (Formerly, 301 Peralta St.)
 Common Name: Sausalito Police
 Historic Name: Alameda, Organic Hall
 Construction Date: 1927
 Designer: Unknown
 Architectural Style: Classical Revival
 Architectural Style: Classical Revival
 Present Use: Domestic/Residential

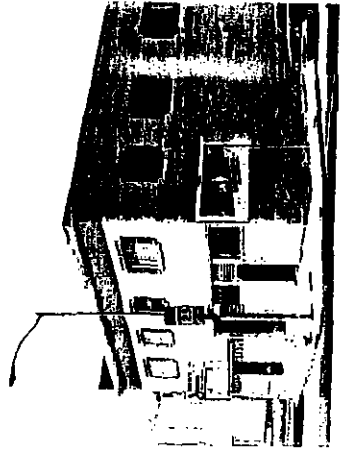


Photo no: 408-9
 Date: 07/20/07
 App: 4- 97- 4- 9
 Survey Rating: EC
 Non-Contributor
 IR Status: 0/50

Address: 1500 7th St (aka, 1500 7th St.)
 Common Name: None
 Historic Name: Woolner (and) Confectionery, Bank Office
 Construction Date: 1905 and 1908
 Designer: Unknown
 Architectural Style: Classical Revival
 Architectural Style: Unknown
 Present Use: Commerce/Domestic/Residential

UNLAKED CULTURAL HERITAGE SURVEY - AREA OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE-CONTINUATION SHEET
 Page 15 of 21 pages
 7th Street Commercial

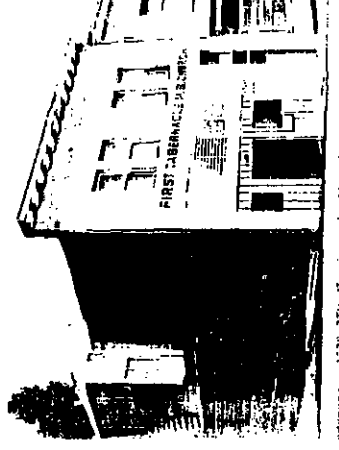


Photo no: 408-4
 Date: 07/20/07
 App: 4- 97- 11- 0
 Survey Rating: EC
 Non-Contributor
 IR Status: 0/50

Address: 1570 7th St (Formerly 1568 7th St.)
 Common Name: First Foursville M. C. Church
 Historic Name: St. Vincent of Paul
 Construction Date: 1920
 Designer: Unknown
 Architectural Style: Colonial Revival
 Architectural Style: Unknown
 Present Use: Commerce/Domestic/Residential

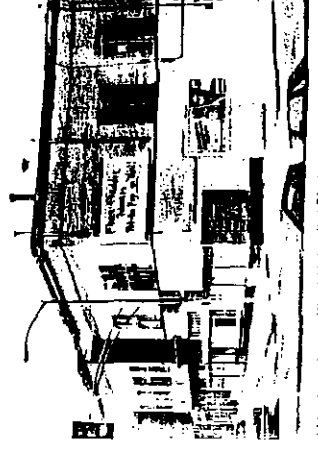


Photo no: 408-0
 Date: 08/20/07
 App: 4- 97- 10- 0
 Survey Rating: EC
 Non-Contributor
 IR Status: 0/50

Address: 1600 7th St (Formerly 1600 7th St.)
 Common Name: None
 Historic Name: Flynn (aka, Wilson-McCallister Plumbing)
 Construction Date: 1900-1905
 Designer: Unknown
 Architectural Style: Classical Revival
 Architectural Style: Unknown
 Present Use: Commerce/Domestic/Residential

UNLAKED CULTURAL HERITAGE SURVEY - AREA OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE-CONTINUATION SHEET
 Page 16 of 21 pages
 7th Street Commercial



Photo no: 408-2
 Date: 08/20/07
 App: 4- 97- 10- 0
 Survey Rating: EC
 Non-Contributor
 IR Status: 0/50

Address: 1568 7th St (Formerly 1568 7th St.)
 Common Name: None
 Historic Name: 4117 (aka, Farmers Warehouse)
 Construction Date: 1945
 Designer: Rossiter, A.L. (L.J.)
 Architectural Style: Neo-Colonial Revival
 Architectural Style: Neo-Colonial Revival
 Present Use: Commerce/Domestic/Residential

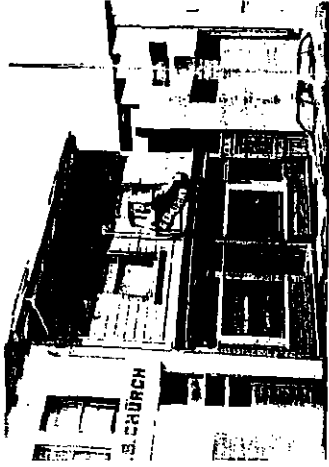


Photo no: 408-2
 Date: 08/20/07
 App: 4- 97- 11- 0
 Survey Rating: EC
 Contributor
 IR Status: 0/50

Address: 1560 7th St (Formerly, 1560 7th St.)
 Common Name: 4115 (aka, Restaurant)
 Historic Name: 4115 (aka, Restaurant) (aka) Office & Res.
 Construction Date: 1907-10 (aka, 1907/08)
 Designer: Unknown
 Architectural Style: Colonial Revival
 Architectural Style: Unknown
 Present Use: Commerce/Domestic/Residential

UNLAKED CULTURAL HERITAGE SURVEY - AREA OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE-CONTINUATION SHEET
 Page 16 of 21 pages
 7th Street Commercial

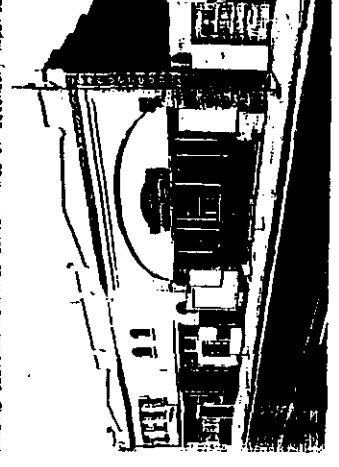


Photo no: 501-0
 Date: 07/24/07
 App: 4- 97- 13- 0
 Survey Rating: EC
 Contributor
 IR Status: 0/50

Address: 1620 7th St
 Common Name: Lincoln Theatre
 Historic Name: Lincoln Theatre
 Construction Date: 1915
 Designer: Unknown
 Architectural Style: Spanish Colonial
 Architectural Style: Unknown
 Present Use: Vacant

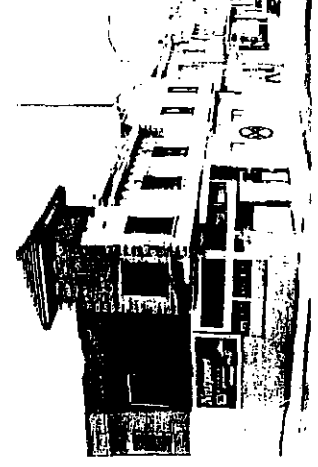


Photo no: 409-11
 Date: 08/20/07
 App: 4- 97- 21- 0
 Survey Rating: EC
 Contributor
 IR Status: 0/50

Address: 1625 7th St (aka, 1625 7th St.)
 Common Name: None
 Historic Name: 4120 (aka, Isaac & Schwartz Block)
 Construction Date: 1900
 Designer: Unknown
 Architectural Style: Classical Revival
 Architectural Style: Unknown
 Present Use: Commerce/Domestic/Residential

Demolition, all the ...
Page 19 of 21 pages
7th Street Commercial

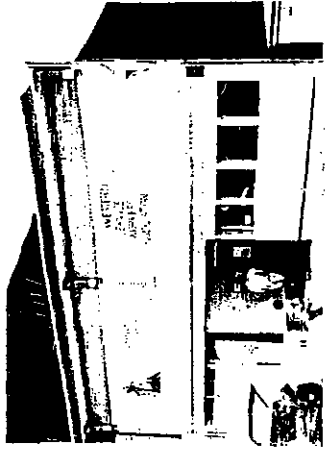


Photo no: 460-11
Date: 06/05/07
APP: 0- 17- 24- 0
Survey Rating: 6-0+
Non-Contributor
IR Status: 0/50

Address: 1074 7th St
Common Name: California Homeowners Assn.
Historic Name: Unknown (possibly 1st Johns Store)
Construction Date: 1911
Designer: Unknown
Architectural Style: Colonial Commercial
Builder: Moore, W.A.
Present Use: Commerce/educational Original Use: Commerce/specialty store

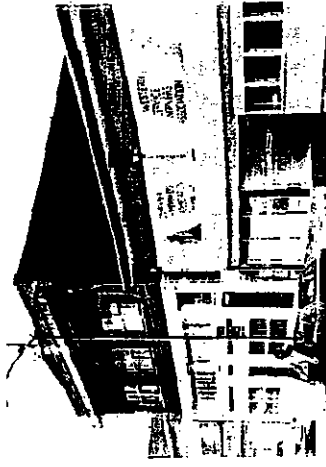


Photo no: 460-11
Date: 06/05/07
APP: 0- 17- 24- 0
Survey Rating: 6-0+
Non-Contributor
IR Status: 0/50

Address: 1074 7th St
Common Name: Lexus Srvs. Market
Historic Name: Unknown
Construction Date: 1921
Designer: Plancher, James A.
Architectural Style: Colonial Commercial
Builder: Unknown
Present Use: Commerce/finance Original Use: Commerce/finance

DEMO'D

ORCLAND KULTURAL HERITAGE SURVEY--area of secondary importance--Continuation Sheet
Page 19 of 21 pages
7th Street Commercial

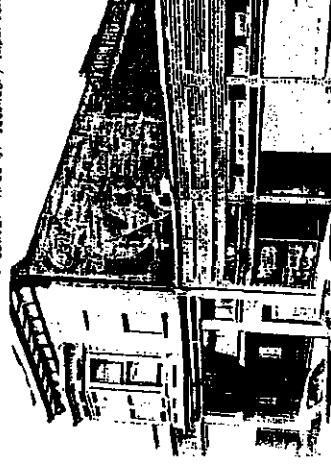


Photo no: 460-17
Date: 06/05/07
APP: 0- 17- 24- 0
Survey Rating: 6-0+
Non-Contributor
IR Status: 40/50

Address: 1064 7th St
Common Name: None
Historic Name: Wallace (possibly) West Yak. Reading Room
Construction Date: 1905-10
Designer: Unknown
Architectural Style: Late 19c Commercial
Builder: Unknown
Present Use: Commerce/vacant/finance Original Use: Commerce/Educ./library

DEMO'D



Photo no: 460-12
Date: 06/05/07
APP: 0- 17- 24- 0
Survey Rating: 6-0+
Non-Contributor
IR Status: 0/50

Address: 1062 7th St (1700 -1700 St) (formerly 1060-1700 7th St.)
Common Name: None
Historic Name: Unknown
Construction Date: 1924
Designer: Unknown
Architectural Style: Late 19c Commercial
Builder: Unknown
Present Use: Commerce/vacant Original Use: Commerce/store

DEMO'D

Demolition, all the ...
Page 20 of 21 pages
7th Street Commercial



Photo no: 461-17
Date: 06/05/07
APP: 0- 17- 24- 0
Survey Rating: 6-0+
Non-Contributor
IR Status: 0/50

Address: 1070 7th St
Common Name: None
Historic Name: Unknown
Construction Date: 1924
Designer: Unknown
Architectural Style: Early 20c Utilitarian
Builder: Hebbles & Hammond
Present Use: Commerce/vacant Original Use: Commerce/garage

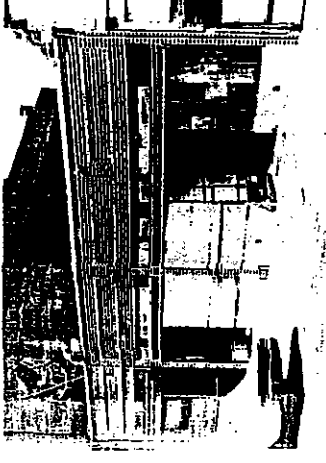


Photo no: 460-10
Date: 06/05/07
APP: 0- 17- 24- 0
Survey Rating: 6-0+
Non-Contributor
IR Status: 0/50

Address: 1070 7th St
Common Name: None
Historic Name: Unknown
Construction Date: 1925
Designer: Unknown
Architectural Style: Early 20c Commercial
Builder: Gardner, Fred.
Present Use: Commerce/vacant Original Use: Commerce

DEMO'D

ORCLAND KULTURAL HERITAGE SURVEY--area of secondary importance--Continuation Sheet
Page 20 of 21 pages
7th Street Commercial



Photo no: 460-17
Date: 06/05/07
APP: 0- 19- 23- 0
Survey Rating: 6-0+
Non-Contributor
IR Status: 40/50

Address: 1710 7th St (formerly 1714 7th St.)
Common Name: None
Historic Name: Int. Greenhood of Sleeping Car Porters
Construction Date: 1885-90
Designer: Unknown
Architectural Style: Stick-Queen Anne
Builder: Unknown
Present Use: Commerce/store/office Original Use: Commerce/store/office

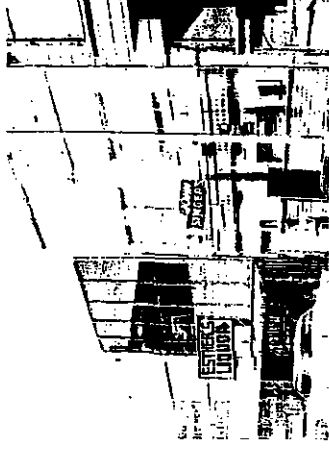


Photo no: 460-20
Date: 06/05/07
APP: 0- 19- 23- 0
Survey Rating: 6-0+
Non-Contributor
IR Status: 0/50

Address: 1620 7th St (formerly 1710 7th St.)
Common Name: None (single)
Historic Name: Wallis (possibly) White Store
Construction Date: 1905
Designer: Unknown
Architectural Style: Late 19c Commercial
Builder: Unknown
Present Use: Commerce/restaurant/finance Original Use: Commerce/shoe/department store

COMMUNITIES IN ACTION

Where the Train Stopped

By Lee Hilditch
The celebrated Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s wasn't the only explosion of black culture that occurred in America during the first part of this century. Much more may have been the hub, but its spokes reached out to every urban center in which large numbers of black people lived. Exciting new developments in music, poetry, fiction, theater, and visual arts were felt throughout the land. What was the main province of the arts, however, and even the highly sophisticated consciousness of such musicians as Duke Ellington and Lester Young could be appreciated by the common man. It appeared as the best, as well as to the head, and his popularity transcended race.

West Oakland NAACP chief Roy Williams once observed, "The places where the train stopped." Between the two great wars, the Southern Pacific deposited thousands of black people, primarily from Texas and Louisiana, at its 16th and 7th depot, West Oakland, which had contained a mixture of Greeks, Slavs, Italians, Europeans, Spanish, Irish, and a few blacks before World War I, became a majority black community by the end of the second World War. Stately old Victorian and Italianate houses were divided up into apartments to accommodate the one-way flow of the white



Harold "Slim" Jenkins

Oakland and beyond, where they could continue to live in white environs while collecting rent.
 The first black musician of note known to have performed in West Oakland was pianist Shelton Brooks, who appeared at Henry Hastings' bar at Pacific and Willow sometime before World War I. Brooks' compositions, which included "Some of These Days" and "Harktown Strutters' Ball," provided an important stylistic link between ragtime and the then-emerging work of such Tin Pan Alley composers as Irving Berlin and Ir-

ving Berlin and Irving Berlin and Ir-
 Later, in 1921, New Orleans trombonist Kid Ory was working his side as a place called the Creole Cafe on 7th Street. Just a year before, in Los Angeles, Ory's Creole Jazz Band had become the first black band to make a record.
 The January 7, 1922 issue of Oakland's *California Voice*, the oldest black newspaper on the West Coast, contained an editorial headlined "Oakland's Shame" bemoaning the failure of a number of black businesses in West Oakland. It read in part: "The Creole Cafe, the finest of its kind west of Chicago, can attribute its

failure to the fact that it was a place where the white and black patrons were forced to ply for patronage to the whites and slowly but surely prejudice crept in this was the beginning of the end."
West Oakland began to come alive again thanks to a new named Harold "Slim" Jenkins. In 1933, directly next door to what had been the Creole Cafe, Jenkins opened a nightclub on the day Prohibition ended. It marked the beginning of the West Oakland Renaissance, a period that lasted into the '60s, well after the Mafia's introduction of heroin into Harlem destroyed what-

COMMUNITIES IN ACTION

ever vestiges of that dream still remained after World War II.
 Born in Monroe, Louisiana, Jenkins came to California right after World War I, worked as a welder, and saved his money. His club at 1718 7th Street became the most celebrated black nightclub on the West Coast.
 "Slim was the most beautiful nigger club that we ever had around here," recalls emcee/strip dancer Finney Moak, who concert shows for such headliners as Louis Jordan, Red Fox, Jimmy Witherspoon, Charles Brown, Louis Armstrong, and Billie Holiday at Slim Jenkins' during the late '40s and early '50s. "It was the spot. No matter where you were—New Orleans, Dallas, Kansas City, Chicago, or New York—everybody heard of Slim."
 Slim Jenkins' restaurant a large show-stopper, a first-class restaurant with a large lounge, a bar, a market, and a lounge show. It attracted a racially mixed clientele, to see most of the big names in black popular music: Ivory Joe Hunter, one of the most popular rhythm 'n' blues artists of the '50s and '60s; a decade earlier, he and his band were one of many whose careers Jenkins nurtured.
 Mr. Jenkins promoted the Blotters in which they became famous," recalls Tippy Jones, who played drums there behind the likes of Joe Turner, Ella James, and Billie Holiday. "When they first came there, they were just a little group trying to make it and he worked them out and brought them out into a beautiful singing group."
 "He was funny, but he was a first man to work for—all business," Finney Moak says. "He didn't allow a whole lotta help in around with the waitresses and the help. He had relationships at least twice a week and the show had to be up to par."

tall and weighed well over 200 pounds, was known as the unofficial "Mayor of West Oakland." He always wore conservative three-piece suits and kept his silver hair closely cropped. Gifted and polite, he was active in various civic and civil rights groups and a Republican Party politics.
 He ruled his club, according to Jones, "with a businesslike iron hand." It was a well-organized establishment, she says, adding, "most of the sites went there. People would come from all over to have dinner down there."
 Slim Jenkins' club, set atop an establishment was celebrated years later in a song by Booker T. and the MGs, from faraway Memphis, titled "Slim Jenkins' Place." It was the centerpiece of 7th Street, which some referred to as "the black Broadway."
 "Seventh Street used to be R," Jones recalls. "It was beautiful. It was all night and the restaurants and clubs very well kept. They had very good clientele. People from all over came down to 7th Street in those years. In the daytime it would be jumping, just as it would be at night. A lot of tall, bad men and nice, neat women come down there. Just everybody went to 7th Street." Jones says that was the nicest of the West Coast.

While Slim Jenkins' was the street's most popular slowcase club, other first-class entertainment establishments flourished there, including those having seen Billy Eckstine, T Bone Walker, Cannon Ball, and James Moody at the Swing Club during the '50s. Other top of the line entertainers played Giro's, the Villa's, the Chief Club, and the Rendezvous. And the Lincoln Theater offered vaudeville and revue.
 Slim Jenkins weathered "the lustrous '30s, the fat '40s, and the Diddy '50s," as he once put it, but he was forced out of his 7th Street location in 1962 when the property was sold as a service station site. He attempted to relocate within West Oakland, at 915 Grand Avenue, but protests from members of a Baptist church across

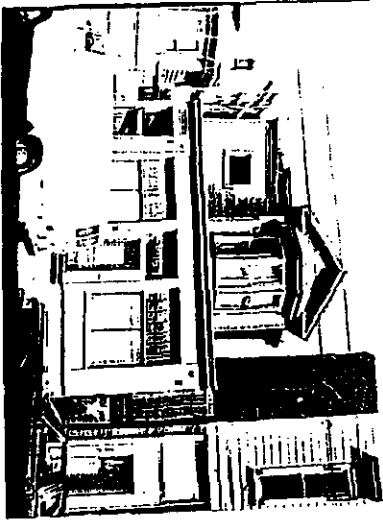
the street caused the justice system to force the city to deny his application, even through the police department reported that there'd never been any problems at 7th Street club. He finally reopened in Jack London Square, but was never able to recapture the magic of 7th Street. The new Slim Jenkins' finally closed its doors in 1967, shortly before Jenkins' death at age 70.
 "After Slim Jenkins' moved from down there, things started slowing up on 7th Street," recalls Jones.
 Today, 7th Street's once thriving business district is one of Oakland's most blighted areas, a row of boarded-up storefronts, bars, pool halls, and liquor stores that is the last vestige of Oakland BART riders get as they emerge from the transit bay tube.

Eather Mabry is one of the last of the old 7th Street merchants. She says she stays there because she's "birth-born." Mabry came to West Oakland from Texas in 1912, arriving at the Southern Pacific station. Two years later, she went to work for Slim Jenkins and, in 1950, opened her own restaurant across the street, calling it Eather's Orkin Room.
 "I tried to keep things going after Slim left and went down to Jack London Square," Mabry says. Indeed, during the heyday of Eather's Orkin Room in the '70s and early '80s, the club regularly presented such stars as Lou Rawls, Joe Turner, Pee Wee Cayton, Charika Brown, Lowell Fulson, Ella James, and Al Green. The post office bought Eather's complex in 1973 to build an employee parking lot. "We had to give it up," she explains. "There was no choice, but I held out. I was the last one to go. They gave me quite a bit more money than they first offered me. We bought a lot here on the corner to build, but we never did because my husband got sick. Then the interest started going up and up and it got harder and harder to build."

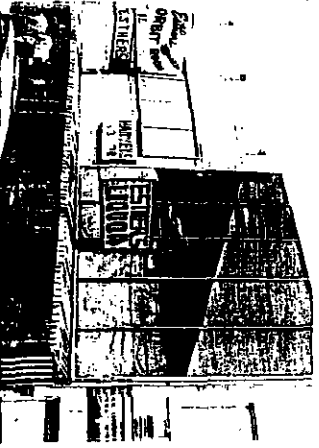
her's Orkin Room, Breakfast Club, and Liquor Store are now located in a smaller building across the street from Oakland's main post office. There's no longer any live music, and Eather's clientele is now made up mostly of neighborhood people, seamstresses, longshoremen, railroad workers, and post office employees. "Not as many of the old customers come down as they used to," she explains. "A lot of them have moved out of the area, but some come back because this is where their roots are."
 So-called redevelopment put an end to the great musical culture that once flourished along 7th Street and today, looking for live music in West Oakland is like trying to find a fruit juke stand in the Sahara Desert. The rock cocaine epidemic is further threatening the community's spiritual welfare.

Festival at the Lake's "Communities in Action" exhibit this year focuses on West Oakland—its past and future. The past chapters through in an exhibit that includes transcriptions of oral history interviews with former and longtime West Oakland residents, one that Slim Jenkins employees Tippy Jones and Eather Mabry among them.
 Hope for the future is the theme of the booths of two West Oakland community organizations, Justice West and White Youth Initiative West, run by Sisters Leona and Pat of the order of St. Joseph of Carmel, has been providing affordable housing for the poor and is presently in the process of renovating Liberty Hall at 1483 8th Street, a 110-year-old mid-Victorian building that served as the local headquarters for Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association in the '20s, and for Harlem-based evangelist Father Divine in the '30s. Children from the organization's after-school program will be performing rap, poems, and short skits on the subject of "being successful." And the Actors' Just Say No! Club Players, a group of children aged five through eleven from the drug-ravaged Acorn housing project, will perform an anti-drug skit under the auspices of Will in You, Inc.

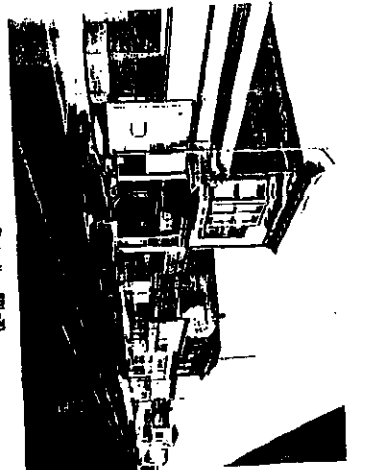
not in original ASI but part of Historic 7th Street business district.
 Address: 712-14 Parula Street
 Eather's Orkin Room/West Oakland Fine Reading Room
 1890-91, est. 1907. Italianate house & early 20th century commercial
 Cb-1+ (National Register, eligible as contributor to Oakland Period Residential District)



Address: 1722 7th St (formerly 1718-20 7th St.)
 Common Name: Eather's Orkin Room
 Historic Name: Unknown, later Villa (Shelby) restaurant
 Construction Date: 1870s, rem. 1944/45, 1950s
 Architectural Style: Italianate commercial
 Present Use: Recreation/Business/Restaurant
 Original Use: Commercial/Residential, Restaurant



Parcel no.: 467-21
 Date: 08/09/87
 APT: 6-19-59-6
 SURVEY: METING, EQU
 400'-CONTR-TOUR
 NW QUARTER, W/30



Parcel No.: 501-26
 Date: 09/24/87
 Location: 7th Street ASI
 Legal Desc: 7th Street ASI
 VED: EAST ON 7th FROM 1722-20

State of California - The Historical Architectural Department of Parks and Recreation
 HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY
 Street or urban address: 7th Street (Commercial) ASI
 Construction Date: 1870s
 Page 11 of 23 pages
 7th Street (Commercial) ASI
 CP

RESOLUTION 2004-2
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
CITY OF OAKLAND

WHEREAS, a proposal to rezone the area described below to the S-7 Historic Preservation Combining Zone pursuant to proposed Chapter 17.84 of the Oakland Planning Code has been submitted by the property owner and considered by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board; and

WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed and examined the material pertaining to this district contained in Case File RZ04-107, the Landmark and S-7 Preservation Combining Zone Application Form, and Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey documentation, copies of which are attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that the proposed district meets the criteria found at proposed Section 17.84.010 of the Oakland Planning Code, as an area of "special importance due to historical association," in that

the nominated Seventh Street Historic District represents the best surviving fragment of 7th Street, West Oakland's legendary commercial street of the 19th and early 20th centuries; and

Seventh Street, historically known as Railroad Avenue, was from 1863 the route of commuter trains through West Oakland to the ferry wharf at Oakland Point, which in 1869 became the terminus of the first transcontinental railroad; and

Seventh Street from Center Street to Bay Street was for a century a thriving business district serving the surrounding Prescott and South Prescott neighborhoods; and

West 7th Street was renowned as a center for African-American musical clubs from the early 20th century until this culture was displaced in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the south side of the street was cleared for BART and the post office; and

the buildings between Peralta and Campbell, despite ground-floor alterations as they shifted from retail to other uses, have their upper stories largely intact and establish a strong presence as distinctive period commercial buildings; and

the histories of the buildings on this block embody the important themes of 7th Street – railroad-related businesses and lodgings, entertainment, and the ethnic and economic evolution of the neighborhood; and

the Arcadia Hotel building, 1632-42 7th Street, designed in 1906 by Thomas Dean Newsom of the Oakland-based Newsom architectural dynasty, is an excellent example of early 20th century Mission Revival commercial architecture, and housed

many early lodgers who worked for the railroad as well as Oscar Breiling's West Oakland Bank and Trust Company which handled the Southern Pacific payroll; and

the complex at 1600-16 7th Street was built and occupied by the Flynn and McAllister families, Irish immigrant in-laws who operated a saloon and a plumbing shop, and even with alterations the pair of two-story Italianate commercial buildings is rare and unmistakable; and

the Lincoln Theater, formerly on the parcel at 1620-28 7th Street, was an anchor of the commercial district and a social and entertainment center as well as a visual landmark, remembered by generations of West Oaklanders; and

the significance of Seventh Street has been widely recognized in formats ranging from publications to performances including the 1993 documentary video *Crossroads, A Story of West Oakland*, the 1997 book *Sights and Sounds: Essays in Celebration of West Oakland*, the Bay Area Blues Society's exhibit, program, and recording *The Music they Played on 7th Street*, and the recent art installation *Landscape in Blue* and streetscape plan by Walter Hood; and

designation of this small district also highlights the significance of the other surviving fragments of West Seventh Street: the cluster from the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters building to Esther's Orbit Room west of Willow Street (1716, 1720, and 1722 7th Street); the four buildings at 1550, 1558, 1568, and 1570, separated from the nominated district by a vacant corner lot; and the former West Oakland Library and Alcatraz Masonic Hall-Booker Emery House, just off 7th Street at 712 and 713 Peralta Street; and

WHEREAS, an Evaluation Sheet for Landmark Eligibility has been prepared for the district in accordance with the Board's Guidelines for Determination of Landmark Eligibility and confirms that the district meets the Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed and accepted the Evaluation Sheet, a copy of which is attached; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that this district merits designation, protective regulations, and preservation for the enjoyment of present and future generations;

Now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board hereby initiates, under the provisions of Section 17.84 of the Oakland Planning Code, action to recommend to the Planning Commission and City Council as an S-7 Historic Preservation District the following area:

HISTORIC NAME: Seventh Street Commercial District, West Oakland, block

including the Arcadia Hotel, Flynn-McAllister Building,
and site of Lincoln Theater
COMMON NAME: Seventh Street – Lincoln Theater block
DATE OR PERIOD *Period of significance: 1880s-1970s*
ADDRESSES and 1600 through 1642 7th Street;
PARCEL NUMBERS: parcels 006 -003-018-00, -019-00, -020-00, -021-00

And be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the structures on these properties shall be preserved generally in all their exterior features as existing on the date hereof or may be modified to restore, replicate, or more closely resemble their original or other historical appearance; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this recommendation be forwarded to the Oakland City Planning Commission for public hearing and consideration.

Approved by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board,
Oakland, California: *February 9*, 2004

ATTEST:

Jeanne M. Pauline
Landmarks Board Secretary

Chapter 17.84

S-7 PRESERVATION COMBINING ZONE
REGULATIONS

Sections:

- 17.84.010 Title, purpose, and applicability.
- 17.84.020 Zones with which the S-7 zone may be combined.
- 17.84.030 Design review for construction, alteration, demolition, or removal.
- 17.84.040 Design review criteria for construction or alteration.
- 17.84.050 Design review criteria for demolition or removal.
- 17.84.060 Postponement of demolition or removal.
- 17.84.070 Duty to keep in good repair.
- 17.84.010 Title, purpose, and applicability.
- The provisions of this chapter shall be known as the S-7 preservation combining zone regulations. The S-7 zone is intended to preserve and enhance the cultural, educational, aesthetic, environmental, and economic value of structures, other physical facilities, sites, and areas of special importance due to historical association, basic architectural merit, the embodiment of a style or special type of construction, or other special character, interest, or value, and is typically appropriate to selected older locations in the city. These regulations shall apply in the S-7 zone, and are supplementary to the provisions of Section 17.102.030 and to the other regulations applying in the zones with which the S-7 zone is combined. (Prior planning code § 6400)
- 17.84.020 Zones with which the S-7 zone may be combined.
- The S-7 zone may be combined with any other zone. (Prior planning code § 6401)

17.84.030 Design review for construction, alteration, demolition, or removal.

In the S-7 zone no building, sign, or other facility shall be constructed or established, or altered or painted a new color in such a manner as to affect exterior appearance, and no structure or portion thereof shall be demolished or removed, unless such proposal shall have been approved pursuant to the design review procedure in Chapter 17.136 and the applicable provisions of Sections 17.84.040, 17.84.050, and 17.84.060. However, after notice to the Director of City Planning, demolition or removal of a structure or portion thereof shall be permitted without such approval upon a determination by the Inspectional Services Department, the Housing Conservation Division, their respective appeals boards, or the City Council that immediate demolition is necessary to protect the public health or safety, or after expiration of the periods of postponement referred to in Section 17.84.060. Whenever it is proposed that demolition or removal be followed within a reasonable period of time by new construction, review of the new construction shall take place in conjunction with review of the demolition or removal. (Prior planning code § 6402)

17.84.040 Design review criteria for construction or alteration.

Design review approval for construction, establishment, alteration, or painting of a facility may be granted only upon determination that the proposal conforms to the general design review criteria set forth in the design review procedure in Chapter 17.136 and to both of the following additional design review criteria:

- A. That the proposal will not substantially impair the visual, architectural, or historic value of the affected site or facility. Consideration shall be given to design, form, scale, color, materials, texture, lighting, detailing and ornamentation, landscaping, signs, and any other relevant design element or effect, and, where applicable, the relation of the above to the original design of the affected facility.

B. That the proposed development will not substantially impair the visual, architectural, or historic value of the total setting or character of the surrounding area or of neighboring facilities. Consideration shall be given to integration with, and subordination to, the desired overall character of any such area or grouping of facilities. All design elements or effects specified in subsection A of this section shall be so considered. (Prior planning code § 6403)

17.84.050 Design review criteria for demolition or removal.

Design review approval, pursuant to Section 17.84.030, for demolition or removal of a structure or portion thereof may be granted only upon determination that the proposal conforms to the design review criteria set forth in subsections A and B of this section, or to one or both of the criteria set forth in subsection C of this section:

A. That the affected structure or portion thereof is not considered irreplaceable in terms of its visual, cultural, or educational value to the area or community;

B. That the proposed demolition or removal will not substantially impair the visual, architectural, or historic value of the total setting or character of the surrounding area or of neighboring facilities;

C. If the proposal does not conform to the criteria set forth in subsections A and B of this section:

1. That the structure or portion thereof is in such condition that it is not architecturally feasible to preserve or restore it, or

2. That, considering the economic feasibility of preserving or restoring the structure or portion thereof, and balancing the interest of the public in such preservation or restoration and the interest of the owner of the property in the utilization thereof, approval is required by considerations of equity. (Prior planning code § 6404)

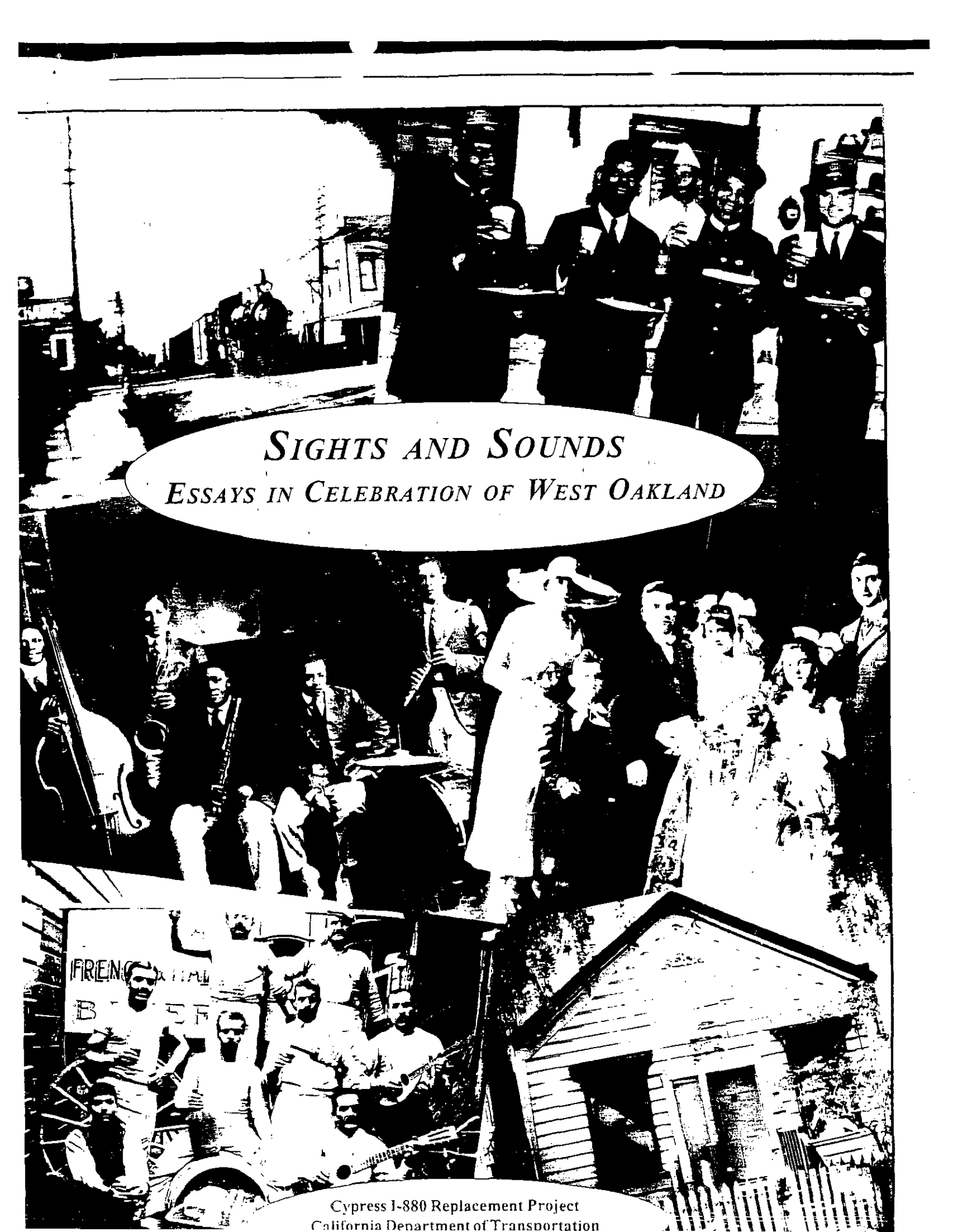
17.84.060 Postponement of demolition or removal.

If an application for approval of demolition or removal of a structure or portion thereof, pursuant to Sections 17.84.030 and 17.84.050, is denied, the

issuance of a permit for demolition or removal shall be deferred for a period of one hundred twenty (120) days, said period to commence upon the initial denial by the reviewing officer or body. However, if demolition or removal of the structure or portion thereof has also been postponed pursuant to Section 17.102.060, the initial period of postponement under this section shall be reduced by the length of the period imposed pursuant to Section 17.102.060. During the period of postponement, the Director of City Planning or the City Planning Commission, with the advice and assistance of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, shall explore all means by which, with the agreement of the owner or through eminent domain, the affected structure or portion thereof may be preserved or restored. The reviewing officer or body from whose decision the denial of the application became final may, after holding a public hearing, extend said period for not more than one hundred twenty (120) additional days; provided, however, that the decision to so extend said period shall be made not earlier than ninety (90) days nor later than thirty (30) days prior to the expiration of the initial one hundred twenty (120) day period. Notice of the hearing shall be given by posting notices thereof within seventy-five (75) feet of the property involved. Notice of the hearing shall also be given by mail or delivery to the applicant, to all parties who have commented on the initial application, and to other interested parties as deemed appropriate. All such notices shall be given not less than ten days prior to the date set for the hearing. Such extension shall be made only upon evidence that substantial progress has been made toward securing the preservation or restoration of the structure or portion thereof. In the event that the applicant shall have failed to exhaust all appeals under Sections 17.136.080 and 17.136.090 from the denial of the application, the decision to extend said period shall be appealable under the provisions of Sections 17.136.080 and 17.136.090 to those bodies to whom appeal had not been taken from the initial denial of the application. (Prior planning code § 6405)

17.84.070 Duty to keep in good repair.

Except as otherwise authorized under Sections 221 17.84.030 and 17.84.050, the owner, lessee, or other person in actual charge of each structure in the S-7 zone shall keep in good repair all of the exterior portions thereof, as well as all interior portions the maintenance of which is necessary to prevent deterioration and decay of any exterior portion. (Prior planning code § 6406)



SIGHTS AND SOUNDS
ESSAYS IN CELEBRATION OF WEST OAKLAND

Cypress I-880 Replacement Project
California Department of Transportation

JAZZING UP SEVENTH STREET: MUSICIANS, VENUES, AND THEIR SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Willie R. Collins

INTRODUCTION

The '20s roared on West Oakland's Seventh Street. King Oliver's cornet wailed; Kid Ory's trombone slid; and Wade Whaley, a young New Orleans' disciple, followed with his clarinet, playing sinewy counter strains around tunes like "Tiger Rag." Crescent City jazz flowed from the Creole Cafe onto Seventh Street. At night, Seventh Street came alive with many sights and many sounds. A night out on the town might begin with attending a social club's annual dance, with Tin Can Henry Alley and His Snappy Cotton Club Band furnishing the music at Magnolia Hall; or a few blocks down to Peralta, listening to Professor Elmer Keeton, organist and musical director at the Lincoln Theater, with the Keeton's Brown Favorites entertaining before seeing the Negro screen drama, "The Sport of the Gods"; or dining at the Overland Cafe on mustard greens and chicken dumplings with cornbread, just like mother used to fix it; or right off Seventh on Pine, listening to Ivy Anderson scat on a jazz chorus at the Bluebird Cabaret's grand opening. Such was the setting of what some called "Hell's Half Acre" but others called heaven.

These were prosperous times for West Oakland. Work was plentiful, with the Phoenix Iron Works to the north and the railroad and Moore shipyards to the west and south. Traffic was heavy, with the *modern electric Red Trains running every 20 minutes, and auto traffic to the ferries routed along Seventh (Olmsted and Olmsted 1994:166)*. Commute passengers punctuated their trips home by patronizing Seventh Street coffeehouses and bars, and boardinghouse residents dined at the restaurants and lounged on the street. While the street traffic swelled in the evenings and weekends, on-foot locals and visitors shared the sidewalks. Seventh Street was bustling, and one could walk the street at night without worry and have a good time.

In the first decades of the 20th century, West Oakland was a multi-ethnic neighborhood. African Americans worked and lived alongside European immigrants and American-born Whites, but maintained, by and large, a separate and rich social life—one in which music played a vital role. Conventional church music, such as religious folk songs, as well as special performances by African American concert artists could be heard in the Black churches of West Oakland. As a giver of pleasure, jazz accompanied all types of affairs, from nightclubs such as the Creole Cafe to associations' banquets. You could hear all types of music in West Oakland, but it was the "hot," energetic jazz à la New Orleans, the "slow drags" guided by the blues, and the undergirding pulse to which couples danced the "Texas Tommy" that gave West Oakland its soul and distinct identity. West Oakland's Seventh Street, shaped by external forces such as racism, became a Mecca for jazz lovers and one of the hubs of Black culture in the San Francisco Bay Area.

THE LEGACY OF JAZZ: A BRIEF CAPSULE

Jazz evolved from African and European American folk musical forms, such as the 19th-century religious folk song, minstrel tunes, and—by the early 20th century—blues. Musicians incorporated ragtime, popular songs, and began ragging tunes, imbuing them with blues inflections to create New Orleans jazz, a Black music with down beats and back beats that would make you swing and sway. New Orleans had more than its share of musicians and was a musical center for all types of music—from the Brass Band tradition to the French Opera. After the 1880s, the mixing of “Black” African Americans with the “Tan” Creoles (persons of mixed African and French or other European descent) produced acculturative forces that gave jazz, America’s original music, its flavor. As early as 1908 Bill Johnson, a double bass player, traveled with the Original Creole Band—one of several names for the band—through the southwest, bringing the music to the West Coast. Others were soon to follow to Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, and West Oakland.

Almost concurrent with its development in New Orleans, jazz was quickly disseminated to the burgeoning African American communities in West Oakland and Los Angeles. New Orleans Blacks heard the Southern Pacific’s train whistle and boarded the *Sunset Limited* for California. In West Oakland, Southern Pacific offered jobs as waiters, cooks, car cleaners, sleeping-car porters, and Redcaps. Louisiana folks responding to this new job market brought their culture and their music with them and maintained it here, and West Oakland’s attraction increased: not only were there jobs available, but there was a familiar and desirable culture in place. Musicians from New Orleans came with bands, trading the Crescent City for the Golden State before the closing of Storyville, New Orleans’s red-light district, in November 1917. Oakland, the largest African American community in the Bay Area and the second largest in the state, was receptive to the new changes.

During the same period that jazz emerged as a new music form, another innovation was taking place:

Jazz performances (beginning in 1920) appeared at the height of the phonograph boom. Records quickly became the chief educational tool for young jazz musicians across the country, as youth in California, Montana, Texas, and Massachusetts alike mimicked and transcribed the new music [Peretti 1992:152].

The record industry also served to create jazz fans throughout the country, paving the way for the success of future tours.

THE IMPACT OF THE RAILROAD ON AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC

While there were a variety of railroad jobs available, the African American community in Oakland grew from the roots of the small Pullman Car colony made up of the “newly created class of Pullman porters who by Pullman company policy, were black” (Bagwell 1982:82). African American railroad men listened to and distributed what were then known as “Race Records”—commercial recordings aimed specifically at the Black market. They patronized African American clubs, hired musicians to play for their social functions, and in some cases, opened clubs of their own. Across the Bay at San Francisco’s Barbary Coast, for example, two ex-porters founded Purcell, which

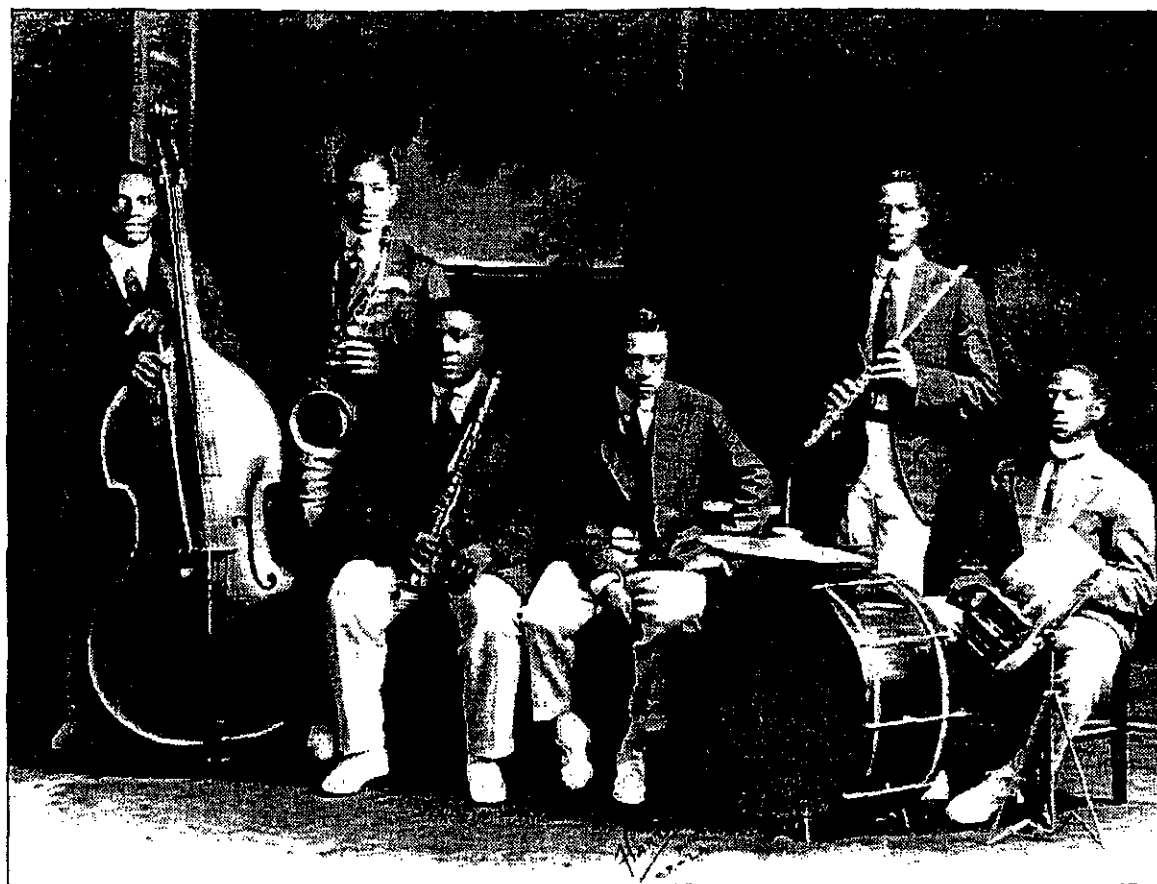


PLATE 89. SIDNEY LePROTTI'S "SO DIFFERENT JAZZ BAND," SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, IN 1915. (Left to right: Clarence Williams, string bass; Reb Spikes, baritone saxophone; Adam "Slocum" Mitchell, clarinet; LeProtti, piano and leader; Gerald Wells, flute; unidentified, drums.) Born in Oakland in 1886, LeProtti was the earliest local jazz musician identified in this study. In the same year as this photograph, LeProtti also led the Crescent Orchestra, featuring 14 musicians, which played banquets and society affairs in Oakland. (Photo courtesy of Gladys LeProtti)

was to become "one of the most famous Negro dance halls in the country" (Stoddard 1982:10). While Whites were quick to embrace Black dance music, its patronage was largely African American. West Oakland could not have sustained the degree of musical activity and other entertainment or the diversity of African American businesses without the railroad's economic base. Black railroad men, in large part, sustained African American music and musicians in the Bay Area.

Unions and railroad associations—such as Local 456 of the Dining Car Cooks and Waiters Union at 1767 Seventh Street, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters at 517 Wood Street, and the Pullman Porters Benefit Association at 404 Willow—were all headquartered in West Oakland (Thompson and Williams 1930). These groups needed music for their special dances and provided a source of employment for local musicians. Mrs. Lenear's Orchestra, one exception to the male-dominated orchestra leaders, played for Western Pacific's Dining Car Waiters and Cooks Christmas Eve dance (*Oakland Sunshine* 6 November 1915, XIII no. 20). Wade Whaley's orchestra played for

the Dining Car Cooks and Waiters grand informal ball at the Native Sons' Hall at Eleventh and Clay streets (*Western American* 26 June 1926:2). "Dad" Moore—an almost legendary West Oakland union leader (see essay, this volume)—organized the first Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters ball and dance, which took place on Monday, 8 November 1926, at the Paradise Gardens at Twelfth and Oak streets. Pianist/bandleader Eddie Liggins and his Knights of Syncopation Orchestra furnished the music (*Western American* 29 October 1926:2).

On both sides of the Bay, the railroad also provided the much-needed "day job" for some musicians. San Francisco drummer and bandleader Eddie Alley, for example, played "casuals" in West Oakland in the '20s and '30s while working split shifts as a Redcap porter at the Third and Townsend station in San Francisco. He played in West Oakland because "Oakland had lots of Blacks relative to San Francisco. It was a railroad hangout. Railroad men had the money. More people [musicians] found work in Oakland than they did in San Francisco" (Eddie Alley 1995, pers. comm.).

RESEARCHING WEST OAKLAND JAZZ MUSICIANS AND VENUES

From the late teens to the late '40s, jazz and jazz-style blues flourished in West Oakland—giving the neighborhood recognition throughout the country. The story of this development is therefore a fitting topic for a volume celebrating West Oakland's history. This essay examines the background, circumstances, and issues that structured the environment of the jazz-music scene on West Oakland's Seventh Street. Black nightlife on Seventh Street and the rest of Oakland presented jazz music for both African American and White audiences. To be sure, there were native Oakland White jazz musicians who played significant roles in the local jazz scene, such as arranger, composer, pianist, and bandleader Marty Paich, who played and wrote arrangements in Oakland in 1941, and Bob Ahern, guitarist for Stan Kenton's Metronome's Band (Simon 1971). This study, however, focuses on African American musicians, who were forced by racism to play in prescribed areas.

This essay also treats Oakland as an independent urban district, not as an appendage or adjunct of San Francisco, as Daniels (1990:xviii) defines it. Although musicians and patrons sometimes moved back and forth across the Bay, West Oakland maintained a distinctive character that deserves its own recognition. The study of jazz in West Oakland is important in that it has been overshadowed by other developments on the West Coast: most of the recording activity took place in Los Angeles, while the Barbary Coast with its Las Vegas-style attractions appealed more to tourists. The history of jazz on West Oakland's Seventh Street, in contrast, reflects the evolution of jazz music within a Black community. Jazz musicians here were less likely to cater to the desires and dictates of the paying public, as occurred on the Barbary Coast. While Oakland musicians had to play what their clientele wanted, in Oakland it was largely a Black clientele with Black sensibilities.

Reconstructing a history of jazz music and venues in Oakland presents challenges. While Oakland was second only to Los Angeles as a center of jazz activity in California, most studies have focused on developments in that southern California city (Eckland 1986; Gioia 1992; Tercinet 1986). Only fragments of West Oakland's early music history appear in scattered places. *Jazz on the Barbary Coast* (Stoddard 1982) includes comments on jazz musicians and bands in Oakland, while an article entitled "New Orleans-Area Musicians on the West Coast, 1908-1925" (Gushee 1989) provides some

information on Oakland jazz musicians but is mostly centered in Los Angeles. Later developments are better known: the California blues and Rhythm and Blues that developed in West Oakland in the 1940s has been documented by author and critic Lee Hildebrand (1982), among others.

Contemporary sources are also scarce. Few jazz events were covered by the *Oakland Tribune*, the city's major daily paper; even Delilah L. Beasley, an African American columnist who wrote for the *Tribune* in the late 1920s and early '30s, rarely mentioned jazz music in her column, "Activities Among Negroes," although it provides useful information on other topics. *Oakland Tribune* yearbooks and publications, such as *The Town Informer 1938-1939*, paid scant attention to jazz and blues music. When African American musicians were covered at all, the emphasis was on traveling concert artists, such as classical singer Marian Anderson, or on more traditional Black music fare, such as the Wings Over Jordan Choir or the local Keeton's Colored Chorus (Gessler 1945:115). Black newspapers active in Oakland—such as the *Oakland Sunshine*, *Oakland Independent*, *Oakland Times*, *Pacific Times*, *Western American*, *Western Outlook*, and *California Voice*—printed advertisements for bands, social-club functions, and nightclubs that were active in the area. Whether the events advertised actually happened cannot be verified. These advertisements, however, serve as primary sources for confirming the period of a band's existence, identifying band personnel, and documenting the kinds of venues available. City directories also corroborate whether a club or musician was actively functioning for a particular decade.

When one turns to recordings, the situation is bleaker. Although West Oakland had its own recording studios in the 1950s, there were few records made in the Bay Area during earlier decades; most local musicians recorded in Los Angeles (see Discography, Appendix B). Henry Halstead, a bandleader who was active in the Bay Area between 1920 and 1924, recorded "Bull Frog Serenade" and "Panama" for Victor in Oakland—the earliest recording identified in this study. Most of the recordings took place beginning in the late '30s.

Of inestimable importance are the living musicians who were born in Oakland or spent their formative years here. (The author interviewed several Bay Area jazz musicians for this essay. The interviews were taped but were not transcribed due to time limitations; tapes were listened to while writing this article.) Many of these musicians remember not only the details of their own careers, but the early clubs and the musicians who played there when they were growing up. While most of the local bands used stock arrangements (i.e., published transcriptions from recordings for various instruments), original scores or arrangements would allow us to recreate the sound of the music in the absence of recordings. Some of the musicians interviewed have scrapbooks containing newspaper clippings and photographs that proved valuable, but none of these men kept copies of the early arrangements. Jazz oral history, with the sometimes failing or inaccurate memories of the musicians, must be validated and verified through other documentation. To every extent possible, I have checked pertinent interview information included here for accuracy.

Further research would likely uncover many more sources on the history of jazz in West Oakland. Transcripts of interviews with early musicians at jazz archives are a potential source of information, as would be more in-depth interviews with living musicians. Now that this initial research has identified the players and venues—and sketched the environment in which the jazz scene operated—researchers can pursue more focused studies.

THE SETTING

JAZZ MUSIC AND SOCIAL LIFE

By the 1920s Oakland, not unlike other cities in the United States, was addicted to social dancing. Much of the social activity in Oakland's African American community was organized around voluntary associations or social clubs that seemed to prefer jazz for dancing (*Western Outlook* 22 April 1922:2). Numerous halls and social clubs sponsored dances—annual affairs as well as weekly events—and they needed jazz music to dance to. Some hired resident bands, while others offered “casuals”: employment for a single event. Eddie Alley recalls playing in West Oakland in the '20s and '30s, underscoring the variety of employment opportunities those social clubs provided the musicians:

I didn't play steady, but I played casuals most of my life. I played for a lot of club affairs. Wherever a club would have a function, I might be called to play. They'd have a dance and a hall that I had never heard of. We'd play for this affair. The audiences were primarily Blacks in those days. Later, I played for mostly White people [1995, pers. comm.].



PLATE 90. EDDIE ALLEY'S GENTLEMEN OF RHYTHM. (Left to right: Eddie Alley, drums and leader; George Fleming, trumpet; Eddie Walker, trumpet; and Ike Bell, trombone.) Alley played casuals in West Oakland in the late 1920s and 1930s while working split shifts as a Redcap porter in San Francisco. He formed The Gentlemen of Rhythm in the early 1940s: according to Alley, his was the first Black band to play large hotels in San Francisco, such as the Mark Hopkins and the Fairmont. (Photo courtesy of George Fleming)

As early as 1907, the Industrial Club—later called the Art and Industrial Club—presented Grand Balls (*Oakland Sunshine* 21 December 1907:4). The Cosmos Social Club, established in 1918, also gave annual dances over a number of years (*California Voice* 27 January 1939:1). Less formal were the weekly dances sponsored by the Marion Social Club on Eleventh Street near Broadway, where the ladies were charged 10 cents admission and the men 25 cents, allowing them to dance to a full orchestra until midnight (*Oakland Sunshine* 19 June 1915:4).

RACISM AND ITS IMPACT ON WEST OAKLAND'S MUSIC SCENE

The San Francisco Union, Local 6 of the American Federation of Musicians, chartered in 1897, stated in its constitution that it would “enforce Good Faith and Fair Dealing and adherence to Union principles among all members”; this did not, however, apply to African American musicians, who were denied membership in the union. In 1924 Black musicians in the Bay Area applied to the American Federation of Musicians and were granted a charter to do business as Local 648, headquartered in Oakland, with the same jurisdictional boundaries as the all-White Local 6. “The two locals cohabited this area . . . until 1934” (Lowe 1985:1).

While Local 648—also called the Musicians Protection Association—may have aided its members on some fronts, one Oakland musician recalled that “it was very difficult for a coloured band to get a steady job, even though we had a coloured local. . . . They didn’t give a damn whether we had a second or a third class rating” (Stoddard 1982:96). Eddie Alley confirmed the situation: “Musicians and where they played were segregated. Black bands couldn’t play in downtown Oakland. It was a segregated union—didn’t allow us to play in certain places, they were very prejudiced” (1995, pers. comm.). In 1934 the White Local 6 filed a complaint against Local 648 and obtained a judgment against it. Local 648 was then placed in receivership, with its charter revoked, and the members placed under the stewardship of Local 6. The Local 6 subsidiary (the Jim Crow Union) was later chartered to do business as Local 669, after James C. Petrillo abolished subsidiary locals. Following World War II, between 1946 and 1948, a general strike as well as economic pressures forced businesses “Uptown” (east of Broadway) to slowly and begrudgingly open their doors to African American musicians and patrons. It was not until 1 April 1960 that the White Local 6 and the Black Local 669 reached an agreement to merge.

The Black musician’s place to play music in Oakland prior to the late 1940s was restricted to Seventh Street and elsewhere in West Oakland. It was an unwritten law not found in the bylaws of the union’s constitution that all of downtown Oakland was “off-limits” for African American musicians. Al Morris, the White union’s business agent for Oakland, defended his territory jealously, and the Oakland Police Department was said to be sympathetic to his position.

Members of Local 648 played for civic events—as long as they took place on the west side of town. Delilah L. Beasley’s column, “Activities Among Negroes,” reported that one such event was held at the Parks Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, at the corner of Chester and Ninth streets, to honor the recently appointed city manager, mayor, and other officials.

One of the principal features will be an overture played by a group of Negro musicians, . . . This aggregation of musicians will render an overture under the direction of the

committee's chairman of music, Harry Perison. The band is under the direction of Justine Sexias [*Oakland Tribune* 23 August 1931].

While the police may have looked the other way on some of the activities in and around Seventh Street, Blacks knew their place and had to walk a tightrope or deal with a heavy-handed policeman, Earl Watkins, who delivered newspapers to businesses on Seventh Street before playing music there, recalls: "Oakland Police patrolled Seventh Street and were pretty cold blooded. They'd beat your butt if you were a Black man within an inch of your life back in the late '30s and all through the '40s" (1995, pers. comm.). Certain policeman became particularly known for their viciousness against Blacks. Bill Hinds, a retired Redcap porter who worked on Seventh Street and frequented many of its establishments, recalled that there were many rough cops in the Oakland police force at that time:

They were known. They had one called "Ass Kicking" Slim. It was a known fact, that if they arrested a Black on Seventh Street, and he got, what they construed to be, out of hand, they would take him around to the Fire House on Eighth Street and beat the hell out of him. That was where Slim got his reputation from. Blacks had a place and knew their place [1995, pers. comm.].

SEVENTH STREET

As long as you knew your place, Seventh Street could be the place where all the action was. In addition to the music, there were pool halls, gambling halls, and places to eat southern-style foods like Sylvester Sims's Overland Cafe at 1719 Seventh Street. "No fancy French names for our dishes," an advertisement assured. "We serve well-cooked home dishes from mustard greens to chicken dumplings, with corn bread and hot biscuits. Just like mother used to fix it," was the enticement for patrons who liked "down-home" food—now known as soul food (*Oakland Independent* 19 October 1929:8).

Shooting pool was a favorite pastime, along with playing cards and shooting dice. The Main Event at 1704 Seventh Street was a favorite hall. The Turf Recreation Hall and Billiard Room at 1736 Seventh Street promised a cosmopolitan atmosphere:

Here you meet the visitor from New York, the breezy Chicagoan, the Cosmopolitan from all points South, East, and West. . . . A home for the visiting railroad man; a recreation place for the home patron. . . . A friendly place where you meet visitors from all over the world [*Oakland Independent* 19 October 1929:7].

Just next door, Charles E. "Raincoat" Jones, operated a business in 1942 selling clothes, jewelry, radios, trunks, and suitcases at 1734 Seventh Street (New Age Publishing Company 1942-43). On the backside of Jenkins's Corner (Slim Jenkins's club), Jones operated another business. A barker would holler to passersby: "Action in the back, action in the alley; big craps game"; there "Suitcase" Brown might be presiding over a crap game. The police were allegedly paid to look the other way at these activities. Jones's operations may have been on the illegitimate side, but he is remembered as a good businessman who kept his enterprises going for years.

While West Oakland was indeed a multi-ethnic neighborhood, Seventh Street and its surrounding area were a haven for Black folks. After the demise of the bohemian Barbary Coast jazz scene in San Francisco in 1921, a number of dancehalls, theaters, and cafes sprang up in West Oakland. The non-Black community in West Oakland in the '20s and '30s—before the “White flight” of the '40s—stayed to themselves and had little to do with African American social life. Some Whites patronized Black and Tan clubs—nightclubs that catered to a mixed clientele—although many perceived themselves as “slumming.” Among West Oakland’s most popular Black and Tan clubs were Slim Jenkins’s club (1933-1962) and The Creole Cafe (ca. 1918-1921), both on Seventh Street, but even here the majority of the patrons were African Americans. The phrase had a cosmopolitan tone, and many bands incorporated it into their names, such as Clem Raymond’s Black and Tans. “‘Black and Tan’ in a band’s title was a selling point—a positive,” as Oakland musician Earl Watkins (1995, pers. comm.) pointed out.

In addition to live music, recorded jazz could be heard in the homes and businesses of West Oakland. Several accounts confirm the reported Pullman porters’ role in distributing records from Chicago before they were available in West Coast stores. In 1926, just six years after Mamie Smith’s historic recordings on the Okeh label, jazz records were advertised for sale at the Center Pharmacy, located on Seventh and Peralta streets. Here, West Oakland residents could purchase records by the latest female blues singers of the '20s: “Latest Blues,” the pharmacy advertised, “Blues to soothe the aching heart.” The listing of available titles (along with the record’s matrix numbers) included such artists as Bessie Smith, Clara Smith and her Jazz Band, Ethel Waters, Maggie Jones, the Charleston Dixie Washboard Band, Rosa Henderson, and the Harmony Hounds (*Western American* 30 July 1926:3). By 1930 the West Oakland Music Company, at 1506-A Seventh Street near Chester, sold radios, phonographs, records, and “quality merchandise” (Thompson and Williams 1930:17). The Okeh Phonograph Company advertised in local Black newspapers. One such advertisement, for Louis Armstrong’s “St. James Infirmary” and “Save it Pretty Mamma” at a price of 75 cents, pictured a cartoon of a dapper man in black face with a cane next to Okeh’s logo (*Oakland Independent* 15 March 1930:4).

While Seventh Street saw the emergence of a bustling night life in the '20s, it was not viewed favorably by all. The *Western American* featured a column called “Dixie Club Notes” based on activities at the Dixie Club, a hall that could be rented by social groups at 708 Pine Street. Although the column was largely self-serving, one entry does reveal something about West Oakland’s image:

Our state [California] is unique though some people have a dislike for our location of the cabaret it is in a part of the city that some people don’t like . . . if you visit San Francisco after the show, you want to go to Chinatown. If you go to Paris you want to get in the Latin quarters. I just want to show you that West Oakland is not the worst place on the globe. So let us get together and make Oakland a real city by putting the Dixie Club over [*Western American* 17 September 1926:2].

Although the fate of the Dixie Club was not learned, clearly West Oakland’s reputation grew to meet the writer’s expectations. The jazz meccas of the East Coast and Midwest—such as Harlem and Chicago—soon had their counterparts in the West. Central Avenue in Los Angeles, the Barbary Coast and later Filmore Street in San Francisco, and—of course—Seventh Street in Oakland were known centers for jazz entertainment and nightlife.

THE LOUISIANA CONNECTION

According to the U.S. population census, a total of 20,771 Negroes inhabited California in 1910; of this total, 73 percent (or 15,200) had been born in other states, with Texas ranking number one and Louisiana (with 1,004 emigrants living in California) ranking fourth. In that same year, there were 3,055 Negroes listed as living in Oakland (Department of Commerce 1918). By 1930 Louisiana ranked second to Texas with 8,599, or 11 percent, of California African Americans having migrated from that state. There were 5,439 Blacks in Oakland in 1920, and 7,503 in 1930. In both those years, Oakland's African American population was second only to Los Angeles (Department of Commerce 1935).

New Orleans culture and New Orleans music impacted and influenced jazz musicians and the music played in West Oakland. Charlie "Duke" Turner recalled his family's story, which was a typical one: "The family came out to California in 1900 or 1901. They were having it pretty tough in New Orleans and the railroad was moving people out here pretty fast to work as cooks and waiters, so my dad came out here to work for the Southern Pacific" (Stoddard 1982:92). *The Argonaut*, "the slowest train out of Louisiana to the Bay Area," brought the Baranco family to the Bay Area in 1921 from Baton Rouge, recalls Lester Baranco, brother of pianist, composer, and bandleader Wilbert Baranco. Beverly Victor Baranco, their father, came ahead of the family after securing a waiter's job with Southern Pacific. After working for a year, he became eligible for a pass that provided transportation for the family to California (Baranco 1996, pers. comm.).

Louisiana Creole, French, and southern influences could not be missed when walking down Seventh Street and West Oakland in the teens and '20s. Some placenames of businesses and bands had parallels in New Orleans, such as the Dew Drop Inn and the Crescent Orchestra. According to George Fleming, the prominent Cosmos social clubs established in San Francisco and Oakland boasted a number of New Orleans natives as members. West Oakland businesses such as the Creole Cleaners, the Bon Ton Tailoring Company at 1722 Seventh, and the Dixie Club reminded one of Louisiana and the South (*Oakland Times* 29 September 1923). The local Black newspapers ran stories on southern progressions, such as the enrollment and appointments at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama. Stories also related southern regressions—of lynchings and the "lily-white" politics that were the status quo. The society column of the African American newspapers often reported visits of southern Black college presidents, concert artists, and other Black professionals to the homes of West Oakland residents. Social clubs regularly used the French word, *dansant* (similar to *soiree*), to refer to their dances. The Phyllis Wheatley Club's advertisement for one of their dances read as follows: "Are we going? I'll say so! To the Christmas Matinee Dansant, December 25, 1920 Jazz Music" (*Oakland Sunshine* 18 December 1920).

New Orleans social clubs, consisting of members from New Orleans, were formed in Oakland. New Orleans native Julia Duplessis, who is now 82 years old, recalls the Uniques, a women's club that began in 1933 with 15 members from New Orleans. Her husband, who is now 85 years old and also a New Orleans native, was a member of the men's club Omega de Porres, which had about 20 members, all from New Orleans (Duplessis 1996, pers. comm.). An advertisement for the first Grand Picnic and Outing of the Idle Hour Social Club, to be held on 10 May 1930, promised music by Wade Whaley's Black and Tan Orchestra; the ad carried the motto, "Remember New Orleans" (*California Voice* 18 April 1930:5).

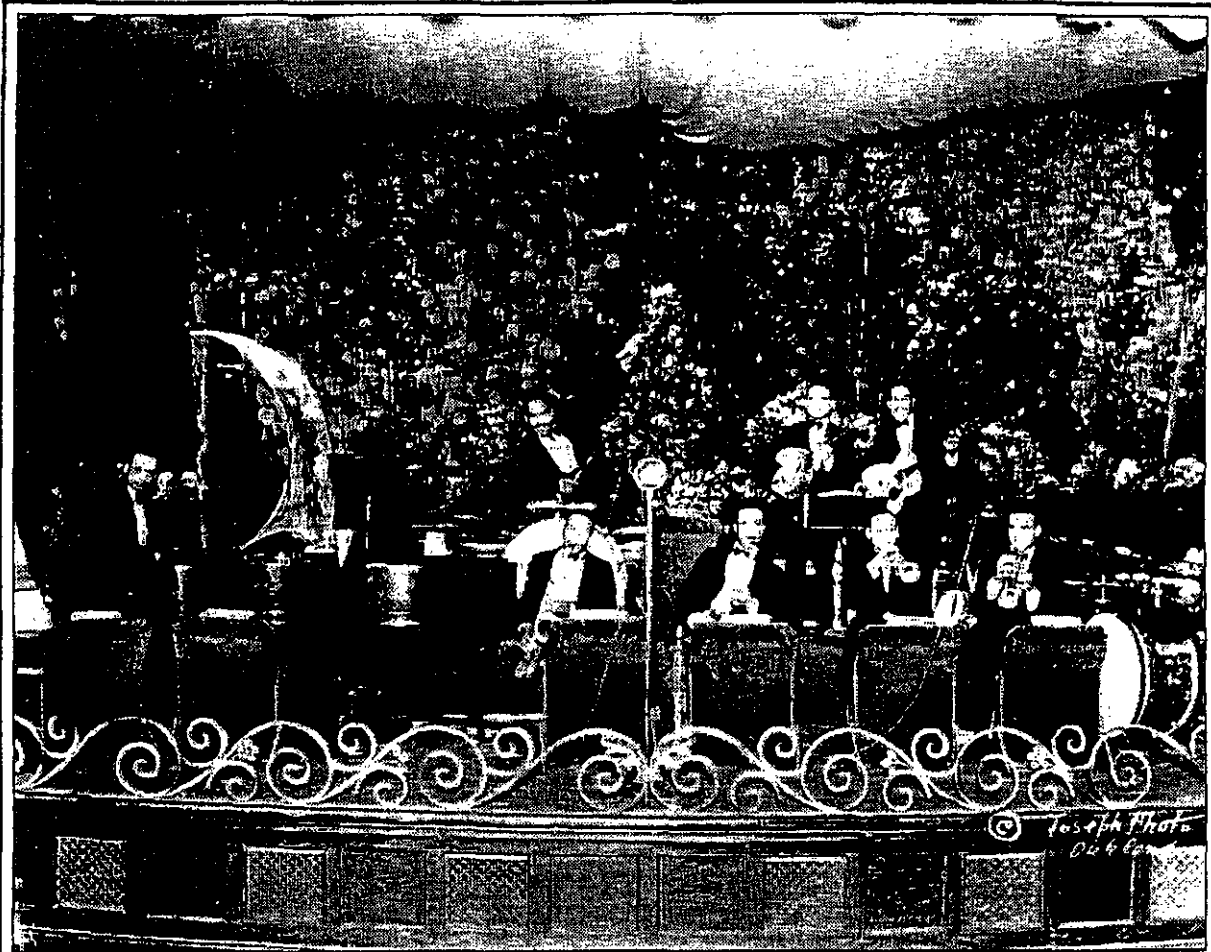


PLATE 91. SID LePROTTI'S ORCHESTRA AT THE PERSIAN GARDENS, OAKLAND, IN THE 1930S. (Left to right: LeProtti, piano and leader; Marcellus Levy, drums; Bob White, reeds; Sax Sexius, reeds; Londrus Roy, banjo; Danny Webster, trumpet; Roy Keyes, guitar; and Elliott Worth (?), trumpet.) LeProtti continued playing at a wide range of venues during the 1930s, while he was also a union activist. The Persian Gardens, located at Grand and Webster in Oakland, was the third ballroom run by the Sweets brothers; it operated between 1931 and 1936. (Photo courtesy of Gladys LeProtti)

New Orleans Creoles and African Americans continued the celebration of Mardi Gras in Oakland, retaining many of the elements of the event as it was celebrated in New Orleans and along the central Gulf Coast, but with some important changes. The Louisiana Commercial Association-sponsored Carnival—consisting of a Pageant, Queen's Contest, and Grand Ball—was held annually from 1920 to 1929 at the Oakland Auditorium and Paradise Gardens. The association's chairman, Franklin Burrill, was a Louisiana native who served as the head janitor at the Oakland Municipal Auditorium. The announcement of the 1927 Queen's Contest, published in December, stated that the winner would receive a diamond ring (*Western American* 17 December 1926). The 1922 event was advertised as follows:

HAIL! ALL HAIL! REX, King of the Carnival and his court will appear on the shores of Lake Merritt, Muncipal Auditorum [sic] Arena 12th and Fallen [sic] Streets, Oakland, California Grand Pageant and Mardi Gras Ball Tuesday, February 28th under the auspices

of Louisiana [sic] Commercial Association orchestra music by King Oliver's and Ory's celebrated Creole Orchestra [*Oakland Sunshine* 25 February 1922].

In New Orleans, Creoles and African Americans would not have been a part of the Rex Parade on Mardi Gras day, which was reserved for Whites. Instead, they would have been a part of the Zulu Parade, which was founded in 1909 as a response to White's typecasting Blacks as uncivilized. In Oakland's Mardi Gras, however, Rex and his court were represented by the native New Orleans African American and Creole committee members of the Louisiana Commercial Association. *Beasley*, in her *Oakland Tribune* column, described the pageant as follows:

There were 1400 persons who witnessed the Louisiana Commercial Association seventh annual Mardi Gras pageant March 1, Shrove Tuesday evening in Paradise Gardens . . . This is one of the outstanding social events among the colored citizens of California. Many attending from different sections of the state . . . The members of this association are former citizens of that quaint southern city. They have kept the memory of this custom by holding annually a Marda [sic] Gras pageant in Oakland . . . The pageant marched slowly into the main arena of the hall to the soft strains of Clem Raymond's orchestra . . . Upon the pageant reaching the throne, the keys of the city were delivered to King Rex, by Harvey Calhoun, representing the mayor . . . There have been few pageants staged by colored citizens in this city that were as beautiful as the one on this occasion. First, because nearly if not all of the girl participants were children of real Creole efamilies [sic] [*Beasley* 1927].

In 1929 the Carnival moved back to the Oakland Auditorium with the theme the Pageant of Jewels. "It was beautiful, colorful and artistic, and gracefully executed. The jewels represented were sapphire, emerald, topaz, amethyst, jade and diamonds. Other characters were Spanish dancers, Scotch lassies and varsity drags" (*Beasley* 1929). This annual event may have ceased after the passing of Franklin Burrill on 9 January 1930 (*Oakland Tribune* 20 January 1930).

Louisiana natives in Oakland, especially those that were Catholic, celebrated St. Joseph's Night by participating in costume competitions. Franklin Burrill also served as chairman of this event; his position as chief janitor, no doubt facilitated his securing the Oakland Auditorium for this celebration as well as for the Mardi Gras. The celebrated Clem Raymond's Jazz Orchestra was to furnish the music in 1927.

Oakland's citizens were treated to outstanding music at these events. Two of the most prominent exemplars of Black New Orleans jazz were selected to headline the Mardi Gras in 1922. King Oliver, cornetist and bandleader and one of the leading exponents of the Black New Orleans style, and his band were playing in San Francisco and Oakland at the time, just prior to the formation of his Creole Jazz Band in June of 1922, which served a long residency at Lincoln Gardens in Chicago (*Gushee* 1994:935). Kid Ory, trombonist and bandleader, presumably led his Original Creole Jazz Band for this event. Unfortunately no personnel is known for either of the two bands featured on this occasion. Local African American and Creole musicians were exposed to authentic Black New Orleans jazz by visiting musicians who would later become world famous, at a time when the music was still insular within urban Black communities.

THE MUSICIANS

Three categories of musicians played jazz in West Oakland: (1) native musicians—musicians born in Oakland or who spent their formative years playing in West Oakland and the Bay Area; (2) musicians who migrated here from other places; and (3) musicians who were members of famous touring bands and orchestras. While the groups are treated separately below, it will be clear from this brief discussion that the paths of natives, immigrants, and visitors often overlapped and intertwined.

NATIVE MUSICIANS

This study has identified at least seven West Oakland musicians who were native born or arrived in the neighborhood in early childhood. Sidney LeProtti, one of Oakland's earliest jazz musicians, was born 25 November 1886 in the Watts Tract, then considered to be North Oakland. LeProtti was a pianist and bandleader who regularly played at the Barbary Coast in San Francisco and—in the late teens and '20s—played for a number of social-club functions in Oakland, such as the Gingham Apron dance. One review noted that "LaProtte's [sic] orchestra . . . had a tendency to bring the dancers out" (*Western Outlook* 22 April 1922:3). According to Stoddard, LeProtti also was a union activist: "Sid started the Negro local for the boys in Oakland" (1982:50). He was on hand at St. Augustine's Church in November 1926 to play for the Red Cap Porters' Benevolent Association annual banquet, where "while the pleasant things were being enjoyed, there were strains of beautiful music rendered by Prof. Le Protti" (*Western American* 1926:4). In 1915 LeProtti served as president of the Crescent Orchestra, with the following personnel: LeProtti, piano; Charles W. Black, Jack Ross, Attrus Hughes, J.H. Long, C.L. Banks, violins; G.L. Taborn, cello; Clarence Williams, bass; Gerald D. Wells, flute; Adam "Slocum" Mitchell, clarinet; H.B. Moore, George Bryant, cornets; B.F. Spikes, saxophone; and Peter Stanley, drums (*Oakland Sunshine* 27 March 1915:1). The Crescent Orchestra played in Oakland and in San Francisco; it is pictured in an advertisement for a ball and banquet given by the Colored Assembly Club at the Eagles' Hall in San Francisco in honor of Mr. Burt Williams, comedian (*Oakland Sunshine* 20 March 1915:1). From its instrumentation—and the description of the musical fare at the Redcaps' banquet 11 years later—it seems probable that the Crescent Orchestra was a society-type group. It is noteworthy that a Crescent Band and Crescent Orchestra, although with different instrumentation, were active in New Orleans. In the 1920s LeProtti formed "LeProtti's Paramount 10," a band that played in West Oakland and elsewhere in the East Bay for many occasions, including dances, picnics, and club affairs (*Western American* 1926:3). George Fleming, who played with LeProtti, remembers that "Sidney LeProtti played jazz piano with a New Orleans style, using his left hand as a bass instrument" (1996, pers. comm.).

Another early musician—though 18 years LeProtti's junior—was banjo/guitarist Alfred Levy, born 9 May 1904 at 2426 Market Street in Oakland. He led the Peacock Melody Strutters, a band that was active from 1921 to 1926. His brother Marcel's Levy played drums (Stoddard 1982:82).

Henry Starr, a pianist/bandleader and Oakland native, was one of the first Blacks on Bay Area radio. Starr's program, called the "Hot Spot of Radio," was broadcast on KAKA and KFRC (Atkinson 1993:7). Starr played piano and sang the popular songs of the day, such as "Sweet Little Joe" and "Old Man River" (Stoddard 1982:84). Despite the name of his radio show, Starr did not play piano in a "hot" style. He may have recorded "Maybe Some Day," a selection for Reb Spikes, on the

Vocalion label. Besides touring Europe for an extended stay, Henry Starr and His Cafe Richards Syncopators played for local social-club functions, such as those of the Meadow Brook Social Club (*Western Outlook* 22 October 1921:2). Starr recorded with Curtis Mosby's Blue Blowers on the Columbia label. He befriended Jack Coakley, a White pianist, bandleader, and composer. According to liner notes on a 1930s record, Coakley remembered "occasions when Henry hosted such stars as King Oliver at his house for late night jam sessions. Starr was host to many traveling black musicians apparently, and Coakley was often asked to come over and meet and sit in with them on piano" (Zwigoff n.d.).

Vernon "Jake" Porter, born in California in 1910, was a cornetist who was raised in Oakland. He played first with the Melvin Parks Band in 1931 and with Wesley Peoples's Band in 1934, followed by stints with Ben Watkins, Clem Raymond, Saunders King, and Lionel Hampton. Porter moved to Los Angeles in 1940, where he was active as a record-company owner, a union official, and a freelancer in film-studio work until his death.

Robert K. Smith, who played clarinet and alto and soprano saxophone, was born in Houma, Louisiana, within 75 miles of New Orleans. His family moved to West Oakland when he was four years old. Smith attended Prescott Elementary, where he began studying music. At Oakland Technical High School, Smith studied harmony and theory. After serving in the 369th Infantry Band, he played in various pre-World War II bands and combos, working in various cities in northern California. After the war, he played as a sideman with Earl Hines's West Coast Big Band and with Eddie Alley among others. According to Smith (1995, pers. comm.), he recorded with Jimmy McCracklin.

Jerome Richardson, born 15 November 1920 in Sealy, Texas, grew up in Oakland. He played alto sax, making his debut in 1934 as a young teenager. Richardson played with local dance bands until 1941 (Kernfeld 1994:1044), when Ben Watkins and Wilbert Baranco helped him launch his professional career.

Perhaps the most-celebrated musician to come from West Oakland is guitarist/singer Saunders King. King was born in 1909 in Staples, Louisiana, and moved with his family to Los Angeles in 1915. Ten years later, they moved to West Oakland. His father, Reverend Judge King, built the Christ Sanctified Holy Church at 1735 Seventh Street, where young Saunders sang, played piano, and later guitar. The church's calendar of activities was a full one, including Sunday school; saints meeting; praise service; and Saturday service. King attended Prescott Elementary School, where he studied piano and voice from a Ms. Forsyte, who provided him with a solid background in musicianship. He sang for school assemblies at Prescott Elementary. King recalled his professional debut in Oakland: "Les Hite gave me my first break; the first solo I sang with the band was 'Stardust' at Sweets's Ballroom [Fourteenth and Franklin]. They didn't think that I could sing that kind of music and I did very well with it" (1995, pers. comm.). In the early 1930s, he met Dr. Cross, who had a morning radio program called "Crosscuts from the Log of the Day." Dr. Cross offered him a job singing tenor with the Southern Harmony Four. King became a staff artist for NBC radio, serving as featured vocalist for the Crosscuts show and also was the "Waterboy" and "Muleskinner" on the program for four years. King's first group, organized in San Francisco, was a modest trio consisting of Vernon Alley, bass; Bob Barfield, tenor sax; and King on guitar and vocals. King and his group played in West Oakland for social-club dances and at nightclubs. They played at the North Pole and Sweets's Ballroom

[Fourteenth and Franklin], where he also was a soloist with the Ben Watkins Band. In 1938 Saunders King moved to San Francisco, because "more blues were in Oakland and in San Francisco they were more into jazz." While King played jazz and popular tunes, his recording of "S.K. Blues" in 1945 became the first Bay Area blues hit: "'S.K. Blues' was a hit before I realized it," he said, noting that David Rosenbaum at Rhythm Records named the tune after him (1995, pers. comm.).

OTHER BAY AREA MUSICIANS

The two most celebrated jazz orchestras in Oakland were led by Wade Whaley and Clem Raymond, two clarinetists and bandleaders who worked in the late teens, '20s, and '30s in West Oakland. As early as 1926, these two bands were recognized in a short article in *Western American*. It is offered here in its entirety:

A Tribute to Our Orchestra the "Jazz Hounds" Clem Raymond, Manager. The "Oakland Syncopaters" W. Whaley, Manager. These two young men have for sometime afforded



PLATE 92. SAUNDERS KING'S BAND, BACKSTAGE IN THE LATE 1940s AT THE SAVOY SUPPERCLUB, SAN FRANCISCO. (Left to right: Eddie Alley, drums; Eddie Taylor, tenor sax; Eddie Walker, trumpet; Saunders King, guitar; Bob Barfield, tenor sax; John Cooper, piano; and Douglas Kinnard, bass.) Probably the best-known musician to come from West Oakland, King's first musical venue was the church his father built at 1735 Seventh Street; as a teenager, he sang and played piano, and later guitar, for the church services. King's groups played at Slim Jenkins's, the North Pole, and Sweet's Ballroom at Fourteenth and Franklin in Oakland before 1938, when he moved to San Francisco. (Photo courtesy of Eddie Alley)

Oakland with the best to be received in the line of syncopation. Continually they are being recognized by all cities along the Pacific Coast, and especially the inhabitants of the Bay district, as being possessed of every quality necessary to produce a well balanced Orchestra. The Western American greets you [*Western American* 28 May 1927:7].

Wade Whaley was born in 1895 in New Orleans. After playing with New Orleans bands and leading his own band for a brief period, he joined Jelly Roll Morton in Los Angeles around 1917. Whaley's first job in West Oakland was at the Creole Cafe in 1920. His Black and Tan Jazz Hounds achieved much success in the late 1920s (Chilton 1978:349), playing regularly on Thursday nights at the Savoy Hall at Thirty-sixth and San Pablo (*California Voice* 18 April 1930:5) and at the Elk's Lodge at 1219 Eighth Street (*California Voice* 4 July 1930:5). In addition to Oakland, Whaley played in San Francisco for the 1930s Elks' dance, being billed as "the Famous Wade Whaley and His Syncopators" (*San Francisco Independent* 17 May 1930:1). Whaley left full-time music for a while, working in San Jose in 1934, but later returned to music and participated in several recording sessions. Clem Raymond came to California around 1918 with the Tennessee Ten and worked in the Bay Area, including West Oakland, for most of his career. Clem Raymond and His Jazz Hounds played regularly at the Golden West Hall at Forty-sixth and Telegraph (*Western American* 4 March 1927:2). As Beasley's description of Raymond's performance at the 1927 Mardi Gras suggests, he and his Jazz Hounds could produce a stately sound.

Elmer Keeton was an organist, composer, and music teacher. He operated a studio of music and served as musical director of West Oakland's Lincoln Theater, presenting plays he wrote that spotlighted local talent (*Oakland Independent* 14 December 1929:5). He also organized a group, called the Keeton's Brown Favorites, that may have played jazz. The group consisted of an orchestra backed by the Treble Clef Quartet, a group of women singers. They appeared on KFWM radio in "Keeton's Brown Variety Hour" in 1930 (*Oakland Independent* 15 March 1930:1).

Many other local musicians were active in West Oakland, some of whom went on to national recognition playing with well-known bands. Drummer Earl (Thomas, Jr.) Watkins, born in San Francisco on 29 January 1920, led his own band at the Bandbox in Redwood City and recorded with Wilbert Baranco. He played casuals with a number of local groups, including Don Anderson at the North Pole Club, Jimmy Simpson, and Aaron "T-Bone" Walker. Watkins worked as a sideman with groups such as Flip Phillips, Muggsy Spanier, Vernon Alley, Wilbert Baranco, and Bob Scobey. He was a member of the Earl Hines's group and recorded "A Monday Date" (Kernfeld 1994:1268; see Discography).

Wilbert Baranco—Louisiana-born pianist, leader, singer, and arranger—worked with Curtis Mosby and recorded with singer Ernie Andrews, Charles Mingus, and Dinah Washington. He also was a member of Lucky Thompson's All Stars. Baranco was a pianist and arranger for Curtis Mosby's Dixieland Blue Blowers, and also worked at NBC as arranger for Meredith Wilson, Lionel Hampton, and Les Hite. Baranco recorded with a number of well-known musicians, including Dizzy Gillespie. He also made records of his own, including "Everytime I Think of You"/"Baranco's Boogie" in 1946 on the Black & White label (Kernfeld 1994:67; see Discography). Baranco played in Oakland after World War II despite the pressures from Al Morris and the Local 6 union. Baranco also led and arranged music for the Works Progress Administration (WPA) Music Project in San Francisco during the Depression and taught at San Francisco City College and Sherman Day.

Eddie Alley—drummer, singer, and bandleader—was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He moved to San Francisco about 1920 and played a few casuals in West Oakland. Prior to becoming leader of Eddie Alley's Gentlemen of Rhythm, he played with various local groups, including Allen's Hot Chocolates and bands led by Wesley Peoples, Wade Whaley, Saunders King, and Eddie Liggins. In the early '40s, Alley formed his own group—usually a quintet, but occasionally a 10-piece group—playing for political events, at hotels, and for social affairs. His band, according to Alley (1995, pers. comm.), was the first Black band to play in large hotels in San Francisco, such as the Mark Hopkins and the Fairmont. Alley never recorded. His brother Vernon (Creede) Alley was a bassist affectionately known as "Mr. Music." Vernon Alley played with Count Basie, Lionel Hampton, and Saunders King, among others, and also hosted radio and television programs. He can be heard with Lionel Hampton on Attitude Victor (Kernfeld 1994:16; see Discography).

Curtis Mosby, drummer and bandleader, was born in Kansas City. In 1921 he ran a music store in Oakland. Some time in the late '20s, Mosby formed his band, Curtis Mosby and His Dixieland Blue Blowers; local musicians playing and recording with him included Wilbert Baranco, Henry Starr, and Country Allen (see Discography). Mosby later moved to Los Angeles, where he operated nightclubs such as the Oasis in the '30s and '40s. His Oakland music store is listed as Mosby and Catley at 1721 Seventh Street in the 1921 city directory; in 1922 it was listed as Mosby and Company, with Curtis Mosby, Sr., listed as manager, and in 1923 as Mosby's Melodie Shop at 1654 Seventh Street, with Curtis, Jr., as manager. In 1924 Mosby is listed as a musician and as selling phonographs; the last listing is in the 1925 directory, under Phonographs, with Curtis B. Mosby, Jr., as manager (*Western American* 15 April 1927:4). A George Mosby also advertised the formation of a band for hire for social occasions during the same period (*Western American* 13 August 1926:7).

Pianist Eddie Liggins started playing when young and became very accomplished, being able to read anything (Stoddard 1982:94). It was Liggins's Knights of Synchronization Orchestra that played for the first Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters' ball in 1926. Winnow Allen and his band, the Hot Chocolates, were active in the late '20s and early '30s; the group consisted of Winnow Allen on trumpet, Country Allen on trombone, and Buster Wysinger on drums. Newspapers also note that Henry Allen—possibly Winnow Allen's formal name—led the Snappy Cotton Club Band, which played regularly Sunday nights at Magnolia Hall on West Seventh and Magnolia streets as well as for a dance at the Oakland Auditorium ballroom; they also could be heard on radio station KFI in Los Angeles (*Western American* 2 October 1928).

Ben Watkins, trumpet player and bandleader, was active in the '30s playing social dances in West Oakland. Watkins played trombone in the Fresno High School Band and played his first professional engagement in 1921 with the Percy Bost's orchestra in Fresno. He received trumpet lessons from Sax Sexias in 1925 after organizing his band in Fresno. Watkins came to Oakland in 1929 and organized a band that played for many social occasions around the Bay Area for over a decade, featuring well-known sidemen such as Sax Sexias, saxophone, and George Fleming, trumpet player. Sexias had received his musical training in Fresno and played with Wade Whaley until he organized his own band in 1927. In the spring of 1939 he joined Ben Watkins's band. Pianist Wesley Peoples led a band and played for a number of social occasions until he died in 1939 of tuberculosis. His group was the nucleus for the Saunders King band formed later. Jimmy ("K.O.") Simpson, pianist, played for social clubs in the 1920s. Simpson was the Oakland business agent for the Black subsidiary musicians union; appropriate to that task, he was also a quasi-prizefighter and ran a gym at



PLATE 93. AN EVENING AT SLIM JENKINS'S NIGHTCLUB AT 1748 SEVENTH STREET IN WEST OAKLAND, ca. 1952. (Left to right: Dr. Robert Joyner; Gladys LeProtti; Mazell Anderson; Sidney Emil LeProtti, son of West Oakland pianist and bandleader Sidney LeProtti; Mrs. Joyner; Dr. William Anderson; Betty, last name not known; and E.F. Joseph, well-known photographer. Slim Jenkins's place—known as Jenkins's Corner or Slim Jenkins's Supperclub—was the most celebrated nightclub in West Oakland. It was opened in 1933, one day after Prohibition ended, and operated into the 1960s. (Photo courtesy of Gladys LeProtti)

Fifth and Union streets. In 1927 Simpson played for the "Hard Time Dance"—at which attendees were encouraged to "dress hard"—sponsored by the United Spanish War Veterans at the Busch-Orviss Hall (*Western American* 18 March 1927:4). Pianist Duo Don Anderson and "Cookie," a singer, were regulars at the North Pole in the late '30s and early '40s. Red Cayou, a pianist from New Orleans, was very active. Ernie Lewis, pianist, used to promote jam sessions at the Clef Club in West Oakland, which was owned by Wesley Smith. The Peter Rabbit Trio played at the Clef Club for years. Bob Hill and His Jazz Hounds, which featured Wade Whaley on the clarinet, was probably an ad-hoc or pick-up group; they played for the Red Cross at Fourteenth and Washington in the late '20s (*Western American* 6 May 1927:2). George Fleming, New Orleans trumpet player born in 1913, migrated to Berkeley in 1938 and joined Ben Watkins's band the same year. He also played with a number of other local musicians and bands, including Eddie Alley and Sidney LeProtti. Fleming never recorded. In 1942 he went to work for Caterpillar Tractor Company but continued playing casuals around the Bay Area. Isaacs "Ike" Bell, trumpeter and trombonist born in 1910 in Fayette, Missouri,

came to the Bay Area in the early '40s. After playing in the Navy Band and also with Lionel Hampton in Los Angeles, he continued working locally with several bands, including those of Ben Watkins and Saunders King. Bell never recorded.

Local African American musicians in the Bay Area—whether native born or more recent arrivals—were like a large family. San Francisco-born Earl Watkins, drummer for Earl Hines and a union activist, commented:

Everyone knew everybody—musicians were a family. Band leaders would compete by bidding for jobs and selling their bands. Musicians would show you things—"Here's a beat," etc. We also knew the Los Angeles musicians by reputation [1995, pers. comm.].

Oakland alto-saxophone player Robert K. Smith agreed, recalling that "Black bandleaders would take younger musicians into their bands to teach them the ropes and train them" (1995, pers. comm).

VISITING BANDS AND MUSICIANS

In addition to New Orleans-based musicians, such as Wade Whaley, settling in the Bay Area, several renowned New Orleans jazz musicians and bandleaders toured California and played in West Oakland in the teens and early '20s. Jazz critic Phil Elwood describes the attraction of Oakland to traveling jazz musicians in the 1920s:

The Bay Area's small Negro community was primarily in Oakland, the western railhead for the transcontinental passenger and freight lines. It was in Oakland that the Kid Ory Band from New Orleans (via Los Angeles) played in the early 1920s and it was in Oakland that black railroad employees brought 1920s jazz and blues recordings back from Chicago [1994:6].

Among the earliest well-known musicians to play West Oakland was New Orleans-born Jelly Roll Morton—composer, pianist, and self-proclaimed inventor of jazz—who came to Los Angeles in 1917 and stayed five years. During this time he traveled to the Bay Area, playing at a club on Columbus Avenue in San Francisco and at the Creole Cafe at 1740 Seventh Street in West Oakland. Kid Ory, trombonist and multi-instrumentalist, formed a band on the West Coast in November 1919 and played residences in Oakland. Although his band had a six-month residency at San Francisco's Pergola Ballroom, King Oliver and his group played in Oakland in 1921 (Jones and Chilton 1971:66). In 1922 both Oliver's and Ory's groups headlined Oakland's lavish Mardi Gras event (see above). The New Orleans Louisiana High Brown Orchestra played at the Bluebird Cabaret at 708 Pine Street managed by Leroy Williams; the cabaret featured a midnight review of the "five best colored singers and dancers" (*Western American* 27 August 1927:3).

In the late 1930s and '40s, when jazz music began taking over the country and Oakland's youthful population had skyrocketed due to the war effort, the roster of visiting jazz musicians included most of the major artists in the country. Many played only one or two shows downtown, but West Oakland continued to host exceptional bands.

MUSICAL VENUES IN WEST OAKLAND AND OAKLAND

The history of jazz and its venues in West Oakland is not well documented. The contexts for the music in Oakland were diverse, including the Oakland Auditorium, four Sweets's ballrooms, nightclubs, cabarets, bars, speakeasies, theaters, and dancehalls. Over time, venues appeared or closed down, and the amount of work available for musicians was constantly changing. There was never enough work to employ most musicians full time, and many worked during the day at other jobs and played music at night or on the weekend. Ad hoc groups were formed and there were many musicians who would organize a group for a one-night engagement. According to Johnny Otis, who was a drummer for blues-and-boogie pianist Count Otis Matthews's West Oakland Houserockers, house-rent parties were places to play:

Too young to play in clubs, they [the West Oakland Houserockers] performed for little or no money at a gym in West Oakland and at house-rent parties at which people would charge their friends and neighbors admission in exchange for food and entertainment [Hildebrand 1995:9].

There were jam sessions held at the Elks Lodge, where Local 648 met, and at an amusement park in West Oakland. Many of the venues provided extended residencies for musicians, while others featured artists for only one night. Most of the musicians interviewed informed the author that, in general, Oakland booked jazz artists for "one nighters," while San Francisco booked artists for periods of a few nights to more extended stays.

THE BIG VENUES

West Oakland did not have a venue that could accommodate the thousands who were eager to dance to the music of famous traveling jazz bands. One had to go "Uptown," to the Oakland Auditorium, which opened on 15 April 1915. A massive building in the Beaux Arts civic architectural style, the arena and theater could accommodate up to 13,000 people. The auditorium was the scene of a number of events featuring the best of touring jazz bands and, until the 1960s, was Oakland's principal auditorium open to Blacks and mixed audiences. Among the large-scale events to take place that first year was a charity entertainment and dance for the United West Indians, advertised for Thursday, 18 November 1915. Although no specific band is mentioned, military music was to be played for a grand march of 1,000 couples (*Western Outlook* 6 November 1915:2). The manager of the Oakland Auditorium shared the following reservations about renting the hall to Negroes:

He [the Manager] did not know whether the Auditorium would be let for a colored dance, as he very well knew that colored people liked to shoot and cut one another at their dances and that the dancers often carried bottles of whisky and beer with them, and thus by keeping a continual war they might disgrace the building [*Oakland Sunshine* 14 August 1915:n.p.].

Beginning in the 1920s, there was a virtually continuous stream of jazz bands playing at the Oakland Auditorium.

Dr. Herb Wong—Oakland native, jazz producer, and critic—vividly remembers attending jazz shows as a kid at the Oakland Auditorium in the 1940s:

The Oakland Auditorium was a major venue for Blacks. My brother and I went to the Oakland Auditorium in the early '40s. The band was Louis Jordan and his Typanny Five and we were into him. The doorman asked: Do you know what you're getting into here? I replied: "It's a Low Down Dirty Shame," "I'm Going to Move to the Outskirts of Town." I went on and on and he said all right, all right, all right, and we went in, and it was 100 percent Black and everybody was jitterbugging and I said, this is hip. The whole auditorium floor was open to dancing. This was a jitterbug contest. They would have a lot of couples dancing their steps, some people who would tag them and put a number on their backs and then weed them out, and that's how they did it. What was exciting for us was that we saw the band with zoot-suit clothing. Louis and his band had chartreuse sport jackets with great big shoulder pads, orange pants, purple shirts, and multicolored ties that went all the way down to the floor. Not only was the music colorful, but look at the band! [1995, pers. comm.].

Oakland became one of the greatest dance towns in the country. Drummer Earl Watkins remembers the Oakland Auditorium well:

Practically anybody could draw seven to ten thousand people at the auditorium. Lionel Hampton would come here and would draw more than seven thousand people for the Fourth of July. He usually made two appearances. I remember one of the greatest dances that I attended in Oakland was of Cab Calloway at Oakland Auditorium. There were so many people, more than ten thousand, until the Fire Marshals had to close the dance. Since Oakland was one of the greatest dance towns in the country, and if a band did a picture in Hollywood, they'd come right up the coast. During the war, bands came doing USO shows and would play dances up and down the coast. Everybody was looking for entertainment. Entertainment was something to take the tension off. Since one had to get rations, and you couldn't buy clothes, shoes, cars, there was surplus money and the price of admission to a dance didn't mean a thing when the bands came to town. I got into the music business by winning a jitterbug contest in 1940. I took the money and bought a set of drums—and was never caught on the dance floor since [1995, pers. comm.].

Well-known local bands, such as Wade Whaley's and Clem Raymond's, also played the Oakland Auditorium. The Sphinx Club advertised "Wade Whaley's a la Jazz" for its Autumn Ball held at the auditorium (*Oakland Times* 29 September 1923:3). Clem Raymond's Orchestra played for the Berkeley-based Sunset Athletic Club's first social dance and for the Pride of the West Third Annual Dansant at the Oakland Auditorium (*Western American* 25 June 1926:6, 17 December 1926). Eddie Liggins's Syncopators played for the Phyllis Wheatley Club's annual Christmas Dance at the Oakland Auditorium (*Western American* 17 December 1926).

Dancers could jitterbug, do the black bottom, and swing "West Coast style" at Sweets's Ballroom, a principal venue in "Uptown" Oakland. The Sweets brothers, William and Eugene, were the principal White promoters of ballroom dancing in Oakland. Four Sweets's ballrooms were opened

over the course of 45 years. The second ballroom, operating from 1924 through 1931, featured the following artists: "Benny Goodman, Fletcher Henderson, Lionel Hampton, Tommy Dorsey, Glenn Miller, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Woody Herman, Gene Krupa, Harry James, Les Brown, Jimmy Dorsey and a host of others" (Harmon 1995:9). The fourth ballroom at 1414 Franklin Street, operating from 1937 through 1965, remained one of the area's main dancehalls for traveling swing bands.

With few exceptions, Sundays were reserved for Whites and Mondays for Blacks at Sweets (Fourteenth and Franklin). This unwritten policy, reported by musicians interviewed for this study, is supported by newspaper advertisements for dances. "Count Basie would play for Whites on Sunday. If you were Black, showed up, and old man Sweets knew you, he might let you in, but would warn you to stay up in the balcony," recalls Earl Watkins (1995, pers. comm.).



PLATE 94. HOMER "CHUCK" WALKER, VOCALIST WITH A BAND AT SLIM JENKINS'S NIGHTCLUB, ca. 1952. (Left to right: Tommy Thompson, saxophone; Freddie McWilliam and Chuck Walker at microphone.) McWilliam served as Master of Ceremonies, while Walker sang on occasion. He also played drums in Slim Slaughter's Quartet. (Photo courtesy of Homer "Chuck" Walker)

Oakland's principal Black promoter, Johnny A. Burton (later spelled "Bur-ton"), presented a number of shows at Sweets on Franklin Street. He got his reputation for promoting dances during World War II, when the African American population exploded in the Bay Area. *Bur-ton produced many shows independently and was also a front man for others, as Earl Watkins recalls: "The Musician's Union rule was that you couldn't promote your own dance. People would use Bur-ton as a front man, give him cash. Burton would in turn put out all the publicity and rent the hall. He became pretty well-off doing that. The booking agent would get in touch with Bur-ton and work a deal with him"* (1995, pers. comm.). Former Redcap porter Bill Hinds, who used to shoot pool with Burton, remembers him as "the main organizer of the music, . . . he was a character and I knew him very well. He lived in Oakland and he used to walk around with five, six, or seven thousand dollars in his pocket and everybody in town knew it. And he was lucky. As far as I know, he never got mugged" (1995, pers. comm.).

A list of the shows Bur-ton produced at Sweets's on Franklin can be extrapolated from advertisements in African American newspapers; all but one of the dates fall on Mondays, and no Sunday shows are advertised. The exception is Les Hite and His

Orchestra, who played on Tuesday, 13 September 1938 (*California Voice* 2 September 1938:5). A few weeks later, on Monday, 17 October 1938, Burton produced a powerhouse band led by Saunders King and the Aristocrats of Swing, with the following personnel: Wesley Peoples, piano; Jake Porter, trumpet; Vernon Alley, bass; Bob Barfield, tenor sax; Norvil Maxey, drums; George Nealy, tenor sax; Charlie Jacobs, trumpet; Melvin Parks, alto sax; Ike Bell, trumpet; and Jerome Richardson, alto sax (*California Voice* 14 October 1938:5). Ella Fitzgerald and her 14-piece orchestra were featured on Monday, 11 August 1941 (*California Voice* 1 August 1941:5); and Earl Hines and His Orchestra appeared on Labor Day—Monday, 1 September 1941 (*California Voice* 22 August 1941:5).

Oakland at one time had an abundance of theaters. African Americans may not have been able to attend some of the uptown theaters, such as the Paramount, but Dr. Herb Wong recalls seeing the Count Basie Orchestra at the Orpheum, with Black patrons in attendance:

It was the 1937 Count Basie Orchestra, the one with Lester Young, Jimmy Rushing, Buck Clayton, and all those cats. I'm sitting there, I was 11 years old. I went out of my gourd. The first time I saw Jimmy Rushing, he had a dance thing—he'd always go like this in front of his crotch and I didn't understand the sexual implication of the blues that he was singing. I just knew that I was into the spirit and feeling of it. I knew that it swung. The blues by way of Kansas City was in Oakland in 1937. That was my inoculation [1995, pers. comm.]

WEST OAKLAND VENUES

The smaller venues provided more intimacy and gave West Oakland its character. A number of cafes sprang up along Seventh Street but one of the most significant for New Orleans style jazz music was Sid Deering's Creole Cafe, at 1740 Seventh Street. This Black and Tan club had a short existence from circa 1918 to 1921; there is no telephone or business listing for the Creole Cafe in 1922 or afterward. The club featured "jazz band, jazz orchestra and jazz entertainers as well as dancing from 3:00pm to 1:00am" (Ye Liberty Play House 1920). Musician Reb Spikes recalled that King Oliver "played for Lucius Lomax up there in Oakland at the Creole Cafe," while Charlie "Duke" Turner remembered trombonist Kid Ory playing at the Creole Cafe (Stoddard 1982:78, 91). Wade Whaley, clarinetist from New Orleans, got his first job at the Creole Cafe. "Slummers" from both sides of the Bay frequented the Creole Cafe, which sold ginger ale for 40 cents a small glass and provided a place for White and Black patrons to dine and watch the entertainment (*Oakland Tribune* 5 October 1920). The club also sponsored dances at halls that could accommodate larger crowds than the cafe. While the band name is not given, the music for the Creole Cafe's New Year's Eve all-night ball at Foresters Hall was advertised as "Jazz! Jazz! Oh Boy!" (*Oakland Sunshine* 18 December 1920). Although it was advertised as "strictly high class," the Creole Cafe was one of three cabarets in West Oakland said to be associated with prostitution (*Oakland Enquirer* 20 December 1920; *Oakland Tribune* 22 April 1920, 29 May 1920; see Solari, this volume). Whether the Creole Cafe closed because of alleged prostitution activities, the challenges of Prohibition, or other factors, was not learned. Hildebrand (1979) cites an article in the *California Voice* that blamed the demise of the Creole Cafe and other Black businesses on a lack of Black patronage.

The Bluebird Cabaret located at 708 Pine opened in 1927 to more than 300 guests. From the newspaper's description of opening night, it is clear that the club was another Black and Tan. The Louisiana High Browns furnished the dance music while an array of entertainers pleased the mixed audience:

Mrs. Mary Richards-Farmer featured among the entertainers [*sic*], especially with her dancing act. Miss Thelma Porter was also pleasing, as well as Miss Alberta Jones, the blues singer. Mr. Prince brought much applause with his sofe [*sic*] shoe dancing, while Mr. Roach excelled on the "vest pocket" piano. It looked as tho' the entire group of City Hall politicians were present, as there was as many white parties present as there was of our own race [*Western American* 2 July 1927:8].

Despite its auspicious opening, the Bluebird Cabaret closed down the following year.

The Athens Elks Lodge #70 (Elks Club), at 1217 Eighth Street in West Oakland, was an important spot for jazz lovers in West Oakland. Upstairs was the social hall, where special affairs were hosted, and downstairs were the bar and nightclub. Commonly known as the Elks Lodge, it was built in 1927 and operated until 1959. A get-acquainted dance for the club featured a host of entertainers and the advertisement showed that West Oakland drew African Americans from surrounding cities and communities in the Bay Area.

Come and meet some of our local talent and renew acquaintance with Ivy Anderson, Lawrence (Flying) Ford, Angeles babe, Ernestine Porter, Strut Marshall, Dorothy Yoles, and a bevy of brownskin dancing beauties. Also meet friends from Sacramento, Stockton, Fresno, San Mateo, San Jose and other points around the Bay (— 2 June 1927).

Dances with dinner and music by the Athens Home Orchestra, apparently the Elks' resident band, were featured (*Western American* 1927). Some of the musicians performing there included Clem Raymond's Syncopators; Wade Whaley (*California Voice* 29 February 1929); and the Sexias and Hawaiian Radio Artists, 1929 to 1930 (*California Voice* 30 May 1930:3). Parties were given for traveling celebrity jazz musicians. Earl Watkins recalls that when both Billie Holiday and Jimmy Lunceford were in town in 1942, a party was given for them at the Elks Club; among that night's activities was a jam session, with local musicians participating. The Elks Lodge had political meaning to local musicians as well, as it served as the meeting hall for the Black Local 648 of the musicians' union.

West Oakland's landmark establishment for jazz and blues, beginning in the early 1930s, was Jenkins's Corner, later known as Slim Jenkins's. Harold "Slim" Jenkins, an African American from Monroe, Louisiana, came to Oakland following a stint in the service during World War I. After working as a waiter and saving his money, he opened the cafe in 1933—one day after Prohibition ended—at 1748 Seventh Street. Over the years, Slim Jenkins's place became the most celebrated club around, featuring well-known traveling jazz and blues bands and harlemesque reviews. During the 1930s, it was also a major source of employment for the local musicians: "All the musicians worked there at one time or another," Eddie Alley stated, remembering it as "a first-class club in those days" (1995, pers. comm.). Guitarist Ed Young recalls playing at Slim Jenkins's, where he led his own band with Eddie Alley on drums and Vernon Alley on bass; they played mostly blues, depending on the

audience (Young 1995, pers. comm.). Saunders King and Blues pianist Count Otis Matthews were also among the locals who played at Jenkins's.

Slim Jenkins offered a good deal more than music. The 1942-1943 California Negro business directory featured the following advertisement: "Jenkins' Corner, brightest nite spot in Northern California, Liquor store, restaurants, cocktail lounge" (New Age Publishing Company 1942-1943). In *We Also Serve*, a booklet published for Black military personnel in 1945, the club is advertised as "Slim Jenkins', bar, coffee shop, better entertainment, good food, best drinks, featuring: baked ham, fried chicken, steaks." According to Eddie Alley, "Slim was one of the best businessmen around in those days. He did better than anybody else" (1995, pers. comm.).

After becoming established, Jenkins began to book name entertainers, such as the *Ink Spots*, Dinah Washington, Earl "Fatha" Hines, and Lou Rawls, among many others. Jenkins' Corner was a first-class club that afforded Whites a taste of Black social life. When William J. Denahy—whose Irish father ran the Snug Harbor Bar at Seventh and Adeline—was asked if Whites frequented Slim Jenkins's place in the '40s, he responded:

Oh, yes. That was the Harlem of Oakland. You went down there when you were slumming. You took the society girl. They generally had some type of Negro musician. That was kind of the big thing. In New York you went out to Harlem [Denahy 1981:24].

Slim Jenkins's club remained a West Oakland landmark until 1962, while Jenkins himself was known as the unofficial "Mayor of West Oakland" because of his many civic activities in the neighborhood. Dewey Bargiacchi, whose Italian family owned and operated another popular West Oakland night spot, the North Pole, recalled: "He ran a real good place. A real fine place. A real gentleman" (Bargiacchi 1981). Today, on the north side of Seventh Street between Willow and Campbell, West Oakland's new senior housing project is named for Slim Jenkins, which should bring back vivid memories to some of its residents.

A few doors down from Jenkins's Corner, at 1720 Seventh, John Singer began operating his nightclub and restaurant in 1942. Singer later gained a reputation for booking first-rate traveling jazz performers. Other West Oakland nightspots were geared more to the local community. One regular neighborhood venue for musicians was Webb's Hall on Eighth Street, which Charlie "Duke" Turner described:

We played Sunday night dances there and any other dances they might have. We usually played a Saturday night dance somewhere else. Webb's Hall was a big barn of a place and they used it for a roller-skating rink too. Sometimes they had skating and dancing at the same time [in Stoddard 1982:93].

The Lincoln Theater at Seventh and Peralta streets, owned by the Golden State Theater and Realty Company, opened in April 1920. It became a well-known venue for vaudeville, movies, other types of family amusement, and—beginning at some point over the next decade—jazz. Most advertisements for the theater appeared in Black newspapers, and it is likely that the clientele was primarily African American. When Mr. J.H. Hart was appointed manager of the theater, he pledged "to secure the best attractions obtainable for the amusement and entertainment of his patrons" (*Western Ameri-*

can 6 May 1927:2). As enticement to remain loyal, drawings were held on at least two occasions, with silk pillows and Blackfoot Indian shawls as prizes (*Western American* 25 March 1927, 15 April 1927). The Lincoln showed movies after they were screened at the larger uptown theaters, and also brought in special showings of Black films. Oakland musician Elmer Keeton served as musical director for the Lincoln Theatre in 1930, and performances by Keeton's Brown Favorites were among the musical fare offered. By the early 1940s well-known artists also performed at the theater. Earl Watkins recalls that Billie Holiday did an engagement at the Lincoln early in 1942: "I was working at the North Pole with Don Anderson, Portland, Oregon, pianist, and he was hired to play for Ms. Holiday. I saw all of Ms. Holiday's performances" (Watkins 1995, pers. comm.).

THE MUSIC

What did the local musicians sound like? Unfortunately, because of the lack of recordings, scores, or arrangements, the answer is left open to conjecture. New Orleans jazz was surely a part of the local jazz scene, given the number of New Orleans people who migrated to West Oakland, both before and after World War I. Oakland native Alfred Levy, who led the Peacock Melody Strutters in the early 1920s, readily acknowledged that influence: "We tried to copy all them pieces off the records: all them old pieces I call Dixieland pieces, like 'Darktown Strutters Ball,' 'St. Louis Blues,' 'Tin Roof Blues,' and 'Margie.' We got some of the stuff from the old-timers around here who played the Dixieland beat" (Stoddard 1982:83). These old timers would have certainly been African American musicians. It is also likely that Levy and other Black musicians in West Oakland were listening to the recordings of Kid Ory, Louis Armstrong, and King Oliver, as well as the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, a group of all-White musicians who played New Orleans Black music with minimal musical success but great popularity. Because Oakland was a Pullman porter's town and their taste was cosmopolitan, it likely that New Orleans style jazz was played even before those recordings were commercially available here.

The visiting traveling musicians, the recordings, and the stock arrangements all provided models for local and other Bay Area musicians and influenced the jazz played in West Oakland. King Oliver's and Kid Ory's personal appearances in Oakland would have had a profound impact on the local musicians. Louis Armstrong's Hot Fives made 26 recordings from 1925 through 1927, all of which were in the New Orleans style; some or all of these records would have been available locally. Drummer Eddie Alley remembers that Winnow Allen's Hot Chocolates "swung like Louis Armstrong—they took solos and improvised." Alley recalled that Allen's Hot Chocolates also played swing music of titles such as "Sweet Georgia Brown" and "Honeysuckle Rose." "We made up a lot of blues, blues you can improvise on" (Alley 1995, pers. comm.). Clem Raymond, from Louisiana, was one of the most popular bandleaders in the '20s. "Raymond played out of a 1919-1920 New Orleans style," remembered George Fleming, a New Orleans trumpet player who was familiar with Raymond's work in the late 1930s; "He had a unique style, and his ideas were New Orleans based" (1996, pers. comm.). The early repertoire most likely consisted of a number of popular and ragtime tunes that were played with jazz phrasings and a jazz feeling.

Later, in the 1940s, Jimmy Lunceford toured Oakland, and Alley saw him at the Oakland Auditorium. Shortly afterwards, Alley formed his own band. "We played more Jimmy Lunceford and all the popular tunes. This area moved with the trend. Playing in hotels, one must play what people

want to hear" (1995, pers. comm.). Saunders King and tenor saxophonist Robert Barfield both made arrangements for the Saunders King band and were influenced by John Kirby's band, King recalls being influenced by the new styles in the 1940s: "I was playing a style of music which was like John Kirby. I saw Kirby in San Francisco. I saw him at an after hour spot. Kirby came in and I met him. I listened to Kirby, and Charlie Christian—that's the way I got the style. The style we played was built on Baltimore-born John Kirby" (King 1995, pers. comm.). Kirby, a bass player and bandleader, formed his band in 1937, and from 1938 to 1942, his sextet was probably the most popular small jazz ensemble playing in the swing style (Kernfeld 1994:653).

From this brief review, it appears that West Oakland and other Bay Area jazz musicians in the 1930s and '40s—influenced by records and by visiting musicians and their bands—played in a variety of styles, including New Orleans, swing, and no doubt in the style of Kansas City musicians. Alto-sax player Robert K. Smith, who was active from the mid-1930s, sums it up this way: "With each musician introduced into the area, with each musical score or recording, with each radio or personal appearance, the music in West Oakland was transformed, refined" (1995, pers. comm.). Although Smith and other musicians interviewed emphasize the continually changing nature of the West Oakland music scene, some generalizations can be made. Minstrelsy—consisting of a variety of



PLATE 95. SIMS AND KELLER, SONG-AND-DANCE STYLISTS, PUBLICITY PHOTO FOR SLIM JENKINS, ca. 1956. Once his nightclub became established, Slim Jenkins booked major artists and groups, such as the Ink Spots and Dinah Washington. The nightclub also remained an important venue for lesser-known bands and specialty acts such as this one. (Photo courtesy of Homer "Chuck" Walker)

upbeat, popular styles—was played from 1900 to the mid-teens; early jazz, probably New Orleans style as represented by King Oliver's band, was played from 1918 to 1930; and the swing style may have dominated from 1930 to 1945. Bebop—a major movement in the East and in southern California beginning in the early '40s—seems to have had little appeal to West Oakland musicians. Bay Area music can also be categorized geographically: Musicians interviewed recall that—by the 1940s—San Francisco was strictly a jazz town and Richmond was strictly a blues town, while Oakland was known for both jazz and blues.

THE CHANGING SCENE AND THE URBAN BLUES

West Oakland changed abruptly in the 1940s, impacted from the arrival of thousands of African Americans who came from the South to work in war-related industries. While the population of West Oakland was 16.2 percent Black in 1940, by 1950 61.5 percent of West Oakland's residents were Black (Johnson 1993:95). Most local African Americans considered the new immigrants "invaders," but the war-workers' paychecks and penchant for recreation fostered a temporary boom in the entertainment business and other enterprises along Seventh Street. When the wartime boom ended, many of the workers found themselves unemployed and far from home. The crowding of the neighborhood had been an accepted wartime necessity; it became an economic necessity after the war as many of the unemployed found they had nowhere else to go. Under these conditions, violence and crime increased. Blue-collar immigrants who had settled West Oakland and had lived there for decades began to move out, as did the middle-class African Americans who had become affluent through railroad work or local business ventures. West Oakland was, for the first time, becoming a Black ghetto. When the ready money that had sustained so many successful Black businesses left West Oakland, most nightclubs closed their doors or reverted to neighborhood bars.

Changes were occurring musically as well. The end of World War II is customarily used to date the decline of the big jazz bands, such as those that had played to audiences of 7,000 or more at the Oakland Auditorium. West Oakland would remain a center for music after the war, but styles were changing.

Oakland had always been a blues town. When California Rhythm and Blues began to flower from the guitars and voices of Lowell Fulson, Aaron "T-Bone" Walker, and Saunders King, Oakland was receptive. The piano styles and voices of Ivory Joe Hunter's "Seventh Street Boogie" and Charles Brown's "Driftin' Blues" became the urban blues of California cities. While Los Angeles was the acknowledged center of this innovation, Oakland also played a role, as a recent history of the blues remarks:

A highly developed urban blues was being played in California well in advance of other regions, and it was also West Coast entrepreneurs who pioneered the trend toward small independent labels that played such a crucial role in the development and dissemination of postwar blues. (Oakland's Gilt-Edge Recording Company was the first in 1945, with Cecil Gant's "I Wonder") [Cohn 1993:179].

Other record companies soon followed. Bob Geddins, called the "Father of Oakland Blues," began pressing records at his West Oakland plant at Eighth and Center streets. Fulson's country rendition



PLATE 96. SLIM SLAUGHTER'S QUARTET AT SLIM JENKINS'S NIGHTCLUB, ca. 1952. (Left to right: Pat Patterson, tenor sax; Slim Slaughter, piano/vibraphone; Homer "Chuck" Walker, drums; Walter Oakes, bass.) Slim Jenkins's club was a major venue for local jazz musicians, and it was said that "all the musicians worked there at one time or another." (Photo courtesy of Homer "Chuck" Walker)

of "Three O'Clock Blues" on Geddins's Down Town label ascended to no. 6 on the billboard's Black music charts. By 1953 Geddins had recorded "Tin Pan Alley," sung by Jimmy Wilson—a slow, mournful "in-your-face" blues whose lyrics tell of killings and knifings at clubs that were worlds away from the Creole Cafe or Slim Jenkins's place.

CONCLUSION

While West Oakland was not responsible for a distinctive style of jazz, its venues, musicians, and nightlife were significant aspects of Black culture in the Bay Area. It was the neighborhood where, if you stayed in your place, African Americans could feel the freedom that jazz music represents and transcend the drudgery of work and other woes. It was also a place where the ingenuity and vitality of Black business could be seen all around. West Oakland and Seventh Street were more than jazz, but it was the jazz music and the nightlife that made the locale known across the Bay and across the country. Not only were West Oakland clubs open to Blacks, but those Whites who ventured there—whether music lovers or, in their minds, "slumming"—found a colorful and vibrant night life whose humanity and vitality showed the rest of the Bay Area how to have a good time.

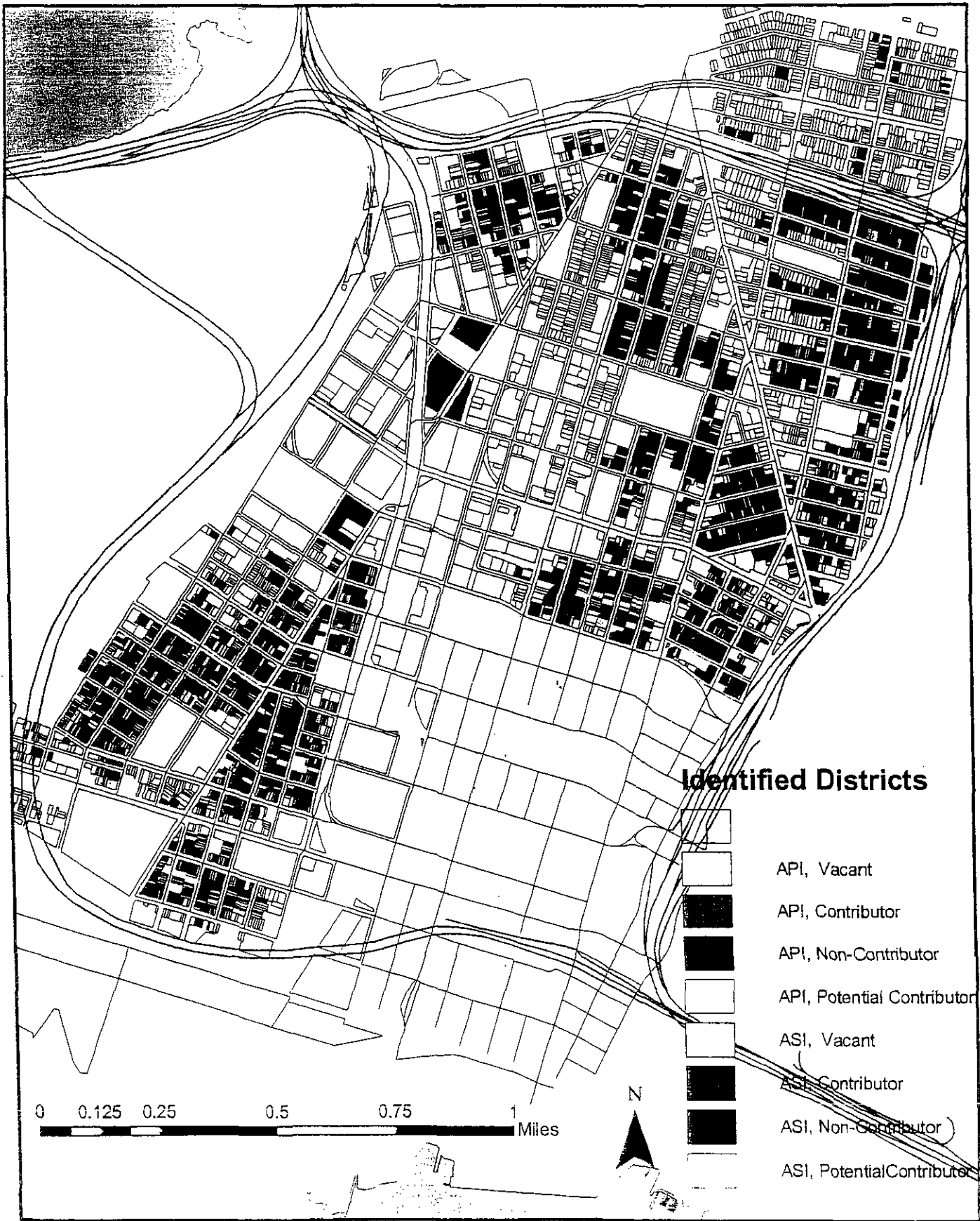


Figure 11-3
Historic Districts

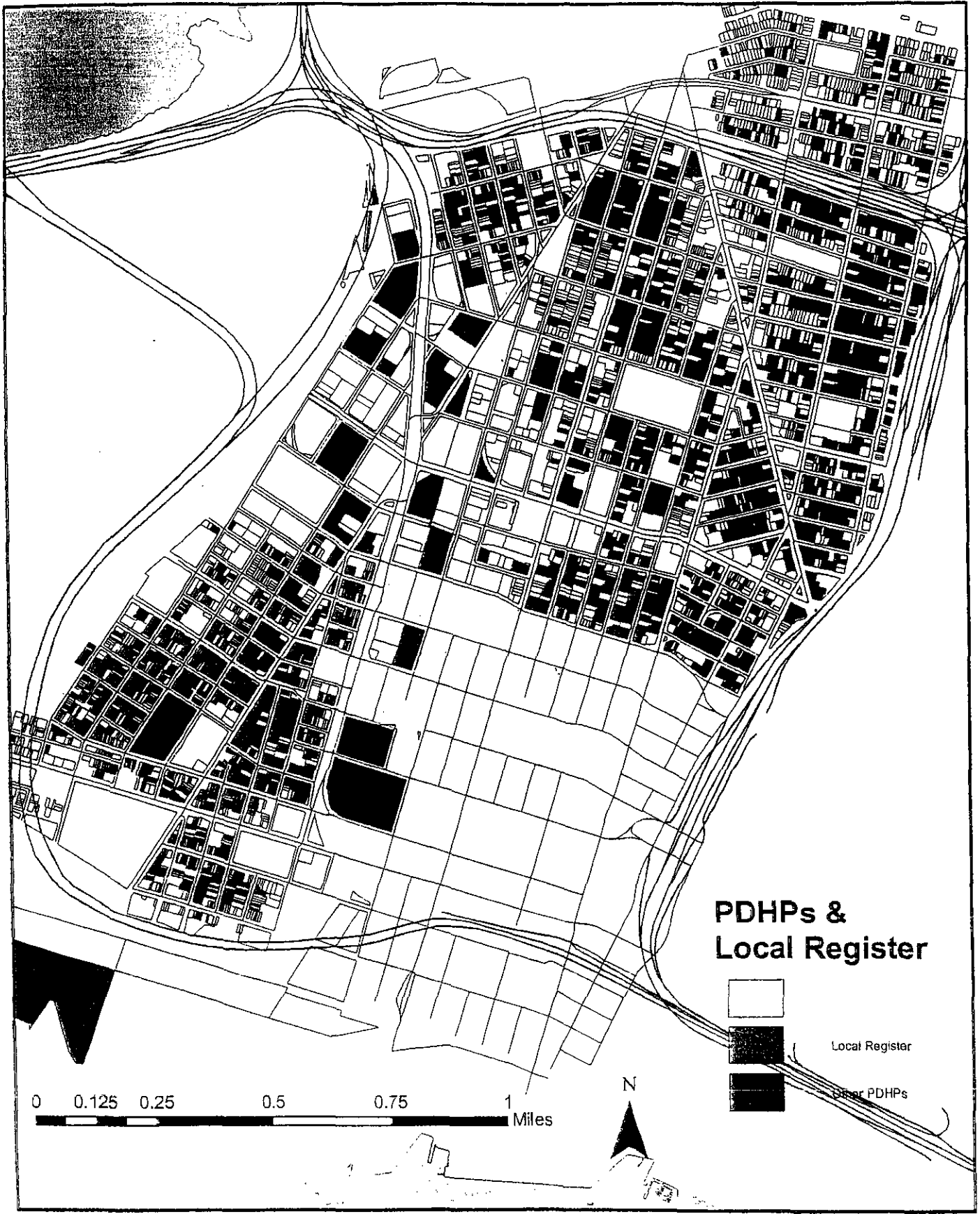


Figure 11-2

Local Register of Historical Resources and Potential Designated Historic Properties



SOURCE: City of Oakland

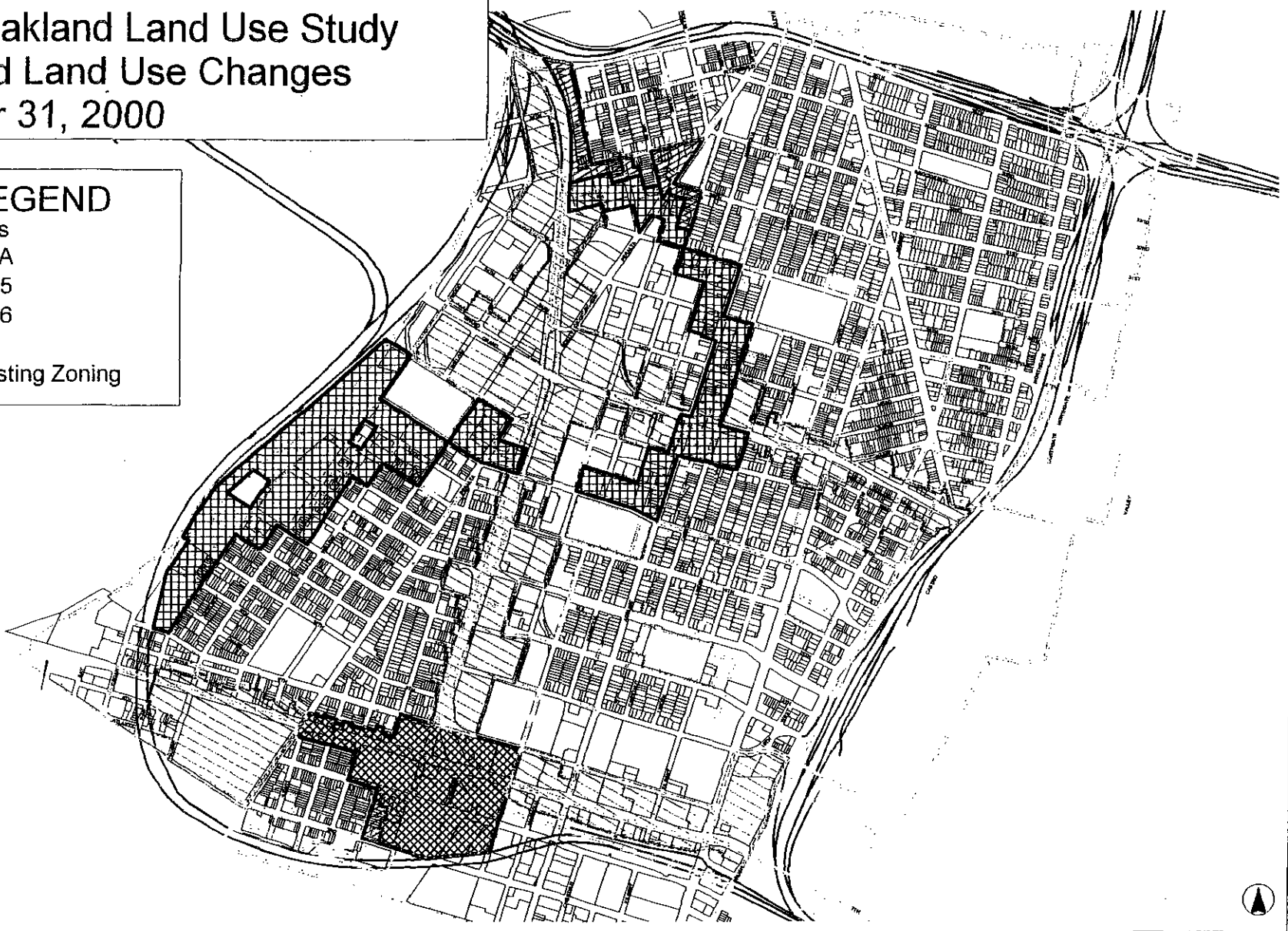
West Oakland Land Use Study
Adopted Land Use Changes
October 31, 2000

LEGEND

Proposals

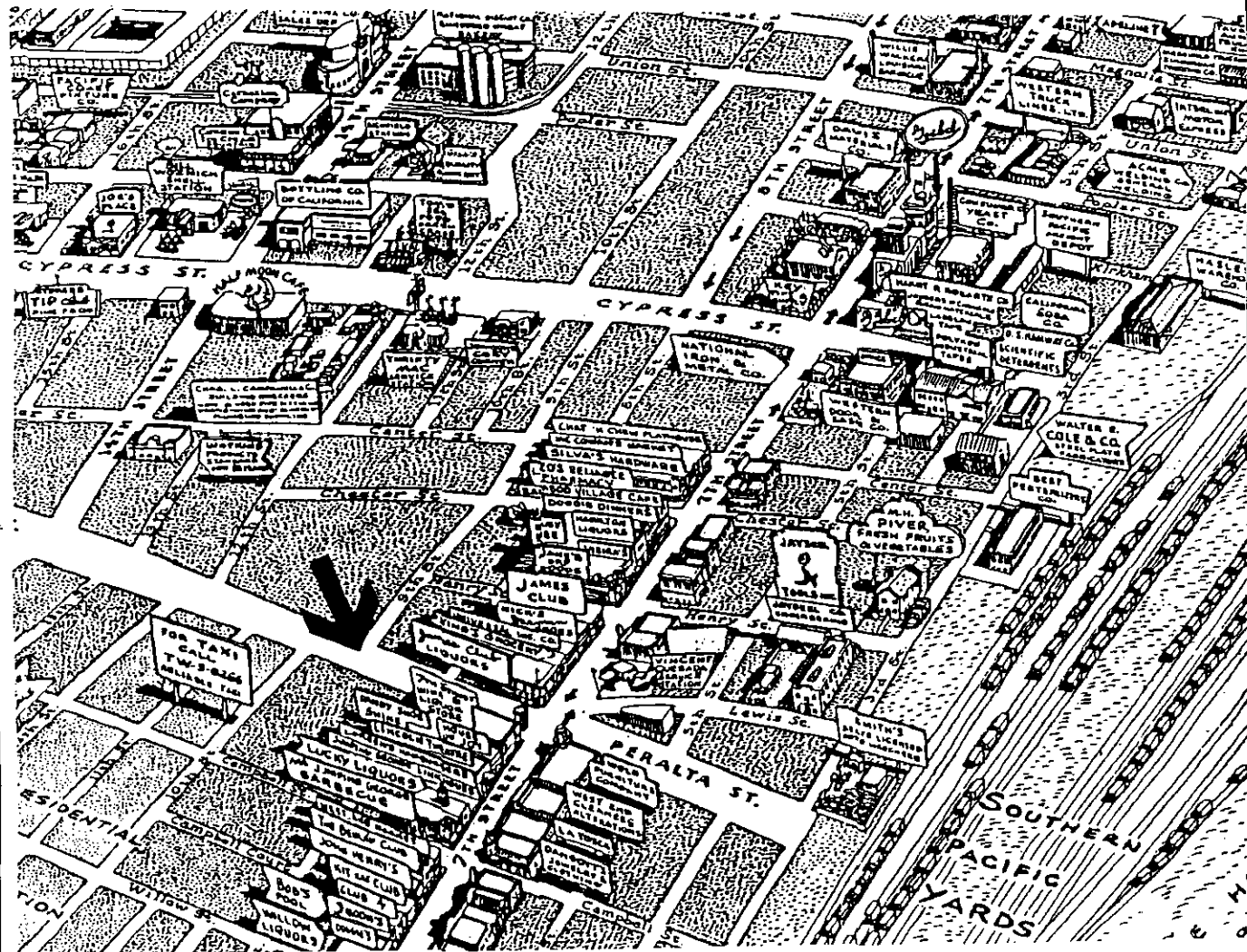
- GPA
- S-15
- S-16
- S-4

Existing Zoning



1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 8000 9000 10000 Feet

Hubbard Advertising Agency, cartoon map of West Oakland, 1954:
detail showing concentration of restaurants and clubs along West 7th Street



**THE MUSIC THEY PLAYED ON
7TH STREET: OAKLAND BLUES &
HERITAGE FESTIVAL**

deFremery Park, Saturday,
September 4.

This is where all the black people are," a friend observed after arriving Saturday afternoon at West Oakland's deFremery Park as the Ballads were winding up their first public performance in thirteen years. She'd just come from Old Oakland, where San Francisco promoter Terry Pimsleur was presenting the first day of a three-day hodgepodge of largely little-known acts called Blues and Art on the Bay. Jerry Brown was excited about that one; it was about bringing tourist dollars to downtown, though attendance was substantially lower than last year when the event was held on Treasure Island. The Bay Area Blues Society's brilliantly conceived The Music They Played on 7th Street: Oakland Blues and Heritage Festival was, on the other hand, about affirming the cultural traditions of a community.

West Oakland, particularly 7th Street, was the hub of African-American commerce and culture in the East Bay as early as this century's second decade. "It was the Harlem of the West Coast," promoter, boxer, and singer "Terrible Tom" Bolden said of the area during a pre-festival panel discussion at the West Oakland Branch Library. "It had everything you wanted," commented Esther Mabry, whose Esther's Orbit Room once presented top R&B attractions.

"There was a lot of money then," added Bob Geddins Jr., whose late father produced a string of records from the mid-'40s to the early '60s that put the sounds of black Oakland on the national charts. Outside forces—notably CalTrans, BART, and the US Post Office—converged some thirty years ago to gut the district's main corridor. West Oakland was never the same, and much of its population migrated to North and East

MUSIC

7th Street Homecoming



The Ballads

Oakland and beyond in search of better opportunities.

With a lineup that featured such Oakland R&B legends as the Ballads, the Natural Four, and Marvin Holmes, Saturday's festival served as a magnet to bring former residents from towns like Hayward and Tracy together with current residents to celebrate West Oakland's oft-forgotten glories. The free event, which drew several thousand fans, was a long-overdue homecoming that reunited many people

who hadn't seen each other in years.

Guitarist Ronnie Stewart's Bay Area Blues Society band, complete with a horn section anchored by Snooky Flowers' bootin' baritone sax, provided solid support for a series of singers early in the afternoon. They included Wiley Trass, Ella Pennewell, Willie G., Lady Margaret, and Teddy Watson, whose ringing tone and soulfully delayed timing on "Don't Throw Your Love on Me So Strong" betrayed a pronounced B.B. King influence.

**Oakland Blues
& Heritage
Festival reunites
a once-vibrant
community.**

monies and lively choreography to songs associated with the Temptations, Dells, and other groups. Together since 1967, the Malibus tightened their act by touring the world as an opening act for Buck Ram's Platters but made few recordings of their own.

The Ballads, the leading Oakland vocal group of the '60s, also did cover tunes—by the Spinners and Temptations—but finally settled into a few of their own local hits, the neo-doo-wop classics "God Bless Our Love" and "Dizzy World" among them. "The kids nowadays think they know about it, but they don't really know what a mack is," said John Foster during "Dizzy World," which the Ballads had performed in the classic blaxploitation film, *The Mack*. Rico Thompson, another charter member, did an admirable job of singing the original lead parts of Leslie Palmer, who, curiously, was holding court nearby in his double-parked car but never entered the park.

The Natural Four, another prominent vocal group from the golden age of Oakland soul, followed with a smoothly harmonized mixture of Curtis Mayfield/Impressions selections and their own hits, including "Can This Be Real?" (which they'd recorded for Mayfield's Curtom label). The current edition, led by original lead tenor Chris James, was expertly backed by Bluz 4 U, James' wife Zakiya Hooker's band.

Other highlights of the day included an instrumental reading of Sly Stone's "Everyday People" by guitarist Carl Robinson that combined Oakland funk with the joyous cacophony of a New Orleans brass band, and an emotive, highly melismatic treatment of "Dr. Feelgood" by onetime Bob Geddins Sr. recording artist Lil' Frances. Guitarist Marvin Holmes' George Benson-inspired instrumentals weren't nearly as funky as the tunes he recorded with the Uptights thirty years ago, but nevertheless provided a warm, jazzy finale for the fast-paced festival. —Lee Hildebrand

FOLK

Stockton's California Malibus delivered the most polished performance of the day, applying top-to-bottom har-

CRY

the Tribune

CALENDAR

Sunday, October 2, 1983

□ Oakland, California



The Roots of Oakland Blues

By Doug D. Worsham
The Tribune

They called Seventh Street "Black Broadway."

The music was Oakland blues.

Bob Geddings, who was there, remembers well.

Oakland blues, he says, are a little bit different from other blues. There's a little more downhome Southern touch in

Oakland blues than in Chicago blues, which has a lot of harmonica in it. Oakland blues comes from Texas and Louisiana. That's the way we heard them down there and we brought them to Oakland."

Geddings spent a lot of time on Seventh Street, mixing business with pleasure in the 1940s and '50s by producing records of the Oakland blues giants. They were the likes of Johnny Fuller, K.C. Douglas, Jimmy McCracklin, Duke Boy Bonner and Jimmy Wilson, who waxed the quintessential Oakland blues tune, "Pan Alley."

key to the City of Oakland on Wednesday at a kickoff party for Oakland Center Stage, which is holding a festival Friday through Sunday to celebrate the community's art and culture.

He'll also receive the second yearly Distinguished Artist of Oakland Award. Mayor Lionel Wilson is expected to present it.

For half a century — from the early 20s to the early 70s — Seventh Street in West Oakland was a thriving center of black commerce and social activity where the sounds of jazz and blues

... continued on next page

Oakland Blues

Continued from preceding page

meshed within the throbbing walls of the hot nightspots that lit up the street like sparklers on the 4th of July.

Nowadays the only reminder of Seventh Street's glory days is Esther Mabry's breakfast club and bar. Mabry once operated Esther's Orbit Room, which was the leading local spot of the 60s and the early 70s with artists such as Lowell Fulson, Pee Wee Crayton, Lou Rawls and Al Green.

In 1971, the concrete sprawl of the U.S. Post Office wiped out much of what was left of Seventh Street's musical life. Today, the looming BART tracks cut right through the heart of the once-bustling black music center, where nightclubs were concentrated in an area that stretched along Seventh Street from Magnolia to Pine.

The strip is now embroidered by abandoned, burned out buildings, a few vacant, littered lots, deteriorating homes and a handful of businesses.

Although the heyday of Seventh Street has ended, the history of this formerly burgeoning musical mecca reveals a rich cultural history of blacks and the arts in the Bay Area.

In 1921, New Orleans trombone great Kid Ory and his Creole Jazz Band were performing at the street's Creole Cafe.

Next door, at 1748 Seventh St., was the place bearing the name of Harold "Slim" Jenkins, who opened his club in 1933 on the day Prohibition ended.

Jenkins, a towering hulk of a man, was known as the unofficial "Mayor of West Oakland."

From 1933 to 1962, Jenkins' posh L-shaped

A complete list of Oakland Center Stage events appears on Page 16.

art deco club attracted the leading black entertainers of the day, from Ben Watkins' Big Band, Dinah Washington, and the Ink Spots to Earl "Fatha" Hines. Ivory Joe Hunter called Jenkins' club his headquarters. One of Hunter's first uptown-style blues hits was "7th Street Boogie," which was recorded during the mid-40s for Pacific Records in Berkeley.

Seventh Street was a cultural magnet, drawing men such as blues singers such as Fulson, Joe Turner and Saunders King, the urbane blues artist who recorded Oakland's first blues hit, "S.K. Blues" in 1942; jazz musicians such as Clarence Blankenship and Robert Smith, who were Seventh Street regulars, and bandleader Johnny Otis, who sneaked into numerous Seventh Street clubs as a teen-ager.

Otis and his big band, with special guests Etta James and Sugar Pie DeSanto, will perform at a "17th Street Festival" Friday. Fulson will return to Oakland Sunday, when he performs at a free blues concert in Jack London Square.

"It was booming," Geddis says of the once-flourishing musical scene on Seventh Street, where he owned a record shop three doors down from Slim Jenkins in the mid-40s.

"Seventh Street was so crowded that you could hardly walk down the street," Geddis recalls. "There were lots of characters around

Inside:

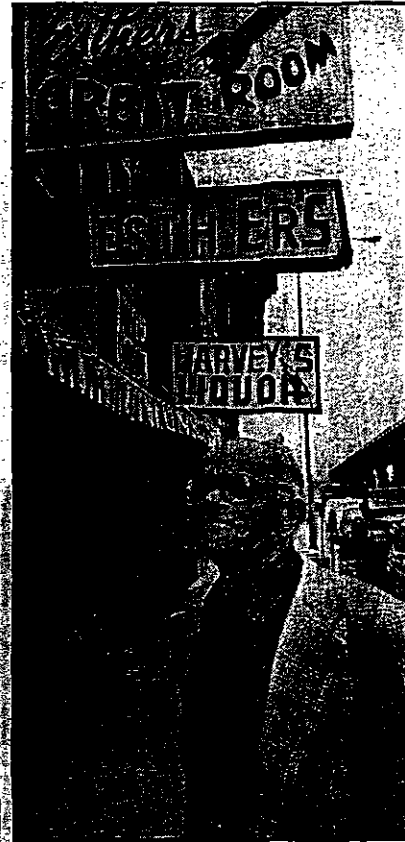
Concerts	4, 29
Movies	8
Books	10
Calendar	13
Television	25
Art	26
Records	30
Clubs/Shows	31
Pastimes	34



By Bill Crouch/The Tribune



By Lew Coban/The Tribune



By Reginald Pearman/The Tribune

Clarence Blankenship, (clockwise from upper right) Bob Geddis and Robert Smith knew well the Seventh Street scene that gave birth to the Oakland blues, a community cultural heritage being honored by the Oakland Center Stage festival.

during that time such as Raincoat Jones. He was a tall slim guy, who was a terrible gambler. He sold bottles of liquor out of his raincoat after hours."

They called him "Raincoat" because he always wore one, remembers Blankenship, now 65, who led his own band at Seventh Street's Kory Kabaret Cafe. (On the cover picture, Blankenship is one right playing a saxophone.) There was another guy, says Blankenship, who who called himself the Reverend. "He was very neat with his black suit and white shirt that looked like a dib. He was constantly orating about the sins and evils of things, but he would drink as much whiskey as anyone else."

By the late 30s and early 40s, Seventh Street had become a boulevard teeming with people flocking to department stores, bars, soul food restaurants and the Lincoln Theater, which showed vaudeville and movies. Gambling and prostitution were other forms of commerce known to the street.

As a teen-ager during the 30s, Johnny Otis haunted the juke joints of Seventh Street in search of his first love — the blues.

"We'd paint on mustaches, wear dark glasses and dress up in suits to look older," recalls Otis,

now often called "the godfather of rhythm and blues."

"Slim Jenkins was kind of cocktail jazz, and they had gambling in the back of the club so they didn't want kids around. But down the street there were these little dark, dingy joints. They had pure blues attractions. Although they were buckets of blood, they were much more alluring than Slim Jenkins."

During World War II, mass numbers of poor southern blacks migrated to the West Coast to work in the shipyards. They came primarily from Texas and Louisiana, although some came from Arkansas and Oklahoma. But they all brought a regional blues heritage, which was an escape from the horrors of southern bigotry.

That downhome blues was decidedly different from the jazz that had dominated the pre-World War II years and the uptown variety of blues and jazz that was in vogue at Slim Jenkins, say Robert Smith and Blankenship.

In the few short years following the outbreak of World War II, tiny juke joints and honky-tonks sprang up on Seventh Street and in North Richmond. The lineup of blues performers included Fulson, Pee Wee Crayton and Ivory Joe Hunter.

Continued on next page

Oakland Blues

Continued from preceding page

Fulson, who began his blues career in Oakland as a sailor stationed at the Naval Air Station, performed on street corners and passed the hat among appreciative onlookers.

Geddins is credited with putting Oakland on the map with his classic recordings of K.C. Douglas, Jimmy Wilson, Jimmy McCracklin and Fulson, who was the first major artist on Geddins' various record labels.

Smith and Blankenship — who now play in Junius Courtney's Big Band — say the clientele at Jenkins' club was primarily the black bourgeoisie of Oakland and San Francisco, but a few whites ventured down to Seventh Street to hear the black blues and jazz artists.

"In that era the whites could come to black clubs, but blacks couldn't go to white clubs," says

Smith, a native of Houma, La., who played with several groups.

Although some Oakland neighborhoods and schools were integrated, says Smith, segregation was "very much implied." Jim Crow signs, he remembers, were prominent in downtown Oakland at restaurants and bars. "Seventh Street was the only place black people could go. If you went to a bar downtown, they would ignore you until you left. I don't think it changed completely until the late 1960s. Black musicians couldn't even join the musicians union. Things have gotten better, but we've still got a long way to go."

Geddins is a soft-spoken, slow-talking man who came to Oakland from Texas in 1941. Geddins remembers Slim Jenkins as a man who didn't tolerate "scraggly" customers in his establishment. "You had to be dressed up to go in there," Geddins says, "but in the other honky tonks you could always find some blues."

Geddins developed his love of blues as a child growing up in his hometown of Martin, Texas.

"All we knew in my little country town were church songs and the blues," Geddins remembers. "We'd go to these Saturday night suppers and they'd have harmonica and guitar players. While the others were drinking moonshine, cussin', and fighting, I was listening to the musicians. That's all you had down there. There weren't any orchestras or concerts. I listened to Basie, Ellington and Cab Calloway on the radio, but that didn't do nothin' for me."

By 1946, Geddins had moved from Seventh Street Eighth Street, where he operated his own record pressing plant. Geddins later moved his shop to 23rd Ave. in East Oakland and after a run of bad luck, retired from the record business 15 years ago. He now owns an East Oakland radiator shop and occasionally dabbles in record producing.

A Preview of Events at
the Oakland Symphony

**Richard Buckley
Opens the Season
with Mahler**

**Impressive
Works in Brass**

**Leontyne Price
in Recital**

OCTOBER

11/12/13

Richard Buckley conducts
BARBER—Second Essay for
Orchestra
SAINT-SAENS—Piano Concerto
No. 4
MAHLER—Symphony No. 1
Peter Orth, Piano

There will be celebrations
before and after the open-
ing night concert, to honor
both our 50th Season and
the debut of Richard Buckley,
our new Music Director.

Tues. & Thurs. at Paramount,
8 p.m. (\$5-16)
Wed. at Zellerbach, 8 p.m.
(\$8-15)

The concert and recital are being sponsored
by the William Sterling Foundation.

21/22

Newton Wayland conducts
"Here Come The Brass," a Pops
concert featuring soloists
from the Oakland Symphony
brass section.

Fri. at Paramount, 8 p.m.
(\$8-16) Sat. at Rheim in
Moraga, 8 p.m. (\$7.50).

23

Jerome Neff conducts
"The Incredible Flutist," a
Young People's Concert with
selections by Mozart, Sousa,



In 1889, Mahler
conducted the premiere of
his Symphony No. 1. He
described it as "the sound
of Nature," but it was more
than a simple, pastoral
piece.

His biographers called
it a work of cosmic dimen-
sion, depicting Man's
struggle to understand the
meaning of life and death.

The reaction at its
premiere, however, was
unfavorable.

Yet, Mahler was con-
sumed by this epic theme,
and he explored it in the
eight symphonies that
followed.

They were never
popular in his time. In fact,
it was not until the middle
of this century that Mahler's
music received the acclaim
denied it in the last.

Irving Berlin and more.
Sun. at Paramount, 2 p.m.
(\$3-6).

26

Leontyne Price in Recital
Leontyne Price will perform
selections from Madame
Butterfly, Gulliver's Travels and

Andre Chénier, in addition
to traditional spirituals and
songs by contemporary
American composers.

... a voice as beautiful as
anything in memory."
—Saturday Review

Wed. at Paramount, 8 p.m.
(\$7.50-24).

Recital sponsored by The Chelan Co.

Home for the Oakland Symphony
is the magnificent Paramount
Theatre, an Art Moderne palace,
acoustically superb, and registered
as a national historic landmark.
It offers convenient, well-lit
parking, and BART nearby.

The Paramount Theatre is
located at 2023 Broadway,
Oakland. For tickets or informa-
tion, call 465-6400.



COMMUNITIES IN ACTION

Where the Train Stopped

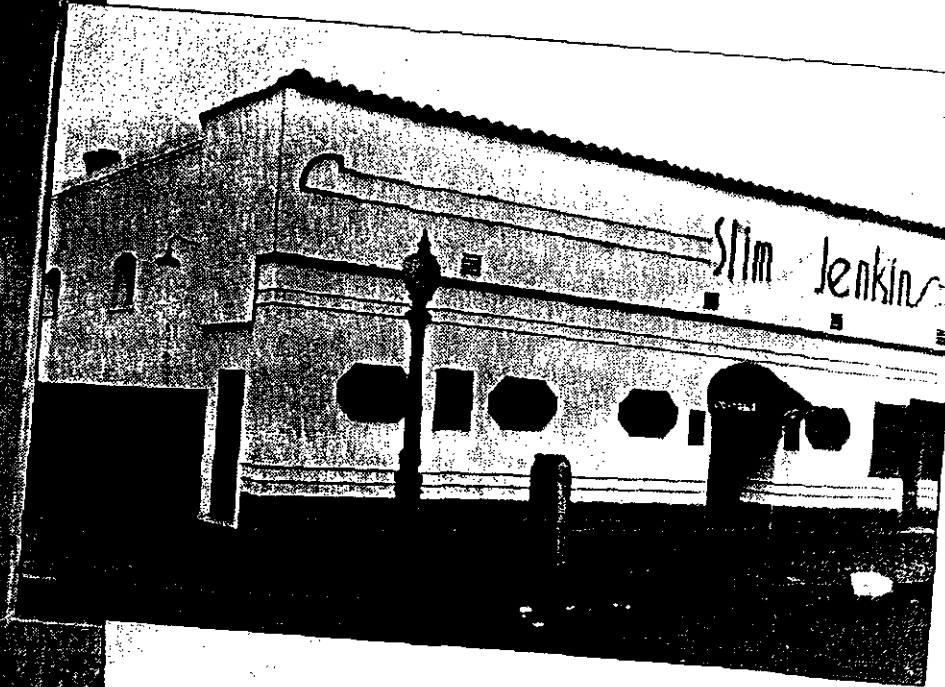
By Lee Hildebrand

The celebrated Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s wasn't the only explosion of black culture that occurred in America during the first part of this century. Harlem may have been the hub, but its spokes reached out to every urban center in which large numbers of black people lived. Exciting new developments in music, poetry, fiction, theater, and visual arts were felt throughout the land. Music was the most pervasive of the art forms, and even the highly sophisticated innovations of such musicians as Duke Ellington and Lester Young could be appreciated by the common man. It appealed to the feet, as well as to the head, and its popularity transcended race.

West Oakland, NAACP chief Roy Wilkins once observed, was "the place where the train stopped." Between the two great wars, the Southern Pacific deposited thousands of black people, primarily from Texas and Louisiana, at its 16th and Wood depot. West Oakland, which had contained a mixture of Greeks, Slavs, Italians, Portuguese, Spanish, Irish, and a few blacks before World War I, became a majority black community by the end of the second World War. Stately old Victorian and Italianate houses were divided up into apartments to accommodate the new black dwellers, the white



Harold "Slim" Jenkins



Oakland and beyond, where they could continue to live in white environs while collecting rent.

The first black musician of note known to have performed in West Oakland was pianist Shelton Brooks, who appeared at Henry Hastings' bar at Pacific and Willow sometime before World War I. Brooks' compositions, which included "Some of These Days" and "Darktown Strutters' Ball," provided an important stylistic link between ragtime and the then-emerging work of such Tin Pan Alley composers as Jerome Kern and Ir-

Later, in 1921, New Orleans trombonist Kid Ory was working his slide at a place called the Creole Cafe on 7th Street. Just a year before, in Los Angeles, Ory's Creole Jazz Band had become the first black band to make a record.

The January 7, 1922 issue of Oakland's *California Voice*, the oldest black newspaper on the West Coast, contained an editorial headlined "Oakland's Shame." Bemoaning the failure of a number of black businesses in West Oakland, it read in part: "The Creole Cafe, the finest of its kind west of Chicago, can attribute its

hence they were forced to ply for patronage to the whites and slowly but surely prejudice crept in; this was the beginning of the end."

West Oakland began to come alive again thanks to a man named Harold "Slim" Jenkins. In 1933, directly next door to what had been the Creole Cafe, Jenkins opened a nightclub on the day Prohibition ended. It marked the beginning of the West Oakland Renaissance, a period that lasted into the '60s, well after the Mafia's introduction of heroin into Harlem destroyed what-

COMMUNITIES IN ACTION

continued from page 7

ever vestiges of that dream still remained after World War II.

Born in Monroe, Louisiana, Jenkins came to California right after World War I, worked as a waiter, and saved his money. His club at 1748 7th Street became the most celebrated black nightclub on the West Coast.

"Slim's was the most beautiful supper club that we ever had around here," recalls comedian/tap-dancer Finney Mo, who emceed shows for such headliners as Louis Jordan, Redd Foxx, Jimmy Witherspoon, Charles Brown, Lowell Fulson, and B.B. King at Slim Jenkins' during the late '50s and early '60s. "It was the spot. No matter where you were—New Orleans, Dallas, Kansas City, Chicago, or New York—everybody heard of Slim's."

Slim Jenkins' contained a large showroom, a first-class restaurant with a huge banquet room, a market, and a liquor store. It attracted a racially mixed clientele to see most of the big names in black popular music. Ivory Joe Hunter, one of the most popular rhythm 'n' blues artists of the '50s, got his start there a decade earlier and was only one of many whose careers Jenkins nurtured.

"Mr. Jenkins promoted the Platters to where they became famous," recalls Tippy Jones, who played drums there behind the likes of Joe Turner, Etta James, and Lil Greenwood. "When they first came there, they were just a little group trying to make it and he wardrobe them and brought them out into a beautiful singing group."

"He was firm, but he was a lovely man to work for—all business," Finney Mo adds. "He didn't allow a whole lotta fool-in' around with the waitresses and the help. He had rehearsals at least twice a week and the show had to be up to par."

tall and weighed well over 200 pounds, was known as the unofficial "Mayor of West Oakland." He always wore conservative three-piece suits and kept his silver hair closely cropped. Dignified and polite, he was active in various civic and civil rights groups and in Republican Party politics.

He ruled his club, according to Jones, "with a businesslike iron hand." It was a well organized establishment, she says, adding, "most of the elites went there. People would come from all over to have dinner down there."

Slim Jenkins' L-shaped, art deco establishment was celebrated years later in a song by Booker T. and the MGs, from faraway Memphis, titled "Slim Jenkins' Place." It was the centerpiece of 7th Street, which some referred to as "the black Broadway."

"Seventh Street used to be it," Jones recalls. "It was beautiful. It was all neon-lit and the restaurants and clubs very well kept. They had very good clientele. People from all over came down to 7th Street in those years. In the daytime, it would be jumpin' just as it would be at night. A lot of railroad men and merchant seamen came down there. Just everybody went to 7th Street 'cause that was the mecca of the West Coast."

While Slim Jenkins' was the street's most popular showcase club, other first-class entertainment establishments lined the boulevard. Jones recalls having seen Billy Eckstine, T-Bone Walker, Count Basie, and James Moody at the Swing Club during the '50s. Other top-of-the-line entertainers played Ciro's, the Villa's, the Clef Club, and the Rendezvous. And the Lincoln Theater offered vaudeville and films.

Slim Jenkins weathered "the hungry '30s, the fat '40s, and the fidgety '50s," as he once put it, but he was forced out of his 7th Street location in 1962 when the property was sold as a service station site. He attempted to relocate within West Oakland, at 975 Grand Avenue, but protests from members of a Baptist church across

the street from the proposed spot caused the city to deny his application, even through the police department reported that there'd never been any problems at his 7th Street club. He finally reopened in Jack London Square, but was never able to recapture the magic of 7th Street. The new Slim Jenkins' finally closed its doors in 1967, shortly before Jenkins' death at age 76.

"After Slim Jenkins' moved from down there, things started slowing up on 7th Street," recalls Jones.

Today, 7th Street's once thriving business district is one of Oakland's most blighted areas, a row of boarded-up storefronts, bars, pool halls, and liquor stores that is the first view of Oakland BART riders get as they emerge from the subway tube.

Esther Mabry is one of the last of the old 7th Street merchants. She says she stays there because she's "stubborn." Mabry came to West Oakland from Texas in 1942, arriving at the Southern Pacific station. Two years later, she went to work for Slim Jenkins and, in 1950, opened her own restaurant across the street, calling it Esther's Breakfast Club. In 1961, she opened Esther's Cocktail Lounge, and after Jenkins left the following year, a nightclub called Esther's Orbit Room.

"I tried to keep things going after Slim left and went down to Jack London Square," Mabry says. Indeed, during the heyday of Esther's Orbit Room in the '60s and early '70s, the club regularly presented such stars as Lou Rawls, Joe Turner, Pee Wee Crayton, Charles Brown, Lowell Fulson, Etta James, and Al Green.

The post office bought Esther's complex in 1973 to build an employee parking lot. "We had to give it up," she explains. "There was no choice, but I held out. I was the last one to go. They gave me quite a bit more money than they first offered me. We bought a lot here on the corner to build, but we never did because my husband got sick. Then the interest started going up and up and it got harder and harder to build."

Esther's Orbit Room, Breakfast Club, and Liquor Store are now located in a smaller building across the street from Oakland's mammoth main post office. There's no longer any live music, and Esther's clientele is now made up mostly of neighborhood people, seamen, longshoremen, railroad workers, and post office employees. "Not as many of the old customers come down as they used to," she explains. "A lot of them have moved out of the area, but some come back because this is where their roots are."

So-called redevelopment put an end to the great musical culture that once flourished along 7th Street, and today, looking for live music in West Oakland is like trying to find a fruit juice stand in the Sahara Desert. The rock cocaine epidemic is further threatening the community's spiritual welfare.

Festival at the Lake's "Communities in Action" exhibit this year focuses on West Oakland—its past and future. The past comes through in an exhibit that includes transcriptions of oral history interviews with former and longtime West Oakland residents, one-time Slim Jenkins employees Tippy Jones and Esther Mabry among them.

Hope for the future is the theme of the booths of two West Oakland non-profit organizations, Jubilee West and Within You. Jubilee West, run by Sisters Joanna and Pat of the order of St. Joseph of Carondelet, has been providing affordable housing for the poor and is presently in the process of restoring Liberty Hall at 1483 8th Street, a 110-year-old mid-Victorian building that served as the local headquarters for Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association in the '20s, and for Harlem-based evangelist Father Divine in the '30s. Children from the organization's after-school program will be performing raps, poems, and short skits on the subject of "being yourself." And the Acorn "Just Say No" Club Players, a group of children aged five through eleven from the drug-ravaged Acorn housing project, will perform an anti-drug skit under the auspices of Within You, Inc.

A blues architect recalls glory of Seventh Street

By Doris G. Worsham
Tribune Staff Writer

"People want to hear the blues," said blues singer-guitarist Lowell Fulson, "but the radio stations won't play it and the record companies don't want to record it — they want the big bucks and rock sells fast."

Although Fulson says he is unhappy about the flagging state of the blues, he is convinced that the once-popular indigenous music form will again flourish in the '80s as it did in the late '40s and '50s.

During that era Fulson was a major architect of the burgeoning blues movement, and he recorded prolifically for such now-defunct record labels as Swingtime, Big Town, Chess, and Kent. Such Fulson compositions as "Three O'Clock in the Morning" and "Reconsider Baby" are regarded as classics of the idiom.

"I think the blues will come back," Fulson predicted Thursday. "And you know who's going to bring the blues back? The young white kids will bring the blues back because they are the ones who are expressing and creating the sound of the blues that their parents disliked."

"I just hope it's not too long, because if they wait too long they may not have anyone here to sing it."

Fulson will appear at 9:30 and 11 tonight and tomorrow night at Mr. Majors in East Oakland.

The blues singer contends that a deliberate prejudice against the blues idiom exists in the record industry.

"The first thing they want to know is 'How old are you?' But I tell them 'It's not how old I am, but how do I sound.'"

"Blues singers have the image of being alcoholics, and jazz and rock artists are always associated with narcotics. But when you see a blues singer still out there singing as well at 60 and 70 years old as he did at 15, why question his age?"

Age hasn't affected the career of the 60-year-old Fulson.

Last year, he toured five European countries and performed at Switzerland's prestigious Montreaux Festival. While touring Japan, Fulson recorded an album in Tokyo. The LP will be released in May. He also played a few club dates in British Columbia.

Fulson was born near a Choctaw Indian reservation between Atoka and Wapanochee, Okla., "a black boy among all those Indians." His guitar style was first influenced by country music.

"I liked country music," said Fulson, tugging at his beige cowboy hat. "I was also attracted to the blues because it reminded me of the spirituals that I heard as a child. I liked the tone of blues and the stories that the songs told."

Country-western bandleader Coot Mason, on

a stopover in Tulsa, taught Fulson how to play the guitar.

"That's why I have a country twang to my guitar style to this day," said the red-haired Fulson, whose nickname is "Tulsa Red."

Discovered in 1940 by legendary blues singer Texas Alexander, Fulson later toured as Alexander's accompanist before joining the Navy in 1943. He later was sent to the Alameda Naval Air Station, where he spent World War II as a butcher.

After his discharge, Fulson drifted down to Oakland's Seventh Street, thriving then with the sounds of musicians like Saunders King, Ivory Joe Hunter, Pee Wee Crayton, and other important blues innovators.

Fulson was attracted to music being played in a small recording studio on Eighth Street, owned by Bob Geddins, the local blues guru who also recorded such noteworthy Oakland blues artists as McCracklin, Sugar Pie DeSanto, Johnny Fuller, and the late L.C. "Good Rockin'" Robinson.

Geddins invited Fulson into the studio, and Fulson picked up and played a guitar sitting in a corner. Geddins, impressed, offered Fulson a recording session. Their first release was called "Crying Blues."

Settling in Oakland, Fulson recorded numerous blues classics for Geddins, including "Black Widow Spider Blues" and "Three O'Clock in the Morning." The blues singer became a virtual fixture in local night spots like the Club Savoy in North Richmond, the Astor House in Vallejo, and the Dreamland Ballroom in Oakland, which booked some of the top black musicians of the day.

"Bob Geddins would bring out the best in an artist," Fulson reflected. "If you had talent he'd draw it out of you. He taught me how to rephrase the blues and how to breathe properly."

"But of all the musicians in Oakland," Fulson noted, "I really listened to Saunders King, because we both played guitar. He was a very polished guitarist and singer."

When Fulson recorded "Everyday I Have the Blues" in 1950, he gained national prominence as one of the most influential blues singers of his time. He later moved to Los Angeles and formed a 12-piece orchestra that featured as its soloists pianist Ray Charles and tenor saxophonist Stanley Turrentine.

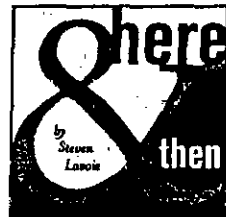
"At that time Los Angeles had a kind of jazzy blues," Fulson remembered. But Oakland, which in recent years has re-emerged as a major blues center, "always had a soulful kind of blues with good orchestration."

"It's not practical to have an orchestra now," lamented Fulson. "To have a big band you have to have a hit record, and in order for the blues to survive it's got to be heard — the record industry isn't doing that now."



Tribune photo by Lonnie Wilson

Lowell Fulson says the blues are coming back but record companies need to help.



"San Francisco" jazz is once again inviting imitators around the world, just as it did when "Frisco" jazz helped spread a new musical gospel to the world at the beginning of this century. But then, as now, the music being played wasn't San Francisco at all. The source of the sound, and the players who created it, was the hard-working city across the bay.

Before the word "jazz" was ever seen in print, musicians in Oakland were transforming the ragtime music of New Orleans into something completely different in the dance halls, saloons and night clubs of West Oakland.

A red-hot night life was beginning to emerge along the strip of Seventh Street that Rev. Judge King, founder of Christ Holy Sanctified Church, would later name "Hell's Half Acre." The Creole Club, at the center of the strip, would become one of the pre-eminent jazz venues in the world.

When San Francisco was ready for the exciting new music, Oaklanders were prepared to provide it. But the crowds were across the bay, haunting the raucous and bawdy San Francisco waterfront. At the heart of the Barbary Coast entertainment district in San Francisco, Lew Purcell opened his Oh So Different Club in the rubble left over from the 1906 earthquake and fire.

Like the musicians he hired to play at his club, Purcell had his roots in Oakland, as a Pullman car porter based at the western terminus of the Southern Pacific Railroad. What made his club so different was the jumping rhythms of the orchestra, led by Oakland pianist Sid LeProtti and a group of fellow Oaklanders who would make



Purcell's a major landmark in the development of jazz.

Born in Oakland in 1886, LeProtti first heard the sounds of ragtime at the West Oakland home of his grandmother, Amanda Marsdon, a contralto opera singer and the first African-American woman to take the stage in California. When Leroy Watkins, a young ragtime player, got off the train from New Orleans in 1884, he tracked Marsdon down to practice his chops on her piano. LeProtti was by his side, captivated by the syncopations. He then combined those rhythms with the classical standards he learned from a German immigrant woman living down the street and the up-beat music of his polyglot ethnic neighbors.

After taking over the piano at the Key Club at 40th Street and San Pablo Avenue in Emeryville, LeProtti put it all together in his red-hot interpretations of the tunes of the day. When Purcell opened his club, LeProtti was leading the band. During the 13 years on that stage, dancers from the Oh So Different took steps like the Texas Tommy Swing, the Turkey Trot and other dances first conceived on that dance floor to New York City, introducing jazz dance to Broadway musicals. The word

Bay Area jazz

"jazz" appeared for the first time in print (in 1913, in the old San Francisco Evening Bulletin, spelled "jass") while LeProtti played, and Bert Kelly, a Barbary Coast banjo player, became the first bandleader to call his orchestra a "jazz band." Finally, solo improvisation, now the foundation of jazz, was introduced during LeProtti's tenure at Purcell's.

Soon, however, the powerful San Francisco Examiner was on an all-out campaign to shut down the Pacific Street clubs, to purge the city of its "wickedness." But before it succeeded, the Jazz Age was in full swing across the country. American culture had finally caught up with West Oakland. ☛

Sounds of early Edison recordings of Bay Area jazz can be heard at the American Memory Project of the Library of Congress at <http://www.loc.gov>. Click on Sound Recordings, then find the Edison files and look for the Frisco Jazz Band.





THE 7TH STREET COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Lucy Lequin
1902 Castro Street Oakland CA 94612
Ebpmgmtgrp@aol.com
510-914-0559



City of Oakland
Attn : Planning Commissioners

Re: Case file # RZ04-107 - The 7th Street Historic District

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I want to thank you for your support for recognizing The 7th Street Historic District as a area with historic significant. However, I understand that not all are in favor of including the Lincoln Theater lot with this designation.

I feel it is essential and only makes since to include the Lincoln Theater lot as part of the 7th Street historic district. The theater I plan to rebuild in it's place will be a replica of the original Lincoln Theater, to conform with the architectural design and character of the adjoining buildings and the community it serves. I plan to break ground for the reconstruction of the Lincoln Theater within 5 years. When the rebuilding of the Lincoln Theater is complete, the 7th Street Commercial Historic District will be complete.

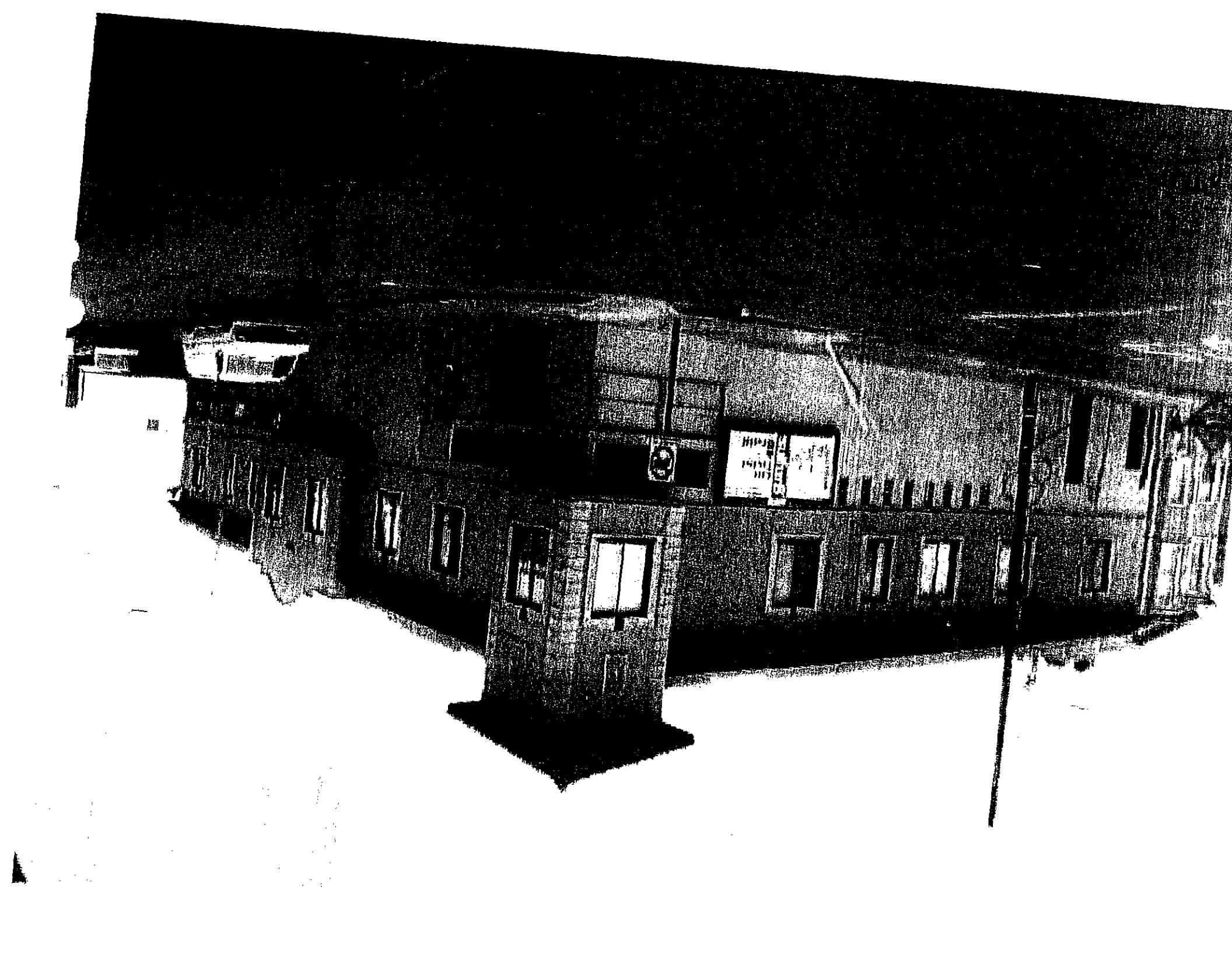
This block of 7th Street proposed for district designation is the best surviving fragment of West Oakland's legendary commercial street of the 1860's to 1960's. The enormous change the railroad wrought in California was magnified in Oakland, the town at the end of the line. The railroad advertised trains to San Francisco, but in literal fact, passengers and freight had to end their trip in Oakland and take a ferry to San Francisco. The main passenger depot was at 7th and Broadway. Trains continued west from Broadway along Seventh Street to its end at the waterfront. Seventh Street (called Railroad Ave) became a thriving commercial strip all along its full length. At the Point, west of Peralta from Seventh to the water's edge, the Central Pacific established its yards and shops, creating a boom in jobs for all levels.

When I acquired the Lincoln Theater block in September 1995, I acquired them in its most deferred state. The plan has always remained the same, and that is to restore these buildings. Since I acquired the property there have been many improvements made permits pulled, one of which included the retrofitting of the Lincoln Theater as well as others. I replaced all windows in kind that needed to be replaced, repaired in kind many items which needed to be repaired, I painted the buildings, replaced roofs, and I am also working with the City of Oakland on a compliance plan for additional work that is needed. All part of the on going restoration process of these buildings.

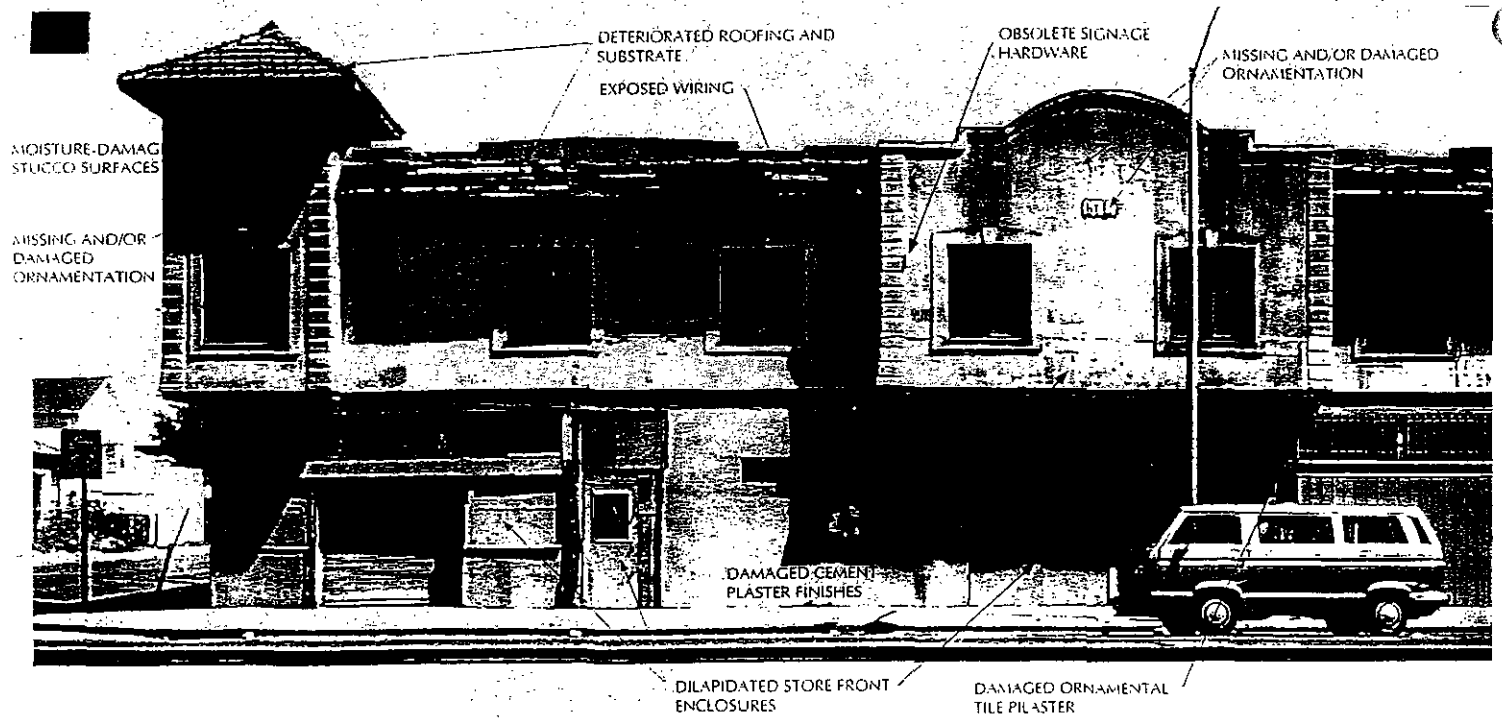
I ask for your support in the designation of this historic district. Every generation has a past, a link to past generations. In time there are many things that change, yet many things which still remain the same. This historic district has become just as much a part of our daily lives today as it was for those who built them.

~~Very truly~~


Lucy Lequin
Property Owner



1640-42 SEVENTH STREET

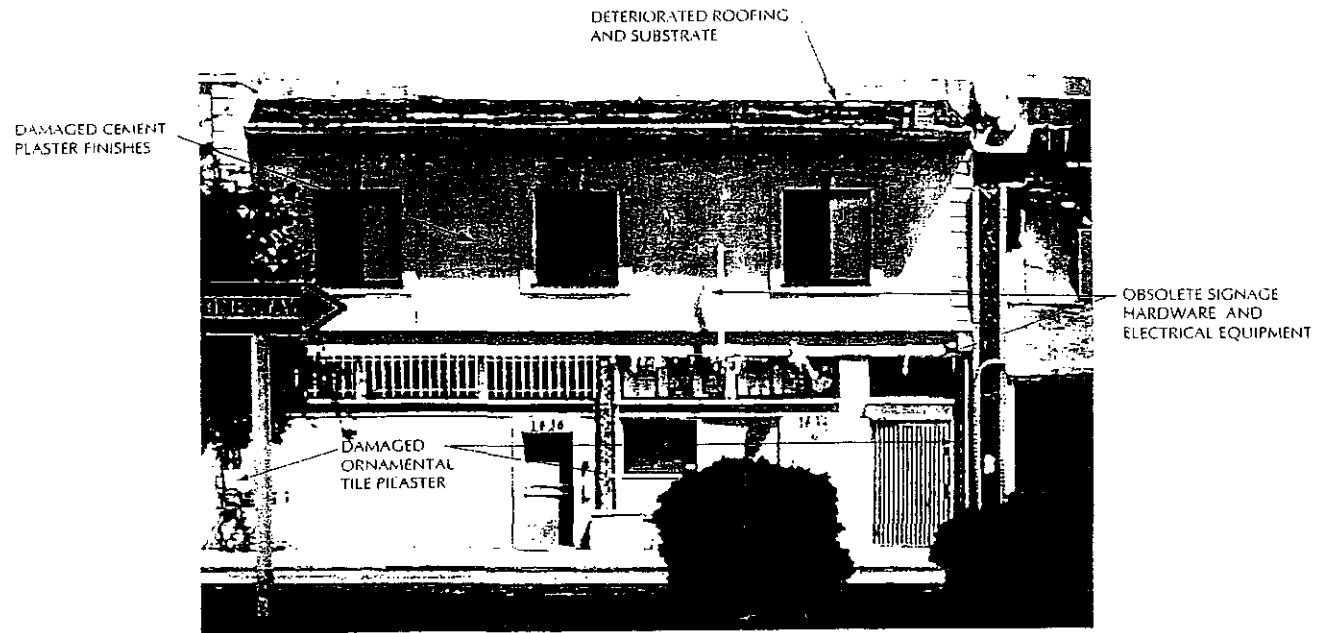


FRONT ELEVATION

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

Existing Conditions

1632-36 SEVENTH STREET

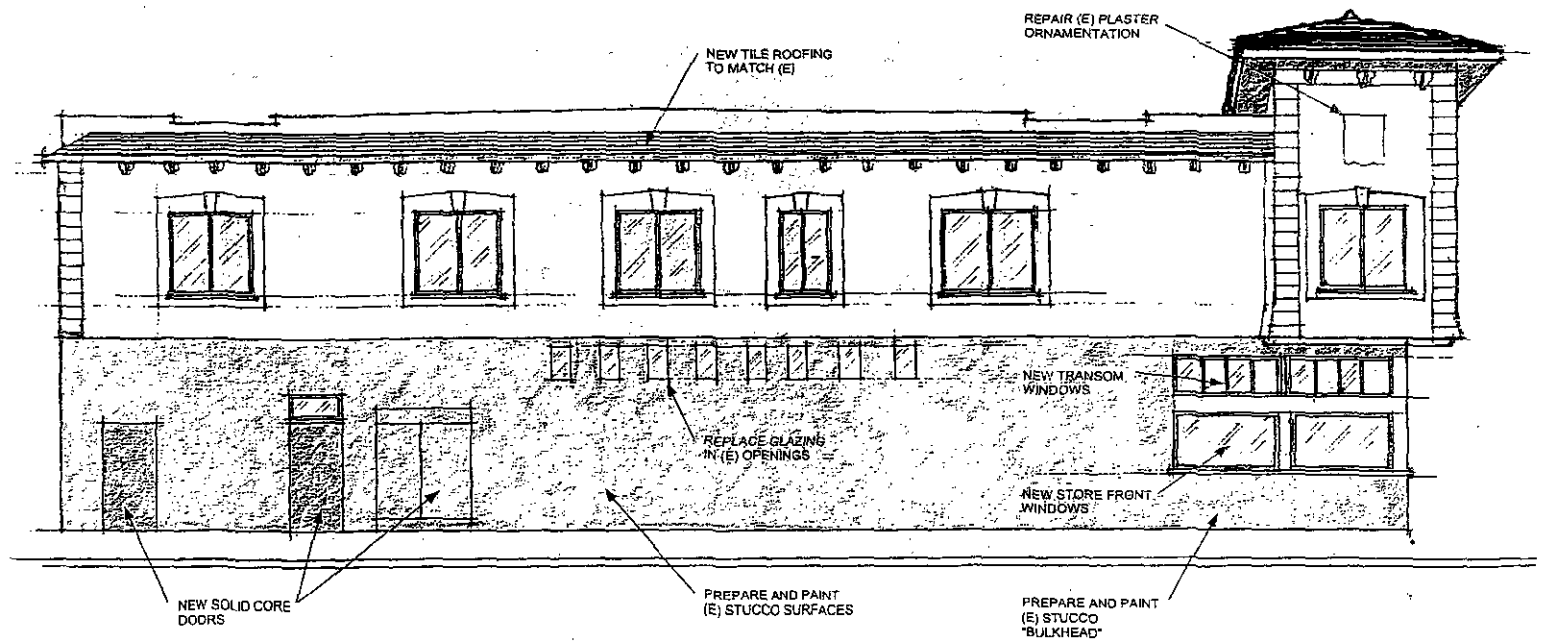


FRONT ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

Existing Conditions

1640-42 SEVENTH STREET

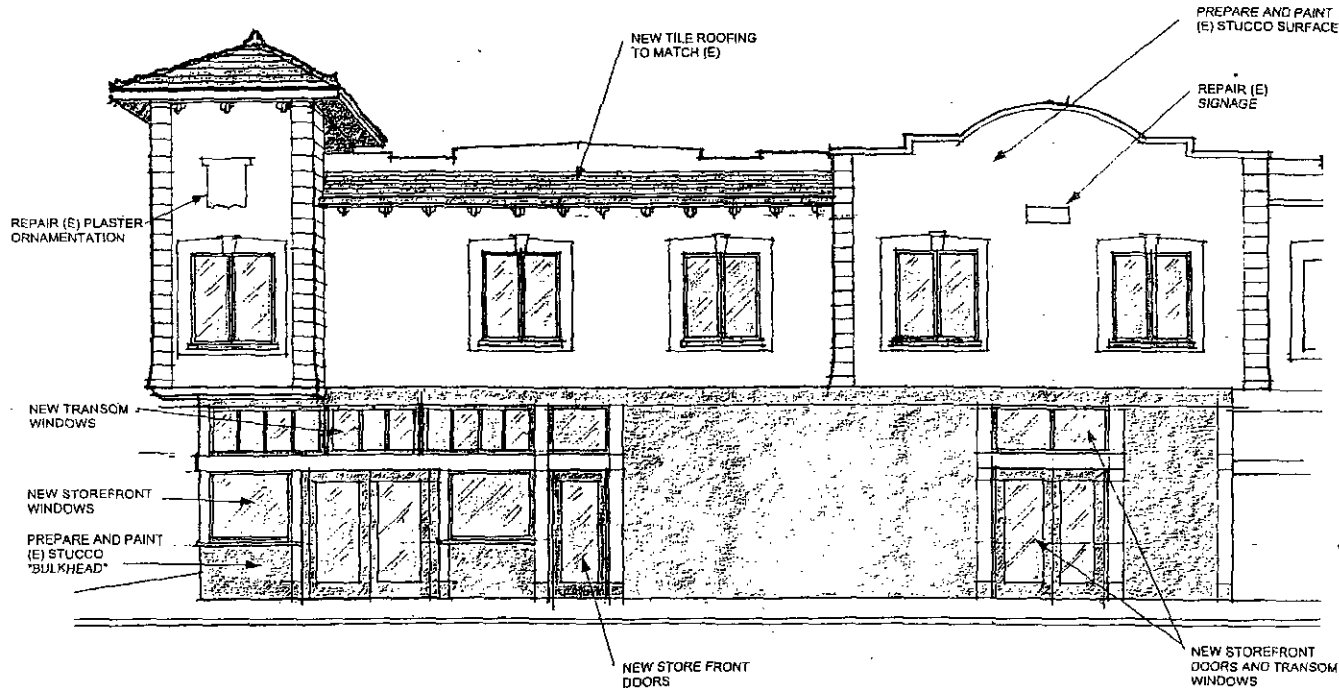
City of Oakland
CEDA
Neighborhood Commercial District
Facade Improvement Program



CAMPBELL STREET ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

1640-42 SEVENTH STREET

City of Oakland
CEDA
Neighborhood Commercial District
Facade Improvement program

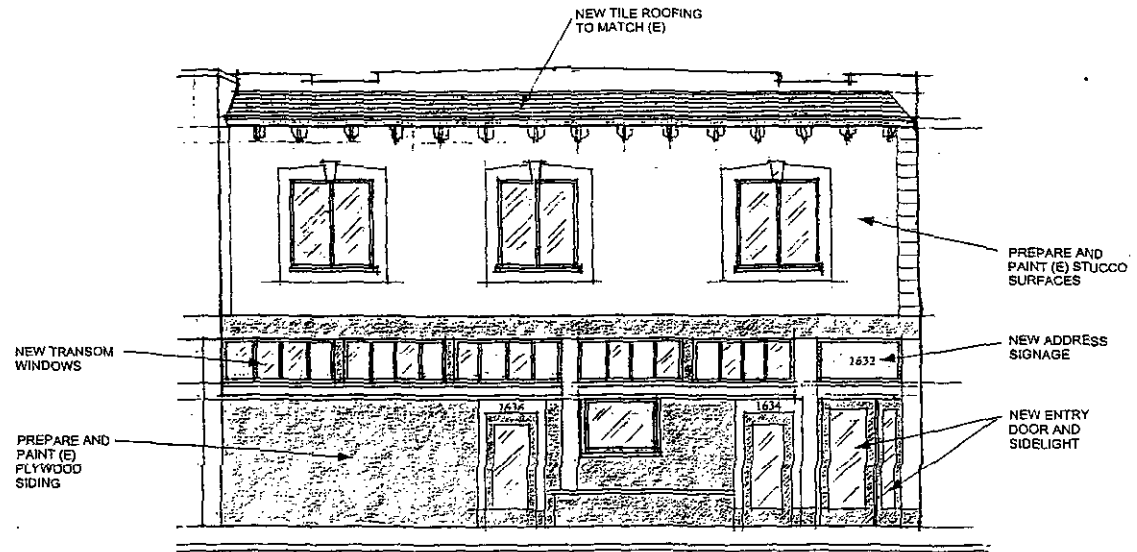


FRONT ELEVATION

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

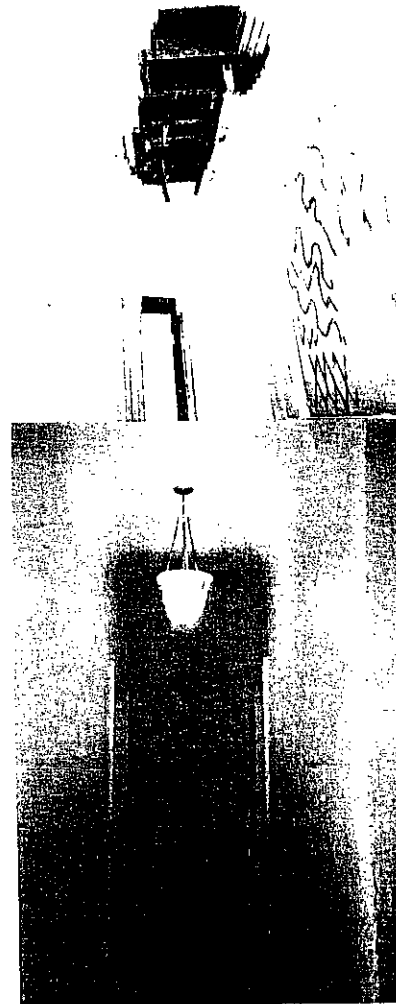
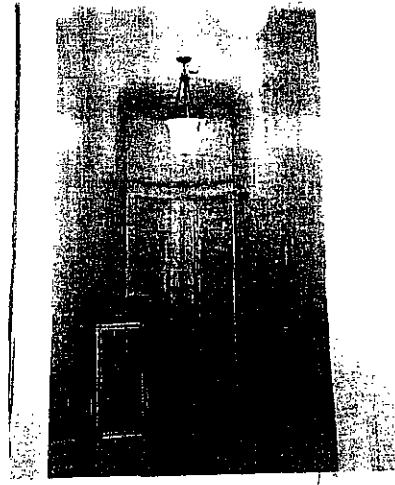
1632-36 SEVENTH STREET

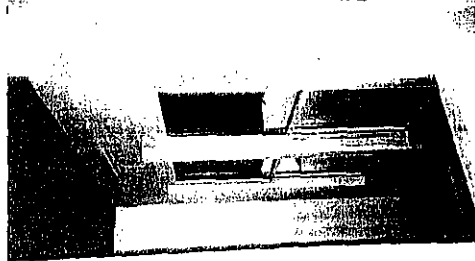
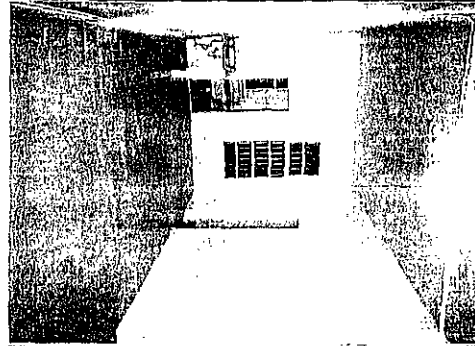
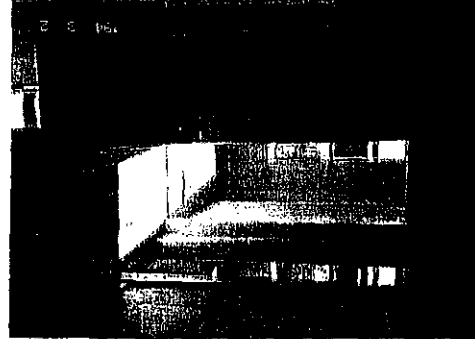
City of Oakland
CEDA
Neighborhood Commercial District
Facade Improvement Program



FRONT ELEVATION

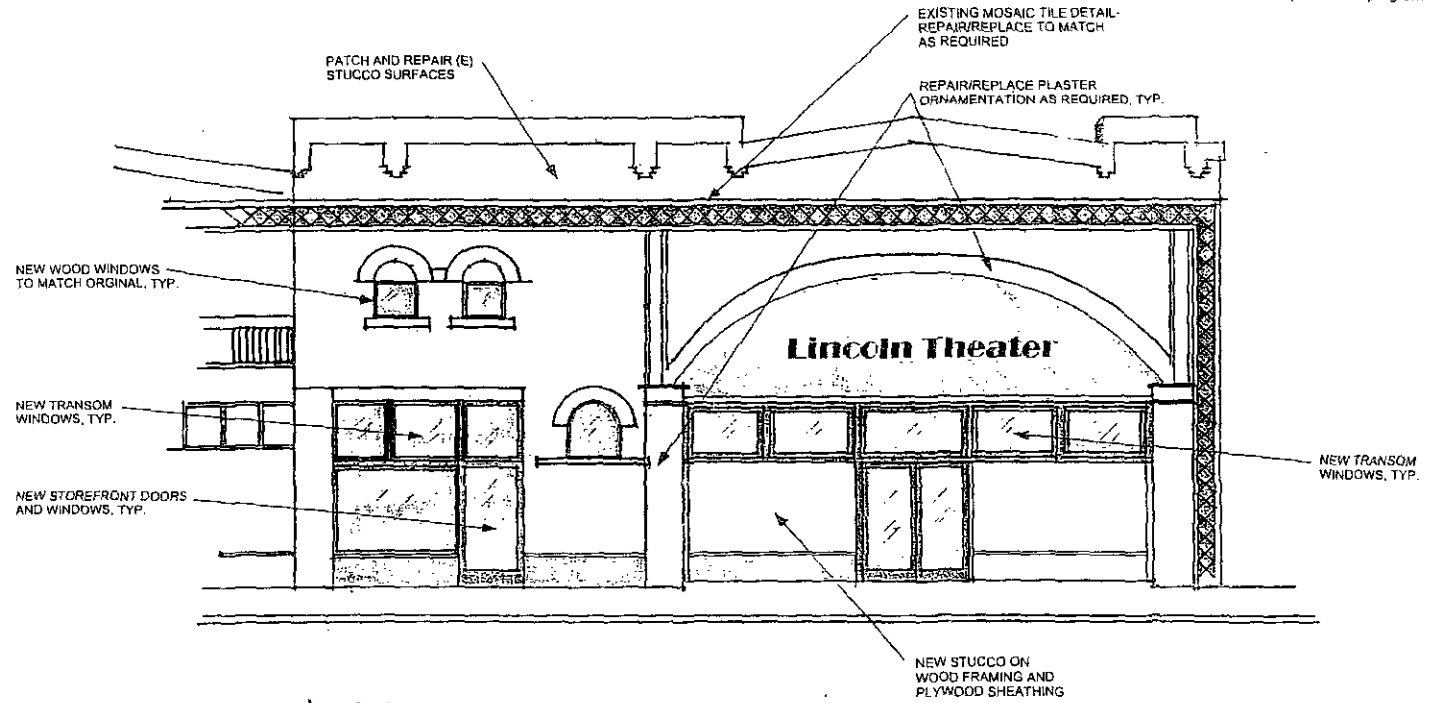
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"





1620 SEVENTH STREET

City of Oakland
CEDA
Neighborhood Commercial District
Facade Improvement program



FRONT ELEVATION

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

1601-1601 7th St

1604 7th St

1608-1610 7th St

1620-1624 7th St

1626-1628 7th St

1632-1642 7th St



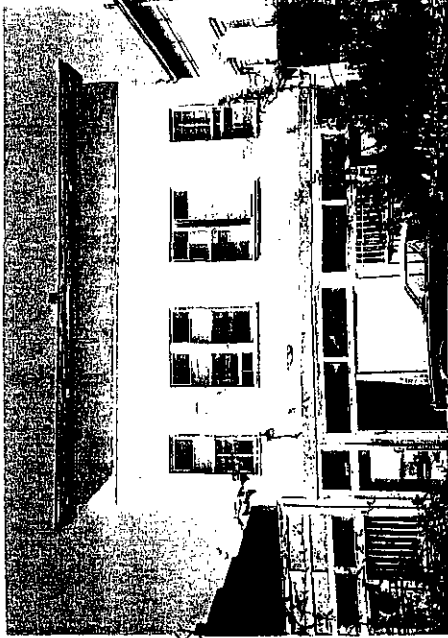
1600 - 1604 ST
7th St



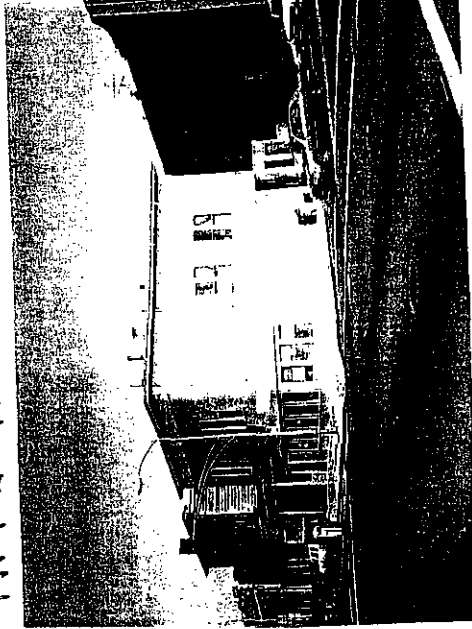
Before
Photos



1608 - 1612 ST
1616
Oakland

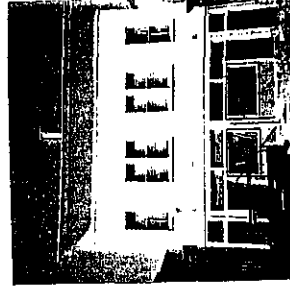


After Photo

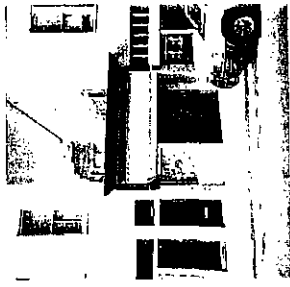


1600 through 1612 St 7th St West Oakland

After Photos - Facade Program



1608 - 1616 St
7th St

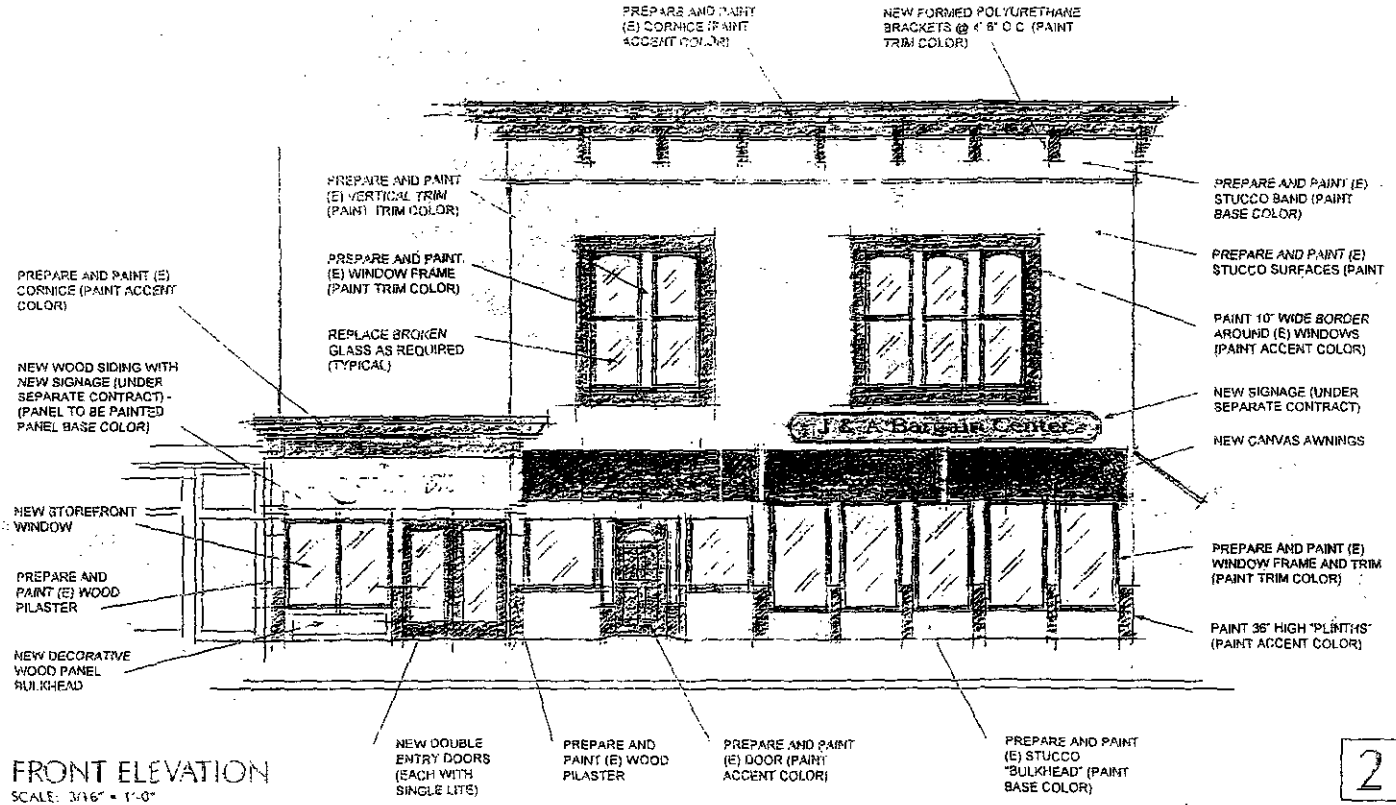


1606 7th St
Oakland

Owner: Lucy Lequin
1902 Castro St
Oakland CA 94612
510-832-1816

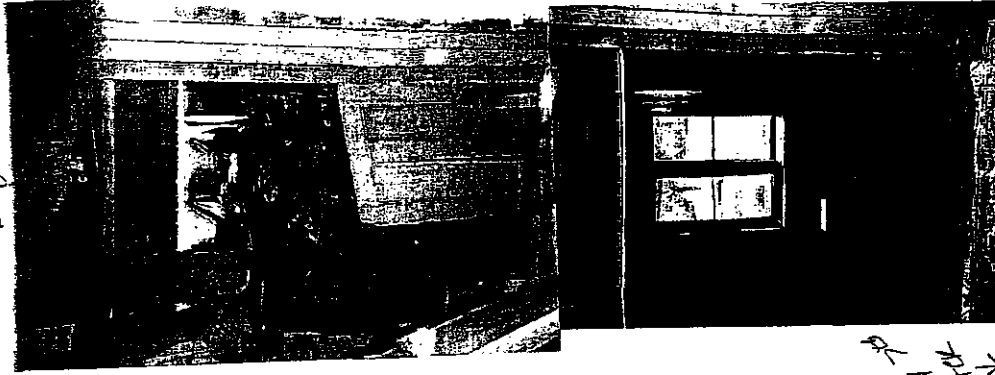
1600 7TH STREET

City of Oakland
CEDA
Neighborhood Commercial District
Facade Improvement Program

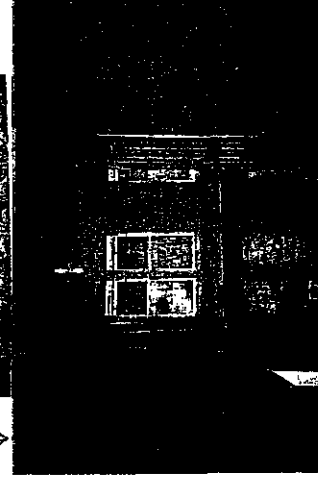


Interior

1614 7th St
before
before



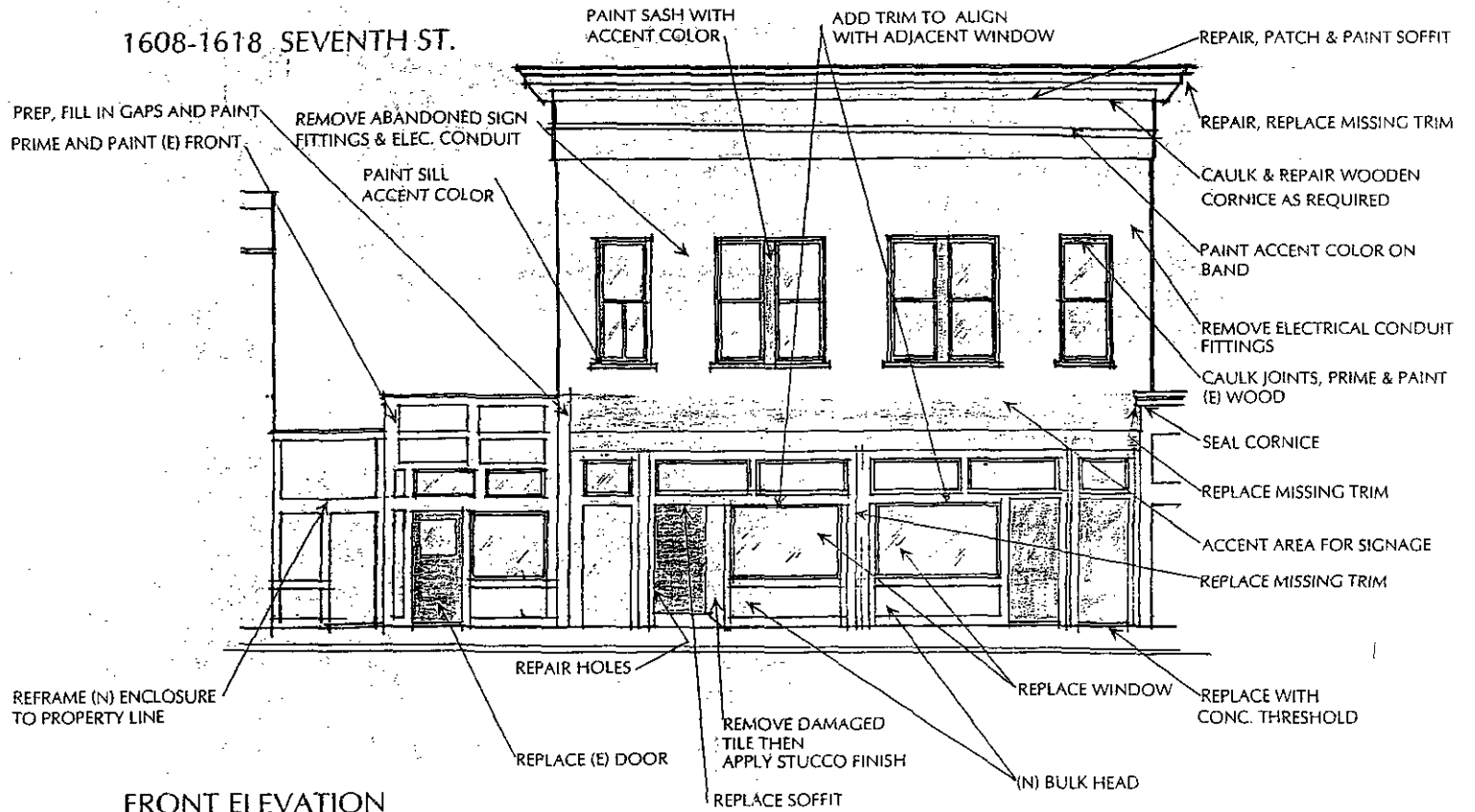
1614 7th St
before
before



1614 7th St
before
before



1608-1618 SEVENTH ST.



FRONT ELEVATION

SCALE: 3/16" = 1' - 0"